



Original Article

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Innovative Management in Iranian Organizations

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ABSTRACT: The purpose of this study is to explain the emerging theory of innovative management in Iranian organizations. Methodologically, a qualitative approach of grounded (data-based) type was preferably used. The valid documents relevant to the field of management, and organizational innovation and entrepreneurship were chosen as the reference community and the main source of this research. Accordingly, 43 well-researched scientific research articles were purposefully selected in terms of theoretical saturation. As data gathering tool, subject-based indices were used. The data were extracted using thematic analysis strategies combined with analytical. The analysis of the extracted data was performed according to the instructions provided by Strauss and Corbin. This process involves preparing data and writing textual propositions, open, axial, and selective coding. To comply with the research qualitative characteristics, the three criteria of acceptability, verifiability and reliability were applied. The results showed that the construct innovative management in Iranian organizations in the causal dimension included categories such as "innovative research, use of organizational intellectual capacity and innovative flexibility," in the outcome dimension, it included "internal organizational capability, cultural growth, and environmental empowerment," in the strategic dimension, "reasonable outsourcing strategy, networking strategy, technology strategy, and flexibility strategy," in the interferer dimension, "policy-making, laws and regulations, and technological challenges" and in the contextual dimension, "innovative personality of managers and employees, cultural insight, and innovative infrastructures" which could be provided.

KEYWORDS: innovative management; organization; Iranian organization; organizational innovation

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1. INTRODUCTION

Innovative organizational management means creating or applying an idea, method or process to deliver a new product or service to the environment. If organizational creativity means presenting a new plan, innovative organizational management means implementing and executing the plan in a realistic way. Innovative management means implementing a creative thinking and organizational innovation is the key to success in the iterative arena of the organization. When it comes to innovative management, the thoughts get focused on product innovation and sometimes the production process, and sometimes not even on service innovation. But process innovation, marketing management and performance management are also needed. When we talk about the importance of innovation and mechanisms, it should be noted that only in a "global" competitive environment can these concepts be discussed (Donbessor et al., 2020). In a world characterized by high rates of change, innovative management of all organizational processes becomes necessary. That is, it requires support processes, operations, and especially management process, and without organizing these processes, product innovation will be of no use and effect (Katraji et al., 2020).

According to many experts, in a situation where societies face key social problems and challenges, social innovation can provide innovative solutions to address them by involving everyone, hence, this has been accepted as a new paradigm (Keshtkar, 2018). If we want to institutionalize innovative management, which is appropriate in the world today, its conditions should be provided in the organization and continuously developed under the appropriate process. To achieve such an organization, a process of fundamental change is required, so the new orbit in which the organization must be positioned is the orbit where learning organizations find themselves. Learning organizations reinforce the factor of innovation within themselves and innovation continues, but existing organizations may not be learning organizations, and until they become learning organizations, these processes will not be created and innovation will not take place in the processes (Ahmad and Howila, 2020). In order for this transition to take place from existing organizations to learning organizations, and in order to change their hierarchical and functional order, their attitudes toward work and people, and their traditional paradigm in general, learning organizations need to innovate in the process of organizational transformation. And this is the most fundamental innovation that managers need to give direction to innovation and make it thrive and spread and create synergies between them. Such innovation will ultimately enable organizational progress (Montalwan et al., 2020). In today's world, changes are rapid, multifaceted, complex and pervasive, and organizations must adapt to the accelerating pace of change and beyond. This requires, above all, the development and deepening of innovation and creativity and the move towards innovative management. But the main challenge is why organizations are less creative and innovative? And what are the challenges of creativity and "innovative management" in organizations? And how can innovative management be developed in the organization? With this description, the purpose of this study is to present a theoretical model of innovative management in Iranian organizations.

2. RESEARCH LITERATURE

Innovative management as a strategy helps organizations and companies to gain competitive advantage and maintain a growing life in the world of global competition. The ground for promoting innovative management can be provided by focusing on the potential capabilities of innovation in the organization (Azadehdel and Farahbod, 2010). Ample research has been done in this direction. Keramati and Entezari (2021) in a research paper developed an interpretive, structure model of the innovation ecosystem in the insurance industry. Their findings showed that based on the dimensions of "leadership power" and "dependence", "good governance" as a governance umbrella and macro-leadership, "university-industry-insurance link" as extra-organizational interactions, "strengthening marketing and competition in the market with the focus on "insurance services" and "development of platforms and infrastructures of the insurance industry" at the organizational level are the key independent variables at the eighth level, acting as the modrl cornerstone. Their results indicated that in order to create and develop the innovation ecosystem, policy makers and managers of the insurance industry should give the priority to the eighth level



dimensions (good governance, university-industry-insurance link, strengthening marketing and market competition and developing insurance industry infrastructure) in their policies.

Hossein Gharib with Azar and colleagues (2009) evaluated the innovative performance of universities nation-wide as examples of Iranian organizations. As a case study, considering this innovation process as a multi-party system involving two sub-processes of research and development and application of results, they applied the introduced model to measure this process in universities of a country in the period 2014-201 and measured the innovation degree according to each sector, time period as well as overall innovation. Rahman Seresht and Jabbarzadeh Karbasi (2010) developed a strategic model to predict (pre-read) innovation projects with a systematic review approach. It was an exploratory research in terms of purpose and applied research by type of use. In this study, using the systematic review research method, 105 related studies in the period 1993-2017 were identified and 60 studies were reviewed as a sample. Their findings were presented in five categories: "internal factors", "inter-organizational factors", "essential activities", "background factors" and "results" in the research model. According to this study, the success of the inter-organizational collaboration framework should be considered as a process. The first and strategic stage of this process, ie pre-reading, requires attention to the factors and supply of the necessary means that the success of the participating organizations in providing them can greatly guarantee the success of cooperation in the next stages. Sabbaghi Rostami and Hosseini Shakib (2009) in a paper studied transformational leadership and how it interacts with creativity, innovation climate, entrepreneurial orientation and in-house entrepreneurship based on employee perception in the civil aviation industry. Their findings showed the positive effect of transformational leadership on organizational innovation climate, innovation climate on employee creativity and the mediating role of innovation climate in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee creativity. Also, the results indicated the positive effect of employee creativity on in-house entrepreneurship, entrepreneurial orientation on in-house entrepreneurship and the moderating role of transformational leadership in the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and in-house entrepreneurship. They concluded that considering the impact of transformational leadership on creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship in selecting employees, the competencies of transformational leadership should be considered. Keshtkar (2008) in a research on social innovation in Iran claimed that results of the study, in addition to contributing to the development of social innovation literature, can be of use for the scientific and executive society of the country. In this study, categories such as "innovative governance, social space, content, value principles, policy and policy-making, processes, resources, structures and institutions" were identified as the model's eight dimensions with 28 components, all of which are significant at the 95th level of confidence.

A review of the background of the studies conducted in the field of innovative management in Iranian organizations indicated that no research has been found to independently address this issue in Iranian organizations and provide a model for it.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a basic research, with an exploratory design and a qualitative approach. For data collection, library research method was used. The grounded theory strategy was used to analyze the content. In the grounded theory strategy, there are three approaches: systematic, across coming, and constructivist. In this study, a systematic approach was used. After selecting the research topic, the access to resources and concepts was considered. In sampling and collecting data, the researcher looked for documents in which the research data, suitable for their categories, features and dimensions, could be found. Data collection continued until "theoretical saturation" was reached. Data analysis was performed in three stages of open, axial and selective coding as follows. In the open coding stage, the concepts were identified and their characteristics and dimensions were discovered in the examples. At this stage, a title (label) was assigned to all the key points in the related documents and put in a table. In the axial coding stage, the process of linking groups and subgroups in terms of specifications and dimensions was performed. In other words, the concepts were linked to their subclasses to provide a more accurate explanation of the subject.



In the selective coding stage, while focusing on the process that underlie the data, the researcher focused on the category that was most frequently repeated in the data and could be related the other categories. In order to ensure the reliability of the results, the theory produced based on the "expert review method" was applied and modified in several stages. In addition, in order to meet the reliability criteria, the process of analyzing verses and narrations until the formation of a theoretical model of innovation management was described as much as possible (Creswell, 2011). Finally, the theoretical model of innovative management in Iranian organizations was presented.

4. RESEARCH FINDINGS

In this section, the research stages and findings related to each stage are treated separately.

5.1. First stage: open coding and theme extraction

At this stage, the basic themes were extracted from the studied informational documents. To ensure the correct understanding, the experts in the field of management and innovation and at the same time fluent in research methods were referred to. The following table lists some of the examples and extracted codes as examples.

Table1. Open coding and theme extraction

Theme	Context
Strengthen the problem solving approach	Organizational issues and problems play a key role in the success of organizations. Solving organizational problems in many cases, especially when the problems and issues are non-repetitive, requires proper decision-making of managers, which is a very important factor for creative and effective decision-making (Ghasemi Pirbalouti, 2015).
Eliminating unnecessary bureaucracies for the idea generating capacity of the organization	When the style and attitude of the managers of the organization is traditional and based on bureaucracy, then the unwillingness to change also appears. It must be admitted that unfortunately in many organizations in the country, managers, instead of supporting and using the employee ideas and innovations to advance the organization strategy, consider it a threat and an incomprehensible move, and view appreciation of this idea a danger for themselves and their future position (Nahid, 2009).
Acceptance of outsourcing ideas	Outsourcing means using external resources to produce a product or perform the activities of an organization that has long been considered. One of the main challenges for public organizations is the decisions related to construction or purchase so as to bring both innovation and agility to the organization and to ensure supply in times of crisis (Karimi Garshaki et al., 2012).
Promoting technological literacy of human resources	According to the NIS definition, we define RIS as a complex context of innovation institutions and actors in an area that is directly related to the development, dissemination and acquisition of technological innovation as well as the interrelationship between innovation actors. Like an NIS, an RIS is made up of three main groups of innovative innovators: universities, industrial enterprises, and government research institutions. In a specific area where there is a close and trusting relationship between innovation actors, an RIS can expand its SIS. When an area does not have enough self-confidence, trust can and should be taught and stored so that cross-training and technological innovation can be effectively activated (Chank, 2002).



<p>Launching and strengthening the idea generation system</p>	<p>We have learned two important things: First, the best innovation systems use old ideas as the raw materials and dough needed to present new ideas. We call this strategy 'knowledge brokerage.' Companies that use this strategy act as intermediaries and are responsible for communicating a wide range of unrelated ideas. They take advantage of their mediation to discover old ideas that they can be used in new places with new methods and in the form of new collaborations (Hargadon and Satin, 2001).</p>
<p>Documenting innovative experiences</p>	<p>An issue that is less considered in Iranian organizations and projects is the issue of documentation. Documentation is done with the intention of creating organizational memory and means collecting, organizing, refining and transmitting valuable information that is at risk of being lost for a variety of reasons. In addition, documentation is one of the things that sheds light on past events. During the life of any organization and during the implementation of any project, great and important things are done, but due to high work pressure, no one records them and others know nothing about the implementation methods, experiences, creativity, and implementation obstacles and problems (Latifian and Molavi, 1394).</p>
<p>Establishment of innovation unit in the organization</p>	<p>Development and innovation centers focus on converting existing knowledge in the world into root and are evaluated by the amount of wealth production and not the production of scientific articles. Environmental space, how it works, purposefulness, product-orientation, how it is managed, and the components and generalities of development and innovation centers are different from research collections. Employees of Development and Innovation Centers, in addition to access to articles, books and scientific reports, must have full information about industry and the world market and its continuous correct feedback (Khamseh and Alimoradian, 2010).</p>
<p>Flexibility in dealing with customers and meeting their demands</p>	<p>Although private banks in terms of service quality, reliability and speed of service fare well and have been largely successful in creating a good image in the minds of their clients, but in terms of flexibility and innovation in providing services, as the most important characteristics of fast, response organizations, are rated lower in terms relative to other factors by their customers; Therefore, it seems necessary to pay more attention to the use of innovation and flexibility in providing services (Zamani Moghadam and Lahiji, 2012).</p>
<p>Paying attention to the culture of innovation in the organization</p>	<p>It is obvious that as business and entrepreneurship move towards entrepreneurship and globalization, it finds more innovation. A key factor in creating creativity and innovation is having the right organizational culture to nurture creative employees and use their creativity. Creativity and culture of innovation are issues that are of special importance in creating and maintaining an innovative and entrepreneurial organization. (Saeedi Kia, 2009).</p>
<p>Limitations arising from the past policies</p>	<p>Upstream documents and documents of other countries are examined in small groups and are selected from the documents that seem more useful and have richer content, respectively, and are extracted from the documents in the form of summary or table of concepts, according to the required output. Some of these materials have the aspect of modeling or idea generation and possible ideas and innovations will be identified and some will be the basis of planning as an upstream document (Sajedinejad</p>



	and Naeemi, 2016).
Self-assessment of human resources	Human resource self-assessment is a regular, systematic and comprehensive review of the organization's activities and results based on an organizational excellence model. Self-assessment allows the organization to clearly identify its strengths and improvable areas and formulate plans for improvement and innovation in various dimensionsv(Bells, Harschel and Hutchison, 2021).

5.2. Second stage: axial coding; concept extraction

At this stage, the relevant documents were studied and the contents thereof were extracted. The table for this step will be provided with the next step.

5.3. Third stage: selective coding; extracting categories

In the final stage, i.e. selective coding, the constructs were formed that could explain the "innovative management in Iranian organizations." These results are shown in the table below. Based on the information in the table below, inferential constructs can be used to explain the "innovative management of Iranian organizations". Also, each of these constructs, individually or in conjunction with other constructs can provide new capacities for the development of management and organizational knowledge.

Axis category: Axis category is the main theme of the research which, although comes out from within the research, is an abstract concept. In fact, the axial category is the main incident or event for which there is a series of actions or interactions to control or manage it and is related to it (Corbin and Strauss, 2016). In the present study, the focal point of the theory derived from the analysis of interviews led to the category 'innovation management.'

Causal conditions: Causal conditions are those events and happenings that affect phenomena (Corbin and Strauss, 2016). In this research, the conditions and factors that are the main cause in creating and affecting innovative management are organized under three categories: Innovative research, use of organizational intellectual capacity, and innovative flexibility as reported in the table below.

Table 2. Causal conditions of innovative management in Iranian organizations (source: research findings)

	Concepts	Initial codes
Causal Conditions	Innovative research	The need for modern research bank
		Complexity & uncertainty of extra-organizational environment
		Emerging environmental challenges and their impact on organization
		Application of authoritative research
		Strengthening problem solving approach
	Use of organization's intellectual capacities	The need of organization for transformational thinking force
		Resolving intellectual challenges of organization
		Presence of idea generation system in organization
	Innovative flexibility	Avoiding the fragility of organizational processes
		Resolving extreme irrational controlism.
		Organization sharing in success or failure of innovative ideas
		Eliminating unnecessary bureaucracy for idea generating capacities of organization

Strategic conditions: these are the strategies that are pursued with a specific purpose to manage and control the intended phenomenon (Corbin and Strauss, 2016). In the present study, the analysis of the interviews showed the strategies *rational outsourcing strategy*, *networking strategy*, *technological strategy*, and *flexibility strategy* in the case of the Iranian organization. The results of the analysis of this part of the research are reported in the table below.

Table 3. Strategic conditions of innovative management model in Iranian organizations (source: research findings)

	Concepts	Initial codes
Strategic conditions	Rational outsourcing strategy	Delegation of authority to relevant reputable institutions
		Acceptance of outsourcing ideas
		Reducing organizational costs by gradually delegating processes and affairs
	Network building strategy	Forming work teams instead of adhering to the traditional hierarchy
		Increasing the network literacy of employees and managers
		Study of network strategies in the global arena
	Technological strategy	Promoting technological literacy of human resources
		Bringing over organizational processes to the digital platform
		Application of new technologies in processes
		Keeping Record of the technological experiences of employees and managers in the form of tacit and explicit knowledge
		Improving technology infrastructure in organization
		Dynamic engagement of the organization and its stakeholders in social networks
	Flexibility strategy	Convergent approach to human resources
		Avoiding wrist-grip control and moving towards assistance-oriented supervision
		Launching and strengthening idea generation system
		Flexibility in dealing with customers and meeting their demands

Contextual factors: contextual factors indicate special characteristics implying a phenomenon and the location of events or happenings related to the phenomenon along a dimension in which the phenomenon lies (Corbin and Strauss, 2016). The results of the analysis of this part of the research are reported in the table below. The underlying factors are organized under the categories of Innovative personality of managers and employees, cultural insight, and innovative infrastructures, as reported in the table below.

Table 4. Contextual factors of innovative management model in Iranian organizations (source: research findings)

	Concepts	Initial codes
Interfering factors	Innovative personality of managers and employees	Innovative literacy for managers and employees
		Paying attention to the spirit of value creation in the organization
		Dynamism of managers and employees' personality
	Cultural insights	Paying attention to innovative culture in organization
		Documentation of innovative experiences
	Innovative infrastructure	Establishing innovation unit in the organization
		Presence of innovative flexible structures in the organization to exchange ideas with the environment
		Provide infrastructures for recording innovative experiences

Interfering factors: include structural conditions that facilitate phenomena and strategies (Corbin and Strauss, 2016). The following table presents the interfering factors in the form of policy-making, laws, and technological challenges, given the views of the interviewees.

Table 5. Interfering factors of innovative management model in Iranian organizations (research findings)

	Concepts	Initial codes
Interferers	Policymaking	Limitations arising from past policies
		Incongruity of existing policies with modern developments
		Inflexibility in policies
	Laws	Limitations arising from laws
		Poor innovative literacy in the field of legislation
		Inflexible deterrent laws
	Technological challenges	Complex and rapid technological developments in the world
		Lack of proper (adequate) technology infrastructure
		Lack of proper understanding of the importance of technology by managers and decision makers
		Contradiction and conflict of technological rules of Iran and other countries
		Lack of suitable alternative for filtering



Outcomes: outcomes in the grounded theory are the result of actions and reactions to the conditions that exist regarding the phenomenon (Corbin and Strauss, 2016). The outcomes of the innovative management of Iranian organizations from the perspective of the research participants are organized in the categories *internal competence of the organization*, *cultural growth* and *environmental empowerment* which are reported in the table below.

Table 6. Outcomes of innovative management model in Iranian organizations (source: research findings)

	Concepts	Initial codes
Outcomes	Internal capability of organization	Smartening organizational processes
		Growth of human resources creativity
		Human resources self-assessment
		Coordination among existing systems
	Cultural growth	A change (development) in work culture
		Creating shared spaces for decision making and implementation
		Developing a culture based on trust and delegation
		Creating motivation and satisfaction in human resources
	Environmental capability	Effective communication/relationship with national and international external environment
		Keeping up with and managing environmental technological developments
		Increasing responsiveness
		Organization compliance with the demands of stakeholders
		Knowledge management in relation to environmental knowledge

Given the open, axial and selective coding in this research, the paradigmatic model of innovative management in Iranian organizations is presented in the following figure.

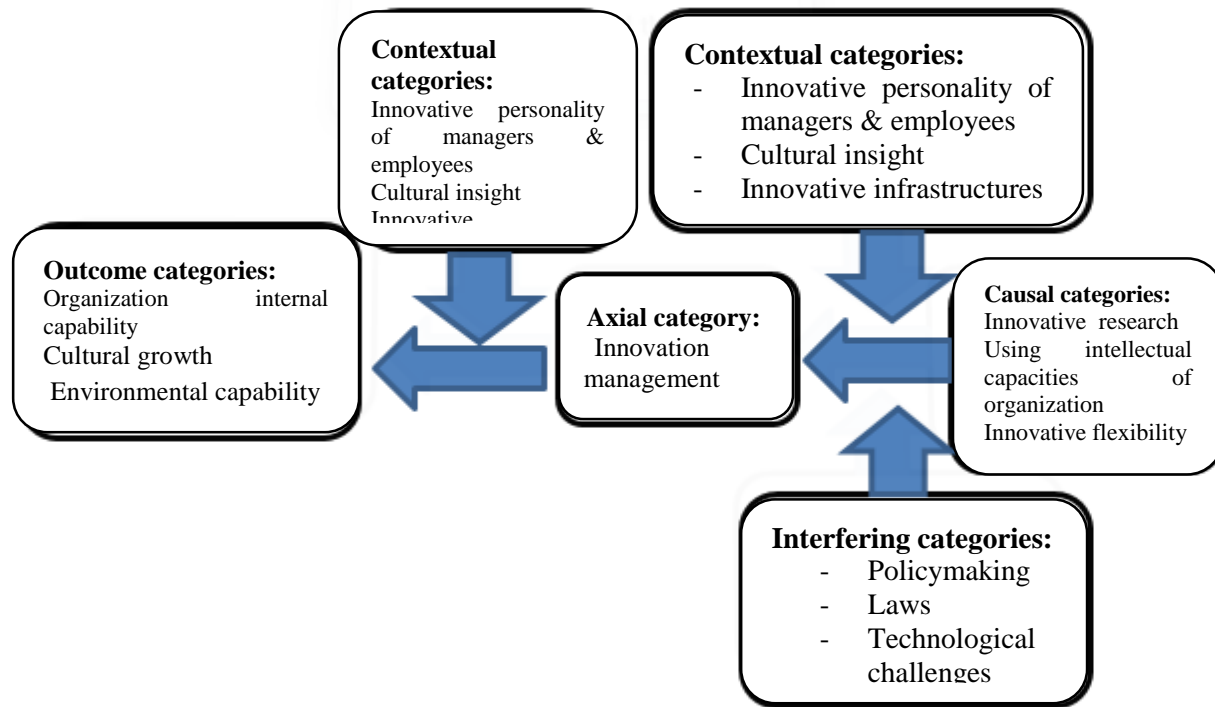


Figure 1. Research paradigmatic model

6. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In the third millennium, the world is going to face many complexities due to the increasing technological changes. With the current speed of the science production, the will face challenges and unknown changes in all areas. This global change will affect political, economic, social and cultural systems. And improvement of productivity will also be different. Managers need to be prepared and able to make accurate decisions about innovative strategies and future planning. The decision of managers can have surprising effects on other organizations and affect the world (Pakdel, 2014). The purpose of this article was to present an innovative management model in Iranian organizations. Organizational competition is fierce, and challenging companies are coming up with new products and services. In such an environment, organizational innovation is not a good organizational proposal but a prerequisite for the organization survival. Innovation can be a completely new product or service, or simply a change in the way a product or service is produced. Therefore, this category should be considered as a continuum. After reviewing and analyzing the documents related to the subject, the extracted codes were placed in pre-determined related classes and a theoretical model was presented. Now it is time to confect the research to the final result by processing the concepts and categories extracted from the relevant documents. At this stage, with the findings extracted from the step 'Selective Coding,' the following theoretical propositions can be proposed:

1. Iranian organization in the direction of its capability in the field of innovation management needs to pay special attention to categories such as the innovative personality of managers and employees. On the other hand, a change in cultural vision and the provision of innovative infrastructure in Iranian organization is essential.
2. Innovative management in Iranian organization requires the development of strategies with a clear rationality regarding the reasonable outsourcing of the organization's affairs. On the other hand, networking



and development of networking strategies will affect the process in directing Iranian organizations towards organizational bio-innovation.

3. In its innovative management, Iranian organization must adopt technological strategies including promoting technological literacy of human resources, bringing the organizational processes over to the digital platform, using new technologies in processes, recording the technological experiences of employees and managers in the form of tacit and explicit knowledge, upgrading technology In the organization and the dynamic presence of the organization and its stakeholders in social networks.

4. A flexible strategy in the innovative management of Iranian organization can be designed in the form of a convergent approach to human resources, elimination of wrist-grabbing control, and a move towards assisting-oriented control, launching and strengthening the idea generation system and flexibility in dealing with customers and meeting their demands.

5. In designing innovative management model in Iranian organizations, it is crucial to pay attention to the intervening and influential factors such as policy-making, laws and technological challenges.

6. The outcomes of applying the above strategies and intervening strategies and factors will produce outcomes such as internal capability of the organization, cultural growth and environmental capability" for innovative management in the Iranian organization.

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Authenticity of the texts, honesty and fidelity has been observed.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Sajad Kazemnasab contributed to the design and implementation of the research, to the analysis of the results and to the writing of the manuscript.

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Author/s confirmed no conflict of interest.