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**Stuck in a rut – Can I try something different? The role of  
intrinsic motivation and mood in the creative performance of ICT  
professionals**

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Rohit Subhash Piplani

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## **Abstract**

In a hyper-competitive and knowledge-based economy, creativity and innovation are considered as the lifeblood of success for ICT firms. Literature suggests that intrinsic motivation and positive mood drive the creative performance of employees. Nonetheless, the mechanism through which creativity antecedents influence the creative performance of IT professionals is seldom examined. Furthermore, the assertion that intrinsic motivation and positive mood – through motivational-affective mechanisms – spur employee creativity has rarely been tested. Therefore, drawing on Self-Determination theory, Cognitive Evaluation theory and Componential theory of creativity, the current study examines the relationship between specific creativity antecedents (job flexibility, perceived supervisor support for creativity, creative role identity and creative self-efficacy), intrinsic motivation, positive mood and creative performance of IT employees. Partial-least-squares based structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) was conducted using survey data collected from 157 IT professionals working in various organisations, including both multinational corporations and tech start-ups, in United States (USA). The results suggested that job flexibility, perceived supervisor support for creativity, creative role identity and creative self-efficacy positively and significantly influence creative performance of IT professionals. Specifically, both intrinsic motivation and positive mood were found to mediate the relationship between personal and contextual factors (creativity antecedents) and employee creativity, thereby playing a role of chain mediators. The findings highlight the significance of motivational-affective mechanisms underpinning employee creativity. Implications of the results for theory and practice are also discussed.

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