



The interplay of humor and creativity: shaping rationality and decision-making quality

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Abstract

This study explores the relationship between humor, creativity, rationality, intuitiveness, and decision-making quality, all of which are vital in organizational management and success. Despite the importance attached to decision-making, prior research has not fully addressed how humor and creativity interact with rationality. Drawing from psychology, cognitive science, and management studies, we investigate how humor and creativity jointly influence cognitive reflection and decision quality. Using a sample of 998 participants and employing a mediating-moderation PROCESS model, our findings indicate that rational individuals tend to make higher-quality decisions, with affiliative humor mediating this relationship. Furthermore, we observed that employees' creativity levels moderated this relationship, especially among rational employees with high creativity, who made higher-quality decisions. These findings highlight the interconnectedness of humor, creativity, and rationality in decision-making processes, offering practical implications for organizational behavior and management practices. Understanding this interplay can provide a nuanced approach to enhancing decision-making processes in management, emphasizing the value of humor in organizational contexts.

Keywords Decision-making · Affiliative humor · Creativity · Cognitive reflection · Rationality

Introduction

Decision-making is a fundamental process that significantly influences organizations' success and sustainability. At its core, decision-making involves choosing from alternative courses of action based on the evaluation of relevant information and potential outcomes (Salas et al., 2010). The quality of decision-making is crucial because it directly affects an organization's capacity to achieve its goals and maintain a competitive edge. By emphasizing the importance of quality in decision-making, organizations can better navigate challenges and capitalize on opportunities, ensuring long-term success and resilience (Johnson & Walker,

2023). Specifically, high-quality decisions are characterized by thorough analysis, consideration of diverse perspectives, and a balanced assessment of risks and opportunities.

In this study, we aim to investigate the effect of (1) cognitive reflection versus rationality and (2) creativity and humor on the quality of decision-making. *Cognitive reflection* (CR) refers to the mental process of consciously evaluating and re-evaluating one's initial thoughts and intuitions before deciding. CR involves a deliberate and analytical approach to problem-solving, whereby individuals question their automatic responses and consider alternative perspectives and information. This reflective thinking is crucial for avoiding cognitive biases and errors in judgment, leading to more accurate and rational decision-making. In organizational contexts, fostering cognitive reflection can enhance the quality of decisions (Frederick, 2005; Sirota et al., 2021). Notably, Frederick (2005) developed a test to measure CR (CRT), which will be used in this study.

Our study involves two more independent variables – vital drivers of innovation and competitive advantage – namely, creativity and humor. *Organizational creativity* involves generating novel and valuable ideas, solutions, and approaches to improve products, services, decision-making

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Shaping Of Rationality

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Table of Contents Shaping Of Rationality

1. Understanding the eBook Shaping Of Rationality
 - The Rise of Digital Reading Shaping Of Rationality
 - Advantages of eBooks Over Traditional Books
2. Identifying Shaping Of Rationality
 - Exploring Different Genres
 - Considering Fiction vs. Non-Fiction
 - Determining Your Reading Goals
3. Choosing the Right eBook Platform
 - Popular eBook Platforms
 - Features to Look for in an Shaping Of Rationality
 - User-Friendly Interface
4. Exploring eBook Recommendations from Shaping Of Rationality
 - Personalized Recommendations
 - Shaping Of Rationality User Reviews and Ratings
 - Shaping Of Rationality and Bestseller Lists
5. Accessing Shaping Of Rationality Free and Paid eBooks

- Shaping Of Rationality Public Domain eBooks
- Shaping Of Rationality eBook Subscription Services
- Shaping Of Rationality Budget-Friendly Options
- 6. Navigating Shaping Of Rationality eBook Formats
 - ePub, PDF, MOBI, and More
 - Shaping Of Rationality Compatibility with Devices
 - Shaping Of Rationality Enhanced eBook Features
- 7. Enhancing Your Reading Experience
 - Adjustable Fonts and Text Sizes of Shaping Of Rationality
 - Highlighting and Note-Taking Shaping Of Rationality
 - Interactive Elements Shaping Of Rationality
- 8. Staying Engaged with Shaping Of Rationality
 - Joining Online Reading Communities
 - Participating in Virtual Book Clubs
 - Following Authors and Publishers Shaping Of Rationality
- 9. Balancing eBooks and Physical Books Shaping Of Rationality
 - Benefits of a Digital Library
 - Creating a Diverse Reading Collection Shaping Of Rationality
- 10. Overcoming Reading Challenges
 - Dealing with Digital Eye Strain
 - Minimizing Distractions
 - Managing Screen Time
- 11. Cultivating a Reading Routine Shaping Of Rationality
 - Setting Reading Goals Shaping Of Rationality
 - Carving Out Dedicated Reading Time
- 12. Sourcing Reliable Information of Shaping Of Rationality
 - Fact-Checking eBook Content of Shaping Of Rationality
 - Distinguishing Credible Sources
- 13. Promoting Lifelong Learning
 - Utilizing eBooks for Skill Development

- Exploring Educational eBooks

14. Embracing eBook Trends

- Integration of Multimedia Elements
- Interactive and Gamified eBooks

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