

Interdependence of Innovation and Leadership Development

¹Utsav Mohan

College – O P Jindal Global University

Abstract: The challenges leaders face continually has become more complex. Therefore, the work of leaders needs to evolve continuously. Unfortunately, leadership development systems used presently aren't changing to keep pace. Though we have tools such as articles, podcasts and webinars, they only offer partial solutions. Innovative Leadership originates leaders those can understand this interconnection and effectively utilize their insight so as to guarantee and support the association to accomplish its vision.

Innovative leadership is a kind of leadership that involves development of an individual by applying innovation and creativity so as to manage its people and projects. Innovative leaders frequently rouse efficiency in new ways and through unexpected methodologies in comparison to have commonly been utilized and taken (1). Innovative leader may not be the one behind all of the creative ideas. Leaders might recognize great ideas of their team members and work constantly to develop paths and draw a roadmap for the success from those ideas. Innovative leader stand out with their willingness to adjust to change, research and experiment with new ideas and have the courage to envision the path ahead for a creative idea.

Leadership development is a dynamic and multifaceted process that aims to cultivate the skills, qualities, and mindset necessary for individuals to excel in leadership roles. In today's rapidly changing and complex world, effective leadership is crucial for organizations to navigate challenges, inspire teams, and achieve success. Self-awareness is foundational to leadership development. Effective communication is another cornerstone of leadership development. Adaptability is a critical trait for leaders in today's dynamic business environment, while mentorship plays an important role in leadership development. Leadership development is not a one-size-fits-all endeavor. Different individuals may require unique approaches based on their personalities, experiences, and goals. Up-skilling ones team with Innovation Leadership Skills is very important. Customized leadership development plans, tailored to individual needs, can be more effective in nurturing the specific skills and attributes required for success in leadership roles. Incorporating experiential learning is essential in leadership development. The interdependence of innovation and leadership development is a dynamic relationship that plays a pivotal role in shaping the success and sustainability of organizations. Both elements are integral for navigating the complexities of the modern business landscape. However, they come with their own set of limitations and strengths.

The paper aims to review the innovative leadership style as portrayed in the literature along with Interdependence of Innovation and Leadership Development, and offering more insight and structural foundation for researching elements of innovative leadership.

The purpose of this research report is as follows:

1. To examine the concept of innovation leadership and its relevance in the current business environment. To create and approve a theory-based measure introducing the creative and inventive leadership behavior construct.
2. To identify the challenges and opportunities of innovation leadership across the world.
3. To analyze few case studies those will highlights the benefits and limitations of innovation leadership.
4. To provide recommendations for leaders who want to implement innovation leadership in their organizations.

Keywords: Innovative Leadership, Innovation Networks, Culture of Creativity, Leadership Development, Experiential Learning.

(1) Introduction

The purpose of this study is to develop and validate a theory-based measure presenting the creative and innovative leadership behavior construct and its connection to leadership Development. Companies have started investing in effective and inclusive leaders to promote a more transparent and trusting company culture that accepts and appreciates diverse opinions and out-of-the-box ideas. Creativity and innovation flourish with adaptability, transparency, and team spirit. Honing ones leadership skills towards being more people-centric is a foolproof way to foster innovation and remain flexible during changes in a dynamic work environment (2). Innovation Leadership Transforms Crisis Into Opportunity. Truly innovative leadership moves beyond buzzwords and takes bold actions to push toward reinvention (3).

Innovate or die – corporate mantra; though very few organizations really know the process and techniques of how to make innovation happen. Organizational innovation is presently one of the top trends influencing business and leadership, and executives refer to creativity as the #1 leadership skills essential for dealing with a certainly complex future.

Innovation leadership as a philosophy has various techniques that combine various leadership styles so as to influence employees so that they can produce creative ideas, products, and services.

Innovation is not an accident; it's the outcome of a culture that values and encourages creativity. Leadership is the catalyst for creating this culture. Leadership development is integral to organizational success, playing a pivotal role in shaping the future of a company. A well-developed leadership cadre ensures a steady pipeline of capable individuals who can guide teams and organizations through dynamic challenges. These programs foster crucial skills such as strategic thinking, effective communication, and decision-making.

In an ever-evolving business landscape, leaders must adapt and innovate. Leadership development programs provide a structured platform for honing these adaptive capacities, preparing leaders to navigate uncertainties and drive positive change. Moreover, they nurture a culture of continuous improvement and learning within an organization. Furthermore, leadership development isn't just about individual growth; it also contributes to succession planning. Identifying and nurturing emerging leaders ensures a smooth transition in leadership roles, mitigating risks associated with leadership gaps. Overall, investing in leadership development is an investment in the resilience, agility, and long-term success of an organization.

(a) Culture of Innovation in a Company - To create and encourage a culture of innovation and creativity, your association should foster these 3 key elements:

- Management practices that can support creating a culture of innovation, like allowing freedom and permitting opportunity in the practice of work.
- Organization should motivate and encourage innovation, which requires collaboration and communication across departments for developing new ideas.
- Resources to support a creative culture, along with balancing the tension between managing the day-to-day activities and driving for improvement.

Fostering an innovative mindset for one's organization is needed by equipping your team with innovation leadership skills. Innovative leaders motivate, empower employees and also provide them necessary resources so as they can come up with groundbreaking ideas and solutions. By fostering a culture of creativity, companies can stay ahead of the competition by adapting to changing markets along with continuous aim to sustain in an increasingly innovative world (4).

(b) Skills of innovative leaders

An innovative leader must have certain skills, which can be enhanced by various training and development programs incorporated in an organization

- Communication
- Imagination
- Willingness to embrace opportunities

- Empathy
- Creative brainstorming
- Efficiency

(c) Innovation and Leadership Development

Innovation leadership refers to a management technique that focuses on the integration of various leadership styles in an effort to increase creativity, competency, and collaboration within the workplace (5).

Leaders can also take a number of other practical steps to advance innovation.

- Define the sort of innovation that drives development and helps meet key goals and strategic objectives.
- At regular leadership meetings, innovation should be added to the formal agenda.
- Then set performance metrics along with targets for innovation. They should think about two sorts of measurements: the monetary (like percentage of total revenue earned from new products) and the behaviora

(d) Importance of Innovation and Leadership Development

Innovation leadership is of utmost importance for every company because successful innovation begins with ideation - the phase where outstanding ideas are developed as the foundation of innovation success (6).

Innovation and leadership are intertwined elements that drive organizational success and progress in today's dynamic business landscape. This connection between innovation and leadership is crucial for staying competitive, adapting to change, and achieving sustainable growth.

Furthermore, effective leadership involves managing change successfully. In an era where technological advancements and market dynamics evolve rapidly, leaders must be agile and adaptable. They need to embrace change, encourage experimentation, and guide their teams through uncertainty.

Innovation often involves taking calculated risks, and leaders must be willing to support and tolerate failure. A culture that penalizes failure stifles creativity and inhibits experimentation. Leaders who foster an environment where mistakes are viewed as learning opportunities create a safe space for innovation to flourish. Encouraging a healthy risk-taking mindset enables employees to explore unconventional ideas without fear of reprisal.

Moreover, leaders need to invest in continuous learning and development. Staying updated on industry trends, emerging technologies, and market shifts positions leaders to make informed decisions that drive innovation. By prioritizing ongoing education and skill development, leaders set an example for their teams, emphasizing the importance of adaptability and staying ahead of the curve.

(e) Connection between Innovation and Leadership Development

In today's ever evolving world, innovation is the lifeblood of companies striving to stay competitive. Innovation not only drives growth, it also enhances products and services, along with ensuring long-term success. However, innovation does not happen in a vacuum; it requires a culture that encourages and nurtures creativity (4).

The Connection between Leadership and Innovation

Leadership and innovation are interconnected in several profound ways:

1. **Setting the Goals and Vision:** Leaders are responsible for defining the company's vision and strategic realistic goals. An innovative leader sets aggressive goals as well as underlines the significance of innovativeness along with out-of-the-box thinking for accomplishing them.
2. **Creating a Safe Space:** Since Innovative ideas frequently involve risk and uncertainty. Effective leaders must create a safe space so that workers feel comfortable to take calculated risks and be free from the fear of punitive consequences. This encourages experimentation and creativity.

3. **Inspiring and Motivating:** Incredible leaders motivate their groups to push limit and challenge the status quo. Their enthusiasm and resolute belief in the significance of innovation spur employees to investigate novel thoughts and approaches.

4. **Providing Resources:** Innovation and development requires resources, both in regards to time and funding. Leaders who focus on innovation allocate the required resources to support research along with development, and experimentation.

5. **Eliminating Hindrances:** Leaders should recognize and eliminate bureaucratic and other cultural obstructions that hinder innovation. This might include smoothing out processes, empowering cross-useful coordinated effort, and promoting a culture of receptiveness to novel thoughts (4).

Innovation and leadership development are intricately interconnected, forming a symbiotic relationship that drives organizational success and growth. This interdependence is rooted in the fact that effective leadership is crucial for fostering a culture of innovation, while innovation, in turn, demands visionary leaders to navigate and capitalize on emerging opportunities.

In today's dynamic and fast-paced business landscape, leaders must navigate uncertainty, embrace change, and inspire others to do the same. Innovation often involves challenging the status quo, and leaders must possess the agility to steer their teams through uncharted territories. They need to be catalysts for change, fostering a mindset that embraces innovation as a constant and necessary element of organizational evolution.

Leadership development programs play a pivotal role in nurturing the skills and mindset required for effective innovation. These programs focus on cultivating traits such as resilience, adaptability, and strategic thinking, all of which are vital for navigating the uncertainties inherent in innovation processes. Moreover, they emphasize the importance of fostering a collaborative and inclusive work environment, where diverse perspectives are valued—a key ingredient for generating innovative ideas.

Innovation and leadership development also converge in the realm of risk-taking. Successful innovation often involves stepping into the unknown, and leaders must be willing to take calculated risks. Leadership development programs help hone decision-making skills and instill the confidence needed to navigate ambiguity. A leader's ability to manage risk effectively can determine the organization's capacity to innovate boldly and sustainably.

Furthermore, innovation requires a keen understanding of market trends, emerging technologies, and customer needs. Leaders must possess the foresight to identify opportunities for innovation and align them with the organization's strategic goals. Leadership development equips individuals with the skills to scan the external environment, anticipate shifts, and position their teams to capitalize on emerging trends.

In conclusion, the connection between innovation and leadership is fundamental to the success of modern organizations. Leaders who champion innovation create a culture that values creativity, embraces change, and fosters collaboration. Through effective communication, strategic vision, and a commitment to continuous learning, leaders propel their teams toward innovative solutions that not only address current challenges but also position the organization for future success in a rapidly evolving business landscape.

(2) Research Methodology

This research report utilizes a qualitative research methodology to investigate and explore various challenges and opportunities faced by innovation leaders across the world. The accumulated data for this research report was collected from secondary sources like books, academic journals, and various online resources.

(3) Role of a Leader in fostering innovation

Effective leadership hinges on self-awareness. Innovative Leadership Framework (7)

- Understand why you lead.

- Appreciate your capabilities: "Leader, know thyself."
- Understand your environment (situational analysis).
- Expand your capability.
- Lead: Be, relate and do.

Innovative leaders lead themselves, their groups, their organizations and their stakeholder community from a lens of self-awareness. They value that they exist in a more extensive, mutually interdependent context and with an understanding that aligning various elements of the system (including themselves) with evolving them together that leads to long-term success.

(4) Leadership and Innovation: Cultivating a Culture of Creativity

Innovation and leadership are interconnected in several ways. Leaders set the vision along with creating a safe space for team members to take risks. Leaders inspire and motivate their team members, along with providing resources, also remove barriers to innovation. Creative pioneers have visionary reasoning, liberality, risk resistance, empowerment, and adaptability. To foster a culture of creativity, leaders should lead by example, encourage diverse teams, provide training and development, reward and recognize innovation, and promote cross-functional collaboration (4).

Though creating a culture of creativity within a company is a collective effort, however role of a leader cannot be overlooked. Steps leaders should take to foster such a culture:

- a) Lead by Example (preaching):** Innovative leaders always demonstrate their commitment to innovation and creativity by actively participating in various activities like brainstorming sessions, free flow of ideas which let everyone share their ideas, and encouraging others for experimentation.
- b) Encourage Diverse Teams:** Diversity in teams leads to a broader range of ideas and perspectives. Leaders should constantly promote diversity and inclusion to enhance creativity in the workplace.
- c) Provide Training and Development:** Investing in training programs that nurture creative thinking and problem-solving skills is essential. Leaders should ensure adequate resources for employees.
- d) Reward and Recognition:** Recognize and reward innovative contributions. It can be through bonuses, promotions, or public recognition. Rewards reinforce the importance of creativity.
- e) Create Cross-Functional Collaboration:** Break down silos and promote collaboration between different departments. Cross-functional teams should be encouraged to bring fresh ideas and insights to the table.

(5) Designing Innovation Networks

With an update in the Innovative Leadership framework which support today's leaders in adapting in various ways that allow ideal performance by increasing their capacity so as to able to recognize and critically examine, motivate and develop aspects of themselves in line with organization's culture and systems for everyone to co-evolve. This framework arranges new and time-tested frameworks that can support leaders' continual evolution. It includes vertical development frameworks which explain how leaders progressively develop more complex perspectives so as to manage complex and interconnected challenges. It also offers leaders to update their leadership "algorithm" to meet these challenges. Finally, this framework builds a structured approach so as employee can develop independently ways without prescribe process. Instead, you will determine your development plans based on your challenges (8).

Since new ideas generate more new ideas, and these networks generate a cycle of innovation. Additionally, effective networks allow people gain various kinds of knowledge and help them to find out ways of tackling problems so as to cross-fertilize ideas. By focusing on getting the most from innovation networks, leaders can therefore capture more value from existing resources, without launching a large-scale change-management program (9).

Networks should be decentralized so as to improve collaboration and performance (Diagram 1). Consider a case of two geographically different units that undertake the same activities. Higher-performing unit will have a larger leadership group which has open and positive mind-set. It has larger number of connections and more decentralized

information network. Hierarchy is as yet apparent in the higher-performing unit, yet its information and knowledge network is more dispersed, along with it more of the members participate actively. The lower-performing unit is assisted by just one leader. He controls most of the interactions through a negative mind-set and is not open for collaboration, and thereby have far fewer connections. The network design is more centralized (5).

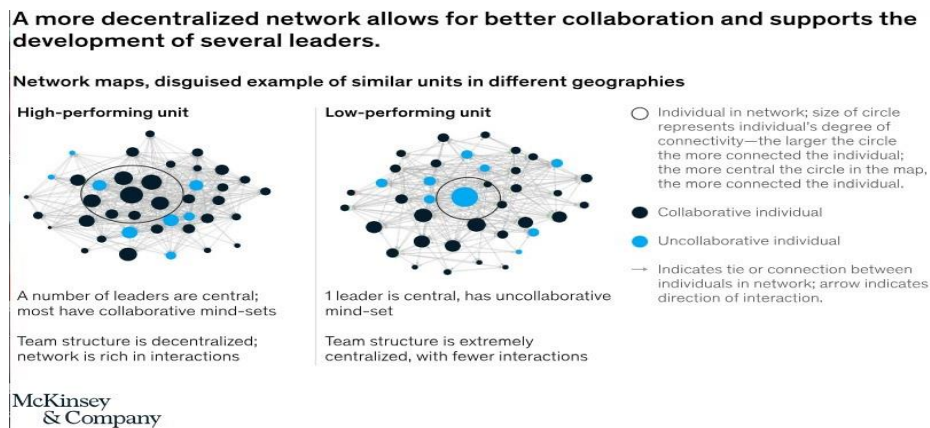


Diagram 1

(6) Six Innovation Leadership Skills Everybody Needs To Master (10)

1. Continuously be in The Opportunity Mode of Thinking
2. Be Adept to continuously attacking Assumptions
3. To develop Empathy for Customers
4. To think Proactively ahead of the Curve
5. To continuously strengthen your Idea Factory
6. To adept at Building The Buy-In

(7) Case study - Innovative Leadership in Action

Elon Musk - Tesla and SpaceX: Elon Musk is eminent for his innovative leadership in both his companies Tesla and SpaceX. He with a clear vision of the future always actively seeks out diverse talent, with calculated risks, and heavily invests in research and development, which resulted into many groundbreaking innovations in various electric vehicles and space exploration.

Mark Zuckerberg - Facebook - Just in his 30s, Mark Zuckerberg believed in hiring employee with passion over skill as he believes that one cannot teach passion. As an ardent innovation leader, Mark Zuckerberg encourages its employees at Facebook to look for and work on ventures they are passionate about instead of their assigned projects. Consequently, this enthusiasm streams down to their inspiration in different parts of their work.

(8) Strengths

Catalyst for Change: Innovation and leadership development mutually reinforce each other by fostering a culture of adaptability and change. Effective leaders encourage innovation, and in turn, innovative practices challenge leaders to evolve and embrace new approaches.

Enhanced Problem-Solving: Innovation often involves solving complex problems. Leadership development equips individuals with the skills to navigate uncertainties, make informed decisions, and lead teams through challenges, creating a synergy that enhances problem-solving capabilities within the organization.

Employee Engagement: A strong leadership development program promotes employee engagement by nurturing leaders who understand the importance of creating a positive work environment. Innovation thrives in a culture where employees are engaged, motivated, and encouraged to contribute their creative ideas.

Risk Management: Innovation inherently involves risk-taking. Effective leadership ensures that risks are managed strategically, minimizing potential negative impacts. Conversely, exposure to innovative practices can cultivate leadership styles that are comfortable with calculated risks.

Competitive Advantage: Organizations that successfully integrate innovation and leadership development often gain a competitive edge. Innovative solutions coupled with effective leadership create a compelling proposition, allowing companies to differentiate themselves in the market.

(8) Limitations

Resistance to Change: The interdependence of innovation and leadership can face resistance from individuals or teams uncomfortable with change. Leaders need to balance the push for innovation with effective change management strategies to overcome this resistance.

Resource Constraints: Both innovation initiatives and leadership development programs require resources, including time and financial investments. Organizations with limited resources may struggle to strike a balance, potentially hindering the successful integration of innovation and leadership development.

Mismatched Priorities: Conflicting priorities may arise when the demands of day-to-day operations compete with the need for long-term innovation and leadership development. Leaders must navigate these challenges to ensure a harmonious integration of both elements.

Overemphasis on Short-Term Results: Pressures for immediate results may lead organizations to prioritize short-term gains over long-term innovation and leadership development. Striking the right balance is crucial to avoid sacrificing future success for immediate wins.

Lack of Alignment: For the interdependence to be effective, there must be alignment between the organization's strategic goals, innovation initiatives, and leadership development efforts. A lack of alignment can lead to disjointed efforts and hinder overall success (11).

(9) Innovation without leadership development in a company

Leadership plays a pivotal role in shaping and nurturing a culture of innovation within an organization. Leaders set the tone for the entire workforce, influencing attitudes, behaviors, and approaches to problem-solving. Without proper leadership development initiatives, there is a risk that the organization may lack the necessary guidance and vision to channel innovation effectively. Leaders need to understand how to foster creativity, encourage risk-taking, and create an environment where employees feel empowered to contribute their ideas. Absence of leadership development in these areas may result in missed opportunities and stagnant progress.

Moreover, leadership development is integral for aligning diverse teams towards a common goal. Innovation often involves collaboration among individuals with varied expertise and perspectives. Leaders must possess the skills to navigate these differences, fostering a collaborative environment where diverse ideas can flourish. Without the proper leadership capabilities, there is a risk of miscommunication, lack of cohesion, and inefficiencies in the innovation process.

A crucial aspect of leadership development is the ability to manage change effectively. In an innovative environment, change is inevitable as new ideas and technologies emerge. Leaders who lack the necessary skills to navigate and guide their teams through transitions may find it challenging to implement and sustain innovative practices. Resistance to change, lack of clear communication, and inadequate strategic planning are common pitfalls that organizations without strong leadership development may face when attempting to innovate (12).

Furthermore, without leadership development, companies may struggle to retain top talent. Talented employees often seek organizations with visionary leaders who inspire and guide them towards professional growth. A lack of leadership development may result in a leadership vacuum, leaving employees feeling directionless and disengaged. This can lead to a higher turnover rate, hindering the continuity of innovation initiatives and causing a loss of institutional knowledge.

In the absence of leadership development, companies might also face difficulties in adapting to external market shifts. Effective leaders possess the foresight to anticipate changes, seize opportunities, and mitigate risks. Without the ability to navigate the complexities of the business landscape, an organization may find itself reactive rather than proactive, putting it at a disadvantage compared to more agile and strategically guided competitors.

In conclusion, while innovation is undoubtedly essential for a company's growth and sustainability, it cannot reach its full potential without simultaneous investment in leadership development.

(10) Leadership development but no innovation culture in a company

In today's ever evolving business landscape, leadership development is the cornerstone for an organizational success. However, the effectiveness of leadership programs can be hindered when there's a lack of an innovation culture within a company. While leadership development focuses on honing managerial skills, fostering an environment that encourages creativity, risk-taking, and innovation is equally crucial.

One key strategy is to incorporate creativity workshops into leadership training sessions. These workshops can help leaders develop a mindset that values innovative thinking. By engaging in activities that stimulate creativity and problem-solving, leaders can enhance their ability to approach challenges with fresh perspectives.

Cross-functional collaboration is another essential element to infuse innovation into leadership development. Many innovation opportunities arise at the intersection of diverse skills and perspectives. Recognition for innovative ideas should be integrated into the leadership development framework. Recognition can be in the form of awards, public commendations, or inclusion in leadership performance evaluations. Creating a culture that values experimentation is crucial for fostering innovation (13).

In conclusion, combining leadership development with an innovation culture is imperative for companies seeking sustained success in today's competitive business environment. By incorporating creativity workshops, promoting cross-functional collaboration, recognizing innovation, fostering a mindset of experimentation, and supporting continuous learning, organizations can cultivate leaders who not only excel in traditional leadership skills but also drive innovation to propel the company forward.

(11) Challenges and Opportunities of Innovation Leadership

Innovation leadership presents several challenges and opportunities for organizations. One main challenge of innovation leadership is handling the resistance to change. Since many employees revolt for change because it disrupts their normal routine and creates uncertainty. Leaders need to address this opposition by imparting the knowledge and communicating the advantages of innovation along with it they need to provide training and support to employees. Another challenge that innovation leaders face as spoken earlier is the lack of resources. Innovation initiatives and processes require resources such as money, time, and expertise. They need to ensure adequate resources for innovative projects to ensure their success (14).

(12) Result

To conquer these challenges, leaders ought to make a culture of development, allocate adequate resources, effectively communicate the benefits of innovation, and lastly encourage failure as a learning opportunity. Thusly, organizations can create a sustainable competitive advantage which will help them to stay ahead of the curve in a quickly changing business environment.

All in all, innovation leadership is crucial and important aspect of an organization in today's fast-paced business environment. By embracing innovation and successfully implementing the recommendations provided, they can create a culture of creativity, research and experimentation that cultivates persistent improvement, thereby leading to long-term success and growth. The interdependence of innovation and leadership development is a powerful force that, when managed effectively, can propel organizations towards sustained success. Recognizing the strengths and addressing the limitations is essential for creating a harmonious and productive relationship between these two critical aspects of organizational development. The synergy between innovation and leadership development is a critical component for long-term success.

(13) Conclusion

In conclusion, the interdependence of innovation and leadership development is a cornerstone of organizational success. Effective leaders create an environment conducive to innovation, fostering a culture that values creativity and continuous improvement (15). Simultaneously, innovation demands visionary leaders who can navigate change, take calculated risks, and align innovative endeavors with the organization's strategic objectives. This symbiotic relationship forms a powerful synergy, propelling organizations to thrive in the ever-evolving landscape of business and technology.

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Ibrahim Bader A. Alharbi

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Ashkan Khalili

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