



ISSN 2233-5382

JIDB website: <http://www.jidb.or.kr>doi:<http://dx.doi.org/10.13106/jidb.2024.vol15.no1.9>

# Innovative Leadership: A Literature Review Paper

Alice MOTSI<sup>1</sup>, Samuel GUMBE<sup>2</sup>, Noel MUZONDO<sup>3</sup>

Received: November 23, 2023. Revised: January 19, 2024. Accepted: January 25, 2024.

## Abstract

**Purpose:** The study aims to develop literature review on innovative leadership in order to study main areas of research and present the status of innovative leadership. The study brings out the importance of innovative leadership given the rate at which the business environment is changing. The development of literature also enhances an understanding of the innovative leadership concept. **Research design, data and methodology:** The study adopted a desktop research methodology. Empirical and theoretical researches and articles which are relevant to innovative leadership are reviewed and analysed. Only secondary information gathered through those articles and researches is used to analyse and build literature review on innovative leadership. **Results:** A literature review of both qualitative and quantitative research on innovative leadership as portrayed in literature propose the new research direction that aims at unravelling the importance of adopting innovative leadership as a leadership style. **Conclusions:** It is evident that innovative leadership is an area which needs more attention especially in contemporary organisations. The service delivery environment is also changing rapidly thereby calling for strategies to match such changes. This paper facilitates improved understanding of innovative leadership, proffering solutions to a number of leadership challenges within various organisations.

**Keywords :** Innovative leadership, Leadership Concept, Style of Leadership, Business Environment

**JEL Classification Code:** D23, C25, O32

## 1. Introduction

Every leader has a leadership character called leadership style (Kumar, 2020). Sudaryono defines leadership style as an embodiment of the behaviour of a leader regarding the ability to lead. The embodiment, according to Sudaryono, usually forms a certain pattern or form. Ahmed et al. (2016), describe that the leadership style is the pattern of behaviour exhibited by someone when trying to influence others. Innovation and leadership strongly resemble each other and leadership has always focused on bringing about a better

future (Koyuncuoglu, 2021). With such a background, therefore, leaders are necessarily innovators (Koyuncuoglu, 2021). To be an innovator or leader demands a certain state or a way of being and relating to the world, a higher level of conscious awareness, especially in the context of change, challenge and uncertainty (Jada et al., 2019; Villaluz & Hechanova, 2019). Innovative leadership concept considers problems as challenges and as result innovative leaders seek problems rather than waiting for problems to occur (Othman & Rahman, 2013). A response to the growing demands of today's managers may be the concept of innovative

1 First and Corresponding Author, Lecturer, Business Enterprise and Management Department, University of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe, Email: [amotsi18@gmail.com](mailto:amotsi18@gmail.com)

2 Second Author, Lecturer, Business Enterprise and Management Department, University of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe, Email: [smgumbe@gmail.com](mailto:smgumbe@gmail.com)

3 Third Author, Lecturer, Business Enterprise and Management Department, University of Zimbabwe, Zimbabwe, Email: [noelmuzondo@gmail.com](mailto:noelmuzondo@gmail.com)

© Copyright: The Author(s)  
This is an Open Access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution Non-Commercial License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>) which permits unrestricted noncommercial use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium, provided the original work is properly cited.

leadership, which comes down to seeking an innovative approach in other adopted leadership concepts, such as transformational leadership, transactional leadership, strategic leadership (Głód, 2018).

## 2. Literature Review

### 2.1. Leadership Concept

Leadership is a complicated concept which is not well understood by people (Sukkar & Diallo, 2021). As Burns (1978), contend the concept of leadership is an area which is not clearly understood. Therefore, it deserves a clear study and explanation (Diallo & Sukkar, 2021). Leadership has been defined in many different ways. Definitions on leadership span over four decades, from the 1980s to the 2020s, and this is an indication that experts keep debating and adding new definitions. This means that the concept has not been fully researched. This is evidenced by Northouse, (2017), who defines leadership as a process by which a person is capable of motivating the followers to attain the objectives and goals that are common and, more recently, by Diallo and Sukkar, (2021). These two authors define leadership as a process by which a person influences others to work willingly to accomplish a desired goal. They add that the concept is generally defined as the art of influencing people so that an organisation can become more effective in achieving its objectives. They also argue that the concept of leadership can be widened to include not only willingness to work but creativity and innovation.

Most definitions of leadership reflect the assumption that leadership involves a process whereby one person exerts intentional influence over other people to guide, structure, and facilitate activities and relationships in a group or organisation (Diallo & Sukkar, 2021). Most conceptions of leadership means that at various times one or more group members can be identified as a leader according to some observable difference between the person(s) and other members, referred to as followers or subordinates (Diallo & Sukkar, 2021). Yeo, (2006), claims that leaders in the workplace play a significant role which propels an organisation as a whole towards success. Leadership has been singled out as a decisive factor in organisations yearning to influence their people in pursuit of a purpose (Steffens et al., 2018). Hristov et al. (2018) emphasize that, the fundamental role of the leader in inspiring collaborators to work, is in order to insure organisational competitiveness in the increasingly disputed market. Thus, Tasara et al. (2021) indicates that good leadership is akin to good branding. A good leader has a reputable brand of leadership.

In leading, it is necessary to know people's motivations and needs, because each of them has different desires,

emotions and reactions (Drzewiecka & Roczniowska, 2018). Griffith et al. (2018), add different motives that can affect the performance and behaviour of subordinates, such as how the leader works, thus, the relationship between the leader and his subordinates is decisive. Therefore, the leaders are the ones who are responsible for the establishment of the environments in which the employees are able to share the knowledge, learn and work in the direction of the achievement of the goals (Griffith et al., 2018). Leadership is seen as a complete capability of the individual to push and motivate the people surrounding him or her in order to contribute voluntarily or willingly for the achievement of the goals (Goetsch et al., 2006). Ismail et al. (2010) claim that the performance of the individual is clearly influenced by the level of trust that exists among the leader and his followers.

Therefore, leadership is regarded as a process by which a person is capable of motivating the followers to attain the objectives and goals that are common (Northouse, 2017). In that regard, good leadership promotes good service delivery (Motsi et al., 2023) Leaders are capable of inspiring their followers by way of encouragement, motivation, and building confidence so that they can achieve the objectives of the organization (DuBrin, 2015). It is accepted extensively that leadership has the ability to affect the vision of an organisation and its direction that also effects the way in which organisational stakeholders concisely deliver the essentials of innovation, that not only aids in the generation of ideas, but also regarded as a mandatory factor for the innovation enhancement and the success of an organisation (Ashraf & Khan, 2013; Gumusluoğlu & Ilsev, 2009; Makudza et al., 2022; Naguib & Naem, 2018). The above arguments clarify that leadership is not connected to any individual person or his or her position in an organisation, seniority or any of the personal attributes. Rather it is the ability of one to inspire other people for the attainment of the goals that are specified (DuBrin, 2015).

### 2.2 Theories of Leadership

There are many theories that have emerged over time on the concept of leadership in the area of management sciences, such as theories of qualities of an effective leader (Kirkpatrick & Locke 1991), behavioural theories of leadership (Blake & Mouton 1978; Tannenbaum & Schmidt 1973), situational leadership theories (Fiedler, 1967), visionary and charismatic theories (Bass & Avolio 1990), theories of power, influence and competence (Dulewicz & Higgs, 2005; Paliszkiwicz, 2019; Müller & Turner, 2005). According to Kumar (2020) these theories can be grouped into eight categories, namely, Great man theory, Trait theory, Behavioural theories, Contingency theory, Situational theories, Functional leadership theory,

Transactional theories also known as Management theories, and Transformational theories also known as Relationship theories. .

### 2.2.1. Great Man Theory

One of the earliest theories of leadership was the great man theory. This theory assumed that the capacity for leadership was inherent; that great leaders are born, not made (Benmira & Agboola, 2021; Ololube et al., 2015). It portrayed great leaders as heroic, mythic and destined to rise to leadership when required (Benmira & Agboola, 2021; Ololube et al., 2015). This theory was made popular in the 19<sup>th</sup> century by Carlyle (1888) who argued that the history of the world is all about the biography of great men. Great men were the leaders of men, the modelers, patterns, and in wide sense creators, of whatsoever the general mass of men contrived to do or to achieve (Kumar, 2020). All things that stand accomplished in the world are properly the outer material result, the practical realisation and embodiment, of thoughts that dwell in the great men sent into the world, and thus the soul of the whole world's history, it may justly be considered, are the history of these great men (Kumar, 2020).

A leader is distinguished from a non-leader by the leadership characteristics portrayed. The great men are natural leaders and they come out as leaders in all conditions (Harrison, 2018). The great man theory is criticised in some ways by many theoreticians (Harrison, 2018; Uslu, 2019; Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991). One of the criticisms, as the name suggests, is that it is gender biased (Uslu, 2019). Another criticism is that the theory does not stress in any way the unity of people in organisations or in businesses (Uslu, 2019). It was also criticised that great man theory had an understanding of leadership separately from environmental factors and assert that leadership attributes were only transferred through genes (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991). The great man theory is also found wanting due to its lack of scientific rigour and reality (Harrison, 2018).

### 2.2.2. Trait Theory

The great man theory gave way to trait theory (Kumar, 2020). Criticisms addressed to the great men theory have led to the emergence of trait theory that claims leadership is not only inborn, but a combination of both inborn and acquired characteristics (Kumar, 2020). In this respect, the trait theory is contemplated as a refinement of the great men theory (Kirkpatrick & Locke, 1991). Like the great man theory, this theory assumed that people inherit certain qualities and traits that make them better suited to leadership (Kumar, 2020). Trait theory tried to make certain personality or behavioural features common amongst leaders (Kumar, 2020). Galton (1869) found that leadership was a unique feature of extraordinary individuals, and the

traits leaders possessed were fixed and could not be developed. Throughout early 1900s, the study of leadership concentrated on traits although a dilemma perplexed the proponents of this theory (Kumar, 2020). If particular traits are key features of leadership, then how can people who have those qualities but are not leaders be explained (Kumar, 2020). Furthermore, each leader brought in additional traits thereby making the list endless. Many of the times, the traits were contradicting each other as well (Kumar, 2020). The trait approach assumes that certain physical, social, and personal characteristics are common in leaders (Novikova, 2013). Though much research was done to identify the traits, no clear answer was found with regard to the traits which were consistently linked to great leadership (Novikova, 2013). One weakness with this line of thought was in ignoring the situational and environmental factors that play a role in a leader's level of effectiveness (Novikova, 2013). Furthermore, trait theory posits key traits for successful leadership such as drive, desire to lead, integrity, self-confidence, intelligence, and job-relevant knowledge, yet does not make a judgment as to whether these traits are common to individuals or whether they can be developed through training and education (Kumar, 2020). No two leaders are the same, and no leader possesses all of the leadership traits (Kumar, 2020).

The trait theory has received similar criticism as the great man theory (Uslu, 2019). First, it is emphasised that the assumptions of the theory are speculative, and the theory lacks empirical tests and research (Harrison, 2018). For instance, the theory does clearly describe a leader. On the other hand, as in the great men theory, the trait theory is also criticised for having a narrow perspective (Uslu, 2019). Only leadership characteristics have been put forward in theory, but environmental factors such as the group values affecting the leadership and the structure of the tasks have not been taken into account (Uslu, 2019). However, leadership is not a superficial phenomenon that can only be explained by characteristics. In addition to the lack of empirical tests and research, there is also inconsistency between the characteristics set forth in the limited studies in trait theory (Uslu, 2019). For instance, some studies focus on physical characteristics in explaining leadership, while others focus on internal characteristics such as personality. In addition, the factors that have been associated with successful leaders in some studies proved otherwise in other studies (Kumar, 2020). This indicates that the studies are not consistent in terms of their findings (Uslu, 2019). Furthermore, the theory is not clear on how characteristics of leadership are to be measured (Harrison, 2018). Intelligence is a leadership trait, for instance, but the theory does not provide enough explanations about the degree of intelligence that is required to be a leader (Uslu, 2019). In general, it is possible to summarise the biggest criticisms of

the trait theory as ignoring the environmental conditions and factors and the inconsistent findings in studies (Harrison, 2018).

### 2.2.3. Behavioral theories

Behavioral theories were the next phase of leadership theories. This leadership theory's focus was on the actions of leaders not on mental qualities or internal states (Benmira & Agboola, 2021). According to this theory, people can learn to become leaders through teaching and observation (Benmira & Agboola, 2021). The leader's behaviours came to be called leadership styles (Kumar, 2020). Lewin et al. (1939) studied the influence of leadership styles on performance. They identified three styles, namely: authoritarian, democratic, and laissez-faire, which impacted group decision making, praise and criticism, that is, giving feedback, and the management of the group tasks, which is, project management. In 1945, a group of researchers at the Ohio State University identified observable behaviours of leaders, and argued that it is not the personality traits that make a leader. They came up with two factors that accounted for most of the variance in leader behaviour (Kumar, 2020). These two factors were labeled, consideration, which is the extent to which a leader displays concern for the welfare of the members of the group, and initiating structure, which is the extent to which a leader defines leader and group member roles, initiates actions, organises group activities and defines how tasks are to be achieved by the group (Kumar, 2020). Behavioural theorists identified determinants of leadership so that people could be trained to be leaders (Harrison, 2018).

While great man theory and trait theory focus on physical, psychological or personality traits, behavioural theory pays attention to leader's behaviours in order to explain effective leaders (Uslu, 2019). Researchers developed personality tests and compared the results against those perceived to be leaders (Harrison, 2018). By the 1940s, researchers had amassed very long lists of traits from numerous psychologically oriented studies (Harrison, 2018). This tactic had two problems: First, the lists became longer and longer as research continued; Second, the traits and characteristics identified were not powerful predictors across situations (Harrison, 2018). The biggest criticism of behavioural theory is that it does not consider situational factors in explaining leadership (Harrison, 2018).

### 2.2.4. Contingency Theory

The basic assumption of the contingency theory is that in any case, under all circumstances, there is no leadership style which is the best (Uslu, 2019). Different situations and circumstances demand different leadership styles (Uslu, 2019). Because of ignoring environmental factors in explaining what effective leadership is; criticisms addressed

to great man, trait and behavioural theories have provided the basis for the emergence of contingency theory (Uslu, 2019). In the emergence of contingency leadership theory factors such as lack of emphasis on conditions and environment affecting leadership insufficiency of universal leadership theories and the view that leadership cannot be explained by purely traits and behaviours have been effective (Harrison, 2018). According to contingency leadership theory, the person may be an effective leader in certain conditions or environments, but the same person may not be the leader in different conditions or environments. Similarly, a leadership style that has been effective in the past may not be effective today (Uslu, 2019). Contingency theory states that effective leadership depends on the degree of fit between a leader's qualities and leadership style that is demanded by a specific situation (Kumar, 2020). Contingency theory of leadership focused on particular variables related to the environment that might determine which particular style of leadership is best suited for the situation (Kumar, 2020).

According to the contingency theory, there is no leadership style which is best in all situations (Kumar, 2020; Benmira & Agboola, 2021). Success is determined by a number of variables, including the leadership style, qualities of the followers and the situation at hand. Among the first proponents of contingency theory were Tannenbaum & Schmidt, (1957), who developed a leadership continuum with relationship orientation characterised by high employee freedom on one extreme and task oriented behaviour characterised by high use of leader authority at the other extreme (Kumar, 2020; Benmira & Agboola, 2021). According to this model, as a leader became more relationship oriented, he became fewer tasks oriented (Kumar, 2020; Benmira & Agboola, 2021). A more detailed and more researched contingency model was developed by Fiedler in 1964. This model recognised that the style of leadership that was most effective depended upon the context in which the style was applied. Leadership behaviour was modeled as a continuum between which was either task oriented or relationship oriented (Kumar, 2020; Benmira & Agboola, 2021). The basic assumption of contingency leadership theory has been criticised (Uslu, 2019). The basis of this criticism rests on the fact that the new styles do not reveal anything different from the old leadership styles (Uslu, 2019).

### 2.2.5. Situational Leadership Theories

Hersey and Blanchard, (1969), presented situational leadership theories and the assumption was that leaders choose the best course of action based upon situational variables. Different styles of leadership might be more appropriate for certain types of decision making. The fundamental argument of the situational leadership theory

was that there is no single style of leadership which is the best (Benmira & Agboola, 2021). It was later recognised that the environment plays a critical role in the leader-follower dynamics and this belief dominated the situational era (Benmira & Agboola, 2021). As the theory's name suggests, the situational era is focused on leadership in particular situations, rather than on the traits or behaviours of leaders (Benmira & Agboola, 2021). This implies that leaders must be able to examine the context in which they operate and then decide on which style to adopt for the particular situation (Thompson & Glasø, 2015). Effective leadership depended on the task and that the most successful leaders were those that adapted their leadership style to the situations (Benmira & Agboola, 2021).

### 2.2.6. Functional Leadership Theory

Functional leadership theory addresses how specific leader behaviours contribute to organisational or unit effectiveness (Kumar, 2020). McGrath (1962), its proponent, suggested that the leadership role is ensuring that whatever is not being adequately handled for group needs is done. This theory argues that the leader's main job was to see that whatever is necessary to group needs is taken care of; thus, a leader can be said to have done their job well when they have contributed to group effectiveness and cohesion (Kumar, 2020). One of the functional theories of leadership, used in many leadership training programmes, is the Action-Centered Leadership theory (Kumar, 2020).

### 2.2.7. Transactional Leadership Theories

Transactional theories, also known as management theories focused on the role of supervision, organisation and group performance (Kumar, 2020). These theories proposed that leadership involved using a system of rewards and punishments (Kumar, 2020). The main proponent of this theory was from the study of Burns (1978). Transactional leadership theory gave the opportunity to the manager to lead the group and the group agreed to follow his lead to accomplish a predetermined goal in exchange for something else. The leader had the responsibility to evaluate, correct, and train subordinates when productivity was not up to the expected level, and reward effectiveness when expected outcome was achieved (Kumar, 2020).

### 2.2.8. Transformational Leadership Theories

Transformational theories, also known as relationship theories, focused upon the connections formed between leaders and followers (Kumar, 2020). Transformational leaders inspired people by helping group members see the importance and higher good of the task. These leaders were focused on the performance of group members, but also wanted each person to fulfill his or her potential. Leaders with this style often have high ethical and moral standards

(Kumar, 2020). Theoretical and empirical studies have found that transformational leaders are more capable in supporting values and norms of followers and promote organisational and personal changes (Jung et al., 2003). Transformational leaders are able to support organisational innovation by enhancing the motivation and ability of organisational members to be creative and innovative (Jung et al., 2003).

## 2.3. Innovative Leadership Concept or Theory

Gliddon, (2006) defined the concept of innovative leadership as a philosophy and approach that blend different leadership styles to cause employees to produce creative ideas, products, and services. Transformational leadership is a type of leadership which is participatory in nature. Thus, a transformational leader, characterised as participative, flexible, versatile, close to the team, renewing vision and strategies, is necessary to achieve goals and survive in the competitive environment (Juhro & Aulia, 2018; Juhro & Aulia, 2019; Juhro et al., 2020). Innovative leaders are also committed and visionary in promoting people's social, political, and economic well-being (Anand & Saraswati, 2014). With new processes and technologies, it is important for the organisation to innovatively think to ensure it stays competitive and successful (Horth & Buchner, 2014). For an organisation to effectively conform to new changes, leaders play a significant role in shaping the success and nature of inventive efforts (Horth & Buchner, 2014).

Organizations that lack innovative leadership are more feasible to struggle (Horth & Buchner, 2014). Abbas and Asghar (2010) state that globalization has transformed the universe into a comprehensive small village. Organisations in this globalised village engage in high competition and high contentions streams and as a result, an organisation's most beneficial and effective action is to generate innovative business methods (Abbas & Asghar, 2010). Abbas and Asghar's (2010) research findings indicate that leadership plays a vital role in facilitating innovations and bringing change to an organisation. Leaders are change agents who can bring or initiate these changes within an organisation (Senior & Fleming, 2006). Innovation is crucial for the competitiveness of any organisation and with the rapid evolution of the technological environment, it is essential to adopt innovative leadership in order to achieve organisational success (Juhro et al., 2020). Today, organisations that adapt to change need leaders who are innovative and researchers stress that leadership can enhance innovation within organisations, as well as highlight characteristics that can be created or improved by leaders to develop an innovative environment (Khalili, 2016; Juhro & Aulia, 2018; Hughes et al., 2018; Melo & Silva, 2019; Zuraik & Kelly, 2019; Juhro et al., 2020).

However, Mumford and Licuanan, (2004) profound that the need for innovation in organisations has resulted in a new focus on the role of leaders in shaping the nature and success of creative efforts. Therefore, the success of organisations requires innovation at every stage of organisation evolution. Innovation began to be an area of great interest since the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The term attracts much attention in various disciplines like science, sociology, engineering, economics, and business (Dunga et al., 2020). In the public sector too, a distinction can be made between innovations that concern products and services (Torfing, 2016), and those that affect processes and organisations (de Vries et al., 2016). Additionally, innovations in the public sector can relate to the governance and policymaking (Dunga et al., 2020). There is a difference in the behaviour of innovative leadership as compared to traditional leadership behaviour (Alsolami et al., 2016). But still, it is said that the role of innovative leadership is not fully understood and therefore requires a further examination (Alharbi, 2021). Research findings suggest that the behaviours of innovative leaders are different from those of other leadership behaviours that have been seen to be enough in conventional leadership development initiatives (Hamel & Labarre, 2011; Teece, 2009).

Hence, it is suggested that there is a research gap and absence of empirical studies that identify successful innovative leaders (Amanchukwu et al., 2015). Innovative scholars generally agree that leadership is a key determinant of innovation success, yet it remains unclear whether leader behaviours geared to drive innovation also contribute to efficiency (Lukoschek et al., 2018). However, even though innovation has been explored in multiple disciplines, the concept remains poorly understood (Alharbi, 2021). Innovation is crucial for any organisation booming in the current 21st-century era (Elkington & Booysen, 2015). The globalised era suggests the necessity of a new kind of leadership, which is different from that which flourished in controlled environments (Solow & Szmerekovsky, 2006).

### 3. Methods

In this study, empirical and theoretical researches and articles which are relevant to innovative leadership are reviewed and analysed. Therefore only secondary information gathered through those articles and researches is used to analyse and build literature review on innovative leadership. Through an analysis of previous results, it is easier to outline most of the solved issues on innovative leadership and identify areas of future research. There is a need for an understanding of the leadership concept first before exploring literature on innovative leadership.

### 4. Results

Several studies were carried out globally on innovative leadership giving an overview of the general state of innovative leadership globally. The development of literature also enhances an understanding of the innovative leadership concept. As a result, the study can propose the new research direction that aims at unravelling the importance of adopting innovative leadership as a style.

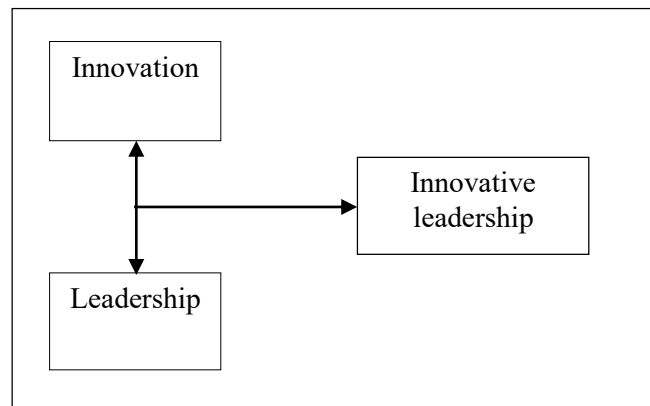


Figure 1: Innovative leadership concept

Innovative leadership refers to introducing a new method, product, service, technique, or an idea to satisfy individuals' needs and find suitable solutions to current and future problems (Kozioł-nadolna, 2020). Innovation leadership thus refers to a technique and philosophy, which combines various leadership styles to influence and motivate employees to generate products, services, and creative ideas (Kozioł-nadolna, 2020). According to Kozioł-nadolna (2020), innovative leadership is a relatively new category of leadership approaches. Not every leader influences the innovativeness of an organisation in the same way, and leadership itself evolves and can be more or less innovative (Kozioł-nadolna, 2020).

The fundamental role in the innovation leadership practice lies in the innovative leader (Muparangi & Makudza, 2020). Approaching organisational development, innovative leadership is believed to promote the attainment of the vision and mission of a group or organization (Sen & Eren, 2012). Innovative leaders possess a number of similar qualities. They have leadership skills, talents, values, and knowledge to identify any current dangers and foresee future negative impacts (Sen & Eren, 2012). Changing markets, rapid advancements in technology and increased customers' expectations have coerced organisations into reevaluating and reassessing how they operate to implement, adopt and understand their business changing model (Abbas & Asghar, 2010). The research findings indicate that 70% of organisations fail to attain their goals

(Abbas & Asghar, 2010). Bad leadership gets linked to that failure since it plays a central role in cultivating and evaluating an organisation (Alharbi, 2021).

In the current century, knowledge is viewed as a powerful tool that facilitates success and it is a critical factor for the practices of innovative leadership (Alharbi, 2021). An innovative leader needs to be aware of and understand their people's problems and formulate new means and ways of solving the problems (Alharbi, 2021). A leader needs to know the methods, rules, processes, principles, and technologies within their organisation for them to be able to determine the how what, and why in solving a given problem (Diallo & Sukkar, 2021). Successful innovative leaders must possess both the values and explicit knowledge (Alharbi, 2021). Values knowledge means knowing the social ideas, beliefs, intuitions, values, and imaginations (Abdullrazak & Alyamani, 2019). At the same time, explicit knowledge refers to technical knowledge. Secondly, an innovative leader needs to possess various values, skills, and talents. Values offer means, beliefs, and reasons for establishing an organisation's vision (Makudza, Muchongwe & Dangaiso, 2020). It also motivates and guides leaders for successful vision achievement (Diallo & Sukkar, 2021). Each leadership action and decision ends and begins with values. In addition, values significantly impact the leader-members relationship and aid leaders in establishing a close relationship and open communication environment (Diallo & Sukkar, 2021). Some values that successful innovative leaders possess include courage, trust, honesty, integrity, equality, morality, and human rights. Skills are established when a leader has knowledge of the organisation (Alharbi, 2021).

When leaders are experts, the quality of the product is high (Dangaiso et al., 2023). The risk of doing one thing continuously is minimised, and the time taken to perform a given task is also shortened, implying talents are critical for fruitful innovation (Diallo and Sukkar, 2021). Talents like being visionary and brilliant enable a leader to achieve and choose suitable activities making these qualities allow innovative leaders to be ahead of time and their competitors (Diallo and Sukkar, 2021). Talents also offer various competitive advantages, such as analysing, thinking, understanding the present, and seeing the future and because of that an innovative leader can implement and develop better strategies (Alharbi, 2021). Innovative leaders possess a strong will to be great leaders, thus go to the extent of risking their lives just to possess and maintain it (Davis, 2019). According to Hill et al. (2014), there is a requirement of leaders to discard the traditional leadership styles in order to establish organisations that are able to continue the innovation and construct creative teams. This kind of a leader should possess the determination that drives him or her to become an innovative leader. Consequently, it is

believed that innovative leaders are capable of achieving all the targets they wish to achieve (Hill et al., 2014).

Today's fast-changing business environment challenges organisations to become dynamic and innovative to ensure their organizational survival (Slåtten & Mehmetoglu, 2015). To gain sustainability and stay competitive, organisations are required to focus on creativity and innovation (Slåtten & Mehmetoglu, 2015). It is important for organisations to be creative and innovative so that they may gain efficiency and success (Makudza et al., 2023). In fact, creativity and innovation can be used as important tools to fuel corporate growth (Baker et al., 2016). In this regard, a growing body of research has acknowledged enablers which facilitate and amplify creativity and innovation (Baker et al., 2016). To be more specific, previous studies have documented many predictors to creativity and innovative behaviour at the individual level and of these, leadership behaviour appears to show one of the most influential constructs (Jyoti & Dev, 2015; Nusair et al., 2012; Shin & Zhou, 2003). Baraldi et al., (2017) stated that innovation is related to how the organisation is managed and to the management of external and internal elements necessary for it to take place. Thus, some researchers emphasise that leadership can enhance innovation within organisations (Hughes et al., 2018; Melo & Silva, 2019; Juhro et al., 2020). Innovation is the heart of any organisation to stay competitive and given the rapid evolution of technologies and processes, it is crucial to lead innovatively to ensure success (Diallo & Sukkar, 2021).

People create and introduce innovations, and their attitude towards innovations is the most important (Alharbi, 2021). The leader plays a crucial role in shaping innovative attitudes in the company (Diallo & Sukkar, 2021). Leaders should be open to new ideas and initiatives of employees and they should support. (Diallo & Sukkar, 2021) They ought to trust their employees by creating a favourable working atmosphere based on teamwork, loyalty and trust (Makudza et al., 2022). Employees must be aware of their real impact on innovation processes within the company (Diallo & Sukkar, 2021). The more managers themselves comprehend the essence and nature of innovation, the easier it is to prepare and convince employees to do so (Diallo & Sukkar, 2021). Therefore, identifying leadership behaviour towards creativity and innovation is an important effort from both theoretical and practical point of views (Alharbi, 2021). The fundamental role of innovative leadership practice augments service quality and the ability of all employees to offer a service with a smile (Makudza, 2022). Approaching organisational development, innovative leadership is believed to promote the attainment of the vision and mission of a group or organisation. Innovative leaders possess various like-qualities (Alharbi, 2021). They have leadership skills, talents, values, and knowledge to identify any current dangers and foresee future negative impacts (Alharbi, 2021).

Innovative leaders are also committed and visionary to promoting people's social, political, and economic well-being (Khalili, 2017). With new processes and technologies, it is vital for the organisation to adopt innovative behaviour to ensure it stays competitive and succeeds (Khalili, 2017). For an organisation to effectively adapt to new changes, leaders play a significant role in shaping the success and nature of inventive efforts (Alharbi, 2021). Organisations that lack innovative leadership are more likely to struggle, therefore effective leadership is critical for the capability of an organisation to be creative and innovative (Alharbi, 2021). Researchers suggest that employees' creativity and innovative behaviour are shaped by their interaction with others in the organisation (Kozioł-Nadolna, 2020). Many organisations seek ways to stimulate and encourage staff innovation, one of which is leadership that can boost staff innovation behaviour (Kozioł-Nadolna, 2020). In this regard, literature suggests that leaders can have a vital influence on the creativity and innovative behaviour of employees in different ways, for instance, by articulating vision, providing feedback, explaining tasks and roles, motivating and encouraging (Kozioł-Nadolna, 2020). In general, leaders have a powerful influence on employees' work behaviours (Alharbi, 2021). Employees must be aware of their real impact on innovation processes within the organisation (Alharbi, 2021). The more managers themselves comprehend the essence and nature of innovation; the easier it is to prepare and convince employees to follow suit (Alharbi, 2021). Creative and innovative behaviours are not an exception. These behaviours, while impacted by knowledge, skills and capacities are also discussed to be greatly affected by inspirational leadership which makes them of interest to leadership researchers (Alharbi, 2021).

The response to the growing demands of today's managers may be the concept of innovative leadership, which comes down to seeking an innovative approach in other traditional leadership concepts, such as transformational leadership, transactional leadership, strategic leadership (Głód, 2018). According to Alharbi (2021), transactional leadership does not inspire internal motivation in employees to innovate, as opposed to transformational leadership, which stimulates employees to generate and implement innovations. Transformational leaders benefit from the inspirational motivation and intellectual stimulation, which are critical factors for innovation (Alharbi, 2021). Zuraik and Kelly (2019) argue that transformational leadership is significantly and positively linked to organisational innovation. In addition, its impact on the organisation's readiness to innovate and on the market success of innovations was confirmed (Alharbi, 2021). The sub factor of contingent reward correlates positively with innovative behaviour (Chang et al., 2015).

Furthermore, literature argues that innovative leaders influence innovation and an organisation's innovativeness largely depends on its employees (Lesáková et al., 2017; Bulinska-Stangrecka, 2018). Employee innovativeness is understood, by analogy to an organisation's innovativeness, as the ability, inclination and desire to create and implement new solutions (Lesáková et al., 2017; Bulinska-Stangrecka, 2018). It is revealed through innovative behaviours perceived as deliberate creation, popularisation and implementation of employees' new ideas in the workplace, in the organisation (Kozioł-Nadolna, 2020). Innovative employees generate new ideas, but also find solutions to current problems, contributing to the development of an organisation (Kozioł-Nadolna, 2020).

Innovative leadership is vital in today's market (Kozioł-Nadolna, 2020). Organisations need thus to adopt new methods and ways of doing business so as to remain competitive. Below are five steps which leaders can follow to become innovative. Firstly, there is need for leaders to put away the best practice notion (Fragouli & Korres, 2017). Best practices in this context refer to things done by others, and results were positive. Innovative leaders should not be the type of people who cling to a particular method of doing things but should encourage their employees to experiment and take risks. Whenever a problem arises, an innovative leader should be a creative and critical thinker to develop new ways and solve a given problem. The second step is fast decision-making (Fragouli & Korres, 2017). Decisions made by an innovative leader are prompt. The other step is allowing members to run some initiatives or solve problems (Fragouli & Korres, 2017). An innovative leader is a person who knows when to be involved in problem solving or in an initiative and when to let their subordinates deal with it. By doing so, the innovative skills of the members are invoked. Being able to tolerate failure is the fourth step (Chutivongse & Gerdri, 2015).

It is difficult to quantify and measure innovation, especially if it is short-term and since innovation involves risk-taking, leaders opt to accept failures in few instances though it should not be the norm (Gosh, 2015). An innovative leader should coach and train their team members on how to keep off from fear of failure. Failures should only be used as lessons and use their strengths, not weaknesses, to attain future goals (Gosh, 2015). The last step consists of recognising and rewarding (Chutivongse & Gerdri, 2015). To create an innovative workforce, they must appreciate innovative ideas raised by the members through rewarding them. When employees feel recognised whenever they perform a task or present ideas, they are motivated and job satisfaction is achieved. Their job morale is boosted, and they are motivated to think broadly, thus generating more ideas that are vital in business (Chutivongse & Gerdri, 2015).



**Table 1:** Key Attributes of an Innovative Leader

Innovative Leader Attributes
Commitment
Visionary
Creative
Innovative
Dynamic
Critical thinker
Initiative

## 5. Conclusion

Innovative leadership is a style of leadership which is relatively new in business management as compared to conventional leadership styles. This paper discussed the importance of innovative leadership given the rate at which the business environment is changing. Innovative leadership as a concept is broad having various definitions from a number of authors. To gain a fair understanding of innovative leadership, there is need to first understand the leadership concept and the innovative concept. The paper provides a comprehensive review of both qualitative and quantitative research on innovative leadership as portrayed in literature offering more insight on the concept thereby developing and facilitating improved understanding of innovative leadership and as a result proffering solutions to a number of leadership challenges within contemporary organisations.

## References

- Ahmed, A.H. (2014). Strategic Decision Making: Process, Models, and Theories, *Business Management and Strategy*, 5(1), 78.
- Ahmed, H., and Abd Elhamed, S. (2021). Future Foresight: Effect of VUCA leadership Educational Program on Nurse Manager's Readiness for Change. *Assiut Scientific Nursing Journal*, 9(27), 11–20.
- Alam, K., & Robb, W. (2009). Issues of economic efficiency of human service delivery in Australia. *International Review of Business Research Papers*, 5(2), 52–61.
- Alemán, R., Gutiérrez-Sánchez, R., and Liébana-Cabanillas, F. (2018) 'Determinant Factors of Satisfaction with Public Services in Spain', *Australian Journal of Public Administration*, 77(1), 102–113.
- Alharbi, I.B.A. (2021) 'Innovative Leadership: A Literature Review Paper', *Open Journal of Leadership*, 10(03), 214–229.
- Alhawamdeh, H.M., and Alsmairat, M.A.K. (2019) 'Strategic Decision Making and Organization Performance: a Literature Review', *International Review of Management and Marketing*, 9(4), 95–99.
- Ali, B.J. et al. (2021) 'Hotel Service Quality: The Impact of Service Quality on Customer Satisfaction in Hospitality', *International Journal of Engineering, Business and Management*, 5(3), 14–28.
- Alsolami, H.A., Guan Cheng, K.T., and M. Ibn Twalh, A.A. (2016) 'Revisiting Innovation Leadership', *Open Journal of Leadership*, 05(02), 31–38.
- Anand, P., and Saraswati, A.K. (2014) 'Innovative Leadership: A Paradigm in Modern HR Practices', *Global Journal of Finance and Management*, 6(6), 497–502.
- Antonenko, P.D. (2015) 'The instrumental value of conceptual frameworks in educational technology research', *Educational Technology Research and Development*, 63(1), 53–71.
- Avis, W.R. (2016) 'Urban governance (Topic Guide)', Gsdrc, (November), pp. 1–57.
- Avolio, B.J., Bass, B.M., and Jung, D.I. (1999) 'Re-examining the components of transformational and transactional leadership using the multifactor leadership questionnaire', *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 72(4), 441–462.
- Bass, B.M., and Avolio, B.J. (1990) 'Developing Transformational Leadership: 1992 and Beyond', *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 14(5), 21–27.
- Dangaiso, P., Makudza, F., Jaravaza, D. C., Kusvabadika, J., Makiwa, N., & Gwatinyanya, C. (2023). Evaluating the impact of quality antecedents on university students' e-learning continuance intentions: A post-COVID-19 perspective. *Cogent Education*, 10(1), 2222654.
- Davis, M. (2019) 'Innovative leadership', *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies* [Preprint].
- Drzewiecka, M., and Roczniowska, M. (2018) 'The relationship between perceived leadership styles and organisational constraints: An empirical study in Goleman's typology', *Revue Europeenne de Psychologie Appliquee*, 68(4–5), 161–169.
- Dulewicz, V., and Higgs, M. (2005) 'Assessing leadership styles and organisational context', *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 20(2), 105–123.
- Fiedler, F.E. (2016). The Effects of Leadership Training and Experience: A Contingency Model Interpretation. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 17(4), 453–470.
- Gliddon, D. G. (2006). *Forecasting a competency model for innovation leaders using a modified Delphi technique*. The Pennsylvania State University.
- Glod, W. (2018) 'Transformational leadership style in the relationship between innovation and efficiency of healthcare units in Poland', *Oeconomia Copernicana*, 9(4), 731–753.
- Griffith, J.A. et al. (2018) 'Are You Thinking What I'm Thinking?: The Influence of Leader Style, Distance, and Leader-Follower Mental Model Congruence on Creative Performance', *Journal of Leadership and Organizational Studies*, 25(2), 153–170.
- Grönroos, C. (1984) '852901.Pdf', *European Journal of Marketing*, 18(4), 36–44.
- Hristov, D., Scott, N., and Minocha, S. (2018) 'Distributed leadership typologies in destination management organisations', *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 28(July), pp. 126–143.
- Hughes, D.J. et al. (2018) 'Leadership, creativity, and innovation: A critical review and practical recommendations', *Leadership Quarterly*, 29(5), 549–569.
- Juhro, S.M. et al. (2021) 'The Role of Catalytic Collaboration in Leveraging Transformational Leadership Competencies to Generate Sustainable Innovation', *SSRN Electronic Journal*, 9, 48–66.
- Khalili, A. (2017) 'Creative and innovative leadership: measurement development and validation', *Management*

- Research Review*, 40(10), 1117–1138.
- Kirkpatrick, S.A., and Locke, E.A. (1991) 'Leadership: do traits matter?', *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 5(2), 48–60.
- Koyuncuoglu, D. (2021) 'An investigation of potential leadership and innovation skills of university students', *International Journal of Education in Mathematics, Science and Technology*, 9(1), pp. 103–115.
- Kozioł-nadolna, K. (2020) 'administrative sciences The Role of a Leader in Stimulating Innovation in an Organization', *Administrative Sciences*, 10(59), 1–18.
- Lesáková, L. et al. (2017) 'Innovation Leaders, Modest Innovators and Non-innovative SMEs in Slovakia: Key Factors and Barriers of Innovation Activity', *Organizacija*, 50(4), 325–338.
- Makudza, F. (2022). Service with a Smile: The Differential Effects of Emotional Labor on Boundary Spanners in the Banking Industry. *Services Marketing Quarterly*, 44(1), 1-15
- Makudza, F., Jaravaza, D.C., Govha, T., Mukucha, P., & Saruchera, F. (2023). Enhancing supply chain agility through e-procurement in a volatile frontier market. *Journal of Transport and Supply Chain Management* 17(1), 1-12.
- Makudza, F., Mandongwe, L., & Muridzi, G. (2022). Towards sustainability of single-owner entities: An examination of financial factors that influence growth of sole proprietorship. *Journal of Industrial Distribution & Business*, 13(5), 15-26.
- Makudza, F., Muchongwe, N., & Dangaiso, P. (2020). Workforce diversity: A springboard for employee productivity and customer experience. *Journal of Industrial Distribution & Business*, 11(10), 49-58.
- Makudza, F., Sandada, M., & Madzikanda, D. D. (2022). Modelling social commerce buying behaviour: an adaption of the sequential consumer decision making model. *Management Research and Practice*, 14(1), 17-29.
- Melo, R.C., Silva, M.J., and Parreira, P. (2014) 'Effective Leadership: Competing Values Framework', *Procedia Technology*, 16(January), 921–928.
- Motsi, A., Gumbe, S., Muzondo, N., & Makudza, F. (2023). Service delivery in urban local authorities: A literature review paper. *Journal of Industrial Distribution and Business*, 14(10), 23-33.
- Muparangi, S., Makudza, F. (2020). Innovation: The driving force for entrepreneurial performance among small, informal businesses. *Sustainable Business and Society in Emerging Economies*, 2(2), 1-11.
- Ololube, N. et al. (2015) 'A Review of Leadership Theories, Principles and Styles and Their Relevance to Educational Management Exploring the Relationship Between Personality and Preferred Leadership A Review of Leadership Theories, Principles and Styles and Their Relevance to ', *Management*, 2015(1), 6–14.
- Paliszkiwicz, J. (2019b) 'Information Security Policy Compliance: Leadership and Trust', *Journal of Computer Information Systems*, 59, 1–7.
- Slåtten, T., and Mehmetoglu, M. (2015) 'The Effects of Transformational Leadership and Perceived Creativity on Innovation Behavior in the Hospitality Industry', *Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality and Tourism*, 14(2), 195–219.
- Somsueb, A., Sutheejariyawatana, P., and Suwannoi, P. (2019) 'Indicators of Innovative Leadership for Secondary School Principals: Developing and Testing the Structural Relationship Model', *International Education Studies*, 12(2), 11.
- Sundaram, A.K., and Inkpen, A.C. (2004) 'Stakeholder theory and "The corporate objective revisited": A reply', *Organization Science*, 15(3), 3–5.
- Tasara, G., Makudza, F., Ndlovu, G. N., Masengu, R. (2021). Nation branding: Twenty-first century branding dynamics impacting emerging economies in the global marketplace. *Skyline Business Journal*, 17(2), 44-60.
- Torring, J. (2016) *Collaborative Innovation in the Public Sector*. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.1353/book48834>.
- van Antwerpen, S., and Ferreira, E. (2016) 'Contributing factors to poor service delivery by administrative employees in the gauteng public service in South Africa', *Africa Development*, 41(1), 81–98.
- van der Voet, J., and Steijn, B. (2021) 'Team innovation through collaboration: how visionary leadership spurs innovation via team cohesion', *Public Management Review*, 23(9), 1275–1294.
- Villaluz, V. C., & Hechanova, M. R. M. (2019). Ownership and leadership in building an innovation culture. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 40(2), 138-150.
- Yukl, G. et al. (2019) 'Effectiveness of broad and specific leadership behaviors', *Personnel Review*, 48(3), 774–783.
- Zuraik, A., & Kelly, L. (2018). The role of CEO transformational leadership and innovation climate in exploration and exploitation. *European journal of innovation management*, 22(1), 84-104.