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Decoding Education Innovativeness: Visionary Leadership through the Lens of Creative Self-Efficacy and Psychological Empowerment

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate how visionary leadership impacts employees' work innovation performance among university teachers in Lahore, Pakistan, in support of the social cognitive theory. In addition, it will examine whether psychological empowerment serves as a mediator of the relationship between visionary leadership and employees' innovative work performance. Furthermore, creative self-efficacy serves as a moderator between psychological empowerment and innovative work performance. The methodology adopted for this research was a quantitative, cross-sectional survey design, using standardized, closed-ended questionnaires administered to university teaching staff in Pakistan. The study used SPSS Software for analysis, and responses from 372 participants were included in the final analysis. The results show that visionary leadership has a direct and positive relationship with innovative work performance. However, the results suggest that psychological empowerment partially mediates the relationship between visionary leadership and innovative work performance. Furthermore, creative self-efficacy positively moderates psychological empowerment and innovative work performance. In addition, this research is helpful to policymakers, owners, managers, and the education sector.

1. Introduction

Organizational innovation performance is the most important driver of sustaining long-term competitive advantage and organizational sustainability. With the rapid development of new technologies, companies need to establish a data-driven organizational structure and facilitate digital cultural communication to support their innovative capacity and overall sustainable

performance (Chaudhuri et al., 2024). Organizations also desire creative performance through the competencies of both their leaders and employees. A comprehensive innovation management strategy in today's corporate world is a combined approach to leadership, organizational culture, and change management that creates an environment that supports innovation, efficient change management, and a commitment to sustainability (Orieno et al., 2024). It will allow organizations to remain successful and competitive in a rapidly changing commercial environment. A manager with the ability to effectively manage their team and clearly define a vision for future growth of an organization provides the means for an individual or organization to reach optimal levels of performance, develop strategies to ensure long-term sustainability, promote vitality, and improve the competitive position of an organization; therefore, providing the key to the success of an organization (Abbas et al., 2022; Ibrahim et al., 2025). The Pakistan economic recovery begins, competition among establishments seeking to expand into new areas continues to grow, while environmental issues have created both challenges and opportunities for businesses (Wu et al., 2022). Visionary leadership, as a form of positive leadership, is particularly critical for enabling firms to increase growth and enter new markets. The act of motivating individuals toward a common goal that enhances the company's strength and competitiveness represents the manifestation of visionary leadership (Wang et al., 2024). Visionary leadership is essential to increasing corporate success. Innovation driven by knowledge management plays a significant role in shaping organizational sustainability by serving as a vital component of a corporation's strategic planning process (Kara et al., 2023). Prior research indicates that communicating a compelling, strategic vision of key goals within an organization leads to greater success, and that positive representations of the vision by visionary leaders improve inventive performance. Thus, we theorize that visionary leadership is positively associated with creative success (Jantz, R. C., 2017). An effective visual representation of the organization's strategy deployment plan and objectives will promote the company culture among the employee base and create an environment conducive to collaboration, leading to innovative performance (Carton et al., 2014). The purpose of this research is to identify the mechanisms by which visionary leadership affects innovative performance and to determine the mediating variables, including long-term competitive advantages and organizational sustainability (Yong-Zhan, 2018). In organizational behavior, psychological empowerment is described as an intrinsic motivational force that produces work motivation. In addition, studies on creativity highlight the importance of intrinsic motivation as a determinant of invention. Therefore, since psychological empowerment is viewed as a unique expression of an individual's internal drive, it is expected to serve as a significant mediator in explaining how visionary leadership operates (Begum et al., 2020). Therefore, we assert that greater inventive performance is due to the moderating effect of workers' psychological empowerment. Hence, it is important to examine those variables that moderate the relationship between them. Many variables affect performance, such as the organization, leadership, and workers. This study focuses on the organizational variable, specifically organizational learning culture. We believe that organizational learning culture serves as a moderator of the media's effect on psychological empowerment. Prior research has found that psychological empowerment positively affects organizational learning (Begum et al., 2020). An organizational learning culture creates a system in which workers' skills are integrated into a larger process of continuous improvement and innovation through continuous learning. Therefore, visionary leaders encourage their staff to achieve psychological empowerment, thereby improving inventive performance. Additionally, it is predicted that psychological empowerment will have a stronger effect on innovation performance when mediated by organizational learning culture (Lin & Huang, 2021). First, most prior research has focused on transformational leadership's effects on innovation performance; therefore, there has been limited research investigating how visionary leadership can improve aspects of inventive performance (Wadei & Wu, 2021). Since transformational leadership includes a dimension of vision and shares similarities with visionary leadership regarding visionary communication, they converge at this

point. However, visionary leadership has a more clearly articulated structure and theoretical framework than the broader concept of transformational leadership, thereby placing it at the forefront of what that concept represents. Therefore, visionary communication, as an integral part of transformative leadership, requires additional development (Fan & Wang, 2017). Secondly, a recent two-year preliminary study examined how visionary leadership impacts performance, including innovative behavior (Farhan, 2024), supportive behaviors by leaders toward users with innovative behavioral competence, and organizational citizenship behaviors (Audije & Panoy, 2024). Moreover, in today's globalized world, every business needs to hire hardworking and imaginative people who can generate and implement new ideas (Ferreira, Coelho & Moutinho, 2020). Employees involved in organizations' innovation activities are essential for identifying the unique characteristics associated with creative self-efficacy. Creative self-efficacy is described as a "construct based on self-perception" (Tierney & Farmer, 2002). The social cognitive theory underlying CSE holds that the health of the work environment affects employees' cognition, behavior, and actions (Gist & Mitchell, 1992; Nawaz et al., 2024). Visionary leadership establishes large-scale objectives for an organization to pursue to advance sustainable development and enables it to grow and prosper over time through the implementation of innovative solutions. Visionary leaders inspire and motivate individuals to be open to and flexible when adapting to change. In turn, they encourage the adoption of behaviors related to change and innovation by suggesting new ways of thinking and proposing new ideas to realize the vision (Cai et al., 2023). Visionary leadership serves as a beneficial influence, as the vision inspires workers to set objectives, fostering intrinsic motivation among subordinates and enabling them to appreciate the value and importance of their own contributions. autonomy in their professional responsibilities and impact. This approach enhances subordinates' psychological empowerment, actively encouraging them to contest prevailing stereotypes, fostering imagination and creativity, and improving workers' inventive performance (Nawaz et al., 2025). According to Tierney and Farmer 2002). "Creative self-efficacy is the belief you can create creative products." In this study, we use psychological empowerment as a mediator (Maynard, Gilson & Mathieu, 2012) to assess the relationship between variables, which will yield better results. Psychological empowerment led to increased creative achievements through enhanced participation in teamwork (Malik et al., 2021). As such, successful project empowerment leads to substantial financial gains through creative projects. The purpose of psychological empowerment is to direct how each worker manages their assigned task (Prati & Zani, 2013). As per the above discussion, the following hypotheses are formulated:

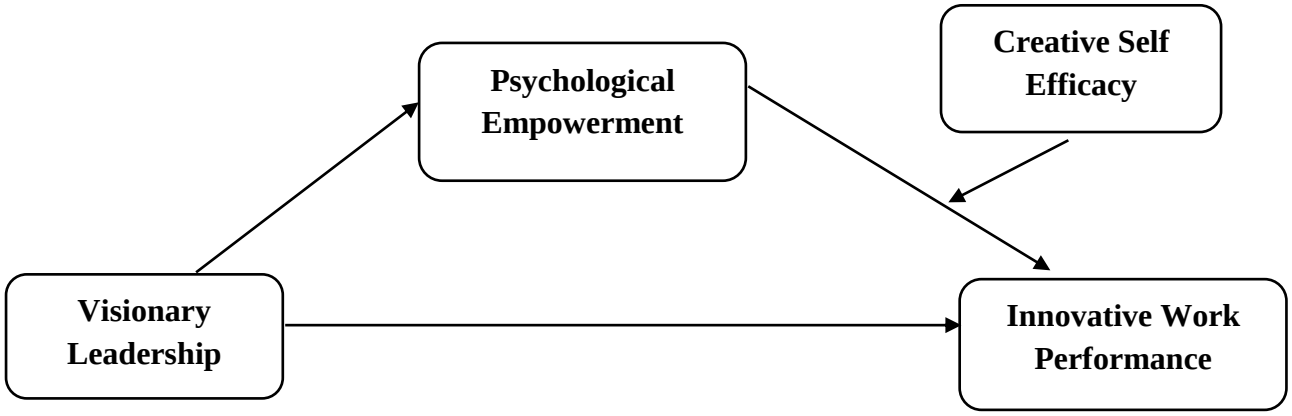
Hypothesis H1: Visionary leadership has a positive impact on innovative work performance.

Hypothesis H2: Visionary Leadership has a positive impact on Psychological Empowerment.

Hypothesis H3: Psychological empowerment has a positive impact on innovative work performance.

Hypothesis H4: Psychological Empowerment mediates the relationship between visionary leadership and innovative work performance.

Hypothesis H5: There is a positive moderator role of creative self-efficacy, psychological empowerment, and innovative work performance



Conceptual Frame Work

2. Methodology

The current study is important for examining the influence of visionary leadership on the innovative work performance of teachers' staff in Pakistan. As a mediator, psychological empowerment has been selected. Moreover, the creative self-efficacy uses a moderator. All personal identifiable information of the participants has remained confidential throughout the data collection process. The methods for this study and the analysis methodology are based on research by Saddique, Khalil, Nawaz, and Mushtaq et al. (2020-2026).

Table 2.1: Variables, No. of Items, Sample Items and Reference:

Variable	Items	Reference
Visionary Leadership	6	Conger and Kanungo's (1994)
Creative Self Efficacy	3	Karwowski, (2016).
Psychological Empowerment	7	Spreitzer, G. M. (1995).
Innovative Work Performance	5	Khalil et al., 2024

Table 2.2: Sample Distribution:

	Characters	F	%
Gender	Male	208	56
	Female	164	44
Ages	Less than 30	75	20.1
	31 to 40	110	29.5
	41 to 50	107	28.7
	Above 50	80	21.5
Qualification	Graduation	49	13.1
	Master	80	21.5
	M. Phil	172	46.2
	PhD	71	19
Experience	Below One Year	45	12
	1 - 5 years	95	25.5
	6-10 Years	156	41.9
	Above 10 years	74	19.8

Explanation: According to Table 2.2 above, 372 people completed and returned the questionnaires. There were 208 male respondents (approximately 56%) and 164 female respondents (approximately 29.5%). The respondent's age was divided into four categories. The

largest group of respondents was in the 41-50 age range (107, or 28.7%); the remaining respondents were all 50 or older (80, or 21.5%). The respondents' qualifications were also categorized into four different groups. The largest number of respondents held an MPhil degree from a university (172 or 46.2%); however, the smallest number of respondents had a graduation (49 or 13.1%). Lastly, based on their work experience, the respondents could be grouped into 4 categories. The largest number of respondents had 6 to 10 years of experience (156, or 41.9%), whereas the fewest had less than 1 year of experience (45, or 12%).

Table 2.3: Reliability Analysis:

Variable	No of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Visionary Leadership	6	0.78
Psychological Empowerment	7	0.84
Creative Self Efficacy	3	0.75
Innovative Work Performance	5	0.83

Explanation: See table #2.3. All the above values are higher than 0.70, so further analysis is applicable.

Table 2.4: Correlation Analysis

Variables	1	2	3
1. Visionary Leadership	1		
2. Psychological Empowerment	0.393**	1	
3. Creative Self Efficacy	0.460**	0.502**	1
4. Innovative Performance	0.137**	0.089**	0.097**

**** Correlation is Shown Significant at 0.01 level, *Correlation is Significant at 0.05 level**

Explanation: Visionary leadership has a strong positive correlation with psychological empowerment ($r = 0.393$, $p = 0.00$) and a positive relationship with creative self-efficacy ($r = 0.460$, $p = 0.000$). Moreover, there is a positive relationship between innovative performance ($r = 0.137$, $p = 0.000$). Psychological empowerment has a positive relationship with creative self-efficacy ($r = 0.502$, $p = 0.000$) and with innovative work performance ($r = 0.089$, $p = 0.000$). Creative self-efficacy is positively related to innovative work performance ($r = 0.097$, $p = 0.000$).

2.5. Regression Analysis

Table 2.5.1: Model between Visionary Leadership and Innovative Work Performance

Variable	R^2	B	t	Sig
Visionary Leadership	0.019	0.206	6.98	0.000

Dependent Variable: Innovative Work Performance* p < 0.05.

Explanation: Table 2.5.1 presents preliminary results from a regression analysis investigating the influence of visionary leadership on innovative work performance. Because the ANOVA Sig value is < .05, the model is deemed adequate and may be used as evidence supporting hypothesis 1. A R-squared of 0.019 shows that for every one unit of visionary leadership, there is a corresponding increase in innovative work performance. It has a 1.9 percent greater ability to develop innovative work. Also, since the p-value of .000 is less than .05, there is a statistically significant relationship between an organization's level of visionary leadership and innovative work performance. Finally, the B coefficient is 0.206, so hypothesis 1 is accepted.

Table 2.5.2: Model between Visionary Leadership and Psychological Empowerment

Variable	R^2	B	t	Sig
Visionary Leadership	0.154	0.353	8.22	0.000

Dependent variable: Psychological Empowerment, *p < 0.05.

Explanation: The statistical output from Table 2.5.2. provides the results of the analysis conducted to determine whether visionary leadership is associated with psychological empowerment. Since the p-value (sig) associated with the ANOVA statistic is < .05, it is appropriate for the model as well. A statistically meaningful relationship exists, as the p-value (.000) is less than .05. Therefore, we can conclude that a unit change in visionary leadership would be expected to result in a .0154 (15.4%) increase in psychological empowerment. The beta value is =0.353. Thus, Hypothesis 2 has been supported.

Table 2.5.3: Model between Psychological Empowerment and Innovative Work Performance

Variable	R^2	B	t	Sig
Psychological Empowerment	0.018	0.149	10.5	0.000

Dependent Variable: Innovative Work Performance, *p < 0.05.

Explanation: Table 2.5.3 presents the results of an investigation into the effects of psychological empowerment on innovative work performance. Based upon the ANOVA sig. = .000 (less than .05), we can say this model fits well, as it has an acceptable R-squared value (.018), indicating that for each unit increase in psychological empowerment, there would be a 1.8% increase in Innovative Work Performance. The coefficient's t-value of .000 is significantly greater than .05, showing a strong relationship between the two variables. The b-value of .149 indicates that greater involvement with psychological empowerment is associated with higher Innovative Work Performance. Therefore, hypothesis H3 is supported.

2.5.4 Mediation Analysis:

Table 2.5.4: Mediation analysis using through Bootstrap

Relationships	*β*	*P*	Bootstraps @ 95%		Hypotheses
			LL	UL	
VL →PE →IWP					
Direct effect	0.181	***	0.19	0.346	
Indirect effect	0.069	***	0.13	0.267	

Note: VL=Visionary Leadership, PE=Psychological Empowerment, IWP=Innovative Work Performance, ***p<0.01

Explanation: In Table 2.5.4. To test the mediating variable hypothesis, the study conducted 1000 bootstrap samples to estimate the 95% confidence interval for the indirect effects. As a result, the total indirect effect of the relationship between visionary leadership and innovative work performance through psychological empowerment was found to be 0.069 (LL = 0.13; UL = 0.267; P = 0.00), which was significantly less than that of the direct effect (β = .181; P = < .01). Since there was no "0" value within the upper limit and the lower limit, Hypothesis H4 is supported. Thus, it can be concluded that psychological empowerment partially mediates the relationship between visionary leadership and innovative work performance.

Table 2.5.4: Moderation-Analysis

Variables	*B*	R^2	*P*
Psychological Empowerment (PE)	0.206	0.019	***
Creative Self Efficacy (CSE)	0.080	0.018	***
PE x CSE	0.016	0.011	***

Note: Dependent Variable = Innovative Work Performance

Explanation: As shown in Table 2.5.4, there is also a positive impact in terms of innovative work performance for both the psychological empowerment (beta = .206, p < .01) and creative self-efficacy (beta = .080, p < .01). The percent of variance explained by each variable of psychological empowerment was R2 = 1.9% and for creative self-efficacy, R2 = 0.8%. Additionally, there was a statistically significant interaction between psychological empowerment and creative self-efficacy (beta = .011, p < .01), indicating that creative self-efficacy influences the relationship between psychological empowerment and innovative work performance. Therefore, Hypothesis #5 has been accepted.

3. Discussion

The purpose of the study is to identify the influence of visionary leadership on the innovative work performance of teaching staff in Pakistan. The mediating role of psychological empowerment in the relationship between visionary leadership and innovative work performance. Furthermore, the moderator role of creative self-efficacy among the psychological empowerment and innovative work performance. The purpose of this research is to identify the mechanisms by which visionary leadership affects innovative performance and to determine the mediating variables, including long-term competitive advantages and organizational sustainability (Yong-Zhan, 2018). Psychological empowerment is viewed as a unique expression of an individual's internal drive; it is expected to serve as a significant mediator in explaining how visionary leadership operates (Begum et al., 2020). Therefore, we assert that greater inventive performance is due to the moderating effect of workers' psychological empowerment. Hence, it is important to examine those variables that moderate the relationship between them. Many variables affect performance, such as the organization, leadership, and workers. This study focuses on the organizational variable, specifically organizational learning culture. We believe that organizational learning culture serves as a moderator of the media's effect on psychological empowerment. Prior research has found that psychological empowerment positively affects organizational learning (Begum et al., 2020). An organizational learning culture creates a system in which workers' skills are integrated into a larger process of continuous improvement and innovation through continuous learning. Therefore, visionary leaders encourage their staff to achieve psychological empowerment, thereby improving inventive performance. Additionally, it is predicted that psychological empowerment will have a stronger effect on innovation performance when mediated by organizational learning culture (Lin & Huang, 2021). First, most prior research has focused on transformational leadership's effects on innovation performance; therefore, there has been limited research investigating how visionary leadership can improve aspects of inventive performance (Wadei & Wu, 2021). Visionary leadership has a more clearly articulated structure and theoretical framework than the broader concept of transformational leadership, thereby placing it at the forefront of what that concept represents. Therefore, visionary communication, as an integral part of transformative leadership, requires additional development (Fan & Wang, 2017). Secondly, a recent two-year preliminary study examined how visionary leadership impacts performance, including innovative behavior (Farhan, 2024), supportive behaviors by leaders toward users with innovative behavioral competence, and organizational citizenship behaviors (Audije & Panoy, 2024). Moreover, in today's globalized world, every business needs to hire hardworking and

imaginative people who can generate and implement new ideas (Ferreira, Coelho & Moutinho, 2020). Employees involved in organizations' innovation activities are essential for identifying the unique characteristics associated with creative self-efficacy. Creative self-efficacy is described as a "construct based on self-perception" (Tierney & Farmer, 2002). The social cognitive theory underlying CSE holds that the health of the work environment affects employees' cognition, behavior, and actions (Gist & Mitchell, 1992; Nawaz et al., 2024). Visionary leadership establishes large-scale objectives for an organization to pursue to advance sustainable development and enables it to grow and prosper over time through the implementation of innovative solutions. Visionary leaders inspire and motivate individuals to be open to and flexible when adapting to change. In turn, they encourage the adoption of behaviors related to change and innovation by suggesting new ways of thinking and proposing new ideas to realize the vision (Cai et al., 2023). Visionary leadership serves as a beneficial influence, as the vision inspires workers to set objectives, fostering intrinsic motivation among subordinates and enabling them to appreciate the value and importance of their own contributions. autonomy in their professional responsibilities and impact. This approach enhances subordinates' psychological empowerment, actively encouraging them to contest prevailing stereotypes, fostering imagination and creativity, and improving workers' inventive performance (Nawaz et al., 2025). According to Tierney and Farmer 2002). In this study, we use psychological empowerment as a mediator (Maynard, Gilson & Mathieu, 2012) to assess the relationship between variables, which will yield better results. Psychological empowerment led to increased creative achievements through enhanced participation in teamwork (Malik et al., 2021). As such, successful project empowerment leads to substantial financial gains through creative projects. The purpose of psychological empowerment is to direct how each worker manages their assigned task (Prati & Zani, 2013). Based on the above discussions, all the study hypotheses are accepted. This is also an addition to the study theories for further studies.

4. Conclusions

The study supports the social cognitive theory in identifying the influence of visionary leadership on the innovative work performance of teaching staff in Pakistan. The mediating role of psychological empowerment in the relationship between visionary leadership and innovative work performance. Furthermore, the moderator role of creative self-efficacy among the psychological empowerment and innovative work performance. The study results show that visionary leadership has a positive and significant influence on innovative work performance. Psychological empowerment has a partial mediating effect on the relationship between visionary leadership and innovative work performance. The moderating role is positive, and creative self-efficacy is positively associated with psychological empowerment and innovative work performance. The study helpful for policymakers, investors, owners and senior-level managers, both nationally and internationally.

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