The Impact of Leadership on Creativity and Innovation

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Abstract: *This article aims to identify the role of leadership in influencing creativity management and innovation management in the organization. From this point, this study tries to drive the thinking of economic companies that taking benefits from creativity and innovation requires their good management inside the company. For that the companies needs to focus on good leadership. Therefore, we are trying through this intervention to clarify* the *impacts of leadership on creativity and the innovation in the organization. In addition, among the most important results reached in this intervention, is that the meaning of creativity is the tendency to generate or recognize ideas, alternatives, or possibilities, and innovation is turning these new and imaginative ideas into reality to help organizations in achieving its goals. To develop creativity, the organization must have a flexible structure that ensures a good culture that the leader could provide the right climate to his employees, inspire them, and motivate them, so they could have the ability to generate artful ideas. Moreover, to apply innovation, the organization must have the culture that accept change and put leaders that could make employees feel the necessity to innovate and to do more initiatives in order to achieve organization's goals.*
Keywords: *Creativity, innovation, organization, leadership.*

I. INTRODUCTION

In the light of a quick changes imposed by many of variables as technological development globalization of markets, heightened competition, changing in the consumers' tastes, the tremendous increase of knowledge…etc, innovation and creativity constitute one of the most important tools to meet these challenges, through role they play in the renewal and the development of productivity and marketing. On this basis, the creativity and the innovation are essential factors to support the competitivity of the enterprise.

Any company whatever their means and capabilities may not maintain its competitive position in the market by adopting traditional methods and strategies in an era of technological revolution and economic globalization, it is imperative for companies to support the creativity and innovation because they are considered one of the most important pillars to build a strong competitivity, which enables organizations to provide continuous streaming of new products and production of high-quality products, with low-costs.

From this point, we can formulate our main question:

"How can leadership improve creativity and innovation in organizations?"
This main question can be divided into these sub-questions:
- How can we achieve the optimal level of creativity and innovation in organizations?
- How can leadership improve creativity in organizations?
- How can leadership improve innovation in organizations?
As pre-answers to these sub-questions:
- To achieve the optimal level of creativity and innovation, organizations needs to motivate employees in order to generate ideas, and choosing the right way to apply these ideas.
- Leadership can improve creativity effectively by communicating a vision conducive to it, through any available formal or informal channel of communication and constantly encourage employees.
- Leadership can improve innovation by putting a leader who can motivate employees to make initiatives, and tends their fear of making mistakes.
This intervention aims to achieve these goals:
- The identification of the creativity and the innovation.
- The exchange of experiences in the field of creativity and innovation.
- Showing the importance of creativity and innovation as keys factors in developing business organizations.

I- Fundamentals on creativity and innovation:
In this section we are going to explain the terms of creativity and innovation, and the difference between these two terms.
**I-1- Definition of creativity**
There are many definitions of creativity. A number of them suggest that creativity is the generation of imaginative new ideas (Newell and Shaw 1972), involving a radical newness innovation or solution to a problem, and a radical reformulation of problems. Other definitions propose that a creative solution can simply integrate existing knowledge in a different way.[1] Creativity is "the creation of a valuable, useful new product, service, idea, procedure or process by individuals working within a complex social organization".[2]

I-2- Components of creativity
Creativity arises through the confluence of the following three components:
 Knowledge: All the relevant understanding an individual brings to bear on a creative effort.
 Creative Thinking: Relates to how people approach problems and depends on personality and thinking/working style.
 Motivation: Motivation is generally accepted as key to creative production, and the most important motivators are intrinsic passion and interest in the work itself.

Figure (01): Components of creativity
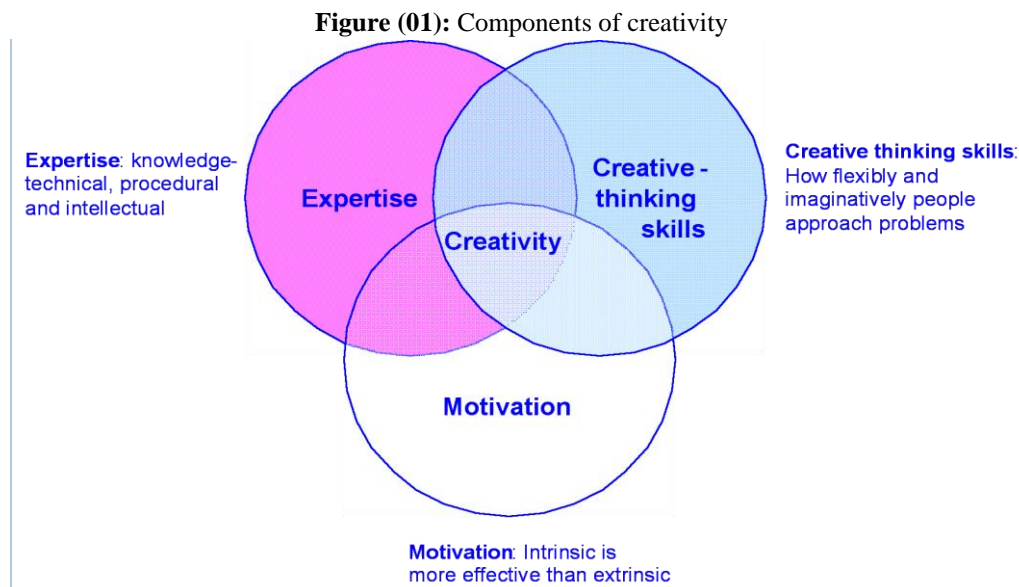
Source : Karlyn Adams, The Sources of Innovation and Creativity , National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE) Research Summary and Final Report, Washington, USA, 2005, P 4.

I-3- Managing Creativity:
Creativity won't just happen. It must be nurtured and encouraged wherever possible.
In a study by Mayfield et al. 2004 entitled 'The effects of leader communication on worker innovation', it was found that there was a positive and significant link between a leader's communication ability and worker innovation. Communication and fun are key to the culture of a workplace, and are directly influenced by the management. De Bono, 1971, identifies that one of the most direct ways to increase creativity is through training of all employees. In general the creative potential of an individual is less significant than a modest rise in creativity all round. De Bono identifies that the management of creativity must develop skills in lateral thinking in individuals and as a specific group function. Clegg et al. 2002, constructed 'The five way course to creativity' in which they describe the five key paths to creativity as:
1. culture
2. techniques
3. personal development, which they believe comes through practise and training
4. mental energy
5. fun.

Eskildsen, Dahlgaard and Norgaard conducted a study entitled 'The impact of creativity and learning on business excellence (1999).' The study found that if an organisation wants to achieve business excellence, defined as stakeholder satisfaction and long-term business success, it must create an "environment where the

creativity of employees is nurtured, developed and sustained through education and training, involvement and teamwork." The creative organisation (Majaro, 1992) can be effectively managed with focused attention on: climate, removal of barriers, managing innovation, idea evaluation procedures, motivational stimuli, communication procedures and development of idea sources. To manage creativity, one must understand the dangers and the pitfalls of creativity. De Bono, 1971 identified that creativity was not a solution in itself, and contains a number of inherent dangers. For example, creativity changes direction, and if business focus changes too often, it's inefficient, costly and you don't get anywhere. The consensus among these leading academics is that creativity is encouraged by environment and culture. But as Majaro (1988) identifies, few managers know how to enhance the level of creativity in their organisation.[3]

I-4- Definition of Innovation:

According to the definition adopted by TIEC, Innovation is "the introduction of a new product, service, or process through a certain business model into the marketplace, either by utilization or by commercialization". Hence, it encompasses: product innovation, service innovation, Process innovation, and business model innovation, and all contribute to strengthen the competitive advantage of a certain company. This definition respects the fact that innovation is a complex and multidimensional activity that cannot be measured directly or with a single indicator, and hence the need to have a composite measure that reflects the organization innovative capability for the purpose of benchmarking, diagnoses, and supporting building up innovation culture and practices in Egyptian ICT firms.[4] Schumpeter defined innovations as product, process and organizational changes that do not necessarily originate from new scientific discoveries, but may arise from a combination of already existing technologies and their application in a new context .Innovation also originates from public research.[5]

I-5- The types of innovations
UNESCO makes the distinction among the four types of innovation as follows :
- **Product innovation**: introduction of a good or service that is new or significantly improved with respect to its characteristics or intended uses. This includes significant improvements in technical specifications, components and materials, incorporated software, user friendliness or other functional characteristics.
- **Process innovation**: implementation of a new or significantly improved production or delivery method. This includes significant changes in techniques, equipment and/or software. The customer does not usually pay directly for process, but the process is required to deliver a product or service and to manage the relationship with the various stakeholders.
- **Marketing innovation**: implementation of a new marketing method involving significant changes in product design or packaging, product placement, product promotion or pricing.
- **Organizational innovation**: implementation of a new organizational method in the firm's business practices, workplace organization or external relations.

I-6- Attributes of Innovation
Before discussing innovation measurements, it would be of value to learn about the innovation attributes. Innovation has a number of attributes discussed in the literature. The key attributes are summarized below:
- **Attribute 1. Innovation involves the combination of inputs in the creation of outputs.**
  Something novel is created during innovation. Certain crucial inputs must be available for innovation to occur, and the exact nature of those inputs differs depending on the desired outputs and outcomes.
- **Attribute 2. Inputs to innovation can be tangible and intangible.** Innovation activities draw on a variety of inputs, which can be both tangible and intangible. Tangible inputs have a physical embodiment and cost. Intangible inputs do not have a physical embodiment but may have a cost. Intangible inputs are commonly referred to in economic literature as "knowledge assets" and in business management literature as "intellectual assets." Inputs are considered assets if they engender future benefits.
- **Attribute 3. Knowledge is a key input to innovation.** Innovation involves the application of knowledge in creative activities. Innovation cannot take place without an understanding of the resources, tools, technologies, materials, markets, and needs in the situation at hand. In recognition of the tremendous importance of knowledge to the innovation process, innovating organizations willingly spend significant amounts of resources on research and the acquisition of knowledge (e.g., intellectual property)
- **Attribute 4. The inputs to innovation are assets.** Most innovation inputs are considered assets because they are used repeatedly after being created for a single innovation pipeline or are used in a pipeline in a way that results in a different product. Intangible assets—which typically are not reported on balance sheets because they are difficult to measure—are increasingly being recognized as critical to the innovation process.
- **Attribute 5. Innovation involves activity for the purpose of creating economic value.** Fundamental to the concept of innovation is the innovator's intention to create something of economic value—something that

offers benefits to consumers and provides economic returns to the innovator. Commercialization—the mechanism through which the consumer obtains the benefits of innovation and the innovator obtains the return—is therefore critical to the innovative process.

- **Attribute 6. The process of innovation is complex.** Innovation is a complex process not easily reduced to measurable elements (e.g., R&D dollars spent; number or value of patents obtained). Nor is it linear. Instead, it is often iterative—the outputs of early activities become the inputs for later processes. Innovation is also not a linear combination of component factors or limited within the boundaries of firms. Non-linear dynamics characterize the entire innovation value chain end-to-end at the national level and at the firm level.
- **Attribute 7. The outputs in innovation are unpredictable.** The inputs to innovation are easy to characterize; they will always be resources and assets. The outputs, however, are difficult to characterize, especially before the process is complete. The outputs are unpredictable because innovation is complex, nonlinear, and risky; responds to opportunities; and inherently includes aspects of serendipity.
- **Attribute 8. Knowledge is a key output of innovation.** Whatever the outputs of innovation may be, they incorporate the firm's knowledge at the time. Every tangible and intangible (i.e., product and process) output reflects the firm's knowledge of its resources, technologies, markets, and consumers.
- **Attribute 9**. The drive for innovation must include consideration of the demand side which determines the rate of investment and diffusion (take-up) of new products and services.[6]

I-7- Managing Innovation:

Managing Innovation means the generation and implementation of a management practice, process structure, or technique that is new to the state of the art and is intended to further organizational goals. In addition, while it is not a necessary component of our definition, it is worth reinforcing that our perspective on management innovation gives conscious attention to the individuals who drive the process. Indeed, one of the themes of this article is the need to increase the emphasis on human agency in management innovation while not losing sight of the contextual dynamics that are the focus of the institutional and fashion perspectives. As McCabe puts it, "What is required is an understanding of innovation as part of a far more complex social process: interrelated to the way in which individuals interpret, act, and ascribe meaning to the world".[7]

I-8- Difference between innovation and creativity:

As I define it, creativity is novel ideas that are communicated, useful, and appealing. Creativity occurs when an individual visualizes a new pattern in their mind. It is the ability of the mind to recognize these new patterns and to generate new patterns that create the basis for a new product or service. It is the ability of humans to then communicate these patterns to other humans. When I had the idea for making a bookmark while singing in the church choir, it was a creative idea, but not an innovation. Typically, creativity is a fuzzy idea and can't be clarified until it is made into a prototype, where you can touch it and test it and show it to others. At this point the creation becomes an invention. Thus I define invention as the stage where a creative idea has been reduced to practice. When I made samples of bookmarks, gave them to others to use, and had tested them carefully; when we put them on the store shelves for sale, they were still not an innovation. They only became an innovation when people like yourself, bought a pad, used it up, and bought a second pad. By then you had changed your habit pattern and adopted it into your life.[8]

II. THE INFLUENCE OF LEADERSHIP ON CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION IN THE ORGANIZATION:

There are many factors that could influence innovation and creativity in the organization, but there is only one main factor that can drive employees to be innovative and creative, this factor is leadership.

II-1- Notions of Leadership:

Leadership is the ability to inspire, motivate, and guide others towards achieving a higher job performance for an organization. [9]

According to (Jacobs & Jaques, 1990), "A leader is a person who helps other to endeavor and to motivate them for accomplishing aims and goals".[10]

According to (Northouse, 2007), "Leadership is a process whereby an individual influences a group of individuals to achieve a common goal".[11]

Although many definitions exist, most of these definitions share certain leadership characteristics which are: [12]

- Leadership is a process.
- Leadership is an influence.
- Leadership requires action to a group.
- Leadership achieves goals.

According to (Miller & al 2002):"Leadership style is the pattern of interactions between leaders and subordinates. It includes controlling, directing, indeed all techniques and methods used by leaders to motivate subordinates to follow their instructions".[13] So the leadership style is the way a leader provides direction to his/her team to execute their tasks, in which the leader motivates and trains the subordinates, and how the leader generally communicates and relates to his/her people.[14]

A leadership style adopted by a leader or a manager in an organization can be influenced by the nature and quality of employees in the workplace. Leaders employ different styles according to the nature and quality of their subordinates. A leadership style used by a manager of highly skilled professionals would be different to that employed by a manager who looks after low skilled professionals. The nature of a firm's human capital and the manner in which it is managed can impact employee and firm performance.[15] According to (Jooste, 2009), there is profound difference between the concepts of management and leadership, although both are important within organizational dynamics. To manage means 'to bring about', 'to accomplish', 'to have responsibility for', and 'to conduct'. To lead means 'to influence', 'to guide in terms of direction, course, action or opinion'. In today's healthcare organization or operations people want to be lead – not managed.[16]

II-2- Impact of leadership on creativity:

As Peter Cook (1998), a fundamental challenge leaders face in the 21st century is how to profit from individual potential and then leverage it so that it produces organizational innovation and excellence. Creative organizations should attract, develop and retain creative talents if they want to remain competitive. Leadership styles conducive to creativity are participative leadership, leader's vision for creativity and ability to develop effective groups. Leaders must effectively communicate a vision conducive to creativity through any available formal or informal channel of communication and constantly encourage employees. Leaders should also be in a position to balance employee's freedom and responsibility. Individuals with strong leadership will consider themselves to have more potential for creativity than individuals with weak leadership potential and individuals with strong potential for creativity will be more likely to practice them when they perceive strong support from work place than weak support. His model suggests encouraging self-leadership among organizational members while building organizational environment to support innovation and creativity. Most discussions on the role of leadership in organizational creativity are inclined to be prescriptive; outlining the ideal leadership traits that can enhance creativity, without considering the development phase an organization is going through at a particular time.

`   Schein (1995) asserts that, organizations have different needs and problems at different stages in their life cycle; it is therefore critical for a researcher of leadership to study his/her subject within the organizational dynamics at a given time. Any leader who aspires to build a creative organization effectively, will benefit from Schein's following role functions assigned to leaders who steer their organizations at different stages of their evolution, At the early stage of organizational creation, the leader play the role as animator who supplies the energy needed to get the organization off the ground; Once an organization is able to survive, the leader changes his/her role to a creator of culture who transfers his/her beliefs, values, and basic assumptions to the mental models of the employees; At the matured stage of organization when institutionalization is needed, a leader has to act as a sustainer of culture which is critical to the organization's further growth; At the changing stage, leader must assume the role as a change agent, to enable the organization to acquire new concepts and skills, and at the same time unlearn things that are no longer relevant to the organization's new development. In advocating for a development organization which emphasizes more on employee growth for greater organizational renewal than a learning organization, Gilley and Maycitnich (2000) encourage organizations to free their employees from the fear of failure or punishment, so that they can benefit from the employees' creativity for cost saving, new product development, improvement of existing products, streamlined processes, or elimination of redundant procedures. A synergistic relationship between leader and employees is needed to foster a favorable work environment dedicated to continuous improvement.[17]

II-3- Impact of leadership on innovation:

The literature supports the view that employees that are empowered and autonomous have a greater degree of control over their work. This degree of control means that employees feel comfortable in their role to be innovative in their own work environment However, some authors argue that the level of management support given to empowered employees will affect their ability to innovate therefore employees must not feel alone in the pursuit of innovation.

Although employees are fundamental to the generation and development of new ideas. Employees need to be given sufficient resources, in time, materials and finance to allow ideas to emerge it, therefore the role of management to ensure the innovation process is to comes to fruition and that employees know how to interact with the innovation process.[18] Leadership style has been highlighted as an individual factor exerting significant influence on innovation in organizations either directly or indirectly through other intervening variables such as

culture and climate. Transformational leadership has been associated with change of culture and motivation of people in pursuit of organizational goals, employee satisfaction and organizational productivity also highlighted the important role that leadership for innovation plays in creating a climate for innovation by influencing organizational culture that support innovation. Organizations could raise leaders for innovation by cultivating transformational leadership among their managers and supervisors. There is however evidence to suggest that culture could also influence the behaviour of managers. Leadership could also indirectly influence innovation through the client as they interact with existing and prospective client to identify how services or products need to change to enhance client satisfaction, The major innovative turn-arounds of organizations occur when senior executives take the trouble to visit at length with their prospective customers and clients to find out what is good and what is bad about the firm's current products and services'.

Bass and Avolio (1994) submitted that through intellectual stimulation, transformational leaders question assumptions and by so doing stimulate their followers efforts to be innovative, creative and approach old situations in new ways. Through idealised influence, the leader earns credit with the followers by placing their needs ahead of their own, shares risks with them and avoids public criticisms of individuals who make mistakes. This engenders a greater willingness on the part of the followers to take risks and adopt more innovative approaches to delivering projects.

Studies on leadership have primarily focused on top management with little attention paid to middle management and less so in the construction industry. Styhre and Josephson (2006) in a study of 13 construction site managers drew a comparison between site managers in the construction industry and middle managers in other industries and found that they generally had a positive experience of their work situation. Although the sample size was small and therefore the findings cannot be generalized it highlights a departure from many other negative reporting on middle. The study also revealed the gap in literature on middle management in the construction industry. Moreover, most of the literature on middle management has been based on organizations in general while studies on site managers or middle managers in the construction industry have seldom referenced the general management literature. Notwithstanding the conflicting views on middle management, they play an important and central role in ensuring organizational and project objectives are achieved. Hence it can be hypothesized that the leadership style exhibited by middle managers will influence the perceptions of climate for innovation which influence the employees' innovation.[19]

III. CONCLUSION

Creativity and innovation plays a big role in giving competitive advantages to the company, and the excellence in the market. In order for the company to maintain the good management of its creative activities, even they were strategic activities or operational activities; it must have the ability to develop creativity, and apply innovation effectively, in order to be the leader in the market.

In this intervention, we derived to these results:

- The optimal level of creativity and innovation means the tendency to generate or recognize ideas alternatives, or possibilities, and turning these new and imaginative ideas into reality to help organizations in achieving its goals.
- Organization must have a good leader that could provide the right climate to his employees, inspire them, and motivate them, so they could have the ability to generate artful ideas.
- Organization must have the culture that accept change and put leaders that could make employees feel the necessity to innovate and to do more initiatives.

In order to improve the practices of both creativity and innovation in organizations, we propose these recommendations:

- Organizations should put their employees into training programs, which helps them in acquiring the ability to generate creative ideas, and find the right way to apply them.
- Organizations should make an honest system of rewards that motivate employees for giving creative ideas, which direct the organization into having good results.
- leaders should not see their followers as threads, should not have the fear from the followers who innovates, and the fear that they will took their places in the organization, because the success of the organization is more important than the private interest.

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