

Effect of Open Leadership on Organisational Culture: Mediating Role of Innovation Orientation

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Open Leadership, Innovation Orientation and Organisational Culture

Abstract

The survival and growth of businesses in dynamic environments depends on their ability to promote and sustain innovation within their organisations. The objective of the study is to investigate the role of innovation orientation in the relationship between open leadership and an organisation's culture. The study employed mixed research approach through a cross sectional survey design. The target population of the study was production employees chosen by using simple random sampling technique. Data were collected using a five point Likert scale questionnaire, descriptive and inferential statistics were used to analyze. The direct and indirect effects are tested by using structural equation modeling. The finding revealed that innovation orientation has a partial mediation positive effect between the relationship of open leadership and organisational culture in the textile factories and the firms should have open leaders that can foster innovation orientation and organisational culture that flourish appropriate innovative organisational culture to survive and expand in today's complex business environment.

Key words: Open Leadership; Innovation Orientation; Organisational Culture

1. INTRODUCTION

Today's society is going through a period of transition and a competitive commercial climate. As a result, in today's market-oriented economies, constant innovation is a critical source for organizational survival. Because it is accepted as a fundamental feature of today's modern organisations that no one has complete autonomy, that all employees are connected to one another through technology, management systems, and organisational hierarchy connections, and that they have created a culture of mutual dependency (Kotter, 2011).

According to Uslu et al. (2015), there are a variety of leadership styles with a long history in organizational study. Varied leadership styles, such as transformational or transactional, production-oriented or employee-oriented, have different effects on organisational outcomes, according to one of

the determinants of how things operate in the company. Certainly, in small organizations, the company owner's leadership style has a direct impact on employee attitudes and organisational outcomes. In large organisations, leadership styles and organisational culture are inextricably linked, affecting employee attitudes and related organizational outcomes.

According to Li, (2010), open leadership is a new approach to leadership that focuses on the shared components of leadership responsibilities. Open leadership is defined as "having the confidence and humility to give up the urge to be in charge while encouraging people to commit to achieving goals." According to this notion, open leadership necessitates employees sharing leadership positions with the leader. Hence, we should expect to see empowered employees in situations where management takes this leadership strategy. As a result, it is a way of life that embraces change as a constant, inspires individual thought, relies on intuition over data, flexibility over hierarchy, trust over fear, and prioritizes the common good above profit.

In some ways, social technology has expanded and transformed everything these days, including leadership approaches. According to Li, (2010), leaders must adapt to the fact that our personal lives have become much more open, and this has spilled over into the workplace. Being open in an effective manner in such a dynamic corporate world requires more structure than being closed. Social media, such as Twitter and Facebook, amplifies both the positive and negative aspects of leadership and provides leaders with a powerful set of tools to expand their influence.

Changes in social technology and openness are leading to a shift in organisational structure and hiring practices in favor of a collaborative and curious attitude. As a result, businesses must be comfortable with trial and error, as well as allowing leaders to fail at a much deeper level. Firms that try to ignore social technologies in this competitive world will inevitably fail. Organisational leaders have never truly possessed control, and social leadership recognizes this and relinquishes the appearance of authority. In today's fast-changing environment, modern businesses are learning that the command-and-control leadership approaches of the previous century are ineffective. Compared to the earlier closed leadership model focusing on the talents of a single leader, today's work environment must focus on motivating employees' potential in a much more open manner in order to attract and retain people (Li, 2010).

Organisational innovativeness is defined by Wang & Ahmed, (2004) as "an organisation's total innovative capability of presenting new products to the market, or opening up new markets, by integrating strategic direction with innovative behavior and process." Although the aforementioned elements may serve to remind us of the end-product, which is the invention itself, organisational innovativeness is more of a process than a result.

According to Dobni, (2010), an innovation orientation indicates how innovative a company is, and the findings imply that such an orientation provides a backdrop for proactive growth-based initiatives to be implemented. Market segmentation, producing new products/services for new markets, and product or service customization are examples of value creation techniques used by businesses with strong innovation orientations. Furthermore, as management realizes that innovation creates long-term advantages and results in dramatic shifts in competitive positioning, the role of innovation is becoming increasingly vital.

The distinctive combination of rules, values, beliefs, and ways of behaving that describe the way in which organisations and individuals unite to get things done is referred to as an organisation's culture (Eldridge & Crombie, 1975).

According to Schein, (1985), organisational culture is a set of basic assumptions created, discovered, or developed by a group as it learns to deal with problems of external adaptation and internal integration that has proven to be valid enough to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel about these issues.

Ethiopia, the world's newest development frontier, is Africa's oldest independent country and fastest-developing African republic. Although the country may be a latecomer to the manufacturing sector in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), recent advances in the value chain qualifies it as a "Rising star" in the textile and apparel export sector, as well as Africa's largest raw material supplier for the leather industry (Khurana, 2018).

The usage of digital technology, as indicated by Bullon et al., (2017) in their research, will revolutionize the way we make textiles in a world of smart tools. Machines with extra sensors, actors, and cognition acting in a network might usher in a new era of industry: The possibilities are examined utilizing currently available technology to develop smart textile systems, such as wireless communications, textile antennas, chromic display materials, textile switches, textile pressure and gesture sensors, textile circuits, and micro-component welding technology and these needs leaders, innovative workers and appropriate organisational culture.

According to Yared, (2010), a large number of garment factories have been established in recent years to produce a variety of products for export and the domestic market. In terms of export sales, the forward and backward linkages to producers of woven and knitted fabrics, as well as basic accessories, were not in place to make garment factories competitive in the global market, thus many of them were forced to work on a cut, make, and trim (CMT) basis.

According to Abdella, (2008), Ethiopia's government has been significantly behind schedule in improving the textile industry for a variety of reasons. These industries aren't as profitable as they once were. Furthermore, it is unsurprising to see that buyers are becoming increasingly unsatisfied with the high market pricing and low quality of several Ethiopian garment and textile manufacturers' products.

The pace of change and innovation has never been faster, and the need to go forward has never been more critical than it is today. Because of turnover or leadership changes, it is no longer appropriate to take a vacation from strategies and projects (Andy Hargreaves, 2019).

Using innovation orientation as a mediating variable, the study's main question is how open leader conduct affects innovation orientation and organizational culture. While a variety of leadership behaviors and styles have been proposed in various studies (Zhang & Bartol, 2010), little effort has been made to compare and integrate the effect of open leadership behaviors on innovation orientation, which is a firm's ability to introduce new products and organisational culture, which supports creativity and innovation.

Jain & Jain, (2016) investigated the relationship between leadership, creativity, and innovation, (Uslu et al., 2015) investigated the effects of open leadership on organisational innovativeness and corporate entrepreneurship, and other researchers such as Anderson et al., (2014) investigated innovation and creativity in organisations, but to the best of the researcher's knowledge, there are few studies on the relationship between open leadership, innovation orientation with organisational culture in textile factories in Amhara regional state, Ethiopia, using innovation orientation as a mediating variable.

Furthermore, to the researcher's knowledge, there is no comprehensive empirical evidence on open leadership, innovation orientation, and its impact on organisational culture in developing nations such as Ethiopia. According to literature in the field, Ethiopian textile firms are less competent, not profitable, and even unable to meet domestic demand due to a lack of innovation and poor leadership that promotes innovation with less attention given to employees' participation in organisational creativity.

At the end, the major goal and motivation behind this research is to see how open leadership affects innovation orientation and organisational culture in textile manufacturers in the Amhara regional state, using innovation orientation as a mediating variable which incorporates also the following research hypotheses:

- ✓ Open leadership has positive and significant effect on organisational culture,
- ✓ Open leadership has positive and significant effect on innovation orientation,
- ✓ Innovation orientation has positive and significant effect on organisational culture and
- ✓ Innovation orientation has a mediation effect on the positive relationship between open leadership and organisational culture.

2. Research Methodology

2.1 Research Design and Strategy

The type of research employed in this study was explanatory (causal) research design, because the purpose of this research is to investigate the direct effect of open leadership, on innovation orientation and organizational culture at the selected study area. The researcher has used a mixed research approach, because, data was collected from respondents through survey questionnaire was quantitatively analyzed and interpreted. This study employed Cross- sectional survey design, this implies that the data was collected at one point in time from sample-selected employees in the textile factories in Amhara regional state.

2.2 Target population

The target population (unit of analysis) of the study was permanent employees working in the production department of the textile factories excluding administrative staffs. The reason is that the role of production workers was engaged in the product innovation and creativity center that was directly related to the study variables. Hence, the total number of production employees in Bahir Dar textile factory was 1131 and nearly 1185 production employees were found in Kombolcha textile factory. The total population of the two sites was 2316.

2.3 Method of data collection

The researcher used quantitative type of data from primary data sources collected from respondents / production employees from Bahir Dar and Kombolcha textile Share companies through self-administered structured questionnaire adopted from Cakir & Adiguzel, (2019).The questionnaire is a five point Likert scale begin from strongly disagree to strongly agree to maintain respondents neutral position.

2.4 Sampling Technique

The researcher is aimed to evaluate the relationship between open leadership, innovation orientation and organizational culture at the selected textile factories found in Amhara regional state. However, eventually the researcher finds out the difficulty of conducting on the industry base in the country in general, because it requires great deal of time and money hence, the researcher judgmentally select two textile factories in the region; Namely Bahir Dar and Kombolcha textile factories that are closer to the researcher. Therefore, initially the study area is classified in to two strata called Bahir Dar and Kombolcha textile S.C. The researcher used Yamane (1967:886) formula to calculate sample sizes.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where **n** is the sample size, **N** is the population size (N=2316), and **e** is the level of precision. By using this formula at 95% confidence level and 5% level of precision the sample size was:-

$$n = 2316 / 1 + 2316(0.05)^2, \quad n = \underline{\underline{342}}$$

Then the researcher was used simple random sampling technique to select the proportionate sample respondents from each textile factory to fill the questionnaire.

2.5 Method of Data Analysis

The researcher used IBM SPSS version 20 and SEM (Structural Equation Model) Amos version 21 as a data input and analysis. This method is preferred by the researcher because it estimates the multiple and interrelated dependence in a single analysis. Mean and standard deviation was used for descriptive analysis and Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) Amos graphics software version 21 was used for inferential analysis.

3. Result and Discussion

3.1 Descriptive Analysis

The following descriptive table presents open leadership (OL), innovation orientation (IO) and organisational culture (OC) to assess the level of employee's perception to the research variables.

Table 3.1 Descriptive statistics

| | N | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|------------------------|-----|--------|----------------|
| Open Leadership | 327 | 3.5560 | .54908 |
| Innovation Orientation | 327 | 3.7562 | .58119 |

| | | | |
|------------------------|-----|--------|--------|
| Organizational Culture | 327 | 3.9040 | .68266 |
|------------------------|-----|--------|--------|

Source: own survey result, 2020/21

The level of open leadership practice in textile factories in the Amhara regional state is suitable, with leaders in the institutions embracing social technologies to communicate critical information with their staff and to make their jobs easier. Furthermore, such an open leadership practice is important to enhance or motivate their employees by allowing them to participate in various factory management decisions, which is critical to utilizing their employees' talents to keep their firms competitive and profitable in such a changing and volatile business environment. Therefore, based on the level and practice of open leadership in the textile factories, we can understand that social technologies such as Facebook, twitter, WhatsApp etc. are used to share information among organizational members and employees are empowered to participate in different organisational decisions.

The status or level of innovation orientation in the case area is good, implying that institutions are capable of introducing new methods, goods, and strategies that will help the firm win the textile industry competition and better meet customer demands and wants. Furthermore, such firm capability, openness, and readiness for the introduction and commercialization of new novel products encourages employees to participate in creating something new that benefits both the employees and the firms in general by fostering an innovative organisational culture that is critical in today's business, which is changing rapidly both domestically and internationally.

Similarly we may also deduce that the level of organisational culture practiced in businesses is high, implying that businesses allow employees to experiment and collaborate, which is critical in maintaining a positive working environment or culture.

3.2 Inferential Analysis

To evaluate the direct and the indirect effects of variables Amos graphics software (SEM) was used that is the direct effect of open leadership (OL) on organizational culture (OC) is measured without entering the mediating variable to compare the direct and indirect effects to categorize the type of mediation. As a result the regression weights, the direct effect of open leadership on organizational culture and the mediating role of innovation orientation (IO) between open leadership and organisational culture are presented as follows:

The Direct Effect of Open Leadership on Organisational Culture

Ho1: Open leadership has positive and significant effect on organisational culture.

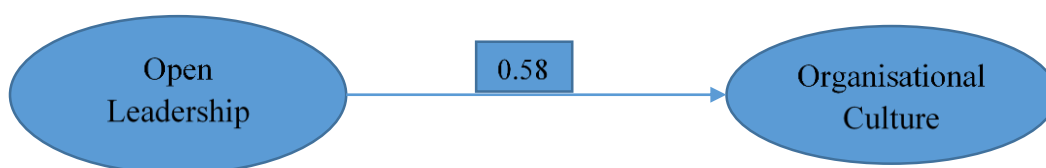


Figure 3.1 Relationship between Open Leadership and organisational culture

As indicated above one of the research hypothesis is about the relationship between open leadership and organisational culture to investigate the direct effect of open leadership on organisational culture at the textile factories and the out of the SEM approach using Amos graphics reveals that open leadership affects organisational culture ($\beta=0.58$) and it is statistically significant and accepted ($P=0.00$).

The result indicated that the existence of open leaders in organisations facilitates the presence of appropriate innovative organisational culture that beliefs, role, power and other innovative organizational elements are affected. Therefore, when leaders become open and share information to their organisational members using social media like Instagram, Facebook, and twitter the culture of innovation in organizations increases. Hence, we can generalize that open leadership positively affects organisational culture according to the result above in textile factories of found in Amhara regional state, Ethiopia.

The above positive relationship between open leadership and organizational culture is also supported by previous researchers in the area like Klein, Wallis, & Cooke, (2013), Schein, (1992) prominent researchers in leadership and culture have opined that leader behavior helps culture evolve and change, Leaders control mechanisms through which they influence the culture, including adapting to their environment, establishing and evolving workgroups, empowering sub-cultures that represent ideal norms, creating systems of task forces and committees to manage the culture, and other techniques.

The other researchers Brockbank, Ulrich, & Yakonich, (2002), also found as Leadership can shape culture through the development of competencies such as creating trusting relationships and establishing personal credibility Leadership that possesses 'personal credibility competencies' may have a significant impact on business results. These can include strategic management domains such as culture management, managing change, strategic decision making, and market-driven integration and connectivity.

Furthermore, Karcioğlu & Kurt, (2009) discovered that one of the most important characteristics of open leaders is that they contribute to the development of new relationships and trust between employees and customers through social media platforms such as blogs, Twitter, Facebook, and other new technology products.

In general, we can deduce that open leaders have a positive impact on organisational culture, i.e., the autonomy, trust, and openness of leaders in organisations facilitate the existence of positive relationships among employees and the maintenance of a conducive innovative organizational culture. It is also critical to share organizational resources in order to achieve organisational goals and missions.

Open Leadership, Innovation Orientation and Organisational Culture

The association between open leadership and organizational culture with innovation orientation as a mediating variable, the effect of open leadership on innovation orientation, and the relationship between innovation orientation and organisational culture are all shown in Table 3.2 route estimates.

Table 3.2 the Regression Weights for Every Path Estimate

| Construct | Path | Construct | Beta Estimate | S.E. | C.R. | P-value | Result |
|-----------|------|-----------|---------------|-------|-------|---------|-------------|
| IO | ← | OL | 0.53 | 0.064 | 8.232 | 0.000 | Significant |
| OC | ← | OL | 0.264 | 0.078 | 3.369 | 0.000 | Significant |
| OC | ← | IO | 0.565 | 0.089 | 6.371 | 0.000 | Significant |

Source: Amos Graphics output

The effect of Open Leadership on Innovation Orientation

Ho2: Open leadership has positive and significant effect on innovation orientation.

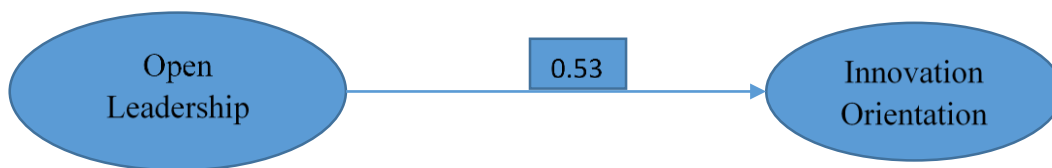


Figure 3.2 Relationship between Open Leadership and Innovation Orientation

As depicted above and according to the study one of the research hypothesis is about the relationship between open leadership and innovation orientation to investigate the effect of open leadership on innovation orientation of the textile factories and the out of the SEM approach using Amos graphics revealed that open leadership affects innovation orientation ($\beta=0.53$) and it is statistically significant and accepted ($P=0.00$). It is important to investigate how much open leaders encourage or support the existence of innovating new goods, services, methods or procedures to enable their firm competitive enough both in domestic and international markets by providing the necessary inputs to increase their ability to introduce new products to their new and potential customers.

This shows when leaders become more open the firm’s capability of innovating new products enhances which can be considered as a competitive advantage to organisations to win the competition in the textile industry. Hence, according to the result above open leadership influences innovation orientation positively that is the openness of leaders in organisations increases the innovative capability of institutions that enables them more preferred by their customers by their new value adding products in relation to their competitors in the industry.

Previous research has also demonstrated that there is a strong association between open leadership and innovation orientation, which has a good impact on employee creativity. Other researchers also

discovered that if companies want to encourage people to be creative, they should focus on innovation (Gupta & Banerjee, 2016).

In a recent study Uslu et al., (2015), open leadership was found to have stronger linkages with organisational outcomes such as organizational innovativeness and corporate entrepreneurship when compared to transactional and transformational leadership styles.

Therefore, the result shows as there is positive relationship between open leadership and innovation orientation that is when leaders become more open it increases the capability and the openness of firms to innovate products, strategy, market, behavioral, and technology.

The effect of Innovation Orientation on Organisational Culture

Ho3: Innovation orientation has positive and significant effect on organizational culture.

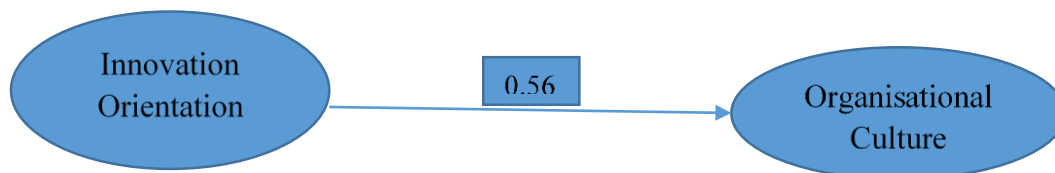


Figure 3.3 Relationship between Innovation Orientation and Organisational Culture

According to the study the other research hypothesis is about the relationship between innovation orientation and organizational culture to investigate the effect of innovation orientation on the organisational culture of the textile factories and the output of the SEM approach using Amos graphics revealed that innovation orientation affects innovative organisational culture ($\beta=0.56$) and it is statistically significant and accepted ($P=0.00$). This result indicated that when organizations are ready, open and capable in different aspects to introduce new things to their existing and prospective customers it positively influences the existence of fantastic innovative organisational culture. The presence of such conducive innovative organisational culture that fosters a positive relationship among organisational members due to innovation orientation is important to exploit or benefit the organisational resources like manpower, finance etc. by introducing new products and others to customers.

Previous studies in the area, such as Dundon, (2002), as cited by Siguaw et al., (2006), investigated and discovered that organisational culture is another facet of operational competency shaped by the firm's innovation orientation, often characterized as a culture in which employees are encouraged to challenge and experiment, and scholars in the field argue that innovation oriented firms must create an environment in which employees are free to explore without fear of failure.

As a result, it is possible to conclude that organizations with a strong innovation orientation are more likely to implement formal and informal policies, procedures, practices, and incentives aimed at stimulating and maintaining innovation-directed individual employee actions, which are critical to surviving and winning in the competitive textile industry environment.

The Mediating Role of Innovation Orientation between Open Leadership and Organisational Culture

Ho4: Innovation orientation has a mediation effect on the positive relationship between open leadership and organisational culture.

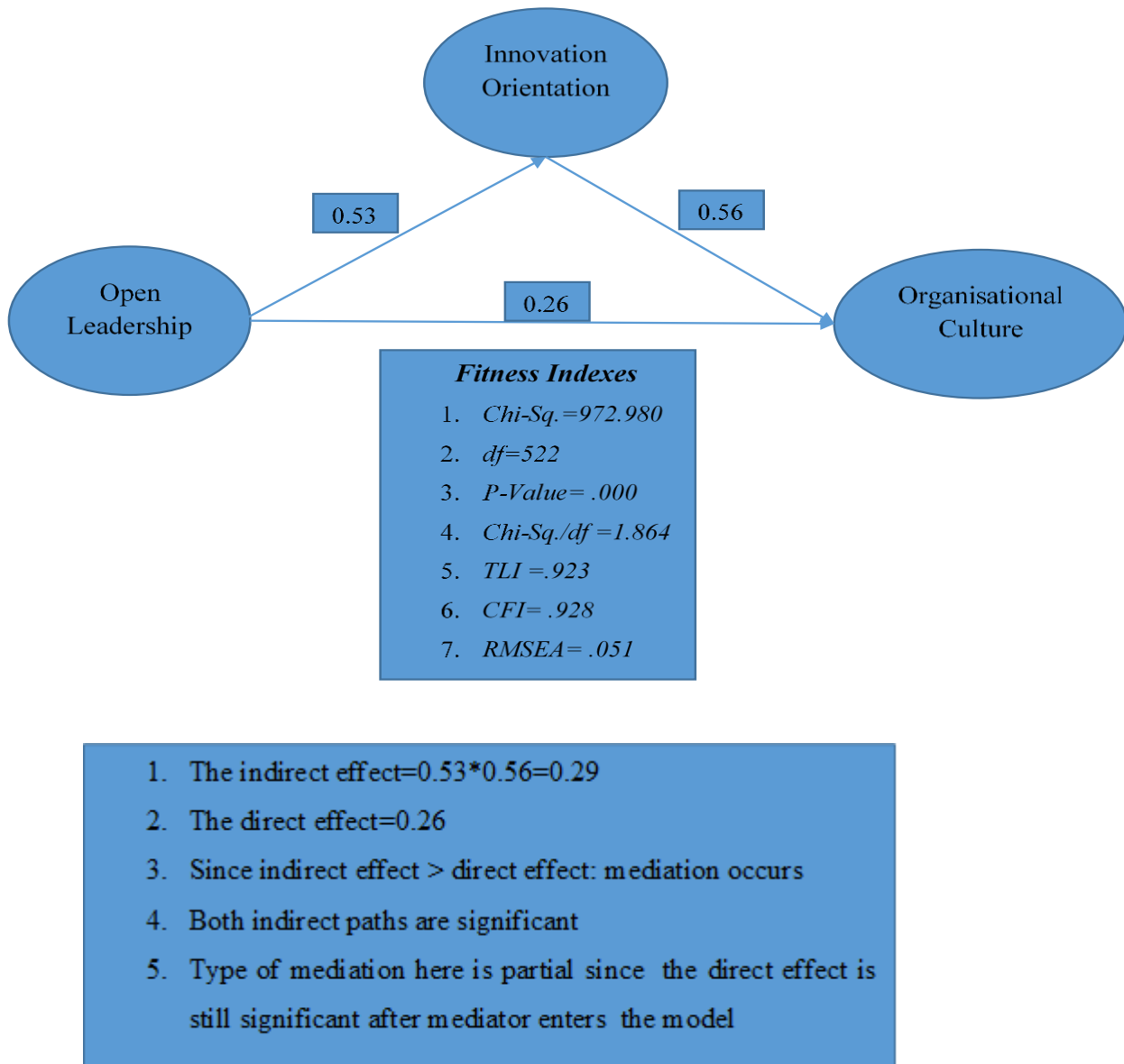


Figure 3.4: the mediating role of Innovation orientation between open leadership and organisational culture

According to the study the other research hypothesis is about the relationship between open leadership and organisational culture to investigate the mediating role of innovation orientation between these variables of the textile factories and the output of the SEM approach using Amos graphics shows that the direct effect of open leadership on employees creativity is ($\beta=0.26$) and the indirect effect of open leadership on organisational culture through innovation orientation is ($\beta=0.29$)

which shows as the indirect effect is greater than the direct effect ($\beta=0.29 > \beta=0.26$) and it is statistically significant and accepted for both the direct and the indirect effect ($P=0.00$).

Because the effect goes through the mediating variable (innovation orientation), as illustrated in the figure (3.1) above, the direct effect of open leadership on organisational culture ($\beta =0.58$) is reduced to ($\beta=0.26$), indicating partial mediation. The mediation described above is partial mediation because open leadership has an impact on organisational culture even when the mediating variable is absent, but with a lower Beta value than the mediating effect, which is the product of open leadership and innovation orientation on organisational culture.

Hence, open leadership more affects organisational culture through innovation orientation than directly to organisational culture. The innovation capability of firms more creates appropriate innovative organisational culture when there is open leaders who give autonomy to its employees and sharing information to its organisational members using social technology such as twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp etc.

Previous research, such as Narver et al., (2004), backs up this research finding by examining the intervening variable effect of the innovation orientation variable as an interim variable, which is the intensive realization of innovation activities in the manufacturing sector, and thus the effects of open leadership on organisational culture. A business's innovation orientation also allows it to learn about and track customer needs, develop new products or services in response, and implement internal processes that improve customer understanding and product development, allowing it to achieve and maintain leadership in its target markets.

In addition, Cerne et al., (2013) also discovered that encouraging innovation is a key mediator in fostering positive organisational member relationships among individuals in institutions. As a result, people who value innovation and work in an environment that tolerates mistakes are more likely to be creative.

Finally, because the indirect effect is bigger than the direct effect, we can conclude that innovation orientation partially mediates the association between open leadership and organisational culture in textile factories.

4. Conclusion

The reason behind this research is to investigate the effect of open leadership on organisational culture with the role of innovation orientation as a mediating variable in the textile factories found in Amhara national regional state.; therefore, based the results of data processing, analysis and discussion that has been done; the researcher has concluded that the following major points:

Open leadership positively influences innovation orientation that is when institutional leaders become open leaders they can enhance the innovation capability, flexibility and openness to introduce new methods, products etc. which can enable firms more competitive in the textile industry. Openness of leaders is required today because sharing organisational information to employees, give chance to employees to participate in enterprise decisions promotes staffs to participate in innovations. The existence of open leaders is important to build and maintain conducive organisational culture that can mobilize every organizational members and stake holders to contribute what is expected from each to achieve organizational objectives.

There is positive relationship between innovation orientation and organisational culture that is the overall innovation readiness and capability of organisations is a predictor to create appropriate innovative culture in firms which is important to initiate staffs to share resources, to work together and to maintain positive relationships among workers.

Innovation orientation has a partial mediation role between open leadership and organisational culture. When the mediating or intervening variable innovation orientation entered to the model the effect of open leadership on organisational culture decreased due to the shift of the impact through the mediating variable. The innovative capability, openness, flexibility of firms facilitates employees to work together, share resources, experiences when leaders are open to share and participate their staff through social technology.

Open leaders stimulate innovation flexibility, employees creative behavior and fostering organizational culture in the textile factories. In this time, the use of social technology is increasing day to day and involving or sharing leadership role to employees become mandatory for the purpose of maximizing profit or outfitting the competition in the textile industry. The results and conclusions of this study pave the way for future scientific research in the area and increases empirical studies to the limited literature in the field. The results of the research may also broaden the knowledge on the roles of leaders in stimulating the organisation's innovative activity, the employees' opinions on the leadership role in stimulating innovation in the organisation and building and maintaining conducive organisational culture.

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