

Entrepreneurial Leadership and Employee Innovative Behaviour in Software Industry

SUMMERA MALIK, TAHIR MUMTAZ AWAN and ANUM NISAR

The study is focused on the effect of entrepreneurial leadership on employee innovative behaviour while using organisational change, employee commitment, and commitment towards change as a mediator. The study used structured questionnaires to gather data through convenience sampling technique from 213 respondents (response rate equals 61.7 percent). The data collected was then analysed by structural equation modelling technique using SPSS-AMOS to examine the relationships. It was found that innovation, being the core competency of the software houses is the most important factor for employees. Employee innovative behaviour helps organisations to survive in this dynamic business environment and is encouraged by top management. It was noted that an entrepreneurial leader has a significant and positive relationship with the innovative behaviour of the employee. Also, an entrepreneurial leader had a positive and significant relation with organisational change, employee commitment, and employee commitment towards change, hence, change is essential for these types of organisations. Entrepreneurial leaders create an environment to support change and innovation and to overcome the internal and external issues of the organisation. The implications of this study are two-fold, i.e. organisation perspective, which states that teach and train process should be followed by leaders too and leaders' perspective, that deals with skill development to support change, motivate and encouraging employees so that they can perform better and update their skills.

Keywords: Motivation; entrepreneurial leadership; employee innovative behaviour; commitment; software industry

1. INTRODUCTION

In this time of competition increased use of technology and innovative changes has become the most important factor and it is difficult for the organisations to survive without constant adaptation and change (Drsensky, Egold, & van Dick, 2012; Straatmann, Nolte, & Seggewiss, 2018). Moreover, innovative champions make the innovation possible and they have inborn abilities to innovate. It helps and encourages other members in their social network to innovative because of their knowledge and authority in the workplace (Coakes & Smith, 2007). Most of the time confusion occurs between innovation and inventions so innovation goes beyond the normal changes and adaptations and it is different from normal continuous improvement, and it must be executed (Miao, Newman, Schwars, & Cooper, 2018; Moore & Hartley, 2010). It is

Summera Malik < > is PhD. Scholar, Department of Education, International Islamic University, Islamabad, Pakistan. Tahir Mumtaz Awan <tahir_mumtas@comsats.edu.pk> is Assistant Professor, Department of Management Sciences, COMSATS University Islamabad, Pakistan. Anum Nisar < > is MS Scholar, Department of Management Sciences, COMSATS University Islamabad, Pakistan.

indicated that creative employees are important for an organisation's success and survival (Amabile, 1996; Nedkovski, Guerci, De Battisti, & Siletti, 2017). Innovation is important for the organisations to achieve their goals (Yuan & Woodman, 2010), based on creative ideas it is an individual employee who creates, encourages, argues, adapts and is involved in the execution of ideas (Scott & Bruce, 1994). Innovation is referred to as a socio-political process, employees who are habitual of their existing system resist the change and innovation process through their thoughts and their actions in the organisation (Janssen, 2005). Organisational change can be outlined as the transfiguration of a basic aspect of a company's operations as organisational change (Hallencreuts & Turner, 2011). The behaviour of a leader affects the innovative behaviour that includes communication and participation in goal setting (Locke & Latham, 2002). In this study employee innovative behaviour is defined as an act of generating ideas, creating innovative thinking in the organisation (Wang, Fang, Qureshi, & Janssen, 2015). Recently some scholars developed a scale on which they assessed how entrepreneurial leadership affects and directs their subordinates in identifying and exploiting entrepreneurial opportunities and affirm its legitimacy from other leadership styles, for example, transformational leadership (Renko, El Tarabishy, Carsrud, & Brännback, 2015). Most people are habitual of their existing system so employees who come up with new ideas of innovation (Aseem & Yasmin, 2016), challenge the existing system (Ford, 2000; Hon, Bloom, & Crant, 2014). Entrepreneurial leadership is the capacity to impact others and to oversee resources deliberately to give importance to both opportunity-seeking and advantage-seeking practices (Kuratko, 2007). An entrepreneurial leader acts as a role model for their subordinates by involving himself in the entrepreneurial activities and also facilitates and motivates their subordinates to engage in these types of activities and are more innovative at the workplace (Aseem & Yasmine, 2015; Meijer, 2014; Miao et al., 2018). Innovative behaviours expect to accomplish the commencement and purposeful presentation (within a work job, group, or organisation) of new and valuable thoughts, procedures, items, or techniques (Oukes, Veenendaal, & Hofman, 2010; Scott & Bruce, 1994). Entrepreneurial leadership affects the change process of an organisation and has an impact on employee commitment. In this study, employee commitment is defined as it implies to the psychological closeness of employees to their work environment (Awan, Li, & Wang, 2018; Hackett, Bycio, & Hausdorf, 1994) if employees perceive that changes in their work styles would be impacted as a result of changes, their commitment and commitment towards change would also be altered (Ye, Marinova, & Singh, 2007). If the organisation takes care of its employees in return, employees would also enhance their commitment to the organisation (Li & Sheng, 2014). There is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and innovative employee behaviour (Miao et al., 2018). This study investigates this relationship by adding three mediators; employee commitment, organisational change, and employee commitment towards change which were also significantly tested by other researchers (e.g. Straatmann et al., 2018; Yaseen, Ali, & Asrar-ul-Haq, 2018) to test their impact on employee innovative behaviour. Hence, the two objectives for the current study can be outlined as first, to investigate the relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and employee innovative behaviour, and second, to investigate the impact of three mediators (organisational change, employee commitment, and employee commitment towards change) on employee innovative behaviour.

1.1. Literature Review

Employees' innovative behaviours rely not only on the intellectual style, character inspiration and capital but also depend on the push from the external context, particularly the leadership and environment (Mumford, Scott, Gaddis, & Strange, 2002). It is argued in the literature that innovation in an organisation is significantly affected by the interaction of employees at multiple levels in the organisation and it escalates the innovation process (Kabasheva, Rudaleva, Bulnina, & Askhatova, 2015). Research conducted on employee innovative behaviour doesn't mean that the result will be profitable for the organisation in all the circumstances. It can result in a loss for the organisation as well so the basic aim to study employee innovative behaviour is to check their impact on organisational performance because in most of the cases it is a perception of employees and organisation that innovative behaviour is beneficial to the organisation (Blouch & Aseem, 2019; Peansupap & Walker, 2006). This study contributes to the body of knowledge related to the history of employees' innovative behaviour and helps practitioners to address the opportunities and issues involved. Employees' innovative behaviour is heavily influenced by the external environment (Awan et al., 2018; Mumford et al., 2002). Entrepreneurial leadership is defined as the capacity to impact others and to oversee resources deliberately to give importance to both opportunity-seeking and advantage-seeking practices (Kuratko, 2007). The entrepreneurial leader acts as a mentor for their followers and motivates them so they can creatively perform their work-related activities. They also motivate their followers/employees to imitate innovative behaviour (Meijer, 2014; Mughal, Ahmad, Gondal, Awan, & Chaudhry, 2010). The support of a leader towards innovation can encourage the attainment of the set goals. To clarify the function leaders must provide aspects through which organisations can analyse the performance of the employees (Montani, Battistelli, & Odoardi, 2017). Employees should be motivated by the supervisors so they will improve their skills and try to be more creative and show more innovative behaviour (Schuckert, Kim, Paek, & Lee, 2018). Leader support plays an important role in resource allocation, to identify problems, and to motivate employees to solve a particular problem (Kirmeyer & Dougherty, 1988). From previous research it was found that entrepreneurial leadership has a significant effect on employee innovative behaviour.

Employees are the main player of organisational change as they can resist the change (Conner & Armitage, 1998). Lewin has proposed 3 steps model of change; unfreeze, change and freeze, and during all this process communication is an important tool to resolve a problem, motivate employees to follow the change. Social interaction among the employees plays an important role in the change process. Leaders through their inspirational speeches can motivate their employees for change and other cultural values (Adeniji, Iyiola, Agboola, Akinbode, & Epetimehin, 2016). The strategic dimension is concerned about providing direction of vision and goals to subordinates and prepares employees for uncertain circumstances like unexpected change. For change, strategic framework can be developed through a six-step process i.e. preparing the organisation, developing a vision, execution of the plan, checking, communication and work, motivation execution, and evaluation (Agbim, Oriarewo, & Owutuamor, 2013; Price & Chahal, 2006). Personal dimension is related to an individual's ability to innovate, emotional stability, and appropriate allocation of resources and courage that

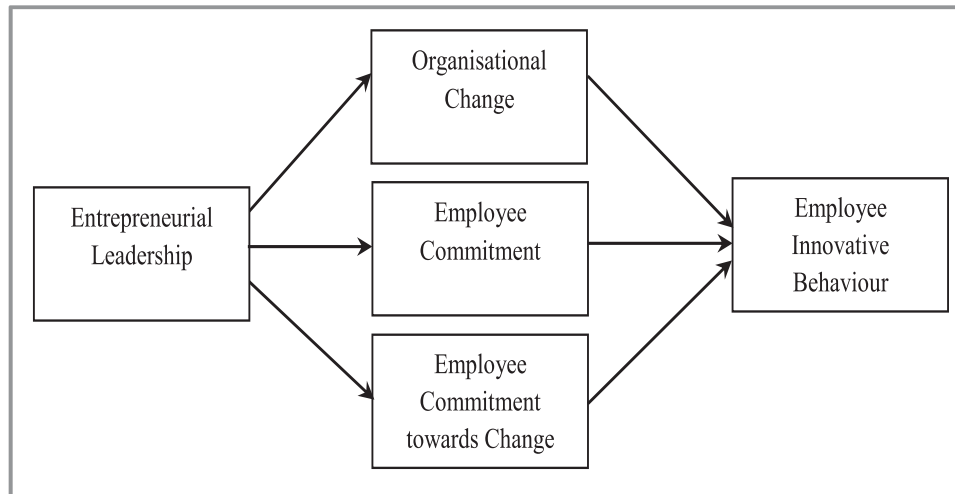
helps in the change process (Agbim et al., 2013). The organisation increases its competencies being innovative at an individual, team, and organisational level (Feng, Huang, & Shang, 2016; Mumford et al., 2002). Employee innovative behaviour depends on the organisation's ability to adapt to organisational change and the learning processes of an organisation. Organisations have to forgo changes that are not suitable for the environment. The organisational change will trip employee innovative behaviour that will increase organisational innovative competence and effectiveness (Feng et al., 2016).

Communication is an important tool for the change to happen and it improves the commitment to change and removes the barrier in resistance of change (Dolphin, 2005). Motivation and commitment both are energising forces, but motivation is broader than commitment. Whenever commitment or motivation increases or decreases, they have an impact on each other (Meyer, Becker, & Vandenberghe, 2004). Strategic and personal references to providing direction to subordinates, helps decision making, personal innovation, emotional stability, and proper allocation of resources. If the employees are made part of the decision making, team rewarding, training, and job security, it will create a high commitment environment at the workplace (Agbim et al., 2013; Uslu, 2015). There exists a give and take the relationship between the employee and the employer. The more an employee feels committed towards the workplace; the more would be his/her loyalty. Employees who are interested in their job and agree with the organisational goals and objectives; show more highly innovative behaviour (Dolphin, 2005; Li & Sheng, 2014).

Entrepreneurial leadership is different from other leadership styles as it creates new opportunities, acquires resources for utilisation of the opportunities, and creates employee commitment in an effective way (Renko et al., 2015). During the transition period, the commitment of an employee is noted to have an impact on organisational effectiveness (Appelbaum, Degbe, MacDonald, & Nguyen-Quang, 2015a, b). It was studied that a swift change in the management practices is linked with a higher level of commitment, even when the leader is absent (Appelbaum et al., 2015b). Three types of commitments, normative, affective, continuance are noted to be positively linked with the need for organisational change based on commitment theory (Meyer, Srinivas, Lal, & Topolnytsky, 2007). Thus, organisations and employees have a two-way relationship of commitment towards change and in return employees produce innovative behaviour (Li & Sheng, 2014).

1.2. Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses

Leader-Member Exchange theory focuses on the social relationship between employees. Leaders focus on the quality relationship with their followers which results in employee commitment, performance, role clarity, and turnover intention (Yukl, 2002). Good relationships between leader and follower have a positive impact on employee innovative behaviour. The leadership model emphasises on various roles of leaders that activates the innovative behaviour of employees and leadership involvement in the change process (Kotter, 1990). A leader's role can be varied and can change employees' commitment and employees' behaviour towards innovation (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2007). Based on the literature review and above discussion the theoretical model for our study is depicted in figure 1 below and hypotheses are outlined afterward.

Fig. 1. Theoretical Framework

- H1:** Entrepreneurial leadership and employee innovative behaviour have a significant relationship.
- H2:** Entrepreneurial leadership has a significant relationship with employee commitment.
- H3:** Entrepreneurial leadership has a significant relationship with organisational change.
- H4:** Entrepreneurial leadership has a significant relationship with employee commitment towards change.
- H5:** Organisation change has a significant relationship with employee innovative behaviour.
- H6:** Employee commitment has a significant relationship with employee innovative behaviour.
- H7:** Employee commitment to change has a significant relationship with employee innovative behaviour.
- H8:** The relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and employee innovative behaviour is mediated by organisational change.
- H9:** The relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and employee innovative behaviour is mediated by employee commitment towards change.
- H10:** The relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and employee innovative behaviour is mediated by employee commitment.

2. METHODS

In this study we used positivist philosophy which involves data collection through surveys, observation, and experimentation (Quiñones, Schiffman, & Kanuk, 1997; Schiffman & Kanuk, 2005). The current study is deductive, quantitative, and cross-sectional in nature. The sampling technique used for the study is non-

probability sampling and the data has been gathered through convenience sampling, a technique where respondents were selected according to ease, and accessibility of the researcher (Etikan, Musa, & Alkassim, 2016). The data has been collected through a structured questionnaire from different software development firm houses in two cities (Islamabad and Rawalpindi) of Pakistan. A total of 324 questionnaires were distributed through personal visits to the said software houses. The respondents were given two days to fill the survey. In the follow-up visit, 213 filled questionnaires were obtained (61.7 percent response rate). Using Statistical Package for Social Scientists (SPSS), the data was analysed through analysis of moment structures (AMOS), and results were calculated, which were then used to test the hypotheses.

Through extensive literature review, for entrepreneurial leadership scale was adopted (Renko et al., 2015) which was also used earlier in research (Miao et al., 2018). The reliability was checked and was found reliable as depicted in table 1 above. Employee Innovative Behaviour was measured through the scale developed by (Scott & Bruce, 1994) and referred by Miao et al. (2018). The Cronbach's alpha value was found significant (0.68) for this variable. To measure employee commitment scale (Angle & Perry, 1981) was used but was converted from a 3-point to 5-point Likert scale. The items of this scale also resulted in significant reliability values (Cronbach's alpha = 0.763). Organisational Change and Employee Commitment towards Change was measured by adapting a scale (Hechanova & Cementina-Olpoc, 2013) with a significant Cronbach's alpha value of 0.715. The final survey instrument used a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 as strongly disagree to 5 as strongly agree. The demographics questions were added to know the description of the sample, which is explained in the following section of the results.

3. RESULTS

The sample contained 167 (78.4 percent) male respondents and 46 (21.6 percent) female respondents. The education of the respondents of this study is categorised into (112) 52.6 percent graduates and (101) 47.7 percent postgraduates. Concerning age, 16.4 percent are at the age of 26 years, 20.7 percent are at the age of 27, 14.1 percent are at the age of 28 years, 13.6 percent are at the age of 29 years, 3.3 percent are at the age of 35 years and so on. The details of the demographic details are given below in Table 1.

Table 2 below shows that the standard deviation values of all variables are close to 1 which means that numbers are spread about the mean or data points tend to be close to means. The mean values of all variables lie in 3.5 which describe that average responses of respondent lies almost in neutral neither agree nor disagree. The threshold value of Skewness lies between -2 to +2 so our data value is in negative numbers which means our data is negatively skewed and the threshold value of kurtosis lies between -3 to +3 and they both show symmetry or shape of data and describe whether data is normally distributed or not. So, in our data, values lie from -0.44 to 0.69 which lies under this threshold value showing normality of data.

Table 1

Demographics Detail of Sample

		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	167	78.4
	Female	46	21.6
Education	Bachelors	112	52.6
	Masters	101	47.4
Age	21.00	4	1.9
	22.00	5	2.3
	23.00	3	1.4
	24.00	10	4.7
	25.00	18	8.5
	26.00	35	16.4
	27.00	44	20.7
	28.00	30	14.1
	29.00	29	13.6
	30.00	12	5.6
	31.00	4	1.9
	32.00	5	2.3
	33.00	5	2.3
	34.00	1	0.5
	35.00	7	3.3
	36.00	1	0.5

Source: Authors' calculation on SPSS.

Table 2

Means, Standard Deviations, Skewness and Kurtosis Values

	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis		
EL	3.18	1.06	-0.53	0.16	-0.44	0.33
EIB	3.54	1.01	-1.06	0.16	0.56	0.33
OCECTC	3.71	0.94	-0.88	0.16	0.69	0.33
EC	3.57	1.09	-1.04	0.16	0.51	0.33

EL=Entrepreneurial Leadership, EIB=Employee Innovative Behaviour, OCECTC=Organisational Change and Employee Commitment towards Change, EC=Employee Commitment.

To calculate the correlation SPSS was used, and Pearson's correlation method was applied. Below Table 3 shows that correlation value lies between -1 to 1. So, in this study correlation among all the variables are positive and significant.

Table 3

Results of Correlation Analysis

Variables	EL	EIB	OCECTC	EC
EL	1			
EIB	.397**	1		
OCECTC	.389**	.508**	1	
EC	.232**	.309**	.480**	1

**At 0.01 of significant level of Correlation (2-tailed).

The measurement model reliability and its validity can be computed through using values of Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, the value of Cronbach's alpha calculated through SPSS lies within the range from 0.6 to 0.7 or greater consider acceptable (Salma, Safiah, Ajau, & Khairil Anuar, 2015). The value of composite reliability is considered acceptable if it lies between 0.6 or above than this value (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Table 3 below shows the values of Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability of the model, which lies within their range i.e. 0.68 – 0.76 and between 0.82 - 0.86. Thus, its mean data is reliable. The value of variance lies between 0.63 - 0.67 and the criterion says that AVE values should be greater than 0.5 (Henseler, Hubona, & Ray, 2016).

Table 4

Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's Alpha	Rho-A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
EC	0.76	0.78	0.86	0.67
OCECTC	0.71	0.72	0.84	0.63
EIB	0.68	0.69	0.82	0.61
EL	0.72	0.72	0.84	0.64

EC=Employee Commitment, ECTC=Organisational Change and Employee Commitment towards Change, EIB=Employee Innovative Behaviour, EL=Entrepreneurial Leadership.

Convergent validity can be found through the results of measurement model factor loadings, composite reliability, and average variance extracted and all the values are according to their threshold value. The detailed factor loadings calculated using SPSS-AMOS are depicted in table 5 below. The suggested criterion says that loadings of each construct should be greater than 0.5 (Hair, Money, Samouel, & Page, 2007), and the actual values are all greater than 0.8 and satisfied the criteria. Loadings show that items of one variable are highly correlated with each other if their value lies in the range of 0.7, and if it is below than 0.7 then its means item of one variable also correlate with each other but have a correlation with other various items that shouldn't occur.

Table 5

Factor Loadings

Constructs	Measurement Items	Factor Loadings
Organisational Change and Employee Commitment towards Change	OCECTC 1	0.814
	OCECTC 2	0.793
	OCECTC 3	0.785
Employee Commitment	EC 1	0.834
	EC 2	0.781
	EC 3	0.849
Employee Innovative Behaviour	EIB 1	0.838
	EIB 2	0.748
	EIB 3	0.762
Entrepreneurial Leadership	EL 1	0.793
	EL 2	0.801
	EL 3	0.807

Note: All factor loadings were greater than 0.5.

The standard value of t- statistics is 1.96 or above according to the criterion. In this model, all values are above 1.96 which means relations among all variables are significant. In this model we take the same scale for organisational change and employee commitment toward change so, in the model, the study collectively added these variables. The beta values range between 0.130 to 0.437 which shows that they are positive and have a direct relationship. The threshold value for P is 0.05 any value that's below 0.05 is significant and in table 6 below, all values of p lie below 0.05 which means all relationships are significant and all hypotheses are accepted. From the literature we also deducted that the relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and employee innovative behaviour is significant as its p-value is 0.000. Thus, our first hypothesis is accepted. The relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and employee innovative behaviour is partially mediated by three variables; organisational change, employee commitment towards change, and employee commitment, and its result also shows significant p-values that are less than 0.05.

Table 6

Results of Hypothesis Testing

	OS (Beta)	Sample Mean(M)	Standard Deviation	T-Statistics	P-value
EC→EIB	0.130	0.139	0.062	2.086	0.037
ECTCOC→EIB	0.437	0.425	0.081	5.400	0.000
EL→EC	0.239	0.244	0.081	2.964	0.003
EL→ECTCOC	0.398	0.404	0.066	6.072	0.000
EL→EIB	0.227	0.232	0.062	3.664	0.000

Note: Relationships were significant at α -level=0.05.

Entrepreneurial leadership has a positive relationship with the mediators and with the dependent variable (i.e. employee innovative behaviour) which means entrepreneurial leaders are mediated through organisational change, employee commitment, and employee commitment towards change and has a significant effect on employee innovative behaviour.

4. DISCUSSION

According to the results of this study, the entrepreneurial leadership and innovative behaviour of an employee are significantly mediated using three mediators that are organisational change, employee commitment towards change, and employee commitment. There is a significant relationship between entrepreneurial leadership and employee innovative behaviour while using three mediators in this study. Their impact on entrepreneurial leadership and innovative behaviour of employee results display significant correlation, p-value and beta values also explain that the relationship is significant ($r=.232, p<0.003$ and beta values 0.239), ($r=.309, p<0.037$ and beta values 0.130), ($r=.508, p<0.000$ and beta value 0.437), ($r=.508, p<0.000$ and beta value 0.437), ($r=.389, p<0.000$ and beta values 0.398), ($r=.397, p<0.000$ and beta values 0.227). From all the values of p values and betas shows that relationships are positive and significant, so all the ten hypotheses are accepted, and literature support is also found significantly in agreement to results.

The first hypothesis is that entrepreneurial leadership has a significant relationship with employee innovative behaviour, so we accept this hypothesis (Miao et al., 2018). Second, third and fourth hypotheses are also accepted. We open different dimensions of entrepreneurial leadership and all have a positive and significant relationship with employee commitment, employee commitment towards change, and organisational change (Appelbaum et al., 2015b; Feng et al., 2016; Schuckert et al., 2018). Fifth, sixth and seventh hypotheses are accepted in which mediators have a significant relationship with a dependent variable that's employee innovative behaviour and literature also supports that employees who are interested in their job and agree with organisational goals, objectives, and their way of working mostly portray highly innovative behaviour. The organisational change will escalate the employee innovative behaviour that will increase organisational innovative competence and organisational effectiveness (Feng et al., 2016; Li & Sheng, 2014). Eighth, ninth, and tenth hypotheses are accepted as well. Scholars agree that the introduction of innovation improves the interaction amongst the employees (Kabasheva et al., 2015). Research conducted on employee innovative behaviour does not mean that the result will be profitable for an organisation it can result in a loss too. The basic aim to study employee innovative behaviour is to check their impact on organisational performance and to research on the narrative that innovative behaviour always benefits the organisation (Peansupap & Walker, 2006).

4.1. Conclusion

Like any other firm, change is important for software firms too, so they should upgrade their recruitment and selection process according to the job requirement. The organisation should give importance to matching personal skills, knowledge and discuss the role of employees. In this manner they are informed about their job responsibilities and when an organisation gives importance to their employees, they feel more loyal and committed toward the organisation. As resources and skills are scarce so employees have to gain long-lasting skills to innovate and organisations have to provide a flexible environment in which they produce more innovative behaviour.

4.2. Implications

In the current dynamic business environment, abrupt changes compel organisations to enhance change capacity. Organisations face different situations; according to previous research, leadership role enhances (Prabhu, 1999) and has an impact on different change processes including the employee's innovative behaviour. As a practice, most of the managers are ill-informed about their duty to encourage employees and most of the promotions are based on the upgrade or improvement of skills (Scott & Bruce, 1994). Leadership style plays an important role to encourage employees' innovative behaviour. Entrepreneurial leaders create an environment to support change and innovation and to overcome the internal and external issues of an organisation (Meijer, 2014). From an organisation's perspective, training their leaders, educating them in entrepreneurial leadership has a positive impact on employee innovative behaviour so organisations should give more importance to the relevant upgrades. From a leader's perspective; developing skills to support change, motivating, improving employee inclination towards change, and encouraging employees that they will deliver their

performance in a better way holds great importance. To improve their performance, they should think to update their skills. For a supportive system, leaders must support the change and also encourage their subordinates as this will increase the organisation's commitment towards employees, and employee's loyalty and commitment will also be high.

4.3. Limitations and Future Directions

This research is cross-sectional in nature but in future longitudinal studies can be conducted to produce better results. Three mediators were used in the current study but, for future research, more than three mediators can be used. Introducing a moderator may result in different outcomes, hence it is also recommended to check the same framework by introducing an interesting set of moderating variables. It is also recommended to use different dimensions of entrepreneurial leadership to examine their impact on employee innovative behaviour.

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