

Fostering Organisational Advancement through Digital Leadership Excellence: A Technology-Driven Exploration with Ambidextrous Leadership Theory

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Abstract

This study explores the use of ambidextrous leadership theory in the perspective of organisational advancement for businesses in the UAE. Effective leadership is central for success, and the research examines the interaction between leaders' opening and closing behaviours, employing ambidexterity theory to gauge their influence on exploration and exploitation within businesses. With a sample size of 430 through random sampling, the results confirm a positive influence on organisational advancement. The study also accentuates the necessity for ambidextrous leadership as a strategic imperative, clarifying its precise contributions to organisational success within the inimitable socio-cultural magnitudes of the UAE. These insights offer guidance for leaders, policymakers and stakeholders targeting to nurture innovation, adaptability and sustainable growth. In essence, this research not only supplements our understanding of ambidextrous leadership but also delivers actionable strategies tailored to the distinct business environment of the UAE.

Keywords: Ambidextrous Leadership, Leader Opening, Leader Closing, Exploration Behaviours, Exploitation Behaviours, Organisational Advancement

in the market that challenge leaders (Sommerlatte, 2020). To answer these challenges, leaders need to adopt innovative and adaptable leadership styles (Kaya et al., 2020; Ricciardi et al., 2016). There are number of leadership styles, lately ambidextrous leadership style to face these challenges have been adopted (Bilal et al., 2021; Weber et al., 2015; Wilson, 2015; Taylor et al., 2019). Ambidextrous leadership uses both explorative and exploitative for organisational advancement (III & Tushman, 2004; Rosing et al., 2011), and integrates opening and closing actions to support both exploration and exploitation behaviours (Busola Oluwafemi et al., 2020; Zacher & Rosing, 2015; Volberda et al., 2021; Heckmann et al., 2016).

We used the ambidextrous leadership style by companies in the UAE and relate its impact for organisational advancement. Though, there is enough recognition of employees ambidexterity, there is a shortage of research for ambidexterity leadership (Kassotaki, 2019; Lawrence et al., 2021; van Assen, 2020). Thus, the study uses the integration between opening and closing leadership behaviours, and its impact on exploration and exploitation behaviours, w.r.t. UAE companies. Also, the study also explores the interaction between leader opening and closing behaviours and their impact on organisational advancement.

The article presents the literature review and hypotheses for developing the conceptual framework. The next section encompasses the research methodology for the research. The next section mentions the outcomes in detail, and concludes with a final section summarising key insights.

Introduction

There is profound effect of leadership on organisational advancement (Buil et al., 2019; Mazzetti & Schaufeli, 2022; Deshwal & Ali, 2020). There are constant challenges

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Literature Review for Hypothesis Formulation

Theoretical Perspectives of Ambidextrous Leadership

Duncan pioneered the notion of organisational ambidexterity, which is based on the duality of structures that foster creativity (Duncan, 1976). (Tushman & O'Reilly, 1996) later elaborated on the concept in organisational learning. Ambidexterity refers to an organisation's ability to leverage present strengths while also investigating future potential (Crescenzi & Gagliardi, 2018). Exploitation is concerned with refinement and efficiency, while exploration is concerned with search, variety and experimentation (Osiyevskyy et al., 2020).

Three factors are proposed by the ambidexterity theory of leadership for innovation and organisational advancement (Baskarada et al., 2016; Rosing & Zacher, 2017): opening leadership behaviour fosters investigation, closed leadership behaviour supports exploitation and flexibility across time permits switching between both behaviours. Exploration is facilitated by opening conduct, which encourages experimentation and autonomy. Closing conduct lowers variation by directing subordinates to specified objectives and encouraging exploitation.

Ambidextrous leadership uses both exploratory and exploitative activities, and is different from transformative leadership (Zhao et al., 2020; Martínez-Climent et al., 2019).

Leader Opening and Exploration Behaviour

Leadership opening and exploration behaviour has an impact on organisational advancement (Rodriguez & Hechanova, 2014; Engelen et al., 2014). Such leadership style gives free hand to team members to have new ideas and take risks. Thus, leaders create an environment where the employees feel empowered (Lenka & Gupta, 2019; Bai et al., 2022; Segarra et al., 2019). Thus, the hypotheses can be stated as:

H1: Leader opening behaviour has a positive impact on Exploration behaviour.

Leader Closing and Exploitation Behaviour

Leader closing and exploitation behaviour is another mechanism identified for organisational advancement (Alghamdi, 2018). In this case, the leaders adopt optimisation strategies (Duc et al., 2020). Such an approach, helps the leaders to use the available resources to the maximum (Schnellbacher et al., 2019). Leaders devise strategies to use the current resources to maximum for optimal performance, thereby, focusing on organisational performance (Katou et al., 2021; Martínez-Climent et al., 2019). Thus, the hypotheses statement is given as:

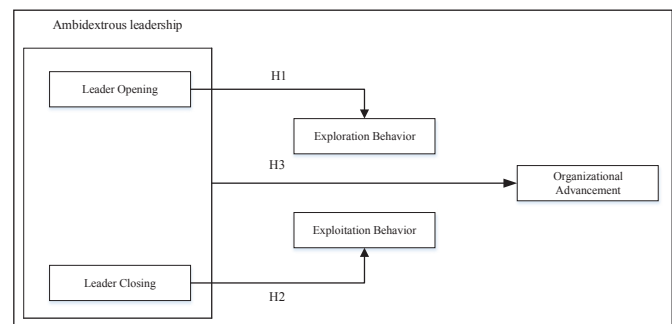
H2: Leader Closing has a Positive Impact on Exploitation behaviour.

Leader Opening and Leader Closing for Organisational Advancement

The interaction between leader opening and leader closing behaviours is also important for organisational advancement (Alghamdi, 2018). By adopting such a leadership style, leaders take risks by giving free hand to employees as well as make optimal use of resources. This helps the companies to identify new opportunities through effective use of resources (Kremer et al., 2019; Hu et al., 2020; Zhang & Han, 2019). Thus, hypotheses statement can be stated as:

H3: The interaction between leaders' opening and closing behaviours has a positive impact on Organisational Advancement.

The proposed model is shown in Fig. 1.



Source: Author.

Fig. 1: Proposed Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

Questionnaire Design

Data for this study was taken through an online survey. The assessment featured a part combining results for five factors: LOB (leader opening behaviour), LCB (leader closing behaviour), EB1 (exploration behaviour), EB2 (exploitation behaviour), and OA (organisational advancement). The subjects in the survey were business leaders in the UAE. The survey, which was performed in English in the UAE. Respondents used a 5-point Likert scale, running from 1 for “strongly disagree” to 5 for “strongly agree”.

Respondents and Data Collection

To test the study’s hypotheses, a survey conducted online was performed in the UAE, targeting business executives. Participants were promised of confidentiality and privacy of their data. Conducted in English, the official language for possible participants, the study applied a random sample method to ensure broad coverage. Initial discovery of suitable participants was followed by getting clear answers and those meeting standards were considered acceptable participants. Participants were informed on the research’s goal, and explicit permission was gained before starting the online survey. A total of 430 responses were collected between January to June 2023.

Data Analysis

The data analysis was done using R programming language using the features of partial least squares structural equation modelling. The libraries from R programming is used to do the statistical analysis involving reliability, discriminant validity and convergent validity. The hypothesis testing was also used to examine and confirm the results.

Measurement Model

The study tested the measuring model for reliability, discriminant validity and convergent validity. The results, given in Tables 1 and 2. The outcomes from the tables display significant reliability and validity.

Table 1: Composite Reliability and Average Variance

Variables	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
LOB	0.74	0.86
LCB	0.77	0.97
{LOB+LCB}	0.72	0.79

Table 2: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

Variables	LOB	LCB	{EB1+EB2}
LOB	X		
LCB	0.27	X	
{LOB+LCB}	0.19	0.23	X

Structural Model

The importance of path coefficients and theories was analysed, as shown in Fig. 2 and Table 3. Among the three research hypotheses, all are confirmed. As shown in Table 3, LOB ($\beta = 0.32$, $t = 6.49$, $p < 0.05$) has a significant effect on EB1, and LCB ($\beta = 0.27$, $t = 6.50$, $p < 0.05$) directly impacts EB2. Also, Both LOB and LCB ($\beta = 0.29$, $t = 6.66$, $p < 0.05$) directly influence the OA. Therefore, all H1, H2, H3, and H4 are supported.

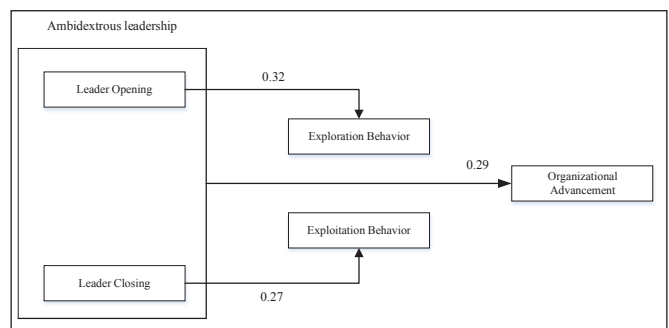


Fig. 2: Model Evaluation Result

Table 3: Hypotheses Results

Hypotheses	Path	β	T-Values	P-Values	Supported
H1	LOB → EB1	0.32	6.49	5.32e-6	Yes
H2	LCB → EB2	0.27	6.50	2.15e-10	Yes
H3	{ LOB+LCB } → OA	0.29	6.66	8.19e-11	Yes

Discussion

This research conducted in the UAE dives into the ambidexterity theory of leadership for organisational advancement. According to ambidextrous leadership theory, the findings support the hypothesis that leader opening promotes exploration behaviour while leader closing promotes exploitation behaviour. Notably, the research emphasises that the existence of leader opening and closing actions at the same time adds to overall organisational growth. This supports the ambidexterity theory's contention that achieving a balance between stimulating creativity and preserving structure leads to increased organisational innovativeness and improved outcomes.

Conclusion

This study makes a significant addition to current research by introducing an entirely novel utilisation of the ambidexterity theory of leadership for organisational progress in the UAE. Despite having been researched elsewhere, the results confirm its applicability in the UAE setting. The research supports the ambidexterity theory by revealing that higher degrees of leader opening and closing behaviours correlate with stronger exploration and exploitation inside companies. This emphasises the significance of leaders fluidly switching between opening and closing behaviours, which stimulate creativity and shutting behaviours, which improve efficiency. Through ambidextrous leadership training for executives, organisations are urged to build an innovative culture by encouraging exploration and exploitation. Future research should address elements such as autonomy, self-belief and a supportive atmosphere, use longitudinal designs to investigate causality and include objective measurements such as new idea creation to evaluate employee innovative ability.

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