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Leadership and Followers' Innovative Work Behavior Relationship Research: Connecting the Dots Using Systematic Bibliometrics

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Abstract

Empirical research established that leadership is a critical determinant of followers' innovative work behavior, and has reached a sufficient level of maturity to warrant a comprehensive review. However, the existing reviews frequently examined leadership and followers' innovative work behavior (IWB) separately, resulting in a distorted picture of the development and relevance of their joint contribution. To address this gap, the paper aims to review the studies examining the relationships between leadership and IWB through a hybrid review. Hence, bibliometric analysis and systematic review were conducted to understand the phenomenon. The data analysis included performance analysis and science mapping by employing VOSviewer and bibliometrix, alongside content analysis of studies obtained from the Scopus database covering the period from 2008 to 2021. Results revealed that transformational leadership was most studied, followed by empowering, inclusive, and servant leadership. Most studies employ social exchange and social cognitive theory. The majority of the studies adopted a quantitative cross-sectional research design. The research examined the mediators and moderators utilized to explore the relationship between leadership and IWB and discovered variations in the empirical results. The prospects for future research are shown in terms of constructs, theoretical lenses, and methodologies.

Keywords: bibliometric analysis, innovative work behavior, leadership, systematic review.

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1 Introduction

Gaining and retaining a competitive edge, ensuring survival, and fostering growth all depend on innovation (Bos-Nehles et al., 2017a; Tkotz et al., 2018). Hence, organizations need innovative employees to survive and prosper in facing turbulent, and challenging times (Chen et al., 2020). However, organizations are striving hard to understand factors that foster IWB among their employees (Amabile, 1996; Mumford et al., 2002; Venketsamy & Lew, 2022), because every new idea, primarily, originates in the minds of individuals (Gupta & Singh, 2014).

IWB is primarily defined by West and Farr (1990) as "the intentional introduction and application within a job, work team or organization of ideas, processes, products or procedures which are new to that job, work team or organization" (p. 9). Organizations rely on their employees to consistently innovate their processes, products, and procedures to sustain their competitive position (Abualoush et al., 2022). Consequently, IWB is regarded as one of the most important criteria for successful organizations (Bos-Nehles & Veenendaal, 2019; Kmieciak,

2021), particularly because continuous innovation needs people to go above and beyond their job obligations (Abualoush et al., 2022). Therefore, organizations that seek innovation should capitalize on their employees' talents and competencies, as well as their motivation to innovate (Newman et al., 2018). However, the ability to create and innovate depends not only on the individuals' characteristics but also on their work environment or external factors (Amabile et al., 1996; Mumford et al., 2002; Woodman et al., 1993). As a result, researchers have tried to identify the antecedents or elements that lead to an individual's ability for creativity and IWB (Alfy & Naithani, 2021; Gumusluoglu et al., 2017; Khalili, 2016; Peerzadah et al., 2021). In particular, research has shown that leaders have a significant role in generating and fostering innovation among employees and work teams by providing an exciting and supportive atmosphere for the innovation process inside organizations (Newman et al., 2018).

Therefore, leaders play a critical role in promoting IWB in their organizations, since they are the ones who know their employees best and know which jobs require the most creativity and innovation (Wang et al., 2021; Zhang & Bartol, 2010). Researchers (for example, Kjellström et al., 2020; Piwowar-Sulej & Iqbal, 2022) contended that although any organization's present development and functioning depend on the characteristics of its leaders, the definition of "appropriate leadership" has evolved throughout time. By inspiring workers and creating an environment that is conducive to the development of their innovative and creative skills, appropriate leadership behavior has the potential to encourage IWB, which will ultimately result in improved innovation capabilities and superior competitive advantages for the organization (Afsar et al., 2019; Patiar & Wang, 2016; Schuckert et al., 2018).

Furthermore, the evolution of the nexus between leadership and IWB research and rich insights accumulated over time indicates that the leadership-IWB phenomenon has reached a sufficient level of maturity to warrant a comprehensive review. Despite the existence of a few literature reviews pertaining to leadership and IWB, they are either limited to one construct or integrated with another construct and do not provide a comprehensive overview of their joint contribution. Moreover, the previous reviews have adopted either qualitative (systematic) analysis or quantitative (bibliometric) analysis to study either of the constructs. Evidence from previous literature has shown a paucity of literature review publications presenting the overall scenario of the leadership-IWB linkages from a comprehensive review perspective. Therefore, the current study utilized a quantitative and qualitative analysis (hybrid approach) and focused on the past and prevailing state of the research on the leadership-IWB relationship to fill the gap in the literature. In other words, this study uses a bibliometric and content analysis approach which is in itself a novel and first attempt, to the best of author's knowledge, at untangling the research on leadership and IWB relationship. Table 1 demonstrates a representative list of important previous review studies along with the landscape of the current study.

Resultantly, this study provides a comprehensive review of the evolution of leadership and IWB relationship research and maps out the landscape of the field to provide future research directions as evidenced by the hybrid reviews conducted by researchers (see for example, Banker et al., 2023; Baruah et al., 2023; Maheshwari et al., 2023; Sinha & Sharma, 2024). The following research questions are formulated to address the research contribution:

Table 1. Representative List of Review Studies

Studies	Construct(s)	Type of studies	Methodology	Period	No. of papers analyzed	Main ideas
Farrukh et al. (2023)	IWB	Quantitative	Bibliometric analysis	1988-2021	910	Review of literature on IWB
Srirahayu et al. (2023)	IWB	Qualitative	Systematic review	2000-2021	57	Review of IWB in public organizations
Li, and Hsu, (2016)	IWB	Qualitative	Systematic review	1995-2014	143	Review of IWB in services
Peerzadah et al. (2024)	IWB	Quantitative	Bibliometric analysis	1989-2021	246	Reviews of literature on IWB
AlEssa and Durugbo (2022)	IWB	Qualitative	Systematic review	2000-2019	211	Review of IWB concepts and contributions
Bos-Nehles et al. (2017b)	HRM practices and IWB	Qualitative	Systematic review	1994-2015	27	Review of HRM practices and IWB
Kwon and Kim (2020)	Employee Engagement and IWB	Qualitative	Systematic review	NA	34	Integrative review of employee engagement and IWB
Present Study	Leadership and IWB	Qualitative and quantitative	Bibliometric analysis and systematic review	2008-2021	For bibliometric analysis (n=172) and for systematic review (n=116)	Systematically review the current scenario and intellectual structure of leadership-IWB research

Q_1. *What are the current trends and intellectual structure of leadership and IWB research?*

Q_2. *Which types of leadership behaviors are associated with the occurrence of IWB, and, mediators, and moderators used to examine the link between leadership and IWB?*

Q_3. *What are the research designs, methods, and theoretical perspectives employed to study the leadership and IWB relationship?*

Q_4. *What are the future research directions?*

Through a systematic bibliometric analysis of research on leadership-IWB relationships, the study aims to make a significant contribution to the existing body of knowledge. First, it presents an outline of the trends of productivity of the field and impact measured in terms of publications and citations respectively. Second, it gives a comprehensive summary of the most referenced nations, universities or institutes, authors, and highly-cited documents. Hence, the evolutionary nuances and the knowledge gaps in the leadership-IWB phenomenon are highlighted. Third, in order to comprehend how these elements are related, the research provides an overview of intellectual networking in the domain which highlights the social patterns and processes supporting knowledge development in the field. Fourth, this study presents an overview of the mediators and moderators utilized to examine the link in the past and to facilitate future research in exploring novel mediators and moderators between leadership and IWB. Lastly, it presents a glimpse of the theoretical foundations, research designs, and methods adopted to study the phenomenon and provide future research directions.

2 Setting the scene: leadership and innovative work behavior (IWB)

2.1 Leadership

Leadership has been viewed as a social process that takes place in a group context in which the leader influences his or her followers' behaviors so that desired organizational goals are met (Oke et al., 2009). According to House et al. (1999), leadership is "the ability of an individual to influence, motivate and enable others to contribute toward the effectiveness and success of the organization" (p. 184). The word 'leader' refers to images of strong and dynamic people who command triumphant armies, direct corporate empires, or lead political parties or even nations (Yukl & Uppal, 2017). According to Bass (1990) "leadership consists of influencing the attitudes and behaviors of individuals and the interaction within and between groups for the purpose of achieving goals." (p. 19). From an academic perspective, leadership research is becoming increasingly focused on the complex nature of the relationship between leaders and followers (Fatima et al., 2021). There are strong indications that leadership is important for innovation management (Denti and Hemlin, 2012; Kesting et al., 2015; Nadler and Tushman, 1990), as leader plays a decisive role in enhancing organizational creativity (Mumford et al., 2002; Amabile et al., 2004), launching and driving innovation projects (Stoker et al., 2001; Bossink, 2007), implementing innovation projects and overcoming resistance (Gilley et al., 2008). Somech (2006) concludes that corporate leaders are the key drivers, who either promote or inhibit innovation management in the organization. Deschamps (2005) goes even further, saying that the failure of innovation projects is most likely due to ineffective leadership skills (see also Bass & Avolio, 1990).

2.2 Innovative Work Behavior (IWB)

For organizations to safeguard their internal operations and their interaction with clients and/or consumers, innovative products and processes are essential (Messmann & Mulder, 2020). Organizations, therefore, require personnel who can contribute to the development of innovative solutions to problems and challenge the status quo at work (Hammond et al., 2011; West & Farr, 1989). Innovative work behavior is primarily defined by West and Farr (1990) as "the intentional introduction and application within a job, work team or organization of ideas, processes, products or procedures which are new to that job, work team or organization" (p. 9). Therefore, the term "innovative work behavior" refers to any and all work activities, both mental and physical, that employees engage in, either alone or in the context of social interaction, with the goal of fostering innovation in their respective work environments (Messmann & Mulder, 2014; West & Farr, 1989). De Jong & Den Hartog, (2010) have identified four additive stages or phases in their conceptualizations of innovative work behavior. These are opportunity exploration, idea generation, idea promotion, and idea implementation. Against this background, it is hardly surprising that a large number of publications have empirically addressed various aspects of the relationship between leadership and followers' IWB, which demands a comprehensive review of their joint contribution.

3 Methods

A hybrid review was conducted to gain a deeper understanding of the current state of leadership and IWB research. This type of review incorporates diverse perspectives from multiple researchers, potentially uncovering new knowledge and suggesting valuable research directions (Ferreira et al., 2018). Hybrid reviews offer the flexibility to blend different review methods within a single study, contributing significantly (Lim et al., 2022) both topically and methodologically (Mishra & Dey, 2023). Therefore, the strengths of bibliometric and traditional systematic literature review (SLR) methods are merged to leverage bibliometric tools and enhance the comprehensiveness of the SLR (Paul & Criado, 2020). Previous research has demonstrated that the combination of these methods yields more comprehensive and reliable results (e.g., Ali et al., 2022; Iftikhar et al., 2024; Kumar & Mishra. 2022; Mishra & Dey, 2023). Besides, the hybrid approach has been applied in different domains like consumer behavior (Bhukya & Paul, 2023; Lages et al., 2023), HRM (Kaushal et al., 2023), information technology (Baber et al., 2023), finance (Singh & Malik, 2022) entrepreneurship (Sassetti et al., 2018) among others.

3.1 Bibliometric Analysis

Bibliometric analysis is an analytical technique that involves the quantitative analysis of scholarly works (Donthu et al., 2021; Lim & Kumar, 2023: Mukherjee et al., 2022; Wani, 2024; Zupic & Čater, 2015). It offers a fossil record and documents the trajectory of scholarship in a particular area (Xue et al., 2023). The following steps were followed to conduct the Bibliometric analysis:

3.1.1 Database, search terms, and the period chosen

The author gathered information on leadership and IWB by searching the Scopus database using terms such as "leadership" and "innovative work behavio*". Retrieval conditions were "Title = leadership AND innovative work behavio*" and the period was "All years (2008–2021)". Scopus, which comprises the majority of journals indexed by Web of Science and Google Scholar, has been shown to be an all-encompassing and universally recognized database (Gölgeci et al., 2022; Harzing & Alakangas, 2016; Martín-Martín et al., 2021; Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016). Researchers (for example, Farrukh et al., 2023; Lazo & Ebardo, 2023; Misra & Mention, 2022; Santos, 2015) have

used the Scopus database for bibliometric and systematic literature review studies over a period of time. Additionally, Scopus serves as a highly efficient resource for conducting literature searches by permitting the utilization of complete search strings (Bouzembrak et al., 2019). The timeframe selected spans from 2008 to 2021, as the initial study on the leadership-IWB relationship retrieved from the database dates back to 2008. In other words, the first recorded instance of research on leadership and IWB guanxi in Scopus dates back to 2008. The year 2021 was designated as the endpoint because the data was retrieved in early 2022. In particular, the study of leadership as a determinant of IWB has gained prominence since 2008 due to the changing business landscape, growing empirical evidence, theoretical advancements, and the recognition of leadership's critical role in fostering innovation at the individual level.

3.1.2 Data cleaning process

In total a sample of 176 articles were retrieved. Four non-English articles were excluded (French=2, Dutch=1, and Italian=1). Hence bibliometric analysis was conducted on 172 articles.

3.1.3 Indicators

The subsequent stage was to choose the indicators that can be utilized for the analysis. Two types of indicators: performance analysis and science mapping (Durieux & Gevenois, 2010; Peerzadah et al., 2024; Varma et al., 2023) were used for this purpose. Performance analysis indicators used in the study include; year-wise distribution of publications, most prolific publication outlets, most prolific authors, most productive institutes, productive countries, and highly cited publications. Science mapping indicators used in the study include; citation analysis, keyword occurrence, and co-authorship analysis among countries or regions.

3.1.4 Software and technique

VOSviewer and the bibliometrix (R studio package) were utilized to evaluate the bibliographic data, particularly for science mapping indicators. Through these tools' analytical features, a visualization of the intellectual structure was generated. The parameters and conditions set for each indicator are shown along with the results of each indicator. By doing so, the interpretability of bibliographic data was enhanced and presented in the form of figures.

3.2 Systematic Literature Review

Within this procedure, we applied the Tranfield et al. (2003) principles of (1) establishing the scope, (2) executing the search and data extraction, (3) choosing the studies and evaluating the data, and (4) extracting the data and reporting the findings. Besides, for inclusion and exclusion of studies, the present review is guided by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Review and Meta-analysis (PRISMA) review protocol (see figure 1), which consists of four stages—i.e. identification, screening, eligibility, and inclusion (Moher et al., 2009). Retrieval conditions were "Title = leadership AND innovative work behavio*" and the period was "All years (2008–2021)." In total, we obtained a sample of 176 articles. Four non-English articles were excluded. A subsequent analysis of 172 articles' abstracts was conducted and a further 23 non-journal articles were excluded. To ensure the quality and accuracy of data, on further investigation 33 publications not investigating the direct linkages between leadership and IWB were excluded. Consequently, the content analysis of the remaining 116 peer-reviewed journal articles was conducted, which necessarily examined the linkages between leadership and IWB. Only the peer-reviewed journal publications were considered for content analysis because such publications are considered good quality publications as these undergo rigorous evaluation, maintain high standards of quality control, provide validation to research findings, and contribute to knowledge advancement. MS-Excel was

used to note the significant results, antecedents, influence mechanisms, study design, theoretical lens, and methodologies adopted. Figure 1 shows the flow diagram of the process as per PRISMA protocol.

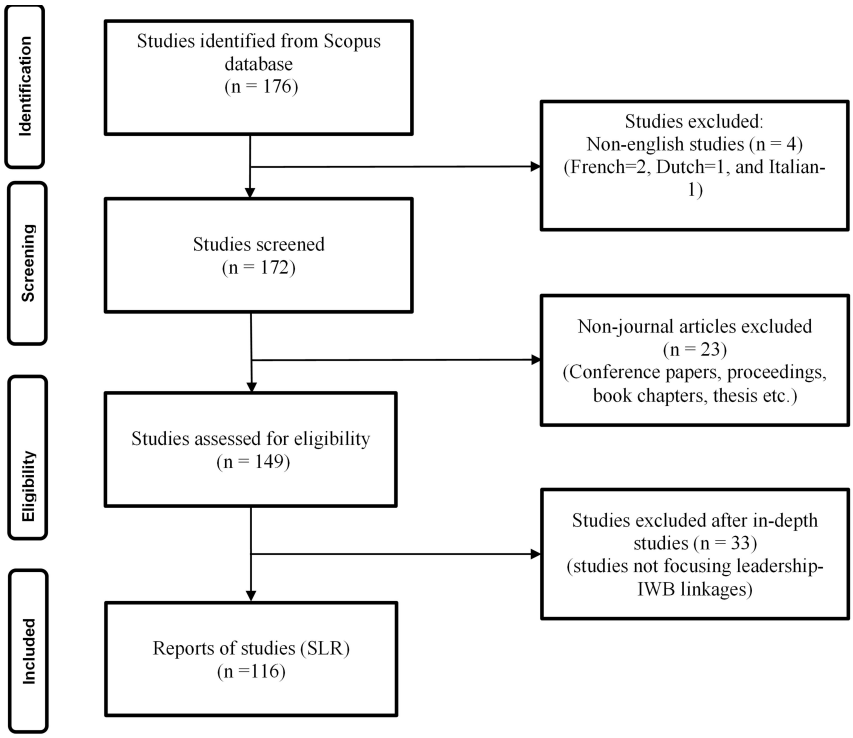

Figure 1. The process of literature review (PRISMA diagram)

4 Analysis and Findings

*Q*1. *What are the current trends and intellectual structure of leadership and IWB research?*

4.1 Performance Analysis

Performance analysis scrutinizes the contributions made by research constituents to a given field (Cobo et al., 2011). The most prevalent measurements are the number of publications and citations each year for each research component, with publication serving as a proxy for productivity and citation as a measure of impact and influence. Other metrics, like prolific authors, institutions, nations, and journals are utilized to assess the performance of research elements.

4.1.1 Year-wise publications

The trend of leadership and IWB research can be viewed and analyzed by the articles published during a particular time frame. Table 2 shows the year-wise publications from 2008 to 2021. In 2008, Scopus retrieved the initial publication on the leadership-innovative work behavior phenomenon. This period coincided with a two-day colloquium organized by Harvard Business School professors Amabile and Khaire, bringing together prominent creativity scholars and executives from companies such as Google, IDEO, Novartis, Intuit, and E Ink. The event marked the inception of a new leadership agenda, emphasizing the understanding that creativity cannot be managed directly—it

can only be managed for. Several key themes emerged, including the notion that a leader's role is not to generate ideas but to foster and support them. Leaders are tasked with stimulating the imagination of employees at all levels, posing thought-provoking questions, integrating diverse perspectives to inspire creative insights, and facilitating collaborative creativity through the use of new technologies (Amabile & Khaire, 2008). Barring a couple of years, there has been a continuous rise in the number of publications from 2013. A sharp increase from 2017 onwards is fuelled by the availability of comprehensive measurement instruments; innovation focussed doctoral degrees as well as the importance of innovation research in business establishments. It is during 2020 and 2021 there were 43 and 50 publications representing a share of 25 percent and 28.57 percent respectively. Since IWB is attracting the interest of policymakers and academics, we believe that more research on this topic will be done in the future.

Table 2. Year-wise publications on leadership-IWB research

Year	Number of publications
2021	50
2020	43
2019	31
2018	14
2017	11
2016	6
2015	3
2014	4
2013	4
2012	0
2011	4
2010	1
2009	0
2008	1
Total	**172**

4.1.2 Journal distribution of leadership and IWB research

The second core component of performance analysis is to study the most prolific publication outlets. Out of the 172 documents that were published on leadership and IWB, Table 3 highlights the most productive ones. These journals have published at least two articles each on this specific topic. The leading journal in this context is the *"European Journal of Innovation Management"*, having published 8 articles, constituting 4.65 percent of the total 172 publications. Despite its commencement in 1998, this journal has emerged as the most prolific contributor to the field of leadership-IWB research over its 24-year history. This achievement can be attributed to its interdisciplinary approach, comprehensively addressing all facets of innovation management. *Sustainability* Journal published 7 articles and the "*International Journal of Innovation Management"*, and "*Leadership and Organization Development"* Journal published 5 articles each. "*International Journal of Innovation Science"* and "*Personnel Review"* have published 4 papers each till 2021 on leadership-IWB phenomena. In terms of citations, "*Creativity and Innovation Management"* has received the highest number of citations, 625 citations in its 3 articles, with an average of 208.33

citations per publication.

Table 3. Prolific journals on leadership-IWB research

Source Title	Publications	Total Citations
European Journal of Innovation Management	8	108
Sustainability (Switzerland)	7	90
International Journal of Innovation Management	5	28
Leadership and Organization Development Journal	5	59
International Journal of Innovation Science	4	15
Personnel Review	4	192
Creativity and Innovation Management	3	625
Frontiers in Psychology	3	38
International Journal of Recent Technology and Engineering	3	3
Journal of Management and Organization	3	103
Academy of Strategic Management Journal	2	1
Economic Research Ekonomska Istrazivanja	2	29
Heliyon	2	17
Human Resource Development Quarterly	2	0
International Journal of Educational Management	2	28
International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health	2	15
International Journal of Innovation Creativity and Change	2	0
Journal of Applied Behavioral Science	2	67
Journal of Business Ethics	2	213
Journal of Creative Behavior	2	14
Journal of Nursing Management	2	3
Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology	2	58
Journal of Public Affairs	2	2
Journal of Research In Nursing	2	5
Psychologie Du Travail Et Des Organisations	2	5
Systematic Reviews on Pharmacy	2	24
VINE journal of information and knowledge management systems	2	0

4.1.3 Prolific authors

The bibliometric data was again analyzed to see who publishes most frequently on leadership-IWB and presented the findings in table 4. Out of 160 authors who published on leadership-IWB, the table shows the details of those authors who have published three or more articles. Bilal Afsar tops the list with 10 publications, followed by Basharat Javed in second place with 6 publications, and Waheed Umrani securing the third position with 5 publications. The authors in fourth place are A.K. Khan, and M.M. Khan, with 4 publications each. In addition to the number of publications, table 3 also shows the total citations and average citations per publication. Mariam Masood emerged as the most influential author, averaging 47 citations per article. Following closely is

Arjoon S., with an average of 40 citations per publication. Bilal Afsar, with ten publications, has garnered an average of 35.30 citations per publication.

Table 4. Prolific authors on leadership-IWB research

Author	Number of publications	Total Citations	TC/P1
Afsar, B.	10	353	35.3
Javed, B.	6	173	28.83
Umrani, W.A.	5	90	18
Khan, A.K.	4	107	26.75
Khan, M.M.	4	20	5
Ahmed, S.S.	3	9	3
Arjoon, S.	3	120	40
Coldwell, D.	3	31	10.33
Islam, T.	3	41	13.66
Khan, E.	3	9	3
Khaola, P.	3	31	10.33
Masood, M.	3	141	47
Odoardi, C.	3	31	10.33

1. TC/P: average citations per publication.

4.1.4 Most productive institutes

Another important element of performance analysis is to look at universities or institutes that have published more research on the leadership-IWB linkage. Table 5 presents the most productive institutes that have published at least 3 articles on the leadership-IWB linkage out of a total of 160 institutes which published on this phenomenon. Hazara University Pakistan is the most productive institute, with 10 publications on leadership and IWB research between 2008 and 2021. The apparent reason why it is the most productive one could be the individuals associated with the university. Bilal Afsar who stands out as the most prolific author is affiliated with this university. The institute in the second spot is Capital University of Science & Technology and Bahria University with 7 publications each. The Universiti Sains Malaysia, Renmin University of China, and Universiteit Twente stand in third place with 5 publications each.

Table 5. Most productive institutes on leadership-IWB research

Institution	Number of publications
Hazara University Pakistan	10
Capital University of Science & Technology	7
Bahria University	7
Universiti Sains Malaysia	5
Renmin University of China	5
Universiteit Twente	5
United Arab Emirates University	4
National University of Lesotho	4

Institution	Number of publications
Open Universiteit	4
Universiti Putra Malaysia	4
Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia	4
Sukkur IBA University	4
Goethe-Universität Frankfurt am Main	3
Asian Institute of Technology Thailand	3
University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg	3
Università degli Studi di Firenze	3
National Institute of Industrial Engineering	3
Wuhan University	3
Tongji University	3
Institute of Business Management, Karachi	3
Bina Nusantara University	3
Namal Institute	3

4.1.5 Most productive regions or countries

Scientific progress is seen as the foundation of a nation's economic growth (Matcharashvili et al., 2014). Therefore, an objective assessment of a nation's scientific output is of the highest importance. The data indicates that over 80 nations have made substantial contributions to research on leadership and IWB guanxi. Table 6 displays the countries that have published three or more papers on leadership-IWB research, out of a total of 68 countries. Pakistan is the most productive country with 38 publications out of a total of 172 publications. The most prolific authors and productive institutes are from the same country. It demonstrates that the researchers from Pakistan are increasingly valuing leadership and IWB phenomenon as a tool for corporate strategy. China holds the second position with 25 publications, followed by Malaysia in third place with 22 publications. The Netherlands ranks fourth with 15 publications, while India secures the fifth spot with 13 publications. However, the Netherlands is the most influential country with 54.93 citations per article.

Table 6. Most productive countries/regions on leadership-IWB research

Country	Number of publications	Citations	TC/D2
Pakistan	38	514	13.52
China	25	616	24.64
Malaysia	22	66	3
Netherlands	15	824	54.93
India	13	302	23.23
United States	11	115	10.45
Germany	10	143	14.3
Indonesia	10	61	6.1
United Kingdom	9	131	14.55
South Korea	8	67	8.37

Country	Number of publications	Citations	TC/D2
Thailand	8	177	22.12
Turkey	8	94	11.75
Australia	7	215	30.71
Italy	7	78	11.14
South Africa	7	77	11
United A. Emirates	7	156	22.28
Canada	6	103	17.16
France	5	78	15.6
Ghana	4	35	8.75
Lesotho	4	31	7.75
Viet Nam	4	29	7.25
Bahrain	3	4	1.33
Denmark	3	7	2.33
Russian Federation	3	5	1.66

2. TC/D: average citations per document.

4.1.6 Highly cited publications

Citation counts and journal impact factors are utilized in a variety of contexts, including the ranking of authors, universities, and journals (Bayer & Folger, 1966). The papers on leadership-IWB phenomenon with more than 30 citations are given in Table 7, with the majority of studies focusing on leadership as an antecedent of IWB. The seminal work by De Jong and Den Hartog (2010) "*Measuring Innovative Work Behaviour"* is the most influential publication with 473 citations. The possible reason could be the development of an updated instrument with four phases of IWB: opportunity exploration, idea generation, idea championing, and implementation of ideas. Subsequently, for confirmation of the validity of the instrument, survey data were collected from 703 matched dyads of knowledge workers and their supervisors in 94 knowledge-intensive services firms. The study concluded that participative leadership likely enhances employees' intrinsic motivation as well as their feelings of responsibility, efficacy, and control. This, in turn, is likely to enhance employees' willingness to engage in IWB (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010). Yidong and Xinxin's (2013) "*How Ethical Leadership Influence Employees' Innovative Work Behavior: A Perspective of Intrinsic Motivation"* is the second most highly cited publication with 194 citations. Drawing on the cognitive evaluation theory, the study proposed a homologous multilevel model to explore how ethical leadership influences employees' IWB through the mediation of intrinsic motivation at both group and individual levels. The results showed that individual IWB was positively related to both individual perceptions of ethical leadership and group ethical leadership, while individual intrinsic motivation mediated these relationships.

The study by Agarwal (2014), "*Examining the impact of social exchange relationships on innovative work behavior: Role of work engagement"* is the third influential publication with 154 citations. The paper aimed to examine the predictive ability of leader-member exchange (LMX), perceived organizational support (POS), and engagement in employees' IWB. The results suggested that LMX, POS, and work engagement positively relate to IWB; LMX moderates the relationship between POS and IWB. The fourth influential study is "*Transformational leadership and innovative work behavior: Exploring the relevance of gender differences"* by Reuvers et al., (2008) with

152 citations. This study investigated the relationship between transformational leadership and employee IWB and examined the moderating effect of the gender of the manager and the gender of the employee. The findings revealed a positive and significant relationship between transformational leadership and IWB. Furthermore, the gender of the leader moderated the latter relationship, indicating that employees report more IWB when transformational leadership is displayed by the male in comparison with female leaders, confirming the gender bias hypothesis. The fifth highly cited publication with 113 citations is "*Transformational leadership and innovative work behavior"* by Afsar et al., (2014). The study examined the mediating role of psychological empowerment and the moderating role of self-construal on transformational leadership and employees' IWB relationship. Results revealed that psychological empowerment mediated the relationship and was stronger among employees with a higher interdependent self-construal and a lower independent self-construal. Hence, leadership is an influential antecedent of IWB as evidenced by these highly cited publications conducted across varied contexts.

4.2 Science Mapping

Science mapping focuses on the intellectual interconnections and structural ties between research components (Donthu et al., 2021). Science mapping techniques include citation analysis, co-word/keyword occurrence analysis, and co-authorship analysis among others.

4.2.1 Citation analysis

Citation analysis works on the presumption that citations reveal the intellectual connections between publications when one cites another (Appio et al., 2014). The number of citations obtained by a publication is taken as the measure of its impact. Citation analysis, therefore, makes it possible to recognize the most important papers in a certain domain. The analysis provided that out of the 172 documents, 54 were linked in terms of citations (the least number of citations of a document was kept as 5), and generated 12 clusters (see, Figure 2). The bigger circle represents the higher contribution of the article in terms of citations and vice versa. The article with the highest number of citations is "*Measuring Innovative Work Behaviour"* by De Jong & Den Hartog, (2010) with 473 citations, followed by Yidong and Xinxin's (2013) "*How Ethical Leadership Influence Employees' Innovative Work Behavior: A Perspective of Intrinsic Motivation"* with 194 citations representing top two clusters with the highest number of citations. Hence, the article, which introduced a revised tool for assessing IWB and conducted an empirical study on leadership's role in shaping IWB, exhibits stronger connections in terms of citations with other articles within the field.

4.2.2 Keyword occurrence

Leadership-IWB research has made use of 679 different keywords. A total of 46 keywords were found to match the software's threshold in the screening results. Figure 3 displays the keyword co-occurrence network map. The co-occurrence of keywords is shown by the appearance of these lines in the considered data set. There are five clusters in the leadership-IWB research theme and there is a notable association between the terms in each cluster. For example, cluster one (yellow color) contains keywords like creative self-efficacy, servant leadership, empowering leadership, job crafting, and knowledge sharing which shows that these words or constructs have been studied along with IWB. Similarly, other clusters with different set of keywords are highlighted in the figure which provides a nuanced understanding of the constructs studied along with IWB.

Table 7. Most cited publications on leadership-IWB research

Author	Publication	Year	Source Title	Citations
De Jong and Den Hartog	Measuring Innovative Work Behaviour	2010	Creativity and Innovation Management	473
Yidong and Xinxin,	How Ethical Leadership Influence Employees' Innovative Work Behavior: A Perspective of Intrinsic Motivation	2013	Journal of Business Ethics	194
Agarwal U. A.	Examining the impact of social exchange relationships on innovative work behavior: Role of work engagement	2014	Team Performance Management	154
Reuvers, et al.	Transformational leadership and innovative work behaviour: Exploring the relevance of gender differences	2008	Creativity and Innovation Management	152
Afsar, Badir, and Saeed	Transformational leadership and innovative work behavior	2014	Industrial Management & Data Systems	113
Javed et al.	Impact of inclusive leadership on innovative work behavior: The role of psychological safety	2019	Journal of Management & Organization	70
Schermuly, Meyer and Dammer	Leader-member exchange and innovative behavior: The mediating role of psychological empowerment	2013	Journal of Personnel Psychology	63
Masood and Afsar	Transformational leadership and innovative work behavior among nursing staff	2017	Nursing Inquiry	56
Afsar and Masood	Transformational leadership, creative self-efficacy, trust in supervisor, uncertainty avoidance, and innovative work behavior of nurses	2018	The Journal of Applied Behavioral Science	51
Li et al.	Influence of transformational leadership on employees' innovative work behavior in sustainable organizations: Test of mediation and moderation processes	2019	Sustainability	46
Afsar and Umrani	Does thriving and trust in the leader explain the link between transformational leadership and innovative work behaviour? A cross-sectional survey	2020a	Journal of Research in Nursing	45

Table 7. Most cited publications on leadership-IWB research (continued)

Author	Publication	Year	Source Title	Citations
Agarwal and Bhargava	The role of social exchange on work outcomes: a study of Indian managers	2014	The International Journal of Human Resource Management	39
Schuh et al.	Are you really doing good things in your boss's eyes? Interactive effects of employee innovative work behavior and leader-member exchange on supervisory performance ratings	2018	Human Resource Management	38
Javed et al.	Impact of ethical leadership on creativity: the role of psychological empowerment	2017	Current Issues in Tourism	38
Bos-Nehles, Bondarouk and Nijenhuis	Innovative work behaviour in knowledge-intensive public sector organizations: the case of supervisors in the Netherlands fire services	2017a	The International Journal of Human Resource Management	35
Afsar and Umrani	Transformational leadership and innovative work behavior: The role of motivation to learn, task complexity and innovation climate	2020b	European Journal of Innovation Management	34

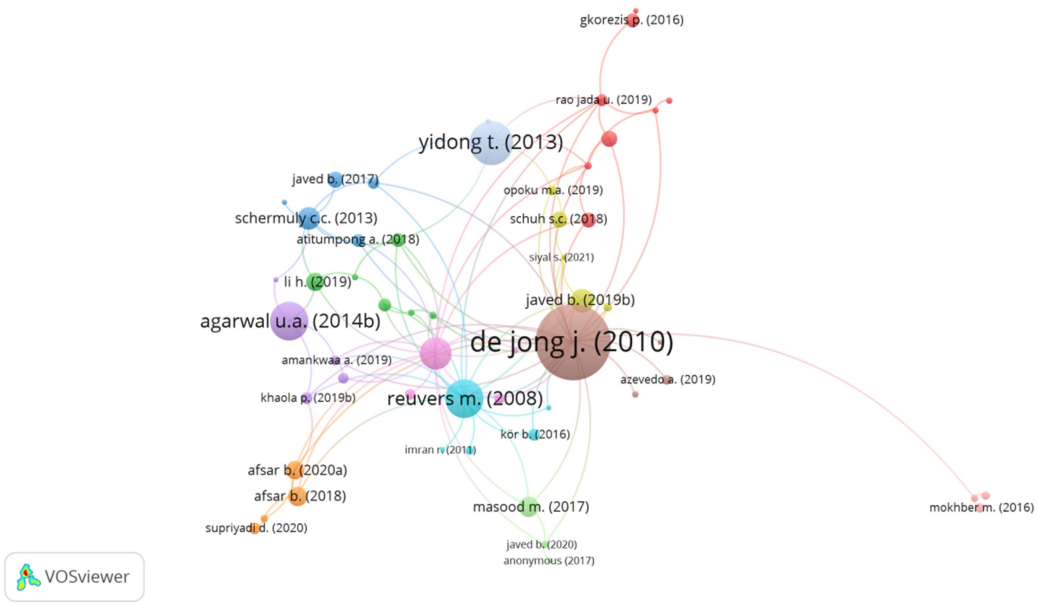

Figure 2. Citation analysis

4.2.3 Co-authorship analysis among countries/regions

It is critical to understand how academics engage with one another, as well as the authors' attributes, such as the institutions and nations where they research (Donthu, et al., 2021). Analyzing clustered research among experts from a certain location might help justify and inspire future research among scholars from underrepresented regions. Researchers from which nations have worked with the greatest number of authors from other nations are shown in table 8. The table reveals that researchers from China and Pakistan have most frequently collaborated on leadership-IWB research over the past years.

Table 8. Country/regions' collaboration

From	To	Frequency
Pakistan	China	8
Pakistan	Malaysia	7
Netherlands	Germany	4
Canada	France	3
China	United Kingdom	3
Italy	France	3
Pakistan	Thailand	3
United Kingdom	Canada	3
China	Germany	2
China	Thailand	2
Germany	Austria	2
Germany	Chile	2
India	Australia	2

From	To	Frequency
Italy	Canada	2
Italy	Israel	2
Netherlands	Australia	2
Netherlands	Belgium	2
Netherlands	Norway	2
Pakistan	Trinidad and Tobago	2
Pakistan	United Kingdom	2
South Africa	Lesotho	2
USA	Korea	2

5 Content analysis

*Q*2. *What are the different antecedents (in terms of leadership styles) of IWB, the mediators, and moderators used to examine the link between leadership and IWB?*

The review thoroughly examined the studies to uncover antecedents, underlying processes, and boundary conditions, utilizing a qualitative method; content analysis. This approach led to the identification of three overarching themes: antecedents in terms of leadership, mediators, and moderators, which are elaborated in the subsequent sections. Figure 4 provides a summary of the research themes identified.

5.1 Leadership styles as antecedents

The analysis indicated that most studies examining the factors influencing IWB in relation to leadership have focused on a limited number of leadership styles. The highest number of studies were based on transformational leadership (42 studies), followed by empowering leadership (11) and inclusive leadership (10). Other frequently studied leadership styles were servant leadership; LMX; transactional leadership; spiritual leadership; and ethical leadership. This shows that transformational leadership holds prominence in boosting IWB of followers by constantly questioning and challenging the followers' assumptions and ways of thinking, and stimulating their intellectual thinking. This, in turn, encourages the followers to help come up with ideas and put them into action (Peerzadah et al., 2021).

5.2 Mediators and moderators studied between leadership-IWB

Most of the studies on leadership-IWB link explained the process through mediators including psychological empowerment; creative self-efficacy; engagement; knowledge sharing; LMX; intrinsic motivation; trust in leader; commitment and so on. Similarly, the previous research examined the phenomenon by incorporating the boundary conditions (moderators) of psychological empowerment; creative self-efficacy; knowledge-sharing, transformational leadership; supportive organizational climate; LMX; ethical leadership; and gender.

*Q*3. *What are the research designs, methods, and theoretical perspectives used to study the leadership and IWB relationship?*

5.3 Designs and Methods

The majority of leadership-IWB research studies utilized the survey approach and used questionnaires to collect data. Furthermore, most of the studies gathered information from employees

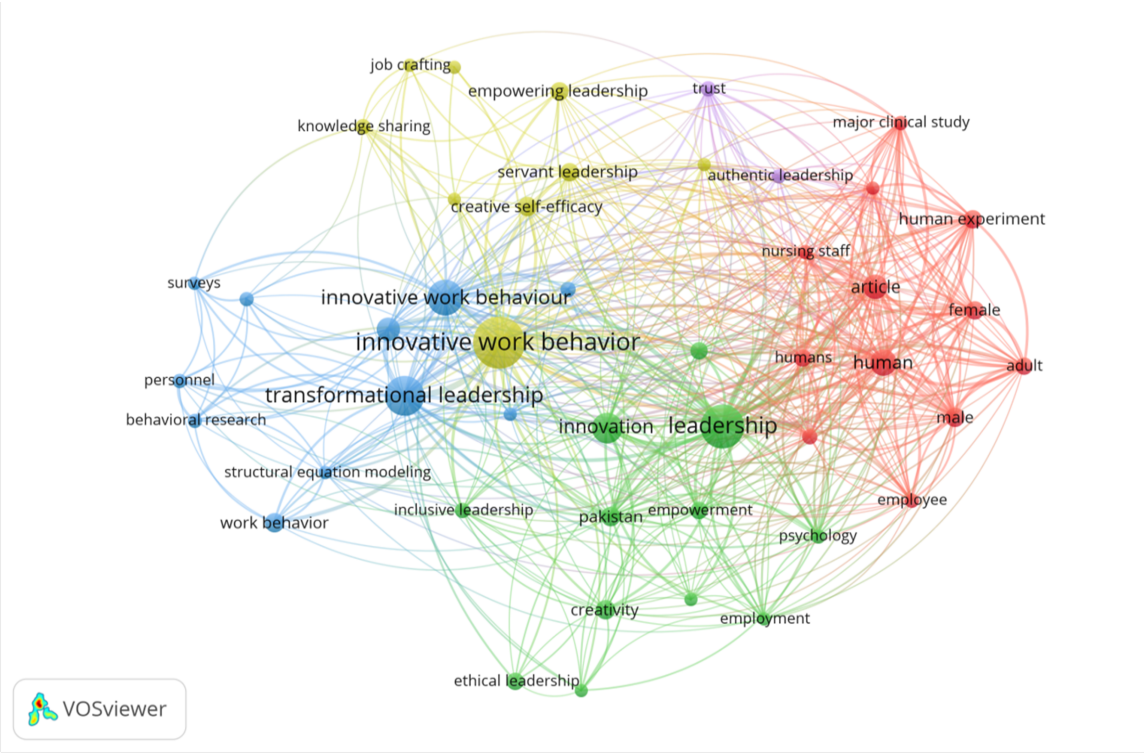

Figure 3. Keyword occurrence

about how they (as followers) view leadership and IWB, using the cross-sectional design (see, eg, Masood & Afsar, 2017). In contrast, only a handful of studies utilized longitudinal methods (e.g. Bednall et al., 2018). Few academics have also employed qualitative approaches (Atatsi, et al., 2021), and mixed-methods strategies (e.g. Stoffers et al., 2020).

5.4 Theoretical perspectives

In addition, researchers used a variety of theoretical lenses to investigate leadership and IWB linkage. Social theories were commonly employed in the majority of studies, alongside motivation-based, leadership-based, organizational, and work-related theories, to elucidate this phenomenon across diverse organizational contexts (Phung et al., 2019; Quratulain et al., 2021). Researchers frequently employ social exchange theory, social cognitive theory, self-determination theory, conservation of resources theory, and job demand resource theory. For instance, Agarwal (2014) utilized the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) to study the antecedents of IWB. The authors revealed that perceived social support is crucial for IWB. In addition, the author believed that social exchange theory defines the connections between employees and their employers and supervisors. When individuals perceive that they are being treated properly, they strive to repay the favor by engaging in IWB.

6 Implications of the study

The study offers several theoretical and practical implications. This review contributed to the literature on leadership and IWB by gathering and analyzing relevant papers on the topic. The current research will help to organize the dispersed literature on leadership and IWB. The study will aid future researchers by establishing a foundation of knowledge by giving an overview of new

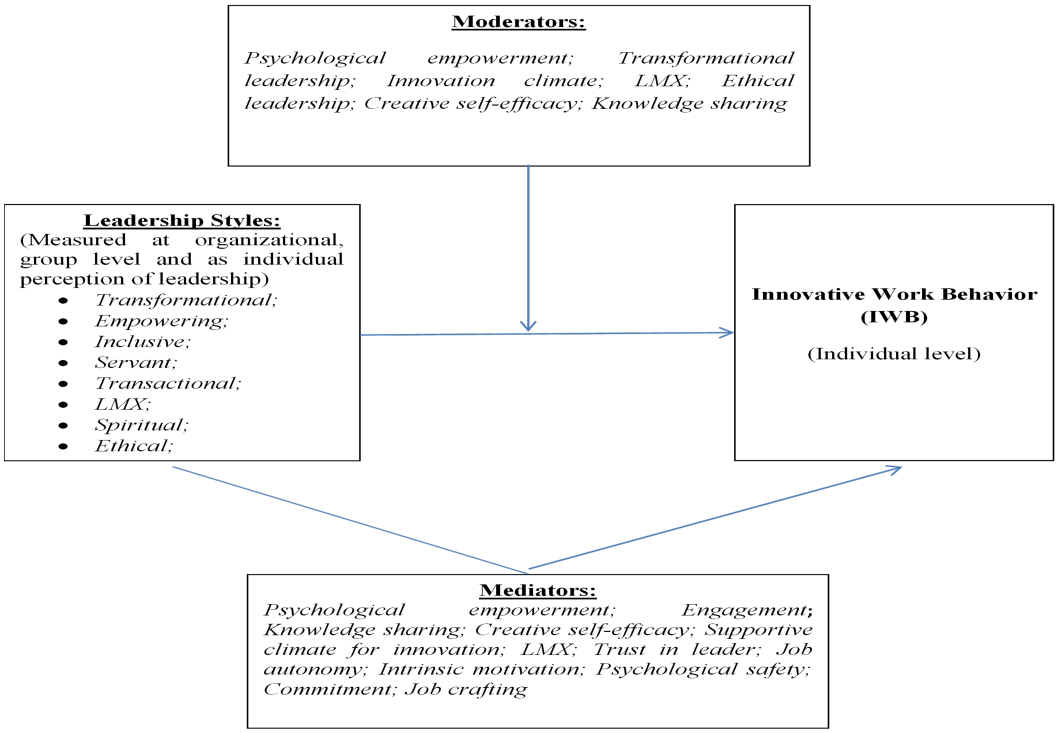

Figure 4. Conceptual framework

research and publishing trends, as well as clarity on the various methodologies and techniques employed. This research also looks at the numerous mediators, moderators, research designs, and theories that were used to study the phenomenon, in order to aid future researchers in understanding the cause-and-effect link between the two. Thus, it will add to the literature on leadership and IWB and can be considered as the base starting point for future studies. The examination of bibliometric data provides a quantitative perspective on the trends and influential works in the field of leadership and IWB. This information offers valuable insights to practitioners and organizational leaders, informing them about the most impactful leadership strategies that correlate with enhanced levels of IWB in various contexts. Effective leadership has a positive impact on IWB and is a signal for organizations to build the leadership traits of their managers and supervisors that will help promote IWB among their employees. Leaders need to lead by example, deliver transformational leadership qualities, be empowering and inclusiveness, and exhibit positive attitudes. To enhance and influence employees' IWB, they also need to build a stimulating environment, encourage new ideas and novel endeavors, grant their employees some degree of control over their tasks, and allow them to learn and improve their skills. However, building the leadership skills of their managers and supervisors without ensuring the support of various identified strategies and behaviors may not lead to a positive outcome in organizations. Organizations, therefore, need to ensure that the intervening variables or the strategies and behavior identified in this study support their efforts.

In addition, policymakers can benefit from the synthesized knowledge to formulate strategies and policies that encourage leadership practices conducive to innovation. Understanding the evidence-based connections between leadership and IWB can inform organizational policies aimed at fostering a culture of innovation. By tailoring policies to replicate the successful models observed in these studies across varied contexts, policy makers can foster a more innovation-

friendly environment. This, in turn, can catalyze economic growth and competitiveness on a larger scale. Educators and trainers can teach leaders about these factors and help them make their organizations supportive of innovation to secure a competitive advantage in an industry.

7 Limitations

The author notes that no process is perfect and would thus want to note a few shortcomings of this study. In the beginning, the search terms were confined to leadership and IWB. Future studies may seek to expand the phenomena by investigating additional aspects of leaders, such as their technical knowledge, personality traits, and mindset. Also, bibliographic information was collected from the Scopus database. As a result, the findings may not be consistent with other databases; thus, it is recommended that future research utilize additional databases, such as the Web of Science, to provide a more complete view of the subject. In addition, the study draws from papers published between 2008 and 2021. Therefore, future research may span a longer period to provide a more complete picture of the area. A further weakness is the exclusion of non-English papers. Numerous nations do research in languages other than English. Since these publications are not included in the analysis, the results may be inconsistent. Overall, quantifying research is a difficult endeavor since each study subject within the leadership and IWB domain may have distinct characteristics, continuously increasing the number of publications and citations. As a result, it is difficult to make assumptions. Despite these limitations, the study reveals patterns and trajectories for future research, as well as how and when the leadership-IWB relationship may be utilized as an assumption to uncover essential information on leadership-IWB research.

*Q*4. *What are the future research directions?*

8 Future research directions

There are increased opportunities for data and information exploration and, subsequently, the discovery of research trends and patterns in any given field of knowledge as the number of academic publications increases rapidly (Degler et al., 2021). Bibliometric reviews then offer a useful way to effectively synthesize existing knowledge to counteract the threat of drowning in information but starving for knowledge. Having a broad, overarching view of the two research fields and exploring their landscapes can be helpful for many stakeholders, such as academics, organizational leaders, and policymakers. Based on the comprehensive literature review, the following avenues are proposed that future research may address:

8.1 Focus on other antecedents of IWB

Investigating the influence of other types of leadership styles on IWB might be another potential area of study. Future research is needed to study Islamic, environmental-specific, sustainable, self-leadership, laissez-faire, shared, humble, paternalistic, or paradoxical leadership as antecedents of IWB. In addition, there is a dearth of research on how digitalization influences the understanding of leadership that uses the term "digital leadership" in research (Erhan, 2022), as well as what impact digital leadership has on IWB because digitalization processes create a digital workplace and it is not well-known by practitioners (Mihardjo et al., 2019). Moreover, it will also be interesting to see if different leadership styles could be used as mediators and moderators between other antecedents, such as personality traits, paradox mindset, and IWB.

8.2 Study the phenomenon at different levels

This bibliometric review revealed that IWB is an emerging field and also brought to light that the antecedents of IWB at the individual level are the least explored area of research (Wojtczuk-Turek & Turek, 2015) therefore, future studies should consider the individual or dispositional characteristics of the employees to further investigate IWB. Very few studies were found to have a synthesis approach to antecedents; thus, merging certain individual-level components with the team, and/or organizational level will offer a better understanding of IWB. From this cross-level research, a combined model may be built, which would be a significant instrument for identifying key elements that can be utilized to anticipate IWB in organizations. Therefore, future studies should incorporate these elements; besides, this integration will aid the understanding of the top-down and bottom-up approaches to IWB.

8.3 Focus on other mediators and moderators between leadership-IWB

The analysis of the articles published from 2008 to 2021 revealed that the researchers have used a limited number of mediators and moderators while investigating the relationship between leadership and IWB. Thus explaining the process with other underlying mechanisms and boundary conditions would be an interesting avenue to explore. Future research, is, therefore, suggested to study harmonious passion, intellectual capital, homophily, personal initiative, learning work behavior, knowledge engagement, team learning, organizational learning, basic psychological needs satisfaction, resource supply, and innovation readiness among others as underlying mechanisms. Furthermore, it is suggested to study task complexity, proactive personality, innovation climate, knowledge-centered culture, entrepreneurial orientation, innovativeness, role clarity, structural empowerment, role conflict, and use of artificial intelligence among others as boundary conditions to study the leadership-IWB phenomenon.

8.4 Focus on the outcomes of IWB

Very few studies have studied the outcomes of IWB; thus, assessing the outcomes of IWB, such as work performance or project success, might be an additional field of research. In addition, it will be intriguing to discover whether IWB may serve as a mediator between antecedents, such as individual knowledge management, performance pressure, or leadership, and outcomes, such as innovative work performance, work satisfaction, or project success (Li & Hsu, 2016).

8.5 New theoretical underpinnings

Researchers may need to study more about how social networks or interaction patterns impact workplace innovation. Perry-Smith and Shalley (2003), for instance, proposed a social network perspective on creativity, stressing the social side of the process and offering many ways to influence creativity. In the same way, future research is suggested to investigate the phenomenon through varied theoretical lenses. Therefore, the theoretical understanding may be extended by using new theories like relational energy theory, affective events theory, human relations theory, challenge-hindrance model, social capital theory, or cognitive evaluation theory.

8.6 Methodologies

Future studies may use innovative and intriguing research methodologies that were not used in prior studies, which will contribute to the methodological rigor of the domain. The majority of studies employed a mono-method approach. The review found that the majority of leadership-IWB studies adopted a cross-sectional design. Since IWB is an extra role behavior that occurs seldom, it would be interesting to use longitudinal research design to investigate leadership-IWB and its

associated antecedents and outcomes. In addition, there are various areas where integration is limited because earlier research did not employ a mixed methods strategy. Consequently, it is suggested that mixed methods be used to investigate the phenomena.

8.7 Cross-cultural expansion

In future research, consideration should be given to industry settings and distinctions between the manufacturing and services industries. Besides, future research direction would be to conduct studies on the leadership-IWB relationships across geographies to provide a comparative view of the phenomenon while taking into consideration the cultural differences, level of technological advancements, and so on.

8.8 New measures

This study found that the majority of research treated IWB as a unidimensional construct (see, for example, De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010). Nevertheless, a few studies have conceptualized IWB as a two-dimensional construct with idea generation and idea implementation as two distinct dimensions (Noefer et al., 2009). In that case, Veenendaal and Bondarouk (2015) discovered that human resource practices have different effects on each dimension of IWB. Based on this distinction, it is suggested that future research should follow this research direction and come up with a holistic and comprehensive instrument to measure IWB from a multidimensional perspective and extend the domain.

Note

Table (1) and figures (1 & 4) were created by the author based on the review of literature. However, tables (2-8) and figures (2 & 3) were created out of data retrieved from the Scopus database.

Conflict of interest

No conflict of interest.

Conflict of interest

The data used in the study are available from the Scopus database.

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