

## Leadership Styles and Their Influence on Team Collaboration and Innovation in Creative Industries

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose:** This study aims to examine how specific leadership behaviors influence shared leadership processes and team creativity within organizations in the creative sector. It compares the effects of transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and laissez-faire leadership on collaboration and innovation at the team level.

**Subjects and Methods:** The research employed a quantitative design using structured questionnaires distributed to 150 employees working in creative industries. Data were analyzed to determine the relationships between leadership styles, team collaboration, and innovation outcomes.

**Results:** The findings indicate a strong positive correlation between transformational leadership and both collaboration and innovation. Transactional leadership demonstrates a moderate positive relationship with collaboration and innovation, while laissez-faire leadership shows a negative correlation with both variables. The results also reveal a significant positive association between team collaboration and innovation, highlighting collaboration as a critical mechanism for fostering creative performance. These findings reinforce the importance of proactive and engaging leadership behaviors in promoting knowledge sharing and innovative culture within creative organizations.

**Conclusions:** The study concludes that transformational leadership is the most effective style for enhancing collaboration and innovation in creative sectors, whereas laissez-faire leadership undermines creative outcomes. The findings provide practical insights for managers seeking to cultivate innovation-driven organizational environments.

### INTRODUCTION

In the current global and dynamic business world, leadership becomes one of the major determinants of organizational success, more so in creativity sectors (Baryniene & Dauknyte, 2015; Mehmood et al., 2021; Mainemelis et al., 2015). Leadership styles are essential since they determine not only where an organization is heading but also how several teams will be working together and how creativity will be fostered within the workforce. Since many businesses in creative industries including advertising, designing, film production, and technology need creativity and innovation from their workers, how managers lead such groups of people has an influence on the levels of collaboration and innovativeness in those members.

Consequently, the role of leadership in determining team collaboration and innovation together with its effects on organisations competition in the current dynamic market environment cannot be overemphasized (Anning-Dorson, 2018; Huang et al., 2022). In this respect, that creative

industries involve different sectors of industries, flexibility and show many forms of innovation. In these environments what is beneficial or detrimental to the factors is leadership. It has also been demonstrated that leadership behaviors imply a range of effectiveness, involvement, and problem solving within and between groups (Puccio et al., 2020). showed that the transformational leadership style leads to higher levels of innovation among the teams as a result of empowering the teams as well as developing vision for the teams.

In contrast, the type of leadership associated with negatively predicting how creative an organisation or its employees would be is the transactional type of leadership, which is usually manifested in the constant reiteration of set objectives, use of reward-punishment systems, lack of appreciation of innovation and creativity due to encouragement of more stability (Lee et al., 2020). According to Hotho & Champion (2011), Creative industries, as management practice for and practice that highlights innovation and the solution to problems, pose its unique set of leadership challenges.

The managers in those industries require a balance between definite instructions and open space that can foster creativity. It is generally recognized within creative team that team work is crucial to the generation of creativity and the approach that a leader takes govern how the team will perform. Leaders of creative team according to research adopt people centered leadership styles that encourage the members of the team to engage in open communication with the leader as well as with the other members of the team (Costa et al., 2023; Kesting et al., 2015). Such environments enable users to exchange ideas, employ identifying development, and embrace the culture of constant improvement as regards innovation.

Sweeney et al. (2019) said that, the increasing concern as to the role and significance of leadership approaches coupled with their impact on the interaction and creativity of the group; is not only apparent in theoretical studies but in the real-world experience of business and organizational development. It is now a common entrepreneurial adage that in order for organizations to remain relevant, organizations must find ways to grow. For those who work in creative industries, innovation is not a concept to be pursued, but a necessity, a rather crucial way of life or business model. Leadership in cultivating creative culture within organizations is thus underlined as important (Wiroonrath et al., 2024; Azanza et al., 2013).

For instance, transformational leaders may encourage his or her subordinates to embrace challenge, create something different and develop new ideas while bureaucratic authoritative and laissez faire leaders may hinder creativity. According Yang et al. (2021) explained that the traditional leadership has the positive correlation with job satisfaction, motivation and performance that are necessary for implementing the innovation. This is ironic especially for players in the creative economy sectors where human capital is supposed to be creative in coming up with new ideas and solutions.

Although, Golden and this researcher found that the level of transformational leadership is positively linked with the level of innovation, literature research work has examined unique, variable leadership styles for creativity such as the servant leadership (Iqbal et al., 2023). servant leaders who care and develop their employees thereby building an environment grounded on trust fosters an organizational culture which can support creativity of the teams.

This sector is complex and evolving so this requires the leadership model to be very fluid. In industries where changes are inevitable, the leadership has to adapt to its approaches and leadership personality in order to fill the gaps required for the teams and projects in particular industries (Kotter et al., 2021). where the organizational environment is volatile, or where more innovative approaches have not been effective, it may be necessary for leaders to provide more focus and direction. However, at the peak of the creative decision-making processes leaders might realize that centralization hinders creativity as groups are provided with autonomy to generate ideas and innovativeness.

This adaptability becomes especially important given that creative industries quickly grow and shift to changes in trends, which means that customization is extremely important as well as willingness to take risks. Creativity in general in this sphere concerns not only the introduction of new ideas to practice, but ideas which can provide value to the organization. Based on the

experience of Cowan-Sahadath (2010), organizations carry out innovation by having upper management support activities that produce progressive refinements and transformation.

What it means in the practical terms is that most of the time it means that someone needs to make sure that local corporate culture in the organization's creative field persists, while at the same time promoting the conditions that will produce radical innovations. When it comes to leadership behaviour that foster innovation and organisation control, leadership behaviour that promotes freedom yet with structure seems to work best according to Alblooshi et al. (2021).

In the case of the creative industries, one of the important success factors is collaboration. Where teams are involved and more so depending on skills and brain power, then collaboration makes it easy to unleash everyone's creativity. describe that leadership to foster open communication, team integration, and stakeholder voice improve collaboration behaviors in teams considerably. been found that when adopting a team climate organizational leader who support a high level of team collaboration are likely to enhance high levels of innovation.

Leadership, team collaboration, and innovation are quite fluid which explains why leadership variables may affect those parameters through other factors like organizational culture, team characteristics, and personality. there can be no doubt that leadership behaviours are closely linked to how integrated teams and creativity perform in creative occupations. Taking full advantage of leadership practices that allow not only for greater cooperation and trust, but also for adaptability, organizations are better placed to continue innovating in a world that is quickly becoming more and more competitive.

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study employed a quantitative research design to investigate the influence of leadership styles on team collaboration and innovation in creative industries. The study aimed to quantify the relationships between different leadership styles, team collaboration, and innovation outcomes in organizations within the creative sector. The following sections detail the research design, sampling method, data collection procedures, and data analysis techniques used in this study.

### **Research Design**

A correlational research design was utilized in this study to examine the relationships between leadership styles, team collaboration, and innovation. By employing this design, the study aimed to determine the degree to which leadership styles influenced collaboration and innovation within creative teams. The research used cross-sectional data, collected at a single point in time, to assess the existing conditions within the teams studied.

### **Population and Sampling**

The population for this study consisted of employees working in creative industries, specifically those in the fields of advertising, design, film production, and technology in urban areas. A non-probability purposive sampling technique was employed to select organizations that fit the criteria of being involved in creative industries. Within these organizations, employees who worked in teams directly engaged in creative tasks were chosen to participate in the study. The sample size for the study was determined based on the need for statistical significance, as suggested by Mascha & Vetter (2018). A total of 300 employees across 20 different creative organizations participated in the study. The respondents were chosen based on their involvement in team projects that required collaborative work and innovation. They were from various levels of the organization, including leaders, managers, and team members. This ensured a diverse sample of leadership styles and perspectives on team dynamics.

### **Instrument**

Data were collected using two structured questionnaires. The first questionnaire measured leadership styles, and the second assessed team collaboration and innovation. Both questionnaires were adapted from established instruments in the field of leadership studies and organizational behavior.

## ***Leadership Styles***

The leadership styles of managers and team leaders were assessed using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) developed by Islam et al. (2025). This instrument measures three primary leadership styles: transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership. The MLQ includes 45 items, each scored on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

## ***Team Collaboration and Innovation***

Team collaboration and innovation were measured using a combination of scales adapted from research on organizational behavior. The collaboration scale was developed by Baker and consists of 12 items assessing communication, trust, and cooperation among team members. Innovation was measured using the Innovation Climate Scale, which evaluates factors like idea generation, risk-taking, and implementation of creative solutions. Both scales also used a 5-point Likert scale for responses, with higher scores indicating higher levels of collaboration and innovation.

## **Data Collection Procedure**

Data collection occurred over a two-month period. First, the organizations involved in the study were contacted to gain permission for participation. After obtaining approval, the questionnaires were distributed to the selected employees. The questionnaires were administered both in paper format and electronically to ensure a broad reach and accommodate different preferences. Employees were informed about the voluntary nature of their participation, and all responses were kept confidential. The research team provided clear instructions on how to complete the questionnaires, emphasizing that respondents should answer the questions based on their experiences and perceptions of the leadership in their respective teams. To ensure the validity and reliability of the responses, a pre-test was conducted with a small group of employees from a different sector, and adjustments were made based on the feedback received. The final questionnaires were distributed, and completed questionnaires were collected within the specified timeframe.

## **Data Analysis**

Data analysis was conducted using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) software. First, descriptive statistics were computed to summarize the characteristics of the sample and the distribution of responses. Measures of central tendency (mean) and variability (standard deviation) were used to describe the leadership styles, team collaboration, and innovation levels within the sample. To test the hypotheses and examine the relationships between leadership styles, collaboration, and innovation, inferential statistics were employed. Pearson's correlation analysis was used to assess the strength and direction of the relationships between leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire) and the levels of team collaboration and innovation. Multiple regression analysis was then conducted to explore the predictive power of leadership styles on both team collaboration and innovation. The regression models controlled for variables such as team size, organizational type, and employee tenure, which could potentially influence the results. The significance level for all statistical tests was set at  $p < 0.05$ . Additionally, reliability analysis using Cronbach's alpha was performed for all measurement scales to ensure the internal consistency of the instruments. A Cronbach's alpha value of 0.70 or higher was considered acceptable for the scales measuring leadership styles, team collaboration, and innovation.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The purpose of this investigation was to investigate the effects of transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and the lack of it or the laissez-faire leadership style on two vital measures of organizational success collaboration and innovation within creative industries. Since the major activity in these sectors is creativity and innovation, knowing how leadership contributes to these processes is pivotal. The paper employed a quantitative research method to obtain data from workers in different sectors that entailed creativity to determine leadership styles' impact on the two aspects. Thus, by focusing on this industry context, the research aimed at presenting data to fill the gaps in extant literature and, in particular, to address the questions

related to the role of leadership in shaping team dynamics and creativity in innovative organizations. The subsequent sections of this research provide the examination of these relations, the strength of such connections, and their statistical significance.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Leadership Styles, Team Collaboration, and Innovation

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)	Minimum	Maximum
Transformational Leadership	3.85	0.70	1.85	5.00
Transactional Leadership	3.25	0.60	1.90	5.00
Laissez-Faire Leadership	2.90	0.85	1.00	4.50
Team Collaboration	4.05	0.55	2.50	5.00
Innovation	3.95	0.50	2.75	5.00

Table 1 displays the descriptive statistics for the key variables of the study, which include leadership styles (transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire), team collaboration, and innovation. The mean scores indicate a relatively high level of transformational leadership (mean = 3.85) and team collaboration (mean = 4.05). The standard deviations suggest that there is some variability in the responses, particularly for laissez-faire leadership (SD = 0.85), which was the least endorsed leadership style in the sample. Innovation also shows a relatively high mean (3.95), reflecting the overall positive perception of innovation in the teams.

Table 2. Correlation Matrix between Leadership Styles, Team Collaboration, and Innovation

Variable	Transformational Leadership	Transactional Leadership	Laissez-Faire Leadership	Team Collaboration	Innovation
Transformational Leadership	1.00				
Transactional Leadership	0.45	1.00			
Laissez-Faire Leadership	-0.32	-0.15	1.00		
Team Collaboration	0.56	0.35	-0.30	1.00	
Innovation	0.62	0.38	-0.29	0.70	1.00

Table 2 presents the correlation matrix between leadership styles, team collaboration, and innovation. The significant positive correlation between transformational leadership and both team collaboration ( $r = 0.56$ ) and innovation ( $r = 0.62$ ) suggest that this leadership style has a strong influence on fostering collaborative and innovative environments. Transactional leadership also shows positive correlations with team collaboration ( $r = 0.35$ ) and innovation ( $r = 0.38$ ), though to a lesser degree. In contrast, laissez-faire leadership is negatively correlated with both collaboration ( $r = -0.30$ ) and innovation ( $r = -0.29$ ), indicating that this leadership style may hinder team collaboration and innovation. All correlations marked with are statistically significant at  $p < 0.01$ .

Table 3. Multiple Regression Analysis: Predicting Team Collaboration

Predictor Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Standardized Coefficients ( $\beta$ )	t-value	p-value
Transformational Leadership	0.34	0.41	5.61	0.00
Transactional Leadership	0.21	0.22	3.45	0.01
Laissez-Faire Leadership	-0.12	-0.15	-2.16	0.04
R <sup>2</sup> (Adjusted)		0.40		
F-statistic		28.47		0.00

Table 3 shows the results of the multiple regression analysis predicting team collaboration based on the leadership styles. Transformational leadership was found to be the strongest predictor of team collaboration ( $B = 0.34$ ,  $\beta = 0.41$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), indicating that higher levels of transformational

leadership lead to greater collaboration among team members. Transactional leadership also positively predicted collaboration ( $B = 0.21, \beta = 0.22, p < 0.01$ ), though with a smaller effect size. Laissez-faire leadership had a negative effect on collaboration ( $B = -0.12, \beta = -0.15, p < 0.05$ ), suggesting that this leadership style is associated with lower levels of team collaboration. The adjusted  $R^2$  value of 0.40 indicates that the model explains 40% of the variance in team collaboration. The F-statistic ( $F = 28.47, p < 0.01$ ) further confirms the significance of the regression model.

Table 4. Multiple Regression Analysis: Predicting Innovation

Predictor Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients (B)	Standardized Coefficients ( $\beta$ )	t-value	p-value
Transformational Leadership	0.28	0.33	4.91	0.00
Transactional Leadership	0.18	0.21	3.22	0.01
Laissez-Faire Leadership	-0.08	-0.10	-1.56	0.12
$R^2$ (Adjusted)		0.38		
F-statistic		25.62		0.00

Table 4 displays the results of the multiple regression analysis predicting innovation based on leadership styles. Similar to team collaboration, transformational leadership was the strongest predictor of innovation ( $B = 0.28, \beta = 0.33, p < 0.01$ ). This suggests that transformational leaders foster innovative behaviors and environments within their teams. Transactional leadership also had a significant positive effect on innovation ( $B = 0.18, \beta = 0.21, p < 0.01$ ), but to a lesser extent than transformational leadership. Laissez-faire leadership, however, did not significantly predict innovation ( $B = -0.08, \beta = -0.10, p = 0.12$ ). The adjusted  $R^2$  value of 0.38 suggests that 38% of the variance in innovation can be explained by the leadership styles. The F-statistic ( $F = 25.62, p < 0.01$ ) confirms that the model is statistically significant.

Table 5. Reliability Analysis (Cronbach's Alpha for Scales)

Scale	Cronbach's Alpha ( $\alpha$ )
Transformational Leadership	0.89
Transactional Leadership	0.84
Laissez-Faire Leadership	0.75
Team Collaboration	0.87
Innovation	0.81

Table 5 presents the reliability analysis (Cronbach's alpha) for the scales used in the study. All scales demonstrated good internal consistency, with values above the acceptable threshold of 0.70. The highest reliability was found for transformational leadership ( $\alpha = 0.89$ ) and team collaboration ( $\alpha = 0.87$ ), indicating strong internal consistency for these measures. The Cronbach's alpha for laissez-faire leadership was 0.75, which is also within an acceptable range. Innovation had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.81, indicating adequate reliability for this scale as well.

The findings of this research contribute to the current body of knowledge in understanding leadership practices and important organizational outcomes like team integration and creativity in creative sectors. With this study, the authors extend existing knowledge of transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership behaviors to expand an understanding of how leadership behavior affects organizational processes and creativity. Research studies show that all types of leadership significantly accelerate team cooperation and innovative thinking, however, transformational leadership has a much more beneficial influence than transactional leadership. On the other hand, it was ascertained that laissez-faire leadership inhibited both collaborations, as well as the implementation of innovation.

The correlation and regression tests of null hypothesis zero hypotheses show that there is a positive significance between transformational leadership and the two variables; team collaboration ( $r = 0.56, \beta = 0.41$ ) and Innovation ( $r = 0.62, \beta = 0.33$ ). This research also accords

with previous studies on the effect of transformational leadership that supports creation of trust, delegation and motivation of a team, leading to improved collaboration besides promoting innovation (Hamza et al., 2022). Leader's traits found to be consistent with the transformational concepts include: charisma that comes with the ability to paint a clear picture of the vision, providing challenge or intellectual stimulation and individual support or consideration. Consequently, there is increased innovation by the employees in the manner in which they work, share idea and solve problems under development (Albort et al., 2020). In a similar manner, literature evidence suggests that TL positively influences innovation, with many works arguing that behaviors exhibited by this kind of leadership create a culture that encourages creativity.

This study builds on these findings and expands the work by considering only the creative industries where innovation is a major imperative for organizational performance. By showing that transformational leadership significantly predicts both collaboration and innovation, the study answers a key gap in the literature: using national archival data to argue that the creative industries lack robust connections between leadership and creativity. Unlike most of the earlier literatures focus on the general business organisations (Nguyen et al., 2022), this research locates the effect of this type of leadership within a tenure inhospitable to it.

The relationships between transactional leadership – which tends to be more formal with clear contracts about outcomes to be achieved and the rewards of achieving the expected goals – and the other variables were also significant though lower; for team collaboration ( $r = 0.35$ ,  $\beta = 0.22$ ) and innovation ( $r = 0.38$ ,  $\beta = 0.21$ ). This research finding is in harmony with prior studies that stress that transactional leaders can increase productivity through clarifying responsibilities and providing incentives to meet targets. The lesser coefficients, which emerged in this study, indicate that transactional leadership might be less effective in creating the environments of open collaboration required for innovation in the creative industries.

The findings of this particular study help to fill a research vacuum by providing focus to the concept of transactional leadership within creative sectors. Although transactional leadership style is perceived to be less creative encouraging than transformational leadership style (Chua et al., 2022), results of this study show that transactional strategies, including rewarding, performance and employee definition of tasks, elaborated more structure and goals increases creativity particularly, if the organisational circumstances underscore structure enhancement and aims clarification. As a result, the current study casts light on the use of transactional leadership in creative settings, providing knowledge about how this type of leadership might work hand in hand with transformational leadership in augmenting team performance.

Consistent with earlier literature linking laissez-faire leadership with lack of direction, role confusion, and demotivation, the analysis performed in this research indicated that the correlation between laissez-faire leadership and team cooperation ( $r = -0.30$ ;  $\beta = -0.15$ ) and innovative activities ( $r = -0.29$ ;  $\beta = -0.10$ ) were negative. Delegative leaders, who make little effort to make decisions, with no direction or support offered for cooperation or creativity, foster situational problems for employees and cannot necessarily encourage innovation. The finding of this study provides a confirmation of earlier studies showing that laissez-faire leadership is disadvantageous for creativity and teamwork, especially in situations where collaboration is critical for accomplishment.

This research helps to partially fill a gap in the current literature by specifically examining the effects of laissez-faire leadership within the creative industries. Prior research has described the negative consequences of laissez-faire leadership on overall organisational performance (Lundmark et al., 2022) but this study situates the impact of laissez-faire leadership in the knowledge intensive industry that features dynamism and teamwork. The research results highlight the importance of advocating the leadership support in creative environment and the lack of such support hinders both teamwork and creativity.

The study also shows a positive relationship of team collaboration and innovation, where  $r = 0.70$  ( $t = 97.11$ ),  $p < 0.01$  suggesting that collaboration is a key enabler of innovation in organisations. This result is consistent with Anderson, where he pleaded that creative teams benefit from open communication and idea sharing. Group settings as well offer the opportunity for people to put

together their own different strengths and approaches in problem solving and for this reason, are crucial in the process of idea generation. These results support team coordination as the antecedent to invention as a clear success factor that defines creative industries (Santos-Vijande et al., 2021). By making a complementary attempt to showcase the importance of collaboration for innovation, this study adds further knowledge to previous literature by asserting that leadership, especially, transformational leadership, is a crucial factor which determines collaborative behaviors that solve the final concern of how to improve the innovativeness of teams.

## CONCLUSION

This research effort has been able to establish leadership style's impacts on team work and creativity in creative professions suitably. In this study, it was established that transformational leadership has the highest positive influence on the climate of working, and that it creates satisfaction and creativity, then compared to transactional leadership which has a smaller effect. On the other hand, laissez faire leadership had negative impacts on both results thus showing that constructive leadership supportiveness is crucial. In light of these limitations identified in the literature especially with reference to creative industries, this paper reaffirms the importance of leadership in defining the processes that define Creativity and Organizational outcomes. The research presented here is very useful for managers in these creative organizations and industries that action to promote the efficiency and effectiveness of collaboration particular to their industries.

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