



## THE ROLE OF INNOVATIVE LEADERSHIP IN DEVELOPING ORGANIZATIONAL CREATIVITY AMONG SPORTS DIRECTORS AND SCHOOL ACTIVITIES IN IRAQ

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### Abstract

This study aimed to identify the levels of innovative leadership and organizational creativity, as well as determining the relationship between innovative leadership and organizational creativity among sports directors in the general directorates of education (GDE) in Iraq from the point of view of its employees. The researchers hypothesized that there is a statistically significant correlation between innovative leadership and organizational creativity. The researchers used the descriptive approach with the correlational coefficient. It adopted and the scales of innovative leadership and organizational creativity on a 425 employees and supervisors, chosen purposefully. The study reported that directors sports and school activities in the Iraqi governorates have an acceptable level of innovative leadership and possess organizational creativity at an average level. Findings also showed the presence of a direct relationship between innovative leadership and organizational creativity for directors of sports and school activities in the GDE in the Iraqi governorates. Therefore, it is recommended that holding workshops and special developmental courses for the development of leadership and innovative qualities and other leadership and personal characteristics, as well as organizational creative skills for managers of sports activities in the GDE in the Iraqi governorates.

**Keywords:** Activities, innovative leadership, organizational creativity, sports directors

### Introduction

Our world is witnessing many changes in all areas of life and at the level of all governmental and private institutions that directly affect their administrative operations. The educational institution is considered the administrative unit that aspires to provide its service in order to achieve its future goals, ways to upgrade it and prepare human cadres capable of keeping pace with scientific progress. These aims can only come through the cooperation of the institution employees, whether they are managers or employees, to consolidate the foundations of organizational performance.

The educational administrative process has many areas and concepts, including leadership and its patterns. Leadership includes multiple types too, each type is specialized in a specific field and has an independent vision and mission.



One of these categories is the innovative leadership and the extent to which the directors of educational institutions, especially the directors of sports activities, enjoy, and the level of its practice them in their administrative units (the departments of sports and school activity) in the directorates of education in the Iraqi governorates. As the managers of sport activities, by virtue of the position an, must have the quality of leadership in order to have a prominent role in leading the employees of their department within a specific, steady-paced framework. Moreover, we note that innovative leadership is important and includes characteristics that provide sports activities with future plans, modern strategies, and innovative and new ideas that contribute to raising the level of its administrative unit. Hence, innovative leadership represents an important element in translating modern educational ideas and theories in order to reach the level of organizational creativity.

Innovative leadership is also considered one of the most basic elements in granting institutions continuity and distinction in their administrative work in light of the competition witnessed by institutions, including the departments of sports and school activity, in which work varies between administrative and field work. This variety requires the existence of leadership that enjoys the capacity of innovation and employees who have the ability to create through synergic efforts.

Likewise, innovative in organizations plays a great role and clear importance in providing an innovative environment that helps to develop and improve services for the benefit of the organization and individuals. Innovation also contributes to develop the intellectual and mental capabilities of the workers in the organization, as well as helps the organization to make good use of human resources and gets benefit from their abilities by giving them the opportunity to searching for everything new in the field of work and continuous updating of work systems (Al-Murshed, 2014).

### ***Research importance***

Scientific importance which stems from the researchers' handling of an important and vital topic related to the educational and sports aspects, i.e., innovative leadership and organizational creativity in the directorates of sports activities in Iraq. Leadership in general needs for innovation as an essential entry point for organizational creativity that administrative units seek to reach, including the directorates of sports activities in Iraq. Besides, the researchers hope that the research an administrative advantage through the results and recommendations that they will reach, to take a number of decisions and actions that work to develop the characteristic of innovative leadership among managers of sports activities in a way that reflects positively on the performance of its members and provide them with administrative skills to reach the stage of organizational creativity.

### ***Research problem***

The researchers got familiarity about the work of the sports and school activity departments in the directorates and departments of education in the governorate centers and districts. The researchers also directly observed the gatherings and tournaments held by the General Directorate of sports and school activity for the education teams in the governorates. Hence, the researchers become aware of weakness and lack of some leadership aspects of the activities managers, especially in the innovative field, which mainly in normal levels contribute to raising the level of professional performance for activities managers and their affiliates including supervisors, administrators, and even trainers. Furthermore, innovative leadership prevents wasting the administrative and training energies that administrators enjoy to reach the level of organizational creativity in their units that they preside over. It urges them to search for what is the mutual relationship between innovative leadership and organizational creativity. Accordingly the research problem can be summarized by the following questions:



1. What is the level of innovative leadership of the directors of sports and school activity in the GDE in Iraq?
2. What is the level of organizational creativity in the directorates of sports and school activity in the GDE in Iraq?
3. Is there a correlation between innovative leadership and organizational creativity in the directorates of sports and school activity in the GDE in Iraq?
4. What is impact of adopting innovative leadership by the directors of sports and school activity on organizational creativity in Iraq?

### **Research Objectives**

1. Identifying the level of innovative leadership of the directors of sports and school activity in the GDE in Iraq.
2. Identifying the level of organizational creativity in the directorates of sports and school activity in the GDE in Iraq.
3. Identifying the correlation between innovative leadership and organizational creativity in the directorates of sports and school activity in the GDE in Iraq.

### **Research hypothesis**

- 1- There is a statistically significant correlation between innovative leadership and organizational creativity in the directorates of sports and school activity in the GDE in Iraq.

Innovative leadership is a set of ideas and practices presented by managers and workers, which lead to finding administrative processes, and methods that are more effective in achieving the goals of government organizations and institutions and more serving the community (Al-Qusous, 2004).

The researchers procedurally define innovative leadership as the ability to create links and relationships between workers in the directorates of sports and school activity. It also refers to the ability to deal with the requirements of change, and the creation of modern administrative and professional methods which aimed at raising the level of performance and achievement.

Organizational creativity is a mental ability that appears at the level of the individual, group or institution, resulting in a new idea or work characterized by the greatest degree of originality (Shaabani, 2016). The researchers define organizational creativity as the ability of managers of sports and school activities to come up with new ideas, strategies and methods in their administrative functions in a way that leads to excellence in job performance.

### **Methods**

#### **Research design**

The descriptive correlational approach was obtained to achieve the objectives of the research. It analyzed and interpreted the data and extracting conclusions that are significant in relation to the research problem. The research design is that overlapping intellectual organization and intellectual steps in the scientific study that the researcher takes to solve a specific problem (Al-Shawk & Al-Kubaisi, 2006). This study was conducted on basketball coaches working in Iraq for the academic year 2021/2022. The study started from 15/1/2022 to 15/6/2022 on departments of directors of sports and school activity in the directorates of education in the Iraqi governorates

#### **Research population and sample**

The current research community consisted of administrative staff and technical supervisors working in the Department of Sports and School Activity in the general directorates of the Iraqi Ministry of Education. They



amounted 611 supervisors and employees for the academic year 2021/2022 distributed to (20) general directorates in all governorates of Iraq. Hence, the researchers cannot study the entire original community, so a representative sample of the original community was tested, provided that the sample carries and is characterized by the specifications of the original community itself. The sample of the current research was chosen purposefully. Yet, the research community was 425 employees and supervisors, i.e. they represented 70% of the original research community. They are shown in Table 1.

**Table 1**  
*Research community and sample*

General directorate	Employees	Technical supervisors	Total	Research sample	Percentage
Kirkuk	5	22	27	25	5,88
Salaheddin	15	36	51	30	7,05
The honorable Najaf	10	32	42	25	5,88
Karbala	8	12	20	15	3.52
Diyala	8	18	26	20	4.70
Rusafa 1	12	22	34	20	4.70
Resafa 2	19	22	32	20	4.70
Resafa 3	8	21	29	20	4.70
Karkh 1	12	22	34	25	5,88
Karkh 2	14	26	40	25	5,88
Karkh 3	11	19	30	25	5,88
Wasit	5	10	15	15	3.52
Basra	9	36	45	25	5,88
Almuthanaa	8	14	22	15	3.52
Dhi Qar	10	18	28	25	5,88
Diwanayah	8	12	20	15	3.52
Anbar	8	20	28	25	5,88
Maysan	9	21	30	20	4.70
Babylon	8	20	28	20	4.70
Nineveh	9	12	21	15	3.52
<b>Total</b>	<b>196</b>	<b>415</b>	<b>611</b>	<b>425</b>	<b>100%</b>

### ***Research instruments and devices***

Research tools are the set of means and standards that the researcher relies on to obtain the information required to understand and solve the problem from the relevant sources. Instrument is the means by which the researcher collects the required data and the tools refer to the devices that the researcher will use in his research. Accordingly, the researchers used the following tools in their current research:

- Personal interviews
- Innovative leadership scale
- organizational creativity scale



- Arabic and foreign references and sources.
- The Internet
- Statistical Package of Social Sciences (SPSS).
- Toshiba calculators.

## ***Procedures***

The achievement of the objectives of this study requires the availability of the measures of innovative leadership and organizational creativity of the directors of sports and school activity in the GDE at the Ministry of Education and its application to the sample.

The researchers used the innovative leadership scale adapted by (Abdullah, 2019), which consists of 57 items without axes. Each statement has a five-fold gradation and grades are given for the positive statements as follows (5-4-3-2-1) and for the negative statements (1-2-3-4-5). The highest score obtained by the respondent is 285 and the lowest score is 57. The hypothetical mean is 171. They are shown in Appendix 1.

The organizational creativity used by Hammadi (2019), which consists of 81 items distributed on five dimensions (flexibility, sensitivity to problems, decision-making ability, originality, fluency) and by (16, 16, 22, 14, 13) items for each dimension respectively. The alternative for the two scales items are (totally agree, agree, agree to some extent, do not agree, do not agree at all), and it bears the weights (5, 4, 3, 2, 1) respectively. The highest value of the scale is 405 degrees and the lowest value is 81degrees. The hypothetical mean amounted 243, (See Appendix 2).

## ***Validity***

The researchers used the innovative leadership and organizational creativity scales to obtain information for the current research. They verified the validity of the two scales, using face validity in which the two questionnaires were presented to a group of arbitrators in the field of management and organization to express their opinions on the areas and items of the two questionnaires and their relevance and inclusion of what they measure and their relevance to a subject. The researcher had taken into account their opinions about the actual items and domains. Thus, the validity of the scales had been proven and the questionnaire achieves the goal for which it was set.

## ***Reliability***

Complementing the scientific foundations that the scale should be characterized by, the researchers established its stability as one of the basic conditions that must be met in the scale. Stability means the accuracy of the scale in observation, its non-contradictoriness, and consistency in what it provides us with information about the behavior of the individual, and that the goal of stability is to estimate scale errors and work to reduce them, if any, and to verify that the scale of this study is characterized by stability, the researchers used the Cronbach Alpha method.

In order to find the reliability of the scale in this way, the innovative leadership scale was applied with its 57 items, and it was found that the value of the stability coefficient amounted 0.85 at the level of significance (0.05).

Likewise, the measure of organizational creativity, the stability was calculated for its 81 items which found that the value of the reliability coefficient was 0.88 at the level of significance (0.05).

## ***Questionnaire administration***



After the aforementioned procedures, the researchers applied the two scales:

- 1- The measure of innovative leadership and the measure of organizational creativity on the research sample of directors of sports and school activity in the GDE in the Iraqi governorates.
- 2- Questionnaires for the two scales were distributed in the locations of the sports activity departments during the research period, from 3/12/2022 to 5/1/2022.

### Data analysis

The researchers used SPSS to calculate the data and present the results including:

- Percentage.
- Mean score.
- Standard Deviation.
- Simple Correlation Coefficient.
- T-test for Independent samples

### Results and discussion

#### Statistical description of the study variable

Table 2

#### Statistical description of the study variable

Variables	Mean score	Standard deviation	Skewness
First axis	18,29	3,22	0,19-
Second axis	17,17	4,15	0,06-
Third axis	16,92	4,24	0,17
Fourth axis	17,32	3,71	0,39
Fifth axis	16,36	4,20	0,74
Total of organizational creativity scale	86,06	19,52	0,32
Total of innovative leadership scale	45,65	9,81	0,43-

Table 2 shows the arithmetic mean of the total axes of the organizational creativity scale was (M=06.86), with a standard deviation of (Std=52.19), and a Skewness coefficient of (0.32). As for the innovative leadership scale, it had an arithmetic mean of (M=65.45), a standard deviation of (Std=81.9), and a skew coefficient of (-43.0)

#### Comparing the result of creative leadership scale with the hypothetical mean

Table 3

#### Comparing the result of creative leadership scale with the hypothetical mean

Variable	Mean score	Hypothetical means	Signification
Total of innovative leadership scale	44,19	76,47	It does not outperform the hypothetical means



**Table 4**

*The sample level in the innovative leadership scale*

Level	Minimum	Maximum	Level of participants
Excellent	65	More than 64	accepted in terms of the arithmetic mean which amounted 26,85
Very good	49	64	
Good	36	48	
Medium	28	35	
Acceptable	17	27	
Weak	Less than 17	16	

Table 3 and 4 compared the arithmetic means of the innovative leadership scale for the study sample with its hypothetical mean (76,47) that is greater than its arithmetic mean. This indicates that the participants have an acceptable level of innovative leadership.

This finding is attributed to the fact that most of the directors of sports and school activities in the governorates of the research sample do not realize that the characteristic of innovation in management means an administrative philosophy aimed at continuous improvement. It also enhances its ability to adapt to the environment and develop the operations of their institutions and make them feel more secure in their jobs.

Al Habsiyya (2017) pointed out that job security contributes to creating a mutual affiliation between the manager and the employees, which enhances the employees' involvement in work and the willingness to make an additional effort to develop their level of creativity and innovation .

### *Comparing the result of organizational creativity scale with the hypothetical mean*

**Table 5**

*Comparing the result of organizational creativity scale with the hypothetical mean*

Variable	Mean score	Hypothetical means	Signification
The first axis (flexibility)	17,28	16	It outperform the hypothetical means
The second axis (sensitivity to problems)	17,53		It outperform the hypothetical means
The third axis (the ability to make decisions)	16,77		It outperform the hypothetical means
Fourth Axis (Originality)	14,83		It does not outperform the hypothetical means
Fifth Axis (Fluency)	13,13		It does not outperform the hypothetical means
Total of organizational creativity scale	79,54	80	It does not outperform the hypothetical means

**Table 6**

*The sample level in the organizational creativity scale*



Level	Minimum	Maximum	Level of participants
Excellent	136	More than 135	Medium as the mean score amounted 81,61
Very good	110	135	
Good	84	109	
Medium	58	83	
Acceptable	37	57	
Weak	Less than 37	36	

Furthermore, Table 5 and 6 also compared the arithmetic means scores of the organizational creativity of the study sample and its axes with its hypothetical mean (76,47). It is greater than the hypothetical averages except for the first, second and third axes (i.e., flexibility, sensitivity to problems, ability to make decisions). Their hypothetical average values scored greater than the arithmetic mean, and this indicates that the study sample has a medium level of organizational creativity.

This finding is interpreted that most of the directors of sports and school activities in the GDE had years of experience and were distinguished by their keeping up with all modern administrative legislation. They support and adopt the creative ideas of their members, and allow the flow of information among their members.

Khairy (2013) mentioned that the lack of information flow does not enable the individual to make the right decision, take responsibility, and prevent them from doing their work clearly and properly, because the information gives the employee a kind of confidence, high morale, and a strong motivation and motivation for work, creativity, and excellence.

## The correlations between organizational creativity dimensions with innovative leadership

*The correlations between organizational creativity dimensions with innovative leadership*

Axes	The first axis)	The second axis	The third axis	The fourth axis)	The fifth axis
The first axis (flexibility)					
The second axis (sensitivity to problems)	0,084 0,376*				
The third axis (the ability to make decisions)	0,402 0,391	0,085 0,664			
Fourth Axis (Originality)	0,068 0,565	0,049 0,511	0,75 0,399		
Fifth Axis (Fluency)	0,095 0,298	-0,058 0,276	-0,058 0,492	0,089 0,1899	
<b>Total organizational creativity scale</b>	0,982 0,000	0,875 0,000	0,642 0,007	0,865 0,000	0,416 0,017

Table 7 shows that innovative leadership has an effective and significant role in improving the level of organizational creativity among director of sports and school activities, that is, whenever they have a high level of innovative leadership, it leads to raising the value and level of organizational creativity in their organization and their administrative unit that they head. It also increases the effectiveness and efficiency of





its affiliates, their interaction and cooperation in order to achieve success and organizational excellence and maintain its continuity.

This is shown by the matrix in Table 7 through the correlations between each of the axes of organizational creativity (flexibility, sensitivity to problems, decision-making ability, originality, fluency), and the innovative leadership of the directors of sports and school activities. That is, there is a direct relationship between both concepts, and one of them contributes to the improvement of the other. Thus upgrades the administrative and organizational process prevailing within their departments to achieve the best achievements at all administrative, sports, educational and social levels through the formation of working teams and committees according to their specializations and delegating some of the powers and authorities coupled with central follow-up that increases their effectiveness and cohesion. Amer (2017) confirmed that shaping work teams leads to increase the individuals' sense of belonging to the institution and is considered one of its basic mechanisms for improvement, development and administrative creativity .

## Conclusions and recommendations

### Conclusions

1. The directors of sports activities in the GDE in the Iraqi governorates have acceptable level of innovative leadership.
2. The directors of sports activities in the GDE in the Iraqi governorates possessed average level of organizational creativity
3. The emergence of a direct correlation between innovative leadership and organizational creativity for director of sports activities in the GDE in the Iraqi governorates.

### Recommendations

1. Holding workshops and special developmental courses for the development of leadership and innovative qualities and other leadership and personal characteristics, as well as organizational creative skills for directors of sports activities in the GDE in the Iraqi governorates.
2. Encouraging innovative and creative ideas and initiatives by the departments of sports and school activities for their affiliates, by setting material and moral incentives that enhance their organizational creativity spirit.
3. Encouraging social and human relations between the departments of sports and school activity in the governorates and between their affiliates because of their strong impact in increasing the innovative leadership process and improving their level of creativity organizationally.

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