

Social Identity of Leadership as an Antecedent of Innovation Readiness

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Innovation is constantly a hot topic in the business world and is essential for any business to prosper. The innovation index in Sri Lanka is significantly low compared to other Asian countries. The lack of innovation readiness in firms is one of the main reasons for the lower innovation. Hence it is essential to check the innovation readiness of a firm to predict the industry's future. The social identity perspective is mainly ignored and overshadowed by popular leadership theories such as leadership styles, leadership traits and characteristics, leadership demographics, and innovative work behavior.

This study aims to fill the research gap identified by studying and investigating the impact of leadership's social identity on innovation readiness. Few studies have looked at the influence of leadership's social identity viewpoint on the firm's innovation readiness in the past. The researcher took a quantitative approach by taking the entire population of the listed companies of Sri Lanka using a self-administrated questionnaire. Descriptive analysis, Structural Equation Modelling and Importance-Performance Mapping were the primary data analytic methods; SPSS and SmartPLS3 were used in the study. The researcher identified that categorization has the highest impact followed by the positive attitude while the sense of belonging has a minor influence on innovation readiness. The study's findings demonstrated that leaders should be more effective in the long-term organizational behavior, specifically in task-oriented and employee-oriented leadership; they also provide group-oriented leadership about a shared social identity. The study suggests a framework for organizations and supports managers in the companies to uplift the innovation readiness of the firm.

Keywords: *Innovation readiness, Social identity of leadership, Self-categorization, Sense of belonging, Positive attitude*

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