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# BRIDGING SCIENCE AND MANAGEMENT: A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF LEADERSHIP MODELS THAT FOSTER A CULTURE OF DISCOVERY AND COLLABORATION

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## ABSTRACT

The changing environment of scientific and technological organizations necessitates a combination of creativity, teamwork, and strategic management as leadership models. This review is a synthesis of recent research in the field of leadership theory, organizational culture, and innovation management to discuss how effective leadership contributes to the development of a culture of discovery and collaboration. In the findings, five leadership paradigms, including transformational, adaptive, servant, distributed, and ambidextrous, are identified to help the knowledge-based organizations balance both exploration and exploitation. The analysis also determines cultural facilitators, including psychological safety, shared learning, and trust, and structural facilitators, including cross-functional teams, digital collaboration tools, and knowledge management systems. Collectively, these dimensions indicate that leadership is an integrative core that coordinates behavioral, cultural, and technological aspects to perpetuate innovation ecosystems. The review finishes with a suggestion that the three components of leadership, culture, and structure are integrative and mutually supporting factors that provide the adaptability of organizations and scientific evolution in the knowledge economy.

**KEYWORDS:** Leadership Models; Transformational Leadership; Adaptive Leadership; Servant Leadership; Organizational Culture; Innovation Management; Collaboration; Psychological Safety; Knowledge Management Systems; Scientific Organizations; Digital Transformation; Discovery Culture.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The twenty-first century has experienced an enormous integration of scientific discovery, technological development, and organizational change. With the rise of knowledge-based industries as the mainstay of the world economies, the task of scientific innovation management requires a leadership that can cut across disciplinary, cultural, and institutional frontiers (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995; Drucker, 1999). It is now anticipated that scientific and technological organizations not only create knowledge, but also convert it into sustainable, socially relevant results, which involves scientific autonomy, as well as coordination by managers (Etzkowitz and Leydesdorff, 2000; Uhl-Bien and Arena, 2018). This dualism has created a framework of chronic conflict between scientific freedom, where scientific creativity and experimentation prevail, and management control, where accountability, efficiency, and resource optimization are the key elements (Hall et al., 2018). At the core of the current leadership in research and innovation ecosystems, and the dilemma of achieving the coordination of these two imperatives comes to the fore.

The emergence of the knowledge economy has transformed the meaning of leadership, which is based on power and control, to one that centers on teamwork, education, and responsiveness (Drucker, 1999; Senge, 2006). In this regard, leading knowledge workers, scientists, and creative workers do not necessarily rely on hierarchical power; rather, this process is based on the development of a mutual purpose, trust, and intrinsic motivation (Amabile and Pratt, 2016; Edmondson, 2019). The key to successful leadership in the scientific and technological field thus lies in promoting what has become commonly referred to as a culture of discovery, which is a culture where curiosity, experimentation, and positive failure are seen as core components of the innovation process (Catmull, 2014; Schein and Schein, 2017). Intimately connected with it is the concept of collaboration, which can be interpreted as the dynamic exchange of ideas and expertise beyond the disciplinary, organizational, and cultural spheres (Hollingsworth, 2012; Von Krogh et al., 2012). The combination of these dimensions makes up the human and social basis of innovation, shifting abstract concepts into physical developments.

Even though there is an increasing literature on the topic of leadership and innovation, studies that explore the convergence of scientific leadership and organizational management are not yet comprehensive. Researchers have developed

leadership theory or innovation management in isolation without thinking about the interplay between leadership practices and cultural and structural systems to maintain the discovery-based collaboration (Bolden, 2011; Bass and Riggio, 2006). This division restricts the knowledge of the ways in which leadership can be effective in balancing the creative freedom of science with the strategic discipline of management- a question that is becoming more and more relevant in research universities, R&D laboratories, and multinational technology companies (Uhl-Bien and Arena, 2018; Von Krogh et al., 2012). Furthermore, the transformational and adaptive leadership models have been studied in the corporate world extensively; the application of these models to the scientific and knowledge-based world is still underexplored (Heifetz et al., 2009; Rosing et al., 2011). The literature gap is essential to fill this gap so as to propel the theory and practice of innovation leadership.

To this end, this review aims to create an integrative model of leadership that creates a culture of discovery and collaboration through the synthesis of the viewpoints derived from leadership theory, organizational culture, and innovation management. Through the review of the available literature in these areas, the paper will attempt to: (1) pinpoint major leadership frameworks that permit innovation and discovery; (2) find out the cultural and behavioral facilitators that support collaborative performance; and (3) identify the structural and technological processes through which leadership can coordinate scientific creativity and organizational alignment.

By means of this synthesis, the review will add to an expanding interdisciplinary conversation on how leadership can make scientific organizations become adaptive and learning-based ecosystems. The resulting paradigm not only ensures a seamless connection between science and management but also offers theoretical bases to the development of future-ready institutions that will flourish in curiosity, cooperation, and purpose.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

This review will use an integrative narrative approach to combine both conceptual and empirical research in the field of leadership, innovation management, and organizational psychology. It aims at building a multidimensional concept of how leadership models contribute to the discovery and collaboration in knowledge-intensive and research-driven organisations. This method focuses on thematic integration and interdisciplinary conceptual interpretation, as opposed to adherence

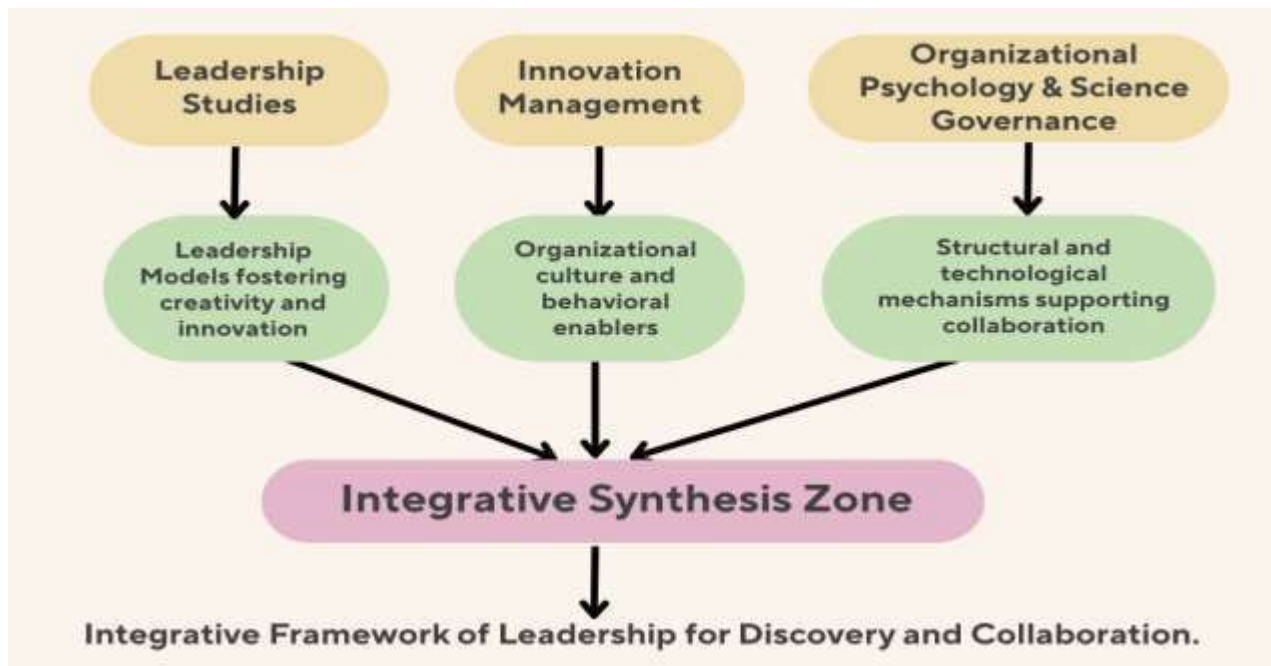
to a strict systematic review protocol.

The most topical literature was found in Scopus, Web of Science, Google Scholar, and Business Source Complete databases, and the scope of the search was limited to the period between 2010 and 2025. Search terms were a combination of leadership for innovation, scientific management, collaborative culture, organizational learning, and interdisciplinary teamwork. Other sources were also acquired by citation tracking, as well as cross-referencing of authors who were prominent in issues about leadership and innovation.

The criteria of selection included peer-reviewed and theoretically based publications that discuss

leadership methods in either scientific, technological, or creative settings. Only studies that covered administrative efficiency or normal management were left out. The identified literature was synthesized using the thematic approach based on three recurring dimensions: leadership models, cultural and behavioral enablers, and structural or technological supports of collaboration.

To guide this synthesis, a conceptual model (Figure 1) was created to demonstrate the integrative review procedure, how the literature in various disciplines is brought together into the thematic domains that support the culture of discovery and collaboration.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Flow of the Integrative Review Process.**

### 3. RESULTS

This part summarizes the results obtained in the literature reviewed in three key dimensions, which include (1) Leadership Models Enabling Innovation and Discovery, (2) Cultural and Behavioral Enablers of Collaboration, and (3) Structural and Technological Supports Facilitating Integrative Work. Collectively, these themes provide the image of how leadership helps close the gap between scientific creativity and managerial coordination to continue the culture of discovery and collaboration.

#### **3.1 Leadership Models Enabling Innovation and Discovery**

Science-based and research-intensive leadership is not similar to the conventional corporate examples. It has to juggle between exploration (curiosity, experimentation) and exploitation (strategic alignment, accountability). The synthesized

literature has a consistent pattern of defining transformational, adaptive, and distributed leadership models as the most useful aspects in developing the innovative capacity.

Transformational leadership encourages intellectual development and the sharing of visions that enhance creativity and problem-solving in research settings (Bass and Riggio, 2006; Gumusluoğlu and Ilsev, 2009). Adaptive leadership supplements this by encouraging flexibility and resilience when faced with uncertainty, which is a critical issue, especially in the rapidly changing fields of science (Heifetz et al., 2009). Another type of leadership is distributed leadership, which is prevalent in academic and laboratory contexts, and it is decentralized and allows team-based innovations to be made (Bolden, 2011; Spillane, 2006).

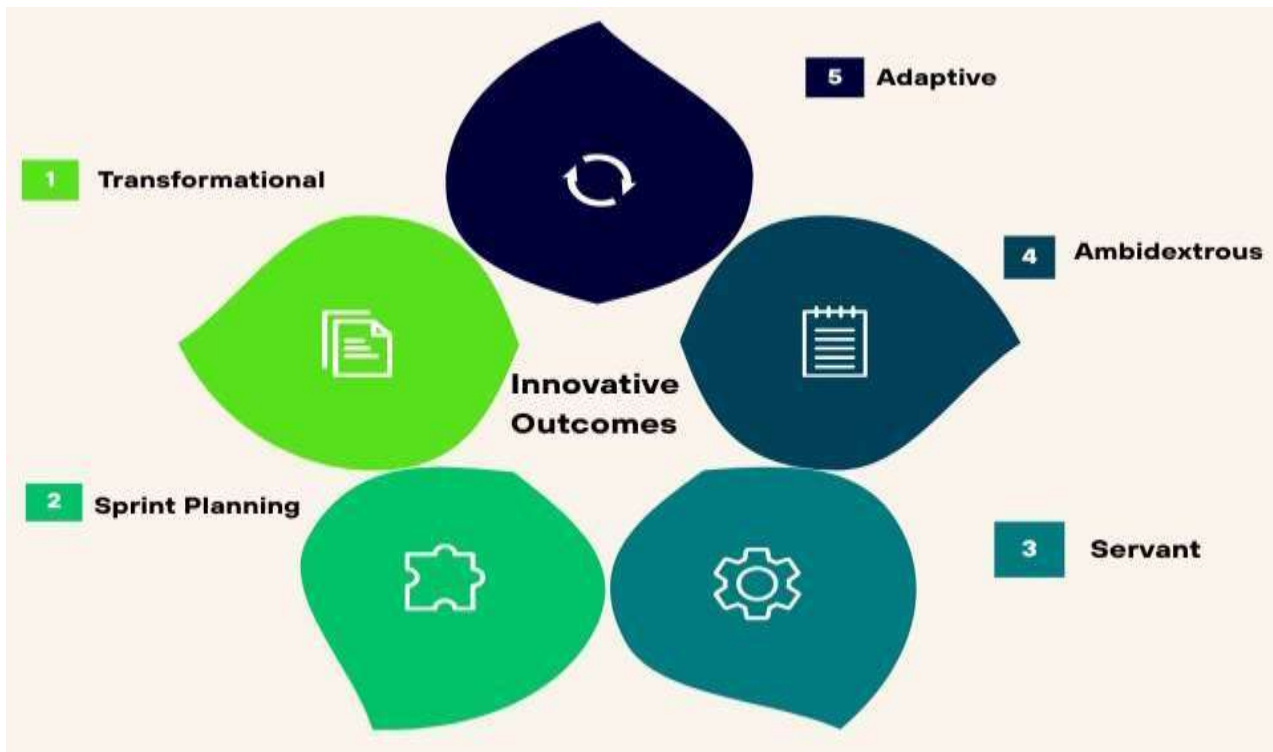
There is also a developing literature that

acknowledges servant leadership because of its human-focused orientation, which fosters psychological security, moral uprightness, and intrinsic drive that are indispensable elements of long-term discovery (Liden et al., 2014). Simultaneously, dualistic leadership (Rosing et al., 2011) is currently being introduced to handle the two-fold requirement of innovativeness and efficiency in operations. Summarizing the main

features of these leadership models, Table 1 will provide a comparison of the roles of both models in creating innovations in research-based settings. The interrelationships between these leadership styles and their overall effect on novel results are also presented in Figure 2, which illustrates the complementary roles of these styles to both creativity and learning in an organization.

**Table 1: Summary of Leadership Models and Their Contributions to Innovation**

Leadership Model	Core Attributes	Innovation Mechanism	Representative Studies
Transformational	Vision, inspiration, intellectual stimulation	Encourages creative thinking and long-term innovation goals	Bass & Riggio (2006); Gumusluoğlu & Ilsev (2009)
Adaptive	Flexibility, situational awareness, resilience	Enables rapid response to complex challenges	Heifetz et al. (2009); Uhl-Bien & Arena (2018)
Distributed	Shared authority, collaboration, participative decision-making	Promotes interdisciplinary teamwork and knowledge sharing	Spillane (2006); Bolden (2011)
Servant	Empathy, ethical focus, empowerment	Builds trust and psychological safety conducive to innovation	Liden et al. (2014); Van Dierendonck (2011)
Ambidextrous	Balance of exploration and exploitation	Aligns creativity with performance outcomes	Rosing et al. (2011); Zacher & Rosing (2015)



**Figure 2: Leadership Models for Innovation.**

**3.2 Cultural and Behavioral Enablers of Collaboration**

In addition to leadership style, a favorable organizational culture is essential for the maintenance of discovery and collaboration. Research and innovation-rich studies highlight the significance of psychological safety, learning orientation, and communication based on trust as

some of the key behavioral foundations (Edmondson, 2019; Schein and Schein, 2017).

Psychological safety enables team members to share ideas and disagree without the fear of disciplinary action and also enables them to take risks and experiment (Edmondson, 1999). Curiosity, reflection, and constant improvement are components of learning-oriented cultures and form a part of the discovery processes (Garvin et al., 2008).

Lastly, social capital is the social bond that ensures different scientific teams trust, and open communication facilitates the knowledge sharing process (Choi et al., 2015).

Empirical evidence of organizations like NASA Jet Propulsion Laboratory, Google X, and Genentech also demonstrates that the leadership practice that supports transparency, humility, and shared vision is directly related to breakthrough innovation (Catmull, 2014; Garvin et al., 2008). For example, the leaders

who demonstrate the art of inclusive conversation and positive failure tolerance will trigger the development of a culture in which collaboration is a norm of operation and not an imposed procedure. To sum up these findings, Table 2 summarizes the key cultural and behavioral factors contributing to discovery and collaboration and the most effective leadership styles that are closely linked to each of them.

**Table 2: Cultural and Behavioral Enablers of Discovery and Collaboration**

Cultural Element	Leadership Influence	Outcome	References
Psychological Safety	Empathetic and servant leadership	Encourages idea sharing and experimentation	Edmondson (1999, 2019)
Learning Orientation	Transformational leadership	Enhances adaptability and organizational learning	Garvin et al. (2008); Schein & Schein (2017)
Trust and Openness	Distributed leadership	Strengthens social capital and collaboration networks	Choi et al. (2015); Catmull (2014)
Shared Vision	Transformational and adaptive leadership	Aligns creative efforts toward institutional goals	Bass & Riggio (2006); Heifetz et al. (2009)
Constructive Failure	Adaptive and ambidextrous leadership	Promotes risk-taking and innovation learning loops	Rosing et al. (2011); Edmondson (2019)

**Conceptual Note**

Culture is the infrastructure of behavior that renders the leadership philosophy into practice. Discovery-based settings are led by leaders who develop norms that strike a balance between curiosity and discipline, which promote a “learning ecosystem” (Schein, 2017).

**3.3 Structural and Technological Supports for Integrative Work**

Modern organizations are relying more on organizational and technological processes that maintain cooperation and scale. The literature review reveals three key enablers, namely, cross-functional structures, digital collaboration ecosystems, and knowledge management systems (KMS).

The interdisciplinary problem-solving that is facilitated by the cross-functional team structures can bring together the various expertise (Ancona and Caldwell, 1992). Such leaders become the so-called “boundary spanners”, and they can help with the coordination of professional and disciplinary borders (Tushman and Scanlan, 1981; Cross et al., 2015).

Digital platforms, such as virtual labs, shared databases, and AI-supported ideation tools, enhance

this connectivity. It has been shown that when leaders are at the forefront of technological openness and a democratic approach to data, the process of collaboration will increase, and the speed of innovation will be accelerated (Von Krogh et al., 2012; Raisch and Krakowski, 2021).

Lastly, discovery is institutionalized through the use of knowledge management systems (KMS) and communities of practice; the tacit knowledge can be captured and shared through institutionalized learning (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995; Wenger et al., 2002). These systems rely on leadership that places importance on transparency and inter-domain communication as opposed to control. The interrelationship among the leadership models, cultural underpinnings, and technological supports is integrated into Figure 3, which conceives the concept of leadership as the key integrative process that connects the three dimensions. Table 3 affirms the main structural and technological enablers to collaborative performance, outlining the leadership functions and processes in which the supports are employed to promote integrative innovation.

**Table 3: Structural and Technological Enablers of Collaboration**

Enabler	Leadership Role	Collaborative Mechanism	Supporting Studies
Cross-Functional Teams	Boundary spanning, integrative coordination	Enhances interdisciplinary problem-solving	Ancona & Caldwell (1992); Cross et al. (2015)
Digital Collaboration Tools	Promoting transparency and digital literacy	Connects distributed teams, accelerates idea sharing	Von Krogh et al. (2012); Raisch & Krakowski (2021)
Knowledge Management Systems (KMS)	Encouraging knowledge sharing and openness	Retains institutional memory, supports continuous innovation	Nonaka & Takeuchi (1995); Wenger et al. (2002)
AI and Data Analytics	Integrative leadership leveraging technological foresight	Identifies patterns, informs strategic innovation	George et al. (2020); Haefner et al. (2021)



Figure 3: Leadership as the Integrative Core.

3.4 Synthesis of Findings

All the findings are leading to one of the main conclusions: leadership is the integrative core that connects personal, cultural, and systemic aspects of organizational innovation. Leaders not only make discovery possible through their own style but also by creating social environments and structures that remain collaborative. Transformational and adaptive leadership style creates the motivational and strategic focus, servant and distributed leadership strengthen inclusiveness and psychological safety, and ambidextrous leadership balances creativity and performance in good research organizations. These structures together constitute a multi-level

ecosystem of leadership in which individuals, culture, and technology interrelate and interact dynamically. This synthesis indicates that the future of innovation leadership is hybrid models, or leaders who are visionary and participative, data-driven and empathetic, and organizationally strategic and scientifically curious.

3.5 Conceptual Integration: The Leadership-Culture-Structure Nexus

The combined results could be summed up as Leadership Culture Structure Nexus (Figure 4), whereby good leadership triggers cultural and structural fit, which fosters continued exploration.



Figure 4: The Leadership-Culture-Structure Nexus.

4. DISCUSSION

The production of leadership models, cultural processes, and structural processes illustrated in the current review underlines the main assumption that leadership plays the role of an integrative hub of

innovative and discovery-based organizations. In a variety of empirical and theoretical works, this evidence remains consistent that leadership is not only the factor defining individual and group motivation, but also the creator of the cultural and

technological environment in which a discovery flourishes. The combination of transformational, adaptive, and servant paradigms and organizational culture and structure gives one a comprehensive framework that can improve the excellence of science and management.

Transformational and adaptive leadership models offer the scaffolding of the visionary and strategic scaffold to facilitate long-term innovation. On the one hand, transformational leaders make the followers believe in purpose and activate intellectual development, whereas adaptive leaders move flexibly through complexity and uncertainty (Bass and Riggio, 2006; Heifetz et al., 2009; Uhl-Bien and Arena, 2018). Such models make organizations resilient and agile, particularly in scientific and R&D settings, where there is always ambiguity and a high rate of change. Distributed and servant leadership extend this ability with participatory decision-making, trust, and empowerment values, which are unavoidable in interdisciplinary collaboration and open innovation (Bolden, 2011; Liden et al., 2014; Van Dierendonck, 2011). Taken together, these models transform leadership as a collective, relationship practice as opposed to a role of power, and this fits in with modern demands to have collaborative, networked forms of organizations (Spillane, 2006; Edmondson, 2019).

The cultural aspect provides a behavioral infrastructure on this leadership base. Inclusive leadership actions have been observed to create psychological safety, open communication, and shared learning, which encourage both risk-taking and creative experimenting (Edmondson, 1999; Garvin et al., 2008; Schein and Schein, 2017). Those organizations that actively nurture such cultures go beyond compliance-based teamwork to learning ecosystems where learning thrives on the tolerance of mistakes, inquisitiveness, and perpetual feedback loops. Significantly, this literature review shows that culture is not just the product of leadership, but a reciprocal process; leaders influence it, and it, in turn, justifies and supports leadership behavior based on collaboration and knowledge sharing (Choi et al., 2015; Catmull, 2014).

Discovery and collaboration are based on structural and technological supports. Organizations need to close the human-technology gap, and leadership will be forced to meet the need to enhance the interface between human and technology as organizations adopt distributed teams, virtual laboratories, and other digital platforms of innovation (Von Krogh et al., 2012; Raisch and Krakowski, 2021). Human creativity is enhanced by knowledge management systems (Nonaka and

Takeuchi, 1995) and AI-supported analytics (George et al., 2020; Haefner et al., 2021) that are accompanied by open-minded and transparent leadership. As demonstrated in the integrative framework in this review (Figure 3 and Figure 4), successful leadership integrates these structural supports with cultural values and behavioral norms such that these ecosystems become unified systems in which innovation becomes a way of life instead of an infrequent occurrence.

Along with such promising implications, this synthesis, however, reveals some shortcomings and decisive gaps in existing literature as well. First, a large part of the available studies are still discipline-specific, whereby leadership, innovation management, and organizational psychology are studied separately. Not many empirical studies operationalize interactions between leadership, culture, and structural design together, hence fragmented knowledge. Second, there is still contextual bias; most evidence is based in Western, corporate, or high-technology settings, and thus institutions of research and science in the developing world are underrepresented (Bolden, 2011; Schein and Schein, 2017). Moreover, the scientific validation of newer leadership paradigms, e.g., ambidextrous or servant leadership, is not much, limiting the applicability of the models. Methodologically, most studies are conducted based on cross-sectional or data-based on perceptions, which makes it hard to draw conclusions on the way leadership behaviors have a concrete impact on the outcomes of innovation (Gumusluoğlu and Ilsev, 2009; Liden et al., 2014). The solution to such methodological and contextual constraints is based on longitudinal and mixed-method studies that can capture the dynamics of human action and behavior, cultural change, and organization design.

In a future study, there are a number of directions that should be taken. To start with, researchers need to examine multi-level integrative frameworks between leadership practices and cultural change and technological adjustment in situ. The development of artificial intelligence, data analytics, and digital ethnography may support stronger behavioral mapping of leadership impact throughout a complex system (George et al., 2020). Second, prospective work should take into account the comparative studies of the work at the cross-sectoral level linking scientific institutions, academic research laboratories, and corporations that are operated by innovative principles or by contextual ones. Third, the necessity to study the ethical and emotional aspects of leadership in innovation environments is on the rise as the leaders must deal

with the problem of data ethics, psychological well-being, and algorithmic decision-making (Raisch and Krakowski, 2021; Van Dierendonck, 2011). Finally, the emergence of a hybrid work environment and digital collaboration ecosystem requires the redefinition of traditional leadership competencies, with empathy, inclusivity, and digital fluency as the main facilitators of discovery in the XXI century.

To sum up, it is reiterated in this review that leadership, culture, and organization constitute a nexus of synergy that supports discovery, creativity, and organizational flexibility. Successful leaders facilitate cross epistemic transfers between science and management to create a space in which curiosity and accountability co-exist, and innovation and ethical intent. The integrative model that is being developed here is an addition to the emerging field of leadership towards innovation because of its focus on the relational, cultural, and systemic coherence as the cornerstone of sustainable scientific development. In order to develop a real culture of discovery and collaboration, companies need to enable the leaders, not just as strategists and managers, but also as creators of learning, connection, and shared meaning.

## 5. CONCLUSION

The review lays stress on the fact that leadership is not just an administrative attribute but a strategic and cultural dynamism that provides a connection between scientific creativity and organizational integrity. Effective leadership in the context of research-intensive and technology-intensive surroundings transforms the vision into a coordinated discovery by combining the motivation of the individual, the culture of the group, and the

structure. Transformational and adaptive leadership steer innovation with inspiration and adaptability, and servant and distributed models enable inclusivity and trust. Collectively, they create a structure of behavior that changes the scientific potential into communal products. Cultural and structural dimensions that support these functions of leadership are also important. Cultures that are based on learning, trust, and psychological safety promote experimentation, whereas systems of digital collaboration and knowledge management instantiate discovery as an ongoing organizational process. These factors, when balanced, lead to what this review refers to as a Leadership-Culture-Structure Nexus, a dynamic balancing effect that fosters creativity and collaboration, and adaptability in fast-changing work-worlds. However, challenges remain. The literature still divides leadership, innovation, and organizational behavior into separate research streams. The empirical research that confirms the integrative frameworks is scarce, and the majority of the evidence is still contextually biased and is based on a Western or corporate environment. Future research should take inter- and multi-level strategies that can integrate cross-sectoral and cross-cultural views and be backed up with longitudinal and data-driven methodologies. Finally, to develop a culture of discovery and collaboration, it is important to redefine what leadership is as both a science and an art, a science that is analytical in its precision and freedom of discovery with curiosity and empathy. Crossing these spheres, organizations can become flexible ecosystems that will be able to promote innovation and impact society during the knowledge age.

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