

Promoting Innovative Work Behaviors for Greener and Sustainable Development among Service Sector Workers in Denmark

Sri Yusriani^{1*}, Faris Isham², Eliya Azis³, Yulina⁴ & Nur Mustofa Kamal⁵

¹ Graduate School of Business (GSB), Universiti Sains Malaysia, Pulau Penang, Malaysia

^{2,3,4,5} Department of Postgraduate Studies of Indonesia Open University, Tangerang Selatan, 15437, Indonesia

Corresponding author: sriysarahlistener@gmail.com; sriyusriani-syspsp@student.usm.my;
501232832@ecampus.ut.ac.id

Abstract

This research investigates how Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL) and Creative Self-Efficacy (CSE) influence Innovative Work Behavior (IWB) among employees in organizations. Additionally, it examines the mediating role of CSE in the relationship between EL and IWB. The study underscores the critical role of EL in fostering IWB by enhancing CSE, thereby nurturing a culture of creativity and entrepreneurship. CSE acts as a mediator, channeling the impact of EL into IWB and highlighting the significance of leadership in driving organizational innovation. Questionnaires were distributed to part-time service sector workers in Aarhus, Vejle, and Billund (Denmark). Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was utilized to analyze the relationships among the independent, mediating, and dependent variables. The findings present a mixed model fit. While EL does not directly affect IWB, it significantly boosts CSE, which subsequently influences IWB. These results align with previous studies, such as those by Zhang and Bartol (2010) and Newman et al. (2018), which emphasize the importance of EL in enhancing employees' creative self-efficacy and innovative performance. This research highlights the essential role of EL in promoting IWB by strengthening employees' CSE. It advocates for leadership development programs that focus on empowering employees, fostering their creativity, and building their confidence. The findings demonstrate that improvements in CSE, driven by effective leadership, can substantially enhance innovation within the service sector. This study provides new empirical insights into how EL influences IWB through CSE among service sector workers in Aarhus, Vejle, and Billund (Denmark). It contributes to a deeper understanding of the interplay between leadership, employee innovation, and sustainable development, particularly in the context of part-time service workers.

Keywords: entrepreneurial leadership, innovative work behavior, creative self-efficacy, employees, greener development, quantitative research.

1. Introduction

Human workers are in a constant state of development, requiring organizations to foster continuous growth, creativity, and innovation to remain competitive. This ever-changing nature of the workforce calls for dynamic leadership approaches that can adapt to evolving employee needs and organizational priorities. As organizational activities evolve, so does the necessity for leadership that encourages employees to embrace and actively engage in innovative practices. Innovation, particularly in the service sector, has become indispensable in addressing global challenges and achieving sustainable development (Anderson et al., 2017). Beyond driving economic growth, innovation is also a core enabler of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which advocate for creative solutions to address environmental, social, and economic challenges (Moyer & Hedden, 2020). This aligns with a global shift toward sustainability and inclusivity, positioning innovation as a cornerstone of organizational and

societal progress.

Although extensive research has highlighted the importance of innovation in modern organizations, there is still a gap in understanding the specific mechanisms that enable employees to engage in Innovative Work Behavior (IWB). While prior studies have demonstrated that Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL) plays a pivotal role in promoting creativity and innovation (Gupta et al., 2004; Newman et al., 2018), there is limited exploration of its indirect effects through Creative Self-Efficacy (CSE). CSE, or employees' confidence in their ability to generate and execute creative ideas, is a critical mediating factor in the relationship between EL and IWB. Furthermore, existing research has often focused on larger economies, leaving a notable gap in examining these dynamics in smaller, yet dynamic regions like Denmark.

This study seeks to address these research gaps by analyzing how EL fosters IWB through CSE among part-time service sector workers in Aarhus, Billund, and Vejle, Denmark. These regions were chosen for their significant contributions to Denmark's service-oriented economy and their alignment with the country's sustainability goals. Aarhus, as a major urban hub, represents a thriving center for education and industry innovation. Billund, known for its prominence in tourism and entertainment, provides insights into creativity-driven workplaces, while Vejle, recognized for its sustainability-focused initiatives, offers a practical lens to study the integration of IWB with the SDGs (UN, 2015).

Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL), defined by opportunity-seeking behavior, proactive decision-making, and the ability to inspire creativity among employees (Gupta et al., 2004), is central to this research. However, the link between EL and IWB is often mediated by employees' self-perception of their creative abilities, captured as Creative Self-Efficacy (CSE) (Tierney & Farmer, 2011). By exploring this mediation effect, organizations can better understand how leadership styles can be leveraged to drive employee-driven innovation. Service sector employees, particularly part-time workers, often face unique challenges such as fluctuating schedules, client-centered roles, and reduced opportunities for organizational engagement. This heightens the need for targeted research in this area to uncover actionable strategies for empowering this workforce segment (Yuan & Woodman, 2021; Luederitz et al., 2017).

Building on prior research (e.g., Zhang & Bartol, 2010; Newman et al., 2018; Tierney & Farmer, 2011), this study employs Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to investigate the mediating role of CSE in the relationship between EL and IWB. The findings aim to enrich theoretical understanding of how leadership dynamics influence innovation while providing actionable recommendations for managers and policymakers in Denmark's service sector. By focusing on part-time employees, this study highlights the often-overlooked innovative potential of this workforce segment. Moreover, it emphasizes the critical role these employees play in fostering organizational sustainability and achieving long-term developmental goals.

This research bridges existing gaps by examining how EL influences IWB directly and indirectly through CSE, with a focus on the Danish service sector. By uncovering practical strategies to enhance employee innovation, this study aims to address the following research questions: (1) Does EL affect employees' IWB in organizations? (2) Does EL affect employees' CSE? (3) Is there an influence of EL with CSE mediation on employees' IWB?

2. Literature Review

2.1 Innovative Work Behavior (IWB)

The core variable in this research is the propensity for employees to engage in Innovative Work Behavior (IWB) within their work environment. IWB refers to individual actions that result in the creation, development, and practical implementation of novel ideas aimed at improving workplace processes, services, and products (Zhu et al., 2023). This behavior is pivotal in enabling organizations to gain a competitive advantage, enhance overall performance, and maintain adaptability in an ever-changing market environment (Sengupta et al., 2023; European Commission, 2011). Research suggests that IWB encompasses not only the ideation phase but also the ability to collaborate and apply creative concepts in various organizational contexts (I. Ahmad et al., 2023; Flocco et al., 2022). Companies that integrate innovation into their daily practices can respond effectively to evolving customer preferences, encourage collaboration, and drive employee engagement (Islam et al., 2024; Karani & Mshenga, 2021). Leadership style is a significant determinant of IWB within organizations, influencing the organizational culture and employees' creative performance. Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL), in particular, has emerged as a key driver of employee innovation. EL inspires employees to identify opportunities, solve problems creatively, and develop unique ideas that contribute to organizational success (Malibari & Bajaba, 2022; Dhamija et al., 2023). This leadership style fosters an environment where innovation is not only encouraged but actively supported, creating a culture of experimentation and dynamic problem-solving (Islam et al., 2024). A meta-analysis by Lee et al. (2020) confirms that EL is among the most effective leadership styles for promoting creativity and cultivating an innovative organizational climate.

2.2 Entrepreneurial Leadership and Innovative Work Behavior

Organizations seeking to improve Innovative Work Behavior (IWB) must fully understand the mechanisms through which Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL) influences employees. Research consistently shows that EL enhances employees' capacity to think beyond conventional solutions, motivating them to prioritize entrepreneurial opportunities and innovation (Bagheri et al., 2022; Li et al., 2022). EL inspires employees to identify and explore creative opportunities, equipping them to address organizational challenges with innovative solutions. This leadership style not only encourages employees to think outside the box but also provides the psychological safety and structural support necessary for experimenting with new ideas and sharing them within the workplace (Chatchawan et al., 2017). Furthermore, studies suggest that EL fosters an organizational culture where experimentation, trial-and-error, and risk-taking are valued, creating an environment conducive to innovation (Sudiyani et al., 2020; Sarwoko, 2020). This culture of creativity is essential for empowering employees to engage in innovative activities without fear of failure, which is a critical barrier in many traditional organizations. EL, therefore, serves as a catalyst for building a collaborative and forward-thinking workforce. By emphasizing employee-driven solutions and valuing entrepreneurial thinking, EL can create sustainable competitive advantages for organizations operating in dynamic markets (Malibari & Bajaba, 2022). A meta-analysis conducted by Lee et al. (2020) underscores the effectiveness of EL in cultivating an innovative organizational climate. By fostering trust and collaboration, EL motivates employees to contribute creative ideas and engage in activities that directly improve organizational processes, products, and services. This leadership style not only enhances individual creativity but also drives collective innovation, making it particularly

effective in industries where adaptability and responsiveness to market changes are crucial.

2.3 Entrepreneurial Leadership and Creative Self-Efficacy

Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL) is a significant determinant of Creative Self-Efficacy (CSE), which represents employees' confidence in their ability to develop and execute innovative ideas. Bandura's (1977) Self-Efficacy Theory posits that individuals' beliefs in their ability to complete tasks directly influence their motivation, persistence, and overall performance. This theory forms the foundation for understanding how EL can shape employees' creative confidence through targeted leadership behaviors.

Leaders who adopt entrepreneurial approaches enhance employees' CSE by creating mastery experiences, fostering an environment of social learning, and providing consistent verbal encouragement. By assigning challenging yet achievable tasks, entrepreneurial leaders enable employees to build creative problem-solving skills while reinforcing their confidence to innovate (Mehmood et al., 2020; Sudiyani et al., 2020). Additionally, leaders act as role models by demonstrating innovative behaviors themselves, creating a culture where creativity is normalized and celebrated (Renko et al., 2015).

Effective communication by entrepreneurial leaders strengthens employees' belief in their creative capabilities. By offering constructive feedback and recognizing employees' contributions, leaders help employees perceive challenges as opportunities for growth and success. This aligns with Bandura's (1977) assertion that supportive feedback and constructive communication play a pivotal role in reinforcing individuals' self-beliefs, enabling them to approach challenges with greater confidence. Moreover, Yusriani et al. (2023) emphasize that self-efficacy is further enhanced when employees feel their efforts are valued and their contributions make a meaningful impact, particularly in dynamic and collaborative work environments where interaction with peers fosters learning enthusiasm. These factors collectively nurture an environment where employees are motivated to innovate and excel.

Moreover, EL nurtures CSE by cultivating a workplace environment that emphasizes dynamic problem-solving, innovation, and calculated risk-taking (Newman et al., 2018). Entrepreneurial leaders encourage employees to explore unconventional ideas and implement novel solutions while providing the resources and support necessary to mitigate potential risks. Bandura (1977) further suggests that mastery experiences—when employees successfully complete innovative tasks—are among the most effective ways to strengthen self-efficacy. These experiences build resilience and adaptability, equipping employees to handle future workplace challenges more confidently.

2.4 The Mediating Role of Creative Self-Efficacy

Creative Self-Efficacy (CSE) serves as a vital bridge between Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL) and Innovative Work Behavior (IWB), mediating the influence of leadership on employee innovation. Studies have demonstrated that entrepreneurial leaders strengthen CSE by providing clear visions, motivating employees, and fostering a culture of risk-taking that drives innovation (Javed et al., 2021; Renko et al., 2015). Employees with high levels of CSE are more likely to initiate, develop, and implement creative ideas, making them instrumental in driving organizational success.

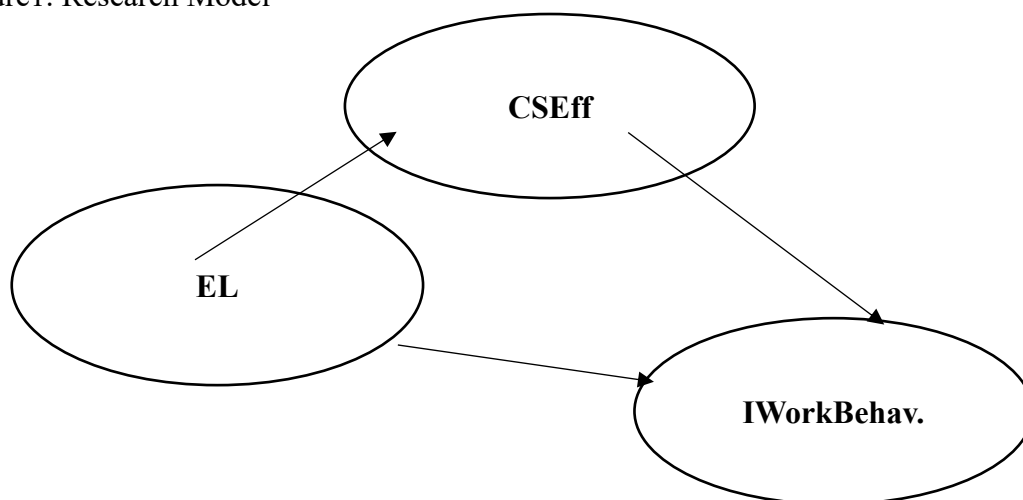
Entrepreneurial leaders inspire employees to believe in their creative potential by offering both

tangible and intangible support, such as access to resources and recognition of achievements. This encouragement fosters a workplace environment conducive to innovation, where employees feel empowered to experiment and take ownership of their ideas (Lee et al., 2020). Additionally, leaders who clearly articulate organizational goals and align them with employees' creative efforts create a shared sense of purpose that further enhances IWB.

CSE not only strengthens employees' motivation to engage in innovation but also equips them with the confidence to navigate challenges associated with the implementation of creative ideas (Endarwati & Riani, 2022). For example, employees with high CSE are more likely to view obstacles as opportunities for growth rather than barriers, making them resilient contributors to organizational innovation. Research by Islam et al. (2024) highlights that fostering employee engagement through CSE can significantly enhance collaboration, idea-sharing, and overall organizational performance.

Finally, leadership styles that emphasize entrepreneurial behaviors contribute to a culture of continuous improvement and innovation. By encouraging employees to take calculated risks and explore untested solutions, leaders can unlock untapped potential within their workforce. This underscores the importance of adopting a holistic approach that integrates EL, CSE, and IWB to achieve sustainable development goals and maintain a competitive edge in dynamic industries (Karani & Mshenga, 2021)

Figure1. Research Model



3. Research Method

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a quantitative research design to investigate the relationships between Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL), Creative Self-Efficacy (CSE), and Innovative Work Behavior (IWB) among part-time employees in Denmark's service sector. A survey-based approach was adopted to gather data, consistent with established best practices in organizational research (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The research focused on three key cities in Denmark—Aarhus, Billund, and Vejle—renowned for their dynamic service industries and contributions to sustainable development.

3.2 Sampling and Population

The target population for this study included part-time employees working in the service sector within small- and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), as these organizations play a crucial role in Denmark's economy and sustainability initiatives (Geissdoerfer et al., 2018). A sample of 130 respondents was selected to ensure statistical reliability and validity. Respondents were chosen using a purposive sampling technique, focusing on part-time employees directly involved in service delivery. This approach enabled the study to capture insights from a diverse workforce segment and align with its focus on fostering innovation within service-oriented roles (D'Amato & Korhonen, 2021).

3.3 Data Collection

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure the constructs of EL, CSE, and IWB. The questionnaire included items adapted from validated scales in prior research to ensure consistency and reliability (Nguyen et al., 2019; Newman et al., 2018). Respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with statements using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). This format facilitated ease of response and enabled precise measurement of the variables under study. To enhance accessibility and minimize environmental impact, the questionnaire was distributed electronically to part-time employees in the service sector (UNEP, 2011). Participants were encouraged to complete the survey during their convenience, ensuring a high response rate while respecting their work schedules.

3.4 Variables and Measures

Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL): Measured using items that assess leadership behaviors fostering creativity, opportunity recognition, and innovation, based on the framework by Gupta et al. (2004). Creative Self-Efficacy (CSE): Measured using validated items that capture employees' confidence in their ability to generate and apply innovative solutions (Tierney & Farmer, 2011). Innovative Work Behavior (IWB): Measured through items evaluating the extent to which employees engage in idea generation, promotion, and implementation in their roles (Zhu et al., 2023).

3.5 Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to examine the relationships among EL, CSE, and IWB. SEM was selected for its ability to assess both direct and indirect effects, making it an ideal method for evaluating the mediating role of CSE (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). Statistical software was utilized to ensure the accuracy and rigor of the analysis. The model fit indices were evaluated against established thresholds commonly used in SEM studies to ensure the reliability of the findings (Dietz et al., 2018). Key indices such as the Chi-square value (χ^2), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) were used to confirm model validity.

3.6 Ethical Considerations

This study adhered to strict ethical guidelines to protect participants' confidentiality and ensure informed consent. All respondents were assured of the anonymity of their responses and the voluntary nature of their participation. The research protocol was reviewed to confirm

compliance with ethical standards, reflecting the study's broader commitment to sustainability and responsible research practices (UN, 2015). Additionally, steps were taken to minimize any risks associated with participation, ensuring that respondents were fully aware of their rights throughout the research process.

3.7 Rationale for Methodology

The chosen methodology provides a robust framework for examining the dynamics between EL, CSE, and IWB in the Danish service sector. The quantitative research design allows for the generalization of findings, while the specific focus on part-time employees highlights a workforce segment that is often overlooked in organizational research. By emphasizing the service sector within the context of SMEs, this study aligns with the broader goals of promoting innovation and sustainability in organizational practices (Jørgensen & Pedersen, 2018). This methodological approach ensures that the study contributes valuable empirical insights into how leadership and self-efficacy influence innovative behaviors, particularly within a sector critical to Denmark's economic and sustainability agendas.

4. Findings and Discussions

4.1 Findings

a. Respondents' Profile

The demographic profile of the 130 respondents is summarized below. These individuals were part-time employees from various service sectors in Denmark, including distribution companies, the hotel industry, education services, cafes, and restaurants. This diverse representation captures the breadth of Denmark's dynamic service sector and provides a comprehensive foundation for analyzing the relationships between Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL), Creative Self-Efficacy (CSE), and Innovative Work Behavior (IWB).

Table 1. Respondents' Profile

Profile	Category	Count	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	85	65.38
	Female	45	34.62
Age (years)	< 25	7	5.38
	25–35	58	44.62
	35–45	48	36.92
	45–55	12	9.23
	> 55	5	3.85
Work Experience (years)	< 1	15	11.54
	1–3	48	36.92
	3–5	17	13.08
	5–7	30	23.08
	> 7	20	15.38
Education Level	Senior High School	9	6.92
	Bachelor's Degree	75	57.69
	Master's or Doctorate	46	35.38
Unit of Work	Distribution Company	65	50.00
	Hotel Industry	30	23.08
	Education Service	10	7.69
	Cafe and Resto	20	15.38
	Others	5	3.85

Source: Analyzed by Scholars, 2024

The majority of respondents were male, accounting for 65.38% of the sample, while female respondents represented 34.62%. This distribution highlights the gender composition within the part-time workforce in Denmark's service sector.

The largest group of respondents fell within the 25–35 age range (44.62%), followed by those aged 35–45 years (36.92%). This indicates that the sample predominantly consisted of young to middle-aged employees, a demographic often associated with high adaptability and willingness to engage in innovative behaviors.

A significant proportion of respondents (50%) reported having less than three years of work experience, reflecting a considerable representation of relatively new employees in the service sector. Conversely, 15.38% of respondents had over seven years of work experience,

representing seasoned professionals. This mix of newer and more experienced employees offers valuable insights into the varying dynamics of EL, CSE, and IWB across experience levels.

The respondents exhibited a high level of educational attainment, with 57.69% holding a bachelor's degree and 35.38% having pursued master's or doctorate degrees. This indicates a well-educated workforce, which may influence their creative confidence (CSE) and engagement in IWB.

The largest group of respondents was employed in distribution companies (50%), followed by the hotel industry (23.08%) and cafes/restaurants (15.38%). The remaining respondents were involved in education services and other sectors, illustrating the diversity of Denmark's service sector and the varied contexts in which EL, CSE, and IWB were explored.

This demographic overview provides a foundational understanding of the respondents' profiles and highlights the diversity within the sample, offering meaningful context for interpreting the subsequent analyses.

b. Findings of PLS-SEM Analysis

This section presents the results of the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) analysis, conducted to evaluate the relationships between Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL), Creative Self-Efficacy (CSE), and Innovative Work Behavior (IWB). The analysis involved 130 part-time service sector employees in Denmark. During the initial data screening process, two outliers were identified. These outliers were retained due to their theoretical significance, as they represent high-performing employees with exceptionally high confidence and innovative behaviors. Their impact on the results was minimal, given PLS-SEM's robustness to moderate data irregularities. The findings provide insights into the reliability, validity, and predictive power of the hypothesized relationships.

Table 2. Measurement Model Assessment

Criterion	Threshold	Findings	Interpretation
Composite Reliability (CR)	$CR \geq 0.70$	All constructs achieved CR values above 0.70.	Indicates that all constructs demonstrate good internal consistency.
Indicator Reliability	Outer loading ≥ 0.70	Most items had loadings ≥ 0.70 ; a few items (0.40–0.70) were retained due to their validity contribution.	Confirms that individual items reliably measure their respective constructs.
Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	$AVE \geq 0.50$	All constructs achieved AVE values above 0.50.	Demonstrates sufficient convergent validity (constructs explain over 50% of variance).
Discriminant Validity	Fornell-Larcker & HTMT Criterion	The constructs passed both Fornell-Larcker and HTMT tests, with HTMT ratios ≤ 0.85 .	Confirms that constructs are distinct from each other.

Source: Data Processed, 2024

The measurement model demonstrated strong internal consistency, reliability, and validity across all constructs, meeting the established thresholds for SEM studies. Table 2 summarizes the reliability and validity indicators for the constructs.

Table 3. Path Coefficients

Criterion	Findings	Interpretation
Path Coefficients (β)	Significant for EL $\rightarrow$ CSE ($\beta = 0.492$, $p = 0.000$) and CSE $\rightarrow$ IWB ($\beta = 0.681$, $p = 0.000$).	Confirms support for H2 and H3.
Coefficient of Determination (R^2)	$R^2 = 0.25$ for CSE; $R^2 = 0.47$ for IWB.	Indicates moderate explanatory power for CSE and IWB.
Effect Size (f^2)	CSE on IWB ($f^2 = 0.35$, medium effect); EL on CSE ($f^2 = 0.10$, small effect).	Suggests that CSE has a stronger impact on IWB than EL has on CSE.
Predictive Relevance (Q^2)	$Q^2 = 0.18$ for CSE; $Q^2 = 0.29$ for IWB.	Indicates good predictive relevance for both constructs.
Model Fit (SRMR)	SRMR = 0.069	Demonstrates a good model fit (values ≤ 0.08 are acceptable).

Source: Data Processed, 2024

Based on Hair et al. (2017), Henseler et al. (2015), and Sarstedt et al. (2019), the measurement model was evaluated to ensure that the constructs met the established criteria for reliability and validity. The bootstrapping procedure was conducted in accordance with these guidelines, using 5,000 resamples to determine the significance of the path coefficients. Table 3 provides a summary of the path coefficients, explanatory power, and model fit statistics, along with their interpretations.

Table 4. Coefficients Determination

Research Question (RQ)	Hypothesis (H)	Path	Path Coefficient (β)	t-value	p-value	Result
RQ1: Does EL affect employees' IWB?	H1: Employees' IWB will be higher in organizations with a higher level of EL.	IWB ← EL	0.089	1.38	0.168	Not Supported
RQ2: Does EL affect employees' CSE?	H2: Employees' CSE will be higher in organizations with a higher level of EL.	CSE ← EL	0.492	6.18	0.000	Supported
RQ3: Does EL indirectly affect IWB through CSE?	H3: EL indirectly affects IWB through employees' CSE.	IWB ← CSE	0.681	7.45	0.000	Supported

Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

The model explained 25% of the variance in CSE and 47% of the variance in IWB, indicating moderate explanatory power.

Effect Size (f^2)

The effect size analysis revealed the following:

CSE had a medium effect ($f^2 = 0.35$) on IWB.

EL had a small effect ($f^2 = 0.10$) on CSE.

Hypotheses Testing

H₁ Employees' IWB will be higher in organizations with a higher level of EL. This hypothesis is not supported ($\beta = 0.089$, $p = 0.168$). The analysis indicates that EL does not have a direct influence on IWB.

H₂ Employees' CSE will be higher in organizations with a higher level of EL. This hypothesis is supported ($\beta = 0.492$, $p = 0.000$). EL significantly enhances employees' confidence in their creative abilities.

H₃ EL indirectly affects IWB through employees' CSE. This hypothesis is supported. The indirect effect of EL on IWB, mediated by CSE, is significant ($\beta = 0.681$, $p = 0.000$), highlighting the critical mediating role of CSE.

Outliers Detected

Two data points were identified as outliers due to extreme values in CSE and IWB measures. These outliers were retained for the following reasons:

They represent high-performing employees with exceptionally high levels of creative

confidence and innovation, reflecting variability in real-world data.

Their removal had minimal impact on the results, as PLS-SEM is robust to moderate outliers.

The inclusion of these outliers highlights the range of creative and innovative behaviors within the sample. Their presence underscores the importance of leadership strategies that adapt to diverse employee capabilities, fostering innovation across varying levels of creative confidence.

Model Fit and Predictive Power

The model demonstrated good predictive power, with R^2 values of 0.25 for CSE and 0.47 for IWB, reflecting moderate explanatory strength. The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) value of 0.069 indicates a good model fit, meeting the recommended threshold ($SRMR \leq 0.08$).

4.2 Discussion

The findings emphasize the critical role of Creative Self-Efficacy (CSE) in mediating the relationship between Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL) and Innovative Work Behavior (IWB). While EL does not have a direct effect on IWB, it significantly enhances employees' CSE, which subsequently drives innovation. These results align with previous studies, such as those by Bandura (1977) and Newman et al. (2018), which highlight employee confidence in creativity as a key mechanism through which leadership fosters innovation.

The findings suggest that Entrepreneurial Leadership fosters employees' belief in their creative capabilities by creating an environment that encourages experimentation, risk-taking, and dynamic problem-solving. This empowerment, in turn, translates into higher engagement in innovative behaviors, as employees feel more confident in proposing and implementing novel ideas.

Additionally, the results reinforce the importance of adopting leadership strategies tailored to the needs of part-time workers in service sectors, where employees often face challenges such as fluctuating work schedules and client-centered roles. Strengthening CSE in such contexts can bridge gaps in employee confidence and unlock latent innovation potential.

Organizations seeking to enhance employee-driven innovation should prioritize leadership development programs that focus on fostering creativity, providing supportive feedback, and encouraging mastery experiences. These programs should also aim to reduce fear of failure and create psychological safety, enabling employees to experiment and take calculated risks.

The indirect role of CSE in linking EL and IWB has broader implications for both theory and practice. From a theoretical perspective, the findings contribute to understanding how leadership styles influence innovation by mediating variables like CSE. Practically, these insights can help organizations design more effective training programs that align leadership behaviors with the goal of building an innovative workforce.

Moreover, the study emphasizes the need for continuous evaluation of leadership effectiveness. By integrating metrics such as employee self-efficacy and IWB into performance evaluations, organizations can track the impact of leadership initiatives and refine their strategies to achieve sustainable innovation.

In summary, while EL does not directly influence IWB, its role in enhancing CSE provides a

pathway for fostering innovation. This underscores the importance of leadership approaches that empower employees by building their creative confidence and enabling them to fully engage in innovative activities.

Limitations and Future Research Directions. This study provides valuable insights; however, several limitations should be acknowledged. The focus on part-time employees in Denmark's service sector limits the generalizability of the findings to other industries or full-time employees, whose engagement in innovative behaviors may differ. Additionally, as the research was conducted in Aarhus, Billund, and Vejle, the findings may not fully represent service sector dynamics in other regions or countries. The cross-sectional design captures data at a single point in time, limiting the ability to infer causality or observe changes in the relationships between EL, CSE, and IWB over time. Furthermore, the study's narrow focus on EL, CSE, and IWB may overlook other influential factors such as organizational culture, team dynamics, or external environmental influences that could impact innovation. Future research could address these limitations by expanding the sample to include full-time employees or workers in different industries to enhance the generalizability of findings. Longitudinal studies could provide deeper insights into how the relationships between EL, CSE, and IWB evolve over time. Incorporating additional variables, such as organizational support or external environmental factors, could offer a more comprehensive understanding of employee innovation. Lastly, extending the geographic scope to compare service sectors across different countries and cultural contexts could enrich the findings and highlight potential cultural differences in leadership and innovation dynamics.

5. Conclusion

This study underscores the critical role of Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL) in fostering Creative Self-Efficacy (CSE) and its subsequent impact on Innovative Work Behavior (IWB) among part-time employees in Denmark's service sector. The findings reveal that, while EL does not directly influence IWB, it significantly enhances CSE, which serves as a key mediator in driving innovative behaviors. This highlights the importance of leadership approaches that prioritize empowering employees and building their confidence in their creative abilities.

The study also emphasizes the unique challenges and opportunities faced by part-time service sector employees, including fluctuating work schedules and client-centered roles. Strengthening CSE within this workforce segment enables organizations to unlock latent innovation potential and adapt more effectively to dynamic market environments.

From a theoretical perspective, this research contributes to the understanding of the mediating role of CSE in the relationship between EL and IWB, enriching the body of knowledge on leadership and innovation. Practically, the findings provide actionable insights for organizations aiming to enhance innovation by adopting leadership strategies that foster creativity, provide supportive feedback, and encourage calculated risk-taking.

While the study is limited by its focus on part-time employees in Denmark's service sector and its cross-sectional design, it opens avenues for future research to explore longitudinal effects, broader populations, and additional variables influencing innovation. By addressing these limitations and leveraging insights from this study, organizations can foster sustainable and innovative cultures that align with long-term development goals.

In conclusion, empowering employees through effective leadership and fostering creative self-

efficacy are essential steps toward building an innovative workforce and driving organizational success in today's competitive and sustainability-focused landscape.

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