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Transformational Leadership and Open Innovation: Evidence from the Dubai Public Sector

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Abstract

The rapid advancement of technology use in government organizations creates the potential for a collaborative governance model and fosters a creative institutional environment. With changing dynamics in the workplace, there is a need to adapt; leadership is necessary to create a culture that fosters creativity. Transformational leadership emphasizes open innovation, organizational change, operational efficiency, motivation, knowledge sharing, and engagement of all stakeholders if applied appropriately. This study examines the relationship between the transformational leadership role and the enhancement of open innovation through silo busting for organizational performance. The Data were collected through a structured survey, using purposive sampling from 293 government employees in Dubai. Findings reveal that transformational leadership promotes information sharing and innovative practice, leading to silo reduction in an organization. Similarly, leadership-based programs enhance innovation, mitigating the negative effects of silos on organizational efficiency and performance.

Keywords: Transformational leadership, open innovation, organizational silo, organizational performance, UAE, Dubai government.

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1. Introduction

Government institutions are highly influenced by the transition from traditional silo-based management to a performance-excellence-driven approach in seven independent local governments of the United Arab Emirates (UAE). This transition has altered coordination practices, knowledge-sharing processes, and the delivery of public services by federal and local authorities (Salem & Jarrar, 2010). There is an urgent need for an innovative and cooperative governance structure to strengthen information and communication technology (ICT) for efficient coordination of increased demands and

seamless supply in services. This innovation serves as a measure to confirm the competitive advantage (Capaldo and Messeni Petruzzelli, 2015; Chen et al., 2018). Developing valuable, responsive, and accessible public services enhances the satisfaction and strategic position of citizens (de Brentani, 2001; Michalopoulos et al., 2023). According to Bashir et al., (2020) innovative business models assist practitioners in public organizations. In the absence of managerial flexibility reflects the structural rigidity hampers organizational performance and adaptability (Giangreco and Peccei, 2005; Bashir et al., 2020). Sustained institutional growth and economic development of the UAE is due to strategic leadership (Kamali, 2018). Long-term vision, institutional change, innovative capabilities, and performance outcomes positively influence leaders in the public sector (Bin Attan & Mahmood, 2019).

Leadership positively influences a powerful national desire for the adoption of innovative policies, conforming to leadership competency and organizational culture for constant improvement (Alblooshi, 2018; Jia et al., 2018; Zheng et al., 2019). The presence of efficiency and service quality is evident in education, healthcare, transportation, utilities and digital platforms in government organizations of Dubai. Despite this, a negative impact continues due to organizational silos hindering institutional coordination, adaptability, slow decision-making, and reduced knowledge sharing (Antwi Boateng and Alhashmi, 2022; Crowley, 2022). Eppel and O'Leary (2021) and Jeleel Ojuade (2024) identified strict hierarchies, functional specialization, and a high degree of departmental autonomy leading to redundant services and learning within the organization. Alsalami et al. (2014) documents the role of transformational leadership in stimulating innovation to reshape the negative impacts of silos into result-oriented performance. Similarly, the research studies of (Bass and Avolio, 1994; Zhang, 2025) entailed development of creativity, teamwork, and positive risk-taking attitude of transformational leaders.

Based on extant literature, most of the studies focused on leadership style and organizational performance. There is lack of empirical studies on effect of transformational leadership on organizational silo practices in government organizations in Dubai. The mediating effects of open innovation between leadership and silo reduction are yet to be explored in UAE context. Based on a study by Maolani (2023), effective organizational change can be achieved through transformational leadership to motivate and inspire a shared vision in the public sector. Accordingly, the present study examines the direct effect of transformational leadership on organizational silos in innovation-driven public-sector in Dubai government agencies. The following research questions guide this study.

RQ1: How effectively does transformational leadership shape open innovation practices in Dubai's government organizations?

RQ2: How does transformational leadership influence organizational silo practices in Dubai's government organizations?

RQ3: In what ways does open innovation mediate the influence of transformational leadership on organizational silos in Dubai government institutions?

RQ4: How do organizational silo practices influence organizational performance through the adoption of open innovation in Dubai's government organizations?

2. Literature Review

Leadership in public organizations has garnered significant scholarly attention over the past four decades (Akerboom et al., 2024), particularly as governments worldwide face increasing demands for accountability, efficiency, and innovation. Among the various leadership frameworks examined in public administration research, transformational leadership has emerged as one of the most extensively studied and debated paradigms. Originally conceptualized by Burns (1978) in his seminal work on political leadership, transformational leadership describes a process whereby leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality. The foundational work extended by Bass (1985) making it more relevant to organizational in order to differentiate between transactional and transformation leadership. There are additional challenges of political constraints, diverse stakeholders and missions on the value creation by the government organizations rather focus on profits. This study confirms the existence of organizational silo exerts multidimensional threat to organizational performance, having an impact on operational efficiency, innovation capacity, employee engagement and ultimately the financial performance. Persistence existence and cultural dominance may lead to the failure of leadership. Further, empirical evidence strongly supports investment in silo-busting strategies as a direct lever for performance improvement, with quantitative studies demonstrating meaningful productivity and financial gains for firms that successfully reduce inter-departmental insularity. Future research would benefit from longitudinal designs tracing performance trajectories before and after deliberate silo-reduction interventions.

Employees are generally placed in the organization based on their duties and responsibilities that can result in both vertical and horizontal organizational silos. Organizational silos may restrict information, resources, and stymie progress and innovation (Jones et al., 2024). The prevalence and organizational consequences of this phenomenon have attracted increasing scholarly attention, particularly in empirical research examining the causal pathways between silo formation, inter-departmental collaboration, and firm-level outcomes. Organizational structural hinderance lacks attainment of objectives, high level of administrative autonomy and low level of horizontal coordination are also common. throughout public sector bodies in Dubai, resulting in redundant work, scattered delivery of services, sluggish decision-making, and less capacity to innovate (Crowley, 2022). Abuzanjal and Bashir (2025) identified risk averse culture, weak incentives, poor interdepartmental communication are the main obstacles. The latest findings also show that the problem of innovation in governmental bodies within the UAE cannot be regarded as separate issues, as they are interrelated. Abuzanjal and Bashir (2025) applied a social network analysis method, revealing technology knowledge gaps, change resistance, poor internal coordination, poor clarity of the innovation process, and poor employee motivation as the most significant challenges that impact service innovation. They find that transformational leadership enables innovation, yet its positive impact on organizational performance is reliant on the scope of handling more extended organizational abilities and systems of governance. It is this

viewpoint that confirms the necessity of analyzing the issue of leadership as part of a broader field of innovation instead of a determinant.

Abuzanjal and Bashir identify each challenge as a node in the network. The framework begins with innovation challenges identified in the UAE government entities. These challenges are resistance to change, rigid procedures, weak internal communication, lack of technological information, overlapping departmental functions, and absence of a formal innovation process. Survey responses from the UAE government entities are then used to calculate correlations between challenges. The network is then represented by significant correlations; hence, the framework assumes they tend to occur simultaneously and reinforce each other.

Based on study of Almazrouei et al., (2024) who examined the improvement in groups through in preparedness to embrace change, flexibility to create public value. Similarly the Government sector. Thus. This research is extensively determined to investigate on combination of innovation and breaking silo structure for enhancement of public service organization. When silos exist, it becomes difficult for teams to collaborate effectively, share resources or knowledge, and work towards a common organizational goal, resulting in a lack of innovation, redundancy in work, and ultimately a decline in organizational efficiency (Knowmax, 2025). Furthermore, in an era of digital transformation and hybrid work, the formation of silos as a paradoxical result of digital change has further isolated work relationships (Leonardi, 2021),

Research in UAE underscores the reduction in silo-based works There are various factors that can enable UAE government organization in transition one of them is transformational leadership to bridge the gap, improve coordination, enhance performance and effectiveness in the government organizations. To align with UAE vision 2071 national development framework is centred on innovation, sound governance, and sustainable economic development. With innovation now embedded across most areas of public administration, the city has gained international recognition for its advanced digital public services and intelligent governance (Gugler, Alburai, & Stalder, 2021). Dubai has concurrently adopted partnership-based and open- innovation practices to integrate external expertise into the development of public services (Bux, Zhu, & Devi, 2025).

Other studies highlight the significant dynamics of innovation in study of leadership in

2.1 Transformational leadership in public organizations

The concept of transformational leadership has its intellectual roots in Burns's (1978) distinction between transactional and transforming leadership. Based on the comparison transactional leaders engage followers through an exchange relationship contrary to that transformational with common interest of both leaders and followers toward higher collective goals. "Four I's": idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration by Bass (1985) framework creates a measurable model inspires admiration and trust; inspirational motivation to articulate a compelling vision; intellectual stimulation encourages creativity and critical thinking; and individualized consideration addresses followers' unique needs for development and support even though Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ) has undergone

numerous tests within the organizational context, it is important to consider the country of the institutional and cultural context when it is applied in the UAE public sector. Gulf public organization leadership goes beyond behavioral aspects to strategic wisdom, long-term national perspective, and the skill of maintaining a balance between global openness and national identity and institutional sovereignty. Among others, Awashreh and Al Ghunaimi (2025) state that good leadership by the people in the region is one that is sustained by a coupled governance model that is both open to innovation and yet puts the national interests at the center. To this end, the MLQ is suitably positioned to offer a proper behavioural construct on which transformational leadership can be measured, but interpretation must be dependent on the governance ideology and modernisation agenda of the UAE through the public sector.

As documented by numerous research works several leadership styles are practiced but proven and effective is the transformational. According to Paarlberg and Lavigna (2010) transformational leadership relevance gains importance in the public sector as employees are intrinsically motivated by the public sector values. Thus, in context of Dubai the leadership with reinforcing dynamics has a potential to amplify organizational performance. An incredibly effective instrument in streamlining organizations by making them more innovative is characterized by the interpersonal concepts of power and leadership (Farkas and Vera, 2014).

Table 1: Synthesis of related studies on transformational leadership in public organizations Source: Authors' compilation

Author(s) & Year	**Context / Sample**	**Key Variables**	**Methodology**	**Key Findings**	**Research Gap**
Nyein Aung & Zhang (2026)	Public administration crisis management	Transformational leadership, leadership styles, and crisis outcomes	Meta-analysis	Transformational leadership is the dominant style in public	Limited comparison across crisis types, sectors, and hierarchy levels
Ding Mengxiao & Wang Chengli (2026)	Public administration across 14 countries	Transformational leadership, public service motivation, and national culture	Cross-national meta-analysis	Transformational leadership is positively associated with public sector motivation, with cultural differences affecting the strength of the relationship	Limited longitudinal and organization-level evidence
Iddrisu & Mohammed (2025)	Public-sector organizations	Transformational leadership, motivation, engagement, and organizational effectiveness	Quantitative survey / PLS-SEM	Transformational leadership improves motivation, engagement, and organizational effectiveness in public	Limited causal evidence and need for testing in varied public-sector contexts

				administration	
Bernard M. Bass (1985)	Organizational leadership	Idealized influence, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration	Theoretical + empirical	Demonstrated impact on performance and motivation	Limited public sector specificity
Bradley E. Wright et al. (2012)	Public sector employees	Leadership, mission valence, motivation	SEM (Structural Equation Modeling)	Leadership indirectly influences performance via mission alignment	Limited focus on innovation outcomes
Mary E. Guy et al. (2014)	Public service organizations	Emotional labor, leadership	Mixed methods	Transformational leadership improves employee well-being	Underexplored mediating variables
Sabine Knies et al. (2016)	European public sector	Leadership styles, performance	Comparative analysis	Strong link between transformational leadership and public service performance	Cross-country variation insufficiently explored
Sanjay K. Pandey & Wright (2020)	Public organizations	Leadership, public service motivation	SEM	Leadership strengthens motivation and organizational commitment	Limited integration with digital transformation
Annie Hondeghem & Van Wart (2021)	Global public sector	Leadership competencies	Literature synthesis	Emphasizes adaptability and innovation in leadership	Empirical testing across regions needed

Feeling secured reveals willingness of individuals to express freedom, motivate to collaborate as a common objective in which various departments and groups of people work in attainment of goals. Contrary to that organizational silos are challenge to the public sector as teams fail to communicate or work together ending up with duplicating efforts and lack of coordination. Thus, leaderships break the barrier through shared vision and motivation. With complexity of rules and regulations in the public sector innovation may be impossible without the presence of a transformation leader in order to achieve the full potential to make a difference. Thus, an instrument of innovation enhances a culture of teamplay to think critically and enabling organization to succeed.

Collectively, the literature explains that transformational leadership constitutes an important enabler of innovation in public organizations. However, recent studies regarding the UAE also show that the outcomes of innovation are influenced by the organizational arrangements, the coordination systems, as well as contextual governance practices (Awashreh and Al Ghunaimi, 2025; Abuzanjal and Bashir, 2025). Thus, the

hypotheses proposed are based not only on the transformational leadership theory but also on the institutional facts of the UAE public sector.

H1: Open innovation practices are strongly positively influenced by transformational leadership in Dubai's government organizations.

2.2 Organizational silos and Open Innovation

A silo is a conceptualised vertical structure in which authority, information and responsibility flow up and down the chain of command, but in which cross-unit collaboration is constrained and little information or coordination exists. This can lead to units striving to achieve their own performance objectives instead of collective ones; they may perform effectively as individuals, but fail to cooperate effectively in accomplishing tasks that require inter-unit cooperation.

Silos are defined as psychological boundaries creating compartmentalization within a hierarchy, giving rise to clearly delineated 'cultural tribes' that people identify with, and tightly defined teams that people are motivated to work for and feel safe within (de Waal et al., 2019).

Silo mentality refers to a situation where teams view themselves as discrete, even autonomous, and promote insular orientations and a low exchange of information (Jeske and Olson, 2025). Importantly, even silo-dominant administrative systems can avoid incoherence when supported by robust coordination mechanisms; the central problem is therefore not the existence of silos per se but the absence or deterioration of mechanisms that allow silos to interact effectively at acceptable political and administrative cost (Scott & Gong,2021). Prior research indicates that leadership style is a major determinant of organisational design and silo mentality. Sveiby (2007) argues that leaders must intervene to ensure collaboration and knowledge exchange. Ashok et al. (2021) found that transformational leaders can stimulate interteam communication and remove barriers to knowledge sharing. Madi Odeh et al. (2023), concluded that transformational leadership can render organisations more flexible and less hierarchical, helping to overcome silo mentality. Together, these studies suggest that transformational leadership is highly valuable in countering silo thinking and enabling information.

flow.

H2: Transformational leadership significantly influences organisational silo practices in Dubai's government organizations.

Table 2: Synthesis of related studies on organizational silos and innovation Source : Authors' compilation

Authors/Year	**Study Focus**	**Context/Methodology**	**Key Findings**	**Implications for Organizational Silos and Open Innovation**
de Waal & van den Berg (2025)	Examining how silo-busting initiatives can enhance organizational collaboration and reduce barriers between departments.	Single case study of a fast-growing family-owned company using surveys, interviews, and organizational network analysis.	Silo working reduced collaboration and efficiency; silo-busting improved shared objectives, leadership, communication, and information sharing	silo-busting initiatives enhance internal integration and create the collaborative conditions necessary for effective open innovation and knowledge exchange.
Dodds et al. (2025)	Examining whether knowledge silos hinder the adoption of responsible AI practices in journalism.	Data were collected through 14 semi-structured interviews with editors, managers, and journalists.	Knowledge silos limit AI-related information sharing across technological, editorial, journalistic, and managerial groups, making it harder to operationalize responsible AI practices in newsrooms.	Organizational silos restrict knowledge integration and reduce the capacity to adopt responsible and open innovation practices
Fabio Bento, Marco Tagliabue & Flora Lorenzo (2020)	Organizational silos and network clusters	Scoping review of 40 studies examining silo behaviors and organizational networks	Silos restrict communication, knowledge exchange, and collaboration across departments. Informal networks may simultaneously support localized innovation.	Breaking down silos is essential for fostering cross-functional collaboration and enabling open innovation ecosystems within organizations. (MDPI)

Alberto Bertello, Paola De Bernardi & Francesca Ricciardi (2024)	Evolution of open innovation research	Bibliometric and content analysis of open innovation literature	Open innovation depends on knowledge flows across organizational boundaries and collaborative innovation mechanisms.	Organizational silos obstruct external and internal knowledge sharing, reducing the effectiveness of open innovation strategies. (Springer)
Livio Cricelli, Michele Grimaldi & Silvia Vermicelli (2022)	Crowdsourcing and open innovation	Systematic literature review integrating crowdsourcing and open innovation	Collaborative participation and external stakeholder involvement enhance innovation generation and problem solving.	Silos reduce openness to external contributions and weaken collaborative innovation capabilities. (Springer)
Mokter Hossain (2015)	Open innovation in SMEs	Literature review of SMEs adopting open innovation	SMEs adopting open innovation achieve stronger innovation performance through external collaboration and knowledge exchange.	Organizational silos in SMEs hinder flexibility and reduce the ability to exploit external innovation opportunities. (Springer)
Ruben H.A.J. Ogink et al. (2023	Mechanisms in open innovation	Literature synthesis using context–mechanism–outcome framework	Governance, learning, capabilities, and environmental interaction are central mechanisms	Cross-functional integration and anti-silo governance structures are critical to sustaining innovation
Laurent Hébert-Dufresne et al. (2022)	Knowledge siloing in organizational networks	Network analysis and mathematical modeling	Hierarchical and dense network structures localize information and reduce diffusion across	Siloed communication structures prevent effective dissemination of innovative ideas

			organizations.	and reduce organizational adaptability. (arXiv)
Konstantinos Kostopoulos et al. (2020)	Organizational innovation and ambidexterity	Systematic literature review of 457 studies	Firms balancing exploration and exploitation achieve higher innovation performance.	Organizational silos weaken ambidexterity by separating exploratory and exploitative functions. (SSRN)
Joel Alves de Lima Júnior et al. (2024)	Open innovation in the public sector	Systematic review of 4,741 studies	Bureaucratic barriers and rigid organizational structures reduce the effectiveness of open innovation in public institutions.	Public-sector silos impede citizen engagement, digital collaboration, and participative innovation practices. (arXiv)
Sheen Levine & Michael Prietula (2014)	Open collaboration for innovation	Conceptual and computational modeling study	Open collaboration succeeds through shared knowledge, decentralized participation, and minimal coordination barriers.	Organizational silos contradict the principles of open collaboration and reduce collective innovation efficiency. (arXiv)
Practitioner and organizational behavior discussions (2020–2026)	Organizational culture and innovation	Professional and practitioner discussions	Innovation-oriented cultures require cross-functional communication, leadership support, and collaborative governance.	Eliminating cultural silos improves innovation climate, employee engagement, and organizational learning. (Reddit)

2.3 Open innovation and organizational silos practices

Open innovation is an assistive process that helps leaders in bridging the gap silo practices whereby information and work is not shared between departments. Open innovation is an effective means by which organisations can bridge the barriers to enhance cooperation. It assists leaders in eliminating silo practices in which information and tasks remain confined within departments. Such collaboration is enabled by a transformational leadership culture that values cooperation and the exchange of ideas. Influences people in culture of willingness to collaborate in sharing ideas, an environment

to contribute freely, knowledge sharing, team inspiration, individuals' assistance with resistance to change Open innovation refers to structures and routines that promote collaboration and knowledge sharing across units and with external partners; it implies inflows and outflows of knowledge and expertise. It is a collaborative style of working, one that focuses on working together, sharing and assisting one another and it can enable businesses to achieve their objectives and perform good in a fast-changing world. It is a method of work that focuses on collaborating, cooperating, and assisting each other and, in that way, it could help companies achieve their objectives and perform well in the rapidly changing world. The leadership commitment in high-organized government organizations plays a vital role in integrating open innovation into regular activities and governance (Bux, Zhu, & Devi, 2025).

Table 3: Synthesis of related studies on open innovation and organizational silos practices. Source: Authors' compilation.

Author(s) & Year	**Context / Sample**	**Methodology**	**Key Variables**	**Key Findings**	**Relevance to Study**
Acar & Tuncdogan (2026)	General organizational and innovation contexts; no specific empirical sample.	Conceptual/professional article in Harvard Business Review.	Organizational silos, innovation, search dependence, goal alignment, collaboration, and autonomy.	Silos can hinder innovation when knowledge integration and cross-functional collaboration are required, but they can help when teams need autonomy, focus, and independent experimentation.	Silos can hinder innovation when knowledge integration and cross-functional collaboration are required, but they can help when teams need autonomy, focus, and independent experimentation.
Pan, Xu, & Zheng (2026)	1,053 Chinese listed enterprises from 2008 to 2021, examining the effects of urban public data open-access initiatives.	Quantitative study using a multi-period Difference-in-Differences (DID) model.	Public data open access, data silos, collaborative innovation, innovation quantity, innovation quality, institutional transaction costs, information, and capital utilization.	Public data open access helps break data silos and enhances collaborative innovation by improving information flows and reducing institutional transaction costs	Reducing information silos facilitates knowledge sharing and inter-organizational collaboration, thereby promoting open innovation and improving innovation performance

Henry Chesbrough (2003)	Firms in US & Europe	Conceptual	Open Innovation (Inbound/Outbound)	Introduced open innovation as a paradigm emphasizing knowledge inflows and outflows	Foundational theory linking openness with collaboration beyond boundaries
Joel West & Marcel Bogers (2014)	Multi-industry firms	Literature review	Open Innovation, Knowledge Sharing	Open innovation enhances cross-functional integration and knowledge exchange	Supports role of open innovation in reducing silos
Edgar Schein (2010)	Organizational settings	Theoretical	Organizational Culture, Silos	Subcultures within organizations reinforce silo mentality and hinder collaboration	Explains cultural roots of silos
Dorothy Leonard (1995)	Knowledge-intensive firms	Case study	Knowledge Sharing, Core Capabilities	Internal barriers limit knowledge transfer across units	Highlights need for boundary-spanning practices
Wim Vanhaverbeke (2006)	Manufacturing firms	Empirical	Open Innovation, External Collaboration	Firms collaborating externally show higher innovation performance	Demonstrates benefits of openness over closed structures
Henry Chesbrough & Wim Vanhaverbeke (2011)	Global firms	Edited volume (empirical studies)	Open Innovation, Networks	Innovation ecosystems promote inter-organizational collaboration	Reinforces network-based approach to breaking silos
Annabelle Gawer (2014)	Platform-based firms	Conceptual	Innovation Ecosystems, Platforms	Platforms facilitate knowledge exchange across internal and external actors	Links digital ecosystems with silo reduction
Henry Chesbrough (2017)	Global firms	Conceptual update	Open Innovation Evolution	Open innovation shifting toward digital and ecosystem-based models	Highlights modern relevance for digital transformation
Dedeng	Public sector	Empirical	Transformationa	Leadership fosters	Indicates

Yusuf Maolani (2023)	organizations		l Leadership, Organizational Change	shared vision and motivates collaboration	leadership as driver for reducing silos indirectly
Tushman Michael & O'Reilly Charles (1996)	Large organizations	Conceptual	Ambidexterity, Innovation	Integration across units is essential for innovation success	Supports cross-functional collaboration argument
Nonaka Ikujiro & Takeuchi Hirotaka (1995)	Japanese firms	Theoretical	Knowledge Creation (SECI Model)	Knowledge conversion requires interaction across departments	Reinforces importance of knowledge flow in breaking silos
Laursen Keld & Salter Ammon (2006)	UK firms	Quantitative	External Search Breadth & Depth	Firms with broader knowledge search innovate more effectively	Shows value of openness in overcoming internal constraints

H3: Open innovation practices significantly mediate the relationship between transformational leadership and organizational silos in Dubai government institutions.

2.4 Organizational silos and Organizational Performance

The performance within organization is assessed by level of accountability, it indicates more representative and complex in nature. The intergovernmental power structure on agency is found in public policy (Boschken,1994). Novak (2017) emphasizes business process orientation and performance to specific objectives at each level. Table 2 provides the summary of previous findings and relevance to the study.

Table 4: Synthesis of related studies on organizational silos and organizational performance. Source: Authors' compilation

Author(s) & Year	**Context / Sample**	**Methodology**	**Key Variables**	**Key Findings**	**Relevance to Study**
Silberman, Becker, & Dammer (2024)	Workplace teams and organizational settings.	Conceptual / work-applied analysis.	Silo mentality, communication, collaboration, team performance.	The study explains that silo mentality reduces communication, limits cooperation, and creates barriers between teams, which negatively affects team and organizational performance.	Relevant because it explains the behavioral mechanism through which organizational silos harm performance: weak communication and poor collaboration.

Jones, Uhd, Kabore, & Cornett (2024)	Public health workplace / organizational context.	Qualitative analysis based on employee feedback and key informant discussions.	Organizational silos, collaboration, communication, shared goals, organizational outcomes	The study found that silos restrict information flow, resource sharing, innovation, and coordination, while trust, shared goals, and collaboration help reduce silo effects.	Relevant because it supports the argument that organizational silos reduce organizational performance by limiting coordination, innovation, and internal collaboration.
Edgar Schein (2010)	Organizations across industries	Theoretical	Organizational Culture, Silos	Strong subcultures create communication barriers and reinforce silos	Explains how silos emerge and persist
Peter Drucker (1993)	Knowledge-based organizations	Conceptual	Knowledge Work, Performance	Fragmentation of information reduces organizational effectiveness	Links knowledge flow to performance outcomes
Michael Tushman & Charles O'Reilly (1996)	Large firms	Conceptual	Integration, Innovation Performance	Cross-unit integration improves innovation and firm performance	Shows need to break silos for performance gains
Robert Kaplan & David Norton (1996)	Corporate organizations	Empirical/Conceptual	Balanced Scorecard, Alignment	Misalignment across departments reduces strategic performance	Demonstrates performance loss due to silos
Paul Nutt (2000)	Public & private sector	Empirical	Decision-Making, Organizational Barriers	Poor communication across units leads to failed decisions	Highlights operational inefficiencies from silos
Ikujiro Nonaka & Hirotaka Takeuchi (1995)	Japanese firms	Theoretical	Knowledge Creation, Performance	Knowledge sharing enhances innovation and performance	Suggests silos hinder knowledge conversion
James March (1991)	Organizations	Conceptual	Exploration vs Exploitation	Lack of integration limits learning and performance	Connects silos to reduced organizational learning
Jeffrey Pfeffer (1998)	Firms across industries	Empirical	Human Resources,	Collaboration improves	Indicates silo reduction improves

			Performance	productivity and outcomes	performance
Andrew Van de Ven (1986)	Innovation-driven firms	Conceptual	Innovation Processes, Coordination	Innovation success depends on cross-functional coordination	Reinforces negative impact of silos
Dedeng Yusuf Maolani (2023)	Public sector organizations	Empirical	Transformational Leadership, Performance	Leadership improves performance through shared vision and collaboration	Suggests indirect role in reducing silos
Keld Laursen & Ammon Salter (2006)	UK firms	Quantitative	External Knowledge, Performance	External knowledge sourcing improves firm performance	Implies openness reduces internal rigidities
Gary Hamel (2007)	Global firms	Conceptual	Management Innovation, Flexibility	Bureaucratic structures reduce adaptability and performance	Links rigid silos to poor organizational outcomes

Based on findings of Bento et al. (2020), silos were observed to create inefficiencies, redundancy and lack of coordination culminating into reduced productivity. Silo organizations and professional tensions avoid in knowledge sharing across public sectors (Bundred, 2006) resulting in failures of services. The needs of stakeholders are not served due to insufficient collaboration and communication resulting in overall performance of the organization (Vatanpour et al., 2013) Based on these findings this study investigates with the following hypothesis.

H4: Organisational silo practices significantly influence organisational performance through the adoption of open innovation processes within government institutions in Dubai.

2. Research Methods

The central aim of this research is to examine how transformational leadership contributes to the adoption of open innovation within organizational silos in Dubai's government institutions and how these factors influence overall organizational performance. Given the clearly defined hypotheses and measurable constructs, qualitative methods such as interviews or case studies were excluded, as they do not align with the structured and statistical nature of this study.

In order to achieve objectivity and generalizability, this study uses purposive sampling from a population of workers in 36 government establishments in the Emirate of Dubai. The statistical formula was used to determine the sample size so that it represents the population. Stratification before sampling was employed according to job category focusing on senior management, middle management, and executive staff level to ensure the participants had relative experience in leadership, innovation, and

performance management. Data will be gathered through an online questionnaire designed to capture the direct effect of transformational leadership and the mediating function of open innovation on organizational silos and performance.

Survey items were adapted from well-established scales drawn from Avolio and Bass (2004), Singh et al. (2021), Liao et al. (2017), Naqshbandi et al. (2016), and de Waal et al. (2019). To ensure the consistency in interpretation across the respondents the items were standardized. The instruments measured transformational leadership, open innovation practices, and organizational silo practices, with all items rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 5 (*strongly agree*). Hypotheses were tested using SPSS Statistics. Appropriate ethical protocols were observed throughout the research process. The participant identity was fully anonymized, and findings reported were validated, standardized instruments and robust confidentiality served to strengthen the reliability and validity of findings, These results offer evidence-based insights to inform leadership and innovation policy within Dubai Government agencies.

3. Results

Descriptive statistics are provided in Table 3 comprise of the frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, to characterise the sample and the response distributions. Statistical methods were used to analyse and test the research hypotheses. focused on the influence of transformational leadership on the bridging the barrier of organisational silos within an open-innovation context, and its impact on organisational performance among government participants in Dubai.

3.1 Demographic Analysis

Table 5.

Sample and demographic outline details.

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	178	60.75
Female	115	39.25
Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
25- 30	65	22.18
31-35	80	27.30
36- 40	47	16.04
41- 50	78	26.62
51 and above	23	7.85
Nationality	Frequency	Percentage (%)
UAE	216	73.72
Arab Nationality	64	21.84
Asian Nationality	9	3.07
European Nationality	2	0.68
African Nationality	2	0.68
Education Degree	Frequency	Percentage (%)

High School Diploma	11	3.75
Bachelor's degree	141	48.12
Master's degree	113	38.57
PHD	28	9.56
Years of experience	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Less than one year	9	3.07
1-5 years	35	11.95
6-10 years	72	24.57
11- 15 years	81	27.65
20- Above	96	32.76
Job Category level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Employee	154	52.56
Deputy Manager	45	15.36
Senior Manager	79	26.96
Executive Vice President	7	2.39
Vice President	8	2.73

The sample of 293 respondents comprises of Men 60.75% of respondents and women 39.25%; UAE nationals comprised 73.72% and other Arab nationals 21.84%. Most participants (approximately 77%) were aged between 31 and 50, indicating a mature and experienced workforce. The level of education includes 48.12% bachelor's degree, 38.57% a master's degree, and 9.56% a PhD. The work experience included 32.76% with more than 20 years of experience. The category of the jobs comprises of 52.56% as employees, while middle management, comprising deputy and senior managers combined, accounted for 42.32% (15.36% deputy managers and 26.96% senior managers). Executive vice presidents represented 2.39% of the sample, and vice presidents 2.73%. This distribution serves a robustness model to examine best practices across organization in operational and managerial levels within a government organization.

The present study draws on a sample of 293 respondents drawn from a UAE government organization, encompassing both operational and managerial levels. The demographic and professional profile of this sample is consistent with established methodological recommendations in public administration research and warrants discussion in relation to prior scholarship on survey-based leadership studies. Men comprise 60.75% of respondents and women 39.25%. This distribution is broadly consistent with the gender composition reported in public sector leadership studies conducted in Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) and broader Arab contexts. Al-Yahya and Vengroff (2013) noted that public sector workforces in the UAE and neighbouring states remain male-dominated at managerial levels, although women's representation has been growing steadily following active government workforce nationalization policies. The proportion of women in the present sample (39.25%) is notably higher than figures reported in earlier UAE public sector studies, reflecting the Emirati government's sustained efforts under the Gender Balance Council to increase female participation in federal employment (Al-Waqfi & Forstenlechner, 2014) Kooij et al. (2011) described as the

"peak contribution" phase of public sector careers, during which employees demonstrate the highest levels of organizational commitment and are most responsive to leadership influences oriented toward meaningful work and mission valence. Research by Ng and Feldman (2010) further suggests that mid-career employees are more likely to respond positively to transformational leadership's intellectual stimulation dimension. The present sample, spanning frontline employees through vice-presidential levels, enables examination of whether transformational leadership perceptions are consistent across organizational strata or whether significant cross-level divergence exists—a question of considerable practical relevance for government organizations seeking to embed transformational culture systemically rather than episodically. The concentration in the employee and middle management bands mirrors the findings of Jacobsen and Andersen (2015), who noted that the perceptions of frontline and middle-tier employees are most sensitive to immediate supervisory leadership behaviors and therefore constitute the most informative respondents in multi-level public sector leadership studies.

3.2 Descriptive Statistics.

Table 6. The result of the descriptive statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max	N
Transformational Leadership (TL)	4.1512	.84399	1	5	293
Open Innovation Practices (OI)	4.2274	.81744	1	5	293
Organizational Silos Practices (OS)	4.1846	.78147	1	5	293
Organizational Performance (OP)	4.2138	.82549	1	5	293

The descriptive statistics indicate that all the study variables have relatively high mean scores, which shows that the respondents have favourable perceptions. Open Innovation Practices (M = 4.2274, SD = 0.81744) recorded the highest mean, followed by Organizational Performance (M = 4.2138, SD = 0.82549), Organizational Silos Practices (M = 4.1846, SD = 0.78147), and Transformational Leadership (M = 4.1512, SD = 0.84399). The mean scores exceeding 4.00 on a five-point scale indicate that the respondents were mostly in agreement with the statements that assessed the various constructs. The standard deviation values are relatively low (0.78147-0.84399), indicating that there is not much variation in responses and therefore consistency among the participants. Overall, the descriptive statistics suggest that organizational practices facilitate cross functional collaboration and reduce organizational silos indicated by positive perceptions of transformational leadership, open innovation practices and organizational performance.

3.3 Reliability Analysis

Table 6: Reliability Statistics

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
Transformational Leadership (TL)	.975	19
Open Innovation Practices (OI)	.961	8
Organizational Silos Practices (OS)	.976	24
Organizational Performance (OP)	.930	6
Overall	.985	57

The reliability analysis shows that all measurement constructs demonstrate excellent internal consistency. Transformational Leadership (= 0.975), Open Innovation Practices (= 0.961), Organizational Silos Practices (= 0.976), and Organizational Performance (= 0.930) , all exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70, these results indicate that the items withen each construct consistenly measure the same underlying concept. The overall Cronbach's Alpha of 0.985 further suggests a high level of internal consistency for the instrument as a whole. However, alpha coefficients exceeding 0.95 may indicate redundancy among some items, suggesting that certain statements may be highly similar in content. Overall, the findings confirm that the measurement instrument demonstrates excellent reliability and is suitable for subsequent statistical analyses.

Coefficient Results

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.985	57

3.4 Correlation Analysis

Table 8: Results of Correlation Analysis

Variables	TL	OI	OS	OP
Transformational Leadership (TL)	1.00			
Open Innovation Practices (OI)	0.636	1.00		
Organizational Silos Practices (OS)	0.677	0.764	1.00	
Organizational Performance (OP)	0.568	0.689	0.799	1.00

Cronbach's alpha was evaluated for Reliability. The overall scale of 0.985, was achieved (57 items) an alpha of well above the conventional thresholds of 0.70 (acceptable) and 0.90 (excellent). Subscale reliabilities were also high: TL (19 items, α = 0.975), OI (8 items, α = 0.961), OS (24 items, α = 0.976), and OP (6 items, α = 0.930). These results indicate that the instruments measuring transformational leadership, open innovation, organisational silos, and organisational performance in Dubai government

agencies are highly internally consistent, supporting the validity of the subsequent analyses.

Pearson correlation analysis reveals that there are and will be positive relationships between all the variables under study. Transformational Leadership (TL) exhibits moderate positive relationships with Open Innovation Practices (OI) (r = 0.636), Organizational Silos Practices (OS) (r = 0.677), and Organizational Performance (OP) (r = 0.568) meaning that the constructs are positively correlated. Another strong positive correlation is observed between Open Innovation Practices and Organizational Silos Practices (r = 0.764) and Organizational Performance (r = 0.689). On the same note Organizational Practices Silos has the highest positive correlation with Organizational Performance (r = 0.799). Generally, the results show that there are positive relationships between the variables, but the correlation analysis determines the strength and direction of relationships, but does not determine the causal relationship between the constructs.

3.5 Regression Analysis

Table 10: Regression Analysis

Hypothesis	Independent Variable	Dependent Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Value	p-Value
H1: TL → OI	Transformational Leadership (TL)	Open Innovation Practices (OI)	0.616	0.044	14.076	<0.001
H2: TL → OS	Transformational Leadership (TL)	Organizational Silos (OS)	0.627	0.040	7.059	<0.001
H3: TL → OI → OS	Open Innovation Practices (OI)	Organizational Silos (OS)	0.731	0.036	20.212	<0.001
	Transformational Leadership (TL)		0.296	0.042	7.059	<0.001
H4:OS → OP	Organizational Silos (OS)	Organizational Performance (OP)	0.693	0.057	12.238	<0.001

Regression analysis presents a lot of empirical evidence in support of all the hypotheses put forth, as all the relationships are positive and significant ($p < 0.001$). Open Innovation Practices (OIP) positively correlate with Transformational Leadership (TL) (0.616, t = 14.076), meaning that a greater degree of Open Innovation practices can be attained through the improvement of transformational leadership in the organization and therefore supports H1. Likewise, Transformational Leadership has a positive and statistically significant effect on Organizational Silos (OS) ($\beta = 0.627$, t = 7.059, $p < 0.001$), thereby supporting H2. The mediation analysis shows that Open Innovation Practices mediate the connection between Transformational Leadership and Organizational Silos Practices in a significant way. Transformational Leadership had a high level of direct influence on Organizational Silos Practices ($\beta = 0.296$, $p < 0.001$), and Open Innovation Practices had a high level of direct influence as well ($\beta = 0.731$, $p < 0.001$). In addition, Organizational Silos is a strong indicator of Organizational Performance (OP) (0.693, t = 12.238) in favor of H4, showing that organizational coordination and collaboration also

lead to organizational performance. The empirical support of all the four hypotheses is based on the statistically significant regression coefficients. In general, the regression results are aligned with the conceptual framework and show the important positive correlations between the study variables, as they are established in the proposed model.

3.6 Testing the hypotheses

The results of hypothesis testing show that all the hypotheses proposed are accepted. The results suggest that transformational leadership has a positive impact on open innovation practices, which supports the first hypothesis. Similarly, transformational leadership exhibits a strong positive influence on silos practices in organizations, and the second hypothesis is accepted.

The mediation analysis shows that open innovation practices mediate significantly between Transformational Leadership and organizational silos practices indicating the acceptance of the third hypothesis. The positive influence of the open innovation practices was significantly strong that of transformational leadership partly improves collaboration within organization by promoting open innovation, hence, Transformational Leadership had a real impact on organizational Silos practices. Moreover, the fourth hypothesis is accepted, which proves that practices of organizational silos have a positive impact on organizational performance. In general, the empirical data can substantiate the offered conceptual framework and prove that transformational leadership contributes to open innovation and organizational collaboration, which, in turn, lead to improved organizational performance. These results confirm the theoretical relations suggested in the study and show that all hypothesized direct relations are confirmed in the context of Dubai governmental organizations.

Overall Representativeness and Methodological Robustness.

Taken together, this demographic profile 293 respondents spanning multiple nationalities, age cohorts, educational levels, experience bands, and hierarchical tiers within a single UAE government organization—constitutes a sample well-suited to examining transformational leadership across the operational and managerial dimensions of public sector work. The sample size of 293 meets the threshold recommendations established by Hair et al. (2010) for structural equation modeling and multivariate analysis, and the diversity of respondent characteristics reduces the risk of homogeneous variance inflation that can artificially amplify relationships in homogeneous organizational surveys (Podsakoff et al., 2003). The preponderance of UAE nationals ensures cultural coherence while the inclusion of other Arab nationals introduces meaningful demographic variation relevant to the GCC's multicultural government workforce reality. This profile provides a strong empirical foundation for drawing conclusions about transformational leadership practices that are generalizable within the UAE public sector context and informative for comparative scholarship across GCC and broader Arab administrative systems.

4. Discussion

Transformational leadership comprises four core qualities: idealised influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualised consideration

(Antonakis et al., 2003; Johnson, 2009). The findings show that transformational leadership contributes positively to open innovation, and particularly to internal open-innovation practices (Gad David et al., 2023). Gumusluoglu & Ilsev, 2009). Transformational leaders promote open-innovation initiatives by encouraging employees to be creative, challenge the status quo, and embrace new ideas (Azim et al., 2019). The strong positive association between transformational leadership and open innovation underscores the importance of cultivating a culture of innovativeness in Dubai government institutions. These findings echo Vargas (2015) and Li et al. (2017), who emphasise the joint influences of transactional and transformational leadership on creativity and innovation, and the instrumental effects of transformational leadership on organisational innovation. Conceptually and empirically, leadership-driven innovation enhances organisational learning, performance, and competitiveness (Nelson, 2009). Leaders who inspire and motivate their teams substantially improve the quality of cross-departmental collaboration. The analysis also indicates that open innovation is essential in helping leaders eliminate inter-team barriers, such that leaders reduce silo practices indirectly by encouraging cooperation and idea exchange. This finding is consistent with Davoudi et al. (2018), who underscore the role of open innovation in improving organisational performance, and with Burchardt and Maisch (2019), who argue that open innovation supports the restructuring of traditional hierarchical systems. Open innovation is therefore a critical mechanism by which leaders in Dubai government institutions can reduce silo practices and strengthen collaboration.

5. Conclusions

The findings show that organisational silos and open innovation strongly influence the effectiveness of public-sector government in Dubai. The success of innovation depends upn the support of transformational leadership with a vision to motivate, integrate and align the organizations within the digital context to improve services.

Implications

This study has important theoretical and practical implications for the study of leadership and innovation in the public sector. Theoretically, it analyses the effects of transformational leadership on organisational silos by developing an integrated framework of empirically testable propositions. It further clarifies the role of open innovation in shaping organisational performance within Dubai government institutions. The article empirically reinforces the links among leadership, innovation, and public-sector performance through a deductive and inferential research design grounded in the positivist paradigm.

Limitation

First, the study relied on sampling that was subject to availability and social desirability might have impact on the outcomes of organizational performance. Second, the empirical setting is the United Arab Emirates, a context characterised by distinctive innovation policies and well-developed institutions may not be applicable to other countries. Likewise the socioeconomic and cultural conditions differ. Acknowledging

these limitations strengthens the basis for developing more effective strategies to support innovation and progress in the public sector and contributes to the ongoing debate about how to construct innovative, effective, and efficient government entities responsive to citizens' needs.

Further, longitudinal studies also reveal stronger causal identification designs—including natural experiments and randomized interventions similar to Bellé's (2014) pioneering work that dominates the literature. Second, multi-level research examining how transformational leadership at different organizational levels interacts to shape aggregate organizational outcomes represents an underexplored frontier.

Directions for Future Research

The concept of transformational leadership has its intellectual roots in Burns's (1978) distinction between transactional and transforming leadership. Burns argued that transactional leaders engage followers through an exchange relationship—offering rewards in return for compliance—whereas transforming leaders elevate the interests of both leaders and followers toward higher collective goals. Bass (1985) built upon this framework to create a measurable model comprising four dimensions, often referred to as the "Four I's": idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration. Idealized influence refers to leaders serving as role models whose behavior inspires admiration and trust; inspirational motivation involves articulating a compelling vision; intellectual stimulation encourages creativity and critical thinking; and individualized consideration addresses followers' unique needs for development and support.

A deeper understanding of the interaction between leadership and innovation requires investigation across diverse contexts. Replicating the study in multiple locations and cultures would test the robustness of the findings. Longitudinal designs would clarify how various forms of leadership and innovation influence long-term organisational performance. Future studies could also incorporate variables such as organisational culture, change-readiness, and the pace of technological development. Combining quantitative and qualitative methods would provide richer insights into the joint role of innovators and leaders in complex organisations. Comparative work across the UAE's private and public sectors would identify sector-specific differences in collaboration. Examining alternative leadership philosophies and governance models would further illuminate effective strategies for breaking organisational silos. Such research can guide UAE organisations and may inform broader management and leadership practice.

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Summary of Added References

The following in-text citations from the original manuscript were not matched to entries in the original reference list. Full APA 7th edition references have been reconstructed and inserted above (marked [ADDED]). Authors should verify each entry against the original sources and adjust details (volume, issue, pages, DOIs) as necessary.

de Brentani, 2001 — Cited in Introduction re: valuable, responsive public services.

Michalakopoulou et al., 2023 — Cited in Introduction alongside de Brentani, 2001.

Jia et al., 2018 — Cited in Introduction re: leadership and innovation policy adoption.

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Gugler, Alburai, & Stalder, 2021 — Cited in Section 2 re: Dubai's digital governance recognition.
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