Innovations

Twofold innovation behavior and Omoluabi leadership: Surviving covid-19 pandemic through unlearning effect

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Abstract

This study examined the survival effect of explorative innovation, the mediation effect of unlearning on the interaction between explorative innovation and firm survival, how Omoluabi leadership influenced unlearning activities and exploitative innovation behaviour and the effect of exploitative innovation behaviour on firm survival concentrating on multiple industry. A survey of 312 organizations across industries in four countries were considered. The PLS-SEM analysis employed showed that the ability to unlearn fully mediates the interaction between explorative innovation and firm survival. Likewise, Omoluabi leadership explained positive and significant changes in unlearning activities and exploitative innovative behaviour and exploitative innovation predicts significant changes to firm survival. This study concluded that possessing the capabilities to unlearn, achieve explorative and exploitative innovative processes and products, and deploying Omoluabi leadership is a recipe for achieving significant adaptation and firm survival. The study recommended that firms invest in infrastructures that aids unlearning activities, explorative and exploitative innovation. Management should also imbibe the Omoluabi leadership orientation because the unlearning activity and exploitative innovation behaviour, requires leadership to drive success.

KEYWORDS: *Behavioral perspective, Dynamic capability, Explorative innovation, Exploitative innovation behaviour, Omoluabi leadership, Unlearning*

1. Introduction

The reality check for many businesses attributable to the coronavirus pandemic's ripple effect suggests that several existing standard organisational processes and strategies may not guarantee sustained competitive advantage. Government socio-economic restrictions as preventive measures to manage the spread of the virus mean firms that intend to continue satisfying market demands quickly will need to reinvent their processes, strategies, infrastructures, and human resource competence; otherwise, they risk their going-concern status. Given the challenges created by the coronavirus pandemic and the need for firms to reinvent organizational activities, scholars have suggested deploying unlearning activities (Orth & Schuldis 2021; Park & Oh 2020;Umukoro, Egwakhe, Akande, Onamusi, & Folorunso, 2022), explorative innovation (Lee, Lee, & Garrett 2017; Yu & Kim

2020),exhibiting exploitative innovation behaviour, and fitting appropriate leadership orientation (Anning-Dorson 2018; Usman, Hameed, & Manzoor 2018) is key to surviving the ripple effect of environmental turbulence. This is because reinventing organizational activities requires unlearning what was already known, without which the new approaches may not work successfully (Tsang & Zahra 2008).

To become more innovative, businesses must first unlearn traditional practices before they can embrace novel approaches (Cepeda-Carrión, Gabriel Cegarra Navarro, & Leal-Millán, 2012). Organizational unlearning is the means by which this is achieved. It is generally agreed that the process of skill destruction and creative construction is typically required for radical innovation (Lawlor & Kavanagh, 2015).Constraints to a company's ability to generate rule-breaking ideas and seize possible opportunities can reduce the likelihood of radical innovation being implemented (Lyua, Yanga, Zhangb, Teoc, & Guo, 2020). As a result, explorative innovation can be supported by organizational unlearning. Firms can adapt their frameworks and responses to changing and challenging events by encouraging unlearning activities regarding changes in beliefs and habits. Next to unlearning activities, engaging in explorative innovation strategy can be achieved more efficiently; that is when an organization engages in explorative innovation activities focusing on a new scope of operation and exhibiting exploitative innovation behaviour to management, process, and product so take advantage of the growth potential within its existing scope of operation.

According to Harmancioglu, Saaksjarvi, and Hultink (2020), organizational learning is a critical precondition for exploring innovation. The implication of this above narrative suggests that the performance-effect of the explorative innovation could potentially be explained through deploying unlearning activities. It is important to stress that unlearning activities are part of the organizational learning process (Morais-Storz & Nguyen, 2017). Moreover, because leadership is critical in formulating a strategic plan and its efficient execution, the whole framework for unlearning and reinventing organizational strategies to achieve radical innovation needs leadership that can enhance achieving desirable results.

Although the above discussion seems conceptually logical, it is essential to substantiate this interaction using empirical submissions. Beyond the capacity of the leadership to promote unlearning activities within the organisation as the basis for explorative innovation, it should be able to provide direction and encourage exploitative innovation behaviour. This is because growth opportunity exists within a turbulent environment (Onamusi, Asikhia, & Makinde, 2019) and in an existing business area. Therefore, management must provide a work environment that not only provides the opportunity to explore other business prospects outside its current scope of operation but should equally provide for exploitative innovation behavior, given that it can guarantee short-run returns on incremental innovation (Strobl, Matzler, Nketia, & Veider, 2020).

Extant literature has positioned the individual relevance of unlearning (Klammer & Gueldenberg 2019; Orth & Schuldis 2021; Park & Oh 2020), explorative innovation (Lee et al. 2017; Yu & Kim 2020), exploitative innovation behaviour (Strobl et al., 2020) and leadership (Abiodun 2017; Anning-Dorson 2018; Onamusi 2020) to organizational performance in different contexts. Nevertheless, the mechanism through which explorative innovation influences firm survival under environmental uncertainties remained rarely explored. Likewise, of the studies reviewed, those that substantiated the effect of leadership from *Omoluabi's* Yoruba perspective on unlearning and how it can reinforce exploitative innovation behavior remain unknown. At best, Onamusi (2020) investigated how *Omoluabi* leadership moderated the relationship between strategic response and firm competitiveness, which is different from the objective of this study.

These multiple gaps in literature create the need for this study simply because they limit the broad understanding of unlearning capability's relevance as a boundary condition through which explorative innovation can influence firm survival, how *Omoluabi* leadership can affect unlearning and exploitative innovation behaviour, and how exploitative innovation behavior affects firm survival. Given these issues, the study assessed the effect of explorative innovation on firm survival. It investigated the mediating effect of unlearning on the link between

explorative innovation and firm survival. It examined the effect of *Omoluabi* leadership orientation on unlearning activities and exploitative innovation behaviour, respectively. Lastly, it examined the effect of exploitative innovation behaviour on firm survival focusing on 312 organizations in multiple industries in Australia, Canada, Nigeria, and the United Kingdom.

2. Literature review

2.1 Theory and Rationale for the Hypotheses

This study draws on Dynamic Capability Theory and the behavioral perspective to provide a theoretical explanation for the link between explorative innovation, unlearning activities, exploitative innovation behaviour, *Omoluabi* leadership, and firm survival. The dynamic capability theory recognizes that certain environmental dynamism (for example, those created by the COVID-19 pandemic) can render existing organizational strategies and competencies obsolete, and this warrant a firm to adapt, absorb new knowledge and innovate its operations. These theories are of specific importance to this study. First, Teece built the DCT on the premise that during a fast-changing macro-environment achieving survival and superior performance is beyond possessing resources and competencies that have Valuable, Inimitable, Rare, and Organized (VIRO) attributes; instead, achieving a competitive advantage is contingent on firm's ability to adapt immediately to the external environmental dynamics in the short-run (Kaur & Mehta 2017; Onn & Butt 2015; Wang, Senaratne, & Rafiq 2015), followed by absorbing knowledge from within and outside its organization to serve as innovation catalyst (Monferrer, Blesa, & Ripollés 2015; Tseng & Lee 2014), and lastly innovate (radical/incremental) its business processes to take advantage of the growth potential in a fast-changing environment (Kaur & Mehta 2016a; Manuj, Omar, & Yazdanparast 2013). The narrative forms the cornerstone to justify that firms with explorative innovation and exploitative innovation behaviour will achieve significant market performance in a charging environment.

However, the adaptive, absorptive, and innovation frameworks did not explain how a firm can unlearn existing strategies and capabilities, which are critical in reinventing obsolete capacities to survive a changing environment. To complement the inadequacies in DCT, the behavioral perspective provides the theoretical explanation for unlearning and its relevance in aiding firm survival. The behavioral perspective suggests that unlearning involves the loss of standard organizational procedures. It becomes a strategic tool for abandoning outdated and less productive knowledge, skills, strategies, and organizational structure (Easterby-Smith & Lyles 2011) to create the opportunity for the deployment of new ones (Leal Rodrı´guez et al. 2015).

The fundamental idea of the DCT and the behavioral perspectives explain the interactions within the variables under investigation. This study argues that the processes leading to radical innovation achievement are different from those required to achieve incremental innovation. In explorative innovation, the organization is wholly engaged in new processes, strategies, and structures but with existing human resources. If the human resources are willing or unwilling to unlearn or forget existing protocols, it will foster or disrupt the explorative innovation outcomes. Hence, to ensure that human resources are willing to unlearn, this is where leadership comes to play. The Omoluabi leader possesses a unique capacity (ability to manage change without creating chaos) (Onamusi, 2020) that can sway the human resource to be willing to unlearn outdated knowledge for the organization's progress. On the strength of the above discussion, the study hypothesized that exploration innovation is a precondition to achieving firm survival during a fast-changing environment. However, the individual link between explorative innovation and exploitative innovation behaviour on firm survival is explained through organizational unlearning.

2.2 Explorative Innovation and Firm Survival

When Foroudi et al. (2016) looked at the impact of innovation on customer outcomes, they discovered the benefits of innovation to corporate success. According to the research, significant performance outcomes were found to be explained by both the technical and managerial elements of innovation. As a result, the research implies that

companies with creative competencies (radical) may quickly adjust to changing customer needs, keeping customers satisfied and improving organizational effectiveness (Eggers, Kraus, & Covin 2014).

Tuan et al. (2016) found that while comparing the performance of firms in Northern Nigeria, there was a substantial difference between those of small and medium size when innovation capability was considered. Tuan et al. (2016) came to a similar conclusion, noting that all facets of innovation (marketing, process, and organization) had a positive effect on business performance, which they used as a surrogate for firm longevity. The authors believe that increased inventiveness is the key to the company's success. These results are supported by prior research (Jiménez-Jiménez & Sanz-Valle, 2011) showing that innovation is crucial to a company's success.Gaining significant corporate success is contingent on invention ownership and the efficient implementation of this innovation, say Jiménez-Jiménez and Sanz-Valle (2011). Innovation, thus, results in fresh corporate strategies, enhanced methods of reducing expenses, and enhanced operational effectiveness. Ukpabio et al. (2017) gathered data from manufacturing SMEs across a variety of sectors in Nigeria's southwestern region to bolster the findings of Jiménez-Jiménez and Sanz-Valle (2011). There is a strong positive relationship between the four facets of innovation and sales revenue (as a measure of market share) (product, process, market, and organization). Additional analysis of the four types of innovation indicated that product innovation was a major factor in generating sales (as a measure of market share).

Similar to Ukpabio et al. (2017), Mohd and Syamsuriana (2013) did a study with a similar title, unit of analysis, measured variables, and technique of analysis, except in Malaysia instead of Nigeria. The findings showed that innovative aptitude significantly affects company profitability, market share, sales revenue, labor productivity, and employee employment. Across all three types of innovation, there was a sizable increase in market share (administrative, process, and product). As a result, the study of Abiodun (2017) on the value of innovation capability is validated. The results obtained by Abiodun verified those of earlier research (Atalay et al. 2013; Hung & Chou 2013; Jaskyte 2011; Jimenez-Jimenez 2011; Saunila, Pekkola & Ukko 2014; Therrient et al. 2011).For Lee et al. (2017), proving the collaboration-effect of innovation in Korean organizational performance was also an important goal. Results showed that product and process innovation capabilities impacted firm performance via exploitation and exploration. Scholars like Azubuike (2013), Foroudi et al. (2016), and Ukpabio et al. (2017) have already stated that innovation potential has a significant impact on performance. Furthermore, the authors encourage those committed to innovation to take advantage of their current market, improve existing products, and explore the possibility of creating a whole new product. The study concludes that if innovation initiatives are carried out properly, they will lead to better market and financial performance. In addition, the results of Yu and Kim (2020) confirm the considerable effect on ambidextrous innovation capability's performance, including explorative innovation.

2.3The Mediating Effect of Unlearning

Empirical studies on the relevance of unlearning to management have been documented in different fields of study, including; management coaching behavior (Park & Oh 2020), strategic flexibility (Wang, Qi, & Zhao 2019), organization learning (Orth & Schuldis 2021), and in new product development (Klammer & Gueldenberg 2019). Considering the exigencies of the need to survive the COVID-19 pandemic, the concept of unlearning has received significant attention from scholars as part of the strategic response to adapt to its disruptive tendencies and sustain business performance (Orth & Schuldis 2021).

The world has experienced unprecedented disruptions to every aspect of business operation, which has a concomitant effect on how businesses operate. Thus, it is vital to re-examine whether existing business processes can deliver value based on the framework created by the COVID-19 pandemic. A significant paradigm shift in business processes and strategies is required to adapt to the 'new normal.' Since no On-Off switch exists in the work environment regarding the management of change, employees will need to unlearn existing management protocols and competencies to enhance the alignment of the new rules of engagement. Klammer and Gueldenberg (2019) stressed that among the many factors that inhibit innovation within an organization, particularly in a turbulent

environment, is employees' unwillingness to unlearn and forget old practices. According to the scholars, the inability to decisively handle these unlearning challenges often leads to the loss of scarce critical resources, encourage intra-group scuffles, and misses out on radical innovation and its attendant performance effect. Kmieciak (2020) submission extended the position of Klammer and Gueldenberg (2019). The scholar opined those employees who favor unlearning activities have a positive and significant relationship with innovative work behaviors. In other words, the mechanism through which radical innovation leads to significant firm performance can be attributable to firms' employees possessing the willingness to unlearn existing organizational processes and strategies.

Achieving successful radical innovation partly means that a firm possesses strategic flexibility (Wang, Lu, Zhao, Gong, & Li 2013), considering the resources required to achieve successful explorative innovation. However, Wang, Qi, and Zhao (2019) posited that individual and organizational unlearning is a critical driver of strategic flexibility and performance. Furthermore, in the context of managerial coaching, Park, and Oh (2020) suggested that the performance of creativity (which is a behavioral precondition to explorative innovation) can be explained through the deployment of unlearning activities. This means that unlearning enhance employee creativity, a critical determinant for achieving radical innovation (Mehta, Chandani, & Neeraja 2014). Also, the submission of Wang et al. (2013) reveals that organizational unlearning significantly affects radical innovation's performance. More so, a flexible organization created the mechanism through which organizational unlearning influences radical innovation (explorative innovation). On the strength of the above discussion on the significance of unlearning, the study proposes that: *the functional relationship between explorative innovation and firm survival will be explained through unlearning activities.*

2.4 Omoluabi Leadership, Unlearning, Exploitative Innovation Behaviour

Many leadership experts and scholars have consistently taught and submitted that organizational success largely depends on the leader and the leadership orientation adopted (Anning-Dorson 2018; Dunne, Aaron, McDowell, Urban, & Geho 2016; Hao & Yazdanifard 2015; Uzohue, Yaya, & Akintayo 2016). This argument is buttressed with the narrative that leadership permeates the entire organizational culture, structure, strategy, capabilities, policies, and employee relations; thus, leadership becomes a contingent factor that can enhance an organization's sustainability (Onamusi 2020). Similarly, leadership is a critical success factor in how organizations can quickly respond, unlearn, and manage external environmental changes. A less agile leadership with weak strategic response competencies would perform less than an agile leadership with strong strategic response competence under changing and uncertain environments (Asikhia, Adewole, Onamusi, & Makinde, 2022; Medinilla 2012).

During environmental changes, particularly one defined by the COVID-19 pandemic, which requires business reinventions, such reinvention requires both organization and employee unlearning to aid the change management process. Of importance to this reinvention process because from the conception to implementation and evaluation of the unlearning activity, leadership is a critical determinant. To support the discussion above, Usman *et al.* (2018) posited that ethical leadership significantly influences the process of unlearning destructive practices within an organization. Considering the complexity of unlearning activities for the organization and employees, this study agrees with the few empirical studies (Usman et al. 2018) concerning leadership's relevance to the unlearning process; however, of the leadership orientation considered, none was conceptualized from the *Omoluabi* Yoruba world view. The performance effect of the *Omoluabi* leadership was first addressed by Onamusi (2020) mainly as a significant moderating variable, improving the effect of strategic response capability on firm competitiveness. Further analysis showed that *Omoluabi* leadership explained significant variation in firm competitiveness. The study posited that

"the Omoluabi leadership describes the personality attribute of a leader that encapsulates the culture of hard work, transparency, accountability, respect for employees, possession of sound character and wisdom in judgment, one equipped to handle problems both within and outside of the organization. More so, such an individual consistently uses a socially approved expression in addressing employees, possess excellent knowledge of the business, and

communicates effectively with the capacity to keep everyone's interest within the organization" (Onamusi 2020, p34).

Given the *Omoluabi* leadership's unique attributes, scholars stressed that such a leader could positively influence behavioural outcomes in a work environment (Adebowale & Onayemi 2019; Oke 2016; Olanipekun 2017). On the strength of this discussion, this study proposes that *Omoluabi leadership's deployment will positively and significantly influence unlearning activities.*

In addition to its effects on unlearning activities, this study suggests that *Omoluabi* leadership may also inspire exploitative innovation behavior among its staff, which can help businesses thrive. From a leadership standpoint, much of the organization's success hinges on the qualities and skills of its top executives. This means that exploitative behavior when the organization is undergoing radical innovation will require significant resources, both in terms of people and equipment. Therefore, as expressed earlier, the *Omoluabi* leader's unique features should foster a setting where employees are invested in their work, enthusiastic about contributing to the company's goals, and willing to go above and beyond in their demonstrations of innovative and entrepreneurial spirit. During times of fast environmental change, businesses that want to succeed will not only look for new opportunities but will also ensure to exploit their existing value chain fully. In light of this submission, the authors of this study postulate that deploying *Omoluabi* leaders will significantly impact the organization's exploitative innovation behavior.

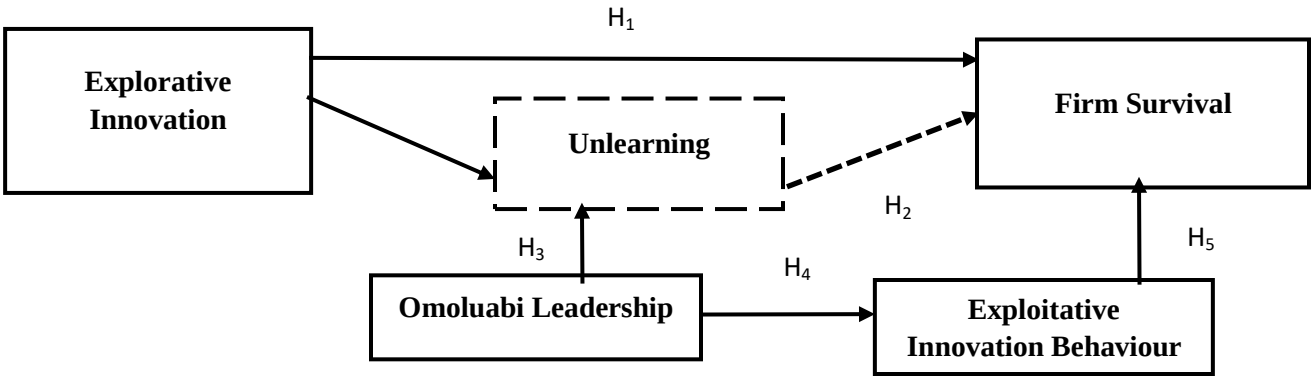

Figure 1. Conceptual Model: Explorative Innovation, Unlearning, *Omoluabi*Leadership, exploitative innovation behaviour, and Firm Survival

Source: Researcher's Model (2022)

Figure 1 presents the conceptual model which shows the effect of explorative innovation on firm survival, the indirect effect of unlearning on the association between explorative innovation and firm survival, the effect of *Omoluabi* leadership on unlearning and exploitative innovation behaviour, and the linkage between exploitative innovation behaviour on firm survival.

3. Methodology

3.1 The Study Context, Design, Sampling, and Data collection

This study used the survey research design to achieve its objectives. This study follows a similar research context found in Onamusi (2021) and sampled 384 organizations in multiple industries (FMCGs, packaging, pharmaceutical and agro-allied, quick service restaurants, insurance, banking, logistics, retail stores, telecommunication, and small and medium enterprises) in four countries (Australia, Canada, Nigeria, and the United Kingdom), given the universality of the reach of the COVID-19 pandemic.

The structured questionnaire was adapted from Australia, Canada, Nigeria, and the United Kingdom extant literature (Subramaniam & Youndt 2005; Park & Oh, 2020; Olanipekun 2017; Onamusi 2020) and used as the instrument for

data collection. The questionnaire had thirty-one (31) items with six (6) unlearning items, five (5) explorative innovation items, five (5) exploitative innovation behaviour, seven (7) Omoluabi leadership items, and eight (8) firm survival items. The response options follow the 6-point Likert-type scale, ranging from 1 strongly disagree to 6 strongly agree, consistent with Itai and Onamusi (2020). The study ensured that professionals and experts examined all the items measuring each variable in the Department of Management and Accounting Lead City University Ibadan to ensure they align with the literature and are not ambiguous statements for respondents.

In 2020, when we wanted to gather data, there was a lockdown occasioned by the Coronavirus pandemic's preventive measures, which meant that questionnaires could not be distributed in-person to the different organisations. As a result, surveys were sent by Google Form, email, and WhatsApp using the snowball sampling method. We were able to get a few contacts based on personal-professional relationships from Australia, Canada, Nigeria, and the United Kingdom, and coopt each contact to take advantage of the WhatsApp group forums to distribute the instrument and equally requested that they do the same with their contacts either via WhatsApp or via the electronic mail system. After eight weeks, the google form platform registered 312 responses which represented 81.2% response rate (See appendix one for the questionnaire link). The advantage of the google form questionnaire is that it helps with the initial coding of the items and the ease of transferring the data into SPSS and subsequently to SmartPLS, where the analysis was carried out.

3.2 Variable Measures and Analytical Technique

In line with this study's research model, the independent variables are explorative innovation and *Omoluabi* leadership, exploitative innovation behaviour, the mediating variable is unlearning, and the dependent variable is firm survival. Like many empirical studies, the study follows a similar approach of adapting established scales in prior studies to suit its contexts. Explorative innovation was measured using Subramaniam and Youndt (2005), which included items such as "innovations that fundamentally change your prevailing products/ services. Park & Oh (2020) considered that unlearning includes replacing outdated or no longer helpful knowledge and practices (Navarro & Moya 2005).

Conceived from a 'Yoruba' world-view, *Omoluabi* leadership was measured using the criteria in previous studies (Adebowale & Onayemi 2019; Olanipekun 2017; Onamusi 2020). Exploitative innovation behaviour was measured using the work of (Berraies & El Abidine, 2019). Firm survival is considered financial and non-financial measures which reflect the ability of the firm to be a going-concern entity. The items of measure include; perceived customer satisfaction, engaged workforce, firm's sales growth, profit growth, and operational efficiency (Onamusi, 2021).

Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed to build one model that best represents the interactions under investigation, and this was followed by testing the hypotheses formulated. Specifically, the effect of explorative innovation on firm survival was examined. It investigated the effect of unlearning on explorative innovation. The study also assessed the indirect effect of unlearning on the functional relationship between explorative innovation and firm survival. The effect of Omoluabi leadership on unlearning and exploitative innovation behaviour was examined, respectively, and the link between exploitative innovation behaviour and firm survival was evaluated.

4. Result

Verifying the instrument's validity and reliability is crucial. As a result, the PLS-SEM algorithm allowed for the estimation of construct validity and reliability. Several other measures of statistical reliability and validity, such as Average Variance Explained (AVE), Discriminant Validity (DV), Composite Reliability (CR), and, are all presented by the PLS-SEM method. As a result, the statistics for validity and reliability were found to be higher than the minimum required, indicating that the instrument is valid and reliable. Tables 1 and 2 display the outcomes.

Table 1: Validity and Reliability Test for Measured items.

Latent Variables	CA	CR	AVE
Exploitative innovation behaviour	0.907	0.931	0.730
Exploratory innovation capability	0.884	0.919	0.741
Firm survival	0.921	0.938	0.716
Omoluabi leadership	0.912	0.932	0.695
Unlearning	0.884	0.920	0.742

Source: Researcher's Results (2022)

Table 2: Discriminant Validity using Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

Latent Variables	EIB	EIC	FMZ	OML	ULC
Exploitative innovation behaviour					
Exploratory innovation capability	0.838				
Firm survival	0.812	0.782			
Omoluabi leadership	0.817	0.707	0.920		
Unlearning	0.832	0.929	0.854	0.803	

Source: Researcher's Results SmartPLS V3.3.6 (2022)

The result of the convergent and divergent validity is presented via the AVE in Table 1 and through the discriminant validity in Table 2 to substantiate construct validity. In line with the threshold for construct validity, AVE value above 0.5 and HTMT criterion value of less than 1 suggest that instrument validity is ensured. In addition, the reliability statistics result in Table 1 through Cronbach Alpha's coefficient and revalidated by the composite reliability aver that the statistics are above the accepted threshold of 0.7 hence the instrument is reliable.

Table 3: Mean, Standard Deviation and Correlation for all Variables

Variable Name	Mean	SD	ULA	EIB	EIC	OML	FS
Unlearning activities	4.86	0.92	1	0.75** (0.000)	0.80** (0.000)	0.76** (0.000)	0.76** (0.000)
Exploitative innovation behaviour	4.66	1.072		1	0.72** (0.000)	0.75** (0.000)	0.73** (0.000)
Explorative innovation capability	4.54	1.12			1	0.65** (0.000)	0.65** (0.000)
Omoluabi leadership	4.87	0.98				1	0.85** (0.000)
Firm survival	4.87	0.88					

*Source: Author's computation using SPSS V25*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The findings of the correlation and descriptive statistics are shown in Table 3. The mean value is somewhere in the range of 4.54 and 4.87. The correlation between their standard deviations indicates that, on average, the respondents in this study agree with the items used to gauge the various factors. There is a positive and robust association between the independent and dependent variables, and the relationship is linear, as shown by the Pearson Product Moment correlation coefficient. As a result of the high degree of correlation between the variables, we employed the Herman-one factor to test for the existence or absence of CMB. According to Harman's one-factor analysis, 48.93%

of the variation may be attributed to only one factor (0.48). With a value below 0.5 for Harman's single component, it is clear that the data set used does not contain any CMB that may compromise the validity of the study's findings.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypotheses testing was performed using PLS-SEM implemented in SmartPLS version 3.3.6. The study used PLS-command algorithms for effect-relationship prediction, bootstrapping for significance testing, and blinding for evaluating the structural model's predictive utility. Accordingly, the (predictive) efficacy of the PLS-conclusion procedure is independent of the degree to which the data "fits" the model (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2017; Henseler, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2015). The PLS-SEM results are presented in a table and three models (Figures I, 2, and 3). (see table 4). The measurement model is depicted in Figure 1, the structural model in Figure 2, and the validation of the structural model's predictive usefulness, Q2, is shown in Figure 3. (t value above 1.96 and Q2 above zero confirm a statistically significant effect and that the structural model specified is relevance). An outer model depicts the factor loadings (correlation) of each item in relation to the latent variable, and an inner model, the structural model (predictive model), describes the interactions between the predictor and outcome variables.

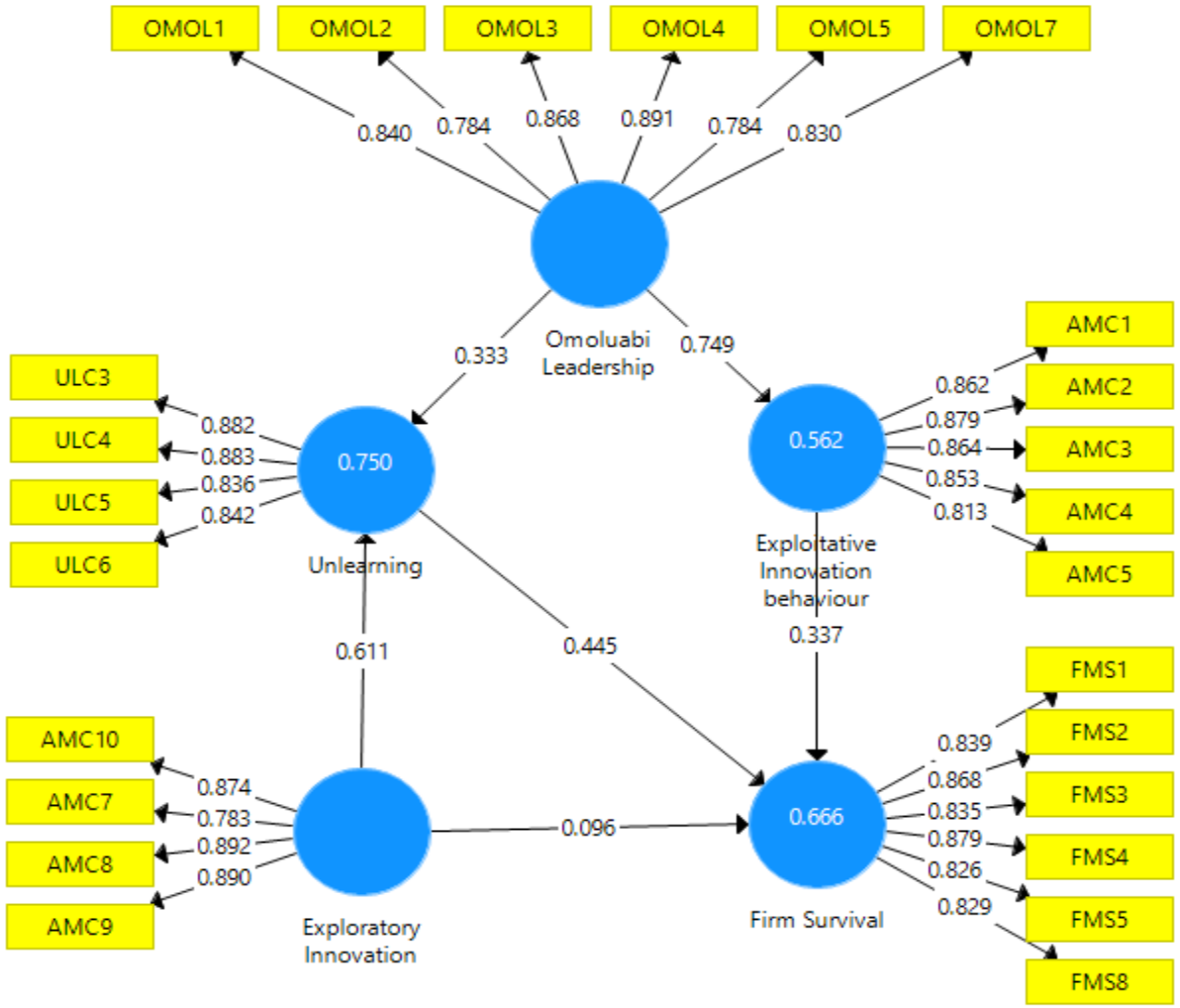

Figure 1: Measurement model for the study's hypotheses

Source: Researcher's Computation via SmartPLS version 3.3.6

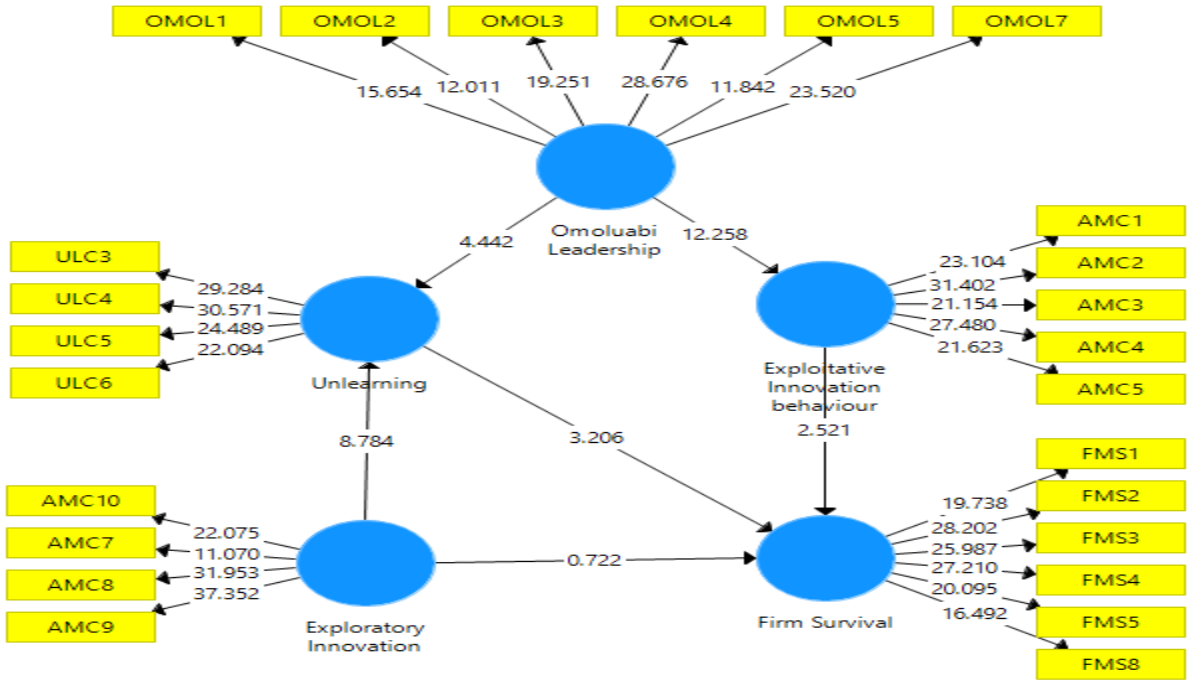

Figure 2: Structural Model for the study's hypotheses
Source: Researcher's Computation via SmartPLS version 3.3.6

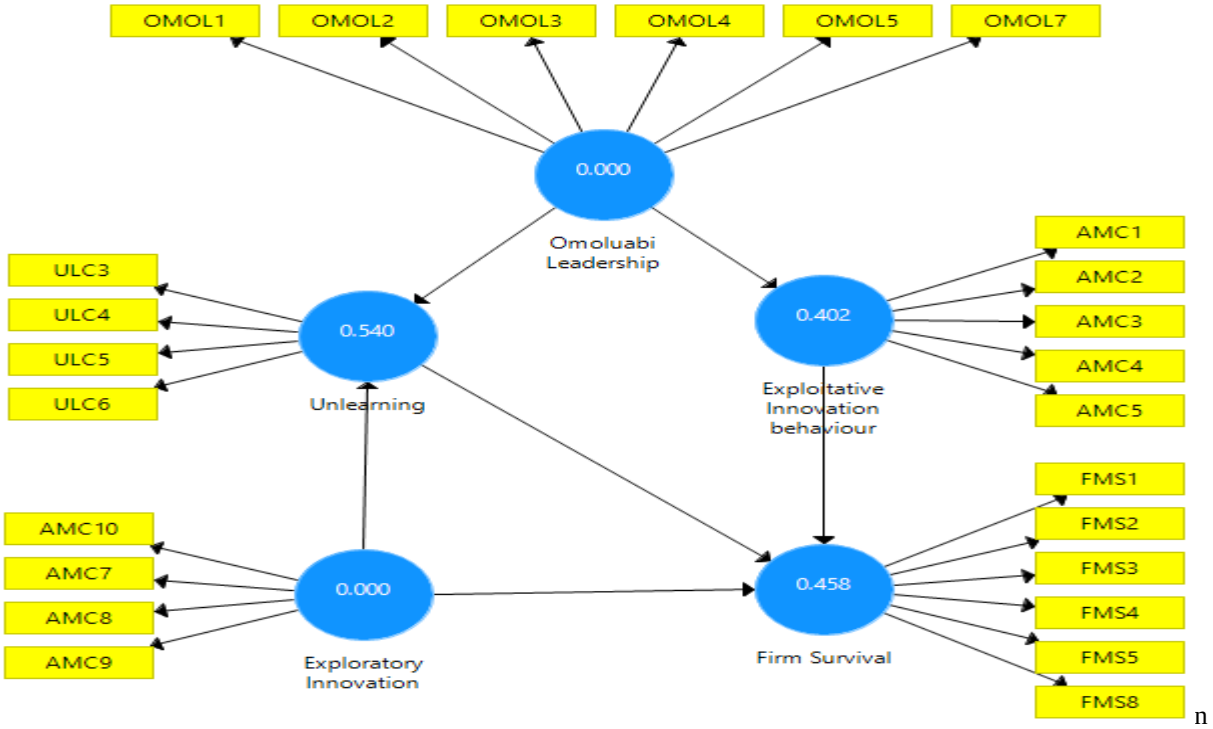

Figure 3: Q^2Statistics for the study's Hypotheses
Source: Researcher's Computatio via SmartPLS version 3.3.6

Table 4: Summary of PLS-SEM Analysis in Figure1-3

Path Coefficient	**Original Sample(O)**	**Sample Mean(M)**	**STDEV**	**T-Statistics**	**P-Values**	**F^2**
Model 1						
EI→ FS	0.096	0.116	0.133	0.722	0.470	0.007
EI → UL	0.611	0.608	0.070	8.784	0.000	0.854
UL → FS	0.445	0.433	0.139	3.206	0.001	0.164
Specific Indirect Effect						
EI →UL→ FS	0.272	0.257	0.095	2.856	0.004	
Model 2						
OML → EIB	0.749	0.748	0.061	12.258	0.000	1.281
OML → UL	0.333	0.333	0.075	4.442	0.000	0.254
Model 3						
EIB → FS	0.337	0.334	0.134	2.521	0.012	0.127
Other specific Indirect Effect un-hypothesized but generated by PLS-SEM algorithm						
OML → UL → FS	0.148	0.142	0.057	2.596	0.010	
OML → EIB → FS	0.253	0.263	0.116	2.186	0.029	
R Square	**R^2**	**Adj R^2**				**Q^2**
Model 1,3						
FS	0.666	0.655				0.458
Model 2						
EIB	0.562	0.557				0.402
UL	0.750	0.745				0.540

Note: EI- Explorative Innovation, EIB- Exploitative Innovation Behaviour, UL- Unlearning, OML- *Omoluabi* leadership, FS- Firm Survival

Source: Researcher's Results via SmartPLS V3.3.6 (2022)

The combined outcomes of the three models are shown in Table 4. The role of unlearning activities as a mediator between exploitative innovation capacity and company survival was examined in model 1. The second model illustrates the impact of Omoluabi's leadership on unlearning activities and exploitative innovation behavior, while the third model uses PLS-SEM with SmartPLS version 3.3.6 to analyze the impact of such behavior on the long-term viability of a business. Visual representations of the data (Figures 1-3) and a summary (Table 4) were provided.

In order to complete the mediating analysis in model 1, we adopted the three-stage process outlined by Baron and Kenny (1986). Full mediation, as defined by Baron and Kenny, happens when a third variable (unlearning activities) regarded a mediator renders the direct interaction between an independent variable (exploratory innovation) and the dependent variable (firm survival) irrelevant. There must be a meaningful connection between the independent factor, the mediator, and the dependent factor. Since the path from exploratory innovation capability to unlearning activities (=0.611, F2=0.854, p=0.000, Q2 =0.458) and unlearning activities to firm survival (=0.445, F2=0.164,

p=0.002, Q2 =0.458) is significant and the structural model specified is relevant and has sufficient predictive power, the result in model 1 suggests that we have a full mediating effect.

In addition, the PLS-SEM provides the result of the specific indirect effect to reinforce the mediation analysis threshold positioned by Baron and Kenny (1986). According to Table 4, the result of the specific indirect effect shows a path analysis from exploratory innovation capability → unlearning activities → firm survival (β=0.272, p=0.004) proves that, as a whole, the indirect path is significant. Hence, the study avers that the unlearning activities fully mediate the interaction between exploratory innovation capability and firm survival. By implication, engaging in unlearning activities explains the path from radical innovation to firm survival during environmental disruption and complexities.

In the second model, unlearning activities and exploitative innovation behaviour were significantly influenced by Omoluabi leadership. This is because 75% of the change in unlearning is explained by *Omoluabi* leadership (R^2 = 0.750, F^2=1.281, p =0.000). Other extraneous factors not considered in this study explained the remaining 25% of the changes in unlearning. The βeta coefficient suggested that a unit change in *Omoluabi* leadership will enhance unlearning by 0.333, and the effect is positive and statistically significant (β= 0.333, t= 4.442, p= 0.000).In addition, 56.2% of the variation in exploitative innovation behaviour is predicted by *Omoluabi* leadership (R^2 = 0.562, F^2=0.254, p =0.000). In comparison, the remaining 43.8% of the change in exploitative innovation behaviour is attributable to factors not considered in this study. The βeta coefficient suggested that a unit change in *Omoluabi* leadership will enhance exploitative innovation behaviour by 0.749, and the effect is positive and statistically significant (β= 0.749, t= 12.258, p= 0.000).

In the last model, exploitative innovation behaviour has a significant relative effect on firm survival. This is depicted by the βeta coefficient, which suggests that firm survival will experience a positive increase of 0.337 for a unit change in exploitative innovation behaviour during the changing environment. This relative effect is statistically significant (β= 0.337, t= 2.521, p= 0.012).

5. Discussion, Conclusion, Recommendation, and Future study

The research looked into how disruptive innovation may help businesses thrive. It also assessed the role of unlearning as a mediator between the variables of exploratory innovation and business survival.It assessed *Omoluabi* leadership's influence on unlearning and exploitative innovation behaviour and adopted a multiple industry analysis. Through its findings, the study confirmed all the hypotheses formulated and found support in previous empirical studies (Kmieciak 2020; Lee et al. 2017; Mohammed et al. 2017; Onamusi 2020; Usman et al. 2018; Wang et al. 2013; Wang et al. 2019; Yu & Kim 2020).

The mediation effect analysis warranted testing hypotheses aligned with Baron and Kenny (1986). The outcomes suggested that although explorative innovative capability significantly influences firm survival, the effect was explained through the mechanism of unlearning activities. This finding corroborated the argument in the introductory section of this study. The process of reinventing organizational strategy requires that firms unlearn established management protocols, without which the new strategies set in motion may not achieve the desired result. This is because unlearning activities enhance the process of actualizing an explorative innovation. It involves exploring new management processes, strategies, and products to create radical innovative management processes and products by nature. Therefore, the ripple effect of creating radical, innovative management processes and products enhances a firm's ability to adapt quickly to a changing environment and varying market demands.

Also, the study, through its findings, found relevance for *Omoluabi* leadership. This study posited that the whole architecture of the interaction between unlearning and exploitative innovation behaviour requires *Omoluabi* leadership, which sets the framework for its successful formulation and implementation. This narrative was confirmed by how *Omoluabi* leadership explained significant variations in unlearning activities and

exploitative innovation behaviour. Lastly, establishing exploitative innovation behaviour is critical for firm survival during changing times. This study contributes to recent literature about the inter-organizational response to surviving the rampaging effect of the COVID-19 pandemic. Evidence abounds in the literature that establishes the relevance of explorative innovation for business survival; however, what triggers the positive interaction remains unexplored. The study's finding contributes to scarce literature that provides answers to the boundary conditions through which explorative innovation can influence firm survival. Likewise, the adoption of *Omoluabi* leadership in this study becomes only the second study that explains its relevance in strategic management literature.

Moreover, it is the only study that explains its effect on enhancing unlearning activities and exploitative innovation behaviour. The study also supported the dynamic capability theory and the behavioral perspective. It stressed that for firms to survive a turbulent environment, they must possess renewable capabilities and a behavioural approach that encourages the willingness to unlearn and change obsolete management processes.

The findings of this study present critical implications for management practice, especially for organisational leadership, as it presents strategic information on internal organisational competencies that holds the potential to enhance firm survival during turbulent times. Overall, this study affirms that possessing the capabilities to unlearn, explore and exploit innovative management processes and products, and deploy Omoluabi leadership becomes a recipe for achieving significant adaptation and firm survival. Hence, the study recommends that firms invest in their organizations' infrastructures that enhance unlearning activities and explorative and exploitative innovation. Likewise, management should also imbibe the *Omoluabi* leadership orientation because the unlearning activity, which has been an attribute of change management, requires leadership to drive its successful formulation, communication, implementation, and evaluation.

Although the geographical reach of this study suggests a robust approach to data gathering, its findings are limited to organisations under study. Like many studies, it is vital to recognize its limitation with the hope that it provides the opportunity for future studies. Care should be taken in generalizing the findings of this study because the study only considers a few organisations in a few countries. Adopting a cross-sectional design meant explaining causality among the variables cannot be established. Although the study provides plausible mechanisms for firms to survive the COVID-19 pandemic's disruptive effects through radical innovation, incremental innovation behaviour, unlearning, and *Omoluabi* leadership, a firm's survival ability is not limited to the variables investigated. Future studies should focus on other countries not considered in this study to enhance the generalization of the findings. Likewise, consider a comparative analysis of country by country to establish the relative difference concerning the interactions in the study. A longitudinal study will help establish absolute causality amongst the variables in this study. Moreover, the variables considered in this study were context-specific; however, future studies can explore other variables, such as how adaptive resilience, decision-making capability, and strategic engagement can enhance a firm's survival in a turbulent environment. Despite these limitations, this study offers significant implication for the management of organisations investigated and position the relevance of explorative innovation, exploitative innovation behaviour, unlearning activities, and *Omoluabi* leadership in surviving economic disruptions.

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