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role of resources in effect of entrepreneurship on product innovation through strategic orientations and coordination adoption

Abstract

The purpose of the study was to examine the effect of multiple strategic orientations and strategic flexibility collectively on company product innovation. The study population was home appliance manufacturers in Tehran. Data were collected using a questionnaire and a simple random sampling method. Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability and factor loading were used to determine the questionnaire reliability. Additionally, logical and construct validity were used to determine the validity. Coefficient of determination, predictive relationship index, and the model fit index were used to evaluate the appropriateness of the structure of the conceptual model. The findings indicated that the data collection tool has the necessary reliability and validity, and the appropriateness of the conceptual model structure was confirmed. Partial least squares structural equation modeling was used in the study to test the hypotheses. The findings indicated that learning orientation and coordination flexibility have a minor mediating role in the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. Moreover, learning orientation and coordination flexibility serially have a mediating role in the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. Ultimately, resource flexibility positively moderates the effect of coordination flexibility on product innovation.

Keywords: *Resource flexibility, Strategic learning orientation strategy, Strategic orientation, Coordination flexibility, Entrepreneurial approach*

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Introduction

Developing a new product is an important source of corporate competitive advantage (Khan et al., 2021). Developing a new product is important as it can bring more profit to companies and, at the same time, differentiate that company from competitors (Khalil et al., 2021). Developing a new product shows the company's ability and effort to continually enhance aspects like innovation in production processes and product design as a key challenge and factor for corporate sustainability performance.Innovative new products present companies with valuable opportunities for growth and competitive advantage. Scholars have increasingly stressed the significance of product innovation on company performance, focusing on product innovation predictors.

One of the elements critical to understanding the performance of new product development is the company's strategic orientation (Ferreras-Méndez et al., 2021). There is a general consensus that adopting appropriate strategic orientations could determine new product development (Han and Zhang, 2021). Strategic orientation is the strategic tendency of companies to create appropriate behaviors that result in better performance of companies (Han and Zhang, 2021). Previous studies in this field have mostly examined the direct effect of strategic orientation like entrepreneurship orientation, market orientation and technology orientation on firm performance, including innovation performance.

The scholars argue that the effect of various strategic orientations like entrepreneurial orientation is not directly on the company's performance. Still, this indirect effect is facilitated through strategic orientations like learning orientation and coordination flexibility. Moreover, they have stressed that the resource flexibility of structural modulators can have a key role in new product development in the presence of strategic orientations such as entrepreneurial orientation, learning orientation, and coordination flexibility. Strategic flexibility is a constant capacity for optimal risk management to facilitate pioneering response to external disturbances, opportunities and threats (Bamel & Bamel, 2018). However, existing studies have some shortcomings on the effect of strategic orientations and strategic flexibility on company product innovation (Han and Zhang, 2021). Firstly, the historical development of the strategic orientation literature has resulted in an imbalance in the attention of scientists to various types of strategic orientation. Market orientation was the first type of strategic orientation that attracted the attention of researchers in new product development and, so far, in the best way Is known (Gupta et al., 2019). Most studies focus on a specific type of strategic orientation, such as market orientation, entrepreneurial orientation, learning orientation, or technology orientation (Abdulrab et al., 2021). Few studies have focused on the relationship between multiple strategic orientations examining company innovation (Han & Zhang,

Resource flexibility is arguably one of the most well-known operational concepts, offering companies with demand uncertainty benefits such as risk integration, maximizing operating income, and operating coverage. Resource flexibility enables managers to understand real demand faster and learn from data to make more profitable decisions.

The study aimed to determine the effect of the entrepreneurial approach on product innovation by learning strategy

orientations and coordination flexibility, considering the moderating role of resource flexibility. Figure (1) shows the research model.

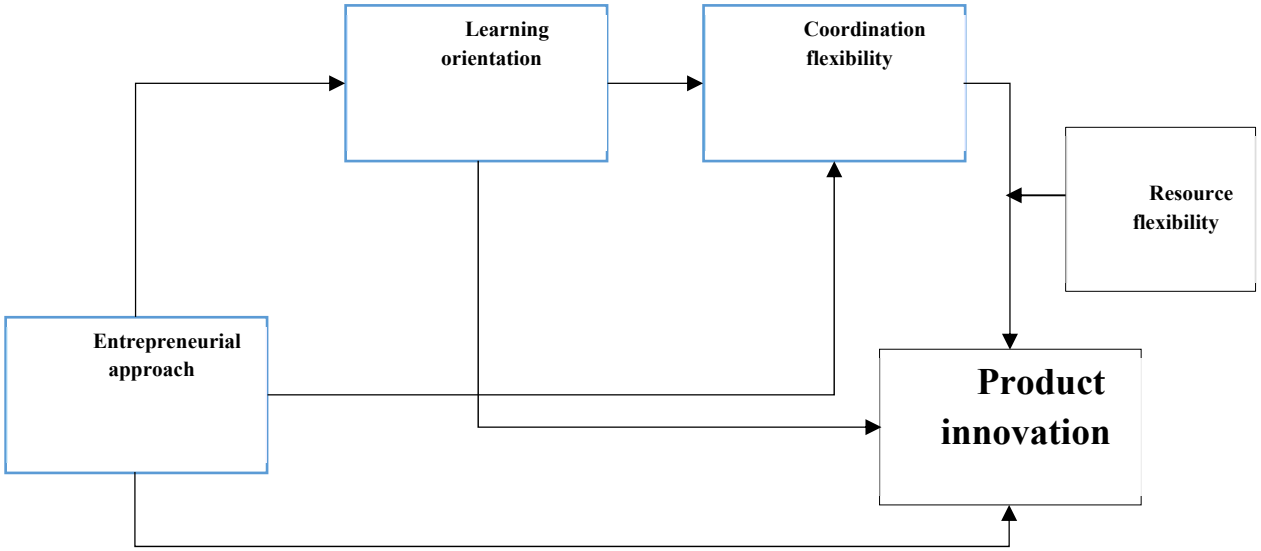


Figure 1. The conceptual model of the study (Han & Zhang, 2021)

Multiple Strategic Orientations and Product Innovation: Three Approaches

Hakala (2011) mixes the three approaches to understanding the effect of multiple strategic orientations on firm performance: sequential, alternative, and complementary approaches. The sequential approach argues that a single orientation is predominant and assumes some strategic orientations extend to other orientations. The alternative approach considers strategic orientations as alternatives. Strategic orientation can be inferred as a better alternative if it is more useful in a particular environment or reaches a similar goal more efficiently. The complementary approach confirms that various strategic orientations coexist and support each other. This approach usually follows the "the more, the better" argument, meaning that the simultaneous focus on multiple strategic orientations promotes superior firm performance because of the synergy created. Each of these three approaches has its values. No single approach fully describes the relationship between multiple strategic orientations and firm performance. The approach used is a matter of taste that depends on the research question and the researchers' priorities. The present study uses a sequential approach to delineate the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and education-oriented. The study assumes that entrepreneurial orientation precedes and promotes learning orientation.

1. Entrepreneurial Orientation, Training-orientation and Product Innovation

Venkatraman (1989) states that strategic orientations are the competitive attitudes and strategies for implementing the company's strategy that dominates the company. Two important types of strategic orientation are entrepreneurial approach and learning orientation. Lumpkin and Dess (1996) define the entrepreneurial approach as the desire to take advantage of new input. Companies with a strong entrepreneurial approach are more likely to initiate exploratory, innovative, dynamic, and potentially risk-taking actions and behaviors. In the emerging Iranian economy, the entrepreneurial approach urges the company to innovate the product Entrepreneurial orientation promotes companies' environmental exploration behaviors to identify and create opportunities for innovation (Covin & Miles, 1999), develop new technologies and products, seize market opportunities, assume market shares quicker and faster, and take greater risks of failure. Thus, the study assumes that entrepreneurial orientation brings about product innovation. Learning orientation includes an organizational culture that evaluates organizational training (Sinkula et al., 1997). Companies with strong learning orientations are more likely to commit to learning, develop shared insights, and preserve open-mindedness. The companies with strong entrepreneurial orientations may be more learning-oriented. Firstly, the companies with a high entrepreneurial orientation are risk-takers who are innovative and dynamic. Thus, they transform current organizational forms, patterns, and routines faster. Entrepreneurial orientation ensures that the organizational

climate benefits from creativity, organizational learning, and knowledge exchange (Kuratko et al., 2001). Secondly, the entrepreneurial orientation of companies with a dynamic and dynamic attitude enables them to devote resources to organizational training, including learning and absorbing knowledge from competitors or colleagues (Wales, 2011).

Hypothesis 1. Learning orientation has a positive mediating role in the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation.

2. Entrepreneurial Orientation, Product Coordination Flexibility and Innovation

Strategic flexibility involves the institutional flexibility of the company's existing resources (resource flexibility) and the firm ability to utilize these resources (synchronization flexibility) (Sanchez, 1995). Resource flexibility is characterized by versatility, sharing ability, and the ability to convert company resources. Coordination flexibility is the ability of organizations to share and transform their internal resources. The study assumes that coordination flexibility has a mediating role in the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and product innovation. Entrepreneurial-oriented companies could identify, capture, exploit and respond to technology markets and opportunities. Moreover, they are better responsive to environmental changes and could reduce feedback time and response costs (Alvarez & Busenitz, 2001).

Hypothesis 2. Coordination flexibility has a mediating role in the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation.

3. In the Direction of the Multiple Chain Intermediary Model

Learning orientation and coordination flexibility mediates the relationship between entrepreneurial orientation and product innovation. Considering the relationship between the two is useful. Firstly, learning orientation creates a learning-oriented organizational culture and atmosphere by increasing the firm's attention to organizational learning practices (Sinkula et al., 1997). Therefore, it enhances corporate resource allocation, configuration, and development. Secondly, learning-learning enables companies to improve their information processing and strategic learning capabilities (Anderson, Covin, & Slevin, 2009), enabling them to adapt to changes and environmental dynamics through the recombination of resources. Therefore, learning enhances coordination flexibility. Considering the effect of entrepreneurial orientation, learning and synchronization flexibility on product innovation, in this study, it is expected that the entrepreneurial tendency of product innovation will be promoted through the serial mediator link of learning orientation and synchronization flexibility. Entrepreneurial orientation results in organizational learning activities by promoting an organizational culture that promotes organizational learning. Activities promote learning, acquiring, and utilizing new knowledge and technologies, thus improving corporate resource allocation, configuration, development and product innovation capacity.

Hypothesis 3. Learning orientation and coordination flexibility has a serially mediating role in the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation.

4. Modifier Effect of Resource Flexibility

The study assumes that the positive effect of synchronization flexibility on firm product innovation increases with resource flexibility. Resource flexibility and coordination flexibility could overcome organizational stagnation. Companies with better resource flexibility use their resources for a wider range of alternative applications and spend less time and money moving from one application to another. Coordination flexibility helps the companies configure their resources through organizational systems and processes and use them efficiently. Resource flexibility reduces resource immutability, develops resource utilization, and facilitates organizational change and adaptation. Coordination flexibility enables companies to quickly adapt and integrate existing resources to adapt to environmental changes and strategic needs, thus promoting continuous innovation to overcome organizational stagnation and strategic inflexibility. The combination of resource flexibility and synchronization flexibility promotes organizational change and modernization and creates a positive organizational climate that enables product innovation (Brozovic, 2018). As resource flexibility improves the positive effect of synchronization flexibility on product innovation, the mediating role of synchronization flexibility in the bond between entrepreneurial orientation and product innovation is intensified.

Hypothesis 4. Resource flexibility positively moderates the effect of coordination flexibility on product innovation.

Methods

The study was applied in terms of purpose and descriptive regarding data collection. The population was 364 companies of home appliance manufacturers in Tehran. Morgan-Krejcie table was used in the study to specify the sample size, based on which the sample size was estimated at 181 companies. Given the limited size of the population, the sampling method in this study was a simple random sampling method. The respondents to the questionnaires were the strategic managers of the companies examined.

A seven-option Likert scale questionnaire adapted from Han and Zhang (2021) was used for data collection. Content and construct validity was used in the study. Fornell-Larcker criterion was used to evaluate the divergent validity of the measurement model.

Structural equation modeling (SEM), partial least squares and Smart PLS software analyzed the data.

Results

Baron and Kenny's criteria were used to determine the mediating role of learning orientation in the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. The findings indicated a positive and significant relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. There is a positive and significant relationship between entrepreneurial approach and learning orientation. There is a positive and significant relationship between learning orientation and product innovation. The value of the standard coefficient of the path has decreased from 0.8832 to 0.467 when the learning orientation is introduced to the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation.

Moreover, the results of the Sobel test showed that this relationship is significant. The findings indicated that the effect of the entrepreneurial approach on product innovation is 47.12% through learning orientation, and 52.88% is obtained from the direct relationship between the entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. Furthermore, the Sobel test shows that this effect is significant. The results are given in Table (1).

Table 1. Examining the mediating role of learning orientation in the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation

	ENOR -> PRIN	ENOR -> LEOR	LEOR -> PRIN	ENOR -> PRIN Mediated by LEOR		
				ENOR -> PRIN	ENOR -> LEOR	LEOR -> PRIN
Beta	0.8832	0.9369	0.8835	0.467	0.9348	0.4459
SE	0.0114	0.0069	0.0125	0.0985	0.0071	0.0999
t-value	77.7378	136.4195	70.8439	4.7435	131.1058	4.4658

Type of mediation: Partial
Sobel Z value 62.50: significance at p< 0.000

Baron and Kenny's criteria were used to determine the mediating role of learning orientation in the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. The findings indicated a positive and significant relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. There is a positive and significant relationship between the entrepreneurial approach and coordination flexibility. There is a positive and significant relationship between coordination flexibility and product innovation. When coordination flexibility is introduced to the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation, the value of the standard path coefficient has reduced from 0.8832 to 0.6736.

Furthermore, the results of the Sobel test showed that this relationship is significant. The findings indicated that the effect of the entrepreneurial approach on product innovation is 23.73% through coordination flexibility, and 76.27% is obtained from the direct relationship between the entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. Moreover, the Sobel test shows that this effect is significant. The results are seen in Table (2).

Table 2. Examining the mediating role of coordination flexibility in the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation

	ENOR -> PRIN	ENOR -> COFL	COFL -> PRIN	ENOR -> PRIN Mediated by COFL		
				ENOR -> PRIN	ENOR -> COFL	COFL -> PRIN
Beta	0.8832	0.8818	0.8316	0.6736	0.881	0.2372
SE	0.0114	0.0127	0.0182	0.075	0.0125	0.0797
t-value	77.7378	69.5414	45.782	8.9851	70.3983	2.9766

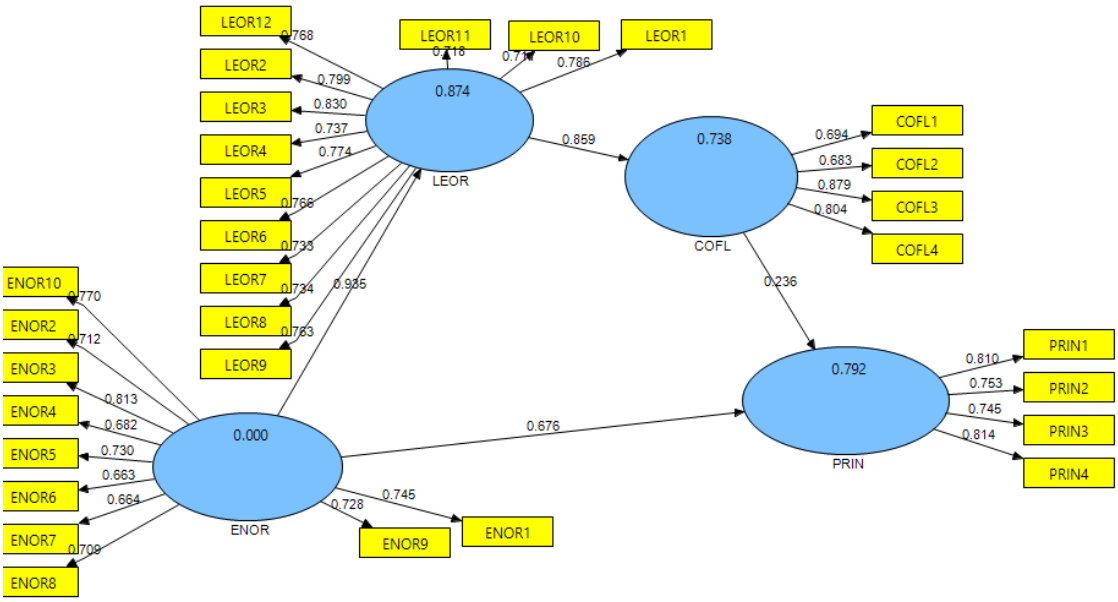
Type of mediation: Partial
Sobel Z value 38.17 : significance at p< 0.000

Baron and Kenny's criteria were used to determine the mediating role of learning orientation in the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. The findings indicated a positive and significant relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. There is a positive and significant relationship between entrepreneurial approach and learning orientation. There is a positive and significant relationship between learning orientation and flexibility. There is a positive and significant relationship between coordination flexibility and product innovation. The value of the standard path coefficient reduces from 0.8832 to 0.6755 when learning orientation constructs and coordination flexibility are introduced to the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. Moreover, Sobel test findings showed that this relationship is significant. The results show that the effect of the entrepreneurial approach on product innovation is 23.52% through coordination flexibility, and 76.48% is obtained from the direct relationship between the entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. Furthermore, the Sobel test shows that this effect is significant, as seen in Table (3).

Table 3. Examining the mediating role of coordination flexibility in the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation

	ENOR -> PRIN	ENOR -> LEOR -> COFL -> PRIN			ENOR -> PRIN Mediated by COFL			
					ENOR -> PRIN	ENOR -> LEOR -> COFL -> PRIN		
Beta	0.8832	0.9369	0.8594	0.2372	0.6755	0.935	0.8592	0.2358
SE	0.0114	0.0069	0.0163	0.0797	0.079	0.0072	0.0157	0.083
t-value	77.7378	136.4195	52.6903	2.9766	8.5559	130.0137	54.5891	2.8409

Type of mediation: Partial
Sobel Z value 2.976 : significance at p< 0.000



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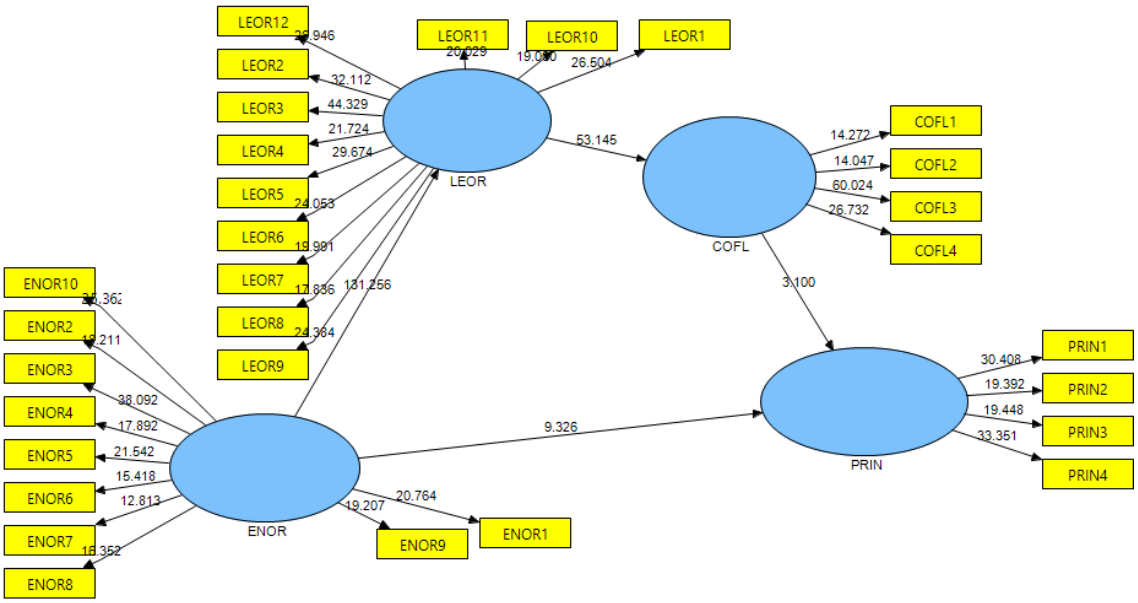

b

Figure 2.a) Standard coefficients in the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation with the mediating role of learning orientation and coordination flexibility,b) The significance of standard coefficients in the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation with the mediating role of learning orientation and coordination flexibility

The findings indicated that resource flexibility moderately and significantly moderates the effect of coordination flexibility on product innovation (β = 0.5409, t =5.03022).(**Table4**& **Figure 3)**

Table 4. The effect of coordination flexibility on product innovation in the presence of modifying variable resource flexibility

The significance of standard coefficients	Standard error	Standard coefficients	path
2.0848	0.367	0.7652	coordination flexibility * Entrepreneurial approach -> Product innovation

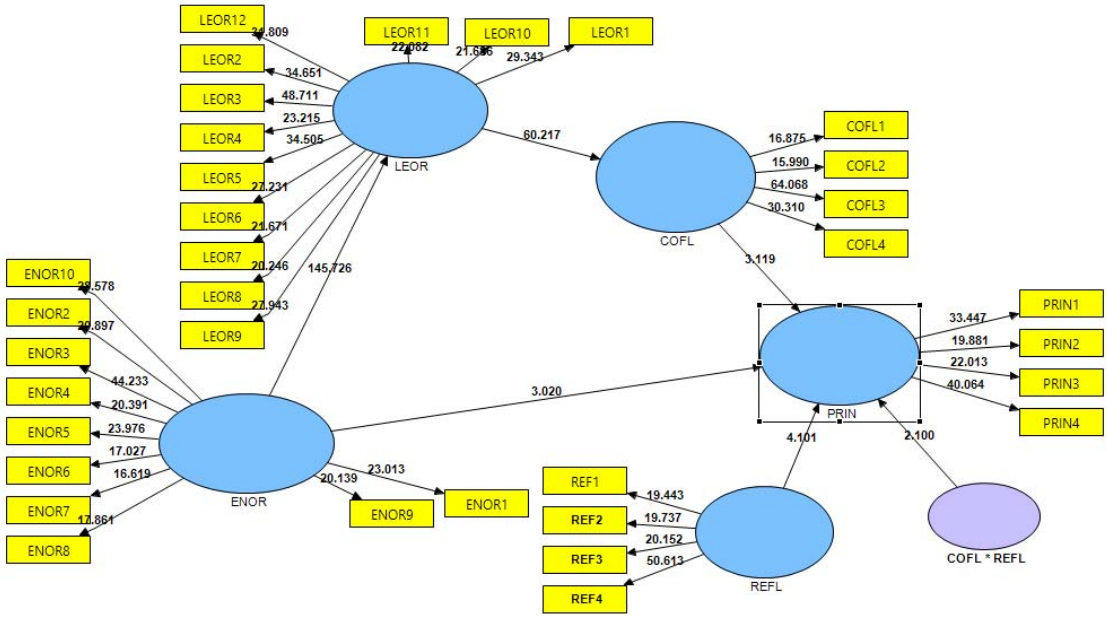

Figure 3. The effect of coordination flexibility on product innovation in the presence of the modifying variable resource flexibility

Conclusion

The study developed a conceptual model to examine the effect of multiple strategic orientations and strategic flexibility on product innovation and entrepreneurial orientation on firm product innovation through the mediating variables of learning orientation and coordination flexibility, taking the moderating role of flexibility into account.

The findings indicated the mediating role of learning orientation in the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. Baron and Kenny's criteria were used to determine the mediating role of learning orientation in the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. The results showed that a) there is a positive and significant relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation, b) there is a positive and significant relationship between entrepreneurial approach and learning orientation, and c) there is a positive and significant relationship between learning orientation and product innovation, and d) the value of the standard coefficient of the path has decreased from 0.8832 to 0.467 when learning orientation is introduced to the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. Moreover, the Sobel test results showed that this relationship is significant. The results show that the effect of the entrepreneurial approach on product innovation is 47.12% through learning orientation and 52.88% through the direct relationship between the entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. Furthermore, the Sobel test shows that this effect is significant. This is consistent with the results of previous studies (Mohammadzadeh & Boroumand, 2020; Zhang et al., 2015; Chaudhary, 2019).

The results indicated that coordination flexibility has a mediating role in the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. Baron and Kenny's criteria were used to determine the mediating role of learning orientation in the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. The results showed that a) there is a positive and significant relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation, b) there is a positive and significant relationship between entrepreneurial approach and coordination flexibility, and c) there is a positive and significant relationship between coordination flexibility and product innovation and d) the value of the standard path coefficient has decreased from 0.8832 to 0.6736 when coordination flexibility is introduced to the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. Furthermore, the results of the Sobel test indicate that this relationship is significant. The results show that the effect of the entrepreneurial approach on product innovation is 23.73% through coordination flexibility, and 76.27% is obtained from the direct relationship between the entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. Moreover, the Sobel test shows that this effect is significant. This is consistent with the results of previous scholars (Zia et al., 2020; Gali et al., 2020).

The findings indicated that learning orientation and coordination flexibility serially have a mediating role in the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. Baron and Kenny's criteria were used to determine the mediating role of learning orientation in the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. The findings indicated the following: a) there is a positive and significant relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation, b) there is a positive and significant relationship between entrepreneurial approach and learning orientation, and c) there is a positive and significant relationship between learning orientation and flexibility, d) there is a positive and significant relationship between coordination flexibility and product innovation, and e) the value of the standard path coefficient has decreased from 0.8832 to 0.6755 when the structures of learning orientation and coordination flexibility are introduced to the relationship between entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. Furthermore, the results of the Sobel test showed that this relationship is significant. The findings indicate that the effect of the entrepreneurial approach on product innovation is obtained at 23.52% through coordination flexibility and 76.48% through the direct relationship between the entrepreneurial approach and product innovation. Moreover, the Sobel test shows that this effect is significant. This is consistent with the results of previous scholars (Babajani et al., 2020; Yoon et al., 2018).

Based on the findings, resource flexibility positively moderates the effect of coordination flexibility on product innovation. The interactive or multiplicative approach was used to determine the moderating role of resource flexibility in this hypothesis. The findings revealed that resource flexibility significantly moderates the effect of coordination flexibility on product innovation ($\beta = 0.5409$; $t = 5.03022$). This is consistent with the results of previous scholars (Abolfazli et al., 2016; Tseng et al., 2019).

Based on the results, the following are recommended: developing and establishing written programs to evaluate the level of learning of employees from training programs and the business environment of the organization, using effective, flexible communication mechanisms between managers and employees using electronic communication channels like

social networks and virtual teams, encouraging the employees to present innovative ideas for all of the organizational processes and rewarding idea providers and employing optimal methods to reduce adjustment costs for alternative resources.

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Conflict of interest

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Ethics statement

None

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