

Knowledge Sharing, Transformational Leadership, and Innovative Work Behavior among College students.

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Abstract: The purpose of this research is that investigate the relationship among Knowledge Sharing, Innovative Work Behavior, and Transformational Leadership. The survey was designed using a structured questionnaire and collected from university students of business administration. A 5-point Likert scale was used to assess the level of agreement of respondents. The quantitative analysis research method was applied to test the reliability of the scale, model, and research hypothesis. Smart-PLS 4 software was used to analyze data collected from 85 Business Management Students. The study results show that business administration students tend to work in groups and are interested in group work behaviors, team leader leadership style, knowledge sharing behavior, and innovative work behavior. Therefore, managers need to apply and promote transformational leadership style at all levels of management. Team tasks need to be planned appropriately and effectively. At the same time, the team leader is always the one who guides members to work towards the final results of the team, mentioning the positive aspects of the results and the future of the team.

Keywords: Knowledge Sharing, Innovative Work Behavior, Transformational leadership

1. Introduction

The survival and development of an organization depend on the competitive advantage of human resources. Human resources not only meet current capacity but also have the ability to create, innovate and share knowledge. Therefore, universities have built training programs that are learner-centered and equip not only with knowledge but also with leadership capacity and innovative thinking. These are the future workforce that contribute to the organizational development and society.

In addition, in the context of technological development and the sharing economy, students need to work in groups in learning and sharing knowledge as well as promoting innovation to be able to quickly adapt to changes in businesses. Therefore, it is necessary to study the relationship between knowledge sharing and innovative work behavior through the role of transformational leadership.

In today's rapidly evolving business environment, the ability to innovate is crucial for maintaining a competitive edge. Transformational Leadership, Knowledge Sharing, and Innovative Work Behavior (IWB) are three critical factors that contribute to organizational innovation. Transformational leadership is known for its ability to inspire and motivate employees, fostering an environment where innovation can thrive. Knowledge sharing, which involves the exchange of information, skills, and expertise among employees, is another key component that supports innovative activities. This research examines the interrelationship among transformational leadership, knowledge sharing, and innovative work behavior, highlighting how these elements interact to promote innovation within organizations.

This study focuses on the relationship among transformational leadership, knowledge sharing and innovative work behavior. Through that, the role of transformational leadership style on knowledge sharing and innovative work behavior of students at universities is determined. The research results contribute to proposing solutions for leaders to build policies suitable for future human resources, while helping students form appropriate leadership styles and work effectively with team members. The researchers also pointed out the role of transformational

leadership style and knowledge sharing, innovative work behavior.

2. Literature review

Transformational leadership and innovative work behavior

Transformational leadership is a leadership style that emphasizes vision, inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass & Avolio, 1994). Leaders who exhibit transformational qualities inspire their followers to achieve higher levels of performance by fostering an environment that encourages creativity and innovation (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Moorman, & Fetter, 1990). Several studies have figured out a positive relationship between transformational leadership and IWB. Ariyani & Hidayati (Ariyani & Hidayati, 2018) demonstrated that transformational leadership directly influences employees' engagement in innovative behaviors by challenging the status quo and encouraging new ideas.

Innovative work behavior (IWB) was described as actions taken by individuals aimed at initiating and intentionally introducing new and beneficial ideas, processes, products, or procedures within a work role, group, or organization (Farr & Ford, 1990). Unlike employee creativity, which focuses on generating new and valuable ideas (Amabile, 1988), IWB also encompasses implementing these ideas. While creativity is essential to IWB, particularly at the early stages of identifying problems and generating solutions in response to the need for innovation, IWB specifically intends to produce tangible, beneficial outcomes (West, 2002).

Several studies have demonstrated both direct and indirect positive correlations between transformational leadership and innovation. A study by Sosik et al. (1998) indicated a positive relationship between transformational leadership and creativity during a computer-mediated brainstorming task. Wilson-Evered et al. (2001, 2004) connected transformational leadership with an innovative work climate and behaviors in healthcare teams. Reuvers et al. (2008) noted that only a few studies have directly linked transformational leadership to innovative work behavior. Additional evidence from Jung et al. (2003) showed a positive relationship between transformational leadership and organizational innovation in Taiwanese electronics companies. Research in Australian hospitals by Reuvers et al. (2008) also confirmed a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and innovative work behavior. Overall, these studies support the theory that transformational leadership positively influences followers' innovative work behavior.

Thus, this study proposes the hypothesis:

H1: Transformational leadership has relationship to Innovative work behavior

Knowledge Sharing and Innovative Work Behavior

Knowledge sharing is the process through which employees exchange valuable information, ideas, and expertise within an organization. This process is crucial for innovation as it allows individuals to build on each other's knowledge, leading to the development of new products, processes, and solutions (Yeboah, 2023). Transformational leaders play a vital role in promoting knowledge sharing by creating a culture of trust and openness, where employees feel safe to share their knowledge without fear of criticism or loss of status (Liu & Li, 2018).

Research indicates that knowledge sharing can mediate the impact of transformational leadership on innovative work behavior. For example, Liu and DeFrank (2013) suggest that transformational leadership enhances knowledge sharing among employees, which in turn fosters innovative work behavior. When leaders emphasize the importance of learning and collaboration, employees are more likely to engage in knowledge sharing, thus contributing to the generation and implementation of innovative ideas.

Therefore, this study hypothesizes that

H2: Knowledge Sharing has relationship to Innovative Work Behavior

Transformational leadership and Knowledge Sharing

Transformational leadership inspires followers to prioritize collective goals over self-interest and aligns them with a higher vision (Steinmann, Klug, & W.Maier, 2018). Over the years, it has become a heavily studied topic, with recent debates focusing on its dimensional structure across different cultures. While some support a unidimensional construct, others advocate for multidimensional models.

Transformational leadership is often conceptualized as a unitary construct due to the high correlation among its dimensions. Research shows that it positively influences knowledge sharing, motivating employees through vision, intellectual development, and individualized attention (Liu & Li, 2018).

Many studies have explored how transformational leadership affects knowledge sharing, often focusing on social exchange theory. For example, transformational leadership has been found to enhance leader-member exchange, leading to increased knowledge sharing. Trust in the leader has also been identified as a facilitator (Ling, San, & Hock, 2009). While social exchange theory provides a deep understanding of these processes, other perspectives may also be relevant. The sensegiving process, where transformational leaders shape followers' perceptions of team characteristics, is another way they motivate knowledge sharing among employees (Chaman, Zulfiqar, Shaheen, & Saleem, 2021).

The relationship among transformational leadership, knowledge sharing, and innovative work behavior is complex and multifaceted. Transformational leaders not only encourage direct innovation through their influence on employees but also indirectly promote innovation by fostering a knowledge-sharing culture. This culture enables employees to access and utilize diverse knowledge resources, which are critical for the development of innovative solutions (Lam, Nguyen, Le, & Tran, 2021).

Empirical studies support this interconnected relationship. Saif et al. (2024) found that transformational leadership positively affects innovative work behavior, with knowledge sharing acting as a significant mediator. Their study showed that when transformational leaders promote a knowledge-sharing environment, employees are more likely to engage in innovative behaviors, enhancing organizational innovation.

Therefore, this study proposes hypothesis:

H3: Transformational leadership has relationship to Knowledge Sharing

3. Methodology

The survey was designed using a structured questionnaire and collected from university students of business administration. A 5-point likert scale was used to assess the level of agreement of respondents. Quantitative analysis research method was applied to test the reliability of the scale, model and test the research hypothesis.

Table 1: Outer Loadings

	IWB	KS	TL
IWB1	0.865		
IWB2	0.879		
IWB3	0.898		
IWB4	0.900		
IWB5	0.865		
IWB6	0.906		
KS1		0.858	
KS2		0.809	
KS3		0.894	
KS4		0.900	

KS5		0.809	
KS6		0.906	
KS7		0.810	
TL1			0.945
TL2			0.965
TL3			0.943
TL4			0.966
TL5			0.968
TL6			0.948
TL7			0.949
TL8			0.929
TL9			0.941

The outer loading results in Table 1 show that all items have values greater than 0.7. This indicates that the data is of good quality for evaluation.

Table 2: Construct Reliability and validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
IWB	0.945	0.946	0.956	0.785
KS	0.939	0.940	0.950	0.733
TL	0.987	0.987	0.988	0.904

The results in Table 2 show that the reliability of the scale with the variables TL, KS, IWWB with values of 0.987; 0.939 and 0.945 respectively are all greater than 0.7. The scale is reliable for evaluation and analysis. At the same time, the convergence with the AVE index of 0.904; 0.733; and 0.785 respectively is greater than 0.5, ensuring convergence.

Table 3: Discriminant Validity

<u>Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) - List</u>	
	Heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT)
KS <-> IWB	0.708
TL <-> IWB	0.768
TL <-> KS	0.574

The discriminant values shown in Table 3 are all below 0.9 and above 0.5, ensuring discrimination between variables.

Hypothesis analysis results

Table 4: Path coefficients

Hypothesis		Path coefficients	Results
H2	KS -> IWB	0.371	Accepted
H1	TL -> IWB	0.539	Accepted
H3	TL -> KS	0.554	Accepted

The analysis results of Table 4 show that all research hypotheses are accepted.

Knowledge Sharing positively impacts Innovative work behavior with a path index of 0.371, showing that when students tend to share knowledge, innovative work behavior will increase.

Transformational Leadership has a positive impact on Innovative work behavior with a path index of 0.539, showing that when the team leader is the one who applies the transformational leadership style, it will promote the team members to have innovative work behavior.

Transformational Leadership has a positive impact on Knowledge Sharing with a path index of 0.554. When the team leader is the one who applies the transformational leadership style, it will promote the team members to share knowledge and information with other members.

4. Result and Discussion

The results of the study show that business administration students tend to work in groups and are interested in group work behaviors, team leader leadership style, knowledge sharing behavior, and innovative work behavior. Accordingly, when the team leader clearly and positively communicates to the team members about the team's work orientation, evaluates the members, and supports the development of the team members, it will help the team members feel comfortable sharing the knowledge they have with other members. When their contributions are recognized as well as being motivated to be confident and participate in teamwork, the members are also active in sharing what they know and comfortable asking the remaining members in the team about their limitations. By encouraging members, respecting members, and aiming for the final result, and clearly understanding their responsibilities to the team, it will help team members understand what is important in the team, share information about the tasks they are performing, and be willing to learn from other members. This research result is also consistent with previous studies with the subjects of graduate students (Liu & Li, 2018) (Saif, et al., 2024), and employees working in different enterprises (Chaman, et al., 2021). This shows that the transformational leadership style of the team leader encourages and promotes knowledge sharing in that team.

The results of the model analysis also show that transformational leadership style will also help improve innovative work behavior. When encouraged and motivated, team members will be willing to come up with creative and innovative ideas while working. At the same time, they will try to propose their own creative ideas and share them to convince other members. Through the team leader's willingness to support the development of team members, members will always learn new methods and knowledge to help achieve the team's ultimate goal better. The team leader encourages respect for the opinions of members and focuses on the final result, which will help team members make clear and appropriate work plans to develop new ideas and identify the resources needed to complete the work.

Therefore, managers need to apply and promote transformational leadership style at all levels of management. Team tasks need to be planned appropriately and effectively. At the same time, the team leader is always the one who guides members to work towards the final results of the team, mentioning the positive aspects of the results and the future of the team. The team leader needs to clearly understand his/her functions and tasks, always encourage, recognize and support members to achieve objectives. Applying transformational leadership style will help team members and the organization promote knowledge sharing behavior, learn and seek innovative and creative ways of working. Thereby improving the organization's competitiveness.

In addition, knowledge sharing behavior in the group also contributes to promoting innovative work behavior. When group members are willing to share new knowledge information and the tasks they are performing with other group members, it will increase the behavior of giving creative and innovative ideas at work and convince other members. In addition, the willingness to share and be comfortable in searching for new knowledge information will help members have the ability to plan appropriately to develop new ideas, encouraging individuals to easily find new methods and ideas to perform the task. The willingness to share with other members what tasks they are performing and how to perform them makes students able to receive information and try to propose new working ideas towards the common goal of the group. This research result is consistent with previous studies on the impact of knowledge sharing and innovative work behavior. Thus, organizations need to encourage and have solutions to enhance knowledge sharing behavior in the organization. In addition to

leadership style, knowledge sharing behavior is also improved through building learning teams, pursuing lifelong learning. Building a working environment that encourages and facilitates knowledge sharing. From that knowledge base, members have more new information and knowledge, learn from each other and find innovative working methods.

5. Limitation

In addition to the results of the study on the relationship between transformational leadership, knowledge sharing, innovative behavior, this study still has some limitations. First of all, the research sample was only conducted on 4th year students of Business Administration, and has not been studied and conducted on students of other majors to have more comprehensive comparisons. Further studies need to expand the survey participants in a variety of majors to have a more general view and make more appropriate recommendations. In addition, the study only determined the relationship among 3 factors, but did not study the forms and methods of knowledge sharing, the methods and methods of innovative work, and did not focus on the final results of the group. Further studies need to further understand the methods of implementing knowledge sharing and ways to promote innovative work behavior associated with the final output of the group and the organization.

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