

Leading innovation in the public sector: Exploring the mediating role of motivation to learn and the moderating role of power distance

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ABSTRACT

Innovation is crucial for organizations' performance, success, and long-term survival. Despite its importance, studies on factors influencing the emergence of innovative work behavior remain inconsistent. This study, grounded in the Interactionist Perspective of Creativity theory, explores the role of motivation to learn as a mediator and Hofstede's national culture dimension of power distance as a moderator in the relationship between transformational leadership and innovative work behavior. The study sampled 210 public sector employees in Indonesia using convenience sampling. Data were collected through an online self-report survey employing the multifactor leadership questionnaire, the innovative work behavior scale, the motivation to learn scale, and the power distance scale. Analysis of the PROCESS macro for SPSS version 26 revealed that motivation to learn fully mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and innovative work behavior. However, power distance does not moderate this relationship directly or through the motivation to learn. This implies that the desire to learn and innovate remains effective for public sector employees regardless of hierarchical differences. Thus, no matter how authority is structured within the organization, the motivation to learn is crucial for fostering innovation.

Keywords: Innovative Work Behavior; Motivation to Learn; Power Distance; Transformational Leadership; Public Sector

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Introduction

Indonesia has been ranked 61st in the Global Innovation Index for 2023, based on an assessment of 80 indicators categorized into innovation input and output (GII, 2023). Innovation, especially at the public sector level, is essential as it can directly influence a country's economic growth. Stewart-Weeks and Kastle (2015) emphasize that innovation is crucial for organizations. Organizations must survive and compete with their rivals in carrying out their business processes (Etikariena & Muluk, 2014). Innovation is the basis of economic competition and a valuable resource for organizations (Rubera & Droge, 2013). Moreover, innovation plays a significant role in determining an organization's performance, success, and long-term survival (Anderson et al., 2014). As a result, innovative organizations tend to be superior in business competition and more resilient to challenges (Etikariena & Muluk, 2014). Due to its importance, Lin (2023) added that organizations are increasingly focused on encouraging employees to engage in innovative work behavior.

Innovative work behavior refers to individuals generating ideas to solve problems, forming coalitions to support these ideas, and producing prototypes (Scott & Bruce, 1994). This definition was later simplified by Etikariena and Muluk (2014) to describe an individual's effort to present, promote, and implement new ideas in their work, group, or organization. Innovative work behavior includes developing new ideas, using new technology and techniques, and trying and implementing new methods related to the organization's business processes (Afsar & Umrani, 2020). This behavior consists of several stages, with different individual activities at each stage (Scott & Bruce, 1994). Innovative work behavior is measured at the personal level because innovation is an idea that individuals initiate and implement within an organization (Etikariena & Muluk, 2014). This confirms that employees are valuable assets for the organization. Their ability to generate and implement new ideas makes them the strongest asset capable of creating a competitive advantage for the company, allowing it to compete with its rivals (Yadav & Vihari, 2021).

According to the Interactionist Perspective of Creativity (IPC) theory, innovation influenced by employee creativity results from complex interactions between individual and situational factors. Previous studies identify various antecedents that could enhance employee innovative work behavior, categorized into individual and situational factors. Individual factors include self-leadership (Kör, 2016), motivation to learn (Afsar & Umrani, 2020; Yu et al., 2018), work engagement (Bin Saeed et al., 2019), employee voice (Lin, 2023), curiosity (Saeed AlShamsi et al., 2022), self-efficacy (Firdausiah & Etikariena, 2021), meaningful

work (Pradhan & Jena, 2019), psychological empowerment (Stanescu et al., 2020), proactive personality (Windiarso & Etikariena, 2017), and work passion (Udin & Shaikh, 2022). Situational factors include low power distance (Espig et al., 2022; Shane, 1993), knowledge sharing (Khan & Khan, 2019), organizational memory (Etikariena & Muluk, 2014), job challenges, and social resources (Afsar et al., 2019).

Leadership style in the organization is another external factor influencing innovative work behavior. Etikariena (2020) explained that leadership styles such as authentic leadership, empowering leadership, ethical leadership, and benevolent leadership positively impact innovative work behavior. Participants in this study are employees in the digital technology sector, which prioritizes innovation in their business processes. Grošelj et al. (2020) also support this, stating that an authentic leadership style can influence employees' innovative work behavior. Additionally, transformational leadership has a positive relationship with innovative work behavior (Afsar et al., 2019; Afsar & Umrani, 2020; Lin, 2023; Odugbesan et al., 2023). Bednall et al. (2018) stated that transformational leadership is more crucial than transactional leadership in influencing innovative work behavior. Transformational leadership can enhance an organization's culture of innovation, thereby increasing employee innovative work behavior (Sattayaraksa & Boon-itt, 2018).

Although transformational leadership should theoretically be positively related to innovative work behavior, a review of several previous studies shows inconsistent results (Afsar et al., 2014; Udin & Shaikh, 2022; Uhl-Bien & Arena, 2018). For instance, Udin and Shaikh (2022) found no relationship between transformational leadership and innovative work behavior in a study involving 193 samples from stone milling companies in Indonesia. These inconsistencies have prompted researchers, including us, to explore potential mediators that could explain the relationship between transformational leadership and innovative work behavior. Previous studies have used mediators such as organizational identification (Lin, 2023) and organizational learning and knowledge sharing (Khan & Khan, 2019). However, these studies focus on external mediators, whereas internal mediators have not been widely studied. Kidwell and Jewel (2003) emphasize that internal variables are crucial in determining a person's intention to behave. To address this gap, we examined the role of motivation to learn, an internal factor, as a mediator between transformational leadership and innovative work behavior.

Recent studies have shifted from focusing solely on the connecting mechanisms between transformational leadership and innovative work behavior to examining boundary conditions

that can strengthen or weaken this relationship (Afsar et al., 2019; Afsar & Umrani, 2020; Bin Saeed et al., 2019; Lin, 2023). Most of these studies have concentrated on internal organizational factors such as knowledge-sharing behavior (Afsar et al., 2019), psychological empowerment (Bin Saeed et al., 2019; Grošelj et al., 2020), intrinsic motivation (Bin Saeed et al., 2019), and innovation climate (Afsar & Umrani, 2020; Lin, 2023). In contrast, there is a lack of studies on external factors, such as dimensions of national culture. A study by Dencik et al. (2023) highlights the importance of the organizational ecosystem in fostering innovative work behavior. To address this second gap, we propose investigating Hofstede's national culture dimension of power distance as an external variable that moderates the relationship between transformational leadership and innovative work behavior.

Based on the explanation, this study contributes to the development of science, particularly in psychology, in several significant ways. First, this study is among the pioneering research that examines internal variables, specifically motivation to learn, as a mediating mechanism in the relationship between transformational leadership and innovative work behavior. This novel approach highlights the critical role of intrinsic motivational factors in driving innovation within organizations. Second, this study uniquely incorporates an external organizational variable, power distance culture, as a boundary condition or moderator in the same relationship. This innovative perspective provides a deeper understanding of how cultural dimensions influence leadership dynamics and employee behavior. Third, unlike most prior studies that focused on industries such as manufacturing, service, hospitality, and academia (Afsar et al., 2019; Afsar & Umrani, 2020; Lin, 2023; Odugbesan et al., 2023), this study uses samples from public sector employees in Indonesia. This diverse sampling aims to provide a broader picture of the relationship between transformational leadership and innovative work behavior, extending the applicability of findings across different organizational contexts.

Finally, this study seeks to enrich the application of the Interactionist Perspective of Creativity (IPC) theory. By using internal variables like motivation to learn as mediators and external organizational variables such as power distance culture as boundary conditions or moderators, this research offers a robust framework for understanding the complex interplay between leadership, culture, and innovation. This theoretical enrichment enhances our ability to explain and predict innovative work behavior within various organizational settings, providing valuable insights for scholars and practitioners.

Literature Review

Innovative Work Behavior in the Public Sector

Innovative work behavior is a process carried out by individuals in developing ideas as solutions to problems that arise, forming coalitions to support the ideas developed, and producing prototypes of these ideas (Scott & Bruce, 1994). Etikariena and Muluk (2014) simplify this definition to an individual's efforts to present, promote, and implement new ideas in their work, group, or work organization. Afsar and Umrani (2020) stated that innovative work behavior also includes developing new ideas, using new technology and techniques, and testing and implementing new methods related to organizational business processes. In the public sector, innovative work behavior is seen as crucial because it can provide effective and efficient solutions for organizations (Apipudin et al., 2023). The important role of innovative work behavior in the government sector encourages researchers to conduct this research.

In several previous studies, Love of Money (LOM) was found to act as a predictor that encourages innovative work behavior of employees in the public sector (Susanto, 2021). This research was conducted in Indonesia using 241 samples from civil service institutions. Other research finds that transformational leadership does not significantly influence the innovative work behavior of employees in the public sector, while psychological development has a significant influence (Pham et al., 2024). Apart from that, ethical behavior was also found to positively and significantly influence innovative work behavior (Khorakian et al., 2019). Other research also finds that public service motivation can increase the innovative work behavior of employees working in the public sector (Vuong, 2022). In addition, based on the results of a systematic literature review conducted by Srirahayu et al. (2023) in an article reviewing the innovative work behavior of employees in the public sector, it was found that there are three main factors that can influence IWB, namely personal, teamwork and organizational factors.

Transformational Leadership

Researchers use transformational leadership as one of the many leadership style constructs (Sürücü et al., 2022). This leadership style is defined as a process where the leader plays an idealized role, stimulates and encourages innovative work behavior, provides inspirational motivation, and is involved in supporting and guiding his followers to achieve the organization's shared vision and goals (Afsar & Umrani, 2020; Bass & Avolio, 1997).

These leaders are characterized by four characteristics: having an ideal influence, providing inspirational motivation, providing intellectual stimulus, and considering individual needs (Bass & Avolio, 1997). With this leadership style, leaders can develop their employees through fostering a supportive environment by encouraging an environment that educates, trains, and develops employees (Nelly et al., 2024). Masood and Afsar (2017) state that the characteristics of leaders who adopt this leadership style can create a supportive work environment by providing motivation and inspiration to their employees.

Transformational leadership can motivate employees to work beyond self-interest to encourage them to achieve the goals set by the organization. Employees can work more optimally with this leadership style to help the organization achieve its goals. Previous research shows that transformational leadership significantly influences the level of innovation in organizations (Al Harbi et al., 2019; Gumusluoglu & Ilsev, 2009). This study states that leaders who display a transformational leadership style can encourage a culture of innovation in the workplace. Other research also finds that the right leadership style can significantly influence organizational creativity and innovation (Shafi et al., 2020). This leadership style was closely related to employees' desired outcomes in the workplace (Hoch et al., 2018).

Transformational leadership was also found to positively influence employee motivation to learn (Afsar & Umrani, 2020). This leadership style is characterized by the leader's ability to inspire his employees. With this character, leaders are considered able to encourage employees to be more involved in their work and use their resources as motivation to learn new things related to their work. According to Leithwood and Jantzi (2006), transformational leadership has a significant impact on employees' motivation to learn, change, and develop certain behaviors. In addition, this leadership style can create a work environment that can encourage employees to increase their learning motivation to achieve predetermined goals (Chung & Li, 2021). Based on the social exchange theory (SET), reciprocal and interdependent relationships between individuals are able to create high-quality relationships (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). By using this theoretical perspective, it can be understood that when leaders are able to provide a supportive environment for employee activities, employees can increase their motivation to learn as a form of reciprocal relationship to create quality work relationships.

Other research also finds that transformational leadership positively influences employees' innovative work behavior (Afsar et al., 2019; Afsar & Umrani, 2020; Lin, 2023; Odugbesan et al., 2023). These studies found that when leaders display a transformational

leadership style, employees will interpret their environment as a supportive condition that can trigger new ideas in carrying out their tasks and thus trigger innovative work behavior. Transformational leadership can improve an organization's innovation culture, which, in turn, can increase employees' innovative work behavior (Sattayaraksa & Boon-itt, 2018). The right leadership style has the opportunity to encourage innovative employee work behavior by providing a workspace that can motivate and inspire employees to present new ideas and ways of working (Afsar et al., 2019; Schuckert et al., 2018). When leaders display a transformational leadership style, employees will interpret their environment as a supportive condition that can trigger new ideas in carrying out their tasks. The new ideas displayed by these employees trigger innovative work behavior. Using social exchange theory (SET), it can be understood that when leaders display a leadership style that inspires and motivates employees, employees will reciprocate this treatment by displaying innovative work behavior to help the leader and the organization achieve its goals.

H₁: There is a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and motivation to learn.

H₂: There is a significant positive relationship between transformational leadership and innovative work behavior.

Motivation to Learn

Motivation to learn is an employee's intention to learn new things at work (Noe, 1986). Individuals who have high motivation to learn tend to take advantage of every opportunity to learn new things. Rhee et al. (2010) suggest that the commitment of employees to learn is the key to generating innovative behavior. Employees who have a commitment and orientation to learning refer to dedication and attention in developing abilities, knowledge, skills, and competencies (Aboobaker & Zakkariya, 2020). According to Afsar and Umrani (2020), employees who have an orientation to learn are also considered to have motivation to learn. Scott and Bruce (1994) state that learning is necessary to generate new ideas related to idea generation, which is one of the stages in the emergence of innovative work behavior.

Previous research shows that motivation to learn is an important factor in encouraging innovative work behavior (Yu et al., 2018). This research shows that employees who have high motivation to learn are able to acquire various new knowledge and skills. This ultimately leads to the emergence of idea generation, which is a stage of innovative work behavior (Etikariena & Muluk, 2014). Apart from that, other research finds that motivation to learn can increase employees' innovative work behavior (Afsar & Umrani, 2020). This

research was conducted in 35 organizations operating in the service and manufacturing sectors. The results show that highly motivated employees tend to be more innovative in their work. This study also revealed that individuals with a motivation to learn tend to make a concerted effort to learn new things when they are presented with an opportunity to do so. The results of these studies are in line with Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), which states that internal processes such as motivation to learn can influence behavioral outcomes such as innovative work behavior (Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020). When employees have the motivation to learn, they actively seek out new ideas, which is one of the initial stages of developing innovative work behavior.

According to the Interactionist Perspective of Creativity theory (IPC), creativity is influenced by both individual and situational factors (Woodman et al., 1993). In our study, we used IPC as a framework to explain the mediating role of motivation in studying the relationship between variables. Innovative work behavior, which is influenced by employee creativity, is the product of complex interactions between individual and situational factors. Motivation to learn is an individual factor that can contribute to generating innovative work behavior, whereas the situational factor is transformational leadership. By inspiring employees to learn, a transformational leadership style can encourage innovative work behavior. With this consideration, we assume that motivation to learn serves as a connecting mechanism involved in the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' innovative work behavior.

H₃: There is a significant positive relationship between motivation to learn and innovative work behavior.

H₄: Motivation to learn mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and employees' innovative work behavior.

Power Distance as Moderator

Indonesia has a High-Power Distance culture (Hofstede et al., 2010). Hofstede and Bond (1984) defined power distance as the extent to which organizational members accept an unequal distribution of power as legitimate. Organizations with a high-power distance culture tend to have difficulty encouraging employees to innovate (Hofstede, 2010). In a high-power distance culture, employees will be considered impolite if they provide suggestions or input regarding something that opposes or opposes a superior's decision (Puni & Anlesinya, 2017). In addition, in a power distance culture, employee empowerment practices carried out by superiors are not uncommon (Tang et al., 2020). Various studies have found that government

organizations tend to have a high-power distance culture (Adhitama, 2016; Hofstede, 2011; Nugraha et al., 2020). This could be attributed to their close association with bureaucratic organizational structures with strict rules regarding the relationship between superiors and subordinates. Therefore, it can be concluded that the level of power distance in government organizations is generally high. Considering these considerations, this research conducted in Indonesia will examine the role of power distance as a moderator in the relationship between transformational leadership and innovative work behavior through motivation to learn.

In proposing power distance as a boundary condition in the relationship between transformational leadership and innovative work behavior, we utilized the framework of institutional theory. According to Shane (1993), various cultural dimensions influence innovation development in organizations. A low power distance culture, characterized by a narrow gap between superiors and subordinates, encourages innovative behavior in employees (Espig et al., 2022). This cultural characteristic allows employees to have more freedom in managing and organizing their tasks. When employees are allowed to think independently, they have a greater chance of coming up with new ideas, which can lead to innovative work behavior. Dencik et al. (2023) also note that the organizational environment is a determinant of the emergence of innovative behavior. An organization can more effectively encourage employees to innovate in an environment with less distance between superiors and subordinates. This condition arises when employees are not free to explore new ideas, which can lead to innovative work behavior.

H₅: Power distance moderates the relationship between transformational leadership and innovative work behavior.

H₆: Power distance moderates the indirect relationship between transformational leadership and innovative work behavior through motivation to learn.

Methods

This study employs a non-experimental quantitative research method using a cross-sectional study design. Cross-sectional studies are a type of observational research that gathers data on a specific topic from various participants simultaneously (Karataş et al., 2022). According to Wang and Cheng (2020), the primary advantage of cross-sectional studies is their speed and cost-effectiveness. Moreover, since respondents or participants are not intentionally exposed to any treatment, cross-sectional studies typically encounter few ethical issues. In this study, data were collected using an online self-report survey. An online self-report study involves a digital survey, questionnaire, or poll where participants

independently read and respond to the questions without external influence (Kormos & Gifford, 2014). Although this method may introduce some bias, as noted by Podsakoff et al. (2003), it is considered the most suitable technique for measuring behavioral and internal variables related to an individual's inner state. Self-reporting allows participants to provide more accurate answers about themselves. Self-report methods offer several advantages. Firstly, they enable the measurement of motivation, a variable that is challenging to capture using alternative data collection techniques. Additionally, self-report methods provide an optimal means of measuring employees' behavior directly from the individuals themselves, thereby enhancing the accuracy of the data collected. These methods also help to avoid the halo effect, a common bias that can occur with third-party assessments. Furthermore, self-report methods are user-friendly, facilitating ease of administration and participation. Finally, they minimize issues related to data loss and confidentiality concerns, ensuring a more secure and reliable data collection process (Ramos-Villagrasa et al., 2019).

The study involved 210 active public servants from Indonesia, all of whom worked at Ministry X (name kept confidential to prevent bias and potential legal issues) and had a minimum of three years of work experience. Respondents were selected based on the increasing need for innovation among public servants to enhance community service quality. A convenience sampling method was used, which means that any eligible and willing participant from the population could take part in the study (Wang & Cheng, 2020). Data was collected from November 13th to November 20th, 2023, with the help of active public servants at Ministry X, who facilitated the internal distribution of the questionnaires. To mitigate Common Method Bias, we randomized the survey instruments and incorporated an item checker. Post-collection, the data was meticulously screened to exclude any responses that did not meet the established criteria. The remaining data was then analyzed for hypothesis testing. The entire research process was systematically documented in a comprehensive research report.

The measurement items in this study, including innovative work behavior, transformational leadership, motivation to learn, and power distance, were adapted from multiple sources such as William et al. (1988), Podsakoff et al. (1996), Janssen (2000), Carless et al. (2000), Etikariena and Muluk (2014), Gavaza et al. (2014), Gilbert et al. (2016), Gorges et al. (2016), Li et al. (2017), Reeve et al. (2018), Afsar and Umrani (2020), and Adamovic (2022). These sources were selected to ensure the validity and reliability of the constructs being measured. Figure 1 shows the framework of the study.

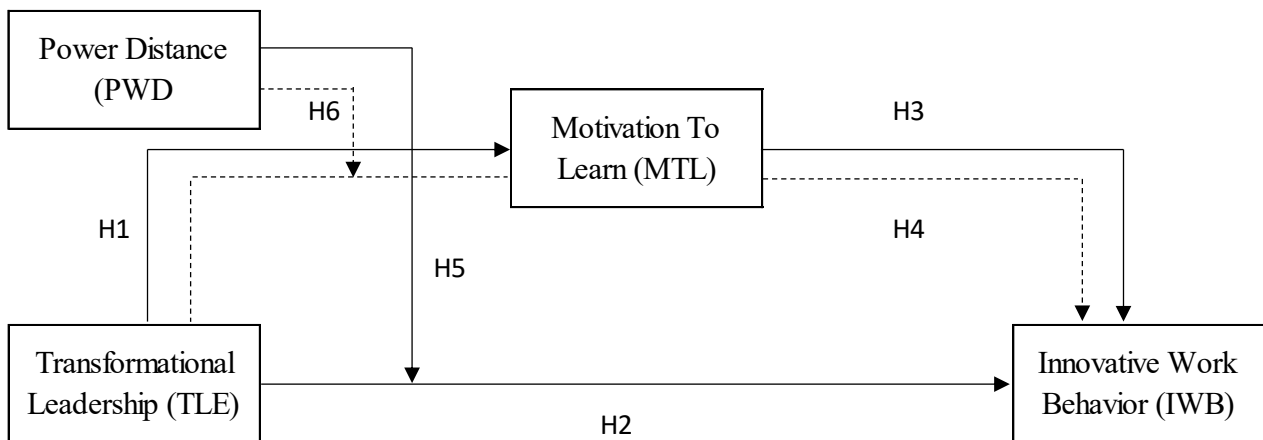
Table 1. Measurement of Innovative Work Behavior and Transformational Leadership

| Variables | Items | FL |
|---|--|-----------|
| Innovative Work Behavior (IWB) $\alpha = 0.800$ | Creating new ideas for difficult issues | 0.783 |
| | Seeking new working methods, techniques, or tools | 0.879 |
| | Generating original solutions for problems | 0.834 |
| | Mobilizing support for innovative ideas | 0.850 |
| | Acquiring approval for innovative ideas | 0.915 |
| | Encouraging to embrace innovative ideas | 0.890 |
| | Transforming innovative ideas into useful applications | 0.898 |
| | Systematically introducing innovative ideas | 0.886 |
| Transformational Leadership (TLE) $\alpha = 0.820$ | Evaluating the utility of innovative ideas | 0.907 |
| | My leader instilled pride in me when I associated with others | 0.838 |
| | My leader talks about my most important values and belief | 0.681 |
| | My leader specifies the importance of a strong sense of purpose | 0.729 |
| | My leader inspires me to prioritize the group over myself | 0.341 |
| | My leader acts in ways that build others' respect for me | 0.701 |
| | My leader considers the moral and ethical consequences of decisions | 0.732 |
| | My leader displays a sense of power and confidence | 0.841 |
| | My leader emphasizes a collective sense of mission. | 0.691 |
| | My leader talks optimistically about the future | 0.800 |
| | My leader talks enthusiastically about what needs to be established | 0.877 |
| | My leader articulates a compelling vision of the future | 0.823 |
| | My leader's actions show confidence in achieving goals | 0.867 |
| | My leader reassesses critical assumptions and their appropriateness | 0.612 |
| | My leader seeks differing perspectives when solving problems | 0.853 |
| | My leader gets others to look at problems from many different angles | 0.762 |
| My leader suggests new approaches to completing assignments | 0.768 | |
| My leader spends time coaching, teaching, and mentoring followers | 0.719 | |
| My leader treats others as individuals, not just group members | 0.519 | |
| My leader recognizes each person's unique needs, abilities, and aspirations | 0.795 | |
| My leader helps others to develop their strengths. | 0.824 | |

Table 2. Measurement of Motivation to Learn and Power Distance

| Variables | Items | FL |
|---|--|-------|
| Motivation to Learn (MTL) $\alpha = 0.820$ | I am motivated to learn the skills emphasized in the job | 0.882 |
| | I will try to learn as much as I can from my job | 0.527 |
| | I am willing to exert considerable effort in my job in order to improve my skills | 0.863 |
| Power Distance (PWD) $\alpha = 0.900$ | I often look for opportunities to develop new skills and knowledge | 0.858 |
| | Managers should make most decisions without consulting subordinates | 0.482 |
| | It is frequently necessary for a manager to use authority and power when dealing with subordinates | 0.112 |
| | Managers should seldom ask for the opinions of employees | 0.832 |
| | Managers should avoid off-the-job social contact with employees | 0.299 |
| | Employees should not disagree with management decisions | 0.350 |
| | Managers should not delegate important tasks to employees | 0.660 |

Figure 1. Research Framework



Following the adaptation guidelines by Beaton et al. (2000), we implemented a five-stage process. Firstly, the instruments were translated into Indonesian by at least two translators. The translations were then synthesized through discussions with the translators to resolve any discrepancies. Next, the instruments were back-translated into English to ensure that the original meanings were maintained. Experts subsequently reviewed the instruments to confirm their relevance to the research context. Lastly, we assessed the validity and reliability of the instruments for the study variables to ensure they accurately measure what they are supposed to and consistently produce reliable results. We checked validity using factor

loading, where items with a score above 0.50 were considered valid (Hadie & Yusoff, 2016). For reliability, we used Cronbach's alpha, and items with a score above 0.70 were considered to be satisfactory internal consistency (Akram et al., 2020; Tahar et al., 2021). After ensuring the instruments were valid and reliable, we moved on to data collection. Prior to collecting data, we received approval from the ethics committee of the Faculty of Psychology, Universitas Indonesia, Depok, Indonesia (certificate number 318/FPsi.Komite Ethics/PDP.04.00/2023), confirming that the study passed the ethics review.

For measuring innovative work behavior (IWB), the survey comprised nine questions adapted from Li et al. (2017), Janssen (2000), and Etikariena and Muluk (2014). The wording of the questions was modified to fit the study context. Respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they engage in and display innovative behaviors at work using a 6-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (not at all) to 6 (to an exceptional degree). In contrast, twenty items assessing transformational leadership (TLE) were adapted from Podsakoff et al. (1996), Carless et al. (2000), and Gilbert et al. (2016). Participants rated the TLE items on a 6-point scale from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 6 (Strongly Agree). Table 1 presents the measurement items for IWB and TLE along with their factor loadings (FL) and Cronbach's alpha (α). The Cronbach's alpha values for IWB and TLE are 0.800 and 0.820, respectively, indicating good internal consistency, as values above 0.70 are considered acceptable. Factor loadings, which indicate how well each item correlates with the construct, further demonstrate item reliability. For IWB, all items have factor loadings above 0.50, ranging from 0.783 to 0.915, indicating strong correlations with the IWB construct. Similarly, for TLE, most items exceed the 0.50 threshold, with loadings from 0.612 to 0.877, confirming their reliability as indicators of the TLE construct. However, one item ("My leader inspires me to prioritize the group over self") has an FL of 0.341, below the acceptable threshold, suggesting it may not be a strong indicator of the TLE construct. Therefore, we decided to remove this item.

For Motivation to Learn (MTL), the four questionnaire items were adapted from Gavaza et al. (2014), Gorges et al. (2016), Reeve et al. (2018), and Afsar and Umrani (2020). This instrument includes four items rated on a 6-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 6 (Strongly Agree). Additionally, six items measuring Power Distance (PWD) were adapted from William et al. (1988) and Adamovic (2022), with modifications to fit the study context. For the PWD items, participants responded on a 6-point scale, from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 6 (Strongly Agree). Table 2 presents the measurement items for Motivation to Learn (MTL) and Power Distance (PWD), along with their respective factor

loadings (FL) and Cronbach's alpha (α). The Cronbach's alpha values for MTL and PWD are 0.820 and 0.900, respectively, indicating good internal consistency, as values above 0.70 are generally considered acceptable. All MTL items have FL above the 0.50 threshold, ranging from 0.527 to 0.882, indicating strong correlations with the MTL construct. In contrast, the PWD items show mixed results. While some items have satisfactory factor loadings (> 0.50), such as "Managers should seldom ask for the opinions of employees" (0.832) and "Managers should not delegate important tasks to employees" (0.660), others fall below the acceptable threshold. Items like "It is frequently necessary for a manager to use authority and power when dealing with subordinates" (0.112) and "Managers should avoid off-the-job social contact with employees" (0.299) have low factor loadings, suggesting they may not be strong indicators of the PWD construct. Therefore, we excluded those items from further analysis.

Finally, the study examined how power distance (PWD) moderates the indirect effects of transformational leadership (TLE) on innovative work behavior (IWB) through motivation to learn (MTL), using bootstrap estimates derived from 5000 samples (Hayes, 2017; Primanto & Rachma, 2023). The mediation role of motivation to learn (MTL) for hypothesis 4 in the study was conducted using model 4 in Process Macro SPSS. For moderated and mediation analysis, the moderation effect of power distances (PWD) and mediation of motivation to learn (MTL) was tested using model 8 in Process Macro SPSS. In these analyses, we look at the lower-level confidence interval (LLCI) and upper-level confidence interval (ULCI). For combined mediation and moderation effects to be considered significant, the confidence interval should not include zero (Hayes & Rockwood, 2017). Additionally, a significant threshold for the direct effect is indicated by a p-value less than 0.05 (Hayes, 2017).

Result and Discussion

The demographic profiles of the respondents (Table 3) reveal a predominantly male group (63%), with a significant majority aged 21-24 years (91%). This youthful demographic is complemented by a smaller representation of older age groups: 25-44 years (5 participants, 2.4%) and 45-64 years (14 participants, 6.6%). Additionally, the participants are largely in executive positions (69%), followed by functional (24%) and structural roles (7%), emphasizing the influence of high-ranking perspectives. When considering education, the group is well-educated, with 59% holding bachelor's degrees, 22.5% with master's degrees, 18% with diplomas, and 0.5% with only a high school education. The variation in job tenure further enriches the demographic profile, with the largest segment having 11-15 years of experience (44%), followed by 6-10 years (28%), over 16 years (19%), and less than five

years (9%), highlighting a mix of seasoned professionals and newer entrants. This diverse range of experiences and educational backgrounds provides a comprehensive view of the participant pool. Furthermore, the executive-heavy composition suggests that the perspectives captured are likely influenced by those in leadership roles. To summarize, the demographic profile table shows a detailed picture of a predominantly young, male-dominated, highly educated, and executive-heavy group with a mix of experienced and new professionals.

Table 3. Demographic Profiles

| Profiles | | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------|---------------|-----------|------------|
| Gender | Male | 132 | 63% |
| | Female | 78 | 37% |
| Age | 21 – 24 years | 191 | 91% |
| | 25 – 44 years | 5 | 2.4% |
| | 45 – 64 years | 14 | 6.6% |
| Position | Structural | 14 | 7% |
| | Functional | 50 | 24% |
| | Executive | 146 | 69% |
| Education | Master | 47 | 22.5% |
| | Bachelor | 124 | 59% |
| | Diploma | 38 | 18% |
| | High School | 1 | 0.5% |
| Job Tenure | ≤ 5 years | 20 | 9% |
| | 6 – 10 years | 58 | 28% |
| | 11- 15 years | 93 | 44% |
| | ≥ 16 years | 39 | 19% |

Table 4. Categorization of Variables

| Variables | Min. | Max. | Mean | Std. Deviation | Categorization | | |
|-----------|------|------|------|----------------|----------------|-------|-------|
| | | | | | High | Med. | Low |
| TLE | 1.25 | 6 | 4.62 | 0.82 | 82.8% | 16.1% | 0.5% |
| MTL | 1.75 | 6 | 5.13 | 0.69 | 93.3% | 6.2% | 0.5% |
| PWD | 1.33 | 5.17 | 2.75 | 0.73 | 31% | - | 69% |
| IWB | 1 | 6 | 3.75 | 1.26 | 44.8% | 42.8% | 12.4% |

Table 5. PROCESS Macro Result

| Hypotheses | β | SE | p-value | ULCI | LLCI | Decision |
|--|---------|-------|---------|--------|--------|----------|
| H ₁ : TLE -> MTL | 0.412 | 0.051 | 0.000 | 0.311 | 0.513. | Accepted |
| H ₂ : TLE -> IWB | 0.023 | 0.113 | 0.840 | -0.199 | 0.245 | Rejected |
| H ₃ : MTL -> IWB | 0.775 | 0.114 | 0.000 | 0.512 | 1.034 | Accepted |
| H ₄ : TLE -> MTL -> IWB | 0.316 | 0.060 | - | 0.201 | 0.445 | Accepted |
| H ₅ : TLE*PWD -> IWB | -0.016 | 0.112 | 0.893 | -0.258 | 0.225 | Rejected |
| H ₆ : TLE*PWD -> MTL -> IWB | 0.024 | 0.060 | - | -0.086 | 0.152 | Rejected |

Table 4 provides an insightful overview of the respondents' perceptions across several key variables. Transformational Leadership (TLE) is highly rated, with a mean of 4.62, and 82.8% of respondents consider it high, indicating strong perceptions of transformational leadership. Motivation to Learn (MTL) scores even higher, with a mean of 5.13 and 93.3% rating it high, underscoring a robust endorsement of motivational leadership. In contrast, Power Distance (PWD) has a mean of 2.75, with 69% of respondents rating it low, suggesting minimal disruption in their work. Innovative Work Behavior (IWB) displays a balanced distribution, with a mean of 3.75, where 44.8% rated it high, 42.8% medium, and 12.4% low, reflecting moderate to high engagement in innovation. Overall, these findings highlight strong positive perceptions of leadership effectiveness and motivation, low perceived work disruption, and substantial innovative behavior among the respondents, offering a comprehensive understanding of their organizational experiences.

Table 5 shows that the hypothesis (H₁) of the study that Transformational Leadership (TLE) positively influences Motivation to Learn (MTL) is accepted. The results show a significant positive relationship with a beta (β) value of 0.412, a standard error (SE) of 0.051, and a p-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$). The high mean score of TLE and MTL in Table 4, indicates that transformational leadership and motivation to learn is widely perceived as positive by respondents. This alignment suggests that as transformational leadership practices increase, employees' motivation to learn also increases, reflecting a direct and robust positive influence. Therefore, the more transformational behaviors are exhibited by leaders in public sector organizations, the higher the motivation among employees to engage in learning and development activities. The results of this study support Afsar & Umrani (2020), who argued that transformational leadership provides autonomy to employees to learn and creates a conducive environment for individual learning. Transformational leadership can push

employee motivation to learn by inspiring a shared vision (Searle & Hanrahan, 2011), providing intellectual stimulation (Arnold & Loughlin, 2013; Khan et al., 2022), and offering individualized consideration (Zacher et al., 2014; Ding & Lin, 2021; Khan et al., 2022). These leaders challenge employees to think critically and creatively, support their professional growth, and foster a culture of continuous improvement.

Interestingly, the result of the study reveals a nuanced finding about the determinants of Innovative Work Behavior (IWB). While Transformational Leadership Effectiveness (TLE) failed to directly affect IWB (H_2), Motivation to Learn (MTL) significantly impacts IWB (H_3). Specifically, the analysis showed that TLE had a β value of 0.023 with a p-value of 0.840 ($p > 0.05$), indicating no significant direct effect on IWB. In contrast, MTL had a strong positive relationship with IWB, with a β value of 0.775 and a p-value of 0.000 ($p < 0.05$), underscoring its critical role in driving innovation. The results indicate that while transformational leadership alone does not directly lead to innovative behavior among employees, it significantly enhances employees' motivation to learn, which is a crucial factor in fostering innovation. Unlike previous studies from Afsar et al. (2019), Afsar and Umrani (2020), Lin (2023), and Odugbesan et al. (2023), this study found that transformational leadership, by itself, is insufficient to drive innovation. However, it plays a critical role in cultivating an environment that motivates employees to engage in continuous learning and development (Etikariena & Muluk, 2014; Yu et al., 2018; Schunk & DiBenedetto, 2020).

Furthermore, the mediator role of motivation to learn (H_4) has been proven to be significant. The indirect effect of TLE on IWB through MTL, with a β value of 0.316 and a confidence interval (CI) ranging from 0.201 to 0.445, indicates that motivation to learn plays a crucial role in translating transformational leadership into innovative behavior. The confidence interval not containing zero confirms the significance of this mediation effect, as it demonstrates that the effect is reliably different from zero, supporting the hypothesis. This finding underscores the importance of motivational factors in fostering innovation within organizations. The significance of H_4 further complements and expands upon the initial findings. While transformational leadership alone does not directly influence innovative work behavior (as seen in H_2), it does significantly enhance employees' motivation to learn, which in turn drives innovation (supported by H_3). This mediation effect highlights that transformational leadership fosters an environment conducive to learning and development, thereby indirectly promoting innovative behaviors. By motivating employees to engage in continuous learning, transformational leaders indirectly foster innovative work behaviors,

aligning with theories that emphasize the importance of ongoing professional development and learning in achieving innovative outcomes.

When examining the interaction between Power Distance (PWD) and TLE in influencing other variables, the analysis revealed no significant influence. The results of H₅ in the table show that PWD does not affect the relationship between TLE and IWB ($\beta = -0.016$, $SE = 0.112$, $p > 0.05$). This finding contradicts institutional theory, which suggests that cultural dimensions, including power distance, determine employee innovation (Shane, 1993). Additionally, the study found that the participants had a low average level of power distance ($M = 2.75$, $SD = 0.73$). Interestingly, 69% of participants fell into the category of low power distance, even though the samples were taken from government agencies. This finding differs from several previous studies (Adhitama, 2016; Hofstede, 2011; Nugraha et al., 2020) which confirm that the level of power distance in government organizations is relatively high. The low power distance observed in this study can be attributed to the sample consisting predominantly of the millennial generation, with an average age of 34.11 years. Easton and Steyn (2022) confirm that the millennial generation typically exhibits lower levels of power distance. This finding aligns with multigenerational theory, which posits that individual who grow up in different time periods develop distinct beliefs, values, attitudes, and expectations. These differences profoundly impact their behavior, both generally and within the workplace (Cogin, 2012; Inglehart, 1997). Another reason for this discrepancy may be the use of self-report as a data collection technique, whereas Adhitama (2016) used interviews and observations. The use of interviews and observation techniques can help researchers identify the true level of power distance among participants.

Finally, the hypothesis (H₆) of the study, which posited that the interaction between Transformational Leadership Effectiveness (TLE) and Power Distance (PWD) influences Innovative Work Behavior (IWB) through Motivation to Learn (MTL), is also rejected. The analysis, with a β value of 0.024, SE of 0.060, and a confidence interval (CI) from -0.086 to 0.152, indicates no significant moderated mediation effect, as the CI contains zero. This finding suggests that the relationship between transformational leadership and innovative work behavior through motivation to learn occurs independently of the level of power distance. In other words, employees can continue to innovate when leaders display transformational leadership styles, regardless of whether power distance is high or low. This independence can be attributed to the nature of organizations as separate entities distinct from external conditions, including national cultural dimensions like power distance. Ahrne et al. (2016) highlighted that an organization is a social order influenced by its leaders' decisions.

Organizational leaders play a crucial role in shaping employees' behavior, especially in fostering innovative behavior (Kozioł-Nadolna, 2020). By providing inspiration and motivation, transformational leaders build supportive work environments (Masood & Afsar, 2017). De Smet et al. (2021) explained that such environments encourage positive values in employees, including motivation to learn, which drives them to implement new ideas and methods in their work (Yu et al., 2018). This process ultimately enhances innovative work behavior through idea generation. Nevertheless, this finding aligns with research by Farooq and Tripathi (2021), who found that power distance does not moderate the relationship between leader-leader exchange (LLX) and knowledge sharing.

Conclusion and Suggestion

This study highlights the pivotal role of motivation to learn as a mediator between transformational leadership and innovative work behavior among government employees in Indonesia. The findings reveal that while transformational leadership does not directly influence innovative work behavior, it profoundly enhances motivation to learn, which in turn acts as a catalyst for innovation. This underscores the critical importance of fostering a learning-centric environment through transformational leadership to unlock the innovative potential of employees. Intriguingly, the study also finds that power distance does not moderate these relationships, indicating that the empowering effects of transformational leadership on innovation through motivation to learn are resilient across varying cultural dimensions of power distance. This resilience stems from the enduring desire to learn and innovate, which remains effective irrespective of hierarchical structures. Therefore, regardless of how authority is distributed within the organization, the driving force for fostering innovation lies in the motivation to learn.

Additionally, the theoretical implications of this research highlight the effectiveness of the Interactionist Perspective of Creativity (IPC) theory in explaining the factors that can influence the emergence of innovative work behavior. This study demonstrates that innovative work behavior arises from a complex interaction between individual factors like motivation to learn and situational factors like transformational leadership. By applying IPC theory, the research provides a nuanced understanding of how these elements interact to foster innovation within organizations. The findings support the notion that both personal and environmental influences are crucial in driving innovative behaviors. Furthermore, the study finds that power distance, a cultural factor, does not significantly impact the relationship between transformational leadership and innovative work behavior, suggesting that the

motivation to learn can drive innovation regardless of cultural differences. Therefore, this research validates the IPC theory and expands its application within the context of public sector organizations, offering valuable insights for future studies.

While this study contributes significantly to the field, it has several limitations that future researchers need to address. First, the correlational research design cannot explain causal effects between all research variables. Future research should employ other designs, such as experimental or longitudinal studies, to determine causal effects. Second, the cultural variable of power distance is sensitive and may introduce potential bias in data collection. Future research could mitigate this by using alternative data collection techniques, such as in-depth interviews and observation. Lastly, this research focused on one type of government organization, which limits its ability to represent all government employees in Indonesia. Future studies should consider including a variety of different public sector organizations to provide a broader depiction of the conditions of public employees.

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