“Antecedents of lecturers’ innovative work behavior in a private university: Creative process engagement as a mediator”

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ANTECEDENTS OF LECTURERS' INNOVATIVE WORK BEHAVIOR IN A PRIVATE UNIVERSITY: CREATIVE PROCESS ENGAGEMENT AS A MEDIATOR

Abstract

Innovative work behavior among lecturers is essential for promoting creativity and academic excellence in higher education, especially during rapid technological and pedagogical changes. This study examines the influence of growth mindset, organizational climate, and digital leadership on innovative work behavior, with creative process engagement as a mediating variable. A quantitative approach was employed, involving 200 lecturers from social sciences and humanities faculties at six major private universities in Surabaya, Indonesia. The sample was selected due to its diverse academic backgrounds and active involvement in institutional innovation.

Data analysis using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) confirmed both direct and mediated effects of the independent variables on innovative work behavior. The results indicate that growth mindset ($T = 3.21$, $p < 0.05$) and digital leadership ($T = 4.02$, $p < 0.01$) have significant direct effects. Most importantly, creative process engagement significantly mediates these relationships. Sobel test results confirm strong mediation effects ($T = 4.910$ for digital leadership, 4.683 for growth mindset, and 2.951 for organizational climate; all $p < 0.01$).

Creative process engagement accounts for 47.94% of the effect of digital leadership, 43.53% of organizational climate, and 31.84% of growth mindset on innovative work behavior, explaining 76.1% of its variance. These findings highlight the transformative role of creative process engagement in enhancing innovative work behavior. They suggest that fostering a growth mindset, supportive organizational climate, and strong digital leadership – alongside active creative engagement – can significantly boost innovation among lecturers in higher education institutions.

Keywords growth mindset, innovative work behavior, private universities, supportive organizational climate, creative process engagement

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INTRODUCTION

Innovative work behavior is not just a buzzword in higher education—it is a transformative force that shapes how lecturers teach, conduct research, and contribute to institutional progress. As universities strive to remain competitive and relevant in an era of rapid technological disruption, the ability of lecturers to think creatively, embrace new teaching strategies, and develop novel research approaches has become more critical than ever. In Indonesia, this urgency is heightened by national education policies that actively promote digital transformation, interdisciplinary collaboration, and global competitiveness within higher education institutions. As a result, lecturers are now expected to be not only subject matter experts but also innovators in their classrooms and research environments.

Despite this growing demand, there remains a significant gap in our understanding of the underlying mechanisms that support innovative behavior. While factors such as a growth mindset, organizational climate, and digital leadership have been widely acknowledged as key drivers of innovation, the mediating role of creative process engagement – how lecturers actively immerse themselves in ideation, problem-solving, and experimentation – has received limited scholarly attention. This engagement may be the missing link that transforms intention into innovation. Exploring this relationship is crucial, as it can reveal actionable insights for higher education leaders and policymakers seeking to cultivate environments where creativity thrives. By focusing on creative process engagement, this study opens new pathways for enhancing innovation capabilities across academic institutions in Indonesia and beyond.

Work behavior plays a vital role in improving teaching methods and research outcomes in higher education. The demand for innovation among lecturers has significantly increased due to rapid technological advancements and Indonesia's higher education policy emphasizing digital transformation and interdisciplinary learning. However, existing research has not extensively explored the role of creative process engagement in mediating the relationship between individual and organizational factors that drive innovation.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES

Innovative work behavior is increasingly recognized as a key factor in enhancing educational quality in universities. While previous studies have focused on corporate employees, there remains a gap in understanding how this behavior develops among university lecturers, especially in the context of digital transformation and evolving pedagogical demands (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010). In the world of education, innovative work behavior is quite a concern today, especially after the COVID period, which requires changes in teaching patterns, where teaching patterns, technology-based work patterns, become part of the job. Unfortunately, the lack of research that focuses on the pattern of forming innovative work behavior of a lecturer, makes there still a gap that needs attention in the research world. Some innovative work behavior research tends to focus on the role of individuals, support from superiors, and organizational support (Leong & Rasli, 2013; Taştan, 2013).

Factors influencing innovative work behavior include a **growth mindset, organizational climate**, and **digital leadership**. A **growth mindset** reflects an individual's belief in the ability to develop skills and competencies through effort and learning, which fosters resilience and adaptability – key traits for innovative behavior (Dweck, 2009; Zeng et al., 2019). **Organizational climate** refers to the collective perceptions of employees regarding their work environment, including support for creativity, collaboration, and risk-taking, which significantly impacts the willingness to engage in innovative activities (Gawke et al., 2019; Logacheva & Plakhotnik, 2021; Prentice et al., 2019; Zhong, 2017). Meanwhile, **digital leadership** plays a vital role in navigating the complexities of digital transformation by promoting the effective use of technology, encouraging digital competence, and fostering an environment conducive to innovation (Cahyarini, 2021; Danish et al., 2019; Petry, 2018).

Creative process engagement is an interaction involving active participation in cognitive and collaborative activities, such as identifying problems, seeking information, and generating ideas (Al-Omari et al., 2019; DiLiello et al., 2011; Woods et al., 2018). Saeed et al. (2019) argue that creative process engagement is most effective when individuals work in a supportive team environment that encourages creativity and risk-taking. Furthermore, Glińska-Neweś et al. (2017) underscored that an organizational climate that fosters inclusiveness and shared learning substantially enhances creative process engagement. In the context of higher education, the cultivation of creative process engagement among lecturers is anticipated to bridge the gap between abstract concepts and practical innovations, thereby enabling more effective teaching and research outcomes. Nevertheless, there is a lack of consistent research results that clarify the nature of engagement capable of fostering innovative work behavior. Consequently, in the future, it may be advisable for universities to

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consider strategic initiatives to encourage innovative work behavior (Bamel et al., 2013).

In educational environments undergoing digital transformation, the role of leaders in fostering a growth mindset among individuals becomes paramount (Cahyarini, 2021; Chan et al., 2021; Muniroh et al., 2021). According to Dweck (2009), the mindset of each individual is characterized by a vast and multifaceted complexity, which is influenced by their openness to growth. This concept posits that an individual's mindset entails the belief that abilities and intelligence can be enhanced through commitment and learning. This perspective fosters resilience, adaptability, and a propensity to embrace challenges, which are pivotal for innovation (Fraser, 2018).

In the modern educational landscape, characterized by digital transformation, the need for effective leadership has become paramount (Antonopoulou et al., 2020; Syekh et al., 2020). Specifically, the need for leaders who can effectively integrate digital tools to enhance communication, streamline administrative processes, and drive innovation has become increasingly evident (Petry, 2018). The establishment of strategic steps to promote digitalization in the modern educational environment necessitates the presence of leaders who can inspire and empower their teams (Bin Saeed et al., 2019; Hagerer et al., 2020; Kim & Shin, 2017). Conventional leadership styles, such as transactional or transformational, have been the prevailing approach in leadership studies. However, with the emergence of a new generation of lecturers, the relevance of these leadership styles is being re-evaluated in terms of their effectiveness in the digital age (Antonopoulou et al., 2020; Cortellazzo et al., 2019; Ehlers, 2020).

A significant challenge hindering the development of innovative work behavior in Indonesian higher education institutions is the lack of faculty involvement in the creative process and the application of digital technology.

The objective of this study is to explore the factors influencing engagement in the creative process, including growth mindset, organizational climate, and digital leadership.

The subsequent hypotheses are predicated on the following assertions.

H_1: *Growth mindset significantly influences innovative work behavior.*

H_2: *Organizational climate significantly influences innovative work behavior.*

H_3: *Digital leadership significantly influences innovative work behavior.*

H_4: *Creative process engagement mediates the relationship between growth mindset and innovative work behavior.*

H_5: *Creative process engagement mediates the relationship between organizational climate and innovative work behavior.*

H_6: *Creative process engagement mediates the relationship between digital leadership and innovative work behavior.*

2. METHOD

This study involved lecturers from six private universities in Surabaya, Indonesia. The sample was selected based on institutional size, faculty diversity, and involvement in educational innovation. Data were collected through structured questionnaires, with 200 valid responses analyzed. Respondents were predominantly in the 31-40 age range (47%), with 52% holding master's degrees and 48% doctoral degrees (see Table 1 for details).

Table 1. Demographic information

Characteristics	Details	Counts	Percent
Gender	Male	98	49
	Female	102	51
	Total	200	100
Age	< 30 y.o	40	20
	31-35 y.o	49	24.5
	36-40 y.o	45	22.5
	41-50 y.o	38	19
	>50 y.o	28	14
	Total	200	100
Education	Master Degree	104	52
	Doctoral Degree	96	48
	Total	200	100
Working Period	2-5 y.o	46	23
	6-10 y.o	56	29
	11-15 y.o	59	30
	16-20 y.o	20	10
	> 20 y.o	19	10
	Total	200	100

The Likert scale is employed to ascertain the value of each response. The descriptors are Strongly Agree (5), Agree (4), Neutral (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly Disagree (1) (Likert, 2010). The analytical approach applies the Partial Least Squares method for the variance-based structural equation model using a statistical test tool (Hair et al., 2018). The Smart Partial Least Squares (PLS) method was employed to analyze the research data. The analysis comprised three distinct phases of verification: the evaluation of the outer model, the assessment of the structural (inner) model, and the testing of the research hypothesis.

This study adhered to ethical research principles, ensuring respondent anonymity and voluntary participation. All participants provided informed consent before taking part in the survey. Data collection was conducted over two months at six private universities in Surabaya, Indonesia. The selection of these institutions was based on their faculty diversity and engagement in innovative educational practices. The dataset generated from this study has not been previously published or used in other studies.

The data collection process involved administering structured questionnaires that included items to measure growth mindset, organizational climate, digital leadership, creative process engagement, and innovative work behavior. All constructs were assessed using validated scales adapted from previous studies and refined to suit the educational context of all respondents.

The collected data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with SmartPLS software, selected for its capacity to handle complex models with relatively small sample sizes. The bootstrapping technique was employed to test mediation effects and assess the significance of path coefficients. Reliability and validity were confirmed through composite reliability (CR > 0.7) and average variance extracted (AVE > 0.5).

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data shown in Table 2 indicate that all individual measures demonstrate reliability, since all item loadings surpass the threshold of 0.7. The minimum value of composite reliability is 0.835. For discriminant validity, the average variance extracted (AVE) from manifest variables by constructs must be a minimum of 0.5. Data in Table 2 indicate that the minimum value of AVE is 0.595, which exceeds the threshold of 0.5.

There are two parts to an investigation of a PLS model: the structural model and the appropriateness of the measures. For the first one, the discriminant validity of the categories and the reliability of the individual measures are looked at. Item reliability is determined by looking at the measurements 'loadings on their related construct. Each item loading equals or exceeds 0.7 (Hair et al., 2021; Henseler & Schuberth, 2020).

The results of hypotheses testing indicate that all independent variables exhibit a direct relationship with the dependent variable. This can be seen from the path coefficient value, t-statistic, and probability value (see Table 3).

Growth mindset affects how people work and think creatively. The path coefficient value is 0.172, and the p-value is 0.001. Lecturers with a high Growth Mindset are more likely to engage in innovative work behavior. Similarly, Growth Mindset has the greatest influence on creative process engagement, meaning it plays an important role in creative process engagement. Lecturers with a good Growth Mindset are more open to challenges and see them as opportunities for growth.

Organizational climate also affects innovative work behavior and creative process engagement. Path coefficient of 0.251 and a p-value of 0.000. This means that a positive and supportive organizational climate can encourage lecturers to be more innovative in their work. A positive and supportive organizational climate encourages lecturers to be more innovative. It also encourages involvement in the creative process, supporting innovation and collaboration.

Digital Leadership affects innovative work behavior and creative process engagement. Path coefficient of 0.300 and a p-value of 0.000. Leaders who use technology in management and encourage lecturers to use it will encourage them to be more innovative. Digital leadership also significantly affects cre-

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Table 2. Validity and reliability

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Growth Mindset (X1)	X1.1	0.749	0.864	0.898	0.595
	X1.2	0.760			
	X1.3	0.778			
	X1.4	0.739			
	X1.5	0.784			
	X1.6	0.815			
Organizational Climate (X2)	X2.1	0.798	0.799	0.869	0.624
	X2.2	0.741			
	X2.3	0.793			
	X2.4	0.827			
Digital Leadership (X3)	X3.1	0.789	0.834	0.883	0.601
	X3.2	0.807			
	X3.3	0.742			
	X3.4	0.777			
	X3.5	0.761			
Creative Process Engagement (Y1)	Y1.1	0.887	0.870	0.920	0.794
	Y1.2	0.897			
	Y1.3	0.890			
Innovative Work Behavior (Y2)	Y2.1	0.808	0.843	0.895	0.680
	Y2.2	0.828			
	Y2.3	0.824			
	Y2.4	0.839			
	Y2.5	0.808			

Table 3. Results of direct effects

Hypothesis	Path Coefficient	p-values	Path Coefficient interval		f square
			Low	high	
Growth Mindset → Innovative Work Behavior	0.172	**0.001**	0.064	0.277	0.155
Organizational Climate → Innovative Work Behavior	0.251	**0.000**	0.175	0.334	0.257
Digital Leadership → Innovative Work Behavior	0.300	**0.000**	0.206	0.394	0.304
Growth Mindset → Creative Process Engagement	0.434	**0.000**	0.341	0.521	0.434
Organizational Climate → Creative Process Engagement	0.297	**0.000**	0.220	0.377	0.297
Digital Leadership → Creative Process Engagement	0.312	**0.000**	0.212	0.402	0.312
Creative Process Engagement → Innovative Work Behavior	0.321	**0.000**	0.179	0.455	0.332

Table 4. Results of indirect effects

Paths	c'	a	B	ab	ab/(ab + c')	%
DL → CPE → IWB	0.103	0.312	0.304	0.095	0.479	47.94
GM → CPE → IWB	0.144	0.434	0.155	0.067	0.318	31.84
OC → CPE → IWB	0.099	0.297	0.257	0.076	0.435	43.53

ative process engagement, suggesting that effective digital leadership can create an environment conducive to engagement in the creative process.

The study by Sobel reveals that creative process engagement significantly impacts the influence of growth mindset on innovation work behavior (see Table 4). The growth mindset indirectly influences innovative work behavior through creative process engagement, with 31.84% of growth mindset mediation occurring through engagement in the creative process. Creative process engagement fosters a growth mindset, allowing individuals with a growth mindset to be receptive to challenges, ex-

perimentation, and innovation. Engaging in the creative process leads to the generation of novel ideas that contribute to innovative work behavior. The mediating effect of creative process engagement on the relationship between organizational culture and innovative work behavior is significant, accounting for 43.53% of the total effect. A positive organizational climate provides a supportive environment for lecturers to engage in the creative process, enhancing innovative work behavior. Creative process engagement acts as the primary mediator, facilitating the effective implementation of independent variables in daily work practices through experimentation, data collection, and innovative problem-solving.

The study demonstrated that a growth mindset positively impacts innovative work behavior ($\beta = 0.172$, $p = 0.001$), which is consistent with the findings of Zeng et al. (2019). These researchers observed that individuals with a growth mindset tend to engage in creative problem-solving and continuous learning, both essential for innovation. Similarly, Dweck (2009) underscored that a growth mindset fosters adaptability and resilience in the face of challenges, which are essential traits for innovative behavior. In the context, lecturers who possess a growth mindset are better equipped to adapt to digital transformations and develop novel teaching methodologies. Influences Innovative Work Behavior.

This study found that organizational climate was a significant predictor of innovative work behavior ($\beta = 0.251$, $p = 0.000$). In line with the findings of prior research (Bogilović et al., 2020; Diamantidis & Chatzoglou, 2019; Logacheva & Plakhotnik, 2021), a supportive organizational climate fosters psychological safety and collaboration, which are critical for innovation. In educational institutions, Diamantidis and Chatzoglou (2019) argue that a positive climate encourages experimentation with new teaching methods and interdisciplinary initiatives. This study underscores the significance of fostering a supportive climate that enables lecturers to innovate in their roles, particularly in addressing disparities between urban and rural universities (Hendrarso, 2020; Riani et al., 2017; Yuanita, 2017).

Digital leadership exhibited the most significant direct impact on innovative work behavior ($\beta = 0.300$, $p = 0.000$). Ehlers (2020), Erhan et al. (2022), Petry (2018), and Santoso et al. (2019) elucidate that digital leadership fosters innovation by integrating technology effectively and promoting a culture of adaptability. Moreover, Hagerer et al. (2020) found that digital leadership bridges technological gaps, empowering team members to innovate. In Indonesia, where digital infrastructure varies widely, the presence of strong digital leadership can facilitate the navigation and utilization of technological resources by educators to implement innovative educational practices (Mihardjo et al., 2019; Zhong, 2017).

The findings of this study demonstrate that creative process engagement was a partial mediator in the relationship between growth mindset and innovative work behavior. The present study's results align with the conclusions of DiLiello et al. (2011), who argue that individuals with a growth mindset are more likely to engage actively in creative processes, such as brainstorming and problem-solving, which is supported by the present study's findings. This assertion is further substantiated by Zhang et al. (2019), who underscore the pivotal role of a conducive team environment in amplifying the creative potential of individuals endowed with a growth mindset.

This study found that organizational climate significantly mediated the relationship between it and innovative work behavior, with a mediation effect of 43.53%. Harun et al. (2022) noted that organizational climates promoting inclusivity and shared learning foster active participation in creative processes. In educational settings, this means that lecturers in supportive climates are more likely to engage in creative problem-solving, leading to innovative teaching and research outcomes.

The strongest mediating effect of creative process engagement was observed between digital leadership and innovative work behavior (mediation effect = 47.94%). Hagerer et al. (2020) demonstrated that digital leaders who encourage creative uses of technology enhance the creative engagement of their team members. This is particularly relevant in higher education, where leaders play a pivotal role in guiding the adoption and innovative application of technology in

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teaching and research. In the development of innovative work behavior of lecturers, creative process engagement plays an important mediating role. This study shows that creative process engagement has a positive and significant influence on lecturers' innovative work behavior. The path coefficient value of 0.321 and the p-value of 0.000 < 0.05 confirm that the higher the involvement of lecturers in the creative process, the higher the level of innovative work behavior produced.

CONCLUSION

This study aimed to examine the direct and mediating effects of growth mindset, organizational climate, and digital leadership on innovative work behavior among lecturers at private universities in Indonesia. By analyzing data from 200 lecturers, the findings provide empirical evidence that these factors significantly influence innovative work behavior, both directly and through the mediating role of creative process engagement. The results confirm that a growth mindset, a supportive organizational climate, and strong digital leadership are crucial in fostering innovation among lecturers. Digital leadership exhibited the most substantial direct effect, highlighting the importance of technology-driven leadership in academic environments. Moreover, creative process engagement was found to be a significant mediator, indicating that lecturers who actively engage in creative cognitive processes are more likely to exhibit innovative behavior. These findings offer practical implications for higher education institutions, suggesting that fostering an environment that supports creativity, digital adaptability, and continuous learning can enhance lecturers' innovative work behavior. University leaders should focus on developing policies that encourage collaboration, digital competence, and knowledge-sharing among lecturers.

Future research should look more closely at how creative process engagement enhances innovative work behavior in different areas, such as complex teams or projects. It is important to study what affects engagement in creative processes and innovative behavior. An organization's climate has a major impact on creativity. Research could examine how technology and flexible policies might affect the relationship between these factors. Digital leadership is linked to innovation through technology. Research could look at how digital leadership helps people and teams be more creative.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization: Moses Soediro, Lieli Suharti, Komala Inggarwati, Andrian Dolfriandra Huruta.
Data curation: Moses Soediro, Lieli Suharti, Komala Inggarwati, Andrian Dolfriandra Huruta.
Formal analysis: Lieli Suharti, Komala Inggarwati, Andrian Dolfriandra Huruta.
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Supervision: Lieli Suharti, Komala Inggarwati, Andrian Dolfriandra Huruta.
Validation: Lieli Suharti, Komala Inggarwati, Andrian Dolfriandra Huruta.
Writing – original draft: Moses Soediro.
Writing – review & editing: Moses Soediro, Lieli Suharti, Komala Inggarwati, Andrian Dolfriandra Huruta.

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