

The Role of Innovative Behavior as a Mediator of the Influence of Employee Engagement and Knowledge Sharing on Performance

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ABSTRACT: The main objective of this study is to determine whether innovative behavior has a mediating effect on the relationship between Employee *Engagement* and Knowledge Sharing with Performance. Data was collected from 136 Semarang City Regional Secretariat Employees, Central Java Province. Respondents were selected using purposive sampling technique. Structural equation modeling was used to analyze the collected data. This study revealed: 1) Employee *Engagement* has a positive and significant effect on performance, 2) *Knowledge Sharing* has a positive and significant influence on Performance, 3) Innovative Behavior has a positive and significant influence on Performance, 4) Employee *Engagement* has a positive and significant influence on Innovative Behavior 5) *Knowledge Sharing* has a positive and significant influence on Innovative Behavior, and 6) The Innovative Behavior variable mediates the relationship between Employee *Engagement*, *Knowledge Sharing* with performance. This study recommends In an effort to improve performance, prioritize the development of Knowledge Sharing and Integrated Employee Engagement programs, then focus on Innovative Behavior as the Main Driver of Performance.

KEYWORDS: Knowledge Sharing, Employee Engagement, Innovative Behavior, Performance

INTRODUCTION

In an era of globalization and increasingly rapid digital transformation, government organizations are required to improve the quality of public services through continuous employee performance enhancement. The Pemalang Regency Secretariat, as the spearhead of government administrative services, faces complex challenges in optimizing employee performance amid public demands for more effective, efficient, and innovative services.

Employee performance is the work results achieved by an individual or group of people within an organization according to their respective authorities and responsibilities in an effort to achieve organizational goals (Mangkunegara, 2017). In the context of government organizations, employee performance is a primary indicator of the success of government administration and public services. However, various phenomena indicate that employee performance in government agencies, including the Pemalang Regency Secretariat, still faces challenges such as low innovation in work, lack of emotional involvement of employees in their work, and minimal knowledge sharing among employees.

Employee engagement has been recognized as a crucial factor influencing organizational performance. Schaufeli & Bakker (2004) define employee engagement as a positive work-related mental state characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. Employees with high levels of engagement tend to demonstrate greater commitment to the organization, increased productivity, and superior work quality (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). In the public sector context, employee engagement is particularly important because it is directly related to the quality of services provided to the public.

Knowledge sharing is a fundamental aspect of modern organizational development. Nonaka & Takeuchi (1995) emphasize that knowledge sharing is a process in which individuals exchange tacit and explicit knowledge to create new knowledge. In government organizations, knowledge sharing enables employees to learn from each other's experiences, best practices, and expertise, thereby enhancing the organization's collective capabilities (Wang & Noe, 2010). Effective implementation of knowledge sharing can reduce duplication of work, increase work process efficiency, and encourage innovation in public services.

Innovative behavior is an individual's ability to develop, adopt, and implement new ideas that are beneficial to the organization. Janssen (2000) identifies innovative behavior as encompassing the generation, promotion, and realization of ideas.

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In the New Public Management era, innovative behavior among government employees is an urgent need to respond to rapidly changing environmental dynamics and increasingly high public expectations for the quality of public services. Innovative behavior enables organizations to develop creative solutions to various administrative and service problems.

The relationship between employee engagement and employee performance has been explored in various studies. Saks (2006) found that highly engaged employees demonstrated superior performance, lower absenteeism, and minimal turnover intentions. Similarly, knowledge sharing has been shown to positively impact individual and organizational performance by enhancing organizational learning and competency development (Carmeli et al., 2013). However, the mechanisms explaining how employee engagement and knowledge sharing influence employee performance require further exploration, particularly the mediating role of innovative behavior.

Several previous studies have shown that innovative behavior can act as a mediator in the relationship between various organizational factors and performance. Agarwal (2014) found that innovative behavior mediates the relationship between leadership style and employee performance. Meanwhile, research by Orth & Volmer (2017) identified that innovative work behavior functions as a mediator between knowledge sharing and job performance. However, research specifically exploring the mediating role of innovative behavior in the relationship between employee engagement and knowledge sharing on employee performance in the context of local government organizations is still limited.

The context of local government organizations has unique characteristics that distinguish it from the private sector, such as a hierarchical bureaucratic structure, strict regulations, and an orientation toward public service rather than profit maximization. The Pemalang Regency Secretariat, as an organization with a strategic role in governance and public services, faces pressure to continuously innovate to improve service quality while adhering to various applicable regulations.

The phenomenon occurring at the Semarang City Regional Secretariat shows variations in employee engagement levels, knowledge sharing practices, and innovative behavior, which ultimately impact employee performance. Initial observations indicate that employees with high engagement levels tend to be more active in sharing knowledge and exhibiting innovative behavior, which then correlates with better performance. However, the causal mechanisms between these variables still require comprehensive empirical investigation.

Based on the identified research gaps and the phenomena occurring in the field, this study aims to analyze the role of innovative behavior as a mediator of the influence of employee engagement and knowledge sharing on employee performance at the Pemalang Regency Secretariat. This research is expected to provide theoretical contributions in developing a public sector employee performance model and practical contributions in the form of policy recommendations to improve employee performance by strengthening employee engagement, knowledge sharing, and innovative behavior.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Employee Engagement in Improving Performance

Schaufeli et al. (2002) developed the concept of engagement further by defining it as "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption." Vigor refers to high levels of energy and mental resilience while working, dedication indicates involvement in work accompanied by a sense of importance, enthusiasm, inspiration, pride, and challenge, while absorption is characterized by complete concentration and engrossment in work so that time passes quickly.

Saks (2006) distinguishes between job engagement and organizational engagement, where job engagement refers to the degree to which an individual is physically, cognitively, and emotionally involved in performing their work, while organizational engagement relates to the degree to which an individual is involved in the organization as a whole. This distinction is important because both have different antecedents and consequences in the organizational context.

Various studies have identified factors that influence employee engagement levels. According to the Job Demands-Resources Model developed by Demerouti et al. (2001), job resources are a key predictor of employee engagement. Job resources encompass physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that can reduce job demands, help achieve work goals, or stimulate personal growth and development.

Employee engagement has been shown to have a significant positive impact on various organizational outcomes. Harter et al. (2002) found in a meta-analysis involving over 7,900 business units that engagement is positively correlated with profitability, productivity, retention, and customer satisfaction. Job satisfaction increases significantly in engaged employees. Locke (1976) explains that engaged employees experience higher satisfaction because they experience meaning and fulfillment in their work. Christian et al. (2011) in a meta-analysis found a strong correlation ($r = 0.78$) between engagement and job satisfaction.

Organizational commitment is also an important consequence of engagement. Meyer & Allen (1991) identified that engaged employees exhibit higher affective commitment because they experience positive emotional attachment to the organization. Saks

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(2006) found that job engagement predicts organizational commitment with $\beta = 0.49$.

Productivity increases substantially in organizations with high levels of engagement. Gallup (2017) reported that business units with the highest engagement experienced a 17% increase in productivity compared to those with the lowest engagement.

The relationship between employee engagement and employee performance has been a major focus of organizational research over the past decade. In a comprehensive meta-analysis, Christian et al. (2011) found a strong correlation ($\rho = 0.43$) between engagement and task performance, and a moderate correlation ($\rho = 0.34$) with contextual performance.

Broaden-and-Build Theory (Fredrickson, 2001) explains that positive emotions arising from engagement can expand thought-action repertoires and build psychological resources that support better performance. Ouwenneel et al. (2012) confirmed that positive emotions mediate the relationship between personal resources and work engagement.

Rich et al. (2010) in a longitudinal study found that job engagement predicts task performance ($\beta = 0.37$) and organizational citizenship behavior ($\beta = 0.30$) after controlling for job satisfaction, job involvement, and intrinsic motivation.

Bakker & Bal (2010) used a weekly diary study to show that fluctuations in engagement correlated with variations in performance at the individual level. This finding confirms the causal relationship between engagement and performance.

Demerouti & Cropanzano (2010) found that engagement predicts not only in-role performance but also extra-role performance, indicating that engaged employees tend to do more than expected in their job description.

Employee engagement research in the public sector demonstrates unique characteristics compared to the private sector. Kim (2005) identified public service motivation (PSM) as a critical driver of engagement in the government context. Wright et al. (2013) found that government employees with high PSM demonstrated higher levels of engagement when they perceived their work as contributing to the public good.

Bakker et al. (2014), in a study of Dutch government employees, found that job resources such as autonomy and social support from supervisors had a stronger effect on engagement in the public sector than in the private sector. This is due to the more rigid bureaucratic structure in government.

Vigoda-Gadot et al. (2013) identified that government employee engagement significantly impacts the quality of public service delivery. Engaged public servants demonstrate greater responsiveness to public needs and innovation in service delivery.

H1: Employee Engagement has a positive and significant effect on performance.

H2: Employee engagement has a positive and significant effect on innovative behavior.

Knowledge Sharing in Improving Performance

Knowledge sharing is a fundamental element of knowledge management that plays a crucial role in improving organizational performance. In today's knowledge-based economy, an organization's ability to create, store, and share knowledge is a critical factor in maintaining competitive advantage. Knowledge sharing is defined as a process where individuals collectively share tacit and explicit knowledge to create new knowledge (Van Den Hooff & De Ridder, 2004). Nonaka & Takeuchi (1995) in Knowledge Creation Theory emphasize the importance of knowledge conversion through the processes of socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization.

Empirical research shows a positive relationship between knowledge sharing and performance. Wang & Noe (2010) found in their meta-analysis that knowledge sharing significantly contributes to improved individual, team, and organizational performance. This mechanism occurs because knowledge sharing enables the accumulation of organizational knowledge and enhances problem-solving capabilities (Argote & Ingram, 2000).

Davenport and Prusak (1998) emphasize that knowledge sharing is not just a transfer of information, but involves a complex communication process where the recipient of knowledge must be able to understand, interpret, and apply the knowledge received in the context of their work.

Based on Blau's (1964) Social Exchange Theory, knowledge sharing can be viewed as a form of social exchange in which individuals share knowledge in the hope of reciprocal benefits. This theory explains individuals' motivations for sharing knowledge and how this can affect performance.

Lin (2007) In his research on 172 employees of a technology company in Taiwan, he found that knowledge sharing had a significant positive influence on employee innovation performance ($\beta = 0.43$, $p < 0.01$).

Kamasak and Bulutlar (2010) In a study of 384 employees of a manufacturing company in Turkey, it was shown that knowledge sharing had a positive effect on task performance ($\beta = 0.52$, $p < 0.001$) and contextual performance ($\beta = 0.38$, $p < 0.01$). Curado et al. (2017) through a longitudinal study of 247 employees of a consulting company found that increased knowledge sharing activities over a 12-month period were associated with a 15-23% increase in employee performance.

Knowledge sharing enables employees to acquire new knowledge and skills relevant to their tasks (Argote et al., 2003).

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Sharing best practices and lessons learned can reduce duplication of effort and increase work efficiency (Szulanski, 1996). Combining knowledge from multiple sources can spark innovative ideas and creative solutions (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995). Access to broader knowledge enables more informed decision-making (Davenport & Prusak, 1998).

Cohen and Levinthal (1990) showed that an individual's ability to recognize, assimilate, and apply external knowledge moderates the relationship between knowledge sharing and performance.

Goodman and Darr's (1998) study indicates that the benefits of knowledge sharing are more pronounced in complex tasks than in routine tasks.

Organizational Context:Contextual factors such as competitive intensity and environmental uncertainty can moderate the effectiveness of knowledge sharing (Zander & Kogut, 1995).

This literature review shows that knowledge sharing has a consistent positive influence on employee performance. This relationship is mediated by various factors such as learning, innovation, and improved decision-making. The effectiveness of knowledge sharing is influenced by individual factors (motivation, personality, self-efficacy), organizational factors (culture, structure, reward system), and social factors (trust, norms, network ties).

H3: Knowledge sharing has a positive and significant effect on performance.

H4: Knowledge sharing has a positive and significant effect on innovative behavior.

Innovative Behavior as a Mediating Variable

Innovative behavior refers to individual actions directed at generating, introducing, and applying new ideas in work roles, groups, or organizations (Janssen, 2000). Scott & Bruce (1994) identified three stages of innovative behavior: idea generation, idea promotion, and idea realization.

Engaged employees have high energy and motivation to engage in innovative activities (Agarwal, 2014). Engagement creates a psychological environment conducive to exploring new ideas and taking risks necessary for innovation (Orth & Volmer, 2017).

Innovative behavior then acts as a mechanism through which engagement influences performance. Engaged employees are more likely to develop innovative solutions that improve work effectiveness and efficiency (Shuck et al., 2017). Research by Karatepe (2013) demonstrated the mediating role of innovative behavior in the engagement-performance relationship.

Knowledge sharing provides essential input for innovative behavior. The accumulation of knowledge from various sources enables individuals to combine existing ideas into innovative solutions (Hargadon & Sutton, 1997). The combinatorial theory of innovation explains that innovation arises from the recombination of existing knowledge (Fleming, 2001).

Cabrera et al. (2006) found that knowledge sharing encourages innovative behavior by providing a richer knowledge stock. The resulting innovative behavior then improves performance through the implementation of new ideas that lead to process or product improvements (Shanker et al., 2017).

Innovative behavior has strong potential as a mediator in the employee engagement- performance and knowledge sharing-performance relationships. However, several gaps still need to be explored: 1) Specific mechanisms: Further research is needed to understand the psychological and social mechanisms that explain the mediation process, 2) Organizational context: Most studies have been conducted in developed countries, so generalization to organizational contexts in developing countries is still limited, 3) Potential moderators: Factors that can strengthen or weaken the mediating role of innovative behavior need to be further explored, 4) Longitudinal design: More longitudinal studies are needed to understand the temporal dynamics of these relationships.

The literature demonstrates strong theoretical and empirical support for the role of innovative behavior as a mediator in the relationship between employee engagement and knowledge sharing and performance. This mediation model offers a more comprehensive understanding of how organizations can improve performance by simultaneously developing engagement, knowledge sharing, and innovative behavior. Based on the literature review above, the research model is presented in Figure 1.

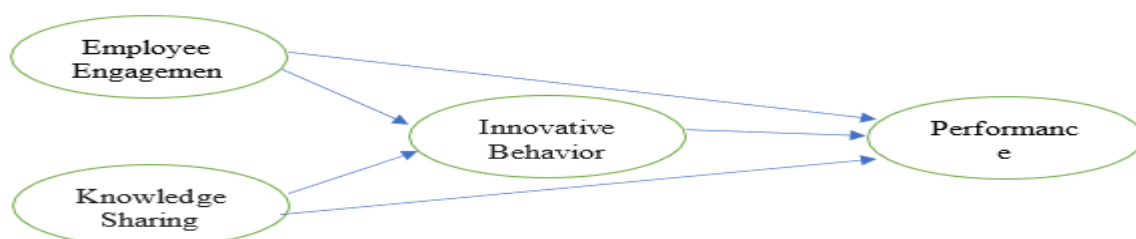


Figure 1: Research Model

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RESEARCH METHODS

Research Data

The study was conducted from March to August 2025. The sample size was 136 respondents, consisting of Civil Servants in the Semarang City Regional Secretariat. The sampling technique used was purposive sampling. The analysis tool used was Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with a two-step approach. Of the 150 questionnaires distributed, 140 were returned, resulting in a 90% response rate. After evaluation, only 136 respondents' data met the requirements for statistical analysis. In terms of gender, 60% of respondents were male and 40% were female. Respondents were aged between 30 and 50 years and had between 5 and 25 years of work experience as lecturers.

To measure variables Employee Engagement using indicators: 1. **Emotional Engagement**, 2. **Organizational Commitment**, 3. **Motivation and Work Spirit**, 4. **Job Satisfaction**, 5. **Active Participation**

To measure variables Knowledge Sharing uses indicators: 1. Willingness to Share Knowledge, 2. Frequency of Information Sharing, 3. Quality of Knowledge Shared, 4. Ease of Information Access, 5. Collaboration and Knowledge Interaction

To measure the Innovative Behavior variable using the following indicators: 1. Idea generation, 2. Idea promotion, 3. Idea implementation, 4. Risk taking, 5. Proactive Problem Solving.

Performance indicators are measured by the following indicators: 1. Employee Performance Targets; 2. Discipline; 3. Work initiative; 4. Cooperation; 5. Integrity.

Table 1 : Respondent Demographics (n = 136)

Variables	Information	Mean	Standard Deviation
Age	Year	38,375	5,851
Work experience	Year	15,521	4,267
Marital status	0 = Not married 1 = Married	0.989	0.445
Innovative Behavior	5 items	23,335	4,359
Employee Engagement	5 items	24,110	4,045
Knowledge Sharing	5 items	23,658	5,017
Performance	5 Item	24,020	4,082

Source: Processed primary data (202)

Reliability Test

Reliability test results show that all construct reliability values are greater than 0.7. This indicates that all research constructs are reliable.

Table 2: Data Reliability Test

Variables	Std. Loading	Standard Error	Reliability
Innovative Behavior	4,028	1,126	0.789
Employee Engagement	4,167	0.890	0.715
Knowledge Sharing	3,695	1,978	0.842
Performance	3,298	1,644	0.847

Source: Processed primary data (2023)

-Model Data Suitability Assessment

Model testing was conducted using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with a two-step approach. The results of the Feasibility Testing Index calculation, presented in Table 3, indicate that the measurement results have met the goodness-of-fit criteria, meaning the model in this study is acceptable.

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Table 3: Structural Equation Modeling Feasibility Testing Index

No	Goodness of fit index	Cut- off value	Analys is Results	Model evaluation
1	χ^2 - Chi-Square	< 108.78	99.28	Good
2	<i>Significance Probability</i>	? ?????	0.061	Good
3	CMIN/DF	??????	1,989	Good
4	GFI	? ?????	0.897	Marginal
5	AGFI	? ?????	0.865	Marginal
6	TLI	? ?????	0.894	Marginal
7	CFI	? ?????	0.916	Good
8	RMSEA	??????	0.077	Good

Source: Processed primary data (2025)

RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Statistical Analysis Results

Each hypothesis is tested by comparing the critical ratio (CR) and the t-table value at a specific degree of freedom (df). If the CR value is greater than the t-table value at a specific df, the relationship between the tested variables can be declared significant at a certain probability level. Furthermore, the probability level is also assessed; if $p < 0.05$, the null hypothesis is rejected, and if $p > 0.05$, the null hypothesis is accepted. The results of the five hypotheses are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Regression Weight Standardized Structural Equation Model

	Estimate	SE	CR	P	Confirmation
Innovative behavior <--- Employee Engagement	0.562	0.53	4,312	0.028	significant
Innovative behavior <--- Knowledge Sharing	0.651	0.49	3,786	***	significant
Performance <--- Employee Engagement	0.369	0.57	4,621	0.043	significant
Performance <--- Knowledge Sharing	0.401	0.67	4,547	***	significant
Performance <--- Innovative Behavior	0.784	0.74	5,341	***	significant

Source: Processed primary data (2025)

DISCUSSION

Referring to the statistical analysis of the proof of the first hypothesis, it shows that Employee Engagement has a positive and significant influence on Performance, which means that the higher the level of Employee Engagement, the higher the performance of the Semarang City Regional Secretariat employees. This can be explained as follows: 1) High Motivation and Commitment. Engaged employees have a strong emotional involvement with their work. They do not just work to get a salary, but they really care about the results of their work. This commitment encourages them to give extra effort and work with higher standards, 2) Better Focus and Concentration. Fully engaged employees tend to be more focused on their tasks. They are less easily distracted and can maintain concentration for longer periods, ultimately improving work quality and productivity. 3) Initiative and Proactivity. Employee engagement encourages employees to take initiative without always being told what to do. They proactively seek ways to improve work processes, address problems, and contribute more to the organization. This proactive attitude is invaluable for improving overall performance. 4) Loyalty and Retention. Engaged employees have lower turnover rates. When employees stay longer, they develop deeper skills and understanding of their jobs, which leads to improved performance over time. 5) Effective Collaboration and Teamwork. Engaged employees tend to be more cooperative and contribute positively to the team. They are more willing to share knowledge, help coworkers, and work together to achieve common goals, which improves overall team performance. 6) Innovation and Creativity. High engagement creates a safe psychological environment for innovation. Engaged employees are more willing to propose new ideas, experiment with different

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approaches, and contribute to organizational development. 7) Well-being and Positive Energy. Employee engagement is closely related to job satisfaction and psychological well-being. Engaged employees generally have lower stress levels and higher energy, which allows them to work more efficiently and effectively.

The findings of this study are consistent with the research results of Mohammed Al-Haziati (2024) which showed a significant relationship between the level of employee engagement and the level of job performance, with a correlation coefficient (R) of 0.295 and a p-value of 0.001. Chi-square analysis showed a significant association between the level of employee engagement and the level of job performance at the 5% level, with high levels of employee engagement resulting in high levels of job performance.

How to improve Employee Engagement to have a positive impact on performance:

1. Optimization of Job Characteristics

Strategy: a) Redesign tasks to be more challenging and meaningful, b) Provide autonomy in making work-related decisions, c) Create variety in tasks to avoid boredom, d) Explain the significance of the task and its impact on the organization, e) Provide constructive feedback regularly **Implementation:** a) Conduct job enrichment by adding more strategic responsibilities, b) Implement a job rotation system to develop skills, c) Create clear documentation about the contribution of each role to company goals.

2. Strengthening the Reward and Recognition System

Research shows that rewards and recognition are the most influential factors on job performance ($\beta = 0.406, p < 0.01$) Employee Engagement Trends for HR Leaders.

Strategy: a) A fair and transparent reward system, b) Consistent recognition program, c) Balanced financial and non-financial rewards, d) Public recognition of employee achievements, e) Career development opportunities as a form of long-term reward **Implementation:** a) Employee of the month/quarter programs, b) Spot bonuses for special achievements, c) Public recognition in Company meetings or newsletters, d) Training and certification opportunities as a form of investment in employees.

3. Increased Organizational Support

Strategy: a) Providing adequate resources to complete the task, b) Ongoing training and development programs, c) Work-life balance support through flexible working arrangements, d) Effective two-way communication between management and employees, d) Organizational culture that supports innovation and learning

Implementation: a) Investment in technology and tools that support productivity, b) Learning and development budget for each employee, c) Flexible working hours and remote work options, d) Regular town halls and feedback sessions

4. Strengthening the Quality of Supervision and Leadership

Research shows that frontline supervision plays a critical role in driving employee engagement Employee Engagement Trends for HR Leaders.

Strategy: a) Management training to develop leadership skills, b) Regular coaching and mentoring from supervisors, c) Open communication channels between superiors and subordinates, d) Participative decision making in relevant matters, e) Supportive leadership style that empowers employees

Implementation: a) Leadership development programs for supervisors and managers, b) Regular one-on-one meetings between supervisors and subordinates, c) 360-degree feedback system for leadership evaluation, d) Management training in emotional intelligence and communication skills.

5. Implementation of Organizational Justice

Strategy: a) a) Procedural justice in all HR policies, b) Distributive justice in the distribution of rewards and punishments, c) Interactional justice in employee communication and treatment, d) Transparency in the decision-making process, e) Consistency in the application of rules and policies. **Implementation:** a) a) Clear and fair performance evaluation criteria, b) Transparent promotion and compensation policies, c) Effective grievance handling mechanisms, d) Regular communication about policy changes and their reasons

6. Developing a Culture of Engagement

Employee engagement should not be a one-off exercise, but should be integrated into the company culture Employee Engagement Trends for HR Leaders.

Strategy: a) Radical transparency in organizational communication, b) Shared mission and values that are clear and meaningful, c) Collaborative work environment that encourages teamwork, d) Innovation culture that values new ideas, e) Continuous improvement mindset at all levels.

Implementation: a) Regular sharing about company performance and strategic direction, b) Values-based hiring and performance evaluation, c) Cross-functional projects and collaboration tools, d) Innovation challenges and suggestion boxes, e) Regular pulse surveys to measure engagement levels

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7. Continuous Measurement and Monitoring

Strategy: a) Regular engagement surveys to measure engagement levels, b) Performance metrics related to engagement, c) Predictive analytics to identify disengagement risks, d) Benchmarking with industry best practices, e) Action planning based on measurement results.

Implementation: a) Quarterly engagement pulse surveys, b) Dashboard for tracking key engagement metrics, c) Exit interview analysis to understand the causes of turnover, d) Regular review and adjustment of engagement strategy

Proof of the second hypothesis, Employee engagement has a significant positive effect on Innovative Behavior. This result means that the higher the degree of Employee engagement, the more the innovative Behavior of Semarang City Regional Secretariat employees will increase. This is caused by: 1) High Intrinsic Motivation. Engaged employees have a strong emotional involvement with their work. They are intrinsically motivated to give their best, including looking for new and creative ways to solve problems or improve work processes, 2) Psychological Safety. Engaged employees feel psychologically safe in their work environment. They are not afraid to take risks, share new ideas, or try different approaches because they feel supported by the organization, 3). Organizational Commitment. Engagement creates a strong emotional bond with the organization. Engaged employees see the success of the organization as their personal success, so they are motivated to contribute through innovative ideas, 4). Energy and Vigor. Engaged employees have a high level of energy at work. This energy encourages them to take the initiative, explore new possibilities, and not just be satisfied with the status quo, 5). Cognitive Engagement. Engagement involves cognitive aspects where employees focus fully on their work. This deep focus allows them to see innovation opportunities that less engaged employees might miss. These findings align with research by Bilqees Ghani et al. (2023), which found that engaged employees are more likely to exhibit innovative behavior.

The results of the statistical analysis proving the third hypothesis state that Knowledge Sharing influences significantly positive impact on performance. This means that the higher the degree of Knowledge Sharing can improve the performance of employees of the Semarang City Regional Secretariat. Knowledge Sharing can Improve Civil Servant Performance if there is: 1) Increased Individual Competence. Knowledge sharing allows employees to learn from the experiences and expertise of other colleagues. When knowledge and best practices are shared, each individual can improve their technical and soft skills without having to experience time-consuming trial and error, 2). Efficiency in Task Completion. Employees can avoid duplication of work and the same mistakes by utilizing existing knowledge. Sharing experiences on how to solve certain problems or effective procedures can speed up task completion, 3). Innovation in Public Services. Knowledge sharing encourages the exchange of creative ideas to improve public services. Employees from various units can share innovative solutions that have been proven successful in their respective fields, 4) Reduction of the Learning Curve. New or transferred employees can adapt more quickly and achieve optimal performance through the transfer of knowledge from seniors or experienced colleagues. This reduces the time required to achieve full productivity, 5). Improved Decision-Making Quality. With access to broader knowledge and diverse perspectives, Employees can make more informed and comprehensively informed decisions, 6). Standardization and Consistency. Knowledge sharing helps spread best practices throughout the organization, creating consistent performance standards across work units, 7) Motivation and Engagement. A culture of knowledge sharing creates a collaborative and supportive work environment, which ultimately increases Employee motivation and engagement in work.

These results support research by Hazem Ali et al. (2022), who found that knowledge sharing behavior within organizations is crucial for improving civil servant performance. With the help of specific technological support, a culture of willingness to share knowledge can be built.

The results of statistical proof of the fourth hypothesis state that Knowledge Sharing has a significant positive effect on Innovative behavior. This means that the higher the level of Knowledge Sharing, the more it can increase the innovative behavior of Semarang City Regional Secretariat employees. Knowledge Sharing is able to increase Employee Innovative Behavior because: 1) Access to Diverse Knowledge. Knowledge sharing allows employees to access various perspectives, experiences, and solutions from various work units and areas of expertise. This diversity of knowledge becomes raw material for developing innovative ideas, 2) Stimulation of Creativity Through Collaboration. When employees share knowledge and discuss, an exchange of ideas occurs that can trigger creative thinking. This interaction often produces new solutions that would not have been thought of before if working individually, 3) Learning from Best Practices. Employees can learn best practices from other units and modify them to be applied in different contexts. This process of adaptation and modification encourages the emergence of new innovations, 4). Reducing Risk Aversion. Knowledge sharing creates an environment that supports experimentation and learning. Employees become more willing to try new approaches because they have the support and input from their colleagues, 5) Identifying Improvement Opportunities. Through knowledge sharing, employees can identify gaps and improvement opportunities in work processes that have previously been invisible. This awareness motivates them to develop innovative solutions, 6) Cross-Pollination

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Ideas. The exchange of knowledge between different fields (cross-functional knowledge sharing) often results in breakthrough innovations through the combination of concepts from different domains, 7). Increased Self-Efficacy. When employees feel their knowledge and ideas are valued in the sharing process, their self-confidence increases. This encourages them to be more courageous in proposing and implementing innovative ideas, 8) Continuous Learning Culture. Knowledge sharing creates a culture of continuous learning that encourages civil servants to always look for new and better ways to carry out their duties.

The results of this study support Research results: M. Jamal Haider Naqvi et al., (2018) This study explored the impact of knowledge sharing on employee innovative work behavior. The results showed that incentives for employees to share new information learned can be increased and improved through interdepartmental relationships and collaboration.

The results of the statistical analysis proving the fifth hypothesis state that Innovative Behavior has a significant positive effect on performance. This result means that the higher the degree of innovative behavior of employees can improve the performance of employees of the Semarang City Regional Secretariat. Innovative Behavior Can Improve Civil Servant Performance if: 1). Increased Operational Efficiency. Innovative behavior encourages employees to find new, more efficient ways of carrying out their duties. Innovation in work processes can reduce excessive bureaucracy, speed up services, and optimize the use of resources. 2). Improved Quality of Public Services. Innovative employees will develop service methods that are more responsive to community needs. This increases public satisfaction and ultimately improves overall organizational performance. 3). Adaptation to Change. Innovative behavior allows employees to adapt more quickly to changes in technology, regulations, and community demands. This adaptability is important to maintain the relevance and effectiveness of public organizations. 4). More Effective Problem Solving. Innovative employees are able to identify problems better and develop unconventional, creative solutions. This improves the organization's ability to overcome complex challenges. 5). Increased Motivation and Engagement. Involvement in innovative activities increases the sense of ownership and job satisfaction of civil servants. They feel more meaningful in contributing to the organization, which ultimately improves individual performance. 6). Technology Optimization and Digitalization. Innovative behavior encourages the use of technology to improve work processes, which can increase accuracy, speed, and transparency in public services.

The results of this study are in accordance with research Yu Cheng et al., (2021; Chun Hui et al., (2015); PD Patterson (2020) which reveals that employee innovative behavior both directly and indirectly improves job performance by reducing the negative impact of inhibitory pressures on performance.

The results of this study are also in line with the research of Arohi Piggy (2021) which provides strong empirical evidence that innovative behavior is not only important for public organizations, but directly contributes to improving civil servant performance through various mediating and moderating mechanisms.

The role of innovative behavior as a mediating variable

To test whether the Innovative Behavior variable is able to act as a mediator in the relationship between Employee Engagement and Knowledge Sharing. with Performance, using the Path Analysis method, the results of which are presented in Table 5.

Table 5: Direct and Indirect Effects

Variables	Estimation
Performance <--- Employee Engagement	0.369
Performance <--- Knowledge Sharing	0.401
Innovative Behavior <--- Employee Engagement	0.562
Innovative Behavior <--- Knowledge Sharing	0.651
Performance <--- Innovative Behavior	0.784
Performance <--- Innovative Behavior <--- Employee Engagement,	0.440
Performance <--- Innovative Behavior <--- Knowledge Sharing	0.510

Source: Processed Primary Data (2025)

The results of the path analysis in Table 5 reveal that the direct influence of Employee Engagement on Performance is 0.369, smaller than its indirect influence, namely through the innovative behavior variable of 0.440. Thus, it can be concluded that innovative behavior can act as a mediating variable and strengthen the relationship between Employee Engagement and the Performance of Semarang City Regional Secretariat employees.

HThe results of the path analysis of the direct influence of the Knowledge Sharing variable on Performance were 0.401,

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smaller than its indirect influence, namely through Innovative Behavior on Performance of 0.510. Based on these results, it can be concluded that Innovative Behavior can act as a mediating variable and strengthen the relationship between Knowledge Sharing and the Performance of Semarang City Regional Secretariat employees.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion:

Employee Engagement, and Knowledge Sharing respectively has a significant positive influence on employee innovative behavior. Employee innovative behavior has a strong positive influence on employee performance.

Employee Engagement, and Knowledge Sharing also has an indirect influence on employee performance, namely through the innovative behavior variable as a mediator variable.

The direct influence of innovative behavior on performance is greater than the direct influence of the Employee Engagement and Knowledge Sharing variables on performance.

Recommendation:

1. Prioritize Knowledge Sharing Development

Knowledge Sharing has the strongest influence on Innovative Behavior (0.651) and the highest indirect effect on Performance (0.510)

Implementation: a) Build an easily accessible knowledge management system, b) Hold regular discussion forums between departments, c) Provide incentives for employees who actively share knowledge, c) Create communities of practice

2. Develop an Integrated Employee Engagement Program

Employee Engagement contributes significantly to Innovative Behavior (0.562) and has a substantial indirect effect on Performance (0.440)

Implementation: a) Strengthen two-way communication between management and employees, b) Involve employees in strategic decision making, c) Provide autonomy and meaningful work challenges, d) Implement clear career development programs

3. Focus on Innovative Behavior as a Key Driver of Performance

Innovative Behavior has the strongest direct influence on Performance (0.784)

Implementation: a) Allocate time and resources for experimentation and innovation, b) Create a reward system for innovative ideas, even those that fail, c) Form cross-functional teams for innovation projects, d) Develop an organizational culture that supports calculated risk-taking

4. Build Synergy Between Knowledge Sharing and Employee Engagement

These two variables reinforce each other and have a cumulative effect on performance through innovative behavior.

Implementation: a) Integrate knowledge sharing activities into engagement programs, b) Make knowledge sharing an indicator of employee performance, c) Create a collaboration platform that facilitates interaction and learning.

Research limitations

1. This study uses a cross-sectional design which only measures variables at one particular point in time.
2. Cannot explain the true temporal causal relationship between variables.
3. It is difficult to capture the dynamics of changes in behavior and performance over a longer period of time.

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