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The Role of Intrinsic Motivation and Psychological Empowerment in the Relationship of Transformational Leadership and Employees Innovative Behavior Post COVID-19 Pandemic

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Abstract

Innovative work behavior provides opportunities for implementing better work systems in carrying out tasks. Transformational leadership, intrinsic motivation and psychological empowerment play a role in encouraging employee innovative behavior. COVID 19 pandemic forces every employee to increase innovative behavior in facing work challenges after this era. There are two aims of this research. First one, exploring the influence of transformational leadership, intrinsic motivation and psychological empowerment on employee innovative work behavior after COVID-19 pandemic. Secondly, exploring intrinsic motivation and psychological empowerment moderating role in this relationship. Non-probability random sampling used for sample collection where the researcher determined three criterias that respondents needed to meet. The data of this research were analyzed by testing the measurement model, structural model and testing the hypotheses using Structural Equation Modeling with SMART-PLS. The results obtained are a) Transformational leadership influences employee innovative work behavior, b) intrinsic motivation influences employee innovative work behavior, c) intrinsic motivation doesn't moderate the relationship between transformational leadership and employee work innovative behavior, d) psychological empowerment influences employee innovative behavior, and e) psychological empowerment doesn't moderate transformational leadership on employee innovative work behavior.

Keywords: Transformational leadership, intrinsic motivation, psychological empowerment, innovative work behavior, post COVID-19 pandemic

1. Introduction

Performance improvement can be encouraged by increasing employee creativity and innovation. Creativity is able to encourage and facilitate the discovery of new ideas which useful for identifying better procedures in achieving any goals (Kim & Lee, n.d.). New ideas, concepts and procedures discovered then adopted and implemented in relevant units or activities (Stoker et al., n.d.). Moreover, creativity and innovation are really needed in facing post COVID-19 pandemic challenges where companies move after the performance targets which obstructed during the COVID-19 pandemic.

A key factor affecting employee creativity and innovation is the style of leadership. Two prevalent leadership styles are transformational and transactional leadership (Bass & Avolio, 1990). Transformational leaders motivate their employees through idealized influence (charisma), inspiration, intellectual stimulation, and personalized attention. These leaders foster an environment that encourages innovation both individually and within the organization (Y. Chen et al., 2018). Transactional leaders are leaders who influence their employees by giving rewards if they succeed in completing the task and punishing them if they fail to carry out the given job. In addition, transactional leaders supervise the performance of their employees and make improvements if their employees don't meet performance standards.

Transformational leaders impact employees' innovative work behavior by encouraging them to view problems from new perspectives and aiding in their personal development. Additionally, these leaders act as mentors and supporters, inspiring employees to take on greater responsibilities (J. De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010). Furthermore, transformational leaders also encourage employees become leaders for themselves (Si & Wei, 2012) (Niphadkar & Mohammed Kuhil, 2017). On the other hand, there are many leaders applying transactional leadership in their company. Transactional leaders are leaders who have more focus on facilitating employees performance rather than encouraging employees creativity and innovation (Kim & Lee, n.d.).

The connection between leadership style and employee innovative work behavior is shaped by various factors, one of which is employees' psychological empowerment. This form of empowerment is crucial because it enhances employees' feelings of competence, joy, and responsibility in performing their tasks (Afsar et al., 2014) (Jha, 2014). Employees with psychological empowerment feel happy about their work and view the work as meaningful and challenging task (Jha, 2014). In this way, employees will be encouraged to increase their creativity and innovation in completing their tasks.

The right type of leadership will increase employees' desire to behave innovatively. In order for this desire can encourage innovative actions and behavior, psychological empowerment is needed which ensures that employees are able to be creative and innovative (Pieterse et al., 2010). In other words, psychological empowerment has a moderating role in the relationship between leadership style and employee innovative work behavior.

This research aimed to: 1) examine the impact of transformational leadership on employee innovative behavior in the post-COVID era, 2) investigate the effect of intrinsic motivation on employee innovative behavior in the post-COVID era, 3) explore the influence of psychological empowerment on employee innovative behavior in the post-COVID era, 4) assess the moderating role of intrinsic motivation in the relationship between transformational leadership and employee innovative behavior in the post-COVID era, and 5) evaluate the moderating role of psychological empowerment in this relationship during the post-COVID era

Innovative behavior is such a hierarchical process consisting of ability in exploring issues, bringing up some ideas and solution to the problems faced, socializing ideas and problem solving till the stage of implementing solution for the problems faced (Pieterse et al., 2010). Other research said, innovative behavior described as a behavior in which a person contributes to the innovation process (Hughes et al., 2018). Innovative behavior reflected in two processes consisting of generating ideas and implementing them in the form of behavior (J. P. J. De Jong & Den Hartog, 2007). The process of generating these ideas related to assessing the problems faced and coming up with a new product or process, improving existing products and processes also other things related to solving the problems faced (J. De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010; Scott & Bruce, 2018). After the ideas are generated, the next stage is to find support and build a group to support these ideas (Scott & Bruce, 2018). After all done, final stage is implementing the ideas and testing and modifying the ideas (J. De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010) (Al-Omari et al., 2019).

In a corporate context, this innovation process is carried out through programs in an effort to achieve company targets. Employee must be able to carry out an assessment toward society and industrial needs. They also needed to bring up ideas which beneficial in solving the problems existed and implement solutions to solve problems faced in an effort to achieve company targets.

Transformational leadership is such a construct consisting several components which are (Pieterse et al., 2010) (M. Y. Chen et al., 2012) (Moradi Korejan & Shahbazi, 2016):

- a. Idealized influence
Transformational leaders become representative to their follower and prioritize group interests rather than their individual interest. We can say that transformational leaders are people admired, respected and can be trusted by their followers.
- b. Inspirational motivation
Transformational leaders have clear vision that they want to achieve, give meaning and challenge for their followers to achieve and realize this vision.
- c. Stimulating intellectuality
Transformational leaders encourage their follower inquiring quo status in their work environment, thinking solution for the problem faced. Furthermore, they give new approach for the conditions prevailing at workplace.
- d. Individual consideration
Transformational leaders provide full support for the achievements and development of their followers. Besides that, transformational leaders act as coaches or mentors in achieving their followers' goals.

Many researches explained that transformational leadership is ideal leadership style which must be implemented in workplace. Leader who carried out transformational leadership stimulated their followers by expressing vision, encouraging to ask quo status, and support their followers' development (Pieterse et al., 2010) (Farahnak et al., 2020). Leaders with strong transformational leadership provide sufficient resources and information for their followers to improve their performance in doing their duties & help them finding innovative ideas which can be implemented. Moreover, strong transformational leaders also care and support their followers' interest (Kim & Lee, n.d.).

Transformational leaders stimulate their follower in seeking problem and challenges in a new way. They help unleash their followers' ability which lead in increasing creativity and innovation done by their follower (J. P. J. De Jong & Den Hartog, 2007) (Lai et al., 2020). Transformational leader not only develop and train their follower to behave innovatively but also align their followers' interest towards company's big vision (M. Y. Chen et al., 2012) (Farahnak et al., 2020). It means, transformational leaders have positive relationship in developing innovative behavior of their followers (Udin & Shaikh, 2022).

H1: Transformational leadership has a positive effect on employee innovative behavior.

Intrinsic motivation is an aspect that influences employee cognition, behavior and emotions, thereby influencing employee performance in carrying out their work. It increases employee interest in carrying out tasks and has an attachment to these tasks (Bin Saeed et al., 2019; Kim & Lee, n.d.).

In previous research, intrinsic motivation has positive effect on employees' creativity in doing their tasks (Al Harbi et al., 2019) (Karadeniz et al., 2021). Employees who have intrinsic motivation will be more diligent and more focused in carrying out their work, exploring and testing innovation opportunities that exist in their company (Bin Saeed et al., 2019). Intrinsic motivation increases employees' ability to assess innovation opportunities in their environment, increasing their enthusiasm for promoting and pursuing new ideas in their workplace.

H2: Intrinsic motivation has positive effect in employee innovative behavior.

H3: Intrinsic motivation moderates the influence of transformational leadership and employee innovative behavior.

Psychological empowerment is a motivational concept based on employees' perceptions

of their ability to initiate and manage their tasks, execute their work effectively, contribute positively to their environment, and find meaningfulness in their work (Pieterse et al., 2010). It manifested in four cognitions which reflects someone's orientation in doing their work (Spreitzer, 1995) (Rani et al., 2021), there are:

- a) Meaning, refers to the significance of the goals or objectives of the work performed by the employee, aligning with their personal ideals and standards
- b) Competence, refers to an employee's confidence in their own abilities and skills required to perform their job effectively
- c) Self-determination, refers to the employee's belief that he has the choice to initiate and regulate his actions. Self-determination represents the independence in starting and maintaining employee work behavior and processes.
- d) Impact/benefits, refers to the extent to which employees impact strategic, administrative, or operational outcomes in the workplace.

High psychological empowerment within employees encourages employees to view themselves as competent and influential individuals in their duties and workplace, having proactive, initiative and independent behavior (Pieterse et al., 2010). It also encourage employees to spawn their new ideas, use relevant knowledge, optimize their abilities and expertise in solving problems that occur in carrying out their work (Rani et al., 2021) (Loi et al., 2015). Thus, psychological empowerment having role in increase employees' motivation in initiating new ideas, communicating to their colleagues and leader, also implement that ideas in their daily work.

H4: Psychological empowerment has a positive effect on employee innovative behavior

H5: Psychological empowerment moderates the influence of transformational leadership and employee innovative behavior.

2. Method

This research was conducted on employees in government and private companies in Indonesia. Researchers used a non-probability random sampling technique by formulating the following criteria for research respondents:

1. Respondents work in government or private companies that are legal entities.
2. Respondent has worked since January 2020 at the company.
3. Respondents keep working at their companies during COVID-19 pandemic.

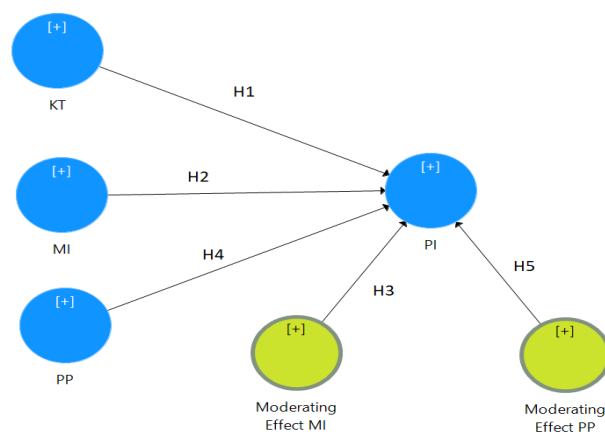
The questionnaire was successfully distributed to 479 respondents. Meanwhile, there are 348 respondents met the research criteria. Measurements were carried out using a Likert scale (1-5).

The PLS analysis method was used to analyze the data obtained. The indicators used are valid if they have an Outer Loadings value > 0.7 and are reliable if the Cronbach's Alpha value for each variable is > 0.7 . Outer loading value greater than 0,7 indicates that the indicators has strong and reliable relationship with latent construct. Outer loading value suggest that the indicator reflect 50% of the variable (Hair et al., 2019). Discriminant validity is also measured to compare the AVE value for a construct which is greater than the correlation value with other constructs.

In proving the hypothesis, the inner model in this research consists of direct effect, f square, r square and adjusted r square. The testing was conduct using the bootstrapping and blindfolding procedures in Smart-PLS (Hair et al., 2019; Leo et al., 2021). The influence between variables is seen in the f square value categories which are 0.02 – 0.15 (small

influence), 0.15 – 0.35 (medium influence) and > 0.35 (large influence). This value is obtained by comparin the size of the path oefficient with the effect size (Hair et al., 2019).

Figure 1.
 Research Model



In the research model illustrated in Figure 1, the study explores how transformational leadership affects employee innovative behavior, the impact of intrinsic motivation on this behavior, and the role of psychological empowerment in influencing it. Furthermore, the research examines how intrinsic motivation and psychological empowerment moderate the relationship between transformational leadership and employee innovative behavior

3. Results and Discussion

Table 1 describes the validity and reliability of the questionnaire instrument used. In the measurements carried out, there were several items in the instrument that had an outer loading value of <0.7, so they were excluded from the measurement and repeated measurements were carried out. In the next measurement, the outer loadings value for all items was obtained > 0.7 and the Cronbach's Alpha value for each variable was > 0.7. Thus, the research instrument used is valid and reliable and suitable for use in research.

Table 1.

Construct Validity and Reliability

Item	Outer Loading				Construct Reliability Cronbach's Alpha
	KT	MI	PI	PP	
KT1	0,716				0,94
KT3	0,807				
KT5	0,801				
KT6	0,833				
KT7	0,743				
KT8	0,772				
KT11	0,823				
KT12	0,71				
KT13	0,789				
KT14	0,899				
KT15	0,799				

MI1	0,74	
MI2	0,889	
MI3	0,83	0,872
MI4	0,722	
MI5	0,878	
PI1		0,872
PI4		0,794
PI5		0,815
PI6		0,839
PI7		0,878
PI9		0,89
PP5		0,705
PP6		0,764
PP7		0,753
PP8		0,796
PP10		0,825
PP11		0,822
PP12		0,847

The discriminant validity test carried out by comparing the AVE value of each variable which is greater than the correlation value with other variables. In the following Table 2. Discriminant Validity, the test results show that the AVE value is greater than the other variables so that the discriminant validity test has been fulfilled. Where the AVE values for the constructs Transformational Leadership (0.792), Intrinsic Motivation (0.815), Innovative Behavior (0.849), and Psychological Empowerment (0.789) are higher than the correlations with other variables.

Table 2.
 Discriminant Validity

	KT	MI	PI	PP
KT	0,792			
MI	0,225	0,815		
PI	0,467	0,532	0,849	
PP	0,453	0,431	0,668	0,789

The predictive relevance test was carried out to determine the level of relevance of a construct model using the Blindfolding procedure in SmartPLS. If the q square results have a value > 0.05 then it can be concluded that the construct model is relevant which all independent variables are appropriately used in predicting the dependent variable.

Table 3.
 Q Square

	SSO	SSE	Q ² (=1-SSE/SSO)
KT	3828,000	3828,000	
MI	1740,000	1740,000	
Moderating Effect MI	348,000	348,000	

Moderating Effect PP	348,000	348,000	
PI	2088,000	1269,531	0,392
PP	2436,000	2436,000	

In the Table 3. Q Square show the test results obtained Q square results of $0.392 > 0.05$. This value indicates that the measured variables (transformational leadership, intrinsic motivation, psychological empowerment, moderation of intrinsic motivation and psychological empowerment) are appropriate to use to predict employee innovative behavior.

Table 4.
R Square

	R Square	R Square Adjusted
Innovative behavior	0,556	0,550

Table 4. R Square describes measured variables (transformational leadership, intrinsic motivation, psychological empowerment, moderation of intrinsic motivation and psychological empowerment) influence employee innovative behavior by 0.556. This influence is included in the moderate category with an r square value > 0.33 . Based on the adjusted r square value, all independent variables are simultaneously able to explain the dependent variable by 55%.

Hypothesis analysis carried out to test whether independent variable has an effect on dependent variable. This test is also to find out whether the moderating variable moderates the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. The criteria used are the β value and p value < 0.05 .

Figure 2.

Output Model of Hypotheses Testing

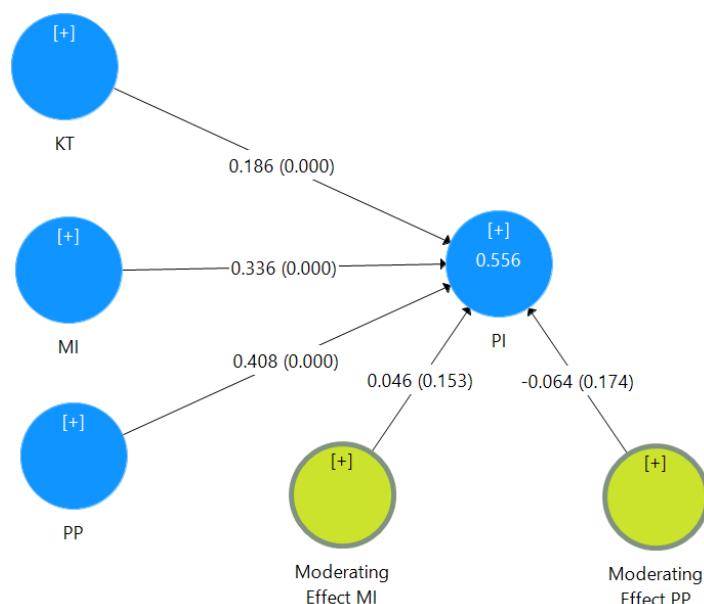


Table 5.

Hypotheses testing

	β	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P Values	Hypotheses
KT -> PI	0,186	4,541	0,000	H1: Supported
MI -> PI	0,336	7,578	0,000	H2: Supported
Moderating Effect MI -> PI	0,046	1,433	0,153	H3: No
PP -> PI	0,408	8,310	0,000	H4: Supported
Moderating Effect PP -> PI	-0,064	1,361	0,174	H5: No

Figure 2 Output Models of Hypotheses Testing and Table 5. Hypotheses Testing shows the following results:

1. The direct effect of Transformational Leadership on Innovative Behavior is 0.186, meaning that if Transformational Leadership increases by one unit, Innovative Behavior can increase by 18.6%. This effect is positive and significant.
2. The direct effect of Intrinsic Motivation on Innovative Behavior is 0.336, meaning that if Intrinsic Motivation increases by one unit, Innovative Behavior can increase by 33.6%. This effect is positive and significant.
3. The direct effect of Psychological Empowerment on Innovative Behavior is 0.408, meaning that if Psychological Empowerment increases by one unit, Innovative Behavior can increase by 40.8%. This effect is positive and significant.
4. The moderating effect of Intrinsic Motivation in the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Innovative Behavior is 0.046, meaning that if Intrinsic Motivation increases by one unit, the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Innovative Behavior can increase by 4.6%. This effect is not significant, as indicated by a p-value of 0.179, which is greater than 0.05.
5. The moderating effect of Psychological Empowerment in the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Innovative Behavior is -0.064, meaning that if Psychological Empowerment increases by one unit, the relationship between Transformational Leadership and Innovative Behavior decreases by 6.4%. This effect is not significant, as indicated by a p-value of 0.226, which is greater than 0.05.

In line with various previous studies, this research shows that there is an influence of all components of transformational leadership on employee innovative behavior (Zhang et al., 2021). Transformational leaders change values, interests, behavior and encourage and motivate employees to show performance above given expectations (Afsar & Umrani, 2020; Karimi et al., 2023). Transformational leaders are willing to take risks to experiment with new methods, modify current processes and systems for long-term advantages, and inspire employees to effectively explore available opportunities (Afsar & Umrani, 2020; Bin Saeed et al., 2019).

The results of this research indicate that intrinsic motivation has an influence on employee innovative behavior. Employees with intrinsic motivation are motivated by the pleasure or opportunities that arise from the work or tasks they do (Karadeniz et al., 2021). Furthermore, interests and satisfaction in doing their works allow them to determine how they do their duties (Ali et al., 2022; Nilasari et al., 2022; Scott & Bruce, 2018; Venkatesamy & Lew, 2022).

Psychological empowerment in employees has an influence on employee innovative behavior. Employees with high psychological empowerment see themselves as competent and have the ability to carry out their work, showing a proactive attitude, high initiative and innovation (Nasir et al., 2019; Prabowo et al., 2018). Employees with psychological empowerment try to exceed beyond work standards and come up with innovative ideas in carrying out their work (Javed et al., 2019).

This research did not identify a moderating effect of intrinsic motivation and psychological empowerment on the relationship between transformational leadership and employee innovative behavior. This contrasts with previous studies, which indicate that psychological empowerment does have a moderating influence (Grošelj et al., 2020; Prabowo et al., 2018; YILDIZ et al., 2017). Transformational leadership is believed to increase influence the emergence of innovative employee behavior if there is high psychological empowerment in employees.

6. Conclusion

From this research we can conclude that:

1. There is an influence of transformational leadership on employee innovative behavior after the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, hypothesis 1 is proven.
2. There is an influence of intrinsic motivation towards employees' innovative behavior after the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, hypotheses 2 is proven.
3. There is an effect of psychological empowerment on employees' innovative behavior after the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, hypotheses 4 is proven.
4. There is no moderating influence of intrinsic motivation or psychological empowerment on the relationship between transformational leadership and employee innovative behavior after the COVID 19 pandemic. Thus, hypotheses 3 and hypotheses 5 are not proven.

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