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Millennial and Gen Z Workers' Innovation Behavior in the Workplace, Knowledge Sharing and Transformational Leadership: A Mediator's Perspective on Workplace Thriving

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ABSTRACT

This study proposed to investigate whether workplace thriving mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and the generation of information, knowledge sharing, and workplace innovation behaviour among Millennials and Gen Zers. The respondents were 294 office branch employees in East Java. The CA Path Analysis was carried out through Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) based on Partial Least Squares (PLS). Knowledge sharing is positively and significantly associated with Workplace Innovation Behaviour (WIB) but does not have a significant direct effect on Transformational Leadership. Transformational leadership positively impacts innovation behavior in the workplace by fostering progress, including vitality, learning, and mental health. The author demonstrates that innovation results from transformational leaders who improve working conditions for employees, rather than from the exercise of authority. The study illustrates the correlation between innovation and leadership. I intend to identify the psychological factors involved. This concise paper underscores the importance of leaders cultivating a culture of sharing and information exchange to foster creativity among staff.

INTRODUCTION

In the new knowledge-based economy, a key focus for start-ups is driving workflow and innovation management. Human resource management has become a global strategic issue due to the increasing number of Millennials and Generation Z in the workforce. According to a 2025 survey conducted in 44 countries involving 23,482 respondents, the Millennial generation accounted for 36% of the workforce, while Generation Z accounted for 18% (Deloitte, 2025). Another survey result in the context of Indonesia predicted that these two generations would make up 80% of the workforce by 2034. Generation Z and Millennials make up more than 60% of Indonesia's population (Zahrotur et al, 2020). In the global economy, workplace innovation behavior is crucial for company success, especially for Millennial and Gen Z workers who have high expectations for a creative and innovative workplace. Saif *et al.* (2024) found that innovative work is strongly influenced by transformational leadership and knowledge sharing, which act as mediators in this relationship.

Knowledge sharing are indirectly associated with innovative behavior via engagement (Osmanaj *et al.*, 2022). Nonetheless, voluntary knowledge sharing among employees is less probable (Yoshida & Zhu, 2025), and initiatives to foster it should incorporate transformational leadership and collaboration during the knowledge-sharing process. Although there has been extensive research on transformational leadership, knowledge sharing, and workplace innovation behavior separately, particularly in the context of empowering Millennials and Generation Z in developing countries like Indonesia,

it remains very limited. Current research largely focuses on developed countries and specific Asian contexts, including China (Son *et al.*, 2020), Pakistan (Rehmani, 2023), and Vietnam (Nguyen, 2024).

Indonesia's unique environment, particularly its unique culture and organizations, has received relatively extensive research. Waworuntu *et al.* (2022) examined work-life balance, job satisfaction, and performance among Indonesian Millennials and Generation Z, who valued a supportive work environment, supervision, and career opportunities most. Hendratmoko and Mutirawati (2024) stated that a simple work environment impacted the performance of Indonesian Generation Z workers, while the effects of workload and job stress were insignificant. The identified gaps indicate the need for a more comprehensive view of this phenomenon, which also includes transformational leadership, knowledge sharing, and workplace innovation behavior within an inclusive model, while job sustainability has been highlighted as a possible mediator

This study aims to achieve three important purposes: (1) to test the direct relationships of transformational leadership with employees' knowledge sharing and workplace innovation behavior; (2) to explore workplace thriving as a mediator between transformational leadership and workplace innovation behavior; and (3) to identify the mediating effect of workplace thriving between knowledge sharing and workplace innovation behavior. The study is theoretically grounded in the Social Exchange Theory (SET) and the Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), offering theoretical perspectives on leader-employee social exchange processes and the impact of organisational climate on employee workplace innovation

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behavior. The findings of this study will be useful for the theory and practice of human resource management in younger generations, as it provides valuable implications for organizations to successfully manage knowledge workers, adopt effective leadership styles and characterize knowledge managements that contribute to organization performance.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Workplace Innovation Behavior

Workplace Innovation Behavior (WIB) is the capacity of an individual to draw up, promote, and make decisions on the projects in a business environment. Triadic reciprocal determinism, which comes from social cognitive theory (SCT; Bandura), offers an explanation for the complex interactions between individuals, their behaviors, and their environments in the context of Workplace Innovation Behavior (WIB). SCT suggests that personal, environmental, and behavioral factors interact in explaining human activity and that individuals are active agents who influence and are influenced by their environment (Wan *et al.*, 2022). De Jong and Den Hartog (2010) describe workplace innovation behavior as consisting of both the ability to generate ideas, such as creativity, and the skill to promote them and drive through their implementation a competency upon which competitive advantage depends (Li *et al.*, 2019).

According to Messmann *et al.* (2022), workplace innovation behavior (WIB) refers to employees' physical and cognitive behaviors, either independently or in combination, that motivate managers to initiate new work-related behaviors. These behaviors include searching, sharing, creating, implementing, composing, learning from, marketing, and implementing (Kim *et al.*, 2024). According to SCT, individual workplace behavior is also shaped by social learning and social cognition factors, which play a significant role in explaining variance in workplace innovation behavior among individuals (Chen *et al.*, 2022). In terms of personality type, leadership, and communication, Dayanti (2023) found that several aspects influence the WIB of millennials and Generation Z.

Millennials and Generation Z are characterized by a high level of enthusiasm for digital technology advancements, flexibility, and a desire for meaningful work, demonstrating an organizational environment that fosters HRAC related to organizational goals (Njoroge *et al.*, 2022). Wasim and Rahman (2022) emphasized that a leadership style that meets the values and aspirations of the younger generation is crucial for developing innovative and sustainable work methods in organizations.

Transformational Leadership and Workplace Innovation Behavior

Burns & Bass created the intellectual underpinning for transformational leadership, a style that has received more study than any other leadership model in today's work environment. Bass (1985) describes transformational leadership as leaders' capacity to motivate followers to exceed their initial expectations through the

identification of the significance and worth of goals. According to Podsakoff and MacKenzie (1990), there are six SW transformational leader behaviors, including the articulation of a shared organizational vision, the role-modelling of appropriate behavior, fostering collaborative relationships among followers, having high expectations for follower skills and abilities, individual consideration, and encouraging workers' task objectives over self-interests. and stimulating reflective thought.

The main characteristics of transformational leadership are a strong commitment to the well-being of the group and individual participation in achieving organizational or community goals (Tarker, 2019). They also provide an environment for innovation and build a supportive climate and culture of collaboration to facilitate the dissemination of knowledge and the generation of new ideas across departments (Njoroge *et al.*, 2022). According to Deng *et al.* (2022), transformational leadership positively influences vision, engagement, and innovation. Otherwise, In their study, Afsar and Ali (2019) analyzed data from a research sample of 338 individuals, including employees and supervisors, and identified a significant correlation between transformational leadership and workplace innovation behavior. Considering all that has been described, we propose the following hypothesis: H1: Transformational leadership significantly influences workplace innovation behavior

Knowledge Sharing and Workplace Innovation Behavior

One of these knowledge management activities is knowledge sharing, which, according to Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995-2000), is believed to be a process in which individuals tend to share tacit or explicit knowledge to create new knowledge and is an inherent part of organizational knowledge management that encourages creativity and innovative performance (Peng *et al.*, 2024). Kmiecik (2020) broadens understanding of knowledge-sharing mechanisms by distinguishing between knowledge donation and knowledge collection in the context of innovative work behavior. Through a study of 252 white-collar employees in Poland, Kmiecik found that "knowledge donating is significantly related to idea generation, which is highly correlated with idea realization" (Kmiecik, 2020, p. 1832). These findings indicate that knowledge sharing activities, particularly in the form of knowledge donation, have a direct impact on specific components of workplace innovation behavior: idea generation and idea realization.

Knowledge sharing refers to the transfer of information as well as experience and expertise among employees within organisations and is a relatively complex mechanism with implicit and explicit types intended to foster innovation (Aydin *et al.*, 2020). It typically involves the exchange and transmission of information through communication, training, and documentation. Knowledge sharers are often happy to engage in it (Magnier-Watanabe & Benton, 2017).

Knowledge sharing enhances and is a crucial driver for enhancing teamwork performance and shared value creation (Al-Omoushe *et al.*, 2024). According to Elamin *et al.* (2024), a study conducted on 193 service sector employees in the United Arab Emirates reveals that “there is a positive significant relationship between knowledge sharing and WIB” (p. 232). This study also found that knowledge-sharing behavior acts as a mediating variable, converting employee engagement into tangible innovative results. Enabling knowledge sharing by empowering leaders greatly stimulates employees’ innovativeness (Dayanti, 2023). Thus we suggest: H2: There is a positive relationship between knowledge-sharing behavior and innovative work behavior performance in the workplace.

The Mediating Influence of Workplace Thriving on the Relationship between Transformational Leadership and Workplace Innovation Behavior

Considerable research has produced a conceptualization that includes transformative leadership, workplace thriving, and workplace innovation behavior. It presupposes that transformational leadership manifests itself such that it impacts employee development through these mechanisms: intellectual stimulation, individualized support, and cohesive organizational goals (Afsar & Umrani 2020). Workplace thriving acts like a vital mediating mechanism through which employees’ psychological well-being capitalizes on the transformational leadership benefits (Wasim & Rehman, 2023). Recent studies have further emphasized the role of workplace thriving in linking transformational leadership to workplace innovation behavior (Wasim & Rehman, 2023; Afsar & Umrani, 2020).

New evidence suggests that work system learning is a strong predictor of employees innovation capability (Kim *et al.*, 2025). This mediation has been proven in several types of organizations (private companies, IT firms) and is reinforced among younger employees looking for challenge and autonomy. We hypothesize: H3. The mediating effect of workplace thriving is positively correlated with the relationship between transformational leadership and behaviors toward workplace innovation behavior.

The Mediating Influence of Workplace Thriving on Knowledge Sharing and Workplace Innovation Behavior

Knowledge sharing and transformational leadership are two of the most powerful antecedents that have been shown to have a significant impact on creative performance. This impact can be demonstrated both directly and indirectly. According to Nurmalitasari and Riani (2025), an indirect path effect is the phenomenon known as workplace thriving. This phenomenon is characterised by the experience of feeling energised, involved, and growing in one’s job.

Empirical studies conducted in the last five years

have consistently validated the mediating function of workplace well-being in connecting knowledge sharing to workplace innovation behavior. Wang (2024), in his research published in *Knowledge Management Research & Practice*, performed a comprehensive analysis of this relationship, emphasizing innovative knowledge sharing. The study found that “knowledge sharing has the potential to enable an employee to thrive at work, and the resulting sense of workplace thriving can motivate these employees to engage in workplace innovation behavior. This study explicitly proposed and verified a mediation model in which employees innovative knowledge sharing will have a positive effect on their workplace innovation behavior through workplace thriving (Wang, 2024). Therefore, we propose: H4: Workplace thriving positively mediates the link between the sharing of knowledge and behaviors related to innovation in the workplace.

Workplace Thriving and Workplace Innovation Behavior

Workplace thriving is an important construct in the positive organizational behavior literature, particularly for how it supports workplace innovation. The vitality factor appears to reflect energy, vigor, and enthusiasm at work, and the learning factor denotes continuous growth in knowledge and skills. Both dimensions combine to form a psychological momentum, which aids employee self-growth and fosters employee innovation in the organization (Spreitzer *et al.*, 2005). Empirical research consistently demonstrates a significant and positive direct relationship between workplace well-being and innovative work behavior. In their landmark study published in the *Journal of Creative Behavior*, Carmeli and Spreitzer (2009) examined this relationship using a sample of 172 employees from various industries in the United States. Using a two-wave, time-lagged research design, the study found that “well-being mediated the relationship between connectivity and innovative behavior” (Carmeli & Spreitzer, 2009).

Eventually, the notion of workplace thriving is now understood to connect leadership with innovation. Good health refers to a state when employees have enough available resources, skills, and ability to gain experience: it promotes healthy mental states that are causing an increase in learning performance and innovative problem solving (Puspita *et al.*, 2022). Another report by Riaz and colleagues (2020) also found a significant relationship of workplace thriving with the workplace innovation behavior. Several studies have suggested that flourishing in one’s job leads to satisfaction and has a relationship with creativity, co-operation and creative work behavior (Liu *et al.*, 2020). Building on this argument, we propose that: H5: Workplace thriving is positively related to workplace innovation behavior.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Regarding the use of older and younger millennials as study participants, the sample for this study consisted

of 294 participants from the East Java regional offices who were employees from 1997 to 2012 and from 1981 to 1996 a purposive sample. A preliminary study with 40 participants will be conducted before the main study to assess the construct validity and reliability of the instruments to be used. This current study will take a quantitative approach. This approach was chosen to

study the relationships among the variables and to test several hypotheses against an established framework. The approach used in this research is explanatory or hypothesis testing. The purpose of this study is to analyze the relationships between Transformational Leadership (TL), Knowledge Sharing (IKS), Workplace Thriving (TAW), and Workplace Innovation Behavior (WIB).

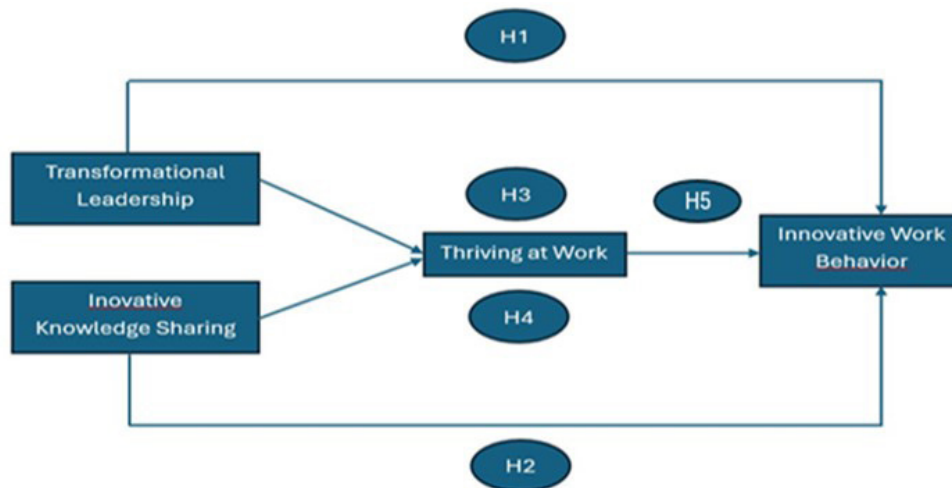


Figure 1: Conceptual Model

The data will be analysed using Smart PLS, an SEM software package. First, we will describe the demographics, followed by the mean scores for the variables of interest and their dependent variables. This study uses Confirmatory Factor Analysis to accept or reject the proposed factors at a threshold of +/- 0.5. HTMT < 0.90 and the Fornell-Larcker criterion confirm the presence of discriminant validity. Using Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability, we will assess internal consistency. In this study, a 5-point Likert scale will be used for each variable, where one indicates 'strongly disagree' and five indicates 'strongly agree'. Prior to Georgescu (2023), most

studies were limited to academic contexts, underscoring the need for additional empirical work. Transformational Leadership was assessed using a ten-item scale developed by Carless *et al.* (2000), as referenced by Georgescu (2023). The Knowledge Sharing Behaviour Scale (KSBS), consisting of 7 items, was developed by Yi (2009) and adapted by Sanjari *et al.* (2023) and Fisher (2022). The Workplace Thriving variable consists of 12 items developed by Porath *et al.* (2012) and adapted by Na-Nan *et al.* (2020). The Workplace Innovation Behaviour variable, adopted from De Jong and van Hartog (2010), proposes 12 items each to measure the Workplace Innovation Behaviour (WIB) construct.

Table 1: Measurement Indicator

Construct	Kode Item	Item	References
Transformational Leader (TL)	TL.1	My leader articulates an optimistic vision for the future.	Carless <i>et al.</i> (2000) Georgescu (2023)
	TL.2	My leader emphasizes the attainment of exceptional performance.	
	TL.3	My leader provides support for individual employees work achievements	
	TL.4	My leader acts as a role model	
	TL.5	My leader is trustworthy	
	TL.6	My leader takes a new approach/way to solve problems	
	TL.7	My leader can learn from the obstacles encountered	
	TL.8	My Leader can awaken employee creativity and innovation	
	TL.9	My leader provides mentoring or training	
	TL.10	My leader encourages me to accept the goals of the group/ organization	
	TL.11	My leader is open to employee input	

Knowledge Sharing (KS)	IKS.1	I often share my new ideas with my colleagues	Yi (2009); Fisher,2022) (Sanjari,2023
	IKS.2	I explained the innovative knowledge I had to my colleagues in detail	
	IKS.3	I provide creative suggestions that can improve my coworkers' work quality.	
	IKS.4	I shared my experience in developing new solutions with the team	
	IKS.5	I discussed a new approach to solving the problem with my colleagues.	
	IKS.6	My work environment encourages the sharing of new ideas	
	IKS.7	I utilize technology (e.g. internal Application, digital platforms, AI) to share knowledge	
Workplace Thriving (WT)	TAW1	I feel alive / comfortable when I work	Porath <i>et al.</i> (2012), (Na-Nan, <i>et al.</i> ,2020)
	TAW2	I feel full of enthusiasm and energy at work	
	TAW3	I feel excited to start work every day	
	TAW4	My work at the office makes me feel motivated	
	TAW5	I feel strong and healthy when I work	
	TAW6	I often learn new things at work.	
	TAW7	Work helps me develop new skills	
	TAW8	I feel like I'm growing in my job	
	TAW9	I gain new knowledge through my work	
	TAW10	My job encourages me to improve myself constantly.	
	TAW11	I feel my work has meaning	
	TAW12	I feel a balance between work demands and personal wellbeing.	
Workplace Innovation Behavior (WIB)	PK.1	I actively seek new information or opportunities to improve the performance of our unit/work.	De Jong & den Hartog (2010)
	PK.2	I keep an eye on new technologies and methods that are useful for my job.	
	PK.3	I often propose new ideas to solve problems at work	
	PK.4	I think creatively to find alternative ways to improve work processes	
	PK.5	I combine different ideas and knowledge to produce new solutions	
	PK.6	I actively seek support from colleagues or superiors to realize my ideas.	
	PK.7	I try to overcome organizational barriers so that good ideas can be implemented in practice.	
	PK.8	I participate in implementing or testing new ideas in the work environment	
	PK.9	I adjust work procedures to operationalize good ideas	
	PK.10	I evaluate the results of implementing ideas and make improvements, if necessary	
	PK.11	I am not afraid of failing when trying new ideas	
	PK.12	I feel that my ideas are appreciated by my superiors and colleagues	

Source: Processed primary data, 2025

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Demographics

The research sample included 294 well-selected adults, including millennial and Gen Z employees from various sectors in India. Table 2 indicates that the total population comprised 294 respondents, of whom 35% were male and 67% were female. Notably, Gen Z constitutes the

largest demographic at 69%. Furthermore, 59% of respondents had been in their current roles for over 5 years. 85% of the survey respondents had a bachelor's or master's degree. Most of them worked in staff jobs, which covered both career and non-career positions. This group made up 50% of the total, or 146 people.

Table 2: Respondent Demographics (N = 294)

No	Variable	Frequency	Percentage
1	Gender		
	Male	104	35%
	Female	190	65%
2	Year of Birth		
	1981-1996 (Millennial)	92	31%
	1997-2012 (Gen Z)	202	69%
3	Length of work		
	< 1 Year	47	15%
	1-5 Year	75	26%
	> 5 Year	172	59%
4	Education Qualification		
	Diploma	43	15%
	Bachelor / Master (S1/S2)	251	85%
5	Position		
	Temporary employees	117	40%
	Career & Non-Career Staff	146	50%
	Assistant Manager	31	10%

Validity and Reliability Test

Table 3 presents the results of the outer model evaluation. All constructs showed adequate convergent validity and reliability. Transformational Leadership (TL) indicators had outer loadings from 0.747 to 0.882, with Cronbach's Alpha = 0.959, Composite Reliability (CR) = 0.964, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) = 0.710. Knowledge Sharing (KS) indicators had outer loadings from 0.662 to 0.856 ($\alpha = 0.915$, CR = 0.933, AVE = 0.665). Workplace

Thriving (WT) had the highest reliability ($\alpha = 0.959$, CR = 0.964, AVE = 0.691), with outer loadings from 0.751 to 0.891. Workplace Innovation Behavior (WIB) showed outer loadings from 0.712 to 0.881 ($\alpha = 0.956$, CR = 0.962, AVE = 0.679). All indicators exceeded the 0.70 threshold except IKS7 (0.662) and two WIB items (PK2 = 0.727, PK11 = 0.712), which remain within acceptable ranges. All constructs met the criteria for reliability (α , CR > 0.70) and convergent validity (AVE > 0.50).

Table 3: Outer Model

Construct	Kode Item	loadings Faktor	Cronbach's alpha	CR	AVE
Transformational Leader (TL)	TL.1	0,82	0,959	0,964	0,71
	TL.2	0,747			
	TL.3	0,855			
	TL.4	0,874			
	TL.5	0,845			
	TL.6	0,861			
	TL.7	0,869			
	TL.8	0,882			
	TL.9	0,833			
	TL.10	0,84			
	TL.11	0,834			
Construct	Kode Item	loadings Faktor	Cronbach's alpha	CR	(AVE)
Knowlegde Sharing (KS)	IKS1	0,839	0,915	0,933	0,665
	IKS2	0,836			
	IKS3	0,856			
	IKS4	0,851			
	IKS5	0,855			
	IKS6	0,792			
	IKS7	0,662			

Construct	Kode Item	loadings Faktor	Cronbach's alpha	CR	AVE
Workplace Thriving (WT)	TAW.1	0,835	0,959	0,964	0,691
	TAW.2	0,875			
	TAW.3	0,858			
	TAW.4	0,891			
	TAW.5	0,819			
	TAW.6	0,816			
	TAW.7	0,836			
	TAW.8	0,879			
	TAW.9	0,805			
	TAW.10	0,821			
	TAW.11	0,751			
	TAW.12	0,778			
Construct	Kode Item	loadings Faktor	Cronbach's alpha	CR	AVE
Workplace Innovation Behavior (WIB)	PK.1	0,798	0,956	0,962	0,679
	PK.2	0,727			
	PK.3	0,847			
	PK.4	0,829			
	PK.5	0,847			
	PK.6	0,809			
	PK.7	0,84			
	PK.8	0,881			
	PK.9	0,868			
	PK.10	0,881			
	PK.11	0,712			
	PK.12	0,825			

Source: Processed primary data, 2025

Discriminant Validity

The Fornell-Larcker criterion (Table 4) confirmed discriminant validity. The square root of AVE for each construct exceeded its correlations with other constructs:

TL ($\sqrt{AVE} = 0.843$), KS (0.816), WT (0.831), and WIB (0.824). The highest inter-construct correlation (KS-IWB = 0.810) remained below both constructs' \sqrt{AVE} values, indicating adequate discriminant validity.

Table 4: Discriminant Validity - The Fornell and Larcker Criterion

Construct	Transformational Leadership	Knowledge Sharing	Workplace Thriving	Behaviour Innovation
Transformational Leadership (TL)	0,843			
Knowledge Sharing (IKS)	0,561	0.816		
Workplace Thriving (TAW)	0,631	0,689	0,831	
Behaviour Innovation (IWB)	0,554	0,81	0,71	0,824

Table 4 shows that the square root of the AVE is bigger than the correlations between the latent variables. This indicates that the research instrument has attained reliability and validity. The results showed that the structures in question follow the established rules. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each construct, including Behavioural Innovation (AVE = 0.824), Knowledge Sharing (AVE = 0.816), Workplace Thriving (AVE = 0.831), and Transformational Leadership, was calculated to be AVE = 0.843. The correlation coefficients for the other variables were lower than those above,

which supports the claim that the variables have distinct, independent conceptual properties. The correlation coefficient of 0.810 between Workplace Innovation behavior (WIB) and Knowledge Sharing indicates a strong relationship between the two. As noted, the correlation coefficients for both variables are below the square root of their AVEs: 0.824 and 0.816, respectively. There is no issue with variable overlap, so discriminant validity is likely valid. The results of the Fornell-Larcker test are consistent with other studies, indicating that the instrument used in this study has discriminatory validity.

**Structural Model Assessment
Explanatory Power (R²)**

The variables in the study are thought to be accurate for testing the structural model in question. The research subsequently examined the R-squared statistics and the internal model. The initial step in this procedure involved calculating the R-squared for each latent, concealed endogenous variable. According to Haryono (2017),

the R-squared value from the structural model shows how strong and how much the correlation is between the exogenous latent variable(s) and the endogenous variable(s). A strong correlation exists when the R-squared value is higher than 0.670. An R-squared value between 0.330 and 0.670 shows a moderate effect. Hair *et al.* (2019) say that an R-squared value between 0.190 and 0.330 shows a small to moderate effect.

Table 5: R-Square

Variable	R-square	R-square adjusted
Workplace Innovation Behaviour	0,701	0,698
Workplace Thriving	0,562	0,559

Source: Processed primary data, 2025

Table 5 presents the coefficients of determination. This model explains 70.1% of the variance in Workplace Innovation Behaviour (R² = 0.701, adjusted R² = 0.698), indicating substantial explanatory power (Hair *et al.*, 2019). Workplace Well-being exhibits moderate explanatory power, explaining 56.2% of the variance (R² = 0.562, adjusted R² = 0.559). The overall R-squared test results imply that the model is well-specified. This model is a stronger explanation than workplace innovation behavior, thus reiterating the importance of knowledge sharing and well-being and transformational leadership

for encouraging employee innovative behavior. The next step was to evaluate the effect size, which is the F-square. This study seeks to quantify the extent to which the exogenous latent variable is a strong predictor of the endogenous latent variable. Another example can be illustrated by Ghazali (2021), who highlighted Hair *et al.* (2019) and Haryono (2017). The influence of the exogenous variable is considered small for an F-square value of 0.02, moderate for an F-square value of 0.15, and high at 0.35, as summarized in Table 6.

Table 6: F-Square

Construct	TL	KS	WT	WIB
Transformational Leadership (KS)			0,198	0,005
Knowledge Sharing (KS)			0,374	0,597
Workplace Thriving (WT)				0,104
Workplace Innovation Behavior (WIB)				

Source: Processed primary data, 2025

The test results indicate that the knowledge sharing variable significantly affects Workplace Innovation Behaviour (f² = 0.597) and thriving (f² = 0.374). This suggests that Knowledge Sharing plays a crucial role in enhancing both Workplace innovation behaviour and the conditions that foster employee thriving. The Workplace Thriving variable has a limited impact on workplace Innovation behaviour (f² = 0.104), suggesting its role is relatively minor. Transformational leadership has a negligible effect on workplace innovation behavior (f² = 0.005), indicating that its direct contribution is insignificant.

However, Transformational Leadership had a moderate influence on thriving (f² = 0.198), which indicates that transformational leadership plays a more significant role in the process of constructing conditions that are conducive to employee thriving than it does in directly influencing the behavior of innovation in the workplace. In summary, the f² test results indicate that Knowledge Sharing is the most significant predictor in the research model. Additionally, Transformational Leadership plays a more substantial indirect role through thriving than it directly affects workplace innovation behavior.

Table 7: Model Fit Result

	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0,051	0,051
d_ULS	2,378	2,378
d_G	1,5	1,5
Chi-square	2314,43	2314,43
NFI	0,82	0,82

Source: Processed primary data, 2025

The next step is to test the model's fit to ensure that the developed research model aligns with the existing empirical data. The normalized value of the model fit evaluation results should show a Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) of 0.051, which is below the threshold of 0.08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999). The model fit test results in Table 7 above indicate that the model has a good and acceptable fit. Furthermore, the d_ULS value of 2.378 and d_G of 1.500 indicate a good fit between the estimated model and the saturated model, strengthening the model's validity. Although the Chi-square value of 2314.430 is quite high, this is understandable given the large sample size, meaning it should not be the sole measure used to evaluate model fit. Conversely, the Normed Fit Index (NFI) value of 0.820 indicates that the model has a fairly adequate fit, although it is still far

from the ideal threshold of ≥ 0.90 . Consequently, based on the full results of the assessment, we can say with confidence that the model fits well enough for us to move on to the next step of structural analysis.

Hypothesis Testing

In structural equation modeling, path coefficients are standardized regression coefficients that show how one variable directly affects another in a causal way. Values between -1 and 1 show how strong the relationships between variables are and whether they are positive or negative. These coefficients help you compare the effects of different explanatory factors, even if they are measured in different ways. The path coefficients in the structural model equation are shown in Figure 2 below.

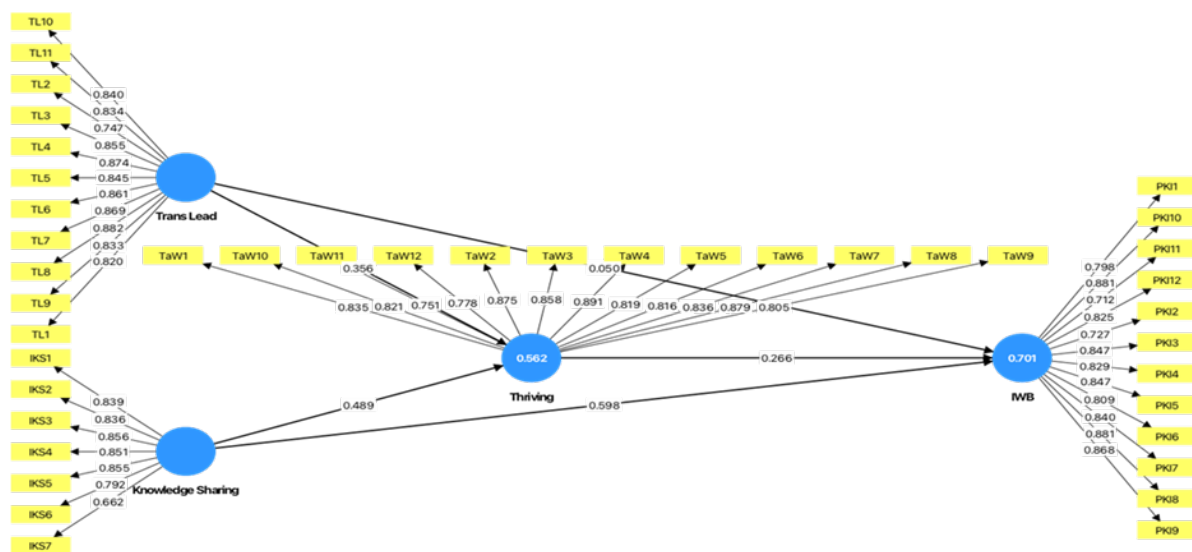


Figure 2: Structural Equation Modelling

This hypothesis aims to be evaluated by analysing the causal relationships among constructs through a priori theory (Hair *et al.*, 2021). In this research, hypothesis testing yields evidence concerning the mediating function of workplace thriving between transformational leadership and knowledge sharing

in relation to workplace innovation behaviour. This testing also confirms or disproves the hypotheses that were based on the literature (Bougie and Sekaran, 2025). The results of hypothesis testing can be seen in Table 8, which shows the path coefficients below.

Table 8: The path Coefficients and Tests of Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Path	Koefisien (β)	T-Statistic	P-Value	Resume
H1	TL \rightarrow WIB	0,052	1,061	0,289	Rejected
H2	KS \rightarrow WIB	0,596	10,714	0,000	Accepted
H3	TL \rightarrow WT \rightarrow WIB	0,095	3,692	0,000	Accepted
H4	KS \rightarrow WT \rightarrow WIB	0,132	3,580	0,000	Accepted
H5	WT \rightarrow WIB	0,268	4,723	0,000	Accepted

Note: TL = Transformational Leadership; KS = Knowledge Sharing; WT = Workplace Thriving; WIB = Workplace Innovation Behavior

Table 8 presents the path coefficients alongside relevant statistics, including T-values and P-values, to evaluate the significance of these relationships. These statistical indicators assist in assessing whether the data substantiates the proposed relationship between the variables. A path is

deemed statistically significant when the T-value surpasses 1.96 and the P-value falls below 0.05 (Hair *et al.*, 2021). Transformational leadership did not have a significant direct effect on workplace innovation behaviour. The very small coefficient (0.052) and $p > 0.05$ indicate

that transformational leadership requires a mediating mechanism to effectively influence workplace innovation behaviour (WIB). Saif *et al.* (2024) found no direct effect of transformational leadership on innovative work behaviour in Pakistani higher education institutions. This may be due to the fact that the role of leaders in the organisation is less influential, as Gen Z and millennial employees already possess integrity and a sense of responsibility. Other studies have found that transformational leadership has a significant direct effect, as confirmed by the results of research by Vu, Nguyen, and Le (2025), who also confirmed a significant positive effect of transformational leadership on innovative work behaviour in Vietnamese employees.

Knowledge sharing has a very strong direct effect on workplace innovation behavior, with the highest coefficient (0.596) among all variables. Each unit increase in knowledge sharing increases workplace innovation behavior by 59.6%, making it the strongest predictor in the research model. This hypothesis is supported by a study by Xu & Suntrayuth (2022) of 446 R&D staff at a Chinese high-tech company, which found that knowledge sharing was significantly positively correlated with workplace innovation behavior through the mediation of psychological safety. According to Osmanaj *et al.* (2022) confirmed the significant positive impact of knowledge sharing in helping individuals become more innovative at work. Kmieciak (2021) found that knowledge donation was significantly related to idea generation, which was highly correlated with idea realization.

In line with social exchange and social capital theories, this means that organisations need to make it easy for employees to share information in order to encourage innovation. Sharing knowledge has always been shown to make people more likely to be innovative at work (WIB). Employees who share information with each other are more likely to come up with new ideas and put them into action. Knowledge sharing is especially beneficial for Millennials and Gen Z, who inherently possess a propensity for collaboration and learning (Sudibjo, N., & Prameswari, R. (2021).

Workplace thriving completely mediates the link between transformational leadership and employee innovation behaviours. Even if the indirect effect of knowledge sharing (0.095) is smaller than its direct one, it is highly significant ($p = 0.000$). This result explains why the direct effect of Transformational leadership on workplace innovation behaviour is not supported and the Transformational leadership variable affects workplace innovation behaviour through first creating thriving workplace conditions. Workplace thriving partly mediates the effect of knowledge sharing on workplace innovation behaviour (0.132). It implies that there are two pathways for knowledge sharing: a direct substantial effect (H2: $\beta = 0.596$) and an indirect impact via the workplace thriving (H4: $\beta = 0.132$).

A relatively new empirical study finds the workplace

thriving in terms of vitality and learning, and as a key mediator between transformational leadership and workplace innovation behaviour (WIB). Workplace thriving, in particular, the workplace innovation behaviour of employees, is enhanced mainly by transformational leadership. This mediating role has been evidenced across different organisational settings (e.g., the private sector and IT firms) and appears especially true for younger workers who are concerned with development and freedom (Al-Wahhabi *et al.*, 2023; Kim & Yun, 2025). Therefore, organisations should establish a work climate that facilitates both knowledge sharing and workplace thriving to promote innovative behaviour among employees.

CONCLUSION

This research reveals the socio-organizational processes of IWB among Indonesian millennial and Gen Z workforces. Drawing on social exchange theory and social cognitive theory, we identify workplace thriving as a key mediator between transformational leadership and knowledge sharing in innovation. Three main conclusions arise: firstly, the diffusion of Knowledge sharing is the strongest innovation driver, and it mirrors the learning generation's participation approach, variety, and digital literacy level. Second, transformational Leadership affects innovation only through the creation of thriving contexts; leaders are portrayed as managers rather than governors. Third, a crucial mechanism by which organisational inputs are translated into innovative outputs: workplace thriving as a core component, including vitality, learning, and psychological health. For organisations that lead or are staffed by healthy, young workforces, the results present straightforward strategic imperatives: invest in knowledge-sharing infrastructure; nurture leaders as flourishing enablers; and systematically design jobs and cultures for employee flourishing. Integration of these constructs generates self-reinforcing loops in which supportive Leadership spurs the exchange of knowledge, promoting thriving, which in turn translates into persistent innovative behaviours. In an increasingly dynamic, knowledge-based economy, organisations need to understand that innovation amongst Millennials and Gen Z is not a product of hierarchical authority but instead of conditions that facilitate self-directed learning, collegial knowledge construction, and psychological flourishing. This passage provides empirical evidence [of what works and a roadmap for organisations navigating this generational change. Transformational leadership and knowledge sharing as factors influencing innovative work behaviour: Evidence from Millennial and Gen Z employees. These factors are mediated directly as well as indirectly (via workplace success). The best leaders in this generation are the ones who can inspire their followers, foster dialogue and encourage autonomy. Most importantly, when organisations have a culture of respecting success and knowledge sharing, the effect on the innovation process is greatest (Dayanti & Yulianti, 2023).

Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study acknowledges several limitations that constrain generalizability and suggest future research avenues. Cross-sectional design precludes causal inference. Although theoretically grounded, SEM indicates that these relationships are directional; however, it cannot be assumed that causation flows in only one direction. There is a need for future research to use longitudinal designs to examine how the trajectories of Leadership Development, knowledge sharing, and thriving interventions influence innovative behaviour over time. Single-source information raises concerns about common-method bias, even with procedural remedies in place. Multi-source designs with supervisor-rated or objectively measured innovation (e.g., patents, implemented ideas) and time-lagged measures would enhance validity.

Regional sampling from East Java may not be representative of other Indonesian regions, cultures, and developmental stages. Replication across different Indonesian regions and between nations would clarify cultural boundary conditions. Public-sector orientation might make it less applicable to non-public or private enterprises, even in economies with strong innovation drivers. Comparative research across organisational forms would make sector-specific mechanisms visible. Aggregating generations like the Millennials and Gen Z might miss intra-generational differences in values. Further studies may compare mechanisms for innovation amongst older (1981-1991) and younger (1992-1996) Millennials and Gen Z cohorts.

In future, research may consider moderating variables such as hierarchical or flat organization culture fit, task complexity found to be positively related to managerial delegation of CDM and digital transformation level. These factors might enhance or attenuate relationships proposed in our model. It would further be of interest to use multilevel models including cross-level interactions. Other mediators and outcomes: Examine other mediators (e.g. self-efficacy, psychological safety, intrinsic motivation) and consequences in the long-run (successful implementation processes; incremental vs. radical innovation; team- level innovative behavior). Mechanisms of process: Qualitative research on how leadership enables the conditions for knowledge sharing and its association with particular types of innovation would enrich our quantitative results. Generational contrasts: Comparative analyses between Generation X versus Baby Boomer, and among employees would further examine the specificity vs. universality of these mechanisms. Longitudinal intervention studies: Intervention studies whether in experimental or quasi-experimental manner on KSPs, leadership programs and job redesign interventions would be able to identify the causal effects and mechanisms of practical use for society.

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