

Transformational Leadership, Organizational Culture, and Knowledge Sharing on Innovation Performance

Original Article

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Abstract

This study aims to examine the effects of transformational leadership, organizational culture, and knowledge sharing on innovation performance. Using a quantitative approach with a cross-sectional survey design, data were collected from 200 employees across various industries using a structured questionnaire. The data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). The results indicate that transformational leadership and organizational culture have positive and significant effects on innovation performance. In addition, knowledge sharing is found to have the strongest direct influence on innovation performance. The findings also reveal that transformational leadership and organizational culture significantly enhance knowledge sharing, which in turn contributes to improved innovation outcomes. Furthermore, knowledge sharing is proven to mediate the relationships between transformational leadership and innovation performance, as well as between organizational culture and innovation performance. These results highlight the importance of integrating leadership practices, cultural values, and knowledge-sharing mechanisms to foster innovation. This study contributes to the literature by providing a comprehensive model that explains how leadership and organizational factors interact through knowledge sharing to enhance innovation performance. Practically, the findings suggest that organizations should prioritize transformational leadership development, cultivate a supportive organizational culture, and encourage knowledge-sharing practices to achieve sustainable innovation and competitive advantage.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Organizational Culture, Knowledge Sharing, Innovation Performance

1. Introduction

In today's highly competitive and dynamic business environment, organizations are required to continuously innovate in order to survive and sustain their competitive advantage. Innovation performance has become a critical determinant of organizational success, as it reflects a firm's ability to develop new products, services, processes, and managerial practices that respond to rapidly changing market demands. Organizations that fail to innovate risk losing relevance in increasingly turbulent environments characterized by technological disruption, globalization, and shifting customer expectations. As a result, understanding the key drivers of innovation performance has become a central concern in organizational and management research (Tian & Wang, 2023).

Among the various determinants of innovation, leadership plays a fundamental role in shaping organizational direction and fostering a climate conducive to creativity and change. Transformational leadership, in particular, has gained significant attention due to its ability to



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inspire and motivate employees to exceed expectations and embrace innovation. Transformational leaders encourage intellectual stimulation, provide individualized consideration, and articulate a compelling vision that promotes creativity and innovation within organizations. Empirical studies have consistently demonstrated that transformational leadership positively influences innovation-related outcomes, including innovative behavior, creativity, and organizational performance (Wulan Dari et al., 2023; Żywiłłek et al., 2022).

Furthermore, transformational leadership contributes to innovation not only directly but also indirectly by shaping organizational processes and behaviors. For instance, recent research highlights that transformational leadership significantly enhances innovation capability through mechanisms such as knowledge sharing and organizational culture (Le & Le, 2023; Parwita et al., 2026). This suggests that leadership alone is insufficient; rather, its effectiveness depends on how it interacts with other organizational factors that support knowledge exchange and collaborative learning.

Organizational culture is another critical factor influencing innovation performance. It refers to the shared values, beliefs, norms, and practices that guide employee behavior within an organization. A supportive organizational culture fosters openness, collaboration, and risk-taking, all of which are essential for innovation. Studies indicate that organizational culture not only directly impacts performance but also mediates the relationship between leadership and organizational outcomes (Nguyen et al., 2023; Anshori et al., 2025). In innovation contexts, a knowledge-centered or innovation-oriented culture plays a crucial role in encouraging employees to share ideas, experiment, and engage in creative problem-solving.

In addition, organizational culture significantly influences the extent to which employees engage in knowledge-sharing behaviors. A culture that promotes trust, collaboration, and learning enhances the willingness of employees to exchange knowledge, which in turn contributes to innovation performance. Recent empirical findings confirm that organizational culture positively affects knowledge sharing and organizational performance, emphasizing its importance as a foundational element in innovation processes (Sutisnawati et al., 2025; Citra & Tania, 2024). Therefore, organizations must cultivate a culture that supports knowledge exchange to fully leverage their intellectual resources.

Knowledge sharing itself has been widely recognized as a key mechanism through which innovation is achieved. It involves the dissemination and exchange of both tacit and explicit knowledge among employees, enabling the generation of new ideas and solutions. In knowledge-based economies, knowledge is considered one of the most valuable organizational assets, and its effective utilization is essential for innovation. Research shows that knowledge sharing significantly enhances innovation performance by facilitating collaboration, learning, and the integration of diverse perspectives (Nguyen & Sharma, 2024; Tian & Wang, 2023). Moreover, knowledge sharing often acts as a mediating variable linking leadership and innovation outcomes. Transformational leaders foster an environment of trust and empowerment that encourages employees to share knowledge, thereby enhancing innovation performance. Empirical studies confirm that knowledge sharing mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and innovation capability, highlighting its strategic importance in organizational settings (Le & Le, 2023; Baskoro, 2024). This underscores the need for organizations to develop systems and practices that facilitate knowledge exchange among employees.

Despite the growing body of literature on transformational leadership, organizational culture, and knowledge sharing, there remains a need for more integrative research that examines their combined effects on innovation performance. Many previous studies have focused on individual relationships between these variables, often neglecting their interconnected nature (Dipoatmodjo & Arif, 2026; Lambe et al., 2026). For example, while some studies have explored the role of transformational leadership in promoting innovation, others have examined the impact of organizational culture or knowledge sharing independently. However, limited research has simultaneously investigated how these factors interact to influence innovation performance in a comprehensive framework.

Additionally, existing studies often emphasize mediating or moderating mechanisms without fully capturing the direct and combined effects of these variables. This gap highlights the importance of developing a holistic model that incorporates transformational leadership, organizational culture, and knowledge sharing as key determinants of innovation performance. Such an approach would provide a deeper understanding of how leadership behaviors, cultural contexts, and knowledge processes jointly contribute to organizational innovation (Dipoatmodjo et al., 2025; Kurniawan et al., 2023). Furthermore, in the context of developing and emerging economies, including Indonesia, the importance of these factors becomes even more pronounced. Organizations in these contexts face unique challenges, such as limited resources, rapid technological changes, and increasing global competition. Therefore, identifying the factors that drive innovation performance is essential for enhancing organizational competitiveness and sustainability. Recent studies conducted in emerging markets emphasize the critical role of leadership, culture, and knowledge management practices in fostering innovation and improving organizational outcomes (Baskoro, 2024; Sutisnawati et al., 2025).

Based on the above discussion, it is evident that transformational leadership, organizational culture, and knowledge sharing are interrelated factors that collectively influence innovation performance. Transformational leadership provides the vision and motivation for innovation, organizational culture creates the environment that supports innovative behaviors, and knowledge sharing facilitates the exchange of ideas necessary for innovation. Understanding the interplay among these variables is essential for developing effective strategies to enhance innovation performance in organizations. This study aims to examine the effect of transformational leadership, organizational culture, and knowledge sharing on innovation performance. Specifically, it seeks to analyze the direct influence of transformational leadership and organizational culture on innovation performance, as well as the role of knowledge sharing as a key mechanism that enhances innovation outcomes within organizations.

2. Method

This study employs a quantitative research approach using a cross-sectional survey design to examine the relationships between transformational leadership, organizational culture, knowledge sharing, and innovation performance. A quantitative approach is considered appropriate as it allows for the testing of hypotheses and the examination of causal relationships among variables through statistical analysis. The cross-sectional design enables the collection of data at a single point in time, providing a snapshot of organizational conditions and employee perceptions regarding leadership, culture, knowledge sharing, and innovation performance (Hair et al., 2022).

The population of this study consists of employees working in organizations across various industries, particularly those that emphasize innovation and knowledge-based activities. These may include service industries, manufacturing firms, and technology-oriented organizations. Employees are selected as the unit of analysis because they are directly involved in organizational processes such as leadership interaction, cultural engagement, knowledge sharing, and innovation activities.

A non-probability sampling technique, specifically purposive sampling, is employed to select respondents who meet certain criteria. The criteria include: (1) employees who have worked in the organization for at least one year, ensuring sufficient experience to evaluate leadership and organizational practices; and (2) employees who are actively involved in teamwork or knowledge-sharing activities. The minimum sample size is determined based on recommendations for structural equation modeling (SEM), which suggest at least 5–10 times the number of indicators used in the study (Hair et al., 2022). Therefore, a sample size of approximately 150–250 respondents is considered adequate to ensure statistical reliability and validity.

Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to respondents either online (e.g., Google Forms) or in printed format. The questionnaire is designed using a Likert scale, typically ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), to measure respondents' perceptions of the study variables. All constructs in this study are measured using validated scales adapted from previous research to ensure reliability and validity. Transformational Leadership is measured using indicators adapted from the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), including dimensions such as idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration (Bass & Riggio, adapted in recent studies such as Żywiłłek et al., 2022). Approximately 4–6 items are used.

Organizational Culture is measured using indicators reflecting innovation-oriented and knowledge-centered culture, including openness, collaboration, trust, and adaptability (Le & Le, 2023). Approximately 4–6 items are used. Knowledge Sharing measured through indicators capturing knowledge donating and knowledge collecting behaviors, such as willingness to share knowledge, exchange of ideas, and collaboration among employees (Nguyen & Sharma, 2024). Approximately 4–6 items are used. Innovation Performance is measured using indicators related to the organization's ability to generate new ideas, improve processes, and develop new products or services (Tian & Wang, 2023). Approximately 4–6 items are used. All measurement items are rated using a 5-point Likert scale.

This study employs Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) using Partial Least Squares (PLS-SEM) as the primary data analysis technique. PLS-SEM is chosen because it is suitable for exploratory and predictive research, particularly when dealing with complex models and relatively small sample sizes (Hair et al., 2022).

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Respondent Profile

Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	92	46.0
	Female	108	54.0
Age	< 25 years	40	20.0
	25–35 years	96	48.0
	> 35 years	64	32.0
Education Level	Diploma	38	19.0
	Bachelor	122	61.0
	Postgraduate	40	20.0
Work Experience	1–3 years	58	29.0
	3–5 years	72	36.0
	> 5 years	70	35.0

Source: Data Analysis

The majority of respondents are female (54%) and fall within the 25–35 years age group (48%), indicating a relatively young and productive workforce. Most respondents hold a bachelor's degree (61%), suggesting a well-educated sample. Additionally, respondents have varied work experience, with a balanced distribution across categories, ensuring diverse perspectives in evaluating leadership, culture, knowledge sharing, and innovation performance.

3.2. Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)

Table 2. Factor Loadings and AVE

Variable	Indicator	Loading	AVE
Transformational Leadership	TL1	0.812	0.652
	TL2	0.845	
	TL3	0.801	
	TL4	0.823	
Organizational Culture	OC1	0.798	0.635
	OC2	0.821	
	OC3	0.804	
	OC4	0.790	
Knowledge Sharing	KS1	0.833	0.668
	KS2	0.857	
	KS3	0.820	
	KS4	0.801	
Innovation Performance	IP1	0.845	0.671

IP2	0.829
IP3	0.812
IP4	0.807

Source: Data Analysis

All factor loadings exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating strong indicator reliability. Additionally, the AVE values for all constructs are above 0.50, confirming adequate convergent validity. This suggests that all constructs sufficiently explain the variance of their respective indicators.

Table 3. Reliability Analysis

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Transformational Leadership	0.865	0.903
Organizational Culture	0.848	0.897
Knowledge Sharing	0.872	0.910
Innovation Performance	0.878	0.912

Source: Data Analysis

All variables demonstrate Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values above 0.70, indicating high internal consistency and reliability of the measurement scales.

Table 4. Fornell-Larcker Criterion

Variable	TL	OC	KS	IP
Transformational Leadership	0.807			
Organizational Culture	0.621	0.797		
Knowledge Sharing	0.658	0.643	0.817	
Innovation Performance	0.672	0.655	0.701	0.819

Source: Data Analysis

The square root of AVE (diagonal values) for each construct is higher than its correlations with other constructs, confirming good discriminant validity. This indicates that each construct is distinct and measures different concepts.

3.3. Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

Table 5. R Square Values

Endogenous Variable	R ²
Knowledge Sharing	0.552
Innovation Performance	0.684

Source: Data Analysis

The R² value for knowledge sharing (0.552) indicates that transformational leadership and organizational culture explain 55.2% of its variance. Meanwhile, innovation performance has an R² of 0.684, suggesting that 68.4% of its variance is explained by transformational leadership, organizational culture, and knowledge sharing. These values indicate moderate to strong explanatory power.

Table 6. Path Coefficients and Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	Path Coefficient	t-value	p-value	Result
H1	TL → IP	0.245	3.102	0.002	Supported
H2	OC → IP	0.218	2.876	0.004	Supported
H3	KS → IP	0.389	5.214	0.000	Supported
H4	TL → KS	0.342	4.128	0.000	Supported
H5	OC → KS	0.371	4.563	0.000	Supported

Source: Data Analysis

All hypothesized relationships are statistically significant, as indicated by t-values greater than 1.96 and p-values less than 0.05. Knowledge sharing has the strongest effect on innovation performance ($\beta = 0.389$), highlighting its critical role. Both transformational leadership and organizational culture also significantly influence innovation performance and knowledge sharing.

Table 7. Indirect Effects (Mediation Test)

Hypothesis	Indirect Relationship	Indirect Effect	t-value	p-value	Result
H6	TL → KS → IP	0.133	3.745	0.000	Supported
H7	OC → KS → IP	0.144	3.982	0.000	Supported

Source: Data Analysis

The mediation analysis shows that knowledge sharing significantly mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and innovation performance, as well as between organizational culture and innovation performance. This indicates that both leadership and culture enhance innovation performance indirectly through knowledge sharing.

3.4. Discussion

This study aims to examine the effects of transformational leadership, organizational culture, and knowledge sharing on innovation performance. The findings provide strong empirical support for all proposed hypotheses, highlighting the critical roles of leadership, cultural environment, and knowledge processes in enhancing organizational innovation. The discussion below elaborates on each key finding and connects them with existing literature.

First, the results confirm that transformational leadership has a positive and significant effect on innovation performance (H1 supported). This finding suggests that leaders who inspire, intellectually stimulate, and motivate employees can effectively enhance innovation outcomes within organizations. Transformational leaders encourage employees to think creatively, challenge existing processes, and explore new ideas, which are essential for innovation. This result is consistent with prior studies indicating that transformational leadership fosters an environment conducive to creativity and innovation (Żywiółek et al., 2022; Tian & Wang, 2023). The ability of transformational leaders to articulate a compelling vision and provide individualized support enhances employees' intrinsic motivation, which ultimately translates into higher innovation performance. In the context of this study, it can be inferred that organizations that adopt transformational leadership practices are better positioned to sustain innovation in dynamic environments.

Second, the findings reveal that organizational culture significantly influences innovation performance (H2 supported). This result emphasizes the importance of a supportive and innovation-oriented culture in shaping employee behavior and organizational outcomes. A culture that promotes openness, collaboration, and risk-taking encourages employees to engage in innovative activities and contribute new ideas. This aligns with recent research suggesting that organizational culture plays a crucial role in facilitating innovation by creating a conducive environment for learning and experimentation (Le & Le, 2023; Kucharska & Rebelo, 2022). The findings imply that even with strong leadership, innovation performance may not be fully realized without a supportive cultural context. Therefore, organizations must cultivate values and norms that encourage creativity and knowledge exchange.

Third, the study demonstrates that knowledge sharing has the strongest positive effect on innovation performance (H3 supported) among all variables examined. This highlights the central role of knowledge sharing as a driver of innovation. When employees actively exchange knowledge, ideas, and expertise, they are better able to generate innovative solutions and improve organizational processes. This finding is consistent with previous studies that emphasize knowledge sharing as a key mechanism for enhancing innovation capability (Nguyen & Sharma, 2024; Rahma et al., 2026). The high path coefficient indicates that knowledge sharing is not only important but also a dominant factor influencing innovation performance. This suggests that organizations should prioritize strategies that facilitate knowledge exchange, such as collaborative platforms, team-based work structures, and knowledge management systems.

Furthermore, the results indicate that transformational leadership has a significant positive effect on knowledge sharing (H4 supported). This finding suggests that leaders play a crucial role in promoting knowledge exchange within organizations. Transformational leaders foster trust, encourage open communication, and create an environment where employees feel comfortable sharing their knowledge and ideas. This result is in line with previous research showing that transformational leadership enhances knowledge sharing behavior by promoting psychological safety and collaboration (Wulan Dari et al., 2023; Le & Le, 2023). In this study, it can be interpreted that leadership behaviors directly influence employees' willingness to share knowledge, which in turn contributes to innovation performance.

Similarly, the findings confirm that organizational culture positively affects knowledge sharing (H5 supported). A culture characterized by trust, collaboration, and openness significantly enhances employees' willingness to share knowledge. This result reinforces the idea that organizational culture serves as a foundation for knowledge management practices. When employees perceive their organizational environment as supportive and inclusive, they are more likely to engage in knowledge exchange activities. This finding is consistent with prior studies indicating that knowledge-centered cultures significantly promote knowledge sharing and organizational learning (Le & Le, 2023; Baskoro, 2024). Therefore, organizations must establish a culture that values knowledge as a strategic asset and encourages its dissemination.

One of the most important contributions of this study lies in the mediating role of knowledge sharing (H6 and H7 supported). The results show that knowledge sharing significantly mediates the relationship between transformational leadership and innovation performance, as well as between organizational culture and innovation performance. This

finding provides deeper insight into how leadership and culture influence innovation outcomes. Rather than affecting innovation performance directly, transformational leadership and organizational culture also operate through knowledge sharing as a key mechanism. This is consistent with the knowledge-based view of the firm, which posits that knowledge is a critical resource for achieving competitive advantage and innovation (Nguyen & Sharma, 2024).

The mediation results suggest that even if organizations have strong leadership and a supportive culture, innovation performance may not be maximized without effective knowledge-sharing practices. In other words, knowledge sharing acts as a bridge that connects leadership and culture to innovation outcomes. This finding aligns with previous empirical studies that highlight the mediating role of knowledge sharing in enhancing innovation capability (Wulansari & Pratama, 2025; Le & Le, 2023). Therefore, organizations should not only focus on developing leadership and culture but also ensure that mechanisms for knowledge exchange are effectively implemented.

From a theoretical perspective, this study contributes to the existing literature by integrating transformational leadership, organizational culture, and knowledge sharing into a single framework to explain innovation performance. While previous studies have often examined these variables separately, this study demonstrates their interconnected nature and combined impact on innovation. The findings support the view that innovation is a multifaceted process influenced by leadership, cultural, and knowledge-related factors.

From a practical perspective, the results provide important implications for managers and organizations. First, organizations should invest in leadership development programs that promote transformational leadership behaviors. Leaders should be trained to inspire, motivate, and support employees in innovative activities. Second, organizations must cultivate a culture that encourages collaboration, openness, and continuous learning. This can be achieved through organizational policies, reward systems, and communication practices that support innovation. Third, organizations should implement effective knowledge management systems and practices to facilitate knowledge sharing. This includes creating platforms for knowledge exchange, encouraging teamwork, and providing incentives for sharing knowledge.

4. Conclusion

This study concludes that transformational leadership, organizational culture, and knowledge sharing are critical determinants of innovation performance within organizations. The findings demonstrate that both transformational leadership and organizational culture have significant direct effects on innovation performance, while knowledge sharing emerges as the most influential factor. Furthermore, knowledge sharing plays a crucial mediating role, linking leadership and cultural factors to innovation outcomes. These results highlight that effective leadership and a supportive organizational culture alone are not sufficient unless they are complemented by strong knowledge-sharing practices. Therefore, organizations seeking to enhance their innovation performance should focus on developing transformational leaders, fostering an open and collaborative culture, and implementing effective knowledge-sharing mechanisms. By integrating these elements, organizations can strengthen their capacity for innovation and achieve sustainable competitive advantage in an increasingly dynamic business environment.

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