

# **Mediation of Servant Leadership in the Effect of Organizational Learning on Innovative Work Behavior in a Government Organization for Public Services**

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## **Abstract:**

*Improving the quality of public services is one very important issue because public services are a measure of the success of implementing tasks and measuring government performance. Improving the quality of public services can be done through innovations that must be carried out continuously. The basis of organizational innovation is the contribution of each individual through innovative work behavior. This study aims to determine the effect of organizational learning on innovative work behavior mediated by serving leadership styles in public service offices. The design of this study was quantitative with a comparative causal approach. The data used consists of primary and secondary data. Primary data is obtained through questionnaires while secondary data is obtained through books and scientific journals. This research was conducted in the government department that handles population administration (Civil Registry Service) in the city of East Java, Indonesia. The sample of this study was all employees, totaling 48 people. Teknik pengumpulan data menggunakan sensus. The results showed that 1) Organizational Learning has a positive effect but not significant on Innovative Work Behavior, 2) Organizational Learning has a positive and significant effect on Servant Leadership, 3) Servant Leadership has a positive and significant effect on Innovative Work Behavior, and 4) Servant Leadership has a positive effect and full mediates between Organizational Learning and Innovative Work Behavior.*

**Keywords:** Organizational Learning, Servant Leadership, Innovative Work Behavior, Public service

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The quality of public services is an important part of good governance, namely a government that can uphold the wishes of the people, is independent, effective and efficient in its work. The meaning of governance is that the government prioritizes the interests of the people, uses legal rights, fulfills obligations, and is able to bridge problems in society. Therefore, to achieve this requires work innovation. Improving the quality of public services can be done through innovations that must continue to be carried out. Fundamental innovation for government bureaucratic employees is a contribution from every member of the organization through innovative work behavior. Innovative work behavior according to Scott and Bruce (1994) is defined as the adoption, implementation, or use of new ideas to solve problems in the workplace. The Department of Population and Civil Registration as one of the providers of public services has proven the success of improving service quality through various innovations that have been carried out.

Innovation and learning are very important for increasing organizational capacity (Pasamar et al, 2019). Effective organizational learning processes by sharing information and knowledge among organizational members have been explored as a source of employee innovative work behavior (Wang and Wang, 2012). Leadership style is also one of the important things in influencing organizational innovation in the public sector (Wihuda et al., 2017). According to Eva et al, (2019), the right leadership style for today's dynamic environment is servant leadership. Servant leadership refers to the style in which a leader serves others in the management process, helps subordinates to get development opportunities, trains subordinates to become excellent service providers, and ultimately benefits the organization (Bande et al, 2016). Servant leadership can create a climate that supports individuals to behave innovatively.

In previous studies, no researcher has tested the relationship between 3 variables (Organizational learning, Servant Leadership, and Innovative Work Behavior) in the structural equation model. However, previous researchers have partially proven the relationship between variables, such as the relationship between Organizational learning and Innovative Work Behavior, namely in the research of Park et al (2014) which states that Organizational learning affects Innovative Work Behavior. Then, the research of Atwood et al

(2010) stated that Organizational learning had a positive impact on Leadership, and the research of Karatepe et al (2020) stated that Servant Leadership was proven to have a positive impact on Innovative Work Behavior. Referring to the results of previous studies as a basis for scientific thinking, the researchers wanted to examine the direct influence between organizational learning and innovative work behavior by considering aspects of Servant Leadership in the Population and Civil Registration Agency. This research is based on curiosity related to issues of good governance in Indonesia.

## **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

De Jong and Hartog (2007) explain about Innovative Work Behavior (IWB) that Innovative Work Behavior is the behavior of individuals towards problem recognition, initiation, and introduction to an object where the individual is involved in workgroups or formal organizations. The output of problem recognition and initiation can be in the form of new ideas (about products), service ideas, and work methods, as well as a series of other outputs needed for improvement and development. Scott and Bruce, (1994) explain the same thing, namely that innovative work behavior is defined as an action to seek, develop, and apply new ideas and solutions in certain situations. Innovative work behavior, by Deanne N Den Hartog, (2010) measured can be explained through the approach of idea exploration, idea generation, fighting for ideas, and implementing ideas. Innovative Work Behavior becomes important to accelerate organizational goals (Abstein and Spieth, 2014). Hult et al (2014) argue that innovation in organizations can proceed well if it is supported by organizational leaders.

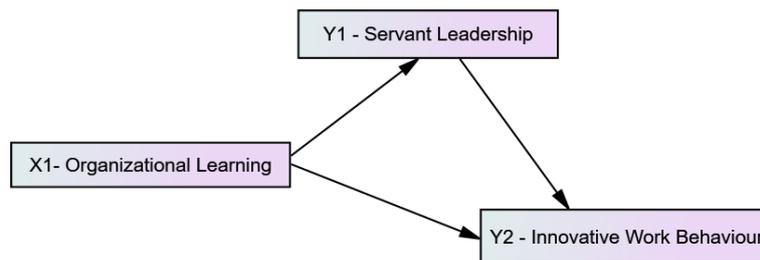
Senge (1990) explains about organizational learning that organizational learning takes place in organizations where organizational members carry out activities that continue to expand their abilities and capacities for achieving organizational goals. Garvin's (2000) view of organizational learning differs from Senge's (1990). Garvin (2000) emphasizes the pattern of acquiring abilities and capacities through creating, acquiring, interpreting, transferring, and sharing knowledge and even modifying it. Effective organizational learning processes by sharing information and knowledge among organizational members have been explored as a source of employee innovative work behavior (Wang and Wang, 2012). Measurement of Organizational Learning follows (Chiva et. al 2009), which consists of experimentation, risk acceptance, interaction with the environment, and dialogue.

Servant leadership is a leadership style that refers to where a leader serves others in the management process, helps subordinates to get development opportunities, trains subordinates to become good service providers (Greenleaf, 1977; Bande et al., 2016). Meta-analysis of the existing literature shows that effective servant leadership can stimulate positive employee behaviors, such as innovative work behavior. Service leadership measured following to Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) can be measured by several things such as altruism, emotional healing, wisdom, persuasion, and organizational stewardship.

The framework of this research is indicated by variables and notations such as the dependent variable (Y2), namely Innovative Work Behavior, the independent variable (X1), namely Organizational Learning, and the mediating variable (Y1), namely Servant Leadership. Innovative Work Behavior is defined as an action that seeks, develops, and implements new ideas and solutions in overcoming problems and challenges facing the Organization. Innovative Work Behavior is measured according to Deanne N Den Hartog, (2010) with indicators: idea exploration, idea generation, fighting for ideas, and implementing ideas. Servant leadership is a leader whose priority is to serve others and does so with an authentic unselfish attitude that places interests above personal and even organizational interests (Greenleaf, 1977). Servant Leadership was measured following Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) with the following indicators altruistic, emotional healing, wisdom, persuasion, and organizational stewardship. Organizational learning is an organization where people continually expand their capacities to create the results they truly desire, where new and expanding patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspirations are set free, and where people are continually learning to see the whole together. Measurement of Organizational Learning follows (Chiva et. al 2009), which consists of experimentation, risk acceptance, interaction with the environment, dialogue, and participation in decision making.

Previous relevant research showing that Organizational Learning affects Innovative Work Behavior is found in Mutonyi et al., (2020) and Park et al., (2014). While the research that shows that Servant Leadership affects Innovative Work Behavior is found in the research of Karatepe et al., (2020), Su et al., (2020), and Iqbal et al., 2020. Research conducted by Raelin, (2011), Atwood et al., (2010), and Brown and Posner, (2001) show that organizational learning has a positive effect on the formation of leadership behavior. Based on the explanation and the results of previous research, the conceptual framework of the research is presented in Figure 1.

**Figure 1. Research concept framework**



**III. RESEARCH METHODS**

The research design uses a causality design with a quantitative approach. Sources of data using primary and secondary data. The instrument used is a questionnaire using a Likert scale. The Likert scale on choice 1 strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 neutral, 4 agree, and option 5 strongly agree.

The research was conducted at the Department of Population and Civil Registration in a city located in East Java. 48 employees work in government organizations that serve the population bureaucracy. The researcher determines all employees to be the research population. The primary data collection technique was using a census.

Innovative work behavior is measured by 4 indicators, namely exploration of ideas, generation of ideas, fighting for ideas, and implementation of ideas. Servant leadership is measured by 5 indicators, namely Altruistic, emotional healing, wisdom, persuasion, and organizational stewardship. Organizational learning is measured by 4 indicators, namely experimentation, risk acceptance, interaction with the environment, and dialogue. The structure of variables, indicators, and the number of research instruments is presented in Table 1.

**Table 1. Variables, Indicators, and Information on the Number of Instrument Items**

Variables and Indicators	Number of Items
Innovative work behavior (Y2)	
Exploration of ideas (Y21)	2
Idea generation (Y22)	2
Fighting for ideas (Y23)	2
Idea implementation (Y24)	2
Servant leadership (Y1)	
Altruistic (Y11)	2
Emotional healing (Y12)	2
Wisdom (Y13)	2
Persuasive (Y14)	2
Stewardship organizing (Y15)	2
Organizational learning (X1)	
Experiment (X11)	2
Risk acceptance (X12)	2
Environmental interaction (X13)	2
Dialog (X14)	2
total	26

**IV. RESEARCH RESULT**

The researcher distributed the questionnaires one by one to the employees of the Department of Population and Civil Registry. The Department of Population and Civil Registration carries out the administration of Population and Civil Registration affairs so that most of the employees work in offices. Researchers did not have difficulty finding respondents. Questionnaires were distributed for two weeks and were returned as many as 48 units. Respondents' answers were tabulated for later analysis of validity, reliability, descriptive and linear regression tests. The following provides information about the respondent's profile as in Table 2.

**Table 2. Profile of Respondents**

Gender	%	Age group	%	Time working	%	Level of education	%
Male	31	21 - 25	15	1 - 3 Years	12	High School	52
Female	69	26 - 30	23	4 - 5 Years	23	Diploma	6
		≥31 Years	62	6 - 10 Years	19	Bachelor	32
				10 -20 Years	46	Postgraduate	10

The majority of respondents are women, while the majority are above 31 years of age and the majority have worked 10 to 20 years with the most education being SMA, then followed by Bachelors. The respondent's profile describes an adult age and good work experience.

Analysis of data processing using the SPSS program. There are 3 research variables, 13 indicators, and 26 instruments in total. The results of testing the validity and reliability of 26 items proved valid as evidenced by the probability that each instrument does not exceed an error rate of 5%, where the instrument can measure variables. The results of the validity test are attached. The results of the research instrument reliability test showed a good level of reliability as evidenced by the Chronbach alpha value that did not exceed the value of the r table (0.336). The results of the descriptive analysis for each research variable, 13 indicators, and 26 research instruments are presented in the appendix.

The main factor that supports the creation of innovative work behavior is the implementation of the idea. Even though they have a lot of creative ideas but cannot implement them, innovative work behavior will not materialize. The main factor that supports the existence of a servant leadership style is altruism. Altruism according to Barbuto and Wheeler (2006) is a deeply rooted desire in a leader to make a positive difference in the lives of others. With strong altruism, a leader will try to make improvements to his followers, which will ultimately benefit the organization. While the main factor that affects learning in organizations is interaction with the environment. Interaction with the external environment such as at the University or in similar organizations that have made achievements will accelerate an organization to make progress by making innovations resulting from OIM (Observe, Imitate, Modify).

To build a structural equation model, two regressions were performed. The results of the regression model equation are as follows:

The first simple linear regression model:  $Y1 = 0.483X1 + e1$

Second multiple linear regression model:  $Y2 = 0.225X1 + 0.604 Y1 + e2$

Note: Y2 = Innovative work behavior; Y1 = Servant leadership; X1 = Organizational learning

Figure 2. Results of structural equation model

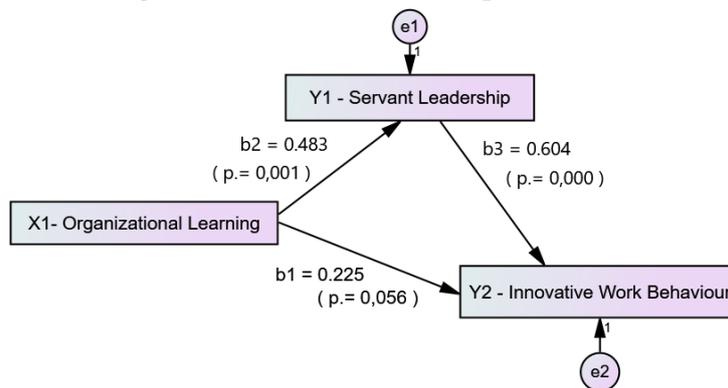


Figure 2. provides information regarding the effect of organizational learning on innovative work behavior that the p-value (0.056) > (0.05) means organizational learning has no significant effect on innovative work behavior. Regarding the effect of organizational learning on servant leadership, the p-value (0.001) < (0.05) means organizational learning has a significant effect on servant leadership. Regarding the influence of servant leadership on innovative work behavior, the p-value (0.000) < (0.05) means that servant leadership has a significant effect on innovative work behavior. Table 3. shows that servant leadership acts as a full mediation between organizational learning and innovative work behavior.

Table 3. Recapitulation of Path Analysis

Variable		p.	Coefficient			Result	
Independent	Mediation		Dependent	Direct effect	Indirect effect		Total effect
Organizational learning	-	Innovative work behavior	0,056	0,225	-	-	H1- rejected
Organizational learning	Servant Leadership	-	0,001	0,483	-	-	H2 - be accepted
-	Servant Leadership	Innovative work behavior	0,000	0,604	-	-	H3 - be accepted
Organizational learning	Servant Leadership	Innovative work	-	0,225	0,483 x 0,604	0, 292	H4- be accepted

Variable	p.	Coefficient	Result
behavior		=0.29*	

Notes:

\*) Significant level (p) less than < 5%.

The direct effect coefficient b1 (0.056) has p. (0.056) > 0.050 then it is considered null, so the total effect is 0.292.

## V. DISCUSSION

Organizational learning has a positive but not significant effect on innovative work behavior. This means that increasing organizational learning will increase innovative work behavior, but current organizational learning partially does not affect innovative work behaviour. This is caused by a learning environment that does not support the creation of innovative work behavior.

Organizational learning has a positive and significant effect on service leadership. This means that organizational learning in which there is interaction with the environment, as well as dialogue between employees, can be a means of transferring knowledge. Atwood et al., (2010) mention that continuous learning is emphasized to employees to be a model of leadership behavior to others and help this culture spread to all individuals and all levels. Jiang (2002) stated that higher levels of organizational learning tend to adopt participatory decision-making. Participatory decision-making is one of the characteristics of servant leadership. From the existing theory and research, it can be concluded that organizational learning can be a means for the emergence of servant leadership behavior. These findings indicate that organizational learning experienced by employees so far can create a service model leadership style. This means that what is done in the learning process in the organization has an impact on the mindset of the thought process to serve.

Servant leadership has a positive and significant effect on innovative work behavior, this means that the higher the application of servant leadership, the positive impact on increasing innovative work behavior. The altruistic indicator gives the highest contribution to service leadership, this shows the altruism of the organizational leadership according to the employee's perception that the climate is very comfortable for employees to accept positive ideas and suggestions. Leaders openly accept creative ideas that aim to improve service quality. This is following the theory from Chiniara and Bentein (2016) which states that servant leadership can create a climate where followers feel important and empowered to do more and be more creative. This is also consistent with the research of Karatepe et al, (2020) which states that servant leadership has a positive effect on innovative work behavior.

## VI. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Servant leadership has an important role as an effort from organizational learning to make employees behave innovatively. This means that organizational learning has not been able to create innovative work behavior but organizational learning that leads to a servant leadership mindset can create innovative work behavior. This means that the role of leadership in serving is so important as a controller for government organizations in the current era of good governance issues. The view of Gillet et al (2011) applies to the era of good governance which states that servant leaders develop people, help them strive for success, provide a vision to gain credibility and follower trust, and influence others.

The recommendation from the results of this study is those government organizations to maintain a servant leadership style so that services to the community can be of higher quality and satisfaction. Leadership training activities that lead to the formation of a servant leadership style for the creation of better future leaders need to be maintained.

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## Appendix

### 1. Recapitulation of Validity, Reliability and Descriptive Test Results

Variables and Indicators	Items	Coefficients correlation	Chronbach's Alpha	Mean
Innovative work behavior (Y2)			0,947	4,31
Eksplorasi ide (Y21)	11	0,959		4,31
	12	0,965		4,31
Idea generation (Y22)	21	0,921		4,21
	22	0,926		4,33
Fighting for ideas (Y23)	31	0,965		4,25
	32	0,958		4,31
Idea implementation (Y24)	41	0,991		4,35
	42	0,991		4,38
Servant leadership (Y1)			0,952	4,39
Altruistic (Y11)	11	0,964		4,46
	12	0,964		4,42
Emotional healing (Y12)	21	0,954		4,40
	22	0,944		4,38
Wisdom (Y13)	31	0,952		4,33
	32	0,947		4,40
Persuasive (Y14)	41	0,929		4,44
	42	0,934		4,33
Stewardship organizing (Y15)	51	0,959		4,38
	Y152	0,952		4,35
Organizational learning (X1)			0,904	4,43
Experiment (X11)	X111	0,934		4,38
	X112	0,916		4,53
Risk acceptance (X12)	X121	0,837		4,29
	X122	0,881		4,29
Environmental interaction (X13)	X131	0,936		4,54
	X132	0,935		4,54
Dialog (X14)	X141	0,854		4,50
	X142	0,904		4,41

**1. Variable, Indicators dan Instruments**

No.	Variables	Indicators	Instruments
1	Innovative work behaviour (Y <sub>2</sub> )	Eksplorasi ide	I am looking for various literature materials related to the implementation of work (Example: Tupoksi, related laws, and regulations, etc.). I want to help find solutions to problems faced by the organization.
		Idea generation	I can communicate every idea effectively. I am willing to accept new ideas from others.
		Fighting for ideas	I fight for new ideas vigorously I can work together to mobilize support for activities to run
		Idea implementation	I carry out the work process with quality results. I provide service guarantees so that people will be satisfied
2	Servant leadership (Y1)	Altruistic	Leaders are willing to accept new and constructive ideas Leaders can show open behavior.
		Emotional healing	Leaders build good personal relationships with subordinates The leader directs subordinates to believe in the beliefs held to work better.
		Wisdom	Leaders can create a good work climate for learning by tolerating unintentional mistakes. Leaders provide opportunities for subordinates to develop their potential to the fullest.
		Persuasive	Leaders respect and recognize the contributions that employees make to the team. Leaders can be role models for subordinates.
		Stewardship organizing	Leaders have a clear understanding of the future direction of the organization. Leaders in carrying out their duties always prioritize community satisfaction.
3	Organizational learning (X1)	Experiment	Institutions provide a way to find the truth continuously The agency supports employee learning that leads to positive.
		Risk acceptance	The agency supports the courage to make risky decisions. Employees want to try to do what was previously unknown.
		Environmental interaction	There are learning activities by interacting from other areas. Employees respond to customer complaints (eg through the suggestion box or complaint contact).
		Dialog	Employees are encouraged to communicate with each other for learning Cross-departmental work teams are common in this organization.

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