

## Determinant Analysis of Innovative Work Behavior of Hospitality Employees in Lake Toba Tourism Area through Employee Engagement: A Structural Equation Model Approach

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### Abstract

The main objective of this research is to analyze the effect of transformational leadership and organizational climate on employee engagement and innovative work behavior. The research method in this study included library and field research designs with a quantitative approach. The research subjects taken in this study were employees who worked in hotels in the Lake Toba Tourism Area. The number of samples analyzed was 170 employees. Data collection techniques using observation, interviews, questionnaires and documentation. The data analysis method used is Partial Least Square (PLS). The data analysis test tool uses the Smartpls statistical software. The results of the data analysis concluded that transformational leadership, organizational climate, and employee engagement positively and significantly influence innovative work behavior. The results of subsequent studies confirm that transformational leadership significantly affects employee engagement. The results of this study also suggest that organizational climate has no significant effect on employee engagement. Furthermore, the managerial implications of this research suggest that to increase employee engagement and innovative work behavior, companies can provide employees with opportunities to learn and develop. Employees who feel empowered and have opportunities to learn and develop are likelier to be engaged and innovative. Employees who feel empowered and have opportunities to learn and develop are likelier to be engaged and innovative.

**Keywords:** *transformational leadership; organizational climate; employee engagement; innovative work behavior*

### Abstrak

Tujuan utama dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menganalisis pengaruh *transformational leadership* dan *organizational climate* terhadap *employee engagement* dan *innovative work behavior*. Metode penelitian dalam penelitian ini meliputi desain penelitian kepustakaan dan lapangan dengan pendekatan kuantitatif. Subjek penelitian yang diambil dalam penelitian ini adalah karyawan yang bekerja di perhotelan di Kawasan Wisata Danau Toba. Jumlah sampel yang dianalisis sebanyak 170 karyawan. Teknik Pengumpulan data menggunakan observasi, wawancara, kuesioner dan dokumentasi. Metode analisis data yang digunakan adalah *Partial Least Square (PLS)*. Alat uji analisis data menggunakan perangkat lunak statistik Smartpls. Hasil analisis data menyimpulkan *transformational leadership*, *organizational climate*, dan *employee engagement* memiliki pengaruh yang positif dan signifikan terhadap *innovative work behavior*. Hasil penelitian selanjutnya, mengkonfirmasi *transformational leadership* berpengaruh signifikan terhadap *employee engagement*. Hasil penelitian ini juga mengemukakan *organizational climate* tidak berpengaruh signifikan terhadap *employee engagement*. Selanjutnya, implikasi manajerial penelitian ini

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mengemukakan untuk meningkatkan *employee engagement* dan *innovative work behavior*, perusahaan dapat memberikan karyawan kesempatan untuk belajar dan berkembang. Karyawan yang merasa diberdayakan dan memiliki kesempatan untuk belajar dan berkembang lebih cenderung untuk terlibat dan inovatif.

**Kata Kunci:** *transformational leadership; organizational climate; employee engagement; innovative work behavior*

## INTRODUCTION

In the tourism context, innovative work behavior is one of the critical factors that can affect service quality and company competitiveness (Chen & Chang, 2013). However, despite the importance of innovative work behavior in tourism, there are still obstacles faced by hotel employees in the Lake Toba tourist area in carrying out this behavior. The main problem of this research is that limited resources, such as obsolete or less sophisticated technology and work equipment, can affect the ability of employees to innovate in their work. This can hinder the development of new ideas and the implementation of innovations in the workplace. Besides the need for employee engagement to increase innovative work behavior, transformational leadership aspects are considered important for HRD management in hospitality and tourism (Larasati et al., 2019). The second problem is that hotel management may need to fully realize the importance of transformational leadership in achieving business goals, resulting in a lack of effective leadership development among hotel management and staff (Dubey et al., 2023); (Silalahi et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the limited human resources, especially regarding the quality and quantity of available employees, makes it difficult for hotel management to find and retain employees with the transformational leadership skills needed to achieve business goals. Apart from employee engagement and transformational leadership factors, an organizational climate is also needed to maintain innovative work behavior (Battistelli et al., 2021). The next problem is management's lack of support, which results in employees feeling unappreciated and less motivated at work. Lack of support from management can also affect the overall organizational climate (Hapsari et al., 2019). From some of the problems above, it is essential to analyze the determinants of innovative work behavior of hotel employees in the tourist area of Lake Toba through employee engagement using a structural equation model approach. Furthermore, research on the determinants of innovative work behavior of hotel employees in the Lake Toba tourist area through employee engagement using a structural equation model approach can be a reference material for further research in this field. This research can be a basis for conducting further research and developing new concepts in the field of innovation and employee engagement in hotels.

### **Transformational Leadership and Employee Engagement**

Reveals that transformational leadership creates change in a particular situation by appealing to followers' values and feelings for a higher purpose (Messmann et al., 2022); (Meng et al., 2022). The emergence of employee engagement among employees cannot be separated from the leadership style of a leader or superior (Yano et al., 2021), because leaders are drivers of employee engagement in work life. Study results (Muhammad & Hendro, 2022); (Insyra, 2022), emphasized that transformational leadership significantly affects employee engagement. Therefore, based on some of the results of previous studies led to the development of the hypothesis:

*H1: Transformational leadership influences employee engagement*

### **Organizational Climate and Employee Engagement**

So that employees in the organization can work optimally (Listya et al., 2018); (Rozman & Strukelj, 2021) and have high work engagement (Ancarani et al., 2019), then the organization must be able to create a good and pleasant climate, so that employees who have formed quality can be maintained and they have high work performance (Fahreza et al., 2019). In the context of dynamic tourism development (Metha et al. Sulisty Radikun, 2022), the essence of the organizational climate is believed to be the foundation for local tourism actors to develop the role and involvement of employees in it (Wijayanti & Budiani, 2021); (Wibisono, 2021). Therefore, based on some of the results of previous studies led to the development of the hypothesis:

*H2: Organizational climate influences employee engagement*

### **Transformational Leadership and Innovative Work Behavior**

Leaders who apply behavior to empower their subordinates aim to develop self-control (Hydayati & Suhariyadi, 2020) and encourage followers to do something on their initiative, thus they will tend to develop creative behavior (Becker et al., 2022). Employees who are empowered and feel their leadership support new ideas proposed (Ferdinan & Lindawati, 2021) and solutions to the problems faced, will have the motivation to innovate in their work (Mustikawati & Nurmala, 2021). Several previous studies have confirmed that transformational leadership significantly influences innovative work behavior (Istanti et al., 2022); (Ariyani & Hidayati, 2018). Therefore, based on some of the results of previous studies led to the development of the hypothesis:

*H3: Transformational leadership influences innovative work behavior*

### **Organizational Climate and Innovative Work Behavior**

Organizational climate that is well perceived by the majority of employees will create a link between individuals and ideal organizational conditions so that it has an impact on good perceptions of the organization (Silalahi et al., 2020) and the results will affect the productivity and quality of performance within the organization (Amanta et al., 2015). According to (Battistelli et al., 2021); (Imran & Haque, 2011), this is because organizational climate can reflect employee perceptions regarding environmental quality and organizational conditions which ultimately affect employee behavior. Several previous studies have proven that organizational climate significantly influences innovative work behavior (Etikariena & Kalimashada, 2021); (Santoso & Nugraheni, 2022). Thus, following some of the results of previous studies led to the development of the hypothesis:

*H4: Organizational climate influences innovative work behavior*

### **Employee Engagement and Innovative Work Behavior**

Employee engagement is a synergy of cognitive, emotional and physical energy that is expected to encourage innovative behavior (Larasati et al., 2019). The importance of member involvement in contributing to the organization dramatically influences the ability of the organization to achieve its goals (Silalahi et al., 2022); (Swaroop & Dixit, 2018); (Veriyanti & Nurhayati, 2022). Several previous studies have confirmed that employee engagement significantly affects innovative work behavior (Sofiyani et al., 2022); (Budiprasetya & Johannes Lo, 2021). Thus, high work engagement will support the creation of innovative behavior. Therefore, based on some of the results of previous studies led to the development of the hypothesis:

*H5: Employee engagement affects innovative work behavior*

Research on innovative work behavior refers to the ability of employees to generate and implement creative ideas and solutions to problems. It is essential in the hospitality industry, especially in Lake Toba's tourist area, to provide visitors with a unique and memorable experience. On the other hand, employee engagement is the level of commitment, motivation

and involvement of employees in their work and organization. The state of the art of this research, namely the author believes in the current digital era. Currently, researching innovative work behavior and employee engagement of hotel employees is very important because both are critical factors in achieving business success in the hospitality industry. Whereas in the novelty aspect of this study, the researcher examines the relationship between the two variables more profoundly using a structural equation model approach by including predictor variables *transformational leadership* and organizational climate. The urgency of this research is that hotel management can find out the factors that influence innovative work behavior and can improve the quality of service to customers. Furthermore, research on the determinants of innovative work behavior of hotel employees in the tourist area of Lake Toba through employee engagement using a structural equation model approach can be a reference material for further research in this field.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a library and field research design with a causal associative approach to look at the relationship of several uncertain variables. (Sugiyono, 2015), Mentioning causal design helps analyze how a variable affects other variables, and is also helpful in experimental research where the independent variable is treated in a controlled manner by the researcher to see its impact on the dependent variable directly. The time of research was conducted from June 2023 to August 2023. The research location is in the tourist area of Lake Toba which includes the Simalungun and Samosir Regencies. The population in this study is the total number of employees working in hotels in Simalungun and Samosir Regencies. The method of determining the sample used in this study is the convenience sampling method, where this technique was chosen because it is the fastest method due to time constraints and anyone who accidentally meets the researcher can be sampled if that person is considered suitable as a data source. According to (Hair, 2014), if the population is not known, then the number of samples can be determined from 5-10 times the number of indicators used in a single construct. This study used 17 indicators from 4 variable dimensions, so the number of research samples obtained was  $17 \times 10 = 170$ . Data collection in this study used the observation method by directly observing the field and documentation derived from secondary data in documents and structured interviews using a questionnaire instrument. The data analysis method used is Partial Least Square (PLS). Data analysis test tool using statistical software Smartpls 3.0. The analysis phase consists of testing the validity and reliability and evaluating the external model with convergent validity. The expected convergent validity criterion is  $> 0.7$  (Hair, 2014). The internal evaluation model reviews the R Square (R<sup>2</sup>) value with the criterion if the R<sup>2</sup> value is 0.5-0.6, which means good, 0-0.33, which means medium and 0-0.19, which means weak. Then review the F-Square value (f<sup>2</sup>) with the assessment criteria of 0.02 which means weak, 0.15 which means medium, and 0.35 which means big (Hair, 2014). Finally, testing the hypothesis which is the criterion for measuring significance and probability value  $< 0.05$ .

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the validity test presented in table 2, the value of each loading factor and AVE on the indicator of the transformational leadership, organizational climate, employee engagement, and innovative work behavior is above 0.7 for the loading factor and above 0.5 for AVE, so it indicates that all items used in the construct are valid. Furthermore, the value for each reliability as measured by the composite reliability value and Cronbach's alpha, it is known that transformational leadership, organizational climate, employee engagement, and innovative work behavior have a value above 0.7, thus indicating that all research variables have an excellent reliability value. Furthermore, judging from the R-square value of the endogenous variables, a

value of 0.405 is obtained for competitive advantage, this shows that overall the ability of exogenous variables to explain innovative work behavior is strong (Ghozali, 2014).

**Table 2.** Validity, Reliability and R-Square test

| Variables                   | Items                          | Outer Loading   | Average Variance Extracted (AVE) | Composite Reliability | Cronbach's Alpha |
|-----------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------|
| Transformational Leadership | Idealistic Influence (TL1)     | 0.746           | 0.636                            | 0.874                 | 0.807            |
|                             | Inspirational Motivation (TL2) | 0.826           |                                  |                       |                  |
|                             | Intellectual Stimulation (TL3) | 0.878           |                                  |                       |                  |
|                             | Individual Consideration (TL4) | 0.731           |                                  |                       |                  |
| Organizational Climate      | Responsibilities (OC1)         | 0.908           | 0.736                            | 0.933                 | 0.908            |
|                             | Coordination (OC2)             | 0.820           |                                  |                       |                  |
|                             | Group Spirits (OC3)            | 0.911           |                                  |                       |                  |
|                             | Work Standards (OC4)           | 0.731           |                                  |                       |                  |
|                             | Organizational Clarity (OC5)   | 0.906           |                                  |                       |                  |
| Employee Engagement         | Opportunity to Grow (EE1)      | 0.855           | 0.736                            | 0.933                 | 0.910            |
|                             | Work Life Balance (EE2)        | 0.913           |                                  |                       |                  |
|                             | Physical Resources (EE3)       | 0.839           |                                  |                       |                  |
|                             | Role Clarity (EE4)             | 0.846           |                                  |                       |                  |
|                             | Rewards (EE5)                  | 0.833           |                                  |                       |                  |
| Innovative Work Behavior    | Generation (IWB1)              | 0.974           | 0.950                            | 0.983                 | 0.974            |
|                             | Promotions (IWB2)              | 0.962           |                                  |                       |                  |
|                             | Realization (IWB3)             | 0.988           |                                  |                       |                  |
| R-Square                    |                                |                 |                                  |                       |                  |
|                             |                                | <i>R-square</i> | <i>R-square Adjusted</i>         |                       |                  |
| Innovative Work Behavior    |                                | 0.426           | 0.415                            |                       |                  |

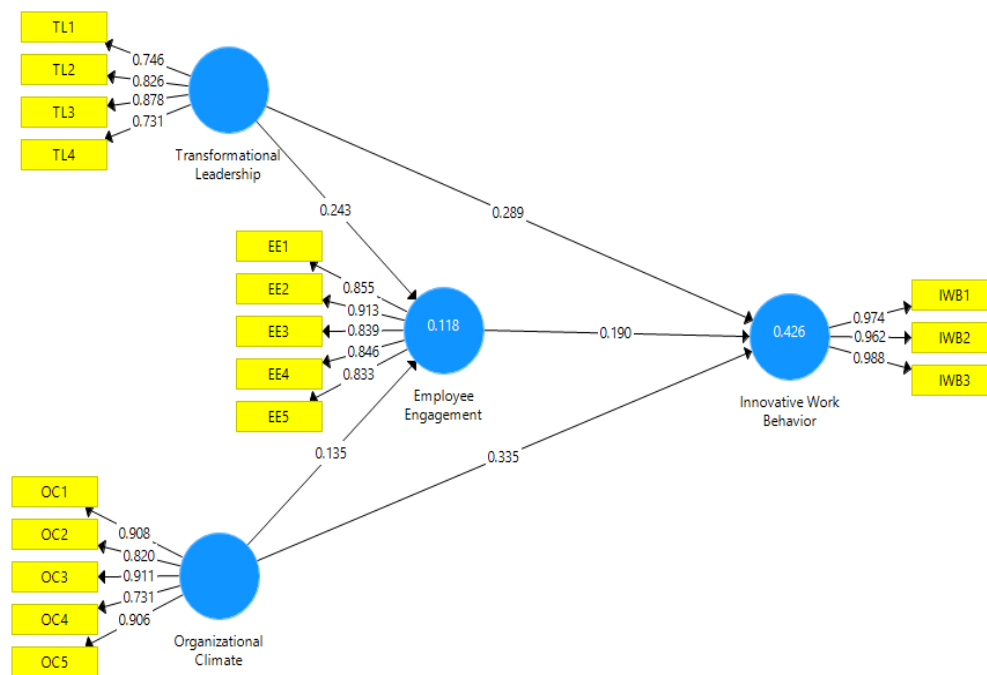
Source: Data Processing Results (2022)

Furthermore, to prove the hypothesis testing, a significance test was carried out to determine the relationship between the exogenous variables and the endogenous variables. The significance criterion was seen from the p-value. With a significance level of 5%, if the p-value between the exogenous variable and the endogenous variable is less than 0.05, it means that the exogenous variable significantly affects the endogenous variable. In contrast, if the value is higher than 0.05, the exogenous variables do not significantly build the endogenous variables. The results of the hypothesis test are presented in Table 3 below:

**Table 3. Hypotheses Results**

| Hypothesis  | Coefficients | t-Statistics | P-Value | Results  |
|---|--------------|--------------|---------|----------|
| Transformational Leadership → Employee Engagement (H1)      | 0.243        | 2,551        | 0.011   | Accepted |
| Organizational Climate → Employee Engagement (H2)           | 0.135        | 1,387        | 0.166   | Rejected |
| Transformational Leadership → Innovative Work Behavior (H3) | 0.289        | 3,811        | 0.000   | Accepted |
| Organizational Climate → Innovative Work Behavior (H4)      | 0.335        | 4,534        | 0.000   | Accepted |
| Employee Engagement → Innovative Work Behavior (H5)         | 0.190        | 3,994        | 0.000   | Accepted |

Source: Data Processing Results (2022)



**Figure 1.** Hypotheses Result

Based on testing the first hypothesis (H1), the results lead to positive and significant results between transformational leadership and employee engagement. These results prove that transformational leadership is leadership that can motivate and inspire followers to achieve goals that are greater than their interests so that this triggers a high emotional and intellectual relationship that employees have towards their work. Transformational leadership significantly impacts employee engagement because it can increase employee motivation, job satisfaction and performance. Transformational leaders can make employees feel confident, motivated, and valued. They can also create a positive and supportive work environment, increasing productivity and innovation. Transformational leaders can increase employee job satisfaction by making them feel valued and acknowledged. They can also create a positive and supportive work environment, making employees feel more comfortable and productive. Transformational leadership has been proven to increase employee engagement significantly. Transformational leaders motivate subordinates to achieve more than they think is possible. They give subordinates purpose and meaning and help them feel that they are making a difference. A study conducted by (Peng et al., 2021) found that employees who work under transformational leaders are more engaged than those who work under transactional leaders. The study also found that engaged employees are likelier to deliver high performance, be creative, and stay with the company.

The results of testing the second hypothesis (H2) resulted in positive results but not significant between organizational climate with employee engagement. Although organizational climate and employee engagement are important for organizational success, they are different. Organizational climate is a more general factor, while employee engagement is a more specific factor. Organizational climate can affect employee engagement, but not directly. There are several reasons why organizational climate does not directly affect employee engagement. First, organizational climate is a perception, not a reality (Inrawan et al., 2022). This means that what employees feel about organizational climate may differ from what is happening in the organization. Second, organizational climate is a relatively stable factor (Efendi et al., 2022). This means that changes in organizational climate take time to occur. Third, organizational climate is just one factor influencing employee engagement. Other factors, such as leadership

style, organizational culture, and compensation, also affect employee engagement. Even though organizational climate does not directly affect employee engagement, it is still an important factor for organizational success. A positive organizational climate can create a more enjoyable and productive work environment, which in turn can increase employee engagement it is still an important factor for organizational success. A positive organizational climate can create a more enjoyable and productive work environment, which in turn can increase employee engagement it is still an important factor for organizational success. A positive organizational climate can create a more enjoyable and productive work environment, increasing employee engagement (Inrawan et al., 2022). Even though the organizational climate does not always affect employee engagement, it is still essential to keep the organizational climate positive. A positive organizational climate can help organizations improve employee performance, satisfaction, and retention.

The results of testing the third hypothesis (H3) resulted in positive and significant results between transformational leadership and innovative work behavior. Transformational leadership has a significant positive impact on innovative work behavior. Transformational leaders encourage followers to think creatively, take risks and share new ideas. They also create a work environment that supports innovation, by providing resources, training, and appreciation for innovation. Transformational leaders create a clear vision for the future. This vision gives followers something to strive for and helps them stay motivated. Transformational leaders create a safe and supportive work environment for risk taking and innovation. They encourage subordinates to think outside the box and develop new ideas, and they provide constructive feedback to help subordinates develop their ideas. Second, transformational leaders motivate subordinates to achieve more than they think is possible. They give subordinates the confidence and support they need to achieve their goals and celebrate their success. Third, transformational leaders create a vision for the future that attracts and inspires followers. This vision gives subordinates a sense of purpose and motivation to work hard to achieve organizational goals. A study by (Butarbutar et al., 2022), suggests transformational leaders build strong relationships with employees' innovative work behavior. This relationship is based on trust, respect and support, thus creating a work environment that supports innovation. They provide resources, training, and appreciation for innovation.

The results of testing the fourth hypothesis (H4), obtained results that lead to positive and significant intermediate results organizational climate within innovative work behavior. These results prove that organizational climate has an important role in fostering employees' innovative work behavior in today's digital era. An organizational climate that supports innovation encourages employees to take risks, think creatively, and share new ideas. Organizational climate can influence employees' motivation, self-confidence, and sense of ownership of their work. When employees feel motivated, confident, and have a sense of ownership of their work, they are more likely to innovate. A positive organizational climate can increase employee motivation to innovate. When employees feel valued, acknowledged and supported, they are more likely to take risks and try new things (Ghosh, 2020). A positive organizational climate can also increase employees' sense of ownership of their work. When employees feel that they are part of a team and that their work makes a difference, they are more likely to innovate. Practice: Organizational practices supporting innovation can include providing resources for innovation, training on innovation, and creating a safe environment for taking risks. Creating a positive organizational climate can increase employees' motivation, confidence, and sense of ownership of their work . This will encourage employees to innovate and generate new ideas to help the organization achieve its goals.

The results of testing the fifth hypothesis (H5), obtained results that lead to positive and significant intermediate result employee engagement within innovative work behavior. Several facts are found from the respondents' responses regarding why employee involvement

significantly affects innovative work behavior. First, engaged employees are likelier to feel they have a voice in the workplace. They feel that their ideas are valued and that they can make a difference. Second, engaged employees are likelier to feel they have control over their work. They feel they can make their own decisions and have the freedom to innovate. Third, engaged employees are likelier to feel that their organization supports them. They feel that they have the resources they need to succeed and are appreciated for their work. Employee engagement is an important factor for organizations looking to drive innovation. Engaged employees are likelier to think outside the box, take risks, and share their ideas. They are also more likely to support innovation in the workplace. Organizations that can create a work environment that supports creativity and innovation will be more likely to generate new ideas to help them stay competitive in a fast-changing economy. A study conducted by (Simatupang et al., 2022), suggests that employees who are engaged in their work are more likely to engage in innovative work behavior.

## CONCLUSION

From the results of this study, they concluded that stated transformational leadership, organizational climate, and employee engagement has a positive and significant influence on innovative work behavior. Transformational leaders motivate and inspire their subordinates to achieve more than they ever thought possible. They create a work environment that supports creativity and innovation and provide subordinates with the resources and support they need to be innovative. An organizational climate that supports innovation encourages employees to take risks, think creatively, and share new ideas (Muliana et al., 2020). Organizational climate that supports innovation can have a significant positive impact on organizational performance. Employee engagement is the degree to which employees are engaged and motivated. Employees attached to their jobs are likelier to engage in innovative work behaviors. Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that transformational leadership, organizational climate, and employee engagement positively and significantly influence innovative work behavior. Transformational leaders can create a safe and supportive work environment, organizational climate that supports innovation, and high employee involvement. Innovative work behavior resulting from these factors can help organizations to improve customer satisfaction, efficiency,

The results of subsequent studies confirm that confirm transformational leadership significantly affects employee engagement. Transformational leadership is a leadership style that focuses on developing and motivating subordinates. Transformational leaders are often described as charismatic, inspiring, and forward-looking. They can motivate subordinates to achieve more than they think possible, and they create a work environment that encourages creativity and innovation. Transformational leaders create visions for the future that attract and inspire followers. This vision gives subordinates a sense of purpose and motivation to work hard to achieve organizational goals. The results of this study also suggest that organizational climate has no significant effect on employee engagement. There are several reasons why organizational climate does not directly affect employee engagement. First, organizational climate is a perception, not a reality. This means that what employees feel about organizational climate is different from what is happening in the organization. Second, organizational climate is a relatively stable factor. This means that changes in organizational climate take time to occur. Third, organizational climate is only one factor influencing employee engagement. Other factors, such as leadership style, organizational culture, and compensation, also affect employee engagement.

The managerial implications of this research conclude that there are several things that organizations can do to increase employee engagement and encourage innovative work behavior. First, organizations can create a work environment that supports creativity and innovation. Second, organizations can provide employees with the resources and training they need to be innovative. Third, allow employees to learn and develop. Employees constantly learning and



growing are more likely to feel engaged and motivated. Organizations can do this by providing training, offering opportunities for career development, and encouraging employees to take on new challenges. For further research regarding employee engagement and innovative work behavior can develop and explore matters related to variables that are suspected to have a relationship with development innovative work behavior, such as cultural diversity, organizational commitment, rewards, work satisfaction, and organizational citizenship behavior. In addition, this research puts forward suggestions for organizational climate factors to have an impact on employee engagement, namely company managers need to encourage a positive and supportive work culture, where every employee feels valued and empowered. Reinforcing positivity in the work environment can spark engagement. In addition, it provides opportunities for employees for career development and professional growth. When employees feel they have opportunities for growth, they are more likely to be actively engaged. Furthermore, the sample size used in this study is still small and yet to be able to provide generalizations, future research should increase the sample size to a larger size from different regions. On the other hand, for larger sample sizes and more complex models, data analysis methods using the Amos application can be used.

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