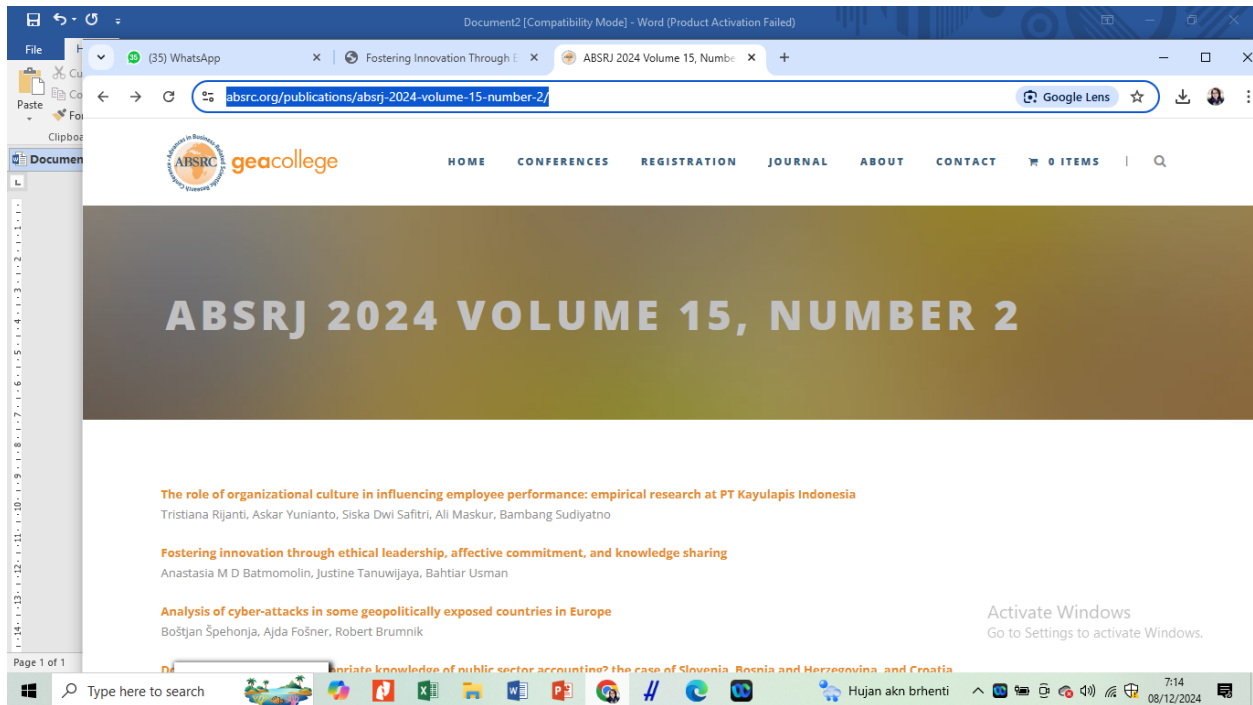


# Fostering Innovation Through Ethical Leadership, Affective Commitment, And Knowledge Sharing

## Cover Jurnal



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Fostering innovation through ethical leadership, affective commitment, and knowledge sharing

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The screenshot shows a web browser displaying the Gea College website. The page is titled "VOLUME 15 (2024) - Number 2". The navigation bar includes links for "For students", "Career Center", "International office", "Incubator", "Research institute", and "Conference & Journal". The main content area lists several articles, with the target article at the bottom: "Do universities provide appropriate knowledge of public sector accounting? The case of Slovenia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Croatia". The browser's address bar shows the URL "gea-college.si/en/absrj-2/journal-absrj/". The Windows taskbar is visible at the bottom, showing the time as 14:56 on 08/04/2026.

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# Journal Ranking

The screenshot displays the SINTA Author Dashboard interface. At the top, the user is identified as JUSTINE TANUWIJAYA with Sinta ID: 5994779. The dashboard includes a sidebar with navigation options: Dashboard, Explore SINTA, Mutation History, List Vericator PT, and My SINTA. The main content area is titled 'Scopus' and features a search bar and a filter section. The filter section includes 'Filter Quartile' with options for Quartile 1, 2, 3, 4, and No Quartile, and a 'Sort By' dropdown set to 'Year'. Below the filter, three journal entries are listed:

Quartile	Journal Title	Creator	Journal publish at	Cited
Q1	Empowering innovation: how coaching leadership shapes employee behavior through well-being	Tanuwijaya J. Cogent Business and Management	2025	0
Q3	The Effect of Coaching Leadership On Employee Well-Being, Knowledge Sharing, And Employee Innovative Behavior	Tanuwijaya J. Quality Access to Success	2025	2
Q3	FOSTERING INNOVATION THROUGH ETHICAL LEADERSHIP, AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT, AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING	Batmomolin A.M.D. Advances in Business Related Scientific Research Journal	2024	0

The bottom of the image shows a Windows taskbar with various application icons and system tray information including the time 17:43 and date 07/04/2026.

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## FOSTERING INNOVATION THROUGH ETHICAL LEADERSHIP, AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT, AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

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### Abstract

In the midst of intense competition and rapid changes, employees' innovative behavior is crucial as it determines the organization's sustainability. This quantitative study seeks to explore how ethical leadership and affective commitment give impact on innovative work behavior, with knowledge sharing acting as a mediator. There were 333 private school teachers in Indonesia responded to an online questionnaire and became the research participants. The research data underwent analysis through Structural Equation Modeling using AMOS version 24.0. The results of the study indicate that ethical leadership and affective commitment directly and indirectly influence the innovative work behavior. Knowledge sharing has a positive effect on innovative work behavior and serves as a mediator for the influence of ethical leadership and affective commitment on innovative work behavior. The implications of this research are significant for education leaders, especially in the appointment of school principals or preparing

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prospective school leaders, and in managing employee behavior to foster and enhance innovation.

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### Key Words

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Affective commitment; ethical leadership; innovative work behavior; knowledge sharing.

## INTRODUCTION

The demands and requirements for professional and reliable employees necessitate educational institutions to undertake reforms to adjust to the changing times and meet stakeholders' expectations. These reforms should enable innovation to thrive within the school environment. Opoku et al. (2019) suggested that in the current business globalization climate and competitive advantage, it was crucial for organizations to pursue various strategies to generate innovative employees' behavior because innovation served as a driver for organizational sustainability and development (Zhang, 2020), and to create competitive advantage and providing products/services according to customer needs (Lei et al., 2020). Efforts to promote and encourage innovation have become a strategic goal for all types of organizations: private and public, for-profit and non-profit, large and small (Battistelli et al., 2019). According to Jia et al. (2022), individuals running in the education segment need to exhibit innovative behavior because it is necessary to keep pace with and adapt to the developments of new knowledge within relevant disciplines. This behavior can be fostered and enhanced through leadership roles, employee commitment, and the implementation of knowledge management.

Several scientific studies have indicated that leadership has a positive influence on employees' and organizations' ability to innovate (Khaola & Coldwell, 2019 ; Vladić et al., 2021). School principals can influence teachers' innovative work behavior by practicing positive leadership behaviors (Khaola dan Oni, 2020). Teachers' affective commitment is a key element in school effectiveness, which can influence students' academic achievements (Maiti et al., 2021). Therefore, affective commitment becomes crucial amidst the competitive challenges of human resources in educational institutions. Similarly, organizational learning and knowledge sharing are two important aspects that should be encouraged, nurtured, and supported by leaders in any organizations (Alblooshi et al., 2020).

This study is intended to discover the roles of ethical leadership, affective commitment, and knowledge sharing on innovative work behavior among private school teachers in Indonesia. While ethical leadership and affective commitment have received attention from previous researchers, some issues remain unexplored, especially regarding their influence on innovative

work behavior. Similarly, in the empirical research field on leadership and innovative work behavior, there are inconsistent outcomes, hence the need to identify and investigate more mediators to help clarify both variables. Knowledge sharing, used as a mediating variable, has not been previously utilized by researchers. Thus, this research is expected to fill the gap in previous research.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT**

### **Ethical Leadership**

Ethical leadership pertains to the way leaders serve as exemplary figures for their followers, demonstrating behavior that normatively fits by using power and treating others ethically and fairly (Robbins & Judge, 2022). The necessity for ethical behavior arises from the ability of leaders to make impartial and just decisions confidently, without causing distress or negative impact on the emotions of their subordinates (Kumar et al., 2023). There is a pressing demand for cultivating a greater number of ethical leaders within numerous organizations. This is essential to inspire employees to mirror leaders' conduct and confidently express constructive opinions and suggestions. Such practices foster enhanced decision-making and cultivate a work environment conducive to improved performance and team effectiveness (Dua et al., 2023).

Ethical leadership is characterized by ethically satisfying traits, demonstrating behaviors of consideration, care, fairness, honesty, openness, and trust (Brown et al., 2005; Alblooshi et al., 2020; Su et al., 2021). Ethical leaders prioritize norms, principles, values, standards, and ethics both in theory and in practice while carrying out various tasks. They effectively communicate these considerations to team members, departments, and the organization as a whole, thereby fostering a more effective workplace environment (Kumar et al., 2023). As moral exemplars, ethical leaders are distinguished by genuine sincerity, empathy, and unwavering integrity. Leaders can influence disciples by demonstrating care and kindness towards them and focusing on the common interests and well-being (Su et al., 2021).

### **Affective commitment**

Affective commitment denotes the favorable emotional connection, enthusiasm, and zeal that employees harbor, compelling them to willingly participate actively in the organization's endeavors. Employees maintain a robust connection with the organization and derive pride from their membership within it (Jafri, 2010; Javed et al., 2021). In simpler terms, commitment involves a sense of attachment and loyalty. Affective commitment specifically pertains to the emotional connection, identification, and engagement of workers with an organization. This emotional bond influences personal attributes, organizational structures, and work experiences (Kumari & Afroz, 2013). Employees possessing robust affective commitment persist in their association with the organization due to their

desire to do so. Affective commitment is developed when employees and the organization have mutually beneficial interactions (Abbasi et al., 2022).

### **Knowledge sharing**

Knowledge sharing within organizations occurs among individuals through interactions and daily conversations among employees, thereby influencing the innovation capabilities of individual employees (Nham et al., 2020). The focus of knowledge sharing is on transferring data between individuals or groups to create mutual understanding and new insights. Knowledge can be established and distributed by coworkers, teams, and organizations through group learning to generate new knowledge and enrich the active knowledge repository, thus creating new solutions. This collective knowledge contributes to human capacity development and has a significant impact on the long-term performance of the organization (Andrade et al., 2023).

Knowledge sharing is highly valuable for organizations because throughout this process, efficiency can be enhanced, waste can be avoided, training costs can be reduced, and risks can also be minimized. When employees actively share knowledge, it not only enhances the accumulation of knowledge but also facilitates the adoption of innovative work behaviors among employees. Knowledge requires to be shared so that each person can understand and utilize it to their work (Nguyen *et al.*, 2019).

### **Innovative work behavior**

Innovation is one of the necessary ways for organizations to survive and strive with other organizations. Mere knowledge and skills are insufficient for an organization to endure in competitive environments (Batmomolin et al., 2022). Innovation can be assessed based on its uniqueness, novelty, and possible effect. Innovation requires three main steps: ideation, implementation, and the outcomes obtained from executing the idea and the associated changes. The goal of innovation in education is to elevate the overall efficiency, capability, and quality of the learning experiences (Serdyukov, 2017).

Individual innovative work behavior is at the core of the creativity and innovation process, thus being a crucial element in the success of an organization (Khaola dan Musiiwa, 2021). The conduct is manifested in employees' capacity to discover innovative solutions to challenges through original thought processes, aiming to boost performance, foster excellence, and ensure long-term effectiveness (Javed et al., 2021).

### **Ethical leadership (EL) and innovative work behavior (IWB)**

Moral values are crucial in achieving success. Moral executives and leaders must present ethical visions and missions, build a culture with strong shared ethical standards within the organization, move beyond personal financial concerns and gains, support individuals' creativity, products and services quality, and sustainable development for the overall well-being of individuals within the organization (Asif et al., 2019). Leaders need to allocate time and effort to implement and practice moral perspectives to enhance the organization's ability to innovate (Lei et al., 2020).

Ethical leaders can shape workers' perceptions of personal competencies and workspace relationships (Zahra & Waheed, 2017) by engaging in open two-way communication, sincerely listening to what staff have to say, and encouraging employees to express concerns and opinions, thereby stimulating subordinates to suggest new ideas to elevate work strategies (Jin et al., 2022).

**H1:** EL positively influences IWB.

### **Ethical leadership (EL) and knowledge sharing (KS)**

Leaders create a supportive environment for knowledge management, enabling employees to train and nurture knowledge and skills. This facilitates access to significant knowledge, promotes collaboration, and encourages employees to allocate knowledge and expertise with colleagues without hindrance (Lei et al., 2020). Leaders want employees to share knowledge because the shared knowledge will benefit the company (Wu, 2021). Ethical leaders actively encourage and motivate employees to share knowledge, both on an individual basis and within group settings (Bavik et al., 2018) because ethical leaders possess values of honesty, principles, and trustworthiness, followers are likely to trust them in the workplace environment (Wu, 2021). Ethical leadership creates an organizational climate that can influence cognition and develop a positive capacity for knowledge sharing and creation in the workplace (Xia & Yang, 2020; Goswami & Agrawal, 2023).

The leader upholds principles of dignity, honesty, fairness, and integrity in their interactions with employees, fostering an environment where employees feel valued and respected. They actively participate employees in decision-making processes and encourage their participation. By promoting normative and ethical behavior through open communication, the leader cultivates a positive perception of their personality among followers (Saeed et al., 2022). Ethics-focused leadership can significantly contribute to positively altering employees' behavior towards knowledge sharing (Le dan Lei, 2018).

**H2:** EL positively influences KS.

### **Affective commitment (AC) and innovative work behavior (IWB)**

Affective commitment describes the emotional bond, identification, and engagement of employees with the organization. Employees who possess strong affective commitment choose to remain with the institution because of their desire to do so (Abbasi et al., 2022). Workers who exhibit affective commitment to the organization demonstrate better performance and can generate new views and recommendations in performing tasks. Affective commitment serves as a catalyst, propelling employees to deeply comprehend and wholeheartedly adopt the values and objectives of the organization. This motivation compels them to exert greater efforts towards achieving these goals, often through novel and innovative approaches (Hakimian et al., 2016).

The findings of the study by Azinga et al. (2023) in textile and clothing manufacturers in Ghana concluded that affective commitment was crucial in

driving employees' innovative work behavior because commitment implied psychological attachment, a sense of ownership, and high motivation from employees contributing to organizational development. Jain (2022), focusing on healthcare workers in India, and Tajeddini et al. (2023), examining small and medium-sized enterprises in Turkey, both discovered a noteworthy and affirmative correlation between affective commitment and innovative work behavior. Contrastingly, Batmomolin et al. (2022) presented divergent findings, indicating that affective commitment did not exert a significant influence on the innovative behavior of employees within public institutions.

**H3:** AC positively influences IWB.

### **Affective commitment (AC) and knowledge sharing (KS)**

Employees with affective commitment, which involves identifying and embracing the organization's values, tend to care about the organization's success. Oneway employees express this concern is through positive social actions, such as sharing knowledge with their colleagues (Ficapal-Cusí et al., 2020). Research by Ouakouak & Ouedraogo (2019) and Luo et al. (2021) concluded that affective commitment positively influences the intention to share knowledge and knowledge sharing, especially tacit knowledge sharing (Sharif et al., 2022). Marques et al. (2019) also proved that high affective commitment of employees to the organization can lead to a raise in the maturity level of knowledge transfer and knowledge management.

**H4:** AC positively influences KS.

### **Knowledge sharing (KS) and innovative work behavior (IWB)**

Knowledge sharing is a voluntary act, making the knowledge possessed by someone ready to be understood, absorbed, and utilized by others, ultimately resulting in shared ownership of knowledge between the transmitter and the recipient (Nham et al., 2020). The willingness to contribute and gather knowledge enables an increase in employees' innovative work behavior (Nguyen et al., 2019; Muhammed et al., 2020).

Knowledge sharing is one aspect of knowledge management initiatives to better understand not only stimulates workforces to partake in knowledge sharing but also its outcome on personal job and how these impacts contribute to the sustainability of the business (Muhammed et al., 2020). Knowledge sharing enables individuals to explore deeper, think innovatively, and adopt behaviors aimed at acquiring new skills. Moreover, it significantly contributes to fostering creativity and innovative work behavior (Vandavasi et al., 2020; Lim & Ok, 2021; Islam et al., 2022).

**H5:** KS positively influences IWB

### **Knowledge sharing (KS) as a mediator**

Alfaridi et al. (2020) highlighted that knowledge sharing serves as a mediator in the relationship between ethical leadership and organizational innovation. Similarly, Lei et al. (2020) discovered that both tacit and explicit knowledge sharing mediate the impact of ethical leadership on both radical and incremental innovation. Moreover, Goswami dan Agrawal (2023) revealed

that knowledge sharing acts as a mediating aspect between ethical leadership and the process of knowledge creation.

According to Jnaneswar dan Ranjit (2021), knowledge sharing is a purposeful mechanism that enables the transfer of intellectual capital from one individual to another. This movement can be from leaders to subordinates and vice versa, or from one employee to another. The ethical treatment demonstrated by leaders stimulates positive ethical practices from employees as well, in the form of participation in positive activities such as knowledge sharing when needed (Arsawan et al., 2022), and innovative work behavior. The findings of the study by Khorakian et al. (2019) demonstrated that sharing best practices and sharing mistakes mediated the influence of ethical behavior on innovative work behavior. Ethical leaders inspire their followers to share knowledge, experiences, skills, prototypes, procedures, manuals, and job reports with their colleagues within the organization. This practice encourages employees to generate fresh ideas related to work methods, processes, products, and services (Goswami & Agrawal, 2023).

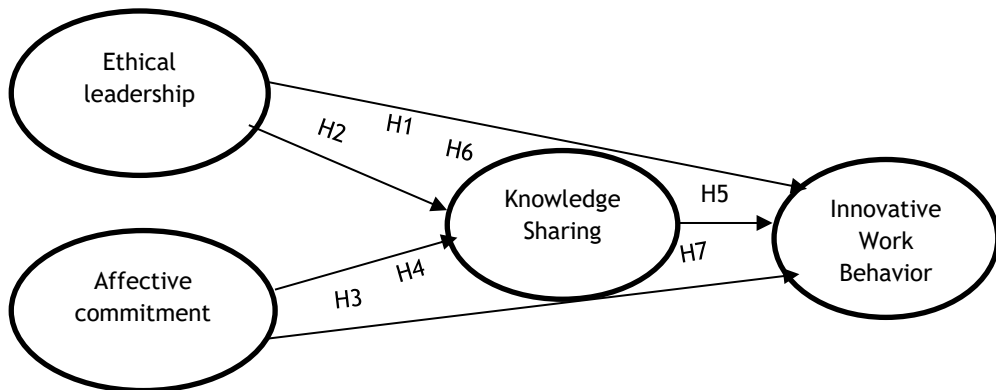
**H6:** KS mediates the influence of EL on IWB.

Ahmed et al. (2018) conducted research suggesting that employees' knowledge sharing plays a critical role in linking high-commitment work systems with innovative work behavior. Their study indicated that steadfast loyalty work systems enable and encourage employee knowledge sharing, which in turn fosters innovative work behavior. This is because the act of information exchange by employees is essential for recombining, translating, and generating new knowledge and ideas, as highlighted in their findings. The choice to disseminate knowledge hinges on employees' perceptions of the costs, benefits, and personal factors such as personality traits and intrinsic motivation, which shape this decision (Devi, 2023). Employees who cultivate a strong sense of affective commitment toward the organization are inclined to share knowledge with their staff more readily. The knowledge transferred will be enriched by the organization's processes, products, and services, thereby contributing to the enhancement of the organization's competitiveness and the provision of added value to customers in the long run (Marques et al., 2019).

**H7:** KS mediates the influence of AC on IWB

Drawing from a review of existing literature and the formulation of hypotheses, the proposed research framework is depicted in Figure 1.

**Figure 1:** Conceptual framework



## METHODS

This study is a causal investigation designed to explore the impact of ethical leadership and affective commitment on innovative work behavior, with knowledge sharing acting as a mediator. Primary data were gathered through a questionnaire distributed online via Google Forms to participants from late June to mid-July 2023.

The population of the study consists of 4000 teachers from 112 reputable private high schools in three major provinces in Indonesia: West Java, Central Java, and East Java. Using purposive sampling technique, 15 private high schools were selected as the research sites, and 333 voluntary teachers responded to and completed the distributed questionnaires.

To measure ethical leadership, ten statement items adopted from Brown et al. (2005) were utilized. Affective commitment was measured using eight statement items developed by Allen & Meyer (1990). The measurement of knowledge sharing utilizes eight statements adapted from the study by De Vries et al. (2006), while innovative work behavior is measured using nine items developed by Janssen (2000). All items in the research instrument were rated on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Descriptive statistical data analysis entails computing the mean of respondents' responses. For examining the influence of variables on each other, Structural Equation Modeling is employed using AMOS software version 24.0.

## FINDINGS

### Respondent characteristics

The majority of participants are female educators (53.2%), with over half aged above 50 years (34.8%), and possessing a bachelor's degree as their highest educational attainment (78.7%), and have been employed at the

same school for more than 20 years (31.5%). More respondent profile details can be found in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Respondent Profile

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Age</b>		
< 30 years	52	15.6
30 - 40 years	93	27.9
41 - 50 years	72	21.7
> 50 years	116	34.8
<b>Education</b>		
Bachelor's degree	262	78.7
Master's degree	71	21.3
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	156	46.8
Female	177	53.2
<b>Length of employment</b>		
< 5 years	75	22.5
5 - 10 years	63	19.0
11 - 15 years	48	14.4
16 - 20 years	42	12.6
> 20 years	105	31.5

**Validation and reliability testing**

Validation and reliability testing follows the criteria set by Hair et al. (2019) based on factor loadings and Cronbach's alpha values. With a sample size above 250, the instrument will be considered valid if it has a factor loading of at least 0.35. The instrument is considered reliable or has internal consistency if the Cronbach's Alpha value is greater than 0.60.

The data in table 2 show that all items from the variables ethical leadership, affective commitment, knowledge sharing, and innovative work behavior are valid because they have a factor loading > 0.35. Similarly, all questionnaire items have Cronbach's Alpha values > 0.60, indicating that this questionnaire is valid and reliable for use as a research data collection instrument.

**Table 2:** Instrument validity and reliability

Variables	Items	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Decision
Ethical Leadership	EL1	.778	0.953	Valid & Reliable
	EL2	.835		
	EL3	.785		
	EL4	.804		
	EL5	.881		
	EL6	.875		
	EL7	.820		
	EL8	.895		
	EL9	.840		
	IL10	.879		
Affective Commitment	AC1	.532	0.860	Valid & Reliable
	AC2	.446		

		AC3	.782		
		AC4	.497		
		AC5	.868		
		AC6	.890		
		AC7	.872		
		AC8	.896		
Knowledge Sharing		KS1	.764	Valid	&
		KS2	.734	Reliable	
		KS3	.768		
		KS4	.694		
		KS5	.678	0.861	
		KS6	.692		
		KS7	.682		
		KS8	.734		
Innovative Behavior	Work	IWB1	.750	Valid	&
		IWB2	.788	Reliable	
		IWB3	.805		
		IWB4	.781		
		IWB5	.806	0.937	
		IWB6	.831		
		IWB7	.860		
		IWB8	.855		
		IWB9	.868		

### Descriptive Statistics

The mean score of respondents' answers to ethical leadership is 4.375. This indicates that school leaders have demonstrated virtues as role models, are trustworthy, live according to ethical and moral standards, discuss ethics and values with employees, make fair decisions, and courageously discipline employees who violate ethical standards. The success achieved by the school is obtained through ethical, correct, and morally accountable means.

The mean score for affective commitment among respondents is 4.421, indicating that teachers experience emotional attachment to the school. This emotional connection stems from the school's meaningfulness to them, the alignment of school issues with their own concerns, their integration into the school community, and their strong sense of ownership toward the institution.

The average score obtained by respondents for knowledge sharing practices is 4.037, indicating that teachers are actively engaged in the process of giving and receiving information, knowledge, and skills to others. They willingly disseminate the knowledge they possess, participate in discussions or idea exchanges, and provide support and assistance to others in gaining new understanding or enhancing their abilities. These activities reflect a collaborative culture among them and demonstrate a commitment to assisting each other in achieving common goals.

The typical rating for innovative work behavior among respondents stands at 4.000, indicating that the majority of respondents have rated themselves as actively adopting new, creative, and innovative practices in carrying out their duties as teachers. This may include the use of creative teaching methods, experimenting with new approaches to learning, or creating new solutions to challenges faced in the educational environment. A high score

suggests that teachers are receptive to change and inclined to explore new methods to improve their work effectiveness.

### Model fitness and hypothesis testing

Testing model fitness refers to the proposal by Hair et al. (2019) obtained from statistical calculations using AMOS version 24.0. In absolute fit indices, the RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) value shows  $0.076 < 0.08$  and the RMR (Root Mean Square Residual) value is  $0.036 < 0.08$ . Incremental fit indices, including Normed Fit Index (NFI), Tucker Lewis Index (TLI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and Incremental Fit Index (IFI), are all above 0.90, thus categorized as a good fit. In the Parsimony fit index, the Normed Chi Square (NCS) value is 3.450. Therefore, it can be concluded that this research model falls under the category of goodness-of-fit, allowing the hypothesis testing to proceed.

The outcomes of hypothesis testing, as shown in table 3, indicate that the p-values for H1 to H7 are all  $< 0.05$ . Therefore, It can be inferred that with a confidence level of 95%, all proposed research hypotheses are supported.

**Table 3:** Hypotheses testing results

Hypotheses	Estimate	P-value	Decision
EL ---> IWB	0,086	0,023	H1 Supported
EL ---> KS	0,101	0,028	H2 Supported
AC ---> IWB	0,194	0,000	H3 Supported
AC ---> KS	0,343	0,000	H4 Supported
KS ---> IWB	0,301	0,000	H5 Supported
EL ---> KS ---> IWB	0,031	0,036	H6 Supported
AC ---> KS ---> IWB	0,103	0,000	H7 Supported

## DISCUSSION

Drawing from the statistical findings, it can be inferred that ethical leadership fosters a favorable impact on IWB. H1 is confirmed. The result is compatible with previous studies conducted by Zahra & Waheed (2017); Özsungur (2019); Lei et al. (2020); Jia et al. (2022); Jin et al. (2022); Iqbal et al. (2020); Musenze & Mayende (2023) in various countries, including China, Pakistan, Vietnam, Turkey, and Uganda, in companies, SMEs, research institutions, and higher education. These findings indicate that a leader who possesses ethics and morality and implements leadership processes guided by ethical and moral principles will foster innovative behavior among teachers in the school environment. In other words, teachers will be motivated to behave innovatively when ethical leadership is applied in schools. According to Liu et al. (2023), ethical leaders are characterized by their ability to make decisions that prioritize ethical considerations within the organization. They demonstrate genuine care and interest for their workers, actively fostering interpersonal relationships built on reciprocal respect and trust. Furthermore, they establish an environment of psychological safety for employees. When employees feel psychologically safe, they are more likely to become deeply

engaged in their job, exhibiting increased enthusiasm and focus. This heightened engagement often leads to the generation of numerous ideas and beneficial behaviors that drive innovation.

Ethical leaders have the ability to inspire employees to consider ethical perspectives and serve as exemplary models, thereby fostering an ethical climate within the organization. By demonstrating ethical leadership styles, leaders cultivate an environment where moral conduct is prioritized. This environment, characterized by elevated ethical standards, communicates the expectation for employees to consistently make ethical decisions and actions in their roles. These guiding principles encourage employees to prioritize task performance aligned with ethical considerations (Tabiu, 2023). Organizations can boost employee commitment and foster positive behaviors by cultivating an ethical work environment. This, in turn, will contribute to a more innovative organizational culture (Hong et al., 2023). This finding is consistent with the expectations of Dua et al. (2023) that many organizations require leaders who possess strong ethical values within the organization, especially in scenarios of scandal, fraud, and deception, which are symptoms of eroded ethical values. Leaders should be chosen and assessed based on their capability and commitment to uphold strong ethical values. Managers have a responsibility to foster, endorse, and uphold ethical leadership, as employees often mirror the ethical conduct of their leaders. This, in turn, can mitigate instances of unethical behavior within the organization. Furthermore, managers must establish an environment where employees feel empowered to express suggestions, directions, ideas, views, and interests, including implementing clear codes of ethics. Such codes serve as guiding principles for ethical behavior and decision-making among employees.

This study's findings suggest that ethical leadership yields a beneficial impact on knowledge sharing. H2 is supported. This finding indicates that if ethical leadership is implemented in schools, the exchange of knowledge and skills among teachers will proceed smoothly. This outcome aligns with the conclusions drawn in earlier studies conducted by Bavik et al. (2018); Le & Lei (2018); Tu et al. (2020); Su et al. (2021); Alfaridi et al. (2020); Chaman et al. (2021); Xia & Yang (2020); Wu, 2021; Koay & Lim (2022); Saeed et al. (2022); Goswami & Agrawal (2023). This discovery is likewise in accordance with the research conducted by Khan et al. (2019) who observed that when employees have high normative perceptions, their perceived behavioral control over knowledge sharing also increases, directly influencing knowledge-sharing behavior. Knowledge sharing is indispensable in any organization and across all roles as it is vital for the growth and sustainability of others and for fostering a positive work environment. Ethical leadership can have a positive impact on the attitudes of subordinates, thereby significantly contributing to the improvement of both individual and organizational performance, as highlighted by Jin et al. (2022).

The statistical analysis reveals that affective commitment exerts a positive effect on innovative work behavior. Thus, H3 is confirmed. It suggests that the long-term rational choice of teachers to be part of a school community, formally identified with the school, and emotionally attached, having a strong

sense of ownership towards the school, can lead teachers to develop themselves optimally by generating brilliant ideas, both for improving the quality of learning and providing pleasant services to students, parents, and the community. A teacher who has a strong commitment to the school will develop emotional bonds and foster unity with students, parents, and colleagues. Emotional bonds include feelings of joy, affection, and pride in the school's vision, mission, goals, values, and culture. Hakimian et al. (2016) stated that employees with high affective commitment enjoy being in the organization, and as a result, they are more attentive to organizational goals and produce positive efforts and performance, which leads them to exhibit innovative behavior.

The research findings provide empirical evidence that emotional dedication enhances the likelihood of individuals sharing their knowledge in a positive manner. H4 is supported. This discovery aligns with the results of earlier research conducted by Ouakouak dan Ouedraogo (2019) and Sharif et al. (2022). Inspired by these findings, teachers who identify themselves with the school, are committed, loyal, and willing to work for a lifetime at the same school will be generous in sharing what they have learned. The higher the teachers' commitment to the school and the values embodied in the school, the more it can guide teachers to develop themselves through the knowledge and skills shared by colleagues, while also encouraging an attitude of sharing intellectual wealth and best practices. For committed teachers, the knowledge gathered or shared is equally significant in developing the school to be of higher quality and more trustworthy. High affective commitment of teachers to their school will also increase their sense of ownership of the school. High ownership will enhance social interaction among employees through shared experiences and communication patterns. Increased ownership plays a crucial role in developing a collective mindset, which ultimately enhances knowledge sharing among employees (Seo, 2023).

Based on the statistical test results, knowledge sharing positively influences innovative work behavior. This finding corroborates hypothesis H5 and is in line with previous studies conducted by Dong Phung et al. (2017); Kim & Park (2017); Ahmed et al. (2018); Munir & Beh (2019); Muhammed et al. (2020); Vandavasi et al. (2020); Anser et al. (2021); Jnaneswar & Ranjit (2021); Lin & Shin (2021); Arsawan et al. (2022); Islam et al. (2022); Escribá-Carda et al. (2023); Yepes & López (2023); Batmomolin et al. (2024). The process of exchanging goodwill, where teachers actively shared knowledge, experiences, ideas, and information with colleagues through various means, had a positive effect on innovation. The exchange of ideas and experiences allowed teachers to gain new perspectives and insights from their peers. This stimulated creative thinking and encouraged the exploration of new ideas. Additionally, through knowledge sharing, teachers could collaborate to collectively address challenges and obstacles encountered in teaching or serving students and parents. Such collaboration could generate innovative ideas that might have been difficult to achieve individually. Teachers who actively shared knowledge tended to continue learning and self-improvement, thereby

enhancing their abilities and capacities to cope with rapid changes and apply the latest practices in teaching, especially in technology and new teaching methods that could stimulate creativity and innovation. Sharing experiences and innovative ideas could encourage teacher creativity in developing teaching methods, problem-solving approaches for students, and school governance.

The research outcomes indicate that ethical leadership impacts innovative work behavior by fostering knowledge sharing as an intermediary mechanism. H6 is supported. Knowledge sharing can facilitate ethical leadership in promoting innovative behavior. Knowledge sharing enables the establishment of a sense of security and mutual trust among employees and leaders. When employees feel secure to share ideas and information, an environment that supports ethics, trust, and collaboration is created. Ethical leadership values and encourages collaboration by helping to create an environment where new ideas can emerge through the exchange of ideas.

The statistical analysis findings suggest that the impact of affective commitment on innovative work behavior is effectively mediated by knowledge sharing. This supports the hypothesis H7. In the school setting, the sharing of knowledge and information among teachers acts as a potent tool for dedicated and loyal educators to nurture creativity and innovation within the institution. When engaging in knowledge sharing, teachers with a strong sense of emotional commitment to the school will acquire fresh insights and endeavour to put them into practice, aiming to enhance the already high standard of classroom learning and deliver outstanding services to students. Through the exchange of knowledge, experiences, information, and ideas among colleagues, individuals tend to experience increased commitment and moral engagement in their workplace. This commitment to active involvement and engagement within the school environment will inspire teachers to boldly take risks and generate new ideas that promote innovation, thus fostering positive change within the institution. Azizi et al. (2023) argue that like weaving golden threads amidst a wilderness of ideas, achieving the desired level of knowledge creation and innovation within an organization requires more than just honing employees' skills and knowledge. They emphasize the need for targeted development, where knowledge sharing becomes its core, weaving a spirit of collaboration within the organization. When employees are motivated, they have the potential to enhance their capabilities and produce higher-quality outputs in knowledge discovery within a condensed timeframe.

## **CONCLUSION AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The research findings indicate that ethical leadership and affective commitment have direct and indirect impacts on teachers' innovative work behavior. The positive practice of knowledge sharing among teachers directly promotes teachers' innovative work behavior. To foster innovative behavior in the school ecosystem, ethical leadership should serve as a leadership model, knowledge sharing among internal stakeholders should

be encouraged, and teachers' affective commitment should be maintained and enhanced. The discoveries aid in enhancing comprehension regarding the interactions among ethical leadership, affective commitment, knowledge sharing, and innovative work behavior in the context of educational institutions.

Some managerial implications that can be suggested based on the research findings. Firstly, if aiming to enhance teachers' innovative behavior, school management may consider appointing or preparing school principals who have ethical capacities and abilities to practice ethics and morality in personal life and leadership. Ethical standards should be one of the requirements that must be fulfilled by candidates to be appointed to structural and functional positions in schools such as principals, vice principals, class teachers, subject coordinators, student organization advisors, and others. Furthermore, school administrations should actively encourage ethical leadership styles among teachers by evaluating, advocating, promoting, and recognizing all dimensions of ethical leadership behavior. This approach fosters a culture where more individuals are motivated to exemplify ethical leadership styles within the school environment. Additionally, school management can bolster ethical leadership by offering comprehensive training to both structural and functional officials within the school. Educational leader needs to pay attention and support teachers who have long served in the school by providing tenure awards such as cash bonuses, gold rings, or other compensations to appreciate their dedication, such as travel tickets to visit historical places abroad, refreshment programs abroad, or family vacations for employees, and others tailored to the school's capabilities. Additionally, school management also needs to provide compensation for teachers who enjoy sharing their knowledge and skills and for teachers who innovate by providing ideas or innovative works.

Amid the widespread issue of the presence of artificial intelligence with applications capable of answering all questions asked, knowledge sharing remains relevant in promoting innovative behavior because the best practices performed by one teacher will greatly enrich other teachers and add value to global knowledge management. The knowledge and skills possessed by an individual due to diligence and work results can help other employees to develop themselves, thus advancing together. Therefore, it needs to be supported by policies and routine programs such as the establishment of knowledge sharing platforms, regular team meetings, and open communication channels to encourage teachers to actively share knowledge, experience, and skills.

This study has numerous constraints, namely that this research was conducted in educational institutions, particularly private schools in Indonesia, which are characterized by a collective culture. Therefore, replication studies with respondents from manufacturing or other service industries are needed, or it could also be conducted in other countries with different cultures. Second, future research could use mediating variables that are closely related to internal factors of teachers, such as psychological capital (Karimi et al., 2023), achievement motivation and trust. Third, this study only selected ethical leadership style, whereas there are several other

positive leadership styles that can promote teachers' innovative behavior in schools. Therefore, future research could utilize, for example, inclusive leadership, servant leadership, digital leadership, empowerment leadership, and collaborative leadership. Fourth, further research can examine the potential moderating effects of organizational culture or the external environment on the relationship between ethical leadership, affective commitment, knowledge sharing, and innovative work behavior. Furthermore, contrasting the dynamics of these connections across various cultural contexts or sectors could yield a more profound understanding of the universality or particularity of the findings from this study.

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# FOSTERING INNOVATION THROUGH ETHICAL LEADERSHIP, AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT, AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

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## FOSTERING INNOVATION THROUGH ETHICAL LEADERSHIP, AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT, AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

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### Abstract

In the midst of intense competition and rapid changes, employees' innovative behavior is crucial as it determines the organization's sustainability. This quantitative study seeks to explore how ethical leadership and affective commitment give impact on innovative work behavior, with knowledge sharing acting as a mediator. There were 333 private school teachers in Indonesia responded to an online questionnaire and became the research participants. The research data underwent analysis through Structural Equation Modeling using AMOS version 24.0. The results of the study indicate that ethical leadership and affective commitment directly and indirectly influence the innovative work behavior. Knowledge sharing has a positive effect on innovative work behavior and serves as a mediator for the influence of ethical leadership and affective commitment on innovative work behavior. The implications of this research are significant for education leaders, especially in the appointment of school principals or preparing

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prospective school leaders, and in managing employee behavior to foster and enhance innovation.

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### Key Words

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Affective commitment; ethical leadership; innovative work behavior; knowledge sharing.

## INTRODUCTION

The demands and requirements for professional and reliable employees necessitate educational institutions to undertake reforms to adjust to the changing times and meet stakeholders' expectations. These reforms should enable innovation to thrive within the school environment. Opoku et al. (2019) suggested that in the current business globalization climate and competitive advantage, it was crucial for organizations to pursue various strategies to generate innovative employees' behavior because innovation served as a driver for organizational sustainability and development (Zhang, 2020), and to create competitive advantage and providing products/services according to customer needs (Lei et al., 2020). Efforts to promote and encourage innovation have become a strategic goal for all types of organizations: private and public, for-profit and non-profit, large and small (Battistelli et al., 2019). According to Jia et al. (2022), individuals running in the education segment need to exhibit innovative behavior because it is necessary to keep pace with and adapt to the developments of new knowledge within relevant disciplines. This behavior can be fostered and enhanced through leadership roles, employee commitment, and the implementation of knowledge management.

Several scientific studies have indicated that leadership has a positive influence on employees' and organizations' ability to innovate (Khaola & Coldwell, 2019 ; Vladić et al., 2021). School principals can influence teachers' innovative work behavior by practicing positive leadership behaviors (Khaola dan Oni, 2020). Teachers' affective commitment is a key element in school effectiveness, which can influence students' academic achievements (Maiti et al., 2021). Therefore, affective commitment becomes crucial amidst the competitive challenges of human resources in educational institutions. Similarly, organizational learning and knowledge sharing are two important aspects that should be encouraged, nurtured, and supported by leaders in any organizations (Alblooshi et al., 2020).

This study is intended to discover the roles of ethical leadership, affective commitment, and knowledge sharing on innovative work behavior among private school teachers in Indonesia. While ethical leadership and affective commitment have received attention from previous researchers, some issues remain unexplored, especially regarding their influence on innovative

work behavior. Similarly, in the empirical research field on leadership and innovative work behavior, there are inconsistent outcomes, hence the need to identify and investigate more mediators to help clarify both variables. Knowledge sharing, used as a mediating variable, has not been previously utilized by researchers. Thus, this research is expected to fill the gap in previous research.

## LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

### Ethical Leadership

Ethical leadership pertains to the way leaders serve as exemplary figures for their followers, demonstrating behavior that normatively fits by using power and treating others ethically and fairly (Robbins & Judge, 2022). The necessity for ethical behavior arises from the ability of leaders to make impartial and just decisions confidently, without causing distress or negative impact on the emotions of their subordinates (Kumar et al., 2023). There is a pressing demand for cultivating a greater number of ethical leaders within numerous organizations. This is essential to inspire employees to mirror leaders' conduct and confidently express constructive opinions and suggestions. Such practices foster enhanced decision-making and cultivate a work environment conducive to improved performance and team effectiveness (Dua et al., 2023).

Ethical leadership is characterized by ethically satisfying traits, demonstrating behaviors of consideration, care, fairness, honesty, openness, and trust (Brown et al., 2005; Alblooshi et al., 2020; Su et al., 2021). Ethical leaders prioritize norms, principles, values, standards, and ethics both in theory and in practice while carrying out various tasks. They effectively communicate these considerations to team members, departments, and the organization as a whole, thereby fostering a more effective workplace environment (Kumar et al., 2023). As moral exemplars, ethical leaders are distinguished by genuine sincerity, empathy, and unwavering integrity. Leaders can influence disciples by demonstrating care and kindness towards them and focusing on the common interests and well-being (Su et al., 2021).

### Affective commitment

Affective commitment denotes the favorable emotional connection, enthusiasm, and zeal that employees harbor, compelling them to willingly participate actively in the organization's endeavors. Employees maintain a robust connection with the organization and derive pride from their membership within it (Jafri, 2010; Javed et al., 2021). In simpler terms, commitment involves a sense of attachment and loyalty. Affective commitment specifically pertains to the emotional connection, identification, and engagement of workers with an organization. This emotional bond influences personal attributes, organizational structures, and work experiences (Kumari & Afroz, 2013). Employees possessing robust affective commitment persist in their association with the organization due to their

desire to do so. Affective commitment is developed when employees and the organization have mutually beneficial interactions (Abbasi et al., 2022).

### **Knowledge sharing**

Knowledge sharing within organizations occurs among individuals through interactions and daily conversations among employees, thereby influencing the innovation capabilities of individual employees (Nham et al., 2020). The focus of knowledge sharing is on transferring data between individuals or groups to create mutual understanding and new insights. Knowledge can be established and distributed by coworkers, teams, and organizations through group learning to generate new knowledge and enrich the active knowledge repository, thus creating new solutions. This collective knowledge contributes to human capacity development and has a significant impact on the long-term performance of the organization (Andrade et al., 2023).

Knowledge sharing is highly valuable for organizations because throughout this process, efficiency can be enhanced, waste can be avoided, training costs can be reduced, and risks can also be minimized. When employees actively share knowledge, it not only enhances the accumulation of knowledge but also facilitates the adoption of innovative work behaviors among employees. Knowledge requires to be shared so that each person can understand and utilize it to their work (Nguyen et al., 2019).

### **Innovative work behavior**

Innovation is one of the necessary ways for organizations to survive and strive with other organizations. Mere knowledge and skills are insufficient for an organization to endure in competitive environments (Batmomolin et al., 2022). Innovation can be assessed based on its uniqueness, novelty, and possible effect. Innovation requires three main steps: ideation, implementation, and the outcomes obtained from executing the idea and the associated changes. The goal of innovation in education is to elevate the overall efficiency, capability, and quality of the learning experiences (Serdyukov, 2017).

Individual innovative work behavior is at the core of the creativity and innovation process, thus being a crucial element in the success of an organization (Khaola dan Musiiwa, 2021). The conduct is manifested in employees' capacity to discover innovative solutions to challenges through original thought processes, aiming to boost performance, foster excellence, and ensure long-term effectiveness (Javed et al., 2021).

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### **Ethical leadership (EL) and innovative work behavior (IWB)**

Moral values are crucial in achieving success. Moral executives and leaders must present ethical visions and missions, build a culture with strong shared ethical standards within the organization, move beyond personal financial concerns and gains, support individuals' creativity, products and services quality, and sustainable development for the overall well-being of individuals within the organization (Asif et al., 2019). Leaders need to allocate time and effort to implement and practice moral perspectives to enhance the organization's ability to innovate (Lei et al., 2020).

Ethical leaders can shape workers' perceptions of personal competencies and workspace relationships (Zahra & Waheed, 2017) by engaging in open two-way communication, sincerely listening to what staff have to say, and encouraging employees to express concerns and opinions, thereby stimulating subordinates to suggest new ideas to elevate work strategies (Jin et al., 2022).

**H1:** EL positively influences IWB.

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### **Ethical leadership (EL) and knowledge sharing (KS)**

Leaders create a supportive environment for knowledge management, enabling employees to train and nurture knowledge and skills. This facilitates access to significant knowledge, promotes collaboration, and encourages employees to allocate knowledge and expertise with colleagues without hindrance (Lei et al., 2020). Leaders want employees to share knowledge because the shared knowledge will benefit the company (Wu, 2021). Ethical leaders actively encourage and motivate employees to share knowledge, both on an individual basis and within group settings (Bavik et al., 2018) because ethical leaders possess values of honesty, principles, and trustworthiness, followers are likely to trust them in the workplace environment (Wu, 2021). Ethical leadership creates an organizational climate that can influence cognition and develop a positive capacity for knowledge sharing and creation in the workplace (Xia & Yang, 2020; Goswami & Agrawal, 2023).

The leader upholds principles of dignity, honesty, fairness, and integrity in their interactions with employees, fostering an environment where employees feel valued and respected. They actively participate employees in decision-making processes and encourage their participation. By promoting normative and ethical behavior through open communication, the leader cultivates a positive perception of their personality among followers (Saeed et al., 2022). Ethics-focused leadership can significantly contribute to positively altering employees' behavior towards knowledge sharing (Le dan Lei, 2018).

**H2:** EL positively influences KS.

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### **Affective commitment (AC) and innovative work behavior (IWB)**

Affective commitment describes the emotional bond, identification, and engagement of employees with the organization. Employees who possess strong affective commitment choose to remain with the institution because of their desire to do so (Abbasi et al., 2022). Workers who exhibit affective commitment to the organization demonstrate better performance and can generate new views and recommendations in performing tasks. Affective commitment serves as a catalyst, propelling employees to deeply comprehend and wholeheartedly adopt the values and objectives of the organization. This motivation compels them to exert greater efforts towards achieving these goals, often through novel and innovative approaches (Hakimian et al., 2016).

The findings of the study by Azinga et al. (2023) in textile and clothing manufacturers in Ghana concluded that affective commitment was crucial in

driving employees' innovative work behavior because commitment implied psychological attachment, a sense of ownership, and high motivation from employees contributing to organizational development. Jain (2022), focusing on healthcare workers in India, and Tajeddini et al. (2023), examining small and medium-sized enterprises in Turkey, both discovered a noteworthy and affirmative correlation between affective commitment and innovative work behavior. Contrastingly, Batmomolin et al. (2022) presented divergent findings, indicating that affective commitment did not exert a significant influence on the innovative behavior of employees within public institutions.

**H3:** AC positively influences IWB.

#### **Affective commitment (AC) and knowledge sharing (KS)**

Employees with affective commitment, which involves identifying and embracing the organization's values, tend to care about the organization's success. One way employees express this concern is through positive social actions, such as sharing knowledge with their colleagues (Ficapal-Cusi et al., 2020). Research by Ouakouak & Ouedraogo (2019) and Luo et al. (2021) concluded that affective commitment positively influences the intention to share knowledge and knowledge sharing, especially tacit knowledge sharing (Sharif et al., 2022). Marques et al. (2019) also proved that high affective commitment of employees to the organization can lead to a raise in the maturity level of knowledge transfer and knowledge management.

**H4:** AC positively influences KS.

#### **Knowledge sharing (KS) and innovative work behavior (IWB)**

Knowledge sharing is a voluntary act, making the knowledge possessed by someone ready to be understood, absorbed, and utilized by others, ultimately resulting in shared ownership of knowledge between the transmitter and the recipient (Nham et al., 2020). The willingness to contribute and gather knowledge enables an increase in employees' innovative work behavior (Nguyen et al., 2019; Muhammed et al., 2020).

Knowledge sharing is one aspect of knowledge management initiatives to better understand not only stimulates workforces to partake in knowledge sharing but also its outcome on personal job and how these impacts contribute to the sustainability of the business (Muhammed et al., 2020). Knowledge sharing enables individuals to explore deeper, think innovatively, and adopt behaviors aimed at acquiring new skills. Moreover, it significantly contributes to fostering creativity and innovative work behavior (Vandavasi et al., 2020; Lim & Ok, 2021; Islam et al., 2022).

**H5:** KS positively influences IWB

#### **Knowledge sharing (KS) as a mediator**

Alfaridi et al. (2020) highlighted that knowledge sharing serves as a mediator in the relationship between ethical leadership and organizational innovation. Similarly, Lei et al. (2020) discovered that both tacit and explicit knowledge sharing mediate the impact of ethical leadership on both radical and incremental innovation. Moreover, Goswami dan Agrawal (2023) revealed

59 that knowledge sharing acts as a mediating aspect between ethical leadership and the process of knowledge creation. 107

According to Jnaneswar dan Ranjit (2021), knowledge sharing is a purposeful mechanism that enables the transfer of intellectual capital from one individual to another. This movement can be from leaders to subordinates and vice versa, or from one employee to another. The ethical treatment demonstrated by leaders stimulates positive ethical practices from employees as well, in the form of participation in positive activities such as knowledge sharing when needed (Arsawan et al., 2022), and innovative work behavior. 108 The findings of the study by Khorakian et al. (2019) demonstrated that sharing best practices and sharing mistakes mediated the influence of ethical behavior on innovative work behavior. Ethical leaders inspire their followers to share knowledge, experiences, skills, prototypes, procedures, manuals, and job reports with their colleagues within the organization. This practice encourages employees to generate fresh ideas related to work methods, processes, products, and services (Goswami & Agrawal, 2023).

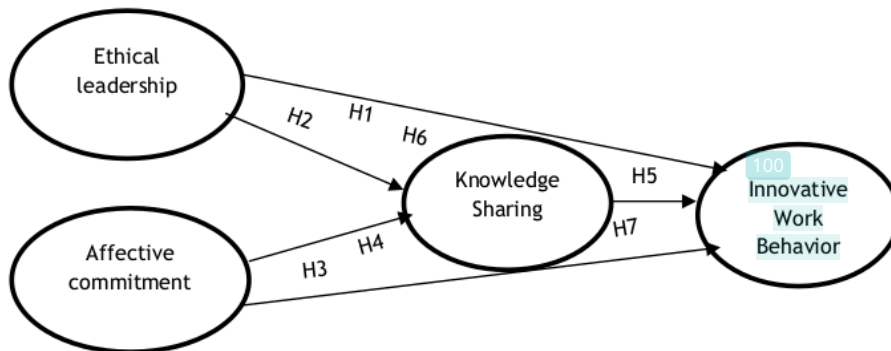
**H6: KS mediates the influence of EL on IWB.**

14 Ahmed et al. (2018) conducted research suggesting that employees' knowledge sharing plays a critical role in linking high-commitment work systems with innovative work behavior. Their study indicated that steadfast loyalty work systems enable and encourage employee knowledge sharing, which in turn fosters innovative work behavior. This is because the act of information exchange by employees is essential for recombining, translating, and generating new knowledge and ideas, as highlighted in their findings. The choice to disseminate knowledge hinges on employees' perceptions of the costs, benefits, and personal factors such as personality traits and intrinsic motivation, which shape this decision (Devi, 2023). Employees who cultivate a strong sense of affective commitment toward the organization are inclined to share knowledge with their staff more readily. The knowledge transferred will be enriched by the organization's processes, products, and services, thereby contributing to the enhancement of the organization's competitiveness and the provision of added value to customers in the long run (Marques et al., 2019).

**H7: KS mediates the influence of AC on IWB**

16 Drawing from a review of existing literature and the formulation of hypotheses, the proposed research framework is depicted in Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Conceptual framework**



## METHODS

This study is a causal investigation designed to explore the impact of ethical leadership and affective commitment on innovative work behavior, with knowledge sharing acting as a mediator. Primary data were gathered through a questionnaire distributed online via Google Forms to participants from late June to mid-July 2023.

The population of the study consists of 4000 teachers from 112 reputable private high schools in three major provinces in Indonesia: West Java, Central Java, and East Java. Using purposive sampling technique, 15 private high schools were selected as the research sites, and 333 voluntary teachers responded to and completed the distributed questionnaires.

To measure ethical leadership, ten statement items adopted from Brown et al. (2005) were utilized. Affective commitment was measured using eight statement items developed by Allen & Meyer (1990). The measurement of knowledge sharing utilizes eight statements adapted from the study by De Vries et al. (2006), while innovative work behavior is measured using nine items developed by Janssen (2000). All items in the research instrument were rated on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

Descriptive statistical data analysis entails computing the mean of respondents' responses. For examining the influence of variables on each other, Structural Equation Modeling is employed using AMOS software version 24.0.

## FINDINGS

### Respondent characteristics

The majority of participants are female educators (53.2%), with over half aged above 50 years (34.8%), and possessing a bachelor's degree as their highest educational attainment (78.7%), and have been employed at the

same school for more than 20 years (31.5%). More respondent profile details can be found in Table 1.

**Table 1:** Respondent Profile

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
<b>Age</b>		
< 30 years	52	15.6
30 - 40 years	93	27.9
41 - 50 years	72	21.7
> 50 years	116	34.8
<b>Education</b>		
Bachelor's degree	262	78.7
Master's degree	71	21.3
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	156	46.8
Female	177	53.2
<b>Length of employment</b>		
< 5 years	75	22.5
5 - 10 years	63	19.0
11 - 15 years	48	14.4
16 - 20 years	42	12.6
> 20 years	105	31.5

**Validation and reliability testing**

Validation and reliability testing follows the criteria set by Hair et al. (2019) based on factor loadings and Cronbach's alpha values. With a sample size above 250, the instrument will be considered valid if it has a factor loading of at least 0.35. The instrument is considered reliable or has internal consistency if the Cronbach's Alpha value is greater than 0.60.

The data in table 2 show that all items from the variables ethical leadership, affective commitment, knowledge sharing, and innovative work behavior are valid because they have a factor loading > 0.35. Similarly, all questionnaire items have Cronbach's Alpha values > 0.60, indicating that this questionnaire is valid and reliable for use as a research data collection instrument.

**Table 2:** Instrument validity and reliability

Variables	Items	Factor Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	Decision
Ethical Leadership	EL1	.778	0.953	Valid & Reliable
	EL2	.835		
	EL3	.785		
	EL4	.804		
	EL5	.881		
	EL6	.875		
	EL7	.820		
	EL8	.895		
	EL9	.840		
	EL10	.879		
Affective Commitment	AC1	.532	0.860	Valid & Reliable
	AC2	.446		

		AC3	.782			
		AC4	.497			
		AC5	.868			
		AC6	.890			
		AC7	.872			
		AC8	.896			
Knowledge Sharing		KS1	.764		Valid	&
		KS2	.734		Reliable	
		KS3	.768			
		KS4	.694	0.861		
		KS5	.678			
		KS6	.692			
		KS7	.682			
		KS8	.734			
Innovative Behavior	Work	IWB1	.750		Valid	&
		IWB2	.788		Reliable	
		IWB3	.805			
		IWB4	.781			
		IWB5	.806	0.937		
		IWB6	.831			
		IWB7	.860			
		IWB8	.855			
		IWB9	.868			

### Descriptive Statistics

The mean score of respondents' answers to ethical leadership is 4.375. This indicates that school leaders have demonstrated virtues as role models, are trustworthy, live according to ethical and moral standards, discuss ethics and values with employees, make fair decisions, and courageously discipline employees who violate ethical standards. The success achieved by the school is obtained through ethical, correct, and morally accountable means.

The mean score for affective commitment among respondents is 4.421, indicating that teachers experience emotional attachment to the school. This emotional connection stems from the school's meaningfulness to them, the alignment of school issues with their own concerns, their integration into the school community, and their strong sense of ownership toward the institution.

The average score obtained by respondents for knowledge sharing practices is 4.037, indicating that teachers are actively engaged in the process of giving and receiving information, knowledge, and skills to others. They willingly disseminate the knowledge they possess, participate in discussions or idea exchanges, and provide support and assistance to others in gaining new understanding or enhancing their abilities. These activities reflect a collaborative culture among them and demonstrate a commitment to assisting each other in achieving common goals.

The typical rating for innovative work behavior among respondents stands at 4.000, indicating that the majority of respondents have rated themselves as actively adopting new, creative, and innovative practices in carrying out their duties as teachers. This may include the use of creative teaching methods, experimenting with new approaches to learning, or creating new solutions to challenges faced in the educational environment. A high score

suggests that teachers are receptive to change and inclined to explore new methods to improve their work effectiveness.

**Model fitness and hypothesis testing**

Testing model fitness refers to the proposal by Hair et al. (2019) obtained from statistical calculations using AMOS version 24.0. In absolute fit indices, the RMSEA (Root Mean Square Error of Approximation) value shows 0.076 < 0.08 and the RMR (Root Mean Square Residual) value is 0.036 also < 0.08. Incremental fit indices, including Normed Fit Index (NFI), Tucker Lewis Index (TLI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and Incremental Fit Index (IFI), are all above 0.90, thus categorized as a good fit. In the Parsimony fit index, the Normed Chi Square (NCS) value is 3.450. Therefore, it can be concluded that this research model falls under the category of goodness-of-fit, allowing the hypothesis testing to proceed.

The outcomes of hypothesis testing, as shown in table 3, indicate that the p-values for H1 to H7 are all < 0.05. Therefore, It can be inferred that with a confidence level of 95%, all proposed research hypotheses are supported.

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**Table 3:** Hypotheses testing results

Hypotheses	Estimate	P-value	Decision
EL ---> IWB	0,086	0,023	H1 Supported
EL ---> KS	0,101	0,028	H2 Supported
AC ---> IWB	0,194	0,000	H3 Supported
AC ---> KS	0,343	0,000	H4 Supported
KS ---> IWB	0,301	0,000	H5 Supported
EL ---> KS ---> IWB	0,031	0,036	H6 Supported
AC ---> KS ---> IWB	0,103	0,000	H7 Supported

**DISCUSSION**

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Drawing from the statistical findings, it can be inferred that ethical leadership fosters a favorable impact on IWB. H1 is confirmed. The result is compatible with previous studies conducted by Zahra & Waheed (2017); Özsungur (2019); Lei et al. (2020); Jia et al. (2022); Jin et al. (2022); Iqbal et al. (2020); Musenze & Mayende (2023) in various countries, including China, Pakistan, Vietnam, Turkey, and Uganda, in companies, SMEs, research institutions, and higher education. These findings indicate that a leader who possesses ethics and morality and implements leadership processes guided by ethical and moral principles will foster innovative behavior among teachers in the school environment. In other words, teachers will be motivated to behave innovatively when ethical leadership is applied in schools. According to Liu et al. (2023), ethical leaders are characterized by their ability to make decisions that prioritize ethical considerations within the organization. They demonstrate genuine care and interest for their workers, actively fostering interpersonal relationships built on reciprocal respect and trust. Furthermore, they establish an environment of psychological safety for employees. When employees feel psychologically safe, they are more likely to become deeply

engaged in their job, exhibiting increased enthusiasm and focus. This heightened engagement often leads to the generation of numerous ideas and beneficial behaviors that drive innovation.

Ethical leaders have the ability to inspire employees to consider ethical perspectives and serve as exemplary models, thereby fostering an ethical climate within the organization. By demonstrating ethical leadership styles, leaders cultivate an environment where moral conduct is prioritized. This environment, characterized by elevated ethical standards, communicates the expectation for employees to consistently make ethical decisions and actions in their roles. These guiding principles encourage employees to prioritize task performance aligned with ethical considerations (Tabiu, 2023). Organizations can boost employee commitment and foster positive behaviors by cultivating an ethical work environment. This, in turn, will contribute to a more innovative organizational culture (Hong et al., 2023). This finding is consistent with the expectations of Dua et al. (2023) that many organizations require leaders who possess strong ethical values within the organization, especially in scenarios of scandal, fraud, and deception, which are symptoms of eroded ethical values. Leaders should be chosen and assessed based on their capability and commitment to uphold strong ethical values. Managers have a responsibility to foster, endorse, and uphold ethical leadership, as employees often mirror the ethical conduct of their leaders. This, in turn, can mitigate instances of unethical behavior within the organization. Furthermore, managers must establish an environment where employees feel empowered to express suggestions, directions, ideas, views, and interests, including implementing clear codes of ethics. Such codes serve as guiding principles for ethical behavior and decision-making among employees.

This study's findings suggest that ethical leadership yields a beneficial impact on knowledge sharing. H2 is supported. This finding indicates that if ethical leadership is implemented in schools, the exchange of knowledge and skills among teachers will proceed smoothly. This outcome aligns with the conclusions drawn in earlier studies conducted by Bavik et al. (2018); Le & Lei (2018); Tu et al. (2020); Su et al. (2021); Alfaridi et al. (2020); Chaman et al. (2021); Xia & Yang (2020); Wu, 2021; Koay & Lim (2022); Saeed et al. (2022); Goswami & Agrawal (2023). This discovery is likewise in accordance with the research conducted by Khan et al. (2019) who observed that when employees have high normative perceptions, their perceived behavioral control over knowledge sharing also increases, directly influencing knowledge-sharing behavior. Knowledge sharing is indispensable in any organization and across all roles as it is vital for the growth and sustainability of others and for fostering a positive work environment. Ethical leadership can have a positive impact on the attitudes of subordinates, thereby significantly contributing to the improvement of both individual and organizational performance, as highlighted by Jin et al. (2022).

The statistical analysis reveals that affective commitment exerts a positive effect on innovative work behavior. Thus, H3 is confirmed. It suggests that the long-term rational choice of teachers to be part of a school community, formally identified with the school, and emotionally attached, having a strong

sense of ownership towards the school, can lead teachers to develop themselves optimally by generating brilliant ideas, both for improving the quality of learning and providing pleasant services to students, parents, and the community. A teacher who has a strong commitment to the school will develop emotional bonds and foster unity with students, parents, and colleagues. Emotional bonds include feelings of joy, affection, and pride in the school's vision, mission, goals, values, and culture. Hakimian et al. (2016) stated that employees with high affective commitment enjoy being in the organization, and as a result, they are more attentive to organizational goals and produce positive efforts and performance, which leads them to exhibit innovative behavior.

The research findings provide empirical evidence that emotional dedication enhances the likelihood of individuals sharing their knowledge in a positive manner. H4 is supported. This discovery aligns with the results of earlier research conducted by Ouakouak dan Ouedraogo (2019) and Sharif et al. (2022). Inspired by these findings, teachers who identify themselves with the school, are committed, loyal, and willing to work for a lifetime at the same school will be generous in sharing what they have learned. The higher the teachers' commitment to the school and the values embodied in the school, the more it can guide teachers to develop themselves through the knowledge and skills shared by colleagues, while also encouraging an attitude of sharing intellectual wealth and best practices. For committed teachers, the knowledge gathered or shared is equally significant in developing the school to be of higher quality and more trustworthy. High affective commitment of teachers to their school will also increase their sense of ownership of the school. High ownership will enhance social interaction among employees through shared experiences and communication patterns. Increased ownership plays a crucial role in developing a collective mindset, which ultimately enhances knowledge sharing among employees (Seo, 2023).

Based on the statistical test results, knowledge sharing positively influences innovative work behavior. This finding corroborates hypothesis H5 and is in line with previous studies conducted by Dong Phung et al. (2017); Kim & Park (2017); Ahmed et al. (2018); Munir & Beh (2019); Muhammed et al. (2020); Vandavasi et al. (2020); Anser et al. (2021); Jnaneswar & Ranjit (2021); Lin & Shin (2021); Arsawan et al. (2022); Islam et al. (2022); Escribá-Carda et al. (2023); Yepes & López (2023); Batmomolin et al. (2024). The process of exchanging goodwill, where teachers actively shared knowledge, experiences, ideas, and information with colleagues through various means, had a positive effect on innovation. The exchange of ideas and experiences allowed teachers to gain new perspectives and insights from their peers. This stimulated creative thinking and encouraged the exploration of new ideas. Additionally, through knowledge sharing, teachers could collaborate to collectively address challenges and obstacles encountered in teaching or serving students and parents. Such collaboration could generate innovative ideas that might have been difficult to achieve individually. Teachers who actively shared knowledge tended to continue learning and self-improvement, thereby

enhancing their abilities and capacities to cope with rapid changes and apply the latest practices in teaching, especially in technology and new teaching methods that could stimulate creativity and innovation. Sharing experiences and innovative ideas could encourage teacher creativity in developing teaching methods, problem-solving approaches for students, and school governance.

The research outcomes indicate that ethical leadership impacts innovative work behavior by fostering knowledge sharing as an intermediary mechanism. H6 is supported. Knowledge sharing can facilitate ethical leadership in promoting innovative behavior. Knowledge sharing enables the establishment of a sense of security and mutual trust among employees and leaders. When employees feel secure to share ideas and information, an environment that supports ethics, trust, and collaboration is created. Ethical leadership values and encourages collaboration by helping to create an environment where new ideas can emerge through the exchange of ideas.

The statistical analysis findings suggest that the impact of affective commitment on innovative work behavior is effectively mediated by knowledge sharing. This supports the hypothesis H7. In the school setting, the sharing of knowledge and information among teachers acts as a potent tool for dedicated and loyal educators to nurture creativity and innovation within the institution. When engaging in knowledge sharing, teachers with a strong sense of emotional commitment to the school will acquire fresh insights and endeavour to put them into practice, aiming to enhance the already high standard of classroom learning and deliver outstanding services to students. Through the exchange of knowledge, experiences, information, and ideas among colleagues, individuals tend to experience increased commitment and moral engagement in their workplace. This commitment to active involvement and engagement within the school environment will inspire teachers to boldly take risks and generate new ideas that promote innovation, thus fostering positive change within the institution. Azizi et al. (2023) argue that like weaving golden threads amidst a wilderness of ideas, achieving the desired level of knowledge creation and innovation within an organization requires more than just honing employees' skills and knowledge. They emphasize the need for targeted development, where knowledge sharing becomes its core, weaving a spirit of collaboration within the organization. When employees are motivated, they have the potential to enhance their capabilities and produce higher-quality outputs in knowledge discovery within a condensed timeframe.

## CONCLUSION AND MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS

<sup>8</sup> The research findings indicate that ethical leadership and affective commitment have direct and indirect impacts on teachers' innovative work behavior. The positive practice of knowledge sharing among teachers directly promotes teachers' innovative work behavior. To foster innovative behavior in the school ecosystem, ethical leadership should serve as a leadership model, knowledge sharing among internal stakeholders should

be encouraged, and teachers' affective commitment should be maintained and enhanced. The discoveries aid in enhancing comprehension regarding the interactions among ethical leadership, affective commitment, knowledge sharing, and innovative work behavior in the context of educational institutions.

Some managerial implications that can be suggested based on the research findings. Firstly, if aiming to enhance teachers' innovative behavior, school management may consider appointing or preparing school principals who have ethical capacities and abilities to practice ethics and morality in personal life and leadership. Ethical standards should be one of the requirements that must be fulfilled by candidates to be appointed to structural and functional positions in schools such as principals, vice principals, class teachers, subject coordinators, student organization advisors, and others. Furthermore, school administrations should actively encourage ethical leadership styles among teachers by evaluating, advocating, promoting, and recognizing all dimensions of ethical leadership behavior. This approach fosters a culture where more individuals are motivated to exemplify ethical leadership styles within the school environment. Additionally, school management can bolster ethical leadership by offering comprehensive training to both structural and functional officials within the school. Educational leader needs to pay attention and support teachers who have long served in the school by providing tenure awards such as cash bonuses, gold rings, or other compensations to appreciate their dedication, such as travel tickets to visit historical places abroad, refreshment programs abroad, or family vacations for employees, and others tailored to the school's capabilities. Additionally, school management also needs to provide compensation for teachers who enjoy sharing their knowledge and skills and for teachers who innovate by providing ideas or innovative works.

Amid the widespread issue of the presence of artificial intelligence with applications capable of answering all questions asked, knowledge sharing remains relevant in promoting innovative behavior because the best practices performed by one teacher will greatly enrich other teachers and add value to global knowledge management. The knowledge and skills possessed by an individual due to diligence and work results can help other employees to develop themselves, thus advancing together. Therefore, it needs to be supported by policies and routine programs such as the establishment of knowledge sharing platforms, regular team meetings, and open communication channels to encourage teachers to actively share knowledge, experience, and skills.

This study has numerous constraints, namely that this research was conducted in educational institutions, particularly private schools in Indonesia, which are characterized by a collective culture. Therefore, replication studies with respondents from manufacturing or other service industries are needed, or it could also be conducted in other countries with different cultures. Second, future research could use mediating variables that are closely related to internal factors of teachers, such as psychological capital (Karimi et al., 2023), achievement motivation and trust. Third, this study only selected ethical leadership style, whereas there are several other

positive leadership styles that can promote teachers' innovative behavior in schools. Therefore, future research could utilize, for example, inclusive leadership, servant leadership, digital leadership, empowerment leadership, and collaborative leadership. Fourth, further research can examine the potential moderating effects of organizational culture or the external environment on the relationship between ethical leadership, affective commitment, knowledge sharing, and innovative work behavior. Furthermore, contrasting the dynamics of these connections across various cultural contexts or sectors could yield a more profound understanding of the universality or particularity of the findings from this study.

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# FOSTERING INNOVATION THROUGH ETHICAL LEADERSHIP, AFFECTIVE COMMITMENT, AND KNOWLEDGE SHARING

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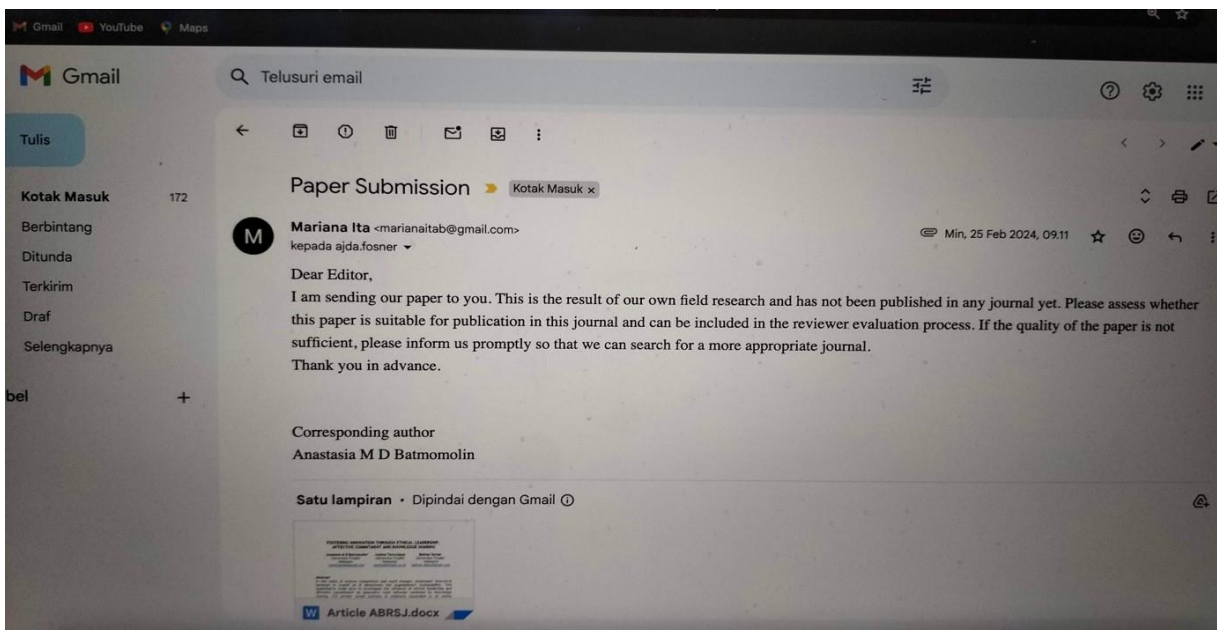
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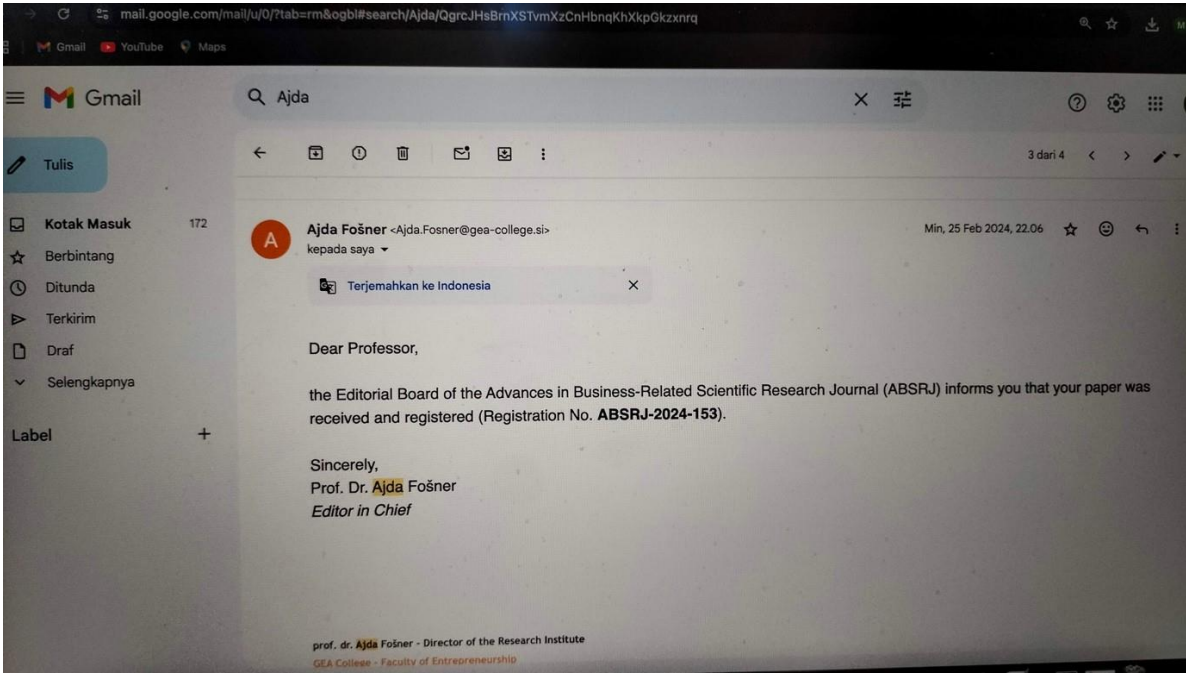
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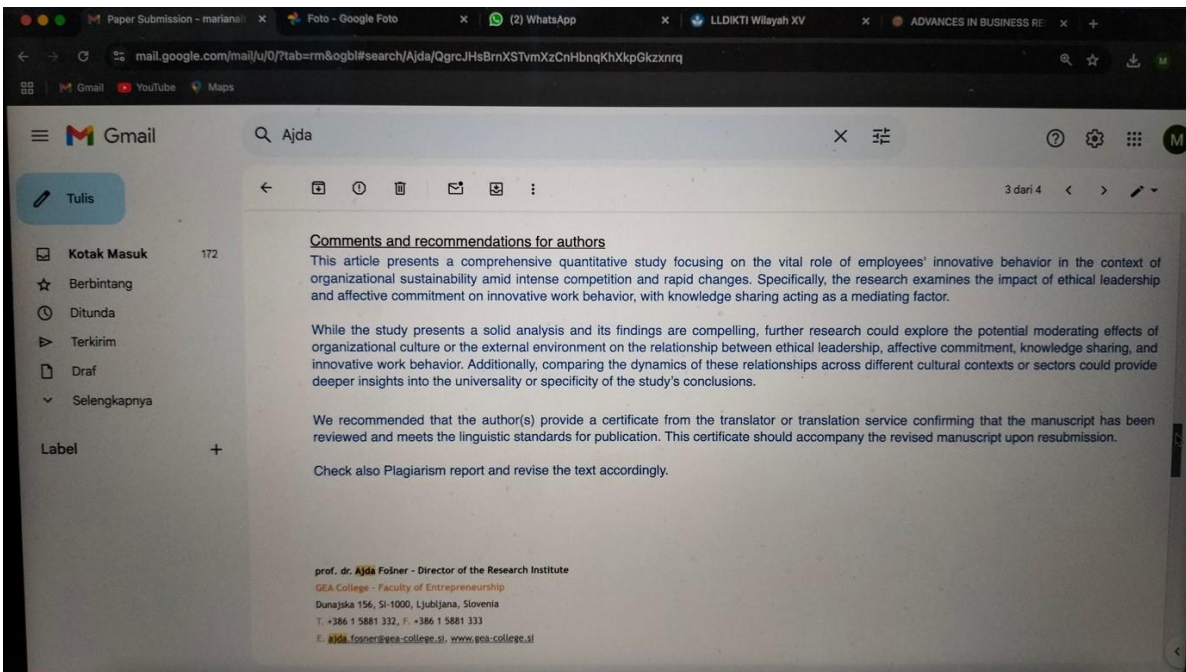
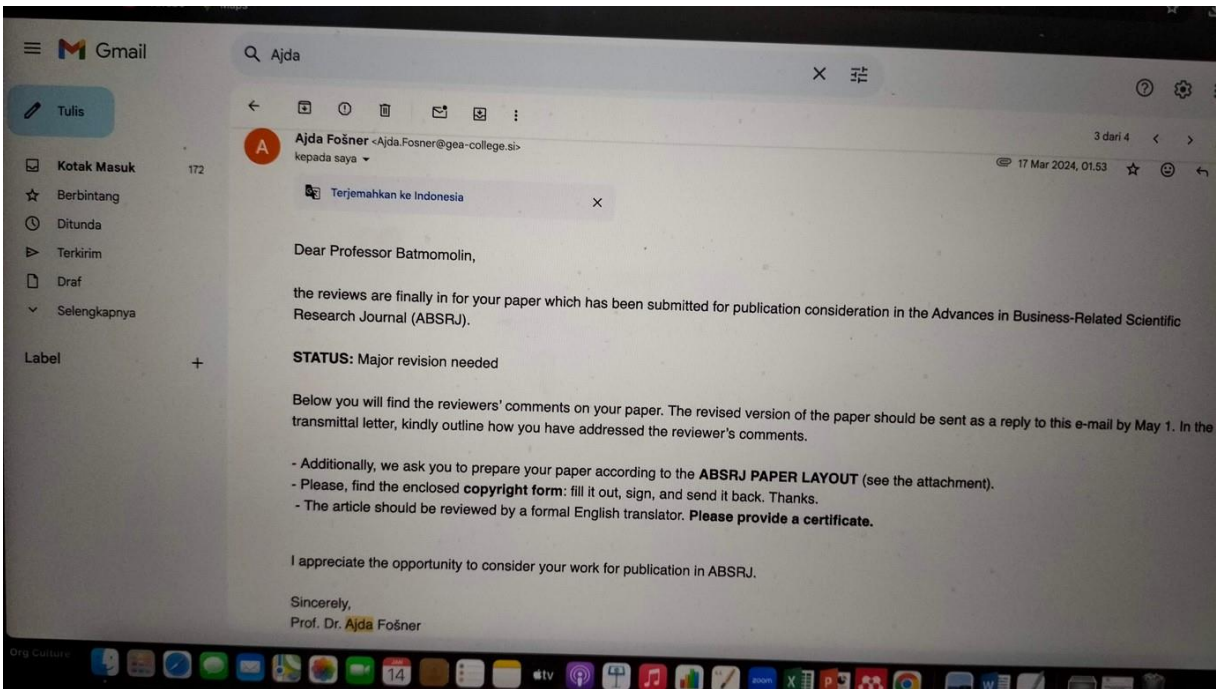
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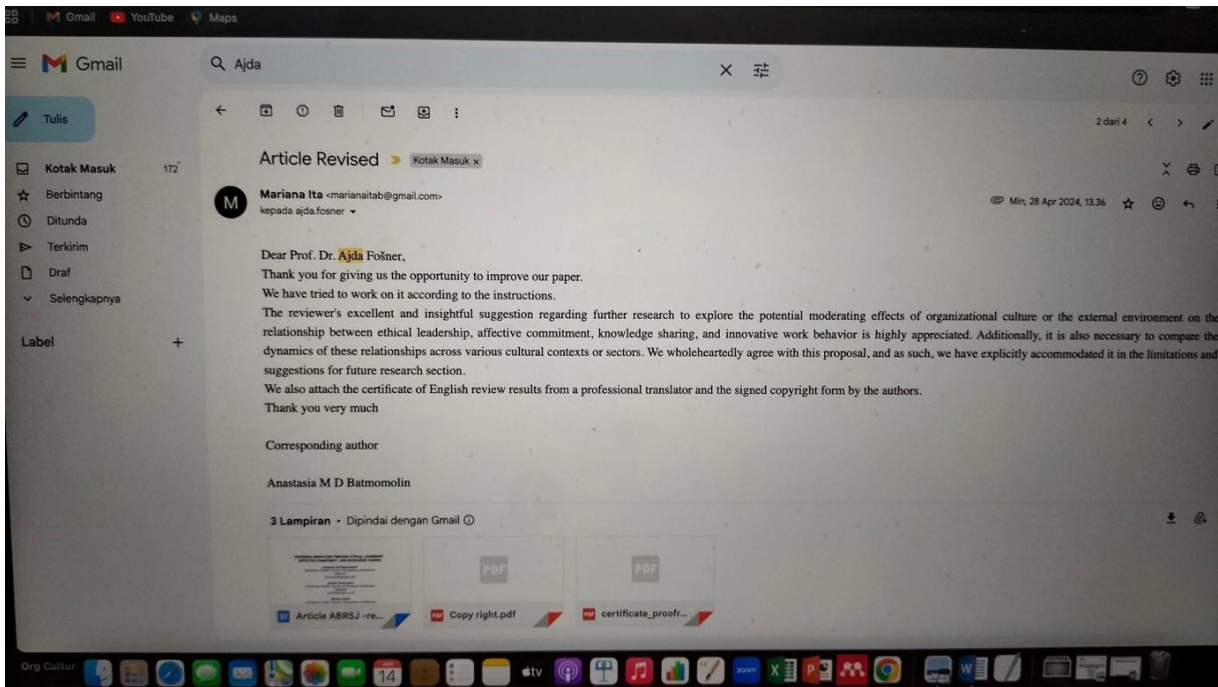




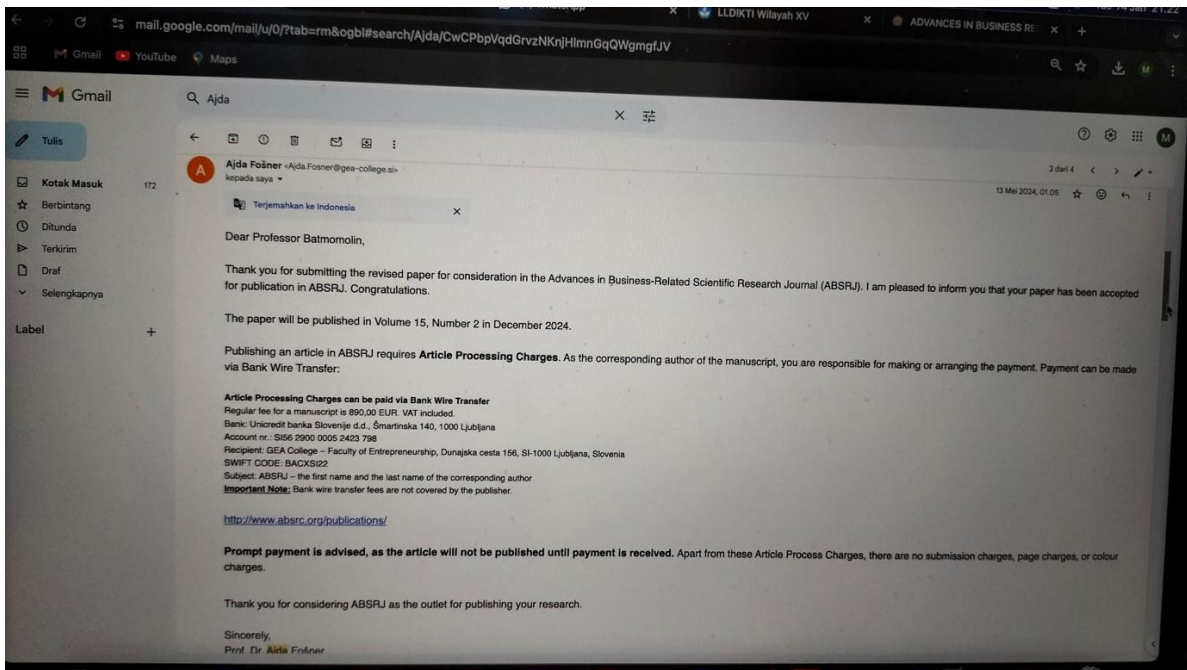
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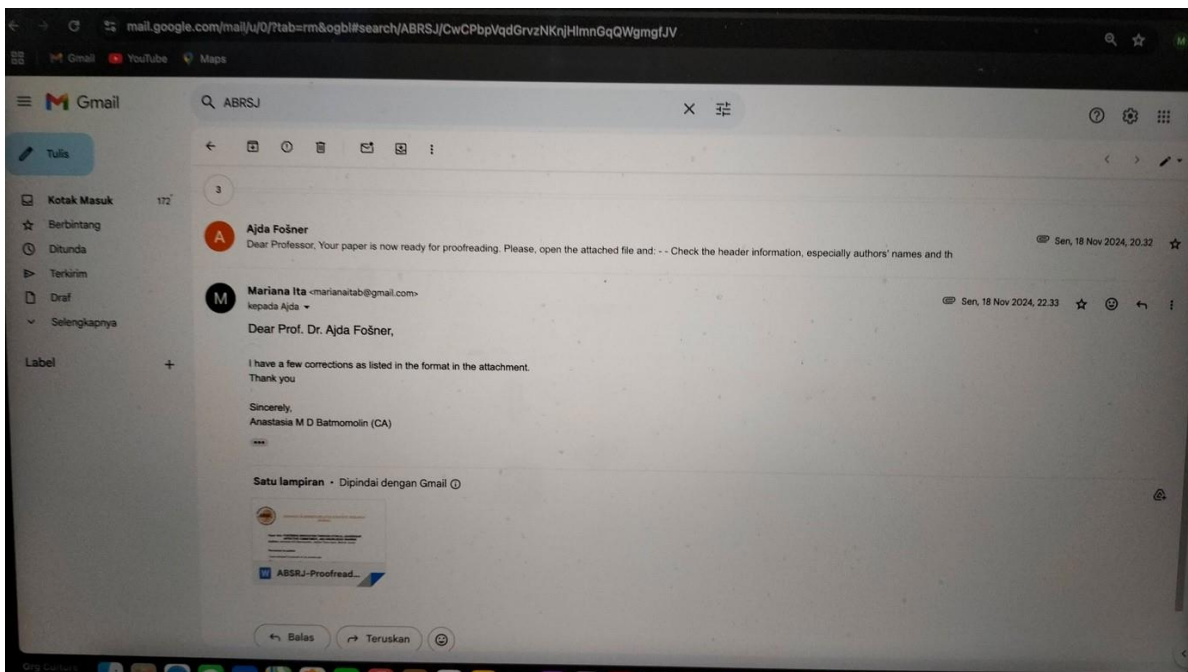
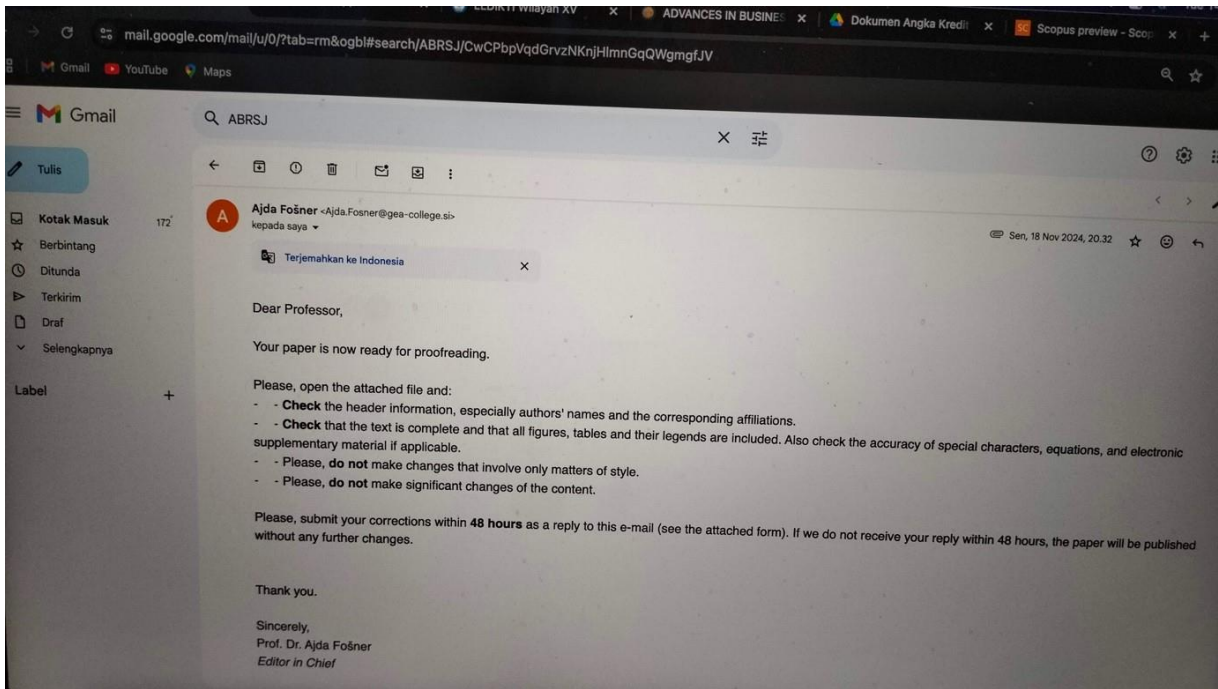
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