

The Influence of Knowledge Sharing, Organizational Learning, And Innovative Work Behavior on Employee Performance Through Work Engagement as an Intervening Variable at Cigarette Manufacturing Company X

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ARTICLE INFO

Keywords: Knowledge Sharing, Organizational Learning, Innovative Work Behavior, Work Engagement, Employee Performance.

Received : 21 April

Revised : 23 May

Accepted: 23 June

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of Knowledge Sharing, Organizational Learning, and Innovative Work Behavior on Employee Performance, with Work Engagement as an intervening variable at Cigarette Manufacturing Company X. The research method employed is quantitative with an explanatory approach. The research sample consists of 150 employees selected using the Proportionate Stratified Random Sampling technique with specific inclusion criteria (permanent employees with a minimum of 2 years of service). Data analysis was performed using Path Analysis and the Sobel Test via SPSS 27 software. The results indicate that Knowledge Sharing, Organizational Learning, and Innovative Work Behavior have a positive and significant influence on both Work Engagement and Employee Performance. The Sobel Test results confirm that Work Engagement significantly mediates the influence of the three independent variables on employee performance. These findings suggest that knowledge transfer and an organizational learning culture will not achieve maximum impact on work outcomes if they fail to evoke employee vigor, dedication, and absorption (engagement). The study recommends that the company establish structured knowledge-sharing systems and innovation spaces to restore work engagement and production stability.

INTRODUCTION

The cigarette manufacturing industry in Indonesia is currently facing highly complex pressures. These pressures include increasingly intense market competition, dynamic changes in consumer preferences, the necessity to adapt to production digitalization, and tightening government regulations. In these challenging and high-pressure external conditions, improving employee performance is no longer merely an option but an absolute necessity to ensure that productivity levels and operational continuity remain optimal (Sofia et al., 1875). Given that the production process in this industry relies heavily on inter-departmental coordination, work efficiency is largely determined by the smooth transfer of knowledge and the employees' ability to innovate (Winahyu, 2026).

Operational realities at Cigarette Manufacturing Company X indicate a gap between industry expectations and actual performance. Based on internal company data for the 2024–2025 period, an alarming downward trend in productivity was discovered, as presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Employee Performance Fluctuation Data (Based on Production Targets and Defect Rates)

Year	Quarter	Production Volume Target	Actual Production Volume	Achievement Percentage	Defect Rate
2024	Q1	100%	96%	96%	2.1%
	Q2	100%	95%	95%	2.4%
	Q3	100%	91%	91%	3.5%
	Q4	100%	89%	89%	4.2%
2025	Q1	100%	87%	87%	5.0%
	Q2	100%	84%	84%	5.8%
	Q3	100%	80%	80%	6.5%
	Q4	100%	73%	73%	8.1%

Source: Internal Production Data of Cigarette Manufacturing Company X (Processed Data, 2025)

The performance decline evidenced by the plummeting target achievement to 73% and the surge in the defect rate to 8.1% by the end of 2025 did not occur by chance. These deteriorating performance indicators coincide with a weakening learning climate and lower psychological engagement among employees. Table 2 illustrates the root functional problems in the field through metrics of knowledge-sharing initiatives, idea contributions, and employee engagement levels.

Table 2. Indication Data for Decline in Knowledge Sharing, Learning, IWB, and Engagement

Year	Quarter	Inter-divisional Knowledge Sharing Sessions	Average Learning Program Participation	Number of Innovative Idea Proposals (IWB)	Work Engagement Survey Index
2024	Q1	9 Times	85%	11 Ideas	4.2 (High)
	Q2	9 Times	82%	12 Ideas	4.5 (High)
	Q3	8 Times	80%	15 Ideas	5.5 (High)
	Q4	7 Times	80%	11 Ideas	3.5 (Moderate)
2025	Q1	5 Times	70%	12 Ideas	4.5 (High)
	Q2	5 Times	70%	10 Ideas	3.5 (Low)
	Q3	5 Times	70%	11 Ideas	4.0 (Moderate)
	Q4	4 Times	65%	9 Ideas	3.0 (Moderate)

Source: Internal HRD Data of Cigarette Manufacturing Company X (Processed Data, 2025)

Based on this data, a phenomenon is observed where the company faces fundamental issues in the form of low knowledge sharing among employees and weak organizational learning. The stagnation of strategic information exchange directly results in a lack of Innovative Work Behavior (IWB), marked by a drop in operational improvement proposals. Consequently, the failure to nurture this intellectual climate leads to low Work Engagement, which ultimately damages both individual and collective performance.

The academic urgency of this research is rooted in the lack of empirical studies in the cigarette manufacturing industry that integrate these variables into a comprehensive model, specifically by positioning work engagement as a mediator. Therefore, this study is crucial to enrich the literature through the testing of an integrative model involving Knowledge Sharing, Organizational Learning, Innovative Work Behavior, Work Engagement, and Employee Performance.

Empirically, the primary motivation for this study is a research gap consisting of inconsistent previous findings. Academic debate continues regarding whether HR capacity-building initiatives always have a positive impact on performance, especially in high-pressure manufacturing environments. Regarding Knowledge Sharing, studies by (Solihah & Mujanah, 2026) and Hasanah & Pratamasari (2024) found a positive and significant influence on performance, where inter-divisional sharing accelerated problem-solving. However, (Dani & Mujanah, 2021) and Annisa et al. (2022) found insignificant or even negative results, as unstructured knowledge transfer can trigger information overload, consuming productive time from primary production tasks.

Studies by (Istanti et al., 2025) and Sanjaya & Arif (2023) prove that Organizational Learning significantly boosts performance by strengthening technical competence. Conversely, Fatimatul et al. (2022) and Nur & Ajie (2023) found no significant influence, arguing that in highly standardized environments with rigid SOPs, employees lack the autonomy to apply new knowledge, rendering it ineffective.

Findings from Zaharanura & Sridadi (2025) and Danardana et al. (2025) show that Innovative Work Behavior (IWB) significantly enhances performance through continuous improvement. In contrast, Sunarsi (2025) and Leksono & Ruspitasari (2025) found that IWB can be insignificant or detrimental; in factory routines, innovating without direction often leads to technical errors, increased defect rates, and disruption of stable team rhythms.

Research by Theresia et al. (2023) and Rachmadhan (2024) proves that Work Engagement positively influences performance. However, Andini & Ekhsan (2024) and Prasetyo et al. (2024) found insignificant effects, noting a performance paradox in machine-paced work where output is limited by machine capacity regardless of psychological engagement.

Conceptually, this study is supported by the Knowledge-Based View, Organizational Learning Theory, Job Demands-Resources Theory, and Social Exchange Theory. From a practical perspective, this research aims to provide strategic references for Company X to accelerate productivity, minimize defect rates, and build an innovative climate. This study aims to analyze the direct influence of knowledge sharing, organizational learning, and IWB on work engagement and employee performance, as well as the mediating role of work engagement in these relationships.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Employee Performance

Employee performance is the accumulation of work results in terms of quality and quantity achieved by an employee in carrying out their duties according to the responsibilities assigned by the organization. Robbins and Judge (2017:78) emphasize that performance is influenced by the interaction between ability, motivation, and opportunity. Based on Robbins and Judge (2017), performance is measured through five main indicators:

1. Quality of Work. The level of perfection of the results achieved.
2. Quantity of Work. The amount of output produced within a certain period.
3. Timeliness. The suitability of task completion with the established deadlines.
4. Effectiveness. The optimal utilization of organizational resources.
5. Independence. The ability to work without constant supervision.

Knowledge Sharing

Knowledge sharing is a social process in which individuals exchange knowledge, skills, and experiences to enhance the collective capacity of the organization. Razmerita et al. (2016:98) define knowledge sharing as a crucial activity in knowledge management involving information transfer between individuals to accelerate operational problem-solving. Amayah (2016:87) adds that this sharing behavior is heavily influenced by organizational support and the availability of intellectual capital accessible to all production sections. According to Hooff and Ridder (2004), knowledge sharing is measured through two main dimensions:

1. Knowledge Donating. The proactive willingness of employees to share their intellectual capital, experiences, and ideas with coworkers.
2. Knowledge Collecting. The willingness of employees to consult, inquire, and absorb knowledge from other colleagues to solve operational issues.

Organizational Learning

Organizational learning refers to the process through which an organization acquires, shares, and utilizes knowledge to change behavior and improve long-term performance. Armstrong and Taylor (2020:134) explain that organizational learning is the collective capacity to understand the external environment and internalize it into the company's internal strategy. Senge (2017:90) states that a learning organization is a place where every individual continuously expands their capacity to create desired results. In general, organizational learning indicators include:

1. Information Acquisition. The company's ability to obtain new information from both internal and external environments.
2. Information Distribution. The process of spreading information evenly across all units or production divisions.
3. Information Interpretation. The common perception among employees in understanding the information distributed.

4. **Organizational Memory.** The ability to document knowledge so it can be re-accessed in the future.

Innovative Work Behavior (IWB)

Innovative work behavior is an individual's behavior directed toward initiating and intentionally introducing new ideas that are beneficial within a job role or organization. De Jong and Den Hartog (2018:167) define IWB as an employee's proactive effort to conceive creative solutions to operational problems and implement them tangibly. In the cigarette manufacturing industry, this behavior is a key factor in maintaining efficiency and adapting to regulations. According to Janssen (2000:94), IWB is measured through three stages of behavior:

1. **Idea Generation.** The employee's awareness of production problems and their ability to find solutions or new ideas.
2. **Idea Promotion.** The employee's effort to seek support (from colleagues or supervisors) for the new idea they have initiated.
3. **Idea Realization.** The employee's tangible action in producing a prototype or applying the idea to work routines to increase efficiency.

Work Engagement

Work engagement is described as a positive work-related mental state characterized by vigor, dedication, and full absorption. Bakker and Leiter (2017:87) state that work engagement is a condition where employees feel highly enthusiastic and deeply connected to their tasks. Based on the Job Demands-Resources Theory, support such as access to knowledge and learning are vital resources that trigger high employee engagement. According to Suryowibowo & Syakarofath (2024), it is measured using the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES), consisting of:

1. **Vigor.** High energy levels and mental resilience while working.
2. **Dedication.** Feelings of enthusiasm, pride, and significance regarding the work.
3. **Absorption.** Full concentration and a sense of being positively "carried away" while performing tasks.

METHODOLOGY

This research is structured as a quantitative study employing an explanatory research approach to systematically examine and clarify the causal relationships between Knowledge Sharing, Organizational Learning, Innovative Work Behavior, Work Engagement, and Employee Performance.

The research is conducted at Cigarette Manufacturing Company X, which has a total population of 1,359 employees. To ensure the data collected is both relevant and high-quality, the study utilizes a multi-stage sampling process. Initially, a Purposive Sampling technique is applied to filter respondents based on specific criteria: they must be permanent employees with at least two years of tenure and hold positions such as staff, supervisors, managers, or technical operators. These criteria are essential to ensure that respondents have the necessary work autonomy and professional experience to exhibit innovative behaviors, effectively excluding manual laborers in purely mechanical roles. From this filtered group, the final selection of 150 respondents

is determined through Proportionate Stratified Random Sampling, ensuring that all operational divisions are fairly represented.

Primary data for this study is gathered through an online questionnaire utilizing a 1-5 Likert Scale, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." This allows for a nuanced measurement of employee perceptions across the various latent variables.

The analytical phase begins with a descriptive analysis to map the demographic profiles and general distribution of responses. For the inferential stage, the study employs Path Analysis facilitated by SPSS software. The analysis proceeds through several rigorous checkpoints: first, an Instrument Quality Test (comprising Validity and Reliability tests) confirms that the questionnaire is accurate and consistent. Second, a Classical Assumption Test verifies that the data is normally distributed and free from multicollinearity or heteroscedasticity. Finally, the hypotheses are tested using the Partial Test (t-test) to determine direct effects and the Coefficient of Determination (R^2) to assess the model's predictive strength. To address the core of the research model the mediating role of Work Engagement the study utilizes the Sobel Test. This specific statistical method calculates the strength and significance of the indirect effects, determining whether work engagement successfully bridges the gap between organizational inputs and actual employee performance outcomes.

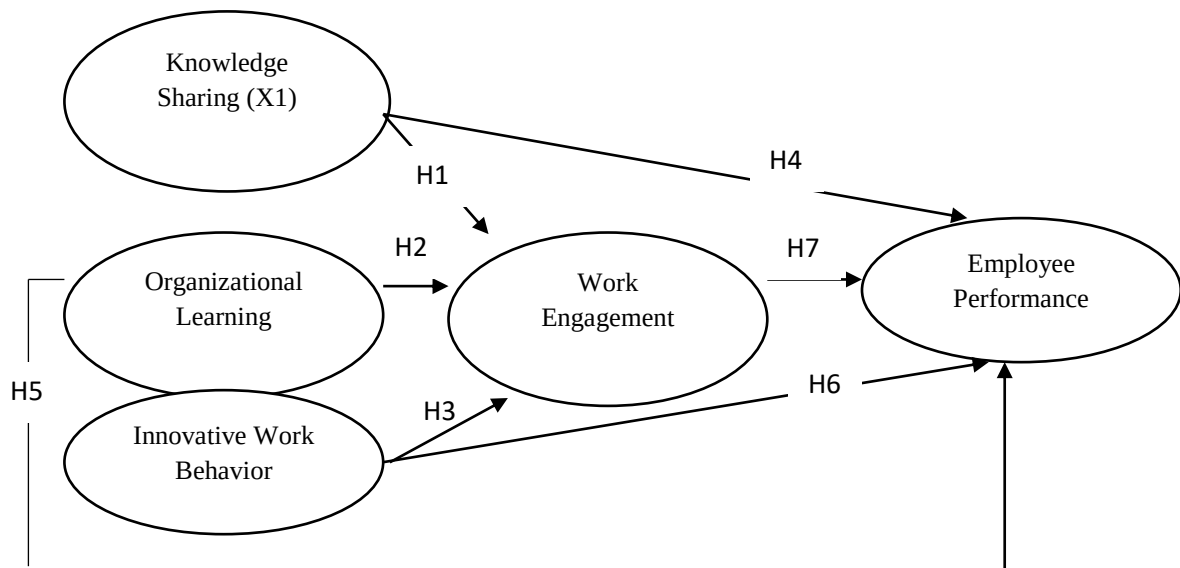


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

Based on the conceptual framework of the study titled "The Influence of Knowledge Sharing, Organizational Learning, and Innovative Work Behavior on Employee Performance through Work Engagement as an Intervening Variable at Cigarette Manufacturing Company X," the proposed hypotheses are as follows:

H1: Knowledge Sharing has a positive and significant influence on Work Engagement at Cigarette Manufacturing Company X.

H2: Organizational Learning has a positive and significant influence on Work Engagement at Cigarette Manufacturing Company X.

H3: Innovative Work Behavior has a positive and significant influence on Work Engagement at Cigarette Manufacturing Company X.

H4: Knowledge Sharing has a positive and significant influence on Employee Performance at Cigarette Manufacturing Company X.

H5: Organizational Learning has a positive and significant influence on Employee Performance at Cigarette Manufacturing Company X.

H6: Innovative Work Behavior has a positive and significant influence on Employee Performance at Cigarette Manufacturing Company X.

H7: Work Engagement has a positive and significant influence on Employee Performance at Cigarette Manufacturing Company X.

H8: Knowledge Sharing has a positive and significant influence on Employee Performance through Work Engagement as an intervening variable at Cigarette Manufacturing Company X.

H9: Organizational Learning has a positive and significant influence on Employee Performance through Work Engagement as an intervening variable at Cigarette Manufacturing Company X.

H10: Innovative Work Behavior has a positive and significant influence on Employee Performance through Work Engagement as an intervening variable at Cigarette Manufacturing Company X.

RESEARCH RESULT

Partial Test (t-Test)					
Model	Unstandardized B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
(Constant)	6.840	1.050		6.514	.000
H1: Knowledge Sharing -> Work Engagement	.385	.065	.352	5.923	.000
H2: Org Learning -> Work Engagement	.294	.062	.280	4.742	.000
H3: Innovative Behavior -> Work Engagement	.242	.068	.225	3.559	.001
H4: Knowledge Sharing -> Employee Performance	.278	.071	.265	3.915	.000
H5: Org Learning -> Employee Performance	.195	.074	.188	2.635	.009
H6: Innovative Behavior -> Employee Performance	.315	.076	.302	4.145	.000
H7: Work Engagement -> Employee Performance	.428	.082	.435	5.220	.000

Source: Data processed by SPSS 27, (2026)

Based on the path analysis results above, the following is the interpretation for each hypothesis:

H1: Knowledge Sharing on Work Engagement: The significance value is $0.000 < 0.05$, with a t-count of $5.923 > 1.655$. Therefore, H1 is accepted, indicating that active knowledge exchange among employees significantly boosts their psychological connection and vigor toward their work.

H2: Organizational Learning on Work Engagement: The significance value is $0.000 < 0.05$, with a t-count of $4.742 > 1.655$. Therefore, H2 is accepted, showing that a robust learning climate provides the mental resources necessary for employees to stay dedicated and absorbed in their tasks.

H3: Innovative Work Behavior on Work Engagement: The significance value is $0.001 < 0.05$, with a t-count of $3.559 > 1.655$. Therefore, H3 is accepted, suggesting that the autonomy and creative challenge involved in innovative behavior increase an employee's sense of significance and excitement.

H4: Knowledge Sharing on Employee Performance: The significance value is $0.000 < 0.05$, with a t-count of $3.915 > 1.655$. Therefore, H4 is accepted, proving that the smooth flow of information directly reduces operational errors and improves work quality.

H5: Organizational Learning on Employee Performance: The significance value is $0.009 < 0.05$, with a t-count of $2.635 > 1.655$. Therefore, H5 is accepted, indicating that continuous capacity building allows employees to adapt more efficiently to production standards.

H6: Innovative Work Behavior on Employee Performance: The significance value is $0.000 < 0.05$, with a t-count of $4.145 > 1.655$. Therefore, H6

is accepted, confirming that proactive efforts to introduce new work methods lead to higher productivity and lower defect rates.

H7: Work Engagement on Employee Performance: The significance value is $0.000 < 0.05$, with a t-count of $5.220 > 1.655$. Therefore, H7 is accepted, demonstrating that employees who work with high energy and focus achieve significantly higher performance outcomes than those who are disengaged.

Path Analysis using Sobel Test (Mediation Analysis)

The following table evaluates the mediation effect of Work Engagement (Z) as the link between the independent variables and Employee Performance (Y):

Path Relationship	Direct Effect	Indirect Effect	Total Effect	Sobel Value (t-count)	Sig.	Result
H8: Knowledge Sharing Engagement Employee Performance	0.278 -> ->	0.165	0.443	3.912	.000	Significant
H9: Org Learning Engagement Employee Performance	-> ->	0.126	0.321	3.485	.001	Significant
H10: Innovative Behavior Engagement Employee Performance	-> ->	0.104	0.419	2.946	.003	Significant

Source: Data processed by SPSS 27, (2026)

Indirect Effect Analysis

H8: Work Engagement is proven to significantly mediate the influence of Knowledge Sharing on performance. This suggests that the technical benefits of sharing information are maximized when it successfully fosters a highly engaged and energized workforce.

H9: Organizational Learning improves performance through the mediation of Work Engagement. A strong learning climate provides employees with the mental resources needed to feel dedicated, which in turn drives productivity.

H10: Work Engagement significantly bridges the relationship between Innovative Work Behavior and performance. Engaging in creative tasks makes employees feel more "absorbed," which stabilizes the output of their innovative efforts.

Simultaneous Test (F Test)

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	6245.330	3	2081.777	78.435	.000 ^b
Residual	3875.120	146	26.542		
Total	10120.450	149			

Source: Data processed by SPSS 27, (2026)

Based on the ANOVA table, the significance value is $0.000 < 0.05$, and the calculated F-count is 78.435, which is significantly higher than the F-table value of 2.67 (for $df_1=3$, $df_2=146$). Therefore, it is concluded that Knowledge Sharing, Organizational Learning, and Innovative Work Behavior simultaneously have a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance at Cigarette Manufacturing Company X. This indicates a high Goodness of Fit for the regression model.

Analysis of Determination Coefficient (R²)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.812 ^a	.659	.652	5.152

Source: Data processed by SPSS 27, (2026)

The R Square value is 0.659 or 65.9%. This result indicates that 65.9% of the variation in Employee Performance at Cigarette Manufacturing Company X can be explained by Knowledge Sharing, Organizational Learning, and Innovative Work Behavior. The remaining 34.1% (100% - 65.9%) is attributed to factors outside this research model, such as compensation systems, physical work environment, or leadership style.

DISCUSSION

The Influence of Knowledge Sharing on Work Engagement

Based on the hypothesis testing, Knowledge Sharing has a significant positive influence on Work Engagement at Company X. This suggests that when employees actively exchange information, skills, and experiences, it creates a collaborative atmosphere that fosters higher energy and resilience (vigor). Theoretically, this supports Razmerita et al. (2016), who argue that social exchange through knowledge sharing satisfies the need for relatedness, thereby increasing the psychological bond between the employee and their work.

The Influence of Organizational Learning on Work Engagement

The results indicate that Organizational Learning significantly influences Work Engagement. A corporate environment that prioritizes capacity building and the acquisition of new information makes employees feel more competent and prepared for challenges. This aligns with Senge (2017), stating that a learning organization continuously expands its members' capacity to create results. Consistent with Ramdayana & Prasetyono (2022), learning resources act as "work resources" that directly trigger high dedication and focus.

The Influence of Innovative Work Behavior on Work Engagement

Innovative Work Behavior has a significant positive influence on Work Engagement. Engaging in the creation, promotion, and realization of new ideas provides employees with a sense of purpose and achievement. According to De Jong & Den Hartog (2018), the creative process involved in IWB prevents work monotony. This finding suggests that the opportunity to innovate acts as a catalyst for "absorption," where employees become deeply and happily immersed in their roles.

The Influence of Knowledge Sharing on Employee Performance

Knowledge Sharing is proven to have a significant positive influence on Employee Performance. In the context of a cigarette manufacturing firm, the smooth transfer of technical knowledge across divisions reduces errors and accelerates problem-solving. This mirrors Rahmanto et al. (2025), who demonstrated that effective knowledge-sharing practices are essential for optimizing work quantity and quality by preventing the "reinvention of the wheel."

The Influence of Organizational Learning on Employee Performance

Organizational Learning significantly influences Employee Performance. When employees at Company X are encouraged to internalize new production technologies and regulatory updates, their technical proficiency increases. This study reinforces Sanjaya & Arif (2023), suggesting that the organization's ability to document and distribute knowledge serves as an informal control mechanism that maintains high performance standards even amidst external industry pressures.

The Influence of Innovative Work Behavior on Employee Performance

Innovative Work Behavior has a significant positive influence on Employee Performance. Proactive efforts to find creative solutions for operational bottlenecks directly contribute to efficiency. As noted by Zaharanura & Sridadi (2025), IWB is a primary driver of "continuous improvement" (Kaizen), which allows employees to exceed standard targets while minimizing the defect rate in the production line.

The Influence of Work Engagement on Employee Performance

Work Engagement shows a strong significant positive influence on Employee Performance. Engaged employees at Company X exhibit higher levels of persistence and mental resilience, especially during high-demand production quarters. This adheres to the Job Demands-Resources Theory by Bakker & Demerouti, where engaged workers use their personal resources more effectively to achieve organizational goals. This finding is consistent with Rachmadhan (2024), identifying engagement as the primary engine of productivity.

The Role of Work Engagement in Mediating Knowledge Sharing on Performance

Work Engagement significantly mediates the relationship between Knowledge Sharing and Employee Performance. This implies that the mere transfer of information is not enough to boost performance; it must first successfully inspire and energize the workforce. Sharing knowledge builds confidence and a sense of community, which fosters the engagement necessary to turn shared information into superior work quality.

The Role of Work Engagement in Mediating Organizational Learning on Performance

Work Engagement significantly mediates the influence of Organizational Learning on Employee Performance. While a learning climate provides the "tools," work engagement provides the "spirit" to use those tools. A positive learning environment fosters enthusiasm and dedication, which then serves as the bridge to improved operational effectiveness. This aligns with Suryowibowo & Syakarofath (2024), who found that psychological attachment is the key to converting organizational resources into tangible output.

The Role of Work Engagement in Mediating Innovative Work Behavior on Performance

Work Engagement significantly mediates the relationship between Innovative Work Behavior and Employee Performance. Innovation often involves risk and extra effort; however, high engagement ensures that employees remain focused and persistent during the "idea realization" phase. This underscores that the "behavioral bridge" of engagement is essential to stabilize the volatile nature of innovation into consistent, long-term performance outcomes.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of the data analysis, this study concludes that Employee Performance at Cigarette Manufacturing Company X is significantly determined by the practices of Knowledge Sharing, Organizational Learning, and Innovative Work Behavior. These findings confirm that the synergy between a fluid exchange of information, a strong commitment to collective learning, and the proactive drive of employees to implement creative solutions serves as the primary foundation for maintaining productivity and reducing defect rates in a high-pressure manufacturing environment.

Work Engagement was identified as playing a highly crucial mediating role. This proves that technical assets like knowledge and learning programs will not reach their maximum potential in boosting performance if employees do not feel psychologically connected, energized, and dedicated to their roles. While Knowledge Sharing and Organizational Learning provide the necessary "intellectual capital," it is Work Engagement that acts as the psychological "bridge," transforming these resources and innovative behaviors into tangible, high-quality production results and operational efficiency.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To enhance employee performance and reverse the recent decline in productivity at Cigarette Manufacturing Company X, management is recommended to implement the following strategic steps:

1. The company should move beyond ad-hoc information exchange by creating structured "knowledge repositories" and regular inter-divisional sharing sessions. This ensures that technical problem-solving insights are distributed evenly, reducing the information overload that often hinders production speed.
2. Given the vital role of Work Engagement as an intervening variable, training programs should be designed to be interactive and autonomy-supportive. When employees see learning as a resource for their personal growth rather than a rigid requirement, their dedication and focus (absorption) will naturally increase.
3. Management needs to grant technical operators and staff the discretion to trial minor process improvements. By reducing rigid SOP barriers for "micro-innovations," the company can encourage employees to proactively find ways to lower defect rates without fear of technical reprisal.
4. It is recommended that the company implements a "Recognition for Contribution" system that rewards not just final output, but also proactive behaviors such as helping colleagues (Knowledge Donating) and proposing operational ideas. This will sustain the emotional attachment and vigor of employees, ensuring long-term performance stability.

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