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Knowledge-Oriented Leadership and Employee Outcomes: The Mediating Role of Knowledge Sharing among Generation Z Employees in the Creative Industry

Muhammad Qaishar Fathin[1], Fanny Martdianty[2]

Corresponding Author: mfathin@asu.edu

[1] Thunderbird School of Global Management, Arizona State University, United States
[2] Department of Management, Universitas Indonesia, Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

Introduction/Main Objectives: Indonesia's creative economy continues to grow, yet challenges remain in workforce readiness, leadership, and innovation. These challenges are particularly relevant to Generation Z employees, whose digital capabilities and distinct workplace expectations require adaptive leadership. This study examines the influence of Knowledge-Oriented Leadership on employee outcomes in the creative industry. **Background Problems:** Knowledge-Oriented Leadership is proposed as an approach that facilitates knowledge exchange and creates a supportive environment for employee performance and innovation. **Novelty:** Unlike prior studies that emphasize organizational-level mediators such as knowledge-centered culture, this study positions knowledge sharing as an individual-level behavioral mechanism linking Knowledge-Oriented Leadership to three distinct employee outcomes: task performance, innovative work behavior, and job satisfaction among Generation Z employees in the creative industry. **Research Methods:** The study used a quantitative, cross-sectional design with 264 Generation Z employees in the creative industry in Greater Jakarta, collected via an online questionnaire and analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (LISREL 8.8) to test the hypothesised structural relationships and mediation effects. **Finding/Results:** Knowledge-Oriented Leadership has a significant positive effect on Task Performance, Innovative Work Behavior, Job Satisfaction, and Knowledge Sharing, with Knowledge Sharing partially mediating all three relationships and carrying between about one-sixth and one-quarter of each total effect. **Conclusion:** Knowledge-Oriented Leadership is associated with improved employee performance, innovation, and job satisfaction, partly through knowledge sharing. These findings highlight the importance of knowledge-based leadership and collaborative learning environments in supporting Generation Z employees in the creative industry.

Keywords: Creative Industry; Employee Outcomes; Generation Z; Knowledge Sharing; Knowledge-Oriented Leadership.

1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia's creative economy has expanded steadily over the past decade. Employment in the sector rose from about 14 million workers in 2013 to 26.47 million in 2024, value added grew from about

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IDR 700 trillion to more than IDR 1,500 trillion, and exports increased from USD 15 billion to USD 25.10 billion over the same period (Kementerian Ekonomi Kreatif, 2025). By 2025, the sector employed 27.40 million people, equal to 18.70 per cent of the national workforce (Badan Pusat Statistik [BPS], 2025). Digital growth has reinforced this expansion. Internet penetration reached 80.66 per cent of the population, or about 229 million users, in 2025 (Asosiasi Penyelenggara Jasa Internet Indonesia [APJII], 2025). This intensifies competition in digital subsectors such as applications, game development, and audiovisual content, and it raises the demand for adaptive and innovative capability among industry players.

Output growth has not been matched by growth in workforce readiness. In Deloitte's 2025 global human capital research, 66 per cent of managers and executives reported that most recent hires are not fully prepared, mainly because they lack experience, while managers spend only 13 per cent of their time developing the people who work for them (Deloitte, 2025). The gap is most relevant to Generation Z, born between 1997 and 2012, who are now entering the labor market in large numbers. This cohort brings strong digital skills but limited work experience, and it responds better to coaching and collaborative learning than to directive supervision (Schroth, 2019).

The labor-market position of this cohort adds urgency. In August 2023, about 9.9 million Indonesians aged 15–24, or 22.25 per cent of that age group, were not in employment, education, or training (BPS, 2024). For those who are employed, early-career development depends heavily on whether supervisors invest in it, which places leadership at the center of how the creative industry builds and retains capability.

The organizational complexity of the creative industries adds urgency to develop adaptive leadership models. In contrast to the conventional sector, the creative industry operates with a project-based structure that is iterative and dynamic, demanding intensive cross-disciplinary coordination among designers, *developers*, content creators, and digital marketers. The economic value in the creative industry is highly dependent on *Intangible assets* in the form of tacit knowledge, experiences, and innovative ideas that are difficult to replicate without effective leadership mechanisms and knowledge flow. Persistent challenges in this setting include fragmented coordination, cross-functional miscommunication, and the loss of knowledge when projects end and teams disband, which can lower the quality of output and interrupt the continuity of innovation.

In response to this complexity, Knowledge-Oriented Leadership (KOL) treats knowledge as a strategic asset and builds the conditions for learning within the organization. A central behavior that such leadership is expected to encourage is Knowledge Sharing, through which employees make their

experience and expertise available to colleagues and which in turn supports Task Performance, Job Satisfaction, and Innovative Work Behavior. Social Exchange Theory (SET) explains this sequence. When leaders provide support, access to information, and an open work climate, employees reciprocate with collaboration, commitment, and discretionary contribution (Chernyak-Hai & Rabenu, 2018; Banmairuroy et al., 2022).

Empirical evidence supports a mediating role for knowledge sharing. Knowledge-oriented leadership raises innovation capability both directly and through tacit and explicit knowledge sharing (Le & Do, 2024; Le & Le, 2025). Among Indonesian university staff, it also predicts knowledge-sharing behavior, which in turn mediates its effect on innovative behavior (Nurhidayati & Zaenuri, 2023). Studies of other leadership styles report the same pattern for innovative work behaviour (Arsawan et al., 2022; Sudibjo & Prameswari, 2021; Udin & Shaikh, 2022) and for job performance (Sasmita et al., 2023; Saif et al., 2024).

Innovation outcomes, however, have lagged behind economic growth. Indonesia rose from 85th in the Global Innovation Index in 2020 to 55th of 139 economies in 2025 (World Intellectual Property Organization [WIPO], 2025), but it remains in the middle of the global distribution. Turning the sector's growth into innovation therefore requires closer attention to how Knowledge-Oriented Leadership reaches individual behavior and outcomes through Knowledge Sharing, especially among Generation Z employees in Indonesia's creative industry. Based on the research phenomena and gaps that have been identified, this study seeks to answer two fundamental questions: First, does *Knowledge-Oriented Leadership* have a positive effect on *Task Performance*, *Job Satisfaction*, and *Innovative Work Behavior* in Generation Z employees in the Indonesian creative industry? Second, does *Knowledge Sharing* positively mediate the influence of *Knowledge-Oriented Leadership* on *Task Performance*, *Job Satisfaction*, and *Innovative Work Behavior* in Generation Z employees in the Indonesian creative industry?

This study analyses the relationships between Knowledge-Oriented Leadership and Task Performance, Job Satisfaction, and Innovative Work Behavior of Generation Z employees in the creative industry in Greater Jakarta, with Knowledge Sharing as a mediating variable. Greater Jakarta was selected because it concentrates creative-industry activity, with the creative economy accounting for 10.63 per cent of Jakarta's gross regional domestic product in 2024 (Badan Perencanaan Pembangunan Daerah (Bappeda) Provinsi DKI Jakarta, 2025). The findings are therefore read as evidence from a dense metropolitan creative ecosystem rather than as a representation of the national creative industry. The study adopts a quantitative approach and uses Structural Equation Modeling to test the hypothesised structural relationships and the mediating role of Knowledge Sharing.

This study makes two contributions. First, prior work has explained the link between knowledge-oriented leadership and employee outcomes through knowledge-centered culture, an organizational-level perception of context (Alzghoul et al., 2024). This study examines knowledge sharing, an individual behavior, as the transmission mechanism, which aligns the level of the mediator with the level at which the outcomes are observed. Second, studies that treat knowledge sharing as a mediator typically examine one or two outcomes of a similar kind, mostly performance or innovation (Saif et al., 2024; Le & Le, 2025). This study tests whether one behavioral mechanism carries the effect of leadership to three outcomes of different nature in a single model: task performance (instrumental), innovative work behaviour (generative), and job satisfaction (affective). The Generation Z creative-industry setting is where this question matters most, because the workforce is early-career and its output depends on tacit knowledge.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory (SET) explains organizational behavior as a series of reciprocal transactions in which parties who receive valued resources feel obliged to return them in kind (Chernyak-Hai & Rabenu, 2018). The obligation is not contractual but normative, sustained by trust and by the expectation that contribution will eventually be reciprocated. In knowledge-intensive settings, the resource being exchanged is knowledge itself, so leadership that invests in employees' access to knowledge creates an obligation that employees discharge through effort, cooperation, and affective attachment to the organization. SET therefore provides the mechanism through which this study links leadership behavior to knowledge sharing and, in turn, to task performance, innovative work behavior, and job satisfaction among Generation Z employees.

Knowledge-Oriented Leadership

Knowledge-Oriented Leadership (KOL) is a leadership paradigm that treats knowledge as a strategic asset and directs the creation, dissemination, and application of knowledge within the organization (Naqshbandi & Jasimuddin, 2018). KOL combines transformational elements, such as intellectual stimulation and the communication of a learning vision, with transactional elements such as the recognition and reward of knowledge contribution (Shamim et al., 2019). Rather than supervising output alone, a knowledge-oriented leader designs the conditions under which knowledge is produced, circulated, and reused, including tolerance of error, the provision of learning resources, and the removal of barriers between individuals and units (Banmairuroy et al., 2022). This orientation is particularly

consequential in the creative industry, where output depends on tacit knowledge held by individuals rather than on codified procedures.

Task Performance

Task Performance (TP) refers to an individual's fulfilment of the work expectations formally set by the organization, assessed through the quality, accuracy, and timeliness of assigned duties (Goodman & Svyantek, 1999). Unlike contextual performance, task performance concerns the core technical activities for which a role exists.

Knowledge-oriented leadership improves task performance by shortening the distance between an employee and the knowledge required to complete work. Leaders who direct attention to knowledge reduce search costs, clarify procedures, and give employees access to expertise that would otherwise remain dispersed (Banmairuroy et al., 2022; Saif et al., 2024). For Generation Z employees, who enter the creative industry with limited accumulated work experience, this access substitutes for tenure and allows expected standards to be met sooner.

H1: Knowledge-oriented leadership has a positive effect on task performance.

Innovative Work Behavior

Innovative Work Behavior (IWB) comprises the generation, promotion, and implementation of new ideas intended to benefit the individual, the group, or the organization (Rafique et al., 2022). It is a behavioral sequence rather than a single act, since an idea must first be recognized, then championed, and finally embedded in practice.

Each stage of that sequence is knowledge dependent. Idea generation requires exposure to diverse knowledge, promotion requires the standing to voice a proposal, and implementation requires cooperation from colleagues who hold complementary knowledge. Knowledge-oriented leadership supports all three by circulating knowledge across boundaries and by signaling tolerance of the experimentation through which new ideas are tested (Shamim et al., 2019; Afsar & Umrani, 2020). Where the perceived risk of proposing an untested idea is lowered, employees are more willing to convert knowledge into innovative action.

H2: Knowledge-oriented leadership has a positive effect on innovative work behavior.

Knowledge Sharing

Knowledge Sharing (KS) is the process through which individuals exchange information,

experience, skills, and understanding in support of organizational goals (Van den Hooff & De Ridder, 2004). KS covers both the donation of knowledge one holds and the collection of knowledge held by others, and it is behavioral rather than attitudinal, which makes it observable at the individual level (Van den Hooff & De Ridder, 2004).

Knowledge sharing is discretionary, so it responds to whether employees perceive that contribution is valued and will be reciprocated. A knowledge-oriented leader supplies precisely that signal by modelling openness, rewarding contribution, and reducing the perceived cost of disclosure (Le & Do, 2024; Nurhidayati & Zaenuri, 2023). Under the logic of social exchange, employees who receive this support reciprocate by making their own knowledge available to colleagues.

H3: Knowledge-oriented leadership has a positive effect on knowledge sharing.

Job Satisfaction

Job Satisfaction (JS) is the positive affective state arising from an individual's appraisal of the work experience, encompassing the work itself, supervision, recognition, and growth opportunities (Ibrahim & Perez, 2014; Usmani & Jamal, 2013).

Knowledge-oriented leadership addresses several of these facets simultaneously. Leaders who invest in learning provide developmental support and recognition of contribution, both of which are direct antecedents of satisfaction, and knowledge-oriented leadership has been shown to raise job satisfaction (Alzghoul et al., 2024). This pathway is likely to be stronger among Generation Z employees, who expect coaching, frequent feedback, and opportunities to learn on the job (Schroth, 2019). Leadership that treats knowledge as a resource to be shared rather than hoarded therefore aligns with what this cohort values in work.

H4: Knowledge-oriented leadership has a positive effect on job satisfaction.

The Mediating Role of Knowledge Sharing

Leadership is a distal antecedent of individual outcomes and typically operates through more proximal mechanisms. Prior work has modelled this transmission through knowledge-centred culture, showing that knowledge-oriented leadership shapes cultural conditions that in turn raise job satisfaction and innovative behaviour (Alzghoul et al., 2024). Knowledge-centred culture and knowledge sharing, however, differ in two respects. They differ in level. Culture is a shared, organisational-level property, measured as employees' perception of the norms and values that surround them, whereas knowledge sharing is an individual-level behavior that each employee enacts or withholds. They also differ in kind.

Culture describes the context in which sharing is expected, and recent evidence treats it as an antecedent of sharing behavior rather than as the behavior itself (Al Mansoori et al., 2025). Employees who work under the same culture can therefore still differ widely in how much knowledge they share.

This distinction matters for the outcomes examined here. Task performance, innovative work behavior, and job satisfaction are individual-level outcomes, and the mechanism that explains variation among individuals should operate at the same level. Social exchange supplies the logic. The obligation created by a leader's support is felt by individual employees within their relationship with the leader, and it is discharged through individual conduct rather than through a change in the shared culture (Chernyak-Hai & Rabenu, 2018; Varghese & Rao, 2024). Knowledge sharing is the conduct through which that obligation is discharged in knowledge work. It also produces the resources that enter each outcome directly, because the knowledge an employee collects from colleagues is the input used to complete tasks, recombine ideas, and build the sense of support that shapes satisfaction (Saif et al., 2024; Usmanova et al., 2021).

Knowledge sharing is therefore proposed as a distinct, individual-level mechanism that complements culture-based explanations rather than replacing them. Culture shapes the context, and sharing carries the effect into individual outcomes. Read through social exchange, the sequence is continuous: leadership support creates an obligation, employees discharge it by sharing knowledge, and the knowledge that circulates raises the resources available for task completion, idea implementation, and the affective evaluation of the job (Le & Le, 2025). Knowledge sharing is thus expected to transmit part of the effect of knowledge-oriented leadership to each of the three outcomes.

H5: Knowledge sharing mediates the relationship between knowledge-oriented leadership and task performance.

H6: Knowledge sharing mediates the relationship between knowledge-oriented leadership and innovative work behavior.

H7: Knowledge sharing mediates the relationship between knowledge-oriented leadership and job satisfaction.

Research Model

Taken together, the seven hypotheses describe a single exogenous construct acting on three endogenous outcomes both directly and through one behavioral mediator. The model builds on Alzghoul et al. (2024), who examined knowledge-centered culture as the mediator between knowledge-oriented leadership and employee outcomes, and on Saif et al. (2024), who examined knowledge sharing as a

mediator of transformational leadership. It combines knowledge-oriented leadership with an individual-level knowledge-sharing mechanism, extends the outcome set to include an affective outcome, and situates the model among Generation Z employees of the Indonesian creative industry. Figure 1 presents the model.

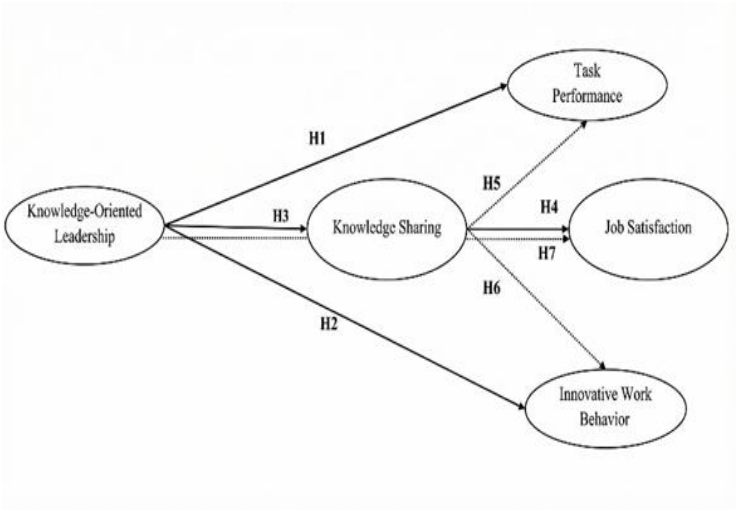


Figure 1. Research Model

Source: Processed Research

3. METHOD

This study applies a quantitative, explanatory design to test the hypothesised relationships among knowledge-oriented leadership, knowledge sharing, task performance, innovative work behavior, and job satisfaction. Data were collected cross-sectionally through a self-administered questionnaire. Because all constructs were measured at one point in time, the estimated paths are interpreted as associations consistent with the theorised ordering, not as causal effects established over time.

The target population comprised Generation Z employees, defined as individuals born between 1997 and 2012, working in the creative industry in the Greater Jakarta area. Respondents were required to have at least one year of tenure with their current employer, on the reasoning that a full working cycle is needed before an employee can meaningfully assess a supervisor's orientation towards knowledge, the sharing practices of a team, and the organization's response to new ideas. Greater Jakarta was selected because it concentrates creative-industry activity (Bappeda Provinsi DKI Jakarta, 2025), but the sample is not intended to represent the national creative industry, and the findings are generalized with caution. Eligibility spanned seventeen creative subsectors, including applications and games, architecture, interior design, visual communication design, product design, fashion, film, photography,

crafts, culinary, music, publishing, advertising, performing arts, fine arts, television and radio, and research and development.

Respondents were recruited through non-probability convenience sampling using an online questionnaire distributed via Instagram and X, the platforms through which this cohort is most readily reached. Internet penetration among Generation Z reached 87.80 per cent in 2025 (APJII, 2025). Screening items at the start of the instrument verified birth year, domicile, subsector, and tenure before a respondent could proceed. Sample adequacy was assessed against several criteria rather than a single rule of thumb, because the sample required for maximum likelihood estimation depends on model complexity, the strength of factor loadings, and the characteristics of the data (Kyriazos, 2018). The guideline of five respondents per indicator set an initial minimum of 150 for the thirty indicators. Data collection over one month produced 264 valid responses after cases failing the data quality criteria were removed, which exceeds this minimum and Hoelter's critical N reported in Table 2. With 398 degrees of freedom, the power of the RMSEA test of close fit (H0: RMSEA = 0.05 against HA: RMSEA = 0.08, $\alpha = 0.05$) at N = 264 approaches 1.00, computed following MacCallum et al. (1996). All standardized loadings were at least 0.63, with five to seven indicators per construct, conditions under which samples of this size yield stable estimates (Kyriazos, 2018). The ratio of respondents to the 67 freely estimated parameters is about 4:1, below the 5:1 ratio sometimes recommended, and this is acknowledged as a limitation.

Measurement

All constructs were measured using multi-item scales adapted from prior studies and adjusted to the language and work context of Generation Z respondents in the Indonesian creative industry. Knowledge-oriented leadership was measured with six items adapted from Naqshbandi and Jasimuddin (2018), knowledge sharing with seven items adapted from Van den Hooff and De Ridder (2004), task performance with six items adapted from Goodman and Svyantek (1999), innovative work behavior with six items adapted from Rafique et al. (2022), and job satisfaction with five items adapted from Ibrahim and Perez (2014) and Usmani and Jamal (2013), giving thirty indicators in total. All items were rated on a seven-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree).

The instrument was organized into an introduction stating the researcher's identity and the confidentiality of responses, a consent item, screening questions, the core measurement section, and a demographic section covering gender, age, education, tenure, position, work unit, subsector, and domicile.

Data Analysis

Analysis proceeded in three stages. First, a pre-test involving 40 respondents was conducted using IBM SPSS Statistics 25 to establish the validity and reliability of the instrument, assessed through the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy above 0.50, the measure of sampling adequacy for each item above 0.50, component matrix loadings above 0.50, and Cronbach's Alpha above 0.60.

Second, the main analysis was performed using LISREL 8.80 with maximum likelihood estimation. The measurement model was evaluated through standardized loading factors of at least 0.50 and t-values of at least 1.645 for indicator validity, and through construct reliability of at least 0.70 and variance extracted of at least 0.50 for construct reliability. Overall model fit was then assessed using absolute fit measures, incremental fit measures, and parsimonious fit measures (Hair et al., 2019).

Third, the structural model was estimated to test the hypothesised paths using a one-tailed criterion of t of at least 1.645 at the 0.05 significance level. Indirect effects were tested with the Sobel test, computed from the path estimates and standard errors produced by LISREL 8.80. The Sobel test assumes a normally distributed indirect effect and has low statistical power, so it tends to understate rather than overstate significance. A significant Sobel result therefore provides a cautious basis for inferring mediation, although bootstrap confidence intervals are preferred where available (Zhao et al., 2010). Mediation was classified using the typology of Zhao et al. (2010), which distinguishes direct-only non-mediation, no-effect non-mediation, complementary mediation, competitive mediation, and indirect-only mediation, and the magnitude of each indirect effect is reported as its share of the total effect. Threshold values applied at each stage are reported once here and are not restated in the results.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

RESULT

Respondent Profile

Data collection yielded 264 valid responses. Women accounted for 59.09 per cent of respondents and 54.55 per cent had between one and two years of tenure, consistent with the early-career profile targeted by the screening criteria. Staff-level positions dominated at 84.85 per cent, and 54.92 per cent were domiciled in DKI Jakarta. Marketing and digital marketing was the largest work unit at 46.21 per cent, while culinary was the most represented creative subsector at 12.88 per cent. Descriptive statistics show grand means between 5.47 and 5.67 on the seven-point scale across the five constructs, indicating that respondents on average perceived their supervisors as knowledge oriented and evaluated their own sharing behavior, performance, satisfaction, and innovative behavior favorably.

Measurement Model

All thirty indicators satisfied the validity criteria, with standardized loading factors above 0.50 and t-values above 1.645, and construct reliability exceeded 0.70 for every construct. Variance extracted exceeded 0.50 for four of the five constructs. Knowledge sharing fell marginally short (Table 1), which means that slightly more than half of the variance in its indicators is attributable to measurement error. The construct was retained on three grounds. First, variance extracted is a conservative criterion, and Fornell and Larcker (1981) note that convergent validity can still be judged adequate when construct reliability is high, as it is here. Second, every knowledge-sharing indicator loaded significantly at 0.63 or above, and current guidance recommends judging convergent validity on multiple criteria, including loadings and sampling error, rather than on a single cut-off (Cheung et al., 2024). Third, the seven items cover both the donation and the collection of knowledge (Van den Hooff & De Ridder, 2004). Removing the weakest item would raise variance extracted to about 0.50 but would narrow the content domain of the construct. Discriminant validity was supported for every construct, since the largest squared correlation between any pair of constructs (0.28) was below the lowest variance extracted. For knowledge sharing, the largest squared correlation with another construct (0.22) was well below its variance extracted, so the construct remains empirically distinct (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The practical implication of the marginal variance extracted is lower precision in estimating paths that involve knowledge sharing, and the mediation results are interpreted with this in mind.

Table 1. Summary of Validity and Reliability of the Measurement Model

Variable	SLF range	T-value range	CR	VE	Conclusion
Knowledge-Oriented Leadership	0.69–0.78	12.36–14.54	0.857	0.559	Valid & Reliable
Knowledge Sharing	0.63–0.76	10.72–18.81	0.874	0.489	Valid & Reliable
Task Performance	0.70–0.80	12.45–15.10	0.857	0.591	Valid & Reliable
Job Satisfaction	0.70–0.84	12.31–15.97	0.833	0.580	Valid & Reliable
Innovative Work Behaviour	0.72–0.77	12.83–14.25	0.857	0.552	Valid & Reliable

Source: Processed Research

Overall Model Fit

The model shows acceptable overall fit. The absolute fit indices are mixed. RMSEA and the normed chi-square meet the criteria for good fit, while GFI, AGFI, and the standardised RMR fall in the marginal range (Table 2). All incremental fit indices exceed 0.90. GFI and AGFI tend to be depressed in models with

many indicators relative to sample size (Hair et al., 2019). Taken together, the indices support an acceptable rather than a close fit, and the structural estimates are interpreted on that basis.

Table 2. Structural Model Fit Test Results

Goodness of Fit Index	Criteria	Value	Conclusion
Chi-Square	The smaller the better	545.47	-
Degrees of Freedom	-	398	-
Normed Chi-Square	1.0–3.0	1.37	Good fit
RMSEA	≤ 0.08	0.038	Good fit
GFI	≥ 0.90	0.88	Marginal fit
AGFI	≥ 0.90	0.86	Marginal fit
NFI	≥ 0.90	0.96	Good fit
NNFI	≥ 0.90	0.99	Good fit
CFI	≥ 0.90	0.99	Good fit
IFI	≥ 0.90	0.99	Good fit
RFI	≥ 0.90	0.95	Good fit
Standardized RMR	≤ 0.05	0.06	Marginal fit
Critical N	≥ 200	225.96	Good fit

Source: Processed Research

Hypothesis Testing

All four direct paths are significant at the one-tailed criterion, so H1, H2, H3, and H4 are supported (Table 3). The largest coefficients run from knowledge-oriented leadership to knowledge sharing and to task performance, followed by innovative work behavior and job satisfaction. The differences between these coefficients are small and were not tested formally, so the ordering is treated as descriptive. Knowledge sharing is in turn positively related to all three outcomes.

Table 3. Structural Path Estimates (Standardized)

Hypothesis	Pathway	β	t-value	Conclusion
H1	KOL → TP	0.45	5.88	Significant
H2	KOL → IWB	0.41	5.58	Significant
H3	KOL → KS	0.45	6.39	Significant
H4	KOL → JS	0.39	5.33	Significant
H5	KS → TP	0.21	2.92	Significant
H6	KS → IWB	0.29	4.05	Significant
H7	KS → JS	0.25	3.38	Significant

Source: Processed Research

Mediation Analysis

Knowledge sharing carries a significant part of the effect of knowledge-oriented leadership on all three outcomes, with every Sobel statistic exceeding the critical value. Because the direct effects remain significant and share the sign of the indirect effects, each pathway is classified as complementary mediation (Zhao et al., 2010). H5, H6, and H7 are supported. The indirect effects account for between about one sixth and one quarter of each total effect, with the largest share for innovative work behavior and the smallest for task performance (Table 4). In practical terms, a one standard deviation increase in knowledge-oriented leadership is associated with an increase of 0.09 to 0.13 standard deviations in each outcome through knowledge sharing alone.

Table 4. Summary of Mediation Analysis Results

Hypothesis	Pathway	Direct	Indirect	Total	Share	Sobel	Mediation
H5	KOL → KS → TP	0.45	0.095	0.54	17.4%	2.68	Complementary
H6	KOL → KS → IWB	0.41	0.131	0.54	24.1%	3.40	Complementary
H7	KOL → KS → JS	0.39	0.113	0.50	22.4%	3.01	Complementary

Source: Processed Research

Coefficient of Determination

The model explains between 20 and 36 per cent of the variance in the endogenous constructs, as reported in Table 5. These values are modest in absolute terms but appropriate for behavioral research, in which the outcomes examined are shaped by factors well beyond leadership alone, and Hair et al. (2019) treat values of around 0.20 and above as an acceptable level of explanation in social research.

Table 5. Coefficient of Determination of the Structural Model

Endogenous Variable	R^2	Interpretation
Knowledge Sharing	0.20	20% of variance explained by KOL
Task Performance	0.33	33% of variance explained by KOL and KS
Innovative Work Behavior	0.36	36% of variance explained by KOL and KS
Job Satisfaction	0.30	30% of variance explained by KOL and KS

Source: Processed Research

DISCUSSION

Knowledge-Oriented Leadership and Task Performance (H1)

Knowledge-oriented leadership has a positive and significant effect on task performance. Leaders who direct attention to how knowledge is produced and circulated improve role clarity, tighten coordination, and structure communication, all of which bear directly on the quality with which assigned work is completed. The effect is plausibly larger for this population than it would be for a more tenured one. Generation Z respondents, of whom the majority have between one and two years of tenure, have not yet accumulated the experiential knowledge that allows a worker to resolve task ambiguity independently, so leader-mediated access to knowledge substitutes for that accumulation. The finding is consistent with Saif et al. (2024) and with Banmairuroy et al. (2022), who show that knowledge-oriented leadership raises individual performance through improved absorption and application of organizational knowledge.

Knowledge-Oriented Leadership and Innovative Work Behavior (H2)

The effect on innovative work behavior is positive and significant, and smaller than the effects on knowledge sharing and task performance. A smaller coefficient is plausible. Innovative work behavior requires not only access to knowledge but also the willingness to expose an untested idea to evaluation, and that willingness depends on conditions the leader can influence but does not control, including peer response and the organization's tolerance of failed experiments (Afsar & Umrani, 2020). Shamim et al. (2019) report a comparable pattern, showing that knowledge-oriented leadership generates a learning climate that supports creativity but does not by itself determine whether ideas are implemented.

Knowledge-Oriented Leadership and Knowledge Sharing (H3)

Knowledge-oriented leadership shows, together with task performance, its largest coefficient for knowledge sharing. Knowledge sharing is discretionary and carries a perceived cost, since disclosing what one knows can be read as surrendering a personal advantage. A leader who models openness, rewards contribution, and treats knowledge as collective property lowers that perceived cost more effectively than any formal system can. The result supports Naqshbandi and Jasimuddin (2018), whose instrument this study adopts, and aligns with Le and Do (2024) and Nurhidayati and Zaenuri (2023), who find that knowledge-oriented leadership predicts knowledge-sharing behavior.

Knowledge-Oriented Leadership and Job Satisfaction (H4)

Job satisfaction responds positively and significantly to knowledge-oriented leadership. The mechanism runs through developmental support and recognition rather than through material reward.

For employees early in their careers, the perception that an employer is investing in their capability functions as evidence that the role has a future, and that evidence shapes the overall evaluation of the job. Alzghoul et al. (2024) report the same association. Job satisfaction shows the smallest direct coefficient of the three outcomes, which is consistent with its broader set of determinants, such as pay, workload, and career prospects, that lie outside the leader's knowledge orientation.

The Mediating Role of Knowledge Sharing (H5, H6, and H7)

Knowledge sharing mediates the relationship between knowledge-oriented leadership and each of the three outcomes, and in every case the mediation is complementary rather than full. Leadership therefore does not act on individual outcomes only through the sharing it induces. A significant direct effect remains in each pathway, and knowledge sharing supplies a second, additive channel.

The three outcomes differ in kind, and the channel plausibly works through a different mechanism for each. For task performance the mechanism is instrumental, since knowledge collected from colleagues reduces search time and task ambiguity, which matters most for early-career employees who lack accumulated experience (Sasmita et al., 2023; Saif et al., 2024). For innovative work behavior the mechanism is generative, since ideas arise from the recombination of knowledge held by different people, and sharing exposes employees to the diverse inputs and early feedback that idea generation and promotion require (Pian et al., 2019; Akram et al., 2020). For job satisfaction the mechanism is relational and affective, since exchanging knowledge builds reciprocal relationships and a sense of being supported and valued, which shapes how employees evaluate their job as a whole (Usmanova et al., 2021).

The indirect effects are not identical across outcomes. Knowledge sharing carries the largest share of the leadership effect for innovative work behavior, a smaller share for job satisfaction, and the smallest for task performance (Table 4). This ordering is consistent with the mechanisms described above. Innovation depends most heavily on knowledge held by other people, so the peer channel matters most there. Task performance is more readily shaped by the leader's direct guidance, which is reflected in its large direct coefficient. Job satisfaction sits between the two, drawing on both the relational value of exchange and the leader's direct support. The differences between the indirect effects were not tested formally and are modest in size, so the ordering is suggestive rather than conclusive. The overall pattern indicates that knowledge sharing serves all three outcomes while mattering somewhat more where the outcome depends on collective knowledge.

The innovation result also contrasts with earlier evidence. Saif et al. (2024) found that knowledge sharing did not mediate the effect of transformational leadership on innovative work behavior, whereas the present study finds a significant indirect path. One explanation is that knowledge-oriented leadership, unlike transformational leadership in general, targets sharing explicitly, so the behavior it induces is more closely tied to the knowledge needs of innovation. Another is the setting. In project-based creative work, innovation depends on knowledge distributed across team members, which raises the value of sharing as a route to new ideas (Sudibjo & Prameswari, 2021; Devi, 2024).

These findings position knowledge sharing as an alternative, individual-level mechanism alongside the culture-based explanation of Alzghoul et al. (2024), not as its replacement. Because the two mediators were not tested in the same model or sample, the evidence does not show that they are interchangeable or that one explains more than the other. It shows that the transmission of knowledge-oriented leadership can be traced in individual conduct as well as in perceived climate.

5. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that Knowledge-Oriented Leadership is positively associated with employee performance, innovation, and job satisfaction among Generation Z employees in the Greater Jakarta creative industry. Knowledge sharing partially mediates all three relationships, indicating that leadership contributes to employee outcomes both directly and through knowledge-sharing practices. The mediating role is most pronounced in innovative work behavior and least pronounced in task performance. These findings highlight knowledge sharing as an important behavioral mechanism through which Knowledge-Oriented Leadership supports diverse employee outcomes. Accordingly, creative organizations should foster knowledge-based leadership and collaborative learning environments to support the performance, innovation, and job satisfaction of Generation Z employees.

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AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

Muhammad Qaishar Fathin: Conceptualization, Methodology, Investigation, Data Curation, Formal Analysis, Writing – Original Draft, Writing – Review and Editing. Fanny Martdianty: Conceptualization, Methodology, Supervision, Validation, Writing – Review and Editing.

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CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest related to the research, authorship, or publication of this article.

DATA AVAILABILITY

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. The raw survey responses are not publicly available because respondents were assured that their responses would remain confidential.

AI USE DECLARATION

During the preparation of this manuscript, the authors used Claude (Anthropic) to assist with proofreading for typographical and language errors and with literature searching to locate and verify the sources and statistical data cited in the article. The tool was not used to collect or analyze the research data. All statistical analyses were conducted by the authors using IBM SPSS Statistics 25 and LISREL 8.80. All AI-assisted output was critically reviewed and verified by the authors, who remain fully responsible for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of the manuscript.

ETHICAL CLEARANCE

Formal ethical clearance was not required for this study under the applicable research procedures of the Faculty of Economics and Business, Universitas Indonesia. Participation was voluntary. Before completing the questionnaire, respondents were informed of the purpose of the study and the confidentiality of their responses, and they gave their consent through a consent item at the start of the instrument.

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