



# The Role of Employee Engagement Towards Innovative Work Behavior Through the Mediation Role of Creativity on Millennial IT Worker

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**Abstract.** This study is aimed to convey the role of Employee Engagement to promote Innovative Work Behavior through Creativity of Employees of Information Technology industry. Data was collected by means of online questionnaire through electronic communication media to 183 millennial employees of the Information Technology companies in Jakarta, Indonesia who follow Remote Working method during Covid-19 pandemic, such as PT Anabatic Technologies, PT Indocyber Global Teknologi, PT Emerio Indonesia, PT Xsis Mitra Utama, and PT Tiga Daya Digital Indonesia. Findings of the study show that good Employee Engagement can promote Innovative Work Behavior, good Employee Engagement can improve Employee Creativity, and good Employee Creativity can promote Innovative Work Behavior. In addition, this study also signifies the mediation role of Employee Creativity toward the relationship between Employee Engagement and Innovative Work Behavior. It does however show existing moderation role of Remote Working between Employee Engagement and Employee Creativity. The managerial implication of the study is to enhance support of the organization for Employee Creativity and to give employees opportunities to express their innovative ideas.

**Keywords:** employee engagement · employee creativity · innovative work behavior · remote working

## 1 Introduction

Coping with dynamic business environment has been a challenge of each organization in Indonesia to keep competitively surviving. It is not merely through differentiation of product and service produced innovatively, but also human resources management which is crucial for an organization in support of achieving competitive excellence. Engagement of each employee is highly required for the organization to improve productivity let alone organizational competitive excellence [11]. Engagement makes employees tend to more creatively and adaptively think of their work [12]. When an organization increases its employee engagement, the employees are expected to be encouraged to do their jobs

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in a creative and innovative manner. Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic which is globally breaking out at this time affects Employee Engagement to run their jobs in the organization. Covid-19 pandemic has been likely to influence Employee Engagement since it leads to poor communication or the lost of face-to-face interactions [20]. Employees of Information Technology companies, especially those who are millennial, need to be investigated to see the effect of Employee Engagement on their creativity in working using and developing technology. [18] through their research explained that technology can be enabler to influence the cognitive engagement of millennial employees and motivated them to perform even better in future. [34] in their study explained that Information Technology companies are companies that are involved in building IT hardware and IT services as they describe about IT companies in China and India.

[21] Found that covid-19 pandemic has now been a challenge and opportunity at the same time for the Employee Engagement in the organization. Physical distancing among individuals that helps limit the spread of covid-19 has shifted the employees' way to work from home, in the so-called Remote Working system. Despite the fact that the Remote Working, which is mediated with information and communication technology, has been by the organization considered good on impact toward Employee Engagement and Creativity [6, 9, 21, 23] Remote Working can also decrease Employee Engagement in the sense of communication and social aspects [25]. Millennial employees of Information Technology companies also work remotely during the Covid-19 pandemic. Those who work every day to analyze, build, and manage computer systems and their infrastructure are certainly able and accustomed to using information and communication technology to work remotely.

Employee Engagement shows that each employee contributes more efforts to his or her jobs in the organization. When they are engaged, the employees use varied levels of emotion and cognition to perform their duties and works in order to meet their performance [5]. The engaged employees express their authenticity through physical engagement, cognitive awareness, and emotional connection. In the meantime, the unengaged employees break them away from their roles in the job [30]. Employment Engagement is able to encourage the Innovative Work Behavior to be created within the employees as noted by [1, 3, 17, 32] stating that the employees engaged with their organization tend to show innovative behavior.

When they feel positively engaged with their organization, the employees are getting more enthusiastic and motivated to complete the work by thinking creatively. Innovative Work Behavior will be formed when employees have good creativity. [4] investigated that Creativity in completing a work is able to boost innovative ideas. Similarly, [12, 14] suggested that Creativity gives an effect to Employee Engagement toward Innovative Work Behavior.

Regarding the relationship between Employee Engagement and Innovative Work Behavior of the Employees of Information Technology Company, Employee Engagement has therefore been significant to be studied. It is necessary that Employee Engagement be optimized to innovatively improve employees' performance through creative ideas and mindset in designing and developing an application system.

Some former studies [19, 24, 27–29, 31, 33] of relationship between Employee Engagement and Innovative Work Behavior have not yet emphasized on Creativity and Remote Working, which is nowadays being applied by organizations. Remote working system that the Information Technology company has been implementing during the Covid-19 pandemic will certainly affects Employment Engagement in promoting Innovative Work Behavior. Thus, this study is conducted to see the effect of Innovative Work Behavior and Remote Working, in which the urgency of Employment Engagement toward Innovative Work Behavior impacted by Creativity and moderated by Remote Working has not yet been widely under research, particularly in Information Technology company in Indonesia.

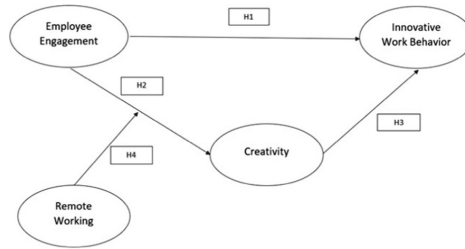
Based on the abovementioned gap, the research is aimed to convey the role of Employment Engagement to promote Innovative Work Behavior through Creativity as a mediator and the effect of Remote Working as a moderator toward the employees of Information Technology Company. It is also expected that this study can contribute to the science of organizational management and give a positive managerial implication toward the innovative human resources management in the organization.

## 2 Methodology and Measurement

### A. Participants

Millennial employees age from 17 to 40 years, either male or female who work in Information Technology companies located in Jakarta area, such as PT Anabatic Technologies, PT Indocyber Global Teknologi, PT Emerio Indonesia, PT Xsis Mitra Utama, and PT Tiga Daya Digital Indonesia were selected as respondents of the study. In addition, the respondents from these five companies were being actively involved in one or more Information Technology Development projects and often work by Remote Working. Information Technology company was selected as place of the study for this place, having been considered its development, has contributed to effectiveness and efficiency in a number of job fields. Besides, this typical company has mostly survived during Covid-19 pandemic since it utilizes technology to virtually complete its business. The employees who work in Information Technology company are therefore fit to be selected as the object of the research. This selection is meant to see how influential the employees Innovative Work Behavior can be shaped through Employee Engagement which is affected by Creativity and Remote Working.

An online questionnaire was distributed to each selected respondent. Out of 187 questionnaires the respondents have filled out, 3 questionnaires were invalid because it did not fit the sample criteria; the respondent age above 40 years and the respondents never worked by Remote Working. As a result, the valid and fully completed questionnaires became 184. Out of this 184, 22 respondents worked at IT Project Management unit, 70 respondents worked at IT Application Development unit, and 35 respondents worked at IT Product/Business Analyst unit, 21 respondents worked at IT Testing unit, 8 respondents worked at IT Product/Business Analyst unit, 21 respondents worked at IT Testing unit, 8 respondents worked at IT Infrastructure unit, and 28 respondents worked



**Fig. 1.** Employee engagement

at other IT units. In addition, out of 184 respondents, 170 respondents were non Managers and 14 respondents were Managers who all worked in Information Technology.

## B. Measurement

### 1) Employee engagement

The measurement of Employee Engagement was adopted from [26] selected from vigor, dedication, and absorption. A Likert scale was employed from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Out of 17 questions adopted, 6 questions only were regarded valid to have been through validity and reliability test with Cronbach's Alpha = 0,87. "I feel full of energy while working" was one of questions taken from Employee Engagement variable (Fig. 1).

### 2) Employee creativity

Employee Creativity variable was measured by a measurement developed by [35] consisting of 13 question items. Each question was answered by 5 Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). 8 questions out of 13 were regarded valid to have been through validity and reliability test with Cronbach's Alpha = 0,95. "I frequently come up with new ideas to promote work achievement" was one of questions taken from Employee Creativity variable.

### 3) Innovative work behaviour

Four questions from [7] comprising four dimensions, namely idea exploration, idea generation, idea championing, dan idea implementation were adopted in this study to measure Innovative work Behavior variable. Each question was answered with a Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). 7 out of 10 questions were regarded valid having been through validity and reliability test with Cronbach's Alpha = 0,92. "I seek new ideas several times to solve problems: and "I often give solutions to my work problems" were two examples of questions taken from Innovative Work Behavior variable."

### 4) Remote working

Remote Working variable that moderates Employee Engagement with Employee Creativity was measured by employing 6 questions developed by [2]. Respondents answered each question using a Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly

agree). 4 questions out of 6 were regarded valid to have been through validity and reliability test with Cronbach's Alpha = 0.84. "I find it easier to manage my work when applying Remote Working; and "I get more focused on work when applying remote working" were two examples of questions taken from Remote Working variable."

### C. Procedure

Data of the study was collected from each employee of Information Technology company in DKI Jakarta, Indonesia who work by Remote Working during Covid-19 pandemic. The online questionnaire was delivered by means of Google Form to have been distributed to such electronic communication and social media as Whatsapp and Instagram for 3 months 7 days. Each respondent was asked to answer each question from the following categories: Employment Engagement, Creativity Employee, Innovative Work Behavior, and Remote Working.

### D. Data Analysis Approach

Validity test used in this research was to see the measurement of KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) and MSA (Measures of Sampling Adequacy) toward Employee Engagement, Employee Creativity, Innovative Work Behavior, and Remote Working variables. The value derived in this test must be higher than 0.500 to have the factor analysis appropriate for further use and process [8]. Reliability test was conducted by using Cronbach's Alpha measurement in which the higher value of Cronbach's Alpha approaching 1 is, the better it will be [15].

SEM (Structural Equation Model) was also employed in this research to see the relationship of causality between variables to test suitability of the study. Based on the explanation from [15], there are six steps used in this study. First, defines an individual construct where Employee Engagement, Employee Creativity, Innovative Work Behavior, and Remote Working are used as measurement variables. Second, develop and specify the measurement model where a research model based on the measurement variables is described in a path diagram. Third, designing a study to produce empirical results where 30 respondents as the research sample are determined to be tested. Four, assessing measurement model validity where the measurement model of this study is tested and capable to be processed become structural model. Five, specify structural model where the measurement model is converted into a structural model. Six, assess structural model validity, where the structural model built is tested for validity through Goodness of Fit results.

Next, the t-value derived would be used for analyzing the mediation value of Employee Creativity. Moreover, Independent Sample T-Test was employed to analyze the effect of moderation toward Remote Working.

### 3 Result

#### A. The Construct Validity and Reliability Test

In the construct variable measurement, all indicators in this study beginning from Work Engagement, Innovative Work Behavior, Employee Creativity, and Remote Working are accepted and declared valid. This is shown on loading factor value in each variable to be well-fitted that is above 0.50. The CR (Construct Reliability) VE (Variance Extracted) calculation variables can be said to meet the overall requirements. The construct validity test value can meet reliability requirement if CR value is above 0.60 and VE value is above 0.50 [15]. All variables in this research have CR above 0.60 that include Employment Engagement (0.869), Innovative Work Behavior (0.925), Employee Creativity (0.955), and Remote Working (0.839). VE values in all variables of the study are above 0.50 that include Employee Engagement (0.530), Innovative Work Behavior (0.641), Employee Creativity (0.729), and Remote Working (0.569).

#### B. Analysis of Structural Test

Analysis of structural test results from R2 value in every equation and is found in this research. The result of the first SEM analysis is that Employee Engagement (KK) and Employee Creativity (KR) variables altogether impact Innovative Work Behavior (PV) with R2 value of 0.82. It means that 82% variance of Innovative Work Behavior (PV) can be explained by Employee Engagement (KK) and Employee Creativity (KR) variables whereas the remaining 18% can be explained by other variables this study does not address.

The second analysis reveals that Employee Creativity variable is impacted by Employee Engagement and the moderation role of Remote Working (KKRW) altogether with R2 value of 0.46. Hence, it means that 46% variance of Employee Creativity can be explained by Employee Engagement and moderation role of Remote Working (KKRW) whilst the remaining 54% can be explained by other variables this study does not address.

#### C. Analysis of Model Suitability

Based on the result of model suitability analysis, most tests conducted have shown good suitability, among of which were Chi Square, ECVI, AIC, CAIC, Fit Index, Critical N, and Goodness of Fit. It can be mainly concluded from the result of analysis that the suitability test of all models has met requirements (Fig. 2 and Table 1).

Table of the hypothesis model test result shows that all variables have T-Value above 1.96; thus, all data of the study supports all hypothesis constructed.

#### D. Analysis of Employee Creativity Mediation

Analysis of mediation variable in this study is conducted by examining an analysis model with and without mediation variable. The first analysis found that Employee Engagement (KK) has a direct effect toward Employee Creativity (KR), with t value = 2.64 (>1.96). Employee Creativity (KR) has a direct effect toward Innovative Work Behavior (PV), with t value = 8.07 (>1.96). Next, Employee Engagement (KK) has a direct effect toward Innovative Work Behavior (PV) with t value = 4.58 (>1.96).



coefficient value. The coefficient value of the direct relationship between Employee Engagement (KK) and Innovative Work Behavior (PB) is 0.29. Whereas the coefficient value the indirect relationship between Employee Engagement (KK) and Innovative work Behavior (PV) through Employee Creativity (KR) is  $0.40 \times 0.68 = 0.27$ . Based on the coefficient value, the direct effect between Employee Engagement and Innovative Work Behavior is slightly higher than the indirect effect through Employee Creativity ( $0.29 > 0.27$ ).

#### E. Analysis of Remote Working Moderation

Analysis of moderation variable was conducted to explore more on the effect of Remote Working moderation using Median Split to separate between group of respondents who positively perceives Remote Working and group of respondents who negatively perceives Remote Working. 105 respondents have perceived Remote Working in a positive manner and 79 respondents have perceived on the contrary. Next, Independent Sample T-Test was conducted on Remote Working variable toward Employee Creativity variable and derived was a value of Sig = 0.00 ( $<0.05$ ). Based on the Sig value, there is a difference in the level of Employee Creativity that perceives Remote Working positive from that of Employee Creativity that perceives Remote Working negative. Findings show that the level of Employee Creativity is higher for the respondents with positive Remote Working perception and in reverse, it is lower for the respondents with negative Remote Working perception.

## 4 Discussion

This study aims to deliver the effect and engagement between Employee Engagement, Innovative Work Behavior, and Employee Creativity as a mediation moderated by Remote Working. The first hypothesis (H1) shows that good Employee Engagement will promote Innovative Work Behavior. The employees working in the Information Technology company will have Innovative Work Behavior when they are engaged with their role in the job. When the employees are engaged with their role and assignment, they tend to be productive and motivated to seek new ideas for solving the problems. [1] supported that Employment Engagement can encourage them to be more productive and try to apply innovative method in an effort to finish the work. [27 and 32] formerly noted similar that the engaged employees will give rise to creative ideas and tend to implement the ideas as innovation in which this can be part of employees' Innovative Work Behavior.

This study proves that good Employee Engagement will promote Employee Creativity (H2). The engaged employees in their work will have positive energy and emotion to be more productive while performing their task and responsibility. Furthermore, the engaged and always positive employees will tend to think and act creatively, let alone deliver innovative ideas to help improve performance of the firm and solve existing problems. Employee Engagement can motivate employees to result more than expected through their innovative mindset and methods [1]. Challenges or obstacles the employees encounter at work can be managed through creative and innovative solutions they have due to their engagement with the job [12]. The Information Technology company



which tends to focus on developing a system providing particular work effectiveness and efficiency becomes a challenge for the employees to keep innovating by developing creative thinking so that Employee Engagement contributes to forming creativity inside while at the same time performing a job faced to existing challenges. This will strengthen the findings of previous studies [1, 3, 12, 13, 27].

It is evident that Good Employee Creativity will promote Innovative Work Behavior (H3). When employees have creative mindset and act, they tend to be able to develop their talents and give rise to innovative ideas for work completion. Employee Creativity embedded inside can drive to innovative work behavior in the organization [31]. The adaptive Information Technology company toward global technological development demands a work practice with high work performance through expertise and skill to develop an innovative system and technology. As Employee Creativity is higher, Innovative Work Behavior will impact the employees on their work practices with high work performance [14]. Employees with creative mindset tend to give solutions to the work challenges. Those who are commonly creative can design and develop method or ways in the sense of helping improve effectiveness and efficiency of time, cost, and resources. This in fact has been part of Innovative Work Behavior in which one will be able to form, promote, and implement the ideas [4]. Findings of the study may contribute to strengthening the former studies arguing that good Employee Creativity can promote a positive effect for shaping employees; Innovative Work Behavior [4, 14, 31].

Eventhough the hypothesis test proves that Remote Working can moderate the relationship between Employee Engagement and Employee Creativity (H4), the Independent Sample T-Test has failed to share similar evidence. In other words, the role of Remote Working indeed does neither strengthen nor weaken the relationship between Employee Engagement and Employee Creativity. Remote Working can indeed increase employee Engagement as well as Employee Creativity. Remote Working is nowadays being applied by many employees in various organizations in order to keep working during social restrictions due to Covid-19 pandemic. Generally, to those who work in Information Technology company, Remote Working gives an easy access and efficiency while performing a job, unnecessarily allowing them to work offline directly at office. Remote Working is assumed to enable employee productivity in completing their creative assignment and job [9]. The implementation of Remote Working toward Employee Engagement can even drive to employees' happiness at work [22]. It is to build Employee Engagement by means of technology which can help the organization grow especially during Covid-19 pandemic [6], and this can be implemented by Remote Working.

Employee Creativity has evidently been able to mediate the relationship between Employee Engagement and Innovative Work Behavior (H5). Employee Engagement that constructs Employee Creativity drives employees to creatively think and act so that they are able to express innovative ideas and further realize the ideas to construct Innovative Work Behavior inside them. Findings of the study show that the employees of Information Technology company engaged with their work projects have been motivated to find solutions creatively in order to complete their projects innovatively. The employees who commonly work in Information Technology company are able to give innovative ideas to meet the needs of the system and technology of their user or client. The employees engaged with their job will make themselves develop innovative solutions to the work

in an innovative way [1, 7]. Employment Engagement should be significantly taken into account because it can make employees more proactive to solve problems creatively and innovatively [29]. Thus, findings of the study have strengthened several former research noting that Employee Creativity can give rise to employees' Innovative Work Behavior [17, 27, 29, 32].

## 5 Implication

This research has some essential managerial implications to be conducted with a view to promoting Innovative Work Behavior. Firstly, it is to consider that Employee Creativity has a big role in constructing Innovative Work Behavior so that it needs support of the organization to stimulate the growth of Employee Creativity through training, seminar, business tour, and sharing session. These efforts can boost each employee to have creative and innovative mindset for the business development of the organization in a competitive way. Secondly, Work Engagement has been proven to promote Employee Creativity so that it needs special attention for the organization to actively involve its employees in numerous projects for helping the organization achieve its goal altogether. Moreover, the leader is expected to realize Work Engagement in the team by encouraging and motivating employees to complete their job with spirit, to reciprocally give constructive feedback and opportunities to express their ideas.

## 6 Conclusion

This study has novelty rather than the previous ones in which it examines the relationship between Employee Engagement toward Innovative Work Behavior moderated by Remote Working system. Good Employee Engagement will promote Innovative Work Behavior directly. In addition, Employee Engagement to be taken into account by the organization has been evident to improve Employee Creativity. The more employees feel engaged with their work, the more creativity they will grow when coping with their tasks and challenges. Employees with creativity inside tend to deliver innovative ideas and strive to implement the ideas. The higher Employee Creativity is, the higher potential the employees have to realize Innovative Work Behavior.

Though the implementation of Remote Working has been widely applied by employees of Information Technology company in DKI Jakarta area nowadays, Remote Working still has an important role in the improvement of Employee Creativity. Remote Working method as a response to social restrictions impacts Employment Engagement at work, and forms creativity in thinking and innovation in action. It is evidence that Employee Creativity can mediate the relationship between Employment Engagement with Innovative Work Behavior. The better Employment Engagement, the better Employee Creativity. This improves the forming of Innovative Work Behavior.

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