

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**UNLEASHING ACADEMIC
INNOVATION: HOW WORK
ENGAGEMENT MEDIATES THE
IMPACT OF KEY DRIVERS ON
PROFESSORS' INNOVATIVE
WORK BEHAVIOUR IN
MALAYSIAN PRIVATE
UNIVERSITIES**

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ABSTRACT

Innovation is a crucial catalyst for generating new opportunities which benefits to national economy and social well-being. As it increases efficiency and competitiveness to be an advanced and inclusive nation, innovation is a critical element of Malaysia's development agenda. Malaysia is aligning with Twelfth Malaysia Plan and The National Transformation 2050 to transition into an advanced knowledge-based economy and achieve developed nation status. In order to achieve these goals, there are indicators that measure the level of innovation for instance, Global Innovation Index, World Competitiveness Ranking and Bloomberg Innovation Index. As to date, Malaysia's ranking in all the indices has generally worsened over the years. In order to improve the Malaysia position in innovation, innovative work behaviour should be fostered. Despite of all the competitive industries, education industry also becomes an important sector in Malaysia that needs to be a crucial sector and innovative. Therefore, innovative work behaviour should be fostered among academicians, specifically among professors. Unlike public universities, private universities received limited funding from the governments, hence, it mounts competitive pressures on the private universities to generate revenue for their survival and sustainability that requires them to enhance their innovative work behaviour. In addition, there is a paucity of knowledge about how innovative work behaviour can be fostered in the academic sector specifically among university professors. Therefore, this study aims to examines how work engagement mediates the impact of key drivers on professors' innovative work behaviour in Malaysian private universities. Data for this study was collected from 205 professors in Malaysian private universities and was analysed by using PLS-SEM. The findings revealed that work engagement has positive and significant relationship with innovative work behaviour. In addition, all the independent variables (self-efficacy, intrinsic motivation, servant leadership, charismatic leadership, training and reward) have positive and significant relationship with work engagement. Moreover, all the independent variables are positive and significant relationship with innovative work behaviour mediated by work engagement. This study is subject to several limitations. Firstly, this study only focuses on certain variables, was conducted exclusively among professors, focused solely on private universities in Malaysia and faced difficulty in obtaining an accurate sampling frame. Therefore, future research may include a broader range of variables, incorporating a wider spectrum of academic staff, expanding the research to include public universities and consider establishing partnerships with relevant educational agencies to obtain accurate and complete sampling frame.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Preamble

This chapter contains the research background, problem statement, research objectives and questions, scope of study, the significance of study and the definition of terms. The first chapter of this research is to provide relevant information regarding the background of the innovative work behaviour. Additionally, nature of the research will be explained to the reader. The issues and problems that need to be resolved and studied are clearly identified in this chapter. This chapter has a detailed plan of action that explains how the research will be conducted. The main goal of this chapter is to promote a concept for conducting research or solving a problem.

A problem that requires attention has been defined to take action, acquire information, evaluate data, identify the components contributing to the problem and provide solutions. The essential topics were highlighted in this chapter to assist in the obtaining the relevant information. The introduction states the problems such describes the aim or purpose of the study. It persuades the reader of the study that it is exciting and that there is a realistic expectation of results. Additionally, it provides reliable background information to show the researcher's expertise in the subject by classifying earlier work into sensible categories.

1.2 Research Background

Innovation is a crucial catalyst for generating new opportunities that benefit the national economy and social well-being. As it increases efficiency and competitiveness to be an advanced and inclusive nation, innovation is a critical element of Malaysia's development agenda (Aziz et al., 2022). The Twelfth Malaysia Plan (12MP) (2021-2025) highlighted Research and Development (R&D) as a key focus area, signifying Malaysia's continued aspiration to become an innovation-driven economy. The 12MP inherit the initiatives stipulated in the Eleventh Malaysia Plan (1 IMP) which sought to strengthen relational capital in order to foster stronger linkages, collaboration and trust among stakeholders. Jin and Choi (2019) indicated that innovation will enable