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G. Maya, A.K. Subramani, N. Akbar Jan, A. Rahmath Nisha

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Knowledge sharing, occupational self-efficacy, and transformational leadership: drivers of innovative work behaviour

G. Maya

Faculty of Management,
SRM Institute of Science and Technology,
Kattankulathur, Chennai, 603 203, Tamil Nadu, India
Email: gm@srmist.edu.in
Email: mayavijayakumar@ymail.com

A.K. Subramani*

Saveetha School of Management,
Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Sciences,
Saveetha University,
Chennai, 600077, Tamil Nadu, India
Email: draksubramani@gmail.com
Email: aksubramani@gmail.com
*Corresponding author

N. Akbar Jan

Department of Human Resource Management and Soft Skills,
ICFAI Business School (IBS),
The ICFAI Foundation for Higher Education (IFHE)
(Deemed to be University U/s 3 of the UGC Act 1956),
Telangana, Hyderabad, 501203, India
Email: akbarjan.1975@gmail.com
Email: akbarjan75@ibsindia.org

A. Rahmath Nisha

Saveetha School of Management,
Saveetha Institute of Medical and Technical Sciences,
Saveetha University,
Chennai, 600077, Tamil Nadu, India
Email: rahmathnishaa.ssm@saveetha.com
Email: nishaphd1993@gmail.com

Abstract: The primary objective of this study is to examine the mediating role of occupational self-efficacy (OSE) and the moderating role of transformational leadership (TL) in the relationship between knowledge-sharing behaviour (KSB) and innovative work behaviour (IWB) among information technology (IT) Professionals in Bengaluru, Chennai, and Hyderabad cities of India. The

longitudinal study was conducted at three-time intervals. The final sample size was 382. The conceptual model of the research was evaluated through a structural equation modelling (SEM) approach. The results of the SEM analysis indicate that the KSB has a significant direct positive effect on IWB ($B = 0.139$, $\beta = 0.146$, $t = 3.168^{**}$) and OSE ($B = 0.234$, $\beta = 0.258$, $t = 4.825^{**}$). Similarly, OSE also demonstrated an important direct positive effect on IWB ($B = 0.476$, $\beta = 0.455$, $t = 9.096^{**}$). Furthermore, OSE confirms the partial mediation of the relationship between KSB and IWB. The study's outcome also indicates that TL strengthens the relationship between KSB and IWB.

Keywords: OSE; occupational self-efficacy; transformational leadership; IWB; innovative work behaviour; KSB; knowledge-sharing behaviour; information technology.

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Biographical notes: G. Maya is currently working as an Assistant Professor at SRM Institute of Science and Technology, Chennai for the past two years. She is totally having around 17 years of teaching experience in various reputed institutions. She has completed her doctorate at Anna University, Chennai during 2018. She has completed her MPhil. At PRIST University during 2009. She did her post-graduation in MBA on Human Resource and Marketing Management at Madha Engineering College affiliated to Anna University, Chennai during 2005. She has published two research papers in the international journals and presented various papers in the national and international conferences.

A.K. Subramani is a distinguished academic with a PhD in Business Administration from Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, Tirunelveli, India. With 18 years of teaching experience, he has made significant contributions to the field of business studies, particularly in human resource management and organisational behaviour. He has an impressive publication record with 74 papers in international journals, including 2 papers in the ABDC-A category, 8 in the ABDC-B category, 3 in the ABDC-C category, 28 in Scopus-indexed journals, and 8 in web of Science journals. His scholarly work has been recognised through numerous presentations at both international and national conferences.

N. Akbar Jan is an accomplished Assistant Professor in HR and OB Department at ICFAI Business School, Hyderabad, India. He holds a PhD in Management Studies from Anna University, Chennai, and brings over 22 years of teaching experience alongside five years in the industry. A prolific researcher, he has published 40 papers in international journals, including 2 in the ABDC-A category, 8 in ABDC-B, 3 in ABDC-C, 30 in Scopus-indexed journals, and 8 in web of Science. His research focuses on human resource management, training and development, and organisational climate. He serves as a recognised research supervisor at Anna University.

A. Rahmath Nisha initially garnered experience as an HR Associate in the medical manufacturing sector. She managed the entire employee life cycle, encompassing recruitment, training and development, payroll processing,

handling employee grievances, and fostering employee engagement. She achieved ISO 13485 certification, reflecting her commitment to maintaining high standards in her profession. Driven by her passion for teaching, she transitioned into academia, drawing on her background as an Engineer specialising in Electronics and Communication. Her academic achievements include ranking as a Gold Medalist in her MBA from Saveetha University, where she was also recognised as the Best Outgoing Student.

1 Introduction

Rapid globalisation has given birth to highly competitive markets, and a change in the economic environment and innovative work behaviour (IWB) has grown in importance (Woods et al., 2017) and is a vital necessity for the existence of any organisation (Hon and Lui, 2016; Kim and Koo, 2017). According to Pian et al. (2019), Innovation is the process of developing, selecting, and practising novel ideas using intangible resources such as employee creativity and knowledge. “Innovative work behaviour is a multi-dimensional construct that involves idea generation, idea promotion, and idea realisation aimed at benefiting the organisation through the application of novel solutions” (Nguyen et al., 2023; Singh et al., 2024). Knowledge is vital, as the global economy is based on sharing knowledge (Okour et al., 2021). As mentioned by Chaudhary et al. (2021), the ability to “communicate, transfer, or transmit knowledge across workers and organisations” is known as knowledge-sharing.” According to organisational learning theory, knowledge-sharing behaviour (KSB) not only fosters employees’ creativity and innovative intelligence (Mowrer, 1960) but also fosters inventions among staff members (Na-Nan and Arunyaphum, 2021). “KSB is the intentional exchange of knowledge between individuals, characterised by the transfer of ideas, information, or experiences to benefit others or the organisation” (Hosen et al., 2023; Fauzi et al., 2024). Sharing knowledge is, therefore, strategically important regarding innovative work-related tasks (Abdel Fattah et al., 2021, 2022; Akram et al., 2020), particularly in the information technology (IT) sector.

Global IT advancement and innovation have sparked fierce rivalry in the product and service industries (Usmanova et al., 2021). The Indian software product market is anticipated to reach a valuation of US\$100 billion by 2025. Indian companies are focusing their international investments on enhancing their global delivery hubs and expanding their global reach. The Indian IT market is expected to grow to US\$ 7 billion by 2030 due to an increase in domestic demand for AI. Nonetheless, the growth in the IT industry has presented a challenge for innovative ideas to deliver better solutions and top-notch facilities (Hassan et al., 2018), which KSB can make possible. With a focus on the most recent literature, KSB research highlights the factors that motivate and encourage employees to participate in IWB (Vandavasi et al., 2020). Thus, this study’s primary goal is to investigate how KSB influences employees’ IWB.

As stated by Vandavasi et al. (2020) and Rahman et al. (2021), determining the mechanisms and circumstances that exist between KSB and IWB is necessary. Given this context, this research highlights the mediating role of occupational self-efficacy (OSE).

Self-efficacy is the belief that one can effectively accomplish a necessary job (Bandura, 2010). “OSE is the belief in one’s ability to organise and execute the courses of action required to achieve work-related goals” (Park and Kim, 2024; Schyns and von Collani, 2023). An OSE is a person’s opinion of their skills and capacity managing professional obstacles in a variety of situations successfully (Klaeijssen et al., 2018). OSEs serve as a source of motivation for people and aid in their professional development (Teng et al., 2020). Hence, the ability to harvest anticipated outcomes even under difficult circumstances enables people to be creative (Bandura, 2009) and encourages employees to think of themselves as competent (Lent and Brown, 2013). In addition, those who are willing and naturally inspired are more inclined to look for innovative means (i.e., IWB) to improve their work operations (Mielniczuk and Laguna, 2020). Thus, OSE interferes with IWB. Thus, this study’s second goal is to investigate OSE’s mediating function between KSB and IWB.

Anser et al. (2020) suggested that leadership might encourage innovative behaviour. Leadership is the process of inspiring and motivating employees to accomplish organisational goals. Leaders not only inspire their workforces with their leadership style (Akbari et al., 2020; Alfaiza et al., 2021), but they also make it possible for them to be more creative (Wang et al., 2021) and create a better work environment (Lee et al., 2020). IWBs can be advanced by effective leadership through motivating employees and creating an environment that encourages the growth of their creative skills. For the organisation as a whole, this results in increased competitive advantages and improved capacity for innovation (Patiar and Wang, 2016). Although there is disagreement among theories regarding the best leadership style for IWBs among employees, prior research has emphasised the significance of TL in this regard (Masa’deh et al., 2016; Rawung et al., 2015). “Transformational leadership is characterised by the ability to bring about significant change by inspiring and motivating employees to exceed expectations, fostering an environment of innovation, and aligning the goals of the followers with those of the organisation” (Bass, 1985; Wang and Howell, 2023; Silva and Dias, 2024).

TL is a type of leadership style that advances the interests of the whole workforce and assists them in achieving group objectives (García-Morales et al., 2012). We anticipate that TL will improve employees’ IWB. Scholars debate innovation in great detail and argue that it is essential in the high-tech and manufacturing sectors to maintain a competitive edge. When individuals exchange competence, others grow more creative and are equipped with the knowledge to produce and execute new concepts under TL. TL encourages followers to share and exchange information with others, which enhances the IWB. Hence, this study also proposes that TL moderates the relationship between KSB and IWB. This research investigates the effects of KSB on IWB in the Indian IT sector. It also examines the intervening role of OSE between KSB and IWB and the moderating role of TL between KSB and IWB.

Despite the acknowledged importance of these constructs, there remain significant gaps in understanding their interrelationships, particularly within specific cultural and sectoral contexts. This study aims to address these gaps by exploring how TL influences KSB and IWB within the Indian IT sector. Hence this research aimed to address the following research questions:

- What is the relationship between KSB and IWB among IT professionals?
- How does OSE mediate the relationship between KSB and IWB?
- What role does TL play in moderating the relationship between KSB and IWB?

By clarifying the interrelated functions of KSB, OSE, and TL in promoting IWB among IT workers, this study offers fresh insights. It emphasises how OSE mediates the relationship between KSB and IWB whereas KSB directly increases IWB, highlighting the significance of personal confidence in promoting creativity. Furthermore, the study shows that TL has a moderating effect on the KSB-IWB connection, indicating that strong leadership is essential to maximise the advantages of knowledge sharing (KSB). The literature on leadership and innovation in dynamic sectors is enhanced by this concept (Fauzi et al., 2024; Hosen et al., 2023).

2 Literature review and hypothesis development

2.1 Knowledge-sharing behaviour (KSB) and innovative work behaviour (IWB)

The practice of sharing knowledge is essential for improving innovativeness both at the organisational level (Pittino et al., 2018; Zhao et al., 2021) and on an individual basis (Abdel Fattah et al., 2022; Anser et al., 2020; Herlina et al., 2024; Leal et al., 2018; Rao Jada et al., 2019). Information is essential to the growth of innovation, which explains its significance. A person's ability to apply and transmit knowledge affects how innovative they are. Such KSB activities can take place between peers or between employees and their managers. Workers who share expertise in managing task uncertainty are more open to experimenting with novel concepts to create innovative approaches, hence enhancing their IWB (Nguyen et al., 2020). Kim and Park (2017) mentioned that KSB enriches innovativeness at the individual level. A significant element influencing business innovation is KSB (Qammach, 2016). Colleague KSB enables people to share thoughts, exchange insights with peers, highlight the advantages of ideas, and put ideas into practice by transforming them into workable solutions (Mura et al., 2013). Thus, KSB and enterprise innovation are linked. The sharing of knowledge among colleagues and individuals can lead to IWB. Prior studies have validated the effect of KSB on IWB (Akram et al., 2018; Jaber, 2016; Lepik and Krigul, 2014; Mansour and Tremblay, 2018; Nguyen et al., 2019). Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is formulated:

H1: KSB has a significant positive relationship with the IWB of employees.

2.2 The mediating role of occupational self-efficacy (OSE)

KSB is crucial since it improves an individual's OSE for several reasons. First, when individuals learn something from others, they integrate it into their knowledge. If fresh knowledge aligns with what people already know, they are more likely to have trust in their skills and are less inclined to provide criticism. Second, individuals who believe they can complete jobs more effectively may be able to withstand setbacks and criticism brought on by shared knowledge, such as losing their position. On the other hand, the performance of employees is improved through OSE.

Geijsel et al. (2009) reported that OSE is a significant indicator of a person's education and development efforts. When individuals think they can achieve the preferred outcome, they become inspired. This skill to harvest anticipated outcomes even in problematic times not only permits employees to think differently and to be resourceful (Bandura, 2009) but also allows them to view themselves as experts (Lent and Brown, 2013). As mentioned by Mielniczuk and Laguna (2020), a person's behaviour is shaped by their positive beliefs, which have a positive effect on individuals. In addition, those who are willing and intrinsically motivated are more inclined to look for innovative ways (i.e., IWB) to improve an activity or process of work (Mielniczuk and Laguna, 2020). Thus, workers who have greater degrees of self-efficacy are more likely to generate, disseminate, and implement creative ideas. Greater SE levels encourage employees to take part in more IWB. According to previous research, individuals with greater OSE levels seek to enhance work processes, accept difficult tasks, and become IWB members (Hsiao et al., 2011). Consequently, this study assumes that OSE could trigger its knowledge-sharing effect on IWB (Islam et al., 2021; Tremblay, 2016). Hence, we propose the following hypothesis:

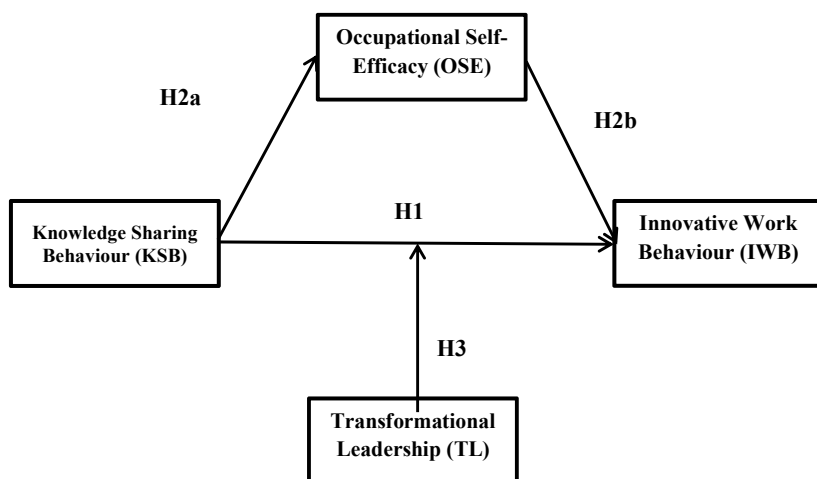
H2: OSE mediates the relationship between KSB and IWB.

2.3 Moderating role of transformational leadership (TL)

Transformational leaders take calculated risks by implementing novel work practices, altering current procedures and frameworks for long-term gains, and encouraging employees to grab opportunities (Pearce and Ensley, 2004) and complete them. Transformational leaders promote IWB by encouraging employees to work toward their shared objectives (Majumdar and Ray, 2011; Qureshi et al., 2023). TL positively impacts organisational creativity. According to Khan and Khan (2019), KSB and organisational learning are positively impacted by TL. It also found that organisational learning and information sharing have a big impact on employees' innovation. TLs develop cognitive skills and inspire their followers to take advantage of opportunities to make a big difference in their roles at work, which raises IWB levels (Afsar et al., 2017). By creating a cooperative, inspiring atmosphere, TL improves both KSB and IWB. TL places a strong emphasis on intellectual stimulation, encouraging staff members to cooperate and exchange knowledge, which enhances KSB (Wang and Howell, 2023). This common knowledge serves as the basis for innovation and is essential for problem-solving. IWB is fuelled by leaders who foster psychological safety and autonomy, which inspires workers to take chances and put up novel ideas (Singh et al., 2024). According to recent research, TL's tailored attention improves open communication and trust, two important KSB enablers. According to Fauzi et al. (2024), this atmosphere encourages staff members to openly share their knowledge, which fosters creativity. Additionally, TL fosters creativity by bringing organisational and individual goals into harmony, which leads to more frequent and successful innovative behaviours (Hosen et al., 2023). This synergy between TL, KSB, and IWB strengthens the theoretical foundation for understanding how leadership drives organisational innovation. Based on the above discussion, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H3: TL moderates the relationship between KSB and IWB.

The conceptual model of the research depicted is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1 Conceptual model

3 Methodology

3.1 Participants and procedure

The purpose of the study and the privacy statement were explained to the targeted respondents via voice notes lasting approximately 1 min to gain consent. The questionnaire links in Google form were sent to interested IT professionals working across various industry verticals, departments, and positions at the top three IT companies in Chennai, Bengaluru, and Hyderabad city from India (IBEF, 2023). The primary data of the research were collected between October and December 2023 (i.e., three months). The data of the research were collected in three waves, namely, T1, T2, and T3, with a time interval of two weeks each. At T1, we collected the participants' demographic summary and the responses of the predictor variable (i.e., KSB). In contrast, at T2, the responses of the mediator (i.e., OSE) and moderator (i.e., TL) were collected. Finally, at T3, the responses of the outcome variable (i.e., IWB) were collected. The unique ID numbers were assigned to the respondents to match the responses during the three waves of data collection.

Out of 600 questionnaire links sent to the respondents in the first wave, T1, 498 usable responses were collected, which led to a response rate of 82.8%. In the second wave (T2), 498 questionnaire links were shared and received 431 responses (i.e., a response rate of 86.7%). Finally, in the third wave, out of the 431 questionnaires shared, 382 valid responses were received (i.e., a response rate of 88.6%). However, there was a drop in the responses in all three waves for various reasons (i.e., unforeseen life events, time constraints, etc.). However, the response rate improved in each wave from T1 to T3. The final sample size of the research is 382, which is greater than the recommended sample size of 280 (10 times the scale items, as advocated by Hair et al., 2010).

3.2 Measures

Knowledge sharing (KSB): A scale with four items developed by Bock et al. (2005) was used to assess the KSB construct. The following is a sample item: "I share my experience or know-how from work with other organisational members". The scale's Cronbach's alpha is $\alpha = 0.848$.

Innovative work behaviour (IWB): IT professionals were asked to report their IWB via Janssen (2000), which includes nine items. The sample item comprises "I always search for the adoption of new working methods, techniques, or technology while performing the assigned task/project". Cronbach's alpha for the scale was 0.939.

Occupational self-efficacy (OSE): The OSE scale, with 8 items, was created by Rigotti et al. (2008) and was used for assessment in this research. The OSE scale includes the sample item "I met the goals that I set for myself in my job". The Cronbach's alpha of the scale is 0.939. Transformational leadership (TL) is assessed via the global transformational leadership (GTL) scale developed by Carless et al., 2000. The scale includes a sample item, "My leader gives encouragement and recognition to me". Cronbach's alpha is 0.941. All the constructs mentioned above are measured via a 5-point Likert agreement scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree).

3.3 Common method bias, multicollinearity, and normality

A longitudinal study is recommended by Maxwell and Cole (2007) for examining the cause and effect relationships between variables via mediation analysis, which could even eliminate the common method bias of the research, increasing the generalisability of the study. The single-factor matrix created by Harman was used to assess common method bias for every item. The single-component accounts for 35.79% of the variance overall, according to the results of the exploratory factor analysis, indicating that common method bias is not present. The calculation of tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF) values, as endorsed by Hair et al. (2010) and Pallant (2007), allowed for the assessment of the data's multicollinearity. The variables' tolerance and VIF values are within the advised ranges of less than 0.1 (0.040 and 0.089) and 10 (1.232 and 2.934), respectively. It follows that there are no multicollinearity problems with the data utilised in the study. By calculating the data's skewness and kurtosis values, the normality of the information was confirmed. The data are considered normal when the absolute values of kurtosis (less than 10.0) and skewness (less than 3.0) are less than 1.046 (Kline, 2011).

3.4 Demographic profile of the samples

Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the samples. Among the 382 IT professionals surveyed in the research, the majority (53.7%) were female, and a significant proportion (36.9%) were aged 31–40 years. The majority (61.3%) of them were undergraduates, and more than one-third (37.7%) of the sampled IT professionals had a total work experience of 6–10 years. Among the 382 companies, 205 are working in entry-level positions in IT industries.

Table 1 Demographic profile of the samples

<i>Demographic variables</i>	<i>Categories</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage (%)</i>
Gender	Female	177	46.3
	Male	205	53.7
Age Group	Up to 30 years	126	33.0
	31–40 years	141	36.9
	41–50 years	82	21.5
	Above 50 years	33	8.6
Educational qualification	Undergraduate	234	61.3
	Postgraduate	111	29.1
	Others	37	9.7
Work Experience	Up to 5 years	110	28.8
	6–10 years	144	37.7
	11–15 years	96	25.1
	Above 15 years	32	8.4
Position	Entry level	205	53.7
	Middle level	136	35.6
	Senior level	41	10.7
Total		382	100.0

4 Results

4.1 Assessment of the outer model

Factor loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE) were computed via the measurement model to evaluate the model's validity and reliability. The model fitness indices $\chi^2 = 784.813$, CFI = 0.948, RMR = 0.069, and RMSEA = 0.058 were used to evaluate the outer model's fitness. CFA was used to assess the research's external model. Table 2 summarises the findings from the CFA evaluation of the outer model. The factor loading, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, squared multiple correlations (SMCs), and AVEs were used to examine the constructs' reliability and convergent validity, as advised by Henseler et al. (2015). All of the construct's components had factor loadings on their latent variable that were higher than the 0.7 criterion (i.e., falling between 0.706 and 0.882), demonstrating the constructs' good validity (Hair et al., 2019). All of the constructs' composite reliability (which ranges from 0.831 to 0.920) and Cronbach's alpha (which ranges from 0.848 to 0.941) are higher than the recommended value of 0.7. Additionally, the construct's AVE values fall between 0.584 and 0.699, which is higher than the suggested range of 0.500. As a result, the reliability and convergent validity of every construct utilised in the study have been verified (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 2 Results of the outer model via CFA

<i>Construct items</i>	<i>Factor loading</i>	<i>CR</i>	<i>Cronbach Alpha</i>	<i>AVE</i>
KSB1	0.802	0.831	0.848	0.584
KSB2	0.765			
KSB3	0.749			
KSB4	0.740			
IWB1	0.801	0.920	0.939	0.636
IWB2	0.760			
IWB3	0.775			
IWB4	0.754			
IWB5	0.798			
IWB6	0.723			
IWB7	0.882			
IWB8	0.825			
IWB9	0.848			
OSE1	0.828	0.901	0.939	0.659
OSE2	0.830			
OSE3	0.822			
OSE4	0.850			
OSE5	0.706			
OSE6	0.792			
OSE7	0.833			
OSE8	0.824			
TL1	0.838	0.911	0.941	0.699
TL2	0.869			
TL3	0.820			
TL4	0.836			
TL5	0.870			
TL6	0.809			
TL7	0.810			

As recommended by Fornell and Larcker (1981), the discriminant validity of the structural equation modelling (SEM) approach's components was evaluated by comparing the square root of the AVE values with the correlation coefficient values in the relevant rows and columns. The results of discriminant validity via the HTMT and Fornell and Larcker criteria are presented in Table 3. This indicates that every correlation coefficient among the constructs is smaller than the corresponding square root of the AVE values, hence validating the discriminant validity of the components. Additionally, supporting the discriminant validity is the fact that none of the constructs' HTMT ratios are greater than the suggested 0.90.

Table 3 Discriminant validity

<i>Construct</i>	<i>KSB</i>	<i>OSE</i>	<i>IWB</i>	<i>TL</i>
<i>Fornell and Larcker Criterion</i>				
KSB	0.764			
OSE	0.359	0.797		
IWB	0.342	0.616	0.812	
TL	0.537	0.438	0.776	0.836
<i>HTMT Criterion</i>				
KSB				
OSE	0.359			
IWB	0.342	0.617		
TL	0.537	0.438	0.776	

4.2 Inner model assessment

4.2.1 Path coefficients

The inner model with path coefficients is presented in Figure 2. The path coefficients in the inner model indicate the causal relationships between the research variables. The fitness of the inner model was assessed via model fitness indices. All the model fitness indices value falls within the threshold values. The model fit indices suggest a strong fit: $\chi^2 = 911.073$ indicates a moderate fit, but CFI = 0.962 (>0.095) and RMSEA = 0.051 (<0.08) show excellent and close fits, respectively. RMR = 0.037 (<0.08) suggests low average discrepancies, further confirming the model's overall good fit with the observed data. As recommended by Hair et al. (2017), the statistical relationship between the variables was measured via path coefficients (β), t values, and p values. The inner model's statistical significance was measured by adopting a bootstrapping procedure with a sample size of 5,000 in AMOS 23.0 software (Hair et al., 2017).

4.3 Hypothesis testing (Direct effect)

The path coefficients of the inner model and the TL moderation effect are summarised in Table 4. The inner model findings show that employees' IWB ($B = 0.139$, $\beta = 0.146$, $t = 3.168^{**}$) and OSE ($B = 0.234$, $\beta = 0.258$, $t = 4.825^{**}$) are significantly positively impacted by KSB, confirming hypotheses H1 and H2a, respectively. Similarly, OSE had a noteworthy direct positive effect on IWB ($B = 0.476$, $\beta = 0.455$, $t = 9.096^{**}$). Consequently, at the 1% level, H2b is similarly significant. The partial mediation effect of OSE on the link between KSB and IWB is confirmed by the importance of hypotheses H1, H2a, and H2b. For example, the positive correlation between KSB and IWB shows that an increase of one KSB corresponds to a 14.6% increase in IWB. Additionally, the KSB*TL interaction term significantly improves the association between KSB and IWB

($B = 0.019$, $\beta = 0.092$, $t = 2.140^*$). Thus, at a significance level of 5%, hypothesis H3 is supported. The interaction term KSB*TL is positive for the β coefficient, suggesting that TL enhances the correlation between KSB and IWB.

Figure 2 Structural model

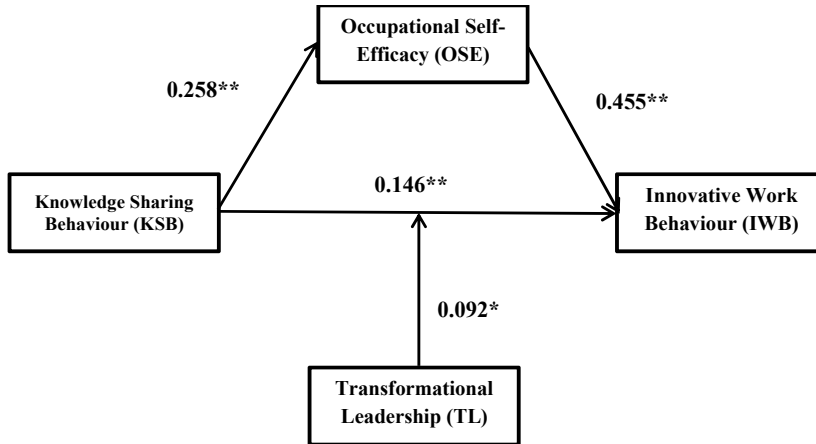


Table 4 Path coefficients of the inner model

Path	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E</i>	<i>t value</i>
KSB → IWB	0.139	0.146	0.044	3.168**
KSB → OSE	0.234	0.258	0.049	4.825**
OSE → IWB	0.476	0.455	0.052	9.096**
Moderation effect	<i>B</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>S.E</i>	<i>t value</i>
KSB*TL → IWB	0.019	0.092	0.009	2.140*

* $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$.

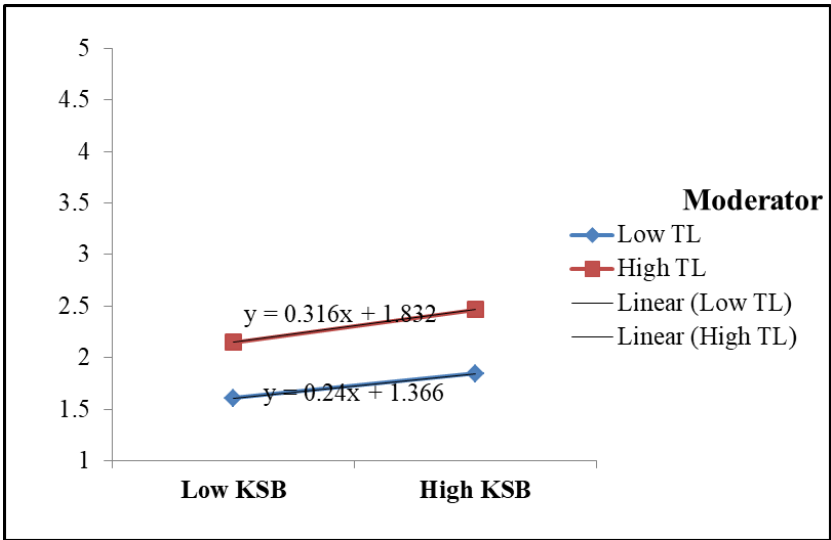
Table 5 provides a summary of the direct, indirect, and total effects that were evaluated to determine the mediating impact of OSE. Through OSE's mediation, KS has a substantial positive indirect effect on IWB ($\beta = 0.117^{**}$), according to the mediation study. Thus, as KSB increases inside the company, employee OSE and IWB also increase. In light of this, Hypothesis H2 is accepted at the significance level of 1%. Figure 3 depicts the moderation effect of TL on KSB-IWB.

Table 5 Direct, indirect, and total effects of the mediating variable

Path	Direct effect	Indirect effect	Total effect
KSB → OSE → IWB	0.146**	0.117**	0.264**

** $p < 0.01$.

Figure 3 Moderation effect of TL on the relationship between KSB and IWB (see online version for colours)



5 Discussion

The findings of this research illuminate the critical relationship between TL, KSB, and IWB. TL is characterised by leaders who inspire, motivate, and encourage their followers to exceed expectations, fostering an environment conducive to open communication and collaboration. This study demonstrates that TL greatly improves KSB because transformational leaders enable employees to openly share their expertise, which is essential for organisational innovation (Fauzi et al., 2024). This is corroborated by Hosen et al. (2023), who discovered that creating an atmosphere that encourages knowledge-sharing requires psychological safety and trust, both of which are frequently fostered by transformational leaders. Additionally, the study emphasises how KSB and IWB interact. Sharing knowledge is a collaborative activity that fosters team creativity and innovation rather than just being a transactional exchange. Employees who exchange knowledge offer a variety of viewpoints and solutions, which strengthens the creative process. According to Jansen et al. (2006), the combination of KSB and IWB can result in improved organisational flexibility and problem-solving skills. This is consistent with Zhang et al. (2011)'s findings, which showed that a knowledge-sharing culture fosters innovative teamwork.

6 Conclusion

The link between KSB and IWB is examined in this study, along with the mediating and moderating effects of OSE and TL. The findings demonstrated that whereas TL moderates the relationship between KSB and IWB, KSB effects both OSE and IWB. According to this study, information sharing among coworkers who are beginning to learn and implementing learning-facilitating behaviours enhances their acquisition of new

knowledge and innovative skills. Our results also contribute to a deeper knowledge of how TL, KSB, and OSE affect the IWB. The results show that KSB is a strong predictor of IWB in addition to improving OSE. According to this, workplaces that encourage candid communication and teamwork help workers advance their expertise, which in turn spurs creativity (Chen et al., 2013; Hosen et al., 2023). Furthermore, the moderating function of TL highlights how crucial leadership is to creating an organisational culture that promotes information exchange. The efficacy of KSB in supporting IWB can be increased by leaders who exhibit transformational traits by fostering an environment of trust and support (Fauzi et al., 2024; Jansen et al., 2006). This realisation supports the idea that effective leadership is essential to converting both individual and group efforts into creative results. In light of these results, businesses ought to give top priority to their leaders' TL skill development while establishing policies and rewards that encourage KSB. In addition to strengthening OSE, this two-pronged strategy will foster an innovative culture. To further validate these correlations and offer more profound insights into improving organisational performance, future research should keep examining these interactions across a range of industries and cultural situations.

7 Limitations and future research

The research is limited only to India; as a result, future research should look at the issue in other developed Asian and European countries that use information technology. This research is limited only to the IT sector; hence, different sectors, such as banking, insurance, transportation, education, and healthcare, are considered. Hence, the abovementioned platform could be studied in future research. Third, further study could enhance the understanding of the relationship between KSB and creative work behaviour by examining pertinent individual traits and team-level mechanisms as potential alternatives. Future studies on the mediating role of emergent states and team processes, such as team potency (Bass and Avolio, 1997) and helping in an innovation environment (Chen et al., 2013), are also encouraged, as they may contribute to the positive translation of KSB's beneficial effects on the IWB.

8 Theoretical implications

The current research improves upon the body of knowledge in several ways. First, there has not been much research on OSE's mediating role in the association between sharing knowledge and IWB. Our results show that, like other proactive behaviours, leaders can encourage OSE by exhibiting KSB, despite the perception that OSE is a bottom-up strategy and that leaders are frequently unaware of the proactive changes staff or employees make in their work environment. Importantly, this finding suggests that KSB encourages employees to approach innovation from the bottom up and that the degree to which followers take the initiative to achieve self-efficacy in their occupation also depends on the enthusiasm and chance given for IWB. Second, our operationalisation of TL differs significantly from that of earlier research. TL was investigated independently as a highly ordered construct rather than for its ability to decrease behaviour (i.e., a first-order construct). This change enables us to evaluate and speculate about the impact of the shared idea that represents several aspects of a certain theory as opposed to the impact of

its dimensions separately. Finally, this research contributes statistical data on employees' IWB in the context of developing countries, as there is a shortage of research on KSB and innovation in emerging and developing economies. Limited research has truly concentrated on IWB, despite the increasing body of research on creative outcomes and innovation (Masood and Afsar, 2017).

9 Practical implications

To enhance KSB and IWB in IT companies, managers can implement several strategies. First, fostering a culture of KSB through regular meetings where employees can exchange insights and experiences will encourage collaboration (Hosen et al., 2023). Additionally, adopting transformational leadership techniques can motivate employees by communicating a clear vision for innovation and understanding their individual needs (Fauzi et al., 2024). Training programs that improve communication and collaboration skills can also boost employees' self-efficacy in sharing knowledge (Çetin and Aşkun, 2018). Furthermore, empowering employees to craft their roles to leverage their strengths increases motivation and performance (Odongo et al., 2018). However, organisations may encounter challenges such as resistance to change, time constraints, and lack of management support. Managers should address these issues by emphasising collaborative goals, integrating KSB into existing workflows, and actively modelling desired behaviours to foster a supportive environment for innovation (Cummings and Teng, 2003; Hansen, 2009).

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