



Fostering Innovative Work Behavior in the Public Sector: Integrating Servant Leadership, Organizational Culture and Organizational Citizenship Behavior

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Abstract

Innovative work behavior (IWB) is increasingly important for public-sector organizations seeking to improve services and respond to evolving organizational demands. Although servant leadership, organizational culture, organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), and IWB have received considerable research attention, greater theoretical integration is needed to explain how organizational conditions may be translated into innovative employee behavior. This conceptual paper addresses this issue by integrating Social Cognitive Theory, Innovation Management Theory, and Organizational Support Theory to develop a framework linking servant leadership and organizational culture with IWB. OCB is positioned as a behavioral transmission mechanism through which these organizational conditions may foster IWB, while direct relationships with IWB are retained to recognize alternative pathways. Seven propositions are advanced to represent the proposed direct and mediated relationships. By connecting leadership and cultural influences with discretionary employee contributions and innovation-related behavior, the paper offers an integrated theoretical explanation of how these mechanisms may operate together in public-sector organizations and establishes a foundation for future empirical examination.

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Introduction

Innovation has become increasingly important in the public sector as organizations respond to technological developments, evolving citizen expectations, and growing demands for effective service delivery. Public-sector innovation depends not only on institutional policies and technological investments but also on employees' willingness to identify opportunities for improvement and translate new ideas into organizational practices. Innovative work behavior (IWB), which encompasses the generation, promotion, and implementation of new ideas, is therefore an important aspect of organizational improvement (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010; Afsar & Umrani, 2020) ^[1, 2]. However, public-sector organizations may encounter structural and organizational barriers that constrain employee innovation. These challenges highlight the importance of understanding the leadership practices, organizational conditions, and employee behaviors that can support IWB.

Servant leadership and organizational culture represent two complementary organizational conditions that may foster employees' innovative behavior. Servant leadership emphasizes employee development, empowerment, and supportive relationships, creating an environment in which employees may feel encouraged to contribute ideas and participate in organizational improvement (Karatepe *et al.*, 2019; Jin *et al.*, 2022) ^[3,4]. Organizational culture, meanwhile, establishes the shared values, beliefs, and behavioral expectations that influence employees' willingness to engage in creative and proactive activities. A culture characterized by collaboration, open communication, and support for innovation may provide conditions

conducive to IWB (Al-Swidi *et al.*, 2021; Arsawan *et al.*, 2022) ^[5,6]. Although leadership and culture operate through different organizational processes, their complementary roles warrant consideration within an integrated conceptual framework.

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) offers a potential explanation for how supportive leadership and organizational conditions translate into IWB. OCB encompasses voluntary and discretionary employee behaviors that contribute to organizational effectiveness, including cooperation, helping colleagues, and undertaking responsibilities beyond formal job requirements (Al-Amri *et al.*, 2016) ^[7]. Such behaviors may establish the collaborative relationships and willingness to contribute that facilitate the development and implementation of innovative ideas. Previous research has identified associations between OCB and IWB, suggesting that employees who voluntarily support their colleagues and organizations may also be inclined to participate in innovation-related activities (Ismail & Rodzalan, 2021) ^[8]. Accordingly, OCB can be conceptualized as a behavioral mechanism through which servant leadership and organizational culture may influence IWB, rather than solely as an independent predictor of innovative behavior.

Despite growing attention to servant leadership, organizational culture, OCB, and IWB, further theoretical integration is needed to explain how leadership and organizational conditions are translated into innovative employee behavior through discretionary employee contributions. Existing research has established relationships between servant leadership and IWB and has identified OCB as a potential intervening mechanism (Alajhar & Salam, 2022) ^[9], while other evidence indicates that servant leadership, organizational culture, OCB, and IWB can operate within the same empirical framework (Baety & Rojuaniah, 2022) ^[10]. However, establishing these relationships empirically does not fully explain the theoretical process through which leadership and organizational conditions stimulate citizenship behaviors that may subsequently facilitate employee innovation. This explanatory issue is particularly relevant to the public sector, where employee innovation is important for organizational improvement and responsiveness to evolving service expectations. Accordingly, greater theoretical integration is warranted to clarify the role of OCB as a behavioral pathway through which servant leadership and organizational culture may foster IWB in public-sector organizations.

Against this background, this paper develops an integrated conceptual framework linking servant leadership and organizational culture with IWB through the mediating role of OCB. Drawing on Social Cognitive Theory, Innovation Management Theory, and Organizational Support Theory, the framework connects leadership influences, organizational conditions, discretionary employee behavior, and innovation-related behavior within a unified theoretical structure. The paper contributes conceptually by positioning OCB as a behavioral transmission mechanism through which servant leadership and organizational culture may foster IWB, while recognizing that these organizational conditions may also exert direct influences on innovative behavior. In doing so, the framework provides a more comprehensive explanation of how leadership and organizational environments may jointly create conditions that encourage employees to contribute voluntarily and translate such contributions into innovative workplace behavior. The proposed framework

also provides a foundation for future empirical research and offers public-sector managers a theoretically grounded perspective for strengthening employee innovation.

Theoretical Foundations

This conceptual paper is grounded in three complementary theories: Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), Innovation Management Theory (IMT), and Organizational Support Theory (OST). Together, these theories provide the theoretical foundation for explaining the relationships among servant leadership, organizational culture, OCB, and IWB.

Social Cognitive Theory

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT) provides the primary theoretical foundation for explaining how organizational environments shape employee behavior. SCT conceptualizes behavior as arising from interactions among individual, behavioral, and environmental influences, emphasizing that employees' actions are shaped by the social and organizational contexts in which they operate (Bandura, 1977) ^[11]. Within organizations, employees learn from observing others, interpreting environmental cues, and responding to organizational expectations and reinforcement. These processes are particularly relevant to innovative behavior because employees may be more inclined to engage in innovation when their work environment signals that new ideas and innovative efforts are valued and supported (Eisenbeiss *et al.*, 2008) ^[12]. Leadership and organizational culture therefore represent important environmental influences, as leaders provide behavioral cues and encouragement, while organizational culture establishes shared values and norms that guide workplace behavior. Applied to the relationships examined in this paper, SCT provides the theoretical logic connecting servant leadership and organizational culture with organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and innovative work behavior (IWB). Supportive leadership and organizational norms may encourage employees to engage in voluntary, cooperative, and proactive behaviors that extend beyond formal job requirements, while environments that encourage creativity and innovation may further stimulate IWB (Zhu & Zhang, 2020; Khan *et al.*, 2021) ^[13,14]. Related evidence from Malaysia further indicates that leadership can foster employee creativity and innovation, reinforcing the broader importance of supportive leadership conditions for innovation-related outcomes (Piaralal *et al.*, 2026) ^[41]. From this perspective, OCB represents a potential behavioral response through which organizational influences can be translated into innovative behavior. SCT therefore supports both the direct influence of servant leadership and organizational culture on IWB and their indirect influence through OCB, providing an overarching behavioral explanation for the relationships incorporated into the conceptual framework.

Innovation Management Theory

Innovation Management Theory (IMT) provides an innovation-specific perspective for explaining how organizational conditions can facilitate employees' innovative behavior. The theory emphasizes that innovation is supported by organizational environments that encourage creativity, experimentation, knowledge exchange, and the development of new ideas. Organizational culture is particularly important because cultures that support creativity

and appropriate risk-taking can strengthen employees' willingness to engage in innovative activities (Buschgens *et al.*, 2013; Anderson *et al.*, 2014) ^[15,16]. Leadership represents another important organizational influence, as leaders can provide the encouragement, direction, empowerment, and resources required for employees to pursue and implement innovative ideas (Zhu & Zhang, 2020; Khan *et al.*, 2021) ^[13,14]. IMT thus directs attention to the organizational conditions that enable employees to move from generating ideas toward promoting and implementing them in the workplace.

From an innovation management perspective, servant leadership and organizational culture represent complementary conditions that can foster IWB. Servant leadership can facilitate innovation by empowering employees, encouraging their contributions, and providing support for developing and implementing ideas, while an organizational culture that values collaboration, creativity, and experimentation can establish norms conducive to innovative activity. These conditions are particularly important because innovation requires not only the generation of ideas but also organizational support for their promotion and implementation. IMT therefore provides the innovation-specific rationale for the direct relationships between servant leadership, organizational culture, and IWB, complementing SCT's broader explanation of employee behavior and OST's explanation of discretionary behavioral responses.

Organizational Support Theory

Organizational Support Theory (OST) explains how employees' perceptions of being valued and supported by their organization can shape their attitudes and workplace behaviors. Organizational support can arise from organizational policies and practices, supervisory behavior, and supportive workplace relationships, which signal that employees' contributions and well-being are valued (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002) ^[17]. Such perceptions can encourage employees to respond positively to the organization by becoming more engaged and willing to contribute beyond their prescribed responsibilities. Organizational support has also been associated with creativity and innovation, suggesting that supportive workplace conditions can encourage employees to contribute ideas and participate in innovation-related activities (Volery & Tarabashkina, 2021) ^[18]. Related evidence from the Malaysian context further demonstrates the relevance of organizational and work-resource conditions in shaping employee performance-related outcomes (Amin *et al.*, 2025) ^[42].

The relevance of OST to this conceptual model lies particularly in its explanation of OCB as a discretionary response to supportive organizational conditions. Servant leadership and organizational culture can create conditions in which employees feel valued, supported, and encouraged to contribute to the organization. Employees experiencing such conditions may reciprocate through OCB, including cooperation, constructive contributions, and behaviors extending beyond formal role requirements. These discretionary behaviors may subsequently facilitate IWB by supporting the development, exchange, and implementation of new ideas. OST therefore adds a support-based explanation for the mediating role of OCB, complementing SCT's broader behavioral perspective and IMT's emphasis

on the organizational conditions that facilitate innovation.

Integration of the Theoretical Foundations

The integration of Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), Innovation Management Theory (IMT), and Organizational Support Theory (OST) provides a complementary explanation of how servant leadership and organizational culture may shape organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and innovative work behavior (IWB). SCT serves as the overarching behavioral foundation by explaining how employees respond to social and environmental influences, with servant leadership representing a salient leadership influence and organizational culture representing the broader organizational environment (Bandura, 1977) ^[11]. IMT extends this behavioral explanation into the innovation domain by clarifying how leadership and organizational conditions that encourage creativity, empowerment, and experimentation can facilitate IWB (Zhu & Zhang, 2020) ^[13]. OST adds a distinct support-based perspective by explaining why favorable organizational conditions may encourage employees to respond through discretionary behaviors that benefit the organization (Rhoades & Eisenberger, 2002) ^[17]. Together, the three theories establish a coherent theoretical pathway from organizational conditions to employee behavioral responses and, ultimately, innovative behavior. Servant leadership and organizational culture may influence IWB directly by creating social and organizational conditions conducive to innovation, while also encouraging OCB as a discretionary behavioral response. OCB, in turn, may facilitate IWB by fostering voluntary cooperation, constructive contribution, and employee initiative that support the development and implementation of new ideas. Accordingly, OCB is conceptualized as a behavioral transmission mechanism through which servant leadership and organizational culture may indirectly foster IWB, while direct relationships with IWB remain theoretically plausible. This integrated perspective provides the theoretical foundation for the conceptual framework and propositions developed in the subsequent sections.

Review of Core Constructs and Conceptual Framework

Innovative Work Behavior

Innovative work behavior (IWB) refers to employees' intentional efforts to generate, promote, and implement new and useful ideas within their work roles, teams, or organizations (Janssen, 2000) ^[19]. Unlike creativity, which primarily concerns the generation of novel ideas, IWB extends to the application of those ideas in ways that improve existing work processes, practices, products, or services (Scott & Bruce, 1994) ^[20]. IWB is therefore a multistage behavioral process involving idea generation, idea promotion, and idea implementation, although these activities do not necessarily occur in a fixed sequence (De Jong & Den Hartog, 2010) ^[1]. This broader conceptualization is particularly relevant to organizational improvement because innovation does not necessarily require entirely new products or services; it may involve adapting existing practices, introducing improved procedures, or applying new approaches to organizational problems (Nham *et al.*, 2020) ^[21]. Accordingly, IWB captures employees' active involvement in translating creative ideas into practical workplace improvements.

IWB is shaped not only by employees' individual motivation but also by the organizational environment in which

innovative activities occur. Supportive leadership can encourage employees to explore new approaches and contribute ideas, while an organizational culture characterized by trust, collaboration, open communication, and support for creativity can create conditions conducive to innovative behavior (Ahmed *et al.*, 2018; Zhou & Velamuri, 2018) ^[22,23]. Such organizational conditions are particularly relevant because developing and implementing new ideas often require employees to exercise initiative, cooperate with others, and contribute beyond narrowly prescribed job responsibilities. Previous research has consequently associated IWB with leadership, organizational culture, and discretionary employee contributions, including OCB, across different organizational settings (Omar *et al.*, 2019; Kim & Park, 2017) ^[24,25]. In this conceptual framework, IWB is therefore positioned as the focal behavioral outcome through which the innovation-related consequences of servant leadership, organizational culture, and OCB are considered.

Servant Leadership

Servant leadership represents a follower-centered approach in which leaders prioritize employees' needs, development, and empowerment while directing their efforts toward broader organizational goals (Greenleaf, 2002; Eva *et al.*, 2019) ^[26,27]. Rather than emphasizing authority and leader-centered control, servant leadership is grounded in serving others and creating conditions that enable employees to develop and contribute meaningfully to the organization. Its core characteristics include listening, empathy, stewardship, commitment to employee growth, and community building, reflecting an orientation toward supportive relationships and employee development (Greenleaf, 2002) ^[26]. Servant leaders consequently seek to create work environments in which employees feel valued, supported, and empowered to participate actively in organizational activities. This orientation is particularly relevant to employee behavioral outcomes because supportive leadership may encourage employees not only to fulfill their formal responsibilities but also to undertake voluntary and constructive behaviors that contribute to organizational effectiveness.

The behavioral implications of servant leadership are reflected in its relationships with both organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and innovative work behavior (IWB). Previous research has associated servant leadership with OCB across different organizational and cultural settings, suggesting that employees who experience supportive and employee-centered leadership may be more willing to contribute beyond their formally prescribed roles (Thao & Kang, 2020; Elche *et al.*, 2020) ^[28,29]. Servant leadership has also been linked with IWB because empowerment, encouragement, and leader support can provide employees with conditions conducive to generating and pursuing new ideas (Karatepe *et al.*, 2019; Zada *et al.*, 2022) ^[3,30]. Evidence from Malaysian public-sector settings further indicates the relevance of leadership-related factors to employees' innovative behavior (Omar *et al.*, 2019) ^[24]. These relationships suggest that servant leadership may influence IWB through more than a direct leadership effect. By fostering employees' willingness to engage in discretionary contributions through OCB, servant leadership may also establish a behavioral pathway through which supportive leadership is translated into innovative workplace behavior. Accordingly, servant leadership is conceptualized in this paper as an organizational antecedent of both OCB and

IWB, with its indirect relationship with IWB operating through OCB.

Organizational Culture

Organizational culture refers to the shared values, beliefs, norms, and practices that provide employees with a common understanding of how work is approached and how members are expected to behave within an organization (Aydin, 2018) ^[31]. Rather than functioning merely as an organizational attribute, culture establishes a behavioral context that can encourage or constrain particular forms of employee contribution. Cultures characterized by trust, collaboration, openness, and support can encourage employees to participate more actively in organizational activities, whereas cultures dominated by control and bureaucracy may provide fewer opportunities for discretionary and innovative behavior. Leadership may also contribute to innovation-supportive cultural conditions, with Malaysian evidence indicating a positive association between transformational leadership and innovation culture (Zakaria *et al.*, 2026) ^[32]. Nevertheless, culture represents a broader organizational condition than individual leadership behavior and is therefore conceptualized separately from servant leadership in the present framework.

The behavioral significance of organizational culture is particularly evident in its relationships with organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) and innovative work behavior (IWB). Supportive organizational cultures have been associated with employees' willingness to undertake discretionary behaviors extending beyond formal job requirements, indicating that shared organizational norms can encourage OCB (Suwibawa *et al.*, 2018; Sumardjo & Supriadi, 2023) ^[33,34]. Culture can similarly facilitate IWB when organizational values support creativity, trust, open communication, collaboration, and experimentation, thereby creating conditions in which employees are more willing to generate and pursue new ideas (Ouyang *et al.*, 2021) ^[35]. Evidence from public-sector and Malaysian organizational settings further supports the relevance of culture to both discretionary and innovative employee behavior. These relationships also suggest an indirect behavioral pathway: organizational culture may foster IWB not only by establishing conditions supportive of innovation but also by encouraging OCB, through which employees voluntarily cooperate, contribute, and take initiative in ways that facilitate the development and implementation of new ideas. Organizational culture is therefore conceptualized as an antecedent of both OCB and IWB, with OCB providing a potential behavioral mechanism linking the cultural environment to innovative employee behavior.

Organizational Citizenship Behavior

Organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) refers to voluntary and discretionary employee behavior that extends beyond formally prescribed job responsibilities and contributes to organizational functioning and the broader social and psychological work environment (Organ, 2018; Robbins *et al.*, 2019) ^[36,37]. Such behavior reflects employees' willingness to contribute beyond minimum role requirements through cooperation, assistance, consideration, and other constructive actions without direct expectations of formal compensation (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2014) ^[38]. Importantly, OCB does not occur independently of the organizational environment. Leadership and organizational

culture can create conditions that encourage employees to undertake these discretionary contributions, particularly when employees experience supportive relationships and organizational values that emphasize cooperation and employee development (Pio & Tampi, 2018) ^[39]. In this sense, OCB represents a behavioral response through which favorable organizational conditions may become reflected in employees' voluntary contributions, supporting its positioning as an outcome of servant leadership and organizational culture in the proposed framework.

The significance of OCB in the present framework extends beyond its role as an employee response because discretionary contributions may also facilitate innovative work behavior (IWB). Employees who willingly cooperate, assist others, accept additional responsibilities, and contribute constructively to organizational activities can help establish the interpersonal and collaborative conditions needed for generating, sharing, promoting, and implementing new ideas. Previous research has reported positive relationships between OCB and IWB across organizational contexts, including Malaysian and public-sector settings

(Ismail & Rodzalan, 2021) ^[8]. More importantly, this behavioral connection provides the basis for conceptualizing OCB as a transmission mechanism rather than solely as an independent predictor of IWB. Evidence indicates that OCB can mediate the relationships between servant leadership and IWB and between organizational culture and IWB, although the nature of these indirect relationships may vary across organizational contexts (Alajhar & Salam, 2022; Baety & Rojuaniah, 2022) ^[9,10]. Accordingly, OCB occupies a dual role in the proposed framework: it directly contributes to IWB while simultaneously providing a behavioral pathway through which servant leadership and organizational culture may be translated into innovative employee behavior.

Conceptual Framework

Based on the theoretical foundations and literature reviewed, this paper proposes an integrated conceptual framework linking servant leadership and organizational culture to innovative work behavior, both directly and indirectly through organizational citizenship behavior. The proposed relationships are illustrated in Figure 1.

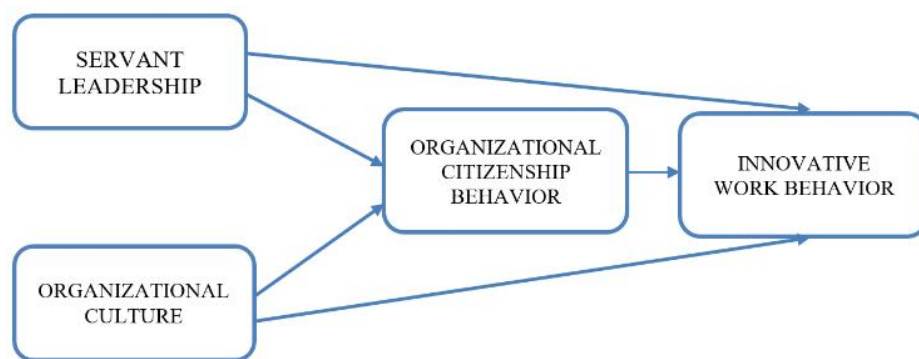


Fig 1: Proposed Conceptual Framework

Conceptual Development and Implications

Proposition Development

The proposed framework considers servant leadership and organizational culture as distinct but complementary organizational influences on organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). Servant leadership operates primarily through the leader–employee relationship, where support, empowerment, and concern for employee development may encourage reciprocal discretionary contributions. This reasoning is consistent with Organizational Support Theory and with evidence associating servant leadership with OCB (Thao & Kang, 2020; Elche *et al.*, 2020) ^[28,29]. Organizational culture operates more broadly through shared norms and expectations concerning cooperation, support, and collective contribution. Supportive cultural conditions have similarly been associated with OCB, including within public-sector settings (Ibrahim *et al.*, 2021) ^[40]. Social Cognitive Theory further connects these influences by suggesting that leadership behavior and organizational norms provide environmental cues that shape employee behavior. Thus, servant leadership may foster OCB through employees' relational experience of leadership, whereas organizational culture may do so through the shared behavioral expectations embedded within the organization.

These organizational influences may also operate directly on innovative work behavior (IWB). From an Innovation Management Theory perspective, servant leadership may provide the empowerment and support needed to pursue new

ideas, while organizational culture may establish norms that encourage creativity, collaboration, and openness to new approaches. Evidence from Malaysian settings supports the relevance of both leadership and cultural conditions to IWB (Omar *et al.*, 2019) ^[24]. OCB provides a third and conceptually different route. Citizenship behavior is not itself innovative behavior; rather, voluntary cooperation, initiative, and constructive contribution may create behavioral and interpersonal conditions that facilitate the generation, promotion, and implementation of ideas. This distinction is consistent with evidence associating OCB with IWB in Malaysian and public-sector settings (Kim & Park, 2017) ^[25]. The central argument of the framework is that these direct and indirect pathways may operate simultaneously. Servant leadership and organizational culture may create conditions conducive to IWB directly, while also encouraging OCB as a discretionary employee response that subsequently supports innovative activity. Prior research provides empirical support for OCB as a potential mediating mechanism linking organizational conditions with IWB. Specifically, OCB has been found to partially mediate the relationship between servant leadership and IWB (Alajhar & Salam, 2022) ^[9], while related research has examined servant leadership, organizational culture, OCB, and IWB within the same empirical framework (Baety & Rojuaniah, 2022) ^[10]. Nevertheless, these findings are derived from specific organizational contexts, and the proposed mediating relationships require further examination across different

settings, particularly within public-sector organizations. OCB is therefore conceptualized as a plausible behavioral transmission mechanism rather than an exclusive or inevitable pathway, preserving the possibility that servant leadership and organizational culture may also relate directly to IWB. Based on this integrated reasoning, the following propositions are advanced:

- **P1:** Servant leadership is positively associated with organizational citizenship behavior.
- **P2:** Organizational culture is positively associated with organizational citizenship behavior.
- **P3:** Servant leadership is positively associated with innovative work behavior.
- **P4:** Organizational culture is positively associated with innovative work behavior.
- **P5:** Organizational citizenship behavior is positively associated with innovative work behavior.
- **P6:** Organizational citizenship behavior mediates the relationship between servant leadership and innovative work behavior.
- **P7:** Organizational citizenship behavior mediates the relationship between organizational culture and innovative work behavior.

Theoretical Contributions

The proposed framework contributes to the literature by integrating Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), Innovation Management Theory (IMT), and Organizational Support Theory (OST) to provide a theoretically grounded explanation of how servant leadership and organizational culture may relate to innovative work behavior (IWB) through organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). Rather than treating these theoretical perspectives independently, the framework assigns them complementary roles in explaining how organizational and leadership conditions may shape employee behavior, encourage discretionary contributions, and facilitate innovative activity. In particular, OCB is conceptualized as a potential behavioral transmission mechanism linking servant leadership and organizational culture with IWB, while direct relationships with IWB are retained to recognize that citizenship behavior may represent one rather than the only explanatory pathway. Accordingly, the contribution of the framework lies not in claiming that these constructs have not previously been examined together, but in offering an integrated theoretical explanation of their direct and mediated relationships that can be evaluated in future empirical research, particularly within public-sector settings.

Practical Implications

The proposed framework offers several practical implications for public-sector management, subject to future empirical validation. It suggests that fostering innovative work behavior may require attention not only to formal innovation initiatives but also to the leadership and organizational conditions that shape employees' willingness to contribute. Servant leadership may support this process by encouraging empowerment, employee development, and supportive leader-employee relationships, while organizational culture may reinforce norms of cooperation, openness, and constructive participation. The proposed mediating role of organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) further suggests that employees' voluntary cooperation, initiative, and contributions beyond formal role requirements may provide

an important behavioral pathway through which these organizational conditions support innovative activity. If empirically supported, the framework could therefore help public-sector managers identify complementary areas for leadership development, cultural reinforcement, and employee engagement when seeking to create organizational conditions conducive to innovation.

Conclusion and Future Research

Conclusion

This conceptual paper develops an integrated framework explaining how servant leadership and organizational culture may influence innovative work behavior (IWB), both directly and indirectly through organizational citizenship behavior (OCB). Drawing on Social Cognitive Theory, Innovation Management Theory, and Organizational Support Theory, the framework connects organizational conditions, discretionary employee behavior, and innovation within a unified explanatory structure. Central to the framework is the proposition that OCB may function as a behavioral transmission mechanism through which supportive leadership and organizational conditions encourage voluntary contributions that facilitate innovative activity, while direct pathways to IWB remain theoretically plausible. The framework therefore emphasizes that employee innovation may emerge not only from conditions that directly support new ideas but also from discretionary behaviors through which employees actively contribute to their organizations.

Future Research

As the proposed framework is conceptual, its propositions require empirical examination before conclusions can be drawn regarding the strength or generalizability of the proposed relationships. Future research should particularly examine whether OCB functions as the proposed behavioral transmission mechanism between servant leadership, organizational culture, and IWB while accounting for the corresponding direct relationships. Testing the framework across different public-sector organizations would help determine whether these relationships are consistent across organizational and administrative contexts. Longitudinal designs would be particularly valuable for examining the temporal sequence implied by the framework, as cross-sectional evidence provides limited insight into how organizational conditions develop into discretionary and innovative behaviors over time. Subsequent research could also investigate theoretically relevant boundary conditions that may strengthen or weaken the proposed relationships, thereby clarifying the circumstances under which the framework is most applicable.

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