

DRIVING LECTURER INNOVATION: SERVANT LEADERSHIP, JOB CRAFTING, AND JOB SATISFACTION INSIGHTS

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I. Background

In the era of rapid technological advancement and global competition, higher education institutions are increasingly required to demonstrate adaptability, relevance, and innovation. Universities are no longer seen solely as centers for knowledge transmission, but also as institutions that must continuously generate new ideas, methods, and solutions to respond to changing societal and industrial needs. In this context, lecturers play a critical role as key actors in driving innovation within higher education.

The concept of innovation work behaviour (IWB) has therefore become increasingly important in understanding how lecturers contribute to institutional development. Innovation work behaviour refers to the process through which individuals generate, promote, and implement new ideas within their work environment (Abun & Ruadap-Macaspac, 2023; West & Richter, 2024). For lecturers, this includes developing innovative teaching methods, integrating digital technologies into learning, producing impactful research, and creating new approaches in community engagement. These activities are essential in improving the quality of education and strengthening the competitiveness of higher education institutions (Elliyana & Basir, 2025; Rabia & Elliyana, n.d.).

In Indonesia, particularly within private universities under the coordination of LLDIKTI Region III (Jakarta), the demand for innovation has become more pressing. The implementation of policies such as digital transformation in education, outcome-based accreditation systems, and increasing competition among universities has created a dynamic environment that requires lecturers to be more adaptive and innovative (García-Morales et al., 2021; Hamid et al., 2025). However, in practice, the level of innovation among lecturers varies significantly. While some lecturers actively engage in creative teaching and research activities, others tend to rely on conventional approaches and show limited initiative in developing new ideas. This phenomenon raises important questions regarding the factors that influence lecturers' innovation work behaviour. It suggests that innovation is not solely determined by institutional policies or external demands, but also by internal and organizational factors that shape individual behaviour (Rattanawichai et al., 2023; Yen et al., 2025). Understanding these factors is crucial for designing effective strategies to foster innovation in higher education. One important factor that may influence lecturers' behaviour is leadership style. In particular, servant leadership has gained attention as a leadership approach that emphasizes serving, supporting, and empowering subordinates (Dul et al., 2024; Kainde & Mandagi, 2023). Leaders who adopt this style focus on the growth and well-being of their team members, creating a supportive and trusting work environment. In academic settings, such an environment may encourage lecturers to express ideas, take initiative, and engage in innovative activities. However, the extent to which servant leadership directly influences innovation behaviour remains an open question, especially in the context of higher education institutions. In addition to leadership, individual-level factors also play a significant role. Job crafting, defined as the proactive behaviour of individuals in shaping and redefining their work, is increasingly recognized as a key driver of positive work outcomes (A. Bakker et al., 2020; Hornung, 2019). Lecturers who actively modify their teaching methods, build collaborative networks, and seek meaningful engagement in their tasks are more likely to develop innovative practices. This proactive approach reflects a shift from passive role execution to active role construction, which is essential in dynamic and knowledge-intensive environments such as universities. Another factor that has been widely discussed in the literature is thriving at work, a psychological state characterized by a sense of vitality and continuous learning. Individuals who experience thriving are typically more energetic, engaged, and open to new experiences, which theoretically should support innovation. However, in structured environments like higher education, where bureaucratic processes and institutional constraints may exist, the relationship between thriving and innovation may not be straightforward. This raises the need for further investigation into how psychological conditions translate into actual innovative behaviour. Furthermore, job satisfaction is often considered a critical factor influencing employee behaviour. Job satisfaction reflects how individuals perceive and evaluate their work experiences, including aspects such as work environment, recognition, and career opportunities. In the context of lecturers, satisfaction may influence motivation, commitment, and willingness to go beyond formal job requirements. When lecturers feel satisfied with their work, they are more likely to invest additional effort, including engaging in innovative activities. Conversely, dissatisfaction may lead to reduced motivation and limited initiative. Despite the relevance of these variables, there is still a lack of comprehensive understanding of how organizational, individual, and psychological factors interact in shaping innovation work behaviour among lecturers. Most existing studies tend to focus on a single perspective, either leadership, individual behaviour, or psychological conditions, without integrating these dimensions into a unified framework. This limitation is particularly evident in the context of higher education in developing countries, including Indonesia, where institutional characteristics and cultural factors may influence behavioural dynamics differently. Therefore, this study is important as it seeks to provide a more holistic understanding of innovation work behaviour by examining multiple influencing factors simultaneously. By focusing on lecturers in private universities within LLDIKTI Region III, this research addresses a relevant and underexplored context, offering insights that are both academically meaningful and practically useful. Understanding how leadership, individual initiative, and psychological conditions contribute to innovation can help higher education institutions develop more effective strategies to enhance lecturer performance and institutional competitiveness. Fostering innovation among lecturers is not only a strategic necessity but also a complex process influenced by multiple interrelated factors. This study is conducted to respond to this complexity and to provide a clearer understanding of the conditions that support innovation in higher education.

II. Literature Review

In the contemporary knowledge-based economy, innovation work behaviour (IWB) has become a crucial determinant of organizational effectiveness, particularly in higher education institutions. IWB refers to the intentional generation, promotion, and realization of new ideas within a work role or organization (Hassan et al., 2024; Kim et al., 2024). Recent studies emphasize that lecturers are expected to act as knowledge creators who continuously innovate in teaching, research, and community engagement to maintain institutional competitiveness (Al-Omari, 2024). Leadership has been widely recognized as a key driver of innovation, with servant leadership gaining increasing attention in recent years. Servant leadership focuses on empowering followers, fostering trust, and prioritizing employee well-being (Maalouf, 2023; Nawaz et al., 2023). Recent empirical studies suggest that servant leadership enhances employees' psychological safety and intrinsic motivation, which are critical for innovation (Ahmed et al., 2025; Xiao et al., 2025). However, emerging evidence indicates that its influence on IWB is often indirect, operating through mediating variables such as job satisfaction and engagement (Ren & Shen, 2024). This highlights the importance of examining the underlying mechanisms linking leadership and innovation. At the individual level, job crafting has been identified as a proactive behaviour that enables employees to reshape their work to better fit their strengths and interests (Bindl et al., 2019; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Recent studies show that job crafting enhances work engagement, meaning, and creativity, which are essential precursors of innovation (Demerouti, 2026; Zhang & Parker, 2022). In academic settings, lecturers who actively redesign their teaching approaches and research agendas tend to exhibit higher levels of innovative behaviour (A. Bakker et al., 2022). This suggests that innovation is not only driven by organizational factors but also by individual initiative. Another construct that has gained attention is thriving at work, defined as a psychological state characterized by vitality and learning (Spreitzer & Doneson, 2005). Recent research indicates that thriving employees are more adaptive and open to change, which can foster creativity and innovation (Iqbal et al., 2025). However, findings remain inconsistent. Some studies report a positive relationship between thriving and innovative behaviour (Abid & Contreras, 2022), while others suggest that this relationship may depend on contextual factors such as organizational support and work structure (Paterson et al., 2022). In highly structured environments like universities, the translation of psychological energy into innovation may be constrained by institutional barriers. Furthermore, job satisfaction continues to be a central construct in organizational behaviour research. It reflects employees' overall evaluation of their work experience and has been linked to higher performance and discretionary behaviours, including innovation (Aslan, 2021; Tang et al., 2019). Recent studies highlight the mediating role of job satisfaction

in explaining how leadership and individual behaviours influence outcomes (Ebgc et al., 2023; Ibrahim et al., 2022). Employees who are satisfied with their jobs are more likely to invest extra effort and engage in innovative activities. Despite these advances, there remains a significant research gap. Most studies have examined these variables independently or within corporate contexts, with limited integration in academic settings. Moreover, the combined effects of servant leadership, job crafting, and thriving at work, as well as the mediating role of job satisfaction, have not been sufficiently explored in higher education, particularly in developing countries. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by proposing an integrative model that examines the interplay between leadership, individual proactivity, and psychological conditions in shaping innovation work behaviour among lecturers.

III. Methodologi

This study employs a quantitative approach using a survey method to examine the relationships among variables in the research model. This approach was chosen because it provides an empirical understanding of the influence of servant leadership, thriving at work, and job crafting on innovation work behavior, with job satisfaction serving as the mediating variable. The population of this study consists of faculty members at private universities in the DKI Jakarta region within the jurisdiction of LLDIKTI Region III. The unit of analysis consists of lecturers who hold teaching certification (serdos) and are actively teaching in the Management program at the Bachelor's (S-1) levels. The sampling technique used is purposive sampling, with respondents selected based on predetermined criteria. The sample size for this study is 88 respondents. This sample size is considered adequate for Partial Least Squares-based Structural Equation Modeling (SEM-PLS) analysis, given that this method has the advantage of handling relatively small sample sizes and does not strictly require a normal data distribution. The determination of the sample size also considered the minimum sample size rule in PLS, which is 10 times the number of indicators or the largest number of paths in the research model. Data collection was conducted through the distribution of an online questionnaire using Google Forms. The research instrument was designed based on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree).

IV. Result

Tabell. Characteristic Responden

Characterisitic		Number	Percent
Gender	Male	47	58.8
	Female	33	41.3
Age	30–40 years	3	3.8
	41–50 years	20	25.0
	Over 50 years	57	71.3
Highest Education	Master's Degree	30	37.5
	Doctorate	50	62.5
Years of Service	<5 Years	11	13.8
	6–15 Years	25	31.3
	Over 16 Years	44	55.0
Faculty Status	Tenured Faculty	80	100.
Academic Rank	a. Assistant Professor	11	13.8
	b. Associate Professor	44	55.0
	c. Full Professor	22	27.5
	d. Professor	3	3.8
Recipient of Certification Allowance	No	20	25.0
	Yes	60	75.0

Data Processed : Author 2026

The majority of respondents were male, accounting for 58.8%, while female respondents made up 41.3%. The majority of respondents were over 50 years old.

The research sample was dominated by senior/experienced lecturers, indicating that the respondents possessed a high level of professional maturity. The majority of respondents held the functional rank of Lecturer. The sample was dominated by lecturers at the mid-career level. Most respondents have received lecturer certification allowances. The majority of respondents have met national lecturer professional standards. Based on an analysis of respondent characteristics, this study is dominated by male lecturers, aged over 50, holding doctoral degrees, with over 16 years of service, holding permanent lecturer status, serving as lecturers, and having received lecturer certification allowances. This profile indicates that the majority of respondents are senior and experienced academic staff, thus possessing sufficient capacity to provide relevant assessments of the research variables

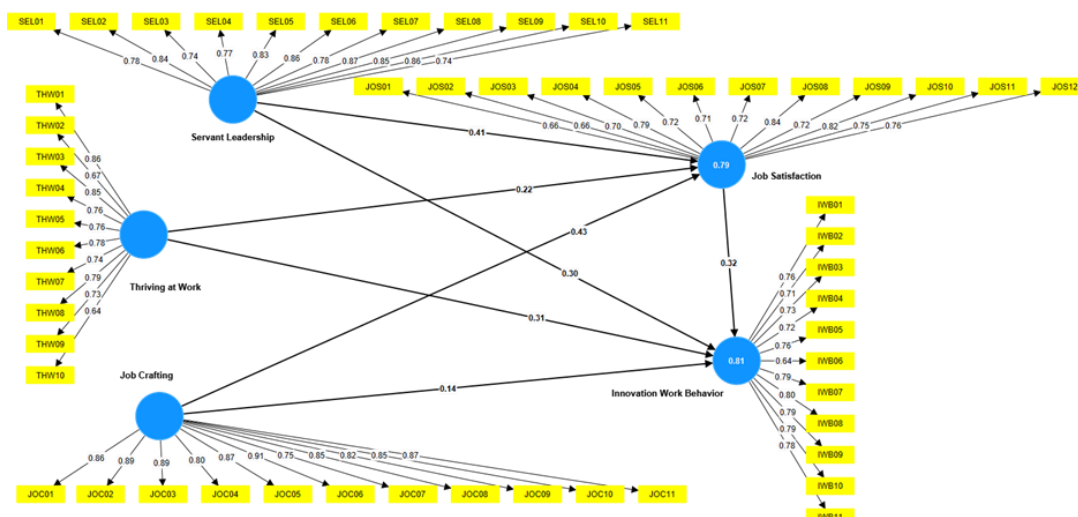


Fig.1 Path coefficients

Based on the results of the outer loading evaluation, all indicators within the constructs of Innovation Work Behavior, Job Crafting, Job Satisfaction, Servant Leadership, and Thriving at Work had outer loading values above 0.60. Thus, all indicators were found to meet the criteria for convergent validity and are appropriate to retain in the measurement model. The convergent validity test was conducted by evaluating the outer loading values of each indicator against the latent construct. Referring to the criteria of Hair et al. (2022), an indicator is considered valid if it has an outer loading value above 0.60. The test results show that all indicators in the constructs Innovation Work Behavior, Job Crafting, Job Satisfaction, Servant Leadership, and Thriving at Work have outer loading values ranging from 0.64 to 0.91. Thus, all indicators meet the criteria for convergent validity and are deemed valid as measurement tools for the research constructs.

Tble.2 Construct reliability

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Innovation Work Behavior	0.92	0.92	0.94	0.57
Job Crafting	0.96	0.96	0.97	0.73
Job Satisfaction	0.92	0.93	0.94	0.55
Servant Leadership	0.95	0.95	0.96	0.66
Thriving at Work	0.92	0.93	0.93	0.58

Data Processed : Author 2026

All research constructs have Cronbach's Alpha values, Composite Reliability (rho_a and rho_c) above 0.70, and AVE values above 0.50. Thus, all constructs are deemed reliable and meet the criteria for convergent validity, making them suitable for use in structural equation modeling. The following text can be directly included in a thesis or dissertation: The results of the construct reliability testing indicate that all constructs have Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from 0.92 to 0.96, Composite Reliability (rho_a) ranging from 0.92 to 0.96, and Composite Reliability (rho_c) ranging from 0.93 to 0.97. All of these values are above the minimum threshold of 0.70, indicating excellent internal reliability. Additionally, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all constructs range from 0.55 to 0.73, exceeding the threshold of 0.50, which indicates that convergent validity has been met. Thus, the measurement model of this study is deemed reliable and valid.

Table.3 Mean, STDEV, T values, p values

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
Job Crafting → Innovation Work Behavior	0.14	0.14	0.09	1.52	0.13
Job Crafting → Job Satisfaction	0.43	0.44	0.08	5.23	0.00
Job Satisfaction → Innovation Work Behavior	0.32	0.31	0.12	2.74	0.01
Servant Leadership → Innovation Work Behavior	0.30	0.30	0.08	3.97	0.00
Servant Leadership → Job Satisfaction	0.41	0.42	0.06	7.05	0.00
Thriving at Work → Innovation Work Behavior	0.31	0.30	0.08	3.94	0.00
Thriving at Work → Job Satisfaction	0.22	0.21	0.08	2.76	0.01

Data Processed : Author 2026

Hypothesis Test Results

1) H1: Job Crafting → Innovative Work Behavior

Hypothesis: Rejected

Coefficient (0.14), T (1.52), P (0.13). Job Crafting does not have a significant effect on Innovative Work Behavior. Although the direction of the effect is positive, the effect is not statistically significant. Job crafting behavior has not yet been able to directly increase employees' innovative work behavior.

2) H2: Job Crafting → Job Satisfaction

Coefficient (0.43), T (5.23), P (0.00). Job Crafting has a significant positive effect on Job Satisfaction. The higher the level of job crafting performed by employees, the higher the job satisfaction they experience.

3) H3: Job Satisfaction → Innovative Work Behavior

Coefficient (0.32), T (2.74), P (0.01). Job Satisfaction has a significant positive effect on Innovative Work Behavior. Employees who are more satisfied with their work tend to exhibit higher levels of innovative work behavior.

4) H4: Servant Leadership → Innovation Work Behavior

Koefisien (0,30), T (3,97), P (0,00)

Hypothesis accepted

Servant Leadership has a significant positive effect on Innovation Work Behavior. ervant-oriented leadership encourages an increase in employees' innovative behavior.

5) H5: Servant Leadership → Job Satisfaction

Coefficient (0.41), T (7.05), P (0.00)

Hypothesis accepted

Servant Leadership has a significant positive effect on Job Satisfaction. The higher the level of servant leadership, the higher the employees' job satisfaction.

6) H6: Thriving at Work → Innovation Work Behavior

Coefficient (0.31), T (3.94), P (0.00)

Hypothesis accepted

Thriving at Work has a significant positive effect on Innovation Work Behavior. Employees who feel they are thriving and energized at work tend to be more innovative.

7) H7: Thriving at Work → Job Satisfaction

Coefficient (0.22), T (2.76), P (0.01)

Hypothesis accepted

Thriving at Work has a significant positive effect on Job Satisfaction. Thriving conditions increase employee job satisfaction.

V. Discussion

The results of this study provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors influencing innovation work behavior (IWB) among faculty members at private universities, taking into account the roles of servant leadership, job crafting, thriving at work, and job satisfaction.

1) First, the results indicate that job crafting does not have a significant effect on innovation work behavior ($\beta = 0.14$; $p = 0.13$). This finding suggests that faculty members' proactive behavior in modifying their work does not necessarily directly lead to innovation. This differs from the findings of (Zhang & Parker, 2022), who stated that job crafting positively contributes to innovation through enhanced work meaning.

This discrepancy can be explained by the relatively structured and bureaucratic context of higher education institutions, where the scope for translating individual initiatives into tangible innovations remains limited. Nevertheless, these results remain consistent with (A. Bakker et al., 2022; A. B. Bakker et al., 2023; A. B. Bakker & Demerouti, 2017) recent studies, which emphasize that the effects of job crafting are often indirect.

2) Second, job crafting was found to have a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.43$; $p < 0.001$). This indicates that the greater the effort faculty members make to shape and adapt their work, the higher their level of job satisfaction. This finding is supported by the research of (Kleine et al., 2023), which states that job crafting enhances well-being and job satisfaction through increased control over work.

3) Third, job satisfaction has a significant positive influence on innovative work behavior ($\beta = 0.32$; $p = 0.01$). This confirms that job satisfaction is a key factor in encouraging faculty members to engage in innovative behavior. Faculty members who feel satisfied tend to have higher intrinsic motivation to contribute creatively. These results align with Al-Khan et al., 2021; Slavić & Avakumović, 2018) research, which indicates that job satisfaction plays a crucial role in enhancing innovation in the higher education sector.

4) Fourth, servant leadership was found to have a significant positive effect on innovation work behavior ($\beta = 0.30$; $p < 0.001$). This indicates that a leadership style focused on service and empowerment can create a work environment conducive to innovation. This finding is supported by the study by Ahmed et al. (2025), which states that servant leadership enhances psychological safety and employee creativity. Servant leadership is strongly linked in recent research to higher psychological safety and greater employee creativity. Multiple empirical studies test this relationship and clarify how and why it occurs. Servant leaders' openness, accessibility, and support foster a belief that speaking up, admitting mistakes, and suggesting new ideas will not lead to punishment or humiliation (Wang et al., 2022; Xiao et al., 2025)

5) Fifth, servant leadership also has a significant effect on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.41$; $p < 0.001$). This indicates that leaders who are supportive, empathetic, and focused on individual development can enhance faculty members' job satisfaction. This finding is consistent with the research by (Nawaz et al., 2023) et al. (2023), which confirms that servant leadership contributes to increased well-being and job satisfaction.

6) Sixth, thriving at work was found to have a significant positive effect on innovative work behavior ($\beta = 0.31$; $p < 0.001$). This indicates that faculty members who feel energetic and are continuously developing cognitively tend to be more innovative. This finding supports the research by Iqbal et al. (2025), which states that a state of thriving enhances an individual's adaptability and creativity. Across multiple empirical studies, thriving clearly enhances individuals' adaptability and creativity: feeling energized and continually learning equips people to adjust to change, spot opportunities, and generate and implement novel ideas (Yang et al., 2019; Żywiołek et al., 2022)

7) Seventh, thriving at work also has a positive effect on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.22$; $p = 0.01$). This indicates that positive psychological conditions enhance individuals' perceptions of their work. This finding aligns with the study by (Abid & Contreras, 2022), which states that thriving contributes to well-being and job satisfaction.

The results of this study confirm that faculty innovation is influenced not only by individual factors but also by leadership and psychological conditions. Job satisfaction emerges as a key mediating variable linking these factors to innovation work behavior. Additionally, the finding that job crafting does not directly influence innovation makes a significant contribution to the literature, particularly within the context of higher education, which possesses unique structural characteristics.

Thus, this study suggests that efforts to enhance faculty innovation should focus on creating a supportive work environment, increasing job satisfaction, and strengthening leadership roles that are oriented toward service and empowerment.

VI. Conclusion and Recommendation

This study shows that lecturers' innovative work behavior is influenced by a combination of leadership factors, psychological conditions, and work attitudes. Servant leadership and thriving at work were found to have a positive effect on innovative behavior and job satisfaction, while job satisfaction emerged as a key factor that directly drives innovation. Job crafting does not have a direct effect on innovation, but it contributes significantly to increasing job satisfaction. These findings confirm that faculty innovation depends not only on individual initiative but also on organizational support and a conducive work environment, with job satisfaction serving as a crucial mechanism linking these various factors.

VII. References

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