PROACTIVE WORK BEHAVIOR OPTIMIZATION THROUGH ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP: TRUST IN LEADER MEDIATION TEST

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Abstract:

The phenomenon and research gaps in Indonesian entrepreneurial behavior and activity were the driving forces behind this study. The SMEs to successfully accomplish its objectives amid unpredictable circumstances, had to be completely cognizant of trust of the employee in leader could boost proactive work behavior that lead to improved output. This investigation sought to evaluate the effect of Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL) on Trust in Leader (TL), the impact of EL on Proactive Work Behavior (PWB), the impact of TL on PWB and the impact of EL using TL as an intervening variable on PWB. Data for this study came from 150 Indonesian SMEs, by distributing questionnaires. Using the regression equation and the causal step mediation test from Baron & Kenny.

Keywords: Entrepreneurial leadership; Proactive work behavior; SMEs; Trust in leader

1. INTRODUCTION

To obtain thorough information about respondents' attitudes, aspirations, and entrepreneurial activities, the Global Entrepreneurial Monitor (GEM) conducted the Adult Population Survey (APS) on 2000 adults in each of the GEM countries. The survey measured the following indicators of entrepreneurial behavior and attitudes regarding the survival of SMEs. The following Table (GEM, 2022) illustrate how results explain the degree of employee involvement and activity in SMEs' entrepreneurial endeavors, such developing new goods or services, introducing new ones, or establishing new or additional business units in Indonesia.

Table 1. Employee Involvement in Entrepreneurial Activities

Year	Entrepreneurial Employee Activity	Motivational Index	
2020	1.5		
2018	1.32	1.75	
2017	1.82	1.72	
2016	0.7	2.3	
2015	0.21	1.92	

(GEM Global Entrepreneurship Monitor, n.d.)

In contrast to 2017, employees' levels of involvement or proactivity in entrepreneurship have declined. However, as 2020 progressed, so did the perceived prospects, which were reinforced by the entrepreneurial intents and motivation index of Small Medium-sized business (SMEs) in developing nations, particularly in Indonesia, have been impacted significantly. Specifically, job insecurity is hindrance to proactive work behavior (PWB), which can be improved through the exercise of good entrepreneurial leadership (Bilal et al., 2021).

Understanding the elements that lead to employees exhibiting proactive behaviors at work is the goal of the research on the antecedents of PWB (Cui, 2021). PWB has been

demonstrated to be essential for both individual and organizational success (Grant & Ashford, 2008; Parker & Wang, 2015; Wang et al., 2017), which made this research significant. According to one source PWB might be sparked by employment demands like higher work requirements (Grant & Ashford, 2008). Another source highlights the psychological mechanisms that impact the dynamic that exists between a person's proactive personality and their engagement in PWB (Wang et al., 2017). This mechanism includes team members' proactive personalities and their perception or organizational support.

The formation of phenomenon gaps and research gaps pertaining to proactive behavior in leadership that has a major beneficial impact, such those reported by (Bagheri, Akbari, et al., 2022; Syamsudin et al., 2022), further supports this study challenge. In addition to partially mediating (Qiu et al., 2019; Yamak & Eyupoglu, 2021), has a strong favorable effect. However, leadership on proactive behavior is also stated to have a negative effect (Basu & Green, 1997), a negative moderating effect (Pieterse et al., 2009), does not support the mediation of leadership on proactive behavior (Amankwaa & Gyensare, Michael Asiedu, 2019) and the effect is not significant (Amankwaa et al., 2022).

Many people consider entrepreneurial leadership to be an excellent leadership approach that encourage creativity and growth in the setting of organizations. Regarding its connection to proactive work behavior, there is, nevertheless, a discrepancy (Bagheri, Newman, et al., 2022). One the one hand, people under entrepreneurial leadership are encouraged to be proactive, take initiative, and look for new prospects. However, other research indicates that proactive work behavior may be hampered by entrepreneurial leadership (Crant, 2000a; Gupta et al., 2004; Sexton & Bowman, 1985). The intrinsic qualities of entrepreneurial leadership, which place a strong emphasis on taking risks and being innovative, may be the cause of this conflict. Entrepreneurial leadership can encourage initiative and proactivity among staff members, but it can also breed instability and unpredictability. In view of this, workers could be reluctant to take initiative out of concern that they might make mistakes or suffer unfavorable outcomes. According to (Baron & Kenny, 1986) proposal, a process connecting inputs and outputs is necessary. Consequently, the inconsistent findings of earlier research offer a chance to reexamine the connection between proactive work behavior and entrepreneurial leadership by incorporating mediating variables.

Based to the social exchange hypothesis, people behave well when they believe their efforts will be rewarded with favorable results (Blau, 1964). When it comes to SMEs, employees who are proactive might be doing so because they feel confident that business leaders will recognize and value their work.

Due to the LMX hypothesis, each follower's experience with the leader-member exchange is unique and contingent upon their role within the organization. Put differently, there are employees who exhibit reciprocal respect, trust, and support in high-quality exchange connections with their leader, and people who don't have strong bond with their leader and exhibit insufficient support, restricted communication, and a lack of trust (Bilal et al., 2021; Jeremy B. Bernerth & Hubert S. Feild, 2007).

Leaders have a big part to play in creating a welcoming atmosphere demonstrating overall support for followers' efforts, fostering their autonomy, and enabling them to assume greater responsibility, for instance (Huynh et al., 2019). On the other hand, across many cultures, it has long been understood that trust is crucial to social interaction, business, and organizations. However, there is a growing lack of trust in leadership in many communities and organizations, including SMEs (Soderberg & Romney, 2022).

Establishing trust as a leader is essential to motivating individuals to take initiative at workplace. When employees have faith in their leader, a psychological safety net is created where they can take chances and voice their opinions without worrying about the

repercussions (Chatman & Cha, 2003). Building trust and encouraging proactive work behavior within the team can also be greatly aided by supporting leadership development programs that improve leaders' interpersonal and communication abilities (Schaufeli, 2021; Smithikrai, 2018; C. H. Wu & Parker, 2017). By emphasizing these crucial areas, leaders can foster a culture in which trust flourishes and proactive work behavior becomes the rule rather than the exception.

Proactive Work Behavior (PWB)

Like most other professional behaviors, proactive behavior depends on both personal preferences and the workplace culture. it can therefore be gathered, nurtured, and maintained through the use of suitable methods for choosing, instructing, releasing, and motivating (Bateman & Crant, 1993). Rather than being a characteristic, proactivity is a way to behave (Crant, 2000b; Grant & Ashford, 2008; Parker et al., 2006, 2010). According to (Parker et al., 2006), notions related proactive behavior at the individual level frequently revolves around self-initiated, future-focused action with the goal of bettering oneself or circumstance, despite variations in terminology and theoretical foundations. Whether proactive behavior is its identification is not primarily based on in-role or extra-role criteria; rather, it is anticipating, preparing for and working toward a future result that will affect oneself or the environment (Grant & Ashford, 2008). Parker and Bindle demonstrated a high positive correlation between trait-oriented version of personal initiative and proactive personality in an organized examination of 163 studies, they concluded that these two different notions should be regarded as "functionally equivalent" (Bindl, 2017).

Various definition of proactive work behavior lead to the conclusion that employees that exhibit proactive work behavior do so voluntarily and on their own initiative to enhance workflows, address issues, and bring creativity to their positions. (Parker & Collins, 2010) recommended that while evaluating proactive work behavior, a number of factors should be considered, including the following:

- 1. Proactive and voluntary attempts to bring about organizationally-wide functional shift in the manner that work is done (Morrison & Phelps, 1999).
- 2. Making a helpful statement when speaking out and meant to benefit the company; even if others don't agree with your opinions, share them with others in the workplace regarding work-related matters (Van Dyne & LePine, 1998).
- 3. Behaviors that are involved in the development and application of ideas (Scott & Bruce, 1994), such as spotting a chance, coming up with fresh concepts or methods, and putting the new concepts into practice.
- 4. Proactive and self-directed measures to stop work-related issues from happening again (Frese, 2001), look for the main reason why things go awry.

Proactive work behavior can be gauged using four indicators (Parker & Collins, 2010), these indicators include the following:

- 1. Taking charge: this is determined by how employees feel they are working to improve workplace practice.
- 2. Voice: this is gauged by how employees feel about discussing work-related concerns with coworkers in the workplace, even mhen their opinions diverge and those of others do not.
- 3. Individual innovation: employee impression of looking for novel methods, tools, and/or product concepts is used to measure this.
- 4. Problem prevention: employee perception of attempting to identify the underlying source of problems is used to gauge this.

Organization are continuously looking for methods to stay ahead of the curve and prosper in a fast-paced, cutthroat business environment. Entrepreneurial leadership is one

element that has come to be recognized for its influence on organizational success. One way to characterize entrepreneurial leadership is as a proactive behavior to problem-solving, inventiveness, and risk-taking. This leadership approach empowers staff members to think creatively, accept responsibility for their work, and be open to change. Employees are more inclined to behave pro-actively at work when they report to entrepreneurial leaders. All things considered, proactive work behavior is positively impacted by entrepreneurial leadership (Bagheri, Newman, et al., 2022).

 H_1 : EL has positive and significant impacts on PWB

Entrepreneurial Leadership (EL)

Considering the significance of entrepreneurial leadership, scholars still disagree about how to define it, with two schools of thought (Bagheri, Newman, et al., 2022). According to the first group of researchers, entrepreneurial leaders can intentionally create plans to enhance their business creativity through defining new business opportunities and creating an inspiring and innovative vision. Key utilitarian and personal skills, including risk-taking, proactivity, and innovation, support these efforts. As defined by the second group of researchers, the purpose of leadership in entrepreneurship is to motivate and direct subordinates toward the accomplishment of entrepreneurial objectives, which include seeing and taking advantage of business prospects. The meeting point of leadership and entrepreneurship is known as entrepreneurial leadership. The act of influencing is what is known as leadership (John Antonakis, 2018), and represents a more intricate phenomenon than a single actor (Cogliser & Brigham, 2004). Likewise, entrepreneurship centers around the entrepreneur as well as the interface between opportunities and that individual (Renko et al., 2015).

Employee voice behavior within a company is another potential consequence of entrepreneurial leadership (Ranjan, 2018). Because they give their followers chances and freedom. Consequently, adherents act in a manner that actualizes claims and concepts for the company's advantage (Dedahanov et al., 2016). The following attributes, behaviors, and actions that set entrepreneurial leadership apart from other leadership philosophies are elements of entrepreneurial leadership that center on the goals of such leadership: opportunity recognition and exploitation (Venkataraman, 2000).

- 1. The ability to launch novel products or services into the market as opposed to replicating existing ones is known as an entrepreneurial opportunity (Gaglio, 2004). Though exploitation is a different action entirely, recognizing an entrepreneurial opportunity involves understanding this possibility (Renko et al., 2015).
- 2. The term "exploitation" describes actions and financial commitments made with the intention of profiting on novel prospects (Choi & Shepherd, 2004). As a result, identifying opportunities involves perception, exploiting them involves action, and entrepreneurial leaders' objectives incorporate both (Renko et al., 2015).

Inspired by Renko, the conceptual framework to assess entrepreneurial leadership provides a nuanced view in the post-2000 period. Renko et al. shed light on the multifaceted nature of entrepreneurial leadership by highlighting two essential elements: strategic decision-making and opportunity recognition (Renko et al., 2015):

- 1. Opportunity recognition:
 - Entrepreneurial executives possess a distinctive capacity to recognize and seize possibilities, propelling the expansion and novelty of their organizations.
- 1.1. Proactiveness and Vision:

Highlight the significance of being proactive as a crucial element of entrepreneurial leadership, highlighting an effective leader can see and seize opportunities.

1.2. Innovation and Creativity:

Entrepreneurial leaders serve as catalysts for an inventive culture by pushing staff members to use their imaginations and help spot and seize chances.

2. Strategic decision-making:

A key component of effective entrepreneurial leadership is making strategic choices that support long-term growth and organizational objectives.

2.1. Risk-Taking Propensity:

Entrepreneurial leaders manage uncertainty by taking calculated risks, weighing the possible benefits, and coming to decisions that advance the company.

2.2. Adaptive Decision-Making:

In dynamic contexts, entrepreneur leaders demonstrate adaptability by modifying their plans and methods to ensure the relevance and effectiveness of their organizations.

Due to this entrepreneurial leadership has a profound effect on employees' faith in leaders at work, fostering an atmosphere that values innovation, teamwork, and a strong feeling of mutual respect and trust (Juan Yang et al., 2019).

 H_2 : EL has positive and significant Impacts on Trust in leader

Trust in Leader (TL)

Effective organizational functioning requires a strong sense of confidence in the leadership (Markus, 2013). It addresses the faith that workers have in their leaders to behave honorably, dependably, and competently (Kramer, 1999). According to (Deutsch, 2009; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002; Sharkie, 2009), building and maintaining trust with their teams is a skill that leader are more likely to possess a pleasant work environment and achieve higher level of employee engagement and loyalty. Building trust in leadership is facilitated by a number of essential elements, such as open communication, openness, consistency, and the display of moral judgment (Deutsch, 2009; Dwivedi, 1983; Jawahar et al., 2019). Trust in leader is essential to establishing a productive and encouraging work environment (Deutsch, 2009; Dwivedi, 1983). A leader's prior performance, consistency in behavior and decision making, transparency and communication skills, emotional intelligence and empathy, relationship-building and maintenance abilities, values alignment with the organization's mission and goals are all factors that impact trust in leaders (Brower et al., 2000; Jixia Yang & Mossholder, 2010). The team members' trust in a leader is what it means to trust them and assurance in the leader's moral fiber, skill, and conduct (Burke et al., 2007; Jixia Yang & Mossholder, 2010).

The finding of (Zhang et al., 2018), staff members who trust their managers are more inclined to take ownership of their work and feel powerful. As a result, proactive work behavior like initiative, creativity, and problem-solving skill increase (C. H. Wu & Parker, 2017). As a whole, trust in leadership is essential for mediating the connection between proactive work behavior and EL (Iqbal et al., 2020; Y. Yang et al., 2020). Regarding (Yin et al., 2017), it can have a major effect on workers' performance result by encouraging them to participate in proactive behavior. In the end, trust in the leadership is critical in resolving the association between proactive work behavior and entrepreneurial leadership.

Because trust is subjective, measuring it in leadership capacity can be difficult (Deutsch, 2009). In the words of (Burke et al., 2007), different people may understand trust and seek various things from their leaders. There are a number of additional indicators that can support a leader's trustworthiness. These include transparency and honesty in communication, acting and speaking consistently, being receptive to followers' worries and comments, and having a history of delivering on promise (Den Hartog, 2017; Dirks & Ferrin, 2002). According to (Jixia Yang & Mossholder, 2010), a leader who exemplifies

these trust indicators is more likely to get the respect and support of their team, which will increase dedication and productivity.

 H_3 : Trust in leader has positive and significantly impacts on PWB

 H_4 : The effect of EL on PWB is significantly mediated by Trust in leader.

2. METHODS

By gathering and evaluating numerical data, researchers can draw conclusions about given subject or event and obtain new insights (W. Wu & Little, 2011). Concentrating on objectivity, accuracy, and statistical analysis are the hallmarks of these approaches (Creswell, 2009). In order to measure variables, test hypotheses, and derive meaningful conclusions from quantitative data, they offer a methodical and structured way to researching phenomena (Sandelowski et al., 2009). Typical instances of quantitative research techniques are experiments, surveys, content analysis, and statistical modeling (Petchko, 2018).

The participants in this study were employees of SMEs located in West Java, Indonesia's Kuningan Regency. This study's sample consisted of 150 participants who were chosen using the Network Scale-up Method (NSUM), a survey-based technique for determining how many people are in a secretive or difficult to reach minority of the broader population (Russell Bernard et al., 1991). Even with NSUM's widespread use, there are no published standards for figuring out the smallest sample size necessary to attain the necessary level of measurement accuracy (Josephs et al., 2022).

This study employs SPSS software version 22, and the Causal Step Mediation Test analysis method. this analysis approach was put forth by Baron and Kenny as a statistical way to determine whether mediation effects are present in a causal relationship and how strong they are (Baron & Kenny, 1986). It gives scholars insight into the processes by which the dependent variable by enabling them to ascertain shatter a variable (mediator) functions in how two variables, one independent and the other dependent are related (Zhao et al., 2010).

However, in general, researchers determine research samples depending on multiplying the total number of indicators by five or ten (Kyriazos, 2018). Purposive sampling will therefore be used as the sampling strategy in this study, with the following requirements: (a) having at least one year of work experience and (b) being active in an organization. this study uses a five-point Likert scale, with 1 denoting strongly disagree and 5 denoting strongly agree, to measure EL and Trust in leaders, while the Proactive Work Behavior measurement uses a slight modification of five points ranging from 1 = very rarely, to 5 = very often.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data testing was carried out after going through validity and reliability tests which showed that this study's indicators were all legitimate and trustworthy.

Analyze using the causal step method:

The X to Y Coefficient result is displayed in table 2. The "model" is notably mentioned in the table with the label "Coefficients". The positive coefficient for "Entrepreneurial Leadership" suggests that "Proactive Work Behavior" and it have a favorable association. At the .05 level, the t-value for "Entrepreneurial Leadership" is statistically significant, indicating that it is improbable that the association is the result of chance.

Table 2. Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Sig.
		В	Std. Error	•
1	(Constant)	8.288	.840	.000
	EL	.116	.048	.018

a. Dependent Variable: PWB

The regression result of X on Y, demonstrates the significant values of C=0.116 and Sig.=0.018.

Table 3: Table X's coefficient against M. The one that is independent is "Entrepreneurial leadership" and the variable that is dependent "Trust in leader" possess a positive association with a statistically remarkable (p<0.05) coefficient.

The coefficients for the two variables "Entrepreneurial leadership" and "Trust in Leader" are shown in the table 3.

Table 3. Coefficients

_	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Sig.
		В	Std. Error	
1	(Constant)	12.820	1.191	.000
	EL	.287	.069	.000

a. Dependent Variable: TL

The regression result of X on M, shows the value af a = 0.287 and Sig. = 0.000 (Significant). The t-value for the "Entrepreneurial Leadership" variable is 4.179.

Coefficient table 4 highlights the significant and positive impact that trusting a leader has on PWB and trust in the leader is perfect mediating factor in the impact of EL on PWB.

The coefficient for the variable X is approximately 0.063. the coefficient for the variable "Trust in leader" is approximately 0.184. The coefficient for the constant term is approximately 5.928. The text that is highlighted is a portion of a table that display a model's coefficient.

Table 4. Coefficients

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Sig.
		В	Std. Error	•
	(Constant)	5.928	1.086	.000
1	EL	.063	.050	.203
	TL	.184	.056	.001

a. Dependent Variable: PWB

The outcomes of X's regression and M on Y, show the value of b = 0.184 and the value of C = 0.063, so that there is a decrease from the value of C = 0.116 to C = 0.063 (C > C). Because the value of C > C (there is a decrease) and there is a change from significant (0.018) to not significant (0.203), it is concluded to be Perfect Mediation.

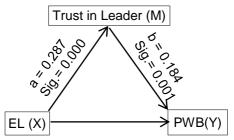


Figure 1. the causal step method

Analysis with product of coeficien (+Proof with Sobel calculator):

Coefficient table of X on Y. The highlighted text is a table that presents coefficients for model (table 2), demonstrating value C = 0.116 and Sig.=0.018 (Significant).

Coefficient table of X on M. It presenting a model's coefficients is the highlighted text (table 3), explaining value a = 0.287 and Sa=0.069(Significant).

Coefficient table of X and M on Y. Regression result of X and M on Y, showing b=0.184 and Sb=0.056 (table 4).

The Sobel calculator's result demonstrate there is a mediator in the association between PWB and EL by trust in leader, as the calculated Z number is 2.578 greater than the Z table at the significant level of 0.05, or 1.96.

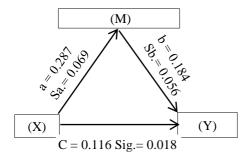


Figure 2. the causal step method

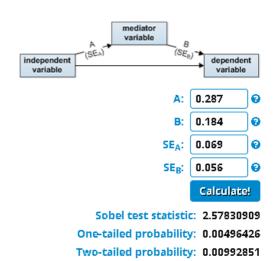


Figure 3. The Sobel calculator's result

Table 5.Hypothesis Test

	В	Std.	t	Sig
		Error		
H_1	.116	.048	2.399	.018
H_2	.287	.069	4.179	.000
H_3	.184	.056	3.278	.001
H_4	.063	.050	1.278	.203

Table 5 shows that of all hypothesis, the fourth hypothesis is not significant, and is called perfect mediation.

$EL \rightarrow Trust in leader \rightarrow PWB$

Apart from trust, several aspects like organizational culture, communication channels, and the congruence of individual and organizational objectives also impact the association between PWB and EL (C. H. Wu, 2017). However, in reality, it is common to find many perfect mediators of a relationship X and Y. Furthermore, the finding of perfect mediation in situations where there is actually partial mediation may simply be the result of statistical power limitation that prevent the detection of a direct influence. This result is often considered correct, even though if the sample is added there is a possibility that there is actually a direct effect, which means that there is partial mediation. In terms of finding partial mediation, it actually doesn't make much sense. Since there is always some mediation involved in psychological variable, the presence of large direct effect is only a reflection of model misspecification (Baron & Kenny, 1986).

EL→*Trust in leader*

How workers' faith in a leader is affected by entrepreneurial leadership at work is extensive, forming a work atmosphere marked by innovation, teamwork, and strong sense of mutual respect and trust. Yang and colleagues (Juan Yang et al., 2019), it exists an association between entrepreneurial leadership and staff trust in leader that is good (Bagheri, Newman, et al., 2022).

$EL \rightarrow PWB$

These leaders provide their staff the ability to experiment, take chances, and challenge the current quo. Employees feel encouraged and empowered to pursue PWB as a result. in general, PWB at work is greatly aided by EL (Gupta et al., 2004; C. H. Wu, 2017).

4. CONCLUSION

This study focuses on how managers of businesses, particularly small ones and medium enterprises in Kuningan District with the Trust in Leader mediation approach to the connection between PWB in SMEs and EL. This study deepens our comprehension of how entrepreneurial leadership (EL) influences in increasing Proactive Work Behavior (PWB). The mediation mechanism through the link between the Trust in leader (TL) variable on the relationship among EL on PWB offers rich insights about EL having a substantial good impact on PWB and likewise greatly enhancing and improving Trust in Leader (TL), and the TL variable having a significant beneficial effect on PWB additionally mediating the absolute influence between EL and PWB. Further research understands the substantial of TL, it impacts both the direct and indirect relationships and facilitates the interaction between EL and PWB. work and ultimately implementing the right policies. There are several restrictions on this study. The test method for causal mediation does not provide a

means of testing that an indirect effect (path a*b) has occurred. Analysis of the role of the most important mediator is actually the presence or absence of indirect effects (indirect effects). The term perfect mediation indicates that he has been able to mediate the overall overall impact of X and Y's relationship.

The study limited researchers from collecting data from 150 SMEs respondents in Kuningan, West Java, Indonesia, by distributing questionnaires directly to the respondents. The subject of this research is SMEs and their unit of analysis are individual employees.

Entrepreneurial leadership has proven to have a substantial effect on proactive work behavior. This influence can also be mediated by trust in the leader. Employees who experience positive behavior from leaders will respond positively to behavior. In turn, the trust between the leader and employees led to innovative ideas. The achievement of positive work outcomes for SMEs employees can be increased by proactive behavior in the kind of future-focused activities and self-initiative intended to alter and enhance one's circumstances or self. Proactive behavior can be increased by increasing entrepreneurial leadership and trust in leaders.

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