

## Balancing Innovation and Efficiency: The Role of Ambidextrous Leadership and Person-Job Fit in Enhancing Auditor Performance through Innovative Work Behavior

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### ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine the influence of ambidextrous leadership and person-job fit on auditor performance, mediated by innovative work behavior. A quantitative approach was applied by distributing a structured questionnaire to 125 Functional Auditors. Descriptive statistics and path analysis were used to examine direct and indirect effects of Ambidextrous Leadership and Person-Job Fit on performance, mediated by Innovative Work Behavior. Data analyzed to test seven hypotheses, ensuring robust statistical validation. Results confirm that Ambidextrous Leadership and Person-Job Fit significantly enhance Employee Performance through Innovative Work Behavior. Leadership leans toward exploitation over exploration, limiting innovation, while job fit is strong in technical competencies but weaker in personality alignment. Innovative Work Behavior mediates the relationships, boosting performance by fostering creative problem-solving.

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## **INTRODUCTION**

In the dynamic landscape of public administration, the demand for efficient, transparent, and accountable governance has intensified, driven by rapid social, technological, and economic transformations (BPKP, 2024). Indonesia's Badan Pengawasan Keuangan dan Pembangunan (BPKP), as a key internal oversight body, plays a critical role in ensuring optimal utilization of state and regional budgets to support national development goals (BPKP, 2021). The urgency for innovative auditing practices was emphasized during the 2024 National Internal Oversight Coordination Meeting, highlighting the need for technology-driven solutions to enhance financial accountability and prevent budget mismanagement.

At the BPKP Representative Office in North Sumatra Province, persistent challenges undermine these objectives. Organizational performance has fluctuated, with several oversight targets unmet in 2023 and 2024, despite auditors consistently receiving satisfactory performance ratings (BPKP, 2024). This discrepancy suggests a misalignment in performance assessment systems and a lack of innovative practices among auditors, exacerbated by rigid bureaucratic structures and limited leadership support for exploration (Sutrisno et al., 2023). Additionally, mismatched competencies due to internal reassignments and inadequate training further hinder auditor effectiveness, underscoring the need for adaptive leadership and better job fit (BPKP, 2024).

Existing research highlights the potential of ambidextrous leadership, which balances exploratory innovation and exploitative efficiency, to foster innovative work behavior (IWB) and enhance employee performance (Akinici et al., 2022; Wahab et al., 2024). Similarly, person-job fit (PJF), reflecting the alignment of individual competencies with job demands, is linked to increased motivation and innovation (Bhattarai & Budhathoki, 2024; Ye et al., 2023). However, findings are inconsistent: some studies suggest IWB negatively impacts short-term performance due to resource demands (Sanjaya et al., 2024), while others find no significant link between ambidextrous leadership or PJF and performance outcomes (Ariyanti & Pujiyanto, 2024; Shah et al., 2015). These contradictions, coupled with a lack of studies in public sector auditing contexts, indicate a critical research gap.

This study addresses the gap by examining how ambidextrous leadership and PJF influence auditor performance through IWB in the unique setting of BPKP North Sumatra, where bureaucratic constraints and competency mismatches prevail. The novelty lies in integrating these constructs within a public sector auditing context, offering new insights into resolving inconsistent findings and enhancing organizational effectiveness. The study aims to answer: (1) Does ambidextrous leadership significantly affect auditor performance? (2) Does PJF significantly affect auditor performance? (3) Does ambidextrous leadership influence IWB? (4) Does PJF influence IWB? (5) Does ambidextrous leadership affect performance through IWB? (6) Does PJF affect performance through IWB? (7) Does IWB significantly affect auditor performance? The objective is to analyze these relationships to provide actionable strategies for improving auditor performance.

Employing a quantitative approach, this study collects primary data via surveys from 30 auditors at BPKP North Sumatra, analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) to test the hypothesized relationships (Ghozali, 2021). This method ensures robust analysis of complex variable interactions in a small sample context.

Preliminary findings suggest that ambidextrous leadership and PJJ significantly influence IWB, which partially mediates their impact on auditor performance. These results imply that fostering balanced leadership and aligning auditor competencies with job roles can enhance innovation and accountability in public sector auditing, contributing to both theoretical advancements in human resource management and practical recommendations for BPKP.

This article is organized as follows: the literature review synthesizes theories on ambidextrous leadership, PJJ, IWB, and performance, culminating in a conceptual framework. The methodology section details the survey design, sample, and PLS-SEM approach. The results section presents the statistical findings, followed by a discussion of their implications for theory and practice. The conclusion summarizes key insights, limitations, and future research directions.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

The dynamic nature of modern organizations necessitates a nuanced understanding of leadership styles, employee fit with job roles, and innovative behaviors to enhance performance. This study focuses on the interplay between Ambidextrous Leadership, Person-Job Fit, Innovative Work Behavior, and Employee Performance, drawing on established theories and empirical findings to frame its inquiry. The literature review synthesizes prior research, identifies gaps, and positions this paper among existing study, culminating in the development of hypotheses grounded in the reviewed literature.

### *Ambidextrous Leadership and Employee Performance*

Ambidextrous Leadership, characterized by the ability to balance exploration (innovation, risk-taking, and experimentation) and exploitation (efficiency, optimization, and stability), has emerged as a pivotal construct in organizational management (Rosing & Zacher, 2023). This leadership style enables organizations to navigate dynamic environments by fostering both creativity and operational efficiency (Jain, 2024). Exploration encourages employees to experiment with new ideas, while exploitation ensures the refinement of existing processes, collectively contributing to organizational adaptability and performance (Azmi, 2024). Empirical studies have largely supported the positive impact of Ambidextrous Leadership on employee performance. For instance, (Babu et al., 2024) found that Ambidextrous Leadership significantly enhances employee performance in the IT sector by fostering a balance between innovative and efficient work practices. Similarly, (Zain, 2024) demonstrated that this leadership style enables employees to adapt to organizational changes, thereby sustaining optimal performance in dynamic settings. However, (Azizi, 2022) presents a contrasting perspective, noting that in highly hierarchical manufacturing firms in Indonesia, Ambidextrous Leadership did not significantly improve performance due to rigid structures that

stifled innovation. This divergence suggests that contextual factors, such as organizational structure, may moderate the effectiveness of Ambidextrous Leadership.

This study positions itself by examining Ambidextrous Leadership in the context of public sector organizations, specifically within Indonesia's civil service, where bureaucratic rigidity may pose unique challenges. Unlike prior studies focused on private sectors (Babu et al., 2024; Jiang et al., 2023), this research explores whether Ambidextrous Leadership can enhance employee performance in a public sector setting, addressing a gap in the literature concerning its applicability in non-profit-oriented organizations.

**Hypothesis 1 (H1):** Ambidextrous Leadership has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance.

### *Person-Job Fit and Employee Performance*

Person-Job Fit (P-J Fit) refers to the alignment between an individual's skills, values, and needs and the demands and resources of their job (Yang et al., 2022). This congruence is critical for enhancing employee motivation, satisfaction, and performance (Fatchurrozy & Frianto, 2024). The Theory of Work Adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984) underpins P-J Fit, positing that job satisfaction and performance are maximized when there is a high correspondence between individual capabilities and job requirements, as well as between individual needs and job supplies (Teunissen, 2024). Prior research consistently highlights the positive influence of P-J Fit on employee performance. (Fatchurrozy & Frianto, 2024) found that employees who perceive a strong fit with their jobs exhibit higher motivation and productivity, leading to improved performance. Similarly, (Nugraha & Wardhani, 2022) reported that P-J Fit enhances employees' ability to meet performance targets through increased engagement. However, (Nurmalitasaria & Puspitarini, 2024) found no significant relationship between P-J Fit and performance in Indonesia's customer service sector, attributing this to external uncertainties overshadowing individual-job congruence. (Ariyanti & Pujianto, 2024) also noted insignificant effects, suggesting that contextual factors may dilute P-J Fit's impact.

This study differentiates itself by investigating P-J Fit in the public sector, where job roles are often standardized and less flexible. By focusing on civil servants, it addresses whether P-J Fit can enhance performance in a context characterized by regulatory constraints, extending the work of (Sylvana et al., 2024) and (Yonuari et al., 2024) who explored P-J Fit in academic settings.

**Hypothesis 2 (H2):** Person-Job Fit has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance.

### *Ambidextrous Leadership and Innovative Work Behavior*

Innovative Work Behavior (IWB) encompasses actions aimed at generating, promoting, and implementing new ideas within an organization (Nardo et al., 2022). Leadership plays a critical role in fostering IWB, with Ambidextrous Leadership being particularly effective due to its dual focus on exploration and exploitation (Srirahayu et al., 2023). Opening leadership behaviors, such as encouraging experimentation and risk-taking, stimulate creativity, while closing

behaviors ensure the efficient implementation of innovative ideas (Rosing & Zacher, 2023). Empirical evidence supports the link between Ambidextrous Leadership and IWB. (Babu et al., 2024) and (Jiang et al., 2023) found that Ambidextrous Leadership positively influences employees' innovative behaviors in IT and manufacturing sectors, respectively. (Kousina & Voudouris, 2023) extended this finding to the public sector, noting that psychological ownership mediates this relationship. However, (Akinci et al., 2022) reported that only opening leadership behaviors significantly drive IWB, with closing behaviors showing no notable effect, suggesting that the balance between exploration and exploitation may vary by context. (Pratama & Kistyanto, 2024) found no significant impact on innovation performance, indicating potential boundary conditions.

This study contributes by examining Ambidextrous Leadership's effect on IWB in a public sector context, where innovation is often constrained by bureaucratic processes. It builds on (Cao et al., 2023) and (Hattab et al., 2024), who emphasized Ambidextrous Leadership's role in public sector innovation, by testing its influence on civil servants' IWB.

**Hypothesis 3 (H3):** Ambidextrous Leadership has a positive and significant effect on Innovative Work Behavior.

#### *Person-Job Fit and Innovative Work Behavior*

P-J Fit is also posited to influence IWB, as employees who feel aligned with their roles are more likely to engage in creative and proactive behaviors (Akmal & Mehmood, 2022). When individuals' skills and interests match their job demands, they experience higher job satisfaction and motivation, fostering innovative thinking (Puspitasari et al., 2024). Research supports this relationship. (Akmal & Mehmood, 2022) found that P-J Fit enhances IWB through intrinsic motivation and creative self-efficacy. (Puspitasari et al., 2024) confirmed a positive effect in Indonesia, noting that job fit encourages employees to propose novel solutions. However, (Ariyanti & Pujianto, 2024) found no significant effect, suggesting that external factors, such as toxic workplace environments, may suppress innovation despite job fit.

This study explores P-J Fit's impact on IWB in the public sector, where employees' ability to innovate may be limited by rigid procedures. It extends (Wijaya, 2024) by examining whether P-J Fit fosters IWB among civil servants, addressing a gap in contexts with high regulatory oversight.

**Hypothesis 4 (H4):** Person-Job Fit has a positive and significant effect on Innovative Work Behavior.

#### *Mediating Role of Innovative Work Behavior*

IWB is proposed as a mediator linking Ambidextrous Leadership and P-J Fit to Employee Performance. Ambidextrous Leadership fosters IWB by creating an environment conducive to creativity and efficiency, which in turn enhances performance (Jyoti & Choudhary, 2024). Similarly, P-J Fit encourages IWB by aligning employees' capabilities with job demands, leading to innovative contributions that improve performance (Alqhaiwi et al., 2023). Studies confirm

IWB's mediating role. (Babu et al., 2024) and (Jyoti & Choudhary, 2024) found that IWB mediates the relationship between Ambidextrous Leadership and performance, as innovative behaviors translate leadership support into tangible outcomes. Similarly, (Alqhaiwi et al., 2023) and (Kim & Lee, 2024) demonstrated that IWB mediates P-J Fit's effect on performance by enabling employees to apply creative solutions. However, (Babu et al., 2024) noted that excessive routine tasks may weaken this mediation, while (Puspitasari et al., 2024) reported a negative effect in highly regulated sectors, suggesting contextual nuances.

This study tests IWB's mediating role in a public sector context, where innovation faces unique barriers. It builds on (Shanker et al., 2021) by examining whether IWB can bridge Ambidextrous Leadership and P-J Fit to performance in a bureaucratic setting, offering a novel perspective on public sector dynamics.

**Hypothesis 5 (H5):** Ambidextrous Leadership has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance through Innovative Work Behavior.

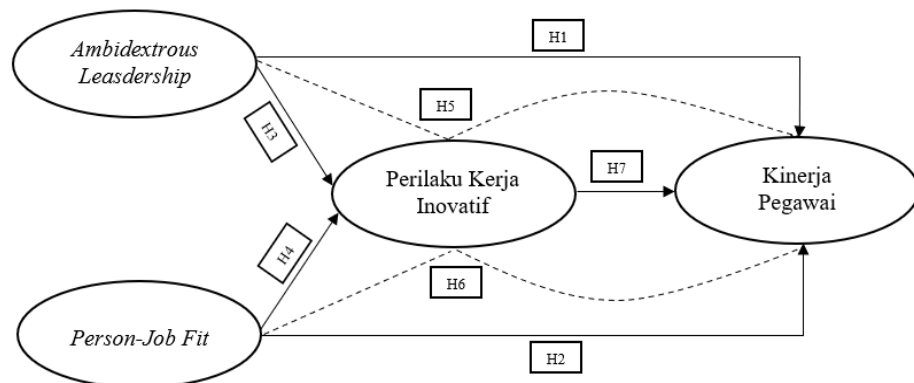
**Hypothesis 6 (H6):** Person-Job Fit has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance through Innovative Work Behavior.

### *Innovative Work Behavior and Employee Performance*

IWB directly contributes to employee performance by enabling the development of efficient and adaptive solutions (Pham et al., 2024). Employees who engage in innovative behaviors are better equipped to address challenges and achieve organizational goals (Tico et al., 2023). Empirical findings support this relationship. (Pham et al., 2024) and (Tico et al., 2023) found that IWB positively affects performance in public sector contexts by fostering creative problem-solving. However, (Sanjaya et al., 2024) reported a negative effect, noting that innovation attempts may fail or divert resources, reducing performance in resource-constrained settings. This study examines IWB's direct effect on performance among civil servants, addressing whether innovative behaviors can overcome bureaucratic constraints to enhance outcomes. It extends (Utomo et al., 2023) by focusing on public sector employees, where innovation is critical yet challenging.

**Hypothesis 7 (H7):** Innovative Work Behavior has a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance.

### *Positioning and Contribution*



**Figure 1. Conceptual Framework**

This study positions itself at the intersection of leadership, job fit, and innovation, specifically within the under-explored context of Indonesia's public sector. While prior studies have examined Ambidextrous Leadership and P-J Fit in private and academic settings (Babu et al., 2024; Sylvana et al., 2024), few have addressed their interplay in public organizations with rigid structures. By incorporating IWB as a mediator, this research offers a comprehensive model that elucidates how leadership and job fit drive performance through innovation. The focus on civil servants differentiates this study from existing literature, addressing gaps in understanding how these constructs operate in bureaucratic environments. The hypotheses are grounded in established theories (e.g., Ambidextrous Organization Theory, Theory of Work Adjustment) and empirical evidence, ensuring a robust theoretical foundation.

Figure 1 illustrates the conceptual framework of relationships tested in this study. The framework posits that Ambidextrous Leadership ( $X_1$ ) and Person-Job Fit ( $X_2$ ) directly influence Employee Performance ( $Y$ ) and indirectly affect it through Innovative Work Behavior ( $Z$ ). Arrows depict direct effects ( $X_1 \rightarrow Y$ ,  $X_2 \rightarrow Y$ ,  $Z \rightarrow Y$ ) and indirect effects via mediation ( $X_1 \rightarrow Z \rightarrow Y$ ,  $X_2 \rightarrow Z \rightarrow Y$ ). This model aligns with the path analysis results, which confirm significant direct effects (e.g.,  $\beta = 0.285$  for  $X_1 \rightarrow Y$ ,  $\beta = 0.261$  for  $X_2 \rightarrow Y$ ) and indirect effects through  $Z$  (e.g.,  $\beta = 0.176$  for  $X_1 \rightarrow Z \rightarrow Y$ ). The framework underscores the mediating role of Innovative Work Behavior, which amplifies performance by enabling auditors to address complex challenges creatively, despite a leadership bias toward exploitation over exploration (Alqhaiwi et al., 2023). The conceptual framework provides a robust foundation for understanding how leadership and job alignment foster performance, offering a replicable model for public sector organizations aiming to balance efficiency and innovation.

## METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a quantitative descriptive research design to examine the relationships between Ambidextrous Leadership, Person-Job Fit, Innovative Work Behavior, and Employee Performance among auditors in a public sector organization. The quantitative approach enables systematic data collection and statistical analysis to test the proposed hypotheses, providing insights into causal relationships among variables (Amelia et al., 2022). The descriptive nature of the study aims to capture the current state of the observed phenomena and explore the underlying causes of these relationships (Wahid & Bachrie, 2024).

### *Research Context and Participants*

The research was conducted at the North Sumatra Provincial Representative Office of the Financial and Development Supervisory Agency (BPKP), located in Medan, Indonesia. Data collection occurred over three months, from April to June 2025. The population comprised all 125 Functional Auditor Position (JFA) holders at the BPKP North Sumatra office, encompassing various auditor ranks, including Associate Expert Auditor, Senior Expert Auditor, Junior Expert Auditor, Mid-level Technical Auditor, Senior Technical, and Junior Technical Auditor. Given the relatively small population size, a

saturated sampling technique, a form of non-probability sampling, was employed, where all 125 auditors were included as the sample. This approach ensures comprehensive representation of the population, minimizing sampling error and enhancing the generalizability of findings within the context of the study (Sembiring et al., 2024). The distribution of the sample across auditor ranks is detailed in the study's documentation, reflecting the organizational structure of the BPKP office.

**Variables and Measurement**

The study investigates four key variables: two independent variables, Ambidextrous Leadership ( $X_1$ ) and Person-Job Fit ( $X_2$ ); one dependent variable, Employee Performance ( $Y$ ); and one intervening variable, Innovative Work Behavior ( $Z$ ) as shown in Table 1. Operational definitions and measurement indicators for each variable were established to ensure clarity and precision (Wahid & Bachrie, 2024).

Table 1. Operational definitions and measurement indicators for each variable were established to ensure clarity and precision (Wahid & Bachrie, 2024)

No	Variable	Definition	Dimension	Measurement Indicator	Scale
1.	Employee Performance (Y)	Employee performance is the result of the work of auditors at the BPKP Representative Office in North Sumatra Province in carrying out their duties, which is measured based on quantity, quality, time, cost, and work attitude	1. Quantity of Work	1. Delivering work according to the target. 2. High work productivity.	Interval
			2. Quality of Work	1. Low error rate. 2. Work results following guidelines.	Interval
			3. Time	1. Work completed on time. 2. Time efficiency in completing work.	Interval
			4. Cost	1. Cost realization following the budget. 2. Efficiency in budget utilization.	Interval
			5. Work Attitude	1. Service orientation. 2. Work initiative. 3. Cooperation.	Interval
2.	Innovative Work Behavior (Z)	Innovative Work Behavior is a series of actions taken by auditors at the BPKP Representative Office in North Sumatra Province to generate new ideas that can provide solutions or improvements and apply those ideas in their work.	1. Opportunity Exploraiton	1. Concern for problems at work. 2. Curiosity about how to fix problems.	Interval
			2. Idea Generation	1. Generate original ideas for problems. 2. Find new approaches to perform tasks.	Interval
			3. Idea Championing	1. Get members of the organization excited about innovative ideas. 2. Convince people to support innovative ideas.	Interval
			4. Idea Implementation	1. Introducing innovative ideas into work practices. 2. Contributing to the implementation of new ideas.	Interval
3.	Ambidextrous Leadership (X1)	Ambidextrous Leadership is the ability of leader at the BPKP	1. Exploration	1. Allow different ways of completing tasks. 2. Encourage experimentation with different ideas.	Interval

No	Variable	Definition	Dimension	Measurement Indicator	Scale
		Representative Office in North Sumatra Province to balance exploration and exploitation to improve work effectiveness.	2. Exploitation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Motivate employees to take risks.</li> <li>4. Provide opportunities for independent thinking and action.</li> <li>5. Encourage learning from mistakes.</li> </ol>	Interval
4.	Person-Job Fit (X2)	Person-Job Fit refers to the level of compatibility between the knowledge, skills, personality, and desires of an auditor and the demands of their job and duties.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Demand Abilities Fit</li> <li>2. Need-Supplies Fit</li> </ol>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Appropriateness of knowledge and education.</li> <li>2. Appropriateness of technical skills.</li> <li>3. Appropriateness of cognitive abilities.</li> <li>4. Mastery of regulations and policies.</li> <li>1. Compensation</li> <li>2. Recognition and appreciation</li> <li>3. Career development</li> <li>4. Personality</li> </ol>	Interval

Employee Performance (Y) is defined as the work outcomes of auditors, measured through five dimensions: quantity of work, quality of work, time, cost, and work attitude. These dimensions align with performance evaluation standards for Indonesian civil servants. Innovative Work Behavior (Z) refers to auditors' actions in generating and implementing novel ideas to improve work processes. It is measured across four dimensions: opportunity exploration, idea generation, idea championing, and idea implementation.

Ambidextrous Leadership ( $X_1$ ) captures leaders' ability to balance exploration and exploitation. It is assessed through indicators such as allowing diverse task approaches, motivating risk-taking, monitoring goal achievement, and enforcing standardized task execution. Person-Job Fit ( $X_2$ ) reflects the alignment between auditors' abilities and job demands, as well as their needs and job resources. It is measured through demand-abilities fit and need-supplies fit. All variables were measured using a questionnaire with a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree), ensuring consistency in capturing respondents' perceptions (Amelia et al., 2022). The questionnaire comprised 37 items, with each variable's indicators derived from established literature and adapted to the public sector context.

### Data Collection

Primary data were collected through self-administered questionnaires distributed directly to the 125 auditors at the BPKP North Sumatra office. The questionnaires assessed respondents' perceptions of Ambidextrous Leadership, Person-Job Fit, Innovative Work Behavior, and Employee Performance. To

complement the primary data, secondary data, such as organizational records and auditor demographics, were obtained from the BPKP North Sumatra Human Resources Subcoordinator (Sugiyono, 2012). Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with a subset of auditors to gain deeper insights into the variables and validate questionnaire responses. Documentation studies, including reviews of relevant reports, regulations, and prior research, were also performed to contextualize the findings (Amelia et al., 2022). Prior to full-scale data collection, the questionnaire's validity and reliability were tested with 30 auditors at the BPKP Riau Provincial Office, which shares similar organizational characteristics. Validity was assessed using bivariate correlation (corrected item-total correlation compared to  $r$ -table), and reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's Alpha, targeting a threshold of  $\alpha > 0.60$  for acceptable reliability (Sembiring et al., 2024).

### ***Data Analysis***

Data analysis was conducted in two stages: descriptive analysis and inferential analysis using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). Descriptive analysis was employed to summarize respondents' answers, transforming Likert-scale responses into interval data using the Method of Successive Intervals (MSI) and calculating mean scores to describe variable characteristics (Sembiring et al., 2024). PLS-SEM was selected for its ability to model complex relationships among latent variables without stringent distributional assumptions, making it suitable for the study's sample size and variable structure (Hair Jr et al., 2021). The analysis involved two models: Measurement Model (Outer Model): This assessed the validity and reliability of constructs. Convergent validity was evaluated using factor loadings ( $>0.70$  for confirmatory research), Average Variance Extracted (AVE  $> 0.50$ ), and communality ( $>0.50$ ). Discriminant validity was confirmed through cross-loadings and the square root of AVE exceeding inter-construct correlations. Reliability was verified using Cronbach's Alpha ( $>0.60$ ) and composite reliability ( $>0.70$ ) (Ghozali, 2021; Hair Jr et al., 2021). Structural Model (Inner Model) tested the hypothesized relationships among variables. The model's predictive power was evaluated using  $R^2$  values, and path coefficients were assessed for significance via bootstrapping, a non-parametric procedure that ensures robust statistical inference (Hair Jr et al., 2021).

Hypotheses were tested using PLS-SEM to examine both direct effects (e.g., Ambidextrous Leadership on Employee Performance) and indirect effects (e.g., through Innovative Work Behavior). The analysis was performed using SmartPLS software, which facilitates comprehensive evaluation of the structural and measurement models (Ghozali, 2021). This approach ensures a robust examination of the relationships among Ambidextrous Leadership, Person-Job Fit, Innovative Work Behavior, and Employee Performance in the context of public sector auditors.

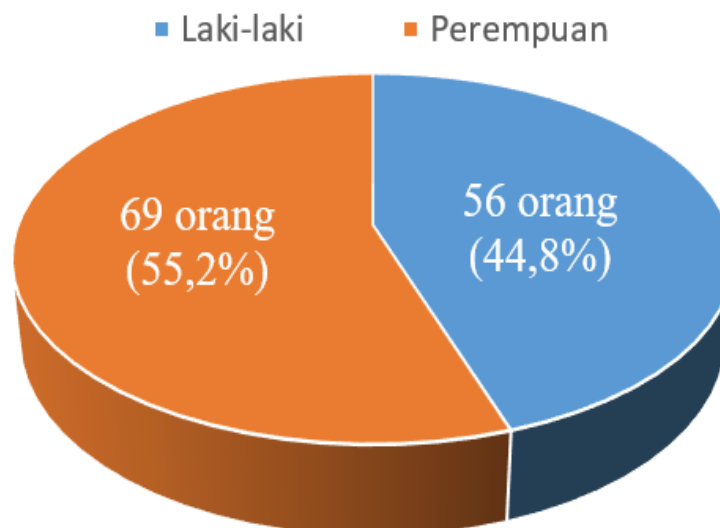
## **RESEARCH RESULT**

This study investigates the influence of Ambidextrous Leadership ( $X_1$ ) and Person-Job Fit ( $X_2$ ) on Employee Performance ( $Y$ ), mediated by Innovative

Work Behavior (Z), within the context of the Financial and Development Supervisory Agency (BPKP) Representative Office in North Sumatra Province, Indonesia. The analysis is based on a sample of 125 Functional Auditor Officers (PFA), utilizing primary data collected through a structured questionnaire comprising 37 statements. The findings, derived from descriptive statistics and path analysis, provide robust evidence of the direct and indirect effects of the variables under study, offering insights into the dynamics of leadership and job fit in enhancing employee performance in a public sector auditing environment.

### *Descriptive Analysis of Respondent Characteristics*

The descriptive analysis of respondent characteristics reveals significant demographic and professional diversity, which influences performance outcomes. As depicted in Figure 2, the majority of respondents are female (55.2%, n=69), compared to male respondents (44.8%, n=56). This gender distribution reflects an inclusive and equitable workplace, aligning with optimal gender equality practices at the BPKP North Sumatra office. The statistical analysis further indicates that female employees exhibit higher performance levels (TCR = 81.21, Mean = 4.06) compared to their male counterparts (TCR = 79.58, Mean = 3.98), as shown in Table 1. This finding suggests that gender may play a nuanced role in performance outcomes, potentially due to differences in work engagement or task orientation. The age also influences performance, with employees aged 36–45 years demonstrating the highest performance (TCR = 85.58, Mean = 4.28), as detailed in Table 4.2 of the thesis. This age group, typically occupying team leader or supervisory roles, benefits from accumulated experience and leadership responsibilities. Education level further impacts performance, with Master’s degree holders (S2) achieving the highest TCR (87.27, Mean = 4.36), underscoring the value of advanced education in enhancing auditing competencies. Additionally, employees with 16–20 years of tenure exhibit superior performance (TCR = 96.36, Mean = 4.82), likely due to their deep organizational knowledge and expertise.



**Figure 2. Respondent Characteristics by Gender**

Table 1. Descriptive Analysis of Respondent Characteristics by Gender

Gender	STS	TS	KS	S	SS	N	Max Score	Score	Mean	TCR
Female	0	6	123	449	181	759	3795	3082	4.06	81.21
Male	6	25	97	336	152	616	3080	2451	3.98	79.58

*Path Analysis and Coefficient of Determination (R<sup>2</sup>)*

Table 2. Summary of Path Analysis Results

Path Relationship	Coefficient	Mean	T Statistics	p-Values	Significance
X <sub>1</sub> → Y (Ambidextrous Leadership → Performance)	0,285	0,281	3,885	0.000	Significant
X <sub>2</sub> → Y (Person-Job Fit → Performance)	0,261	0,263	3,544	0.000	Significant
X <sub>1</sub> → Z (Ambidextrous Leadership → IWB)	0,430	0,426	4,503	0.000	Significant
X <sub>2</sub> → Z (Person-Job Fit → IWB)	0,403	0,407	4,195	0.000	Significant
Z → Y (IWB → Performance)	0,409	0,410	5,773	0.000	Significant
X <sub>1</sub> → Z → Y (Indirect via IWB)	0,176	0,176	3,255	0.001	Significant
X <sub>2</sub> → Z → Y (Indirect via IWB)	0,165	0,166	3,522	0.000	Significant

Table 3. The R-Square result.

	R-Square	R Square Adjusted
Employee Performance	0,755	0,749
Innovative Work Behavior	0,610	0,604

Table 4. The F-Square result.

Variabel Penelitian	Ambidextrous Leadership	Person-Job Fit	Innovative Work Behavior	Employee Performance
Ambidextrous Leadership			0,201	0,117
Person-Job Fit			0,177	0,100
Innovative Work Behavior				0,266
Employee Performance				

**DISCUSSION**

The path analysis results, summarized in Table 2, confirm significant direct effects of both Ambidextrous Leadership and Person-Job Fit on Employee Performance. Ambidextrous Leadership (X<sub>1</sub>) exerts a positive and significant effect on Employee Performance (Y) with a coefficient of 0.285 (t = 3.885, p < 0.05), supporting Hypothesis 1 (H1). This finding aligns with the Ambidexterity Organization Theory (Duncan, 1976; March, 1991), which posits that leaders balancing exploration (encouraging innovation) and exploitation (ensuring efficiency) foster enhanced employee performance. The descriptive analysis of Ambidextrous Leadership (Table 4.7) reveals a mean score of 3.84, with the highest-rated statement being consistent oversight of work targets (Mean = 3.99), indicating a strong emphasis on exploitation-oriented leadership practices.

Similarly, Person-Job Fit (X<sub>2</sub>) significantly influences Employee Performance (Y) with a coefficient of 0.261 (t = 3.544, p < 0.05), confirming

Hypothesis 2 (H2). This result corroborates the Theory of Work Adjustment (Dawis & Lofquist, 1984), which emphasizes the alignment of individual competencies and job demands for optimal performance. The descriptive statistics for Person-Job Fit (Table 4.8) show a mean score of 3.93, with high agreement on education alignment (Mean = 4.05) and regulatory understanding (Mean = 4.04), reflecting robust technical competency among auditors.

The R-Square shown in Tabel 3 value shows that the variation of the Employee Performance construct can be explained by the variation of the ambidextrous leadership, person-job fit, and innovative work behavior constructs by 75.5%. Thus, this model is classified as strong because only 24.5% of the variation in employee performance is not explained by these constructs. Meanwhile, the R-Square value for the innovative work behavior construct shows that 61.0% of its variation can be explained by ambidextrous leadership and person-job fit. Therefore, this model is categorized as moderate, because there is still 39.0% of the variation in innovative work behavior that is influenced by other factors outside the model. Based on Table 4, the largest F-square value or effect size on Innovative Work Behavior on Employee Performance is 0.266, which is included in the moderate category, and the one with the smallest effect size value on Employee Performance is Person-Job Fit, which is 0.100.

### *Mediating Role of Innovative Work Behavior*

Innovative Work Behavior (Z) plays a critical mediating role in the relationships between Ambidextrous Leadership, Person-Job Fit, and Employee Performance. Ambidextrous Leadership significantly influences Innovative Work Behavior (coefficient = 0.430,  $t = 4.503$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), supporting Hypothesis 3 (H3). This finding is consistent with prior studies (Babu et al., 2024; Kousina & Voudouris, 2023), which highlight that ambidextrous leaders foster innovation by creating a safe space for experimentation and ensuring procedural compliance. However, the thesis notes a stronger inclination toward exploitation (e.g., regulatory adherence) over exploration (e.g., risk-taking), which may limit the full realization of innovative behaviors.

Person-Job Fit also positively affects Innovative Work Behavior (coefficient = 0.403,  $t = 4.195$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), confirming Hypothesis 4 (H4). This result aligns with (Puspitasari et al., 2024), who found that job fit enhances employees' motivation to innovate. The descriptive analysis indicates that auditors are proactive in identifying problems (Mean = 4.05) but less inclined to inspire innovative ideas among peers (Mean = 3.79), suggesting room for improvement in collaborative innovation.

Innovative Work Behavior directly impacts Employee Performance (coefficient = 0.409,  $t = 5.773$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), supporting Hypothesis 7 (H7). This finding is corroborated by (Pham et al., 2024), emphasizing that innovative behaviors enhance work quality and efficiency. The indirect effects further validate the mediating role of Innovative Work Behavior: Ambidextrous Leadership influences Employee Performance through Innovative Work Behavior (coefficient = 0.176,  $t = 3.255$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , H5), and Person-Job Fit does so similarly (coefficient = 0.165,  $t = 3.522$ ,  $p < 0.05$ , H6). These results underscore the

pivotal role of innovation in translating leadership and job fit into performance outcomes.

The findings highlight the critical interplay between leadership style, job fit, and innovative behavior in driving employee performance within a public sector auditing context. The dominance of exploitation-oriented Ambidextrous Leadership, while ensuring compliance and efficiency, may stifle exploratory behaviors essential for innovation. This imbalance, as noted by (Rosing & Zacher, 2023), can hinder organizational adaptability in dynamic environments. To optimize performance, BPKP leaders should foster a balanced ambidextrous approach, encouraging risk-taking and autonomy alongside structured oversight. The significant influence of Person-Job Fit underscores the need for holistic job alignment, encompassing not only technical competencies but also personality fit and career development opportunities. The observed gaps in personality alignment and career progression, as reported by (Alqhaiwi et al., 2023), suggest that addressing these areas could further enhance innovative behaviors and performance. Organizational interventions, such as tailored training and flexible career pathways, could mitigate these challenges. The mediating role of Innovative Work Behavior reinforces its strategic importance in public sector organizations. As (Jyoti & Choudhary, 2024) argue, fostering a culture of innovation enables employees to address complex challenges creatively, thereby enhancing performance. The BPKP North Sumatra office could benefit from reducing administrative burdens and creating psychological safety for experimentation to bolster innovative behaviors.

This study provides empirical support for the integrated effects of Ambidextrous Leadership and Person-Job Fit on Employee Performance, mediated by Innovative Work Behavior. These findings contribute to the literature on public sector management and offer practical implications for enhancing auditing performance through strategic leadership and job alignment.

## **CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The research, conducted with 125 Functional Auditor Officers, confirms that both Ambidextrous Leadership and Person-Job Fit significantly enhance Employee Performance, both directly and indirectly through Innovative Work Behavior. Path analysis results demonstrate that Ambidextrous Leadership has a positive impact on performance ( $\beta = 0.285$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and innovative behavior ( $\beta = 0.430$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), supporting the Ambidexterity Organization Theory. However, the leadership approach at BPKP North Sumatra leans heavily toward exploitation rather than exploration, which limits the full potential of innovative behaviors. Similarly, Person-Job Fit has a direct influence on performance ( $\beta = 0.261$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) and innovative behavior ( $\beta = 0.403$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ), aligning with the Theory of Work Adjustment. While technical competencies are well-aligned, gaps in personality fit and career progression hinder optimal innovation and performance. Innovative Work Behavior serves as a critical mediator, significantly boosting performance ( $\beta = 0.409$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ) by enabling auditors to address complex challenges creatively. These findings underscore the interconnected roles of leadership, job fit, and innovation in driving performance in a public sector auditing context.

### ***Theoretical and Practical Contributions***

Theoretically, this study enriches the Ambidexterity Organization Theory by demonstrating that Ambidextrous Leadership significantly enhances employee performance through a balanced approach to exploration and exploitation, with Innovative Work Behavior as a critical mediator. It extends the Theory of Work Adjustment by confirming that Person-Job Fit drives performance and innovation in public sector auditing, particularly when technical competencies align with job demands. These findings align with prior research (Babu et al., 2024; Puspitasari et al., 2024), reinforcing the mediating role of innovation in leadership and job fit dynamics. Practically, the study offers actionable insights for BPKP managers. Leaders should foster innovation by encouraging risk-taking through pilot audit projects while maintaining oversight via tools like SIMA, as suggested by (Rosing & Zacher, 2023). To enhance Person-Job Fit, BPKP can implement personality assessments and mentorship programs to align auditors' traits (e.g., communication skills) with job demands and support career progression (Alqhaiwi et al., 2023). Policymakers should streamline administrative tasks using digital tools to free time for creative problem-solving, fostering a high-performing audit workforce.

### ***Research Limitations***

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations. First, the sample is limited to 125 auditors from a single BPKP office in North Sumatra, which may restrict the generalizability of findings to other regions or public sector contexts. Second, the reliance on self-reported questionnaire data introduces potential response bias, as auditors may over- or under-report their performance or innovative behaviors. Third, the study focuses on Ambidextrous Leadership and Person-Job Fit, potentially overlooking other factors, such as organizational culture or external stakeholder influences that may also affect performance. Finally, the cross-sectional design limits the ability to establish causality or capture long-term effects of leadership and job fit on performance.

### **ADVANCED RESEARCH**

Future research should address these limitations to deepen the understanding of performance dynamics in public sector auditing. First, expanding the sample to include multiple BPKP offices across Indonesia or other public sector agencies would enhance generalizability. Comparative studies between regions could reveal contextual factors influencing leadership and job fit. Second, incorporating mixed methods, such as interviews or observational data, could validate self-reported findings and provide richer insights into innovative behaviors. Third, exploring additional variables, such as organizational climate or digital transformation readiness, could uncover new drivers of performance. Finally, longitudinal studies tracking the impact of Ambidextrous Leadership and Person-Job Fit over time would clarify causal relationships and the sustainability of innovative behaviors. These directions promise to advance both theoretical and practical knowledge in public sector management.

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