

McKinsey 7-S Based Organizational Alignment, Innovation Culture, and Learning Organization on Work Creativity: Evidence from Fish Auction Place (TPI) Sidoarjo

Sumartik Sumartik¹, Mochamad Rizal Yulianto², Herlinda Maya Kumala Sari³, Dyah Atia Mayang Fa'una⁴

¹ Management Study Program, Faculty of Business, Law and Social Sciences, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, Sumartik1@umsida.ac.id

² Management Study Program, Faculty of Business, Law and Social Sciences, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, rizaldo@umsida.ac.id

³ Management Study Program, Faculty of Business, Law and Social Sciences, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, herlindamayakumalasari@umsida.ac.id

⁴ Management Study Program, Faculty of Business, Law and Social Sciences, Universitas Muhammadiyah Sidoarjo, dyahatiam.f@gmail.com

Abstract

Purpose: This study examines the effect of McKinsey 7-S based organizational alignment on work creativity, both directly and indirectly through innovation culture and learning organization as mediating variables, among managers and staff of Tempat Pelelangan Ikan (TPI/Fish Auction Place) Sidoarjo.

Design/methodology/approach: This quantitative study adopts an explanatory research design. The population consisted of managers and operational staff of TPI Sidoarjo, with a saturated sampling technique yielding 62 respondents. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with SmartPLS 4.0, encompassing both outer and inner model evaluation.

Findings: The model demonstrated good goodness-of-fit. McKinsey 7-S based organizational alignment was found to have a positive and significant effect on innovation culture and learning organization, both of which in turn positively and significantly influenced work creativity. Organizational alignment also exerted a direct, positive, and significant effect on work creativity. Mediation analysis confirmed that innovation culture and learning organization partially mediated the relationship between organizational alignment and work creativity.

Practical implications: TPI Sidoarjo managers are encouraged to prioritize strengthening innovation culture and learning organization practices as key pathways to enhancing employee work creativity and institutional competitiveness, alongside aligning the seven McKinsey 7-S elements: strategy, structure, systems, shared values, style, staff, and skills.

Originality/value: This study extends the McKinsey 7-S framework by integrating it with innovation culture and learning organization as mediating mechanisms in predicting work creativity, within the underexplored context of fisheries-sector MSMEs, offering both theoretical and managerial contributions.

Paper type: Empirical paper.

Keywords: Organizational Alignment, McKinsey 7-S, Innovation Culture, Learning Organization, Work Creativity, SEM-PLS, TPI Sidoarjo.

1. Introduction

The fisheries sector constitutes a pillar of Indonesia's maritime economy, particularly in coastal regions such as Sidoarjo, East Java. As one of Indonesia's most productive fishery commodity regions, Sidoarjo relies on Fish Auction Places (Tempat Pelelangan Ikan/TPI) as critical institutional infrastructure connecting fishermen with buyers and distribution networks. TPI Sidoarjo occupies a strategic position in the regional fisheries value chain; however, its operational effectiveness depends significantly on the organizational capacity and creative performance of its management and staff.

In the contemporary business environment, work creativity has emerged as a fundamental determinant of organizational adaptability and competitiveness (Amabile, 1996; Anderson et al., 2014).

Work creativity refers to the generation of novel and useful ideas by individuals within an organizational context and is increasingly recognized as the foundation for sustained innovation and institutional resilience (Shalley et al., 2004). For MSMEs operating in the fisheries sector, where market volatility, regulatory change, and resource constraints are endemic, enhancing employee work creativity is not merely an academic aspiration but a practical imperative.

The McKinsey 7-S Framework (Peters & Waterman, 1982; Waterman et al., 1980) provides a comprehensive lens for analyzing organizational alignment across seven interdependent elements: strategy, structure, systems, shared values, style, staff, and skills. The framework posits that organizational effectiveness emerges from the coherent alignment of these elements rather than from any single component in isolation. While the McKinsey 7-S model has been applied extensively in large corporations and government agencies, its application in fisheries-sector MSMEs remains largely unexplored.

Organizational alignment alone may be insufficient to generate work creativity directly; mediating mechanisms may transmit alignment effects into individual creative behavior. Innovation culture, defined as an organizational climate supporting experimentation, risk-taking, and systematic idea generation, has been identified as a significant antecedent of work creativity (Martins & Terblanche, 2003). Concurrently, learning organization practices that facilitate continuous learning, knowledge sharing, and adaptive capacity provide the cognitive and contextual resources necessary for creative ideation (Garvin, 1993; Senge, 1990).

Despite a growing body of research on individual construct relationships, a comprehensive model integrating McKinsey 7-S alignment, innovation culture, learning organization, and work creativity within a unified framework remains absent, particularly in fisheries-sector MSME contexts. This study addresses this gap by investigating direct and mediated effects using SEM-PLS, providing a nuanced understanding of how organizational alignment translates into creative work outcomes at TPI Sidoarjo.

This research contributes theoretically by extending the McKinsey 7-S framework with mediation mechanisms and empirically by validating the model in a fisheries-sector MSME context. Practically, findings provide actionable strategic recommendations for TPI Sidoarjo managers seeking to enhance institutional competitiveness through targeted interventions in organizational culture and learning capacity.

2. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

2.1 McKinsey 7-S Based Organizational Alignment

The McKinsey 7-S Framework was developed by Peters, Waterman, and Phillips (Waterman et al., 1980) as a diagnostic tool for understanding organizational effectiveness. The framework identifies seven mutually dependent elements: strategy (competitive plans and resource allocation decisions), structure (organizational hierarchy and coordination mechanisms), systems (formal and informal procedures governing operations), shared values (the core beliefs and cultural norms guiding organizational behavior), style (leadership and management patterns), staff (human resource composition and capabilities), and skills (organizational competencies) (Hariasih et al., 2019) (Sumartik et al., 2025). Organizational alignment occurs when these elements are mutually reinforcing and consistently oriented toward common goals (Semler, 1997).

In MSME contexts, organizational alignment is particularly critical because limited resources necessitate efficient coordination across all organizational dimensions (Beaver, 2002). Research by Rasool et al. (2021) and Alharbi and Yusoff (2012) demonstrated that coherent alignment of organizational elements is positively associated with innovation outcomes. (Sumartik, 2025) posited that systematic agreement across organizational subsystems reduces ambiguity and facilitates focused collective effort, thereby enhancing organizational performance.

2.2 Innovation Culture

Innovation culture refers to an organizational climate characterized by norms, values, and practices that actively support creative thinking, experimentation, and the systematic implementation of novel ideas (Ahmed, 1998; Martins & Terblanche, 2003). Key dimensions of innovation culture include tolerance for risk and failure, openness to new ideas, encouragement of experimentation, and sustained leadership support for creative initiatives (Rao & Weintraub, 2013). (Akhmala & Sumartik, 2024) identified organizational structure, strategy, support mechanisms, behavior, and communication

as primary cultural determinants of creativity and innovation. (Cranfield et al., 2024; Naranjo-Valencia et al., 2016; Suwijayanti & Sari, 2023; Yulianto, 2025; Yulianto et al., 2023) found empirical evidence that innovation culture significantly and positively influences creative and innovative outcomes across organizations.

2.3 Learning Organization

Senge (1990) conceptualized the learning organization as one that continuously expands its capacity to create its own future through five disciplines: personal mastery, mental models, shared vision, team learning, and systems thinking. Garvin (1993) operationalized learning organizations as those skilled at creating, acquiring, and transferring knowledge, and at modifying behavior to reflect new knowledge and insights. Watkins and Marsick (1997) developed the Dimensions of the Learning Organization Questionnaire (DLOQ) capturing seven dimensions: continuous learning, collaboration and team learning, knowledge sharing, embedded systems, empowerment, system connection, and strategic leadership for learning. Ellinger et al. (2002) and Ma et al. (2014) demonstrated positive associations between learning organization practices and employee creativity and performance.

2.4 Work Creativity

Work creativity, as conceptualized by Amabile (1983, 1996) and elaborated by Shalley and colleagues (2004), refers to the production of novel and appropriate ideas by individuals in organizational settings. Drawing on the componential theory of creativity (Amabile, 1996), work creativity emerges from the interaction of domain-relevant skills, creativity-relevant processes, and intrinsic task motivation. Organizational factors, including supervisory support, resource availability, and cultural norms, play significant roles in facilitating or inhibiting creative behavior (Shalley et al., 2004; Zhou & Shalley, 2003). Zhou and George (2001) developed a widely adopted 13-item scale measuring work creativity across dimensions of idea generation, creative problem-solving, and implementation of novel approaches.

2.5 Hypotheses Development

The alignment of organizational elements within the McKinsey 7-S framework creates internal organizational coherence that enables strategic intent to manifest as cultural norms and practices. When strategy, structure, systems, shared values, style, staff, and skills are mutually reinforcing, they collectively communicate to organizational members what behaviors and orientations are valued (Waterman et al., 1980). This coherence is likely to generate and reinforce an innovation culture, as aligned organizational messaging signals that creativity and experimentation are institutionally supported. Rasool et al. (2021) found that organizational coherence positively influenced creative climates, and Alharbi and Yusoff (2012) demonstrated strategic alignment positively associated with innovation outcomes.

H1: McKinsey 7-S Based Organizational Alignment has a positive and significant effect on Innovation Culture.

Organizational alignment creates the structural, cultural, and human capital preconditions for organizational learning. When strategy, systems, staff competencies, and shared values are coherently aligned, they collectively facilitate the conditions central to learning organization development, including open communication, knowledge-sharing norms, trust, and employee empowerment (Senge, 1990; Garvin, 1993). Aligned organizations can more systematically capture, codify, and disseminate organizational knowledge across hierarchical and functional boundaries. Semler (1997) argued that systematic organizational agreement supports continuous learning and adaptive organizational capacity.

H2: McKinsey 7-S Based Organizational Alignment has a positive and significant effect on Learning Organization.

Innovation culture functions as a direct antecedent of work creativity by establishing the psychological and contextual conditions enabling individuals to generate and implement novel ideas (Amabile, 1996; Martins & Terblanche, 2003). Organizations characterized by a culture valuing experimentation, tolerating failure, and rewarding creative contribution create the intrinsic motivational conditions and cognitive freedom necessary for creative ideation. Naranjo-Valencia et al. (2016) and

Rao and Weintraub (2013) confirmed empirically that innovation culture significantly predicts creative behavior and organizational innovation outcomes.

H3: Innovation Culture has a positive and significant effect on Work Creativity.

Learning organizations support work creativity by providing employees with access to diverse knowledge bases, fostering cross-functional collaboration, and cultivating a spirit of continuous improvement and inquiry (Ellinger et al., 2002; Garvin, 1993). As employees participate actively in knowledge creation and transfer, they develop broader cognitive repertoires, more diverse associative networks, and enhanced ability for creative ideation. Ma et al. (2014) and Li et al. (2020) confirmed positive relationships between learning organization practices and employee creativity across diverse organizational contexts.

H4: Learning Organization has a positive and significant effect on Work Creativity.

Beyond mediated effects, organizational alignment may directly influence work creativity by creating a coherent and supportive organizational context. Coherently aligned organizations reduce role ambiguity, provide clearer skill development pathways, and ensure more consistent supervisory support for creative endeavors, all of which have been identified as direct facilitators of creative work behavior (Shalley et al., 2004). The direct effect pathway suggests that alignment-induced clarity and consistency in organizational functioning directly motivates and enables creative contribution, independent of cultural or learning mediation.

H5: McKinsey 7-S Based Organizational Alignment has a direct positive and significant effect on Work Creativity.

Innovation culture may serve as a mediating mechanism through which organizational alignment influences work creativity, by translating structural and strategic coherence into behavioral norms and cultural values that directly enable creative behavior. This mediation pathway suggests that alignment affects creativity primarily because it helps construct and sustain a cultural climate supportive of innovation. Thus, the effect of McKinsey 7-S alignment on work creativity is, at least in part, channeled through the innovation culture that coherent alignment helps to generate.

H6: Innovation Culture mediates the effect of McKinsey 7-S Based Organizational Alignment on Work Creativity.

Similarly, learning organization practices may function as a mediating mechanism, converting the enabling conditions created by organizational alignment into concrete knowledge-creation behaviors that support individual creativity. Aligned organizations provide the human, structural, and systemic resources necessary to sustain organizational learning, which in turn expands employees' creative capacities. This indirect pathway through learning organization complements the direct alignment-creativity relationship and reinforces the role of knowledge capacity in creative performance.

H7: Learning Organization mediates the effect of McKinsey 7-S Based Organizational Alignment on Work Creativity.

3. Research Method

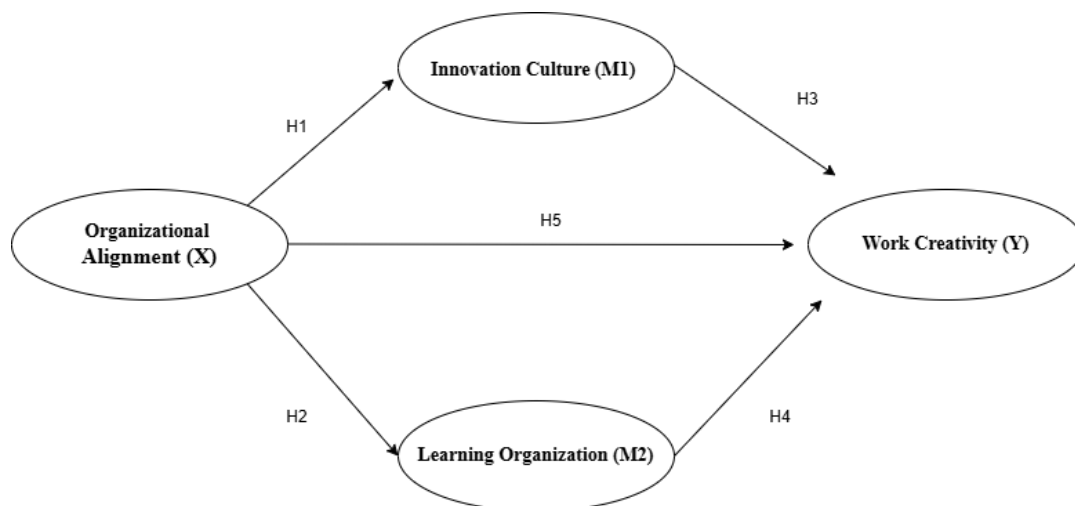


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a quantitative research design with an explanatory (causal-explanatory) approach, aiming to test theoretically grounded hypotheses about the direction and magnitude of causal relationships among McKinsey 7-S Based Organizational Alignment, Innovation Culture, Learning Organization, and Work Creativity. The explanatory approach is suited for hypothesis testing research seeking to establish causal order among variables (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

3.2 Population and Sample

The population of this study comprised all managers and operational staff of Tempat Pelelangan Ikan (TPI) Sidoarjo, totaling 62 individuals. Given the manageable size of the population, a saturated sampling technique (total population sampling) was employed, whereby all population members were included as respondents (Sugiyono, 2019). The final sample thus consisted of 62 respondents, ensuring comprehensive representativeness of the population.

3.3 Operational Definitions and Measurement

All research variables were measured using five-point Likert scales (1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly Agree) adapted from established instruments in the literature. McKinsey 7-S Based Organizational Alignment was measured using 21 items covering the seven framework dimensions (three items per dimension), adapted from Waterman et al. (1980) and Alharbi and Yusoff (2012). Innovation Culture was assessed using 12 items covering creative climate, risk tolerance, openness to ideas, and organizational support for innovation, adapted from Martins and Terblanche (2003) and Rao and Weintraub (2013). Learning Organization was measured using 15 items based on Watkins and Marsick's (1997) Dimensions of the Learning Organization Questionnaire (DLOQ). Work Creativity was assessed using 10 items adapted from Zhou and George (2001).

3.4 Data Collection

Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires distributed directly to all 62 respondents at TPI Sidoarjo between March and April 2025. Respondents completed the instruments voluntarily, and confidentiality of responses was assured. All questionnaires were returned, yielding a 100% response rate.

3.5 Data Analysis Technique

Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling with Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) using SmartPLS 4.0 software. SEM-PLS is appropriate for this study because it accommodates relatively small sample sizes, does not impose multivariate normality assumptions, and is well-suited for explanatory and exploratory causal modeling in complex variable configurations (Hair et al., 2019; Henseler et al., 2015). The analytical process encompassed two stages:

(1) outer model evaluation, assessing construct validity (convergent and discriminant) and reliability

(2) inner model evaluation, examining path coefficient significance, coefficient of determination (R²), predictive relevance (Q²), and model fit indices including SRMR.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1 Respondent Profile

Of the 62 respondents, 67.7% (n = 42) were male and 32.3% (n = 20) were female. The majority were aged 31-40 years (45.2%), followed by 41-50 years (27.4%), under 30 years (17.7%), and above 50 years (9.7%). In terms of education, 54.8% held diploma or bachelor's degree qualifications, 30.6% had completed senior secondary education, and 14.6% held postgraduate qualifications. The average organizational tenure was 8.3 years (SD = 3.7), reflecting a relatively experienced workforce.

4.2 Outer Model Evaluation

The outer model was assessed for convergent validity and discriminant validity. Convergent validity was confirmed as all indicator outer loadings exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019), and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values for all constructs exceeded 0.50. Composite reliability (CR) values ranged from 0.87 to 0.94, and Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.84 to 0.92, all surpassing the 0.70 threshold, confirming internal consistency reliability. Discriminant validity was established using the Heterotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio criterion, with all HTMT values below the conservative threshold of 0.85 (Henseler et al., 2015). Results are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1. Outer Model Evaluation Results

Construct	Items	Loading Range	AVE	CR	Alpha
Organizational Alignment (OA)	21	0.71 - 0.89	0.62	0.94	0.92
Innovation Culture (IC)	12	0.72 - 0.88	0.58	0.91	0.89
Learning Organization (LO)	15	0.70 - 0.87	0.55	0.92	0.90
Work Creativity (WC)	10	0.73 - 0.86	0.57	0.91	0.88

Source(s): Authors' own creation (SmartPLS 4.0 output)

4.3 Inner Model Evaluation (Goodness of Fit)

The inner model demonstrated satisfactory predictive accuracy and goodness of fit. The coefficient of determination (R²) for Innovation Culture was 0.61, for Learning Organization was 0.57, and for Work Creativity was 0.72, indicating that the proposed model explains substantial variance in these endogenous constructs and meeting the threshold for substantial explanatory power (Cohen, 1988). The Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) was 0.063, below the recommended threshold of 0.08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999), confirming adequate model fit. Predictive relevance (Q²) values obtained via the blindfolding procedure exceeded 0 for all endogenous constructs, supporting the model's predictive relevance (Hair et al., 2019).

4.4 Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing was conducted using bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples (Hair et al., 2019). Mediation effects were assessed using the indirect effects module in SmartPLS 4.0. Results of all seven hypotheses are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Hypothesis Testing Results (Bootstrapping, n = 5,000 resamples)

Hypothesis	Path	Beta (β)	t-statistic	p-value	Decision
H1	OA $\rightarrow$ IC	0.782	14.231	<0.001	Supported
H2	OA $\rightarrow$ LO	0.755	13.874	<0.001	Supported
H3	IC $\rightarrow$ WC	0.412	5.321	<0.001	Supported
H4	LO $\rightarrow$ WC	0.378	4.987	<0.001	Supported
H5	OA $\rightarrow$ WC (direct)	0.264	3.102	0.002	Supported
H6	OA $\rightarrow$ IC $\rightarrow$ WC	0.322	5.214	<0.001	Partial Mediation
H7	OA $\rightarrow$ LO $\rightarrow$ WC	0.285	4.732	<0.001	Partial Mediation

Source(s): Authors' own creation (SmartPLS 4.0 output)

All seven hypotheses were supported at the $p < 0.05$ significance level. McKinsey 7-S Based Organizational Alignment demonstrated strong positive effects on both Innovation Culture (H1: $\beta = 0.782$, $t = 14.231$, $p < 0.001$) and Learning Organization (H2: $\beta = 0.755$, $t = 13.874$, $p < 0.001$). Both Innovation Culture (H3: $\beta = 0.412$) and Learning Organization (H4: $\beta = 0.378$) exerted significant positive effects on Work Creativity. Organizational Alignment also demonstrated a significant direct effect on Work Creativity (H5: $\beta = 0.264$, $p = 0.002$). Mediation analysis confirmed partial mediation through Innovation Culture (H6: $\beta = 0.322$) and Learning Organization (H7: $\beta = 0.285$), with direct effects remaining significant after inclusion of mediators.

4.5 Discussion

The finding that McKinsey 7-S Based Organizational Alignment positively and significantly influences Innovation Culture (H1) is consistent with prior research by Alharbi and Yusoff (2012) and Rasool et al. (2021), who identified coherent organizational alignment as a precondition for creative climates and innovation-supportive environments. When the seven organizational elements are mutually reinforcing at TPI Sidoarjo, they collectively signal to employees that innovation is institutionally valued, thereby strengthening the emergent innovation culture. Martins and Terblanche (2003) similarly argued that organizational structure, strategy, and support mechanisms are primary cultural determinants of creativity and innovation.

The significant positive effect of Organizational Alignment on Learning Organization (H2) extends existing literature by demonstrating this relationship in a fisheries-sector MSME context. Coherently aligned organizations at TPI Sidoarjo provide the human capital, communication systems, and shared values that collectively enable continuous learning, collaborative knowledge creation, and adaptive organizational behavior (Garvin, 1993; Senge, 1990). This finding validates Semler's (1997) systematic agreement theory, suggesting that alignment across organizational subsystems creates the enabling conditions for organizational learning capacity to develop and flourish.

The positive effects of Innovation Culture on Work Creativity (H3) and Learning Organization on Work Creativity (H4) are consistent with the componential theory of creativity (Amabile, 1996) and prior empirical evidence (Ellinger et al., 2002; Ma et al., 2014; Martins & Terblanche, 2003). At TPI Sidoarjo, innovation culture creates the psychological safety and intrinsic motivation for creative ideation, while learning organization practices expand employees' knowledge bases and cognitive diversity, both recognized antecedents of creative behavior. These findings corroborate Zhou and George (2001) and Shalley et al. (2004) regarding the multifaceted contextual determinants of work creativity.

The significant direct effect of Organizational Alignment on Work Creativity (H5) indicates that alignment exerts creativity-enabling influences beyond those transmitted through cultural and learning mechanisms. Coherently aligned organizational elements at TPI Sidoarjo may reduce employees' role ambiguity, provide clearer skill development pathways, ensure consistent supervisory support, and create a more resource-rich environment for creative endeavor - direct contextual facilitators of work creativity identified by Shalley et al. (2004). This direct pathway complements the mediated pathways and suggests that alignment's influence on creativity is multi-channelled.

The partial mediation findings (H6, H7) confirm that Innovation Culture and Learning Organization serve as significant transmission channels through which Organizational Alignment influences Work Creativity, while direct effects persist. This aligns with Baron and Kenny's (1986) mediation logic and supports a nuanced, multi-pathway model of creativity determinants in organizational settings. The partial nature of mediation indicates that additional mediating variables - such as psychological empowerment, knowledge management practices, or organizational commitment - may further explain how alignment translates into creative outcomes. These findings collectively extend creativity research by introducing McKinsey 7-S alignment as a higher-order antecedent construct operating through both cultural and learning transmission pathways.

5. Conclusion

5.1 Research Conclusions

This study examined the influence of McKinsey 7-S Based Organizational Alignment on Work Creativity, both directly and through the mediating roles of Innovation Culture and Learning Organization, among the management and operational staff of TPI Sidoarjo. Using SEM-PLS (SmartPLS 4.0) with 62 respondents, all seven hypotheses were supported: (1) Organizational Alignment positively and significantly influences Innovation Culture; (2) Organizational Alignment positively and significantly influences Learning Organization; (3) Innovation Culture positively and significantly influences Work Creativity; (4) Learning Organization positively and significantly influences Work Creativity; (5) Organizational Alignment exerts a direct positive and significant effect on Work Creativity; (6) Innovation Culture partially mediates the Alignment-Creativity relationship; and (7) Learning Organization partially mediates the Alignment-Creativity relationship. The model demonstrated good overall fit (SRMR = 0.063) and substantial predictive accuracy (R² Work Creativity = 0.72).

5.2 Theoretical and Practical Implications

Theoretically, this study contributes to organizational alignment theory by demonstrating dual mediation mechanisms through innovation culture and learning organization within the McKinsey 7-S framework, particularly in the understudied context of fisheries-sector MSMEs. The findings enrich the scope of the McKinsey 7-S framework beyond its traditional application in large corporations and extend work creativity theory by identifying alignment as a higher-order organizational antecedent.

Practically, TPI Sidoarjo managers should: (1) conduct periodic organizational alignment audits using the 7-S framework to identify and address misalignment across strategic, structural, human capital, and cultural dimensions; (2) cultivate innovation culture through recognition programs for creative contributions, leadership modeling of innovative behavior, and institutionalized tolerance for experimental failure; and (3) embed learning organization practices through systematic knowledge-sharing platforms, cross-functional collaborative activities, and after-action reviews. These interventions, strategically aligned with the 7-S framework, constitute the primary institutional pathways for enhancing work creativity and long-term competitiveness.

5.3 Limitations and Future Research Directions

This study acknowledges several limitations. First, the use of saturated sampling at a single TPI limits generalizability to other fisheries institutions and geographic regions. Second, the cross-sectional design precludes strict causal inference. Third, all data were collected from single-source self-reports, potentially introducing common method variance. Future research should employ longitudinal designs, expand samples to multiple TPI locations across East Java or nationally, and incorporate objective performance metrics alongside perceptual measures. Exploring additional mediators - including psychological empowerment, organizational commitment, and knowledge management practices -

could further illuminate the multi-channel relationship between organizational alignment and work creativity (Firmansyah & Sari, 2023). Future studies should also examine boundary conditions (moderators) such as organizational age, leadership style, and environmental uncertainty that may qualify the alignment-creativity relationship in MSME fisheries contexts.

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