



Unleash the Potential of Personal Knowledge Management: Fostering Innovation and Well-Being in Higher Education

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Abstract

Purpose - This study aims to explore ways to enhance innovative behaviours and improve the well-being of academic staff in the higher education sector. Specifically, it examines whether personal knowledge management can foster innovative behaviours among academic staff. Additionally, the study investigates the impact of both innovation and personal knowledge management on staff well-being.

Design/methodology/approach - Applying to private universities, 154 questionnaires were collected. The collected data was analysed using Smart-PLS to check the constructs' validity and reliability, and to test the relationships between constructs under investigation.

Findings - The results showed that personal knowledge management can support individual innovation and raise human well-being. Unlike previous studies, this study found that individual innovation does not affect well-being in the higher education sector.

Originality/value - This study advances knowledge in two ways. First, it investigates knowledge management from the individual level, while most of the previous studies focused on the organisational level of knowledge management. Second, it is believed that well-being can support innovation, but the impact of innovation on well-being has not sufficiently been studied yet.

Keywords: Personal knowledge management; individual innovation; well-being; higher education; private universities

1. Introduction

Current organisational studies have made a strong emphasis on employees' well-being. More companies have started to prioritise employees' well-being because of its benefits in the work environment. Although great attention has been paid to well-being, comprehensive understanding of employees' well-being is still unresolved (Pradhan and Hati, 2022). Higher education staff is believed to suffer from work stress. Many studies called for more understanding about the well-being of the staff and finding a way to improve

it. Reflecting on the past, we discover that working in academia was low stress until the 1990s. However, over the past few decades, a number of changes have taken place, including management changes, increased competition, teaching loads, online courses, higher expectations for research, and administrative duties, which in turn have increased the academic stress (Hyatt, 2022). The danger of this pressure is the fear that staff's burnout would result in a series of problems such as a lack of energy, negativism, a decrease in efficiency, absenteeism, and an interruption in the relationship between the staff and the students (Teles et al., 2020). Therefore, it is very important to study the factors that may support higher education staff's well-being. Gopinath (2020) has found that academic staff would be happy and satisfied if they performed activities that would give them the feel of self actualisation, such as innovative activities.

Based on the literature and the researcher's knowledge, the majority of research that has been conducted to investigate the relationship between innovation behaviour and well-being focused on the impact of well-being on innovation, while studying the role of innovation in well-being has received relatively less attention (Tan et al., 2021). In addition, it has been believed that the individual innovation behaviour and the way employees think and manage information can have a great impact on the organisation (Newman et al., 2020); however, previous studies have not paid enough attention to the relationship between individual's level of managing knowledge and innovative behaviours (Slåtten et al., 2020). Finally, most of the studies that investigated the role of knowledge management in supporting innovation were on the organisational level, while the theory of enterprise knowledge management is divided into three parts: personal knowledge management, knowledge value management, and knowledge creation (Zhao et al., 2022). Moreover, Hock-Doepgen et al. (2021) mentioned that various types of knowledge management may vary in their impacts on innovation. Furthermore, many studies recommended the relationship between knowledge management and innovation in service industries such as: Azeem et al., (2021); Ode and Ayavoo, (2020); Mei et al., (2023). Therefore, it is vital to examine the role of personal knowledge management in supporting the innovation at the individual level. Thus, this current study aims at 1) Investigating the influence of personal knowledge management on both individual innovation behaviours and well-being. 2) Examining the influence of individual innovation on well-being.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Personal Knowledge Management

Personal knowledge management can be defined as a variety of activities that are carried out by individuals to investigate, collect, and apply new knowledge, ideas, and experiences. These activities allow them to update and renew their personal knowledge (Nazeer et al., 2023). Personal knowledge could be acquired from instructions, books, notes, documents, videos, or photographs. Higher education staff, as knowledge workers, use personal knowledge management even they do not know that the activities they are performing are a component of personal knowledge management (Figurska et al., 2023).

2.2. Individual Innovation Behaviours

Individual innovation behaviour is a process of recognising a certain problem, finding new ideas, and deciding how to implement the solution. It is a complex process by which the individuals try to use creative ideas, technology, or methods to solve their work problems. Previous studies of innovation focused heavily on the organisational innovation and did not pay enough attention to the individual's innovation behaviours (Mutonyi et al., 2020), especially in higher education sector (Purwanto, 2020).

Khan et al. (2020) and Purwanto (2020) believed that the challenges of the current era have caused individual innovation behaviours to play a critical role in higher education sector, and that more studies have to be conducted to discover the factors affecting innovation behaviour in higher education. This may be due to the learning environment, which is no longer stable as it used to be. Nowadays, the innovative behaviours of the staff affect their career development, students' outcomes, and the overall performance of all stakeholders (Ovbiagbonhia et al., 2019).

2.3. Well-being

There is an increasing concern about studying employees' well-being, especially in the learning context, because of its critical impact on the learning quality (Hascher and Waber, 2021). The employee's well-being is a general feeling of life satisfaction or happiness, self-acceptance, and purpose of life. The main concern is that the impact of the staff's well-being is not only reflected on organisation performance, but also on the entire society, which results in a series of ongoing problems (Hascher and Waber, 2021).

Well-being can be classified into two types: subjective well-being and objective well-being. The objective well-being investigates the objective things of a good life, such as income, health, and educational attainment (Tan et al., 2020). While subjective well-being is known as the degree to which the individual is happy and considers his/her life as a whole favourable (Voukelatou et al., 2021). In other words, it represents the degree to which the individual feels life satisfaction (Tan et al., 2020).

Thus, this study focused on the subjective dimension of well-being for two reasons: first, in higher education sector, innovation does not necessarily increase the individual's income or develop their health. Second, objective well-being can be measured with some indicators such as gross domestic product (GDP), while subjective well-being is measured by data collected from the individual himself /herself (Voukelatou et al., 2021).

3. Theoretical Background

The theory of self-determination illustrates that individuals have intrinsic motivation by nature. They instinctively search for challenges, updates, and any chance to learn. Moreover, they need to integrate with the surrounding values and social practices (Ryan, 2009). Individuals are active and strive for growth and development. If individuals are satisfied with competence, autonomy, and relatedness, this would enhance their well-being (Deci et al., 2017). Accordingly, individuals need knowledge and seek innovation (since it is a challenge), and when they have the knowledge and innovation, they would be more satisfied.

4. Conceptual Framework and Hypotheses Development

4.1. Personal Knowledge Management and Individual Innovation Behaviour

Managing knowledge has many benefits, since it requires methods and techniques to find out valuable information and ideas and share them with others (Abbas et al., 2020). Personal knowledge management is very important for researchers and employees. It plays a vital role in their lives because it supports their performance and innovative behaviours. In addition, personal knowledge management includes searching, collecting, organising, using, and sharing information. These processes help them manage their files and documents so they can find the information needed easily and use it in a correct way. Without effective personal knowledge management, individuals may not achieve their objectives (Shahzad et al., 2022).

H1: Personal knowledge management has a positive impact on individual innovation behaviours

4.2. Personal Knowledge Management and Well-being

Managing information enables the individual to achieve his/her goals easier, which would make him/her feel satisfied. On the other hand, when employees share information, they may solve others' problems and behold their development, which would also make them feel satisfied in turn. Moreover, employees need support, and sharing knowledge will enable them to get the advice or the information they need. These supportive behaviours would also make them satisfied (Chung and

Huang, 2021). Singh and Singh, (2018) believed that knowledge management enables individuals to get valuable information and facilitates effective decisions. These benefits will in turn make them satisfied. Moreover, communicating with others who may have the same interests might give a feeling of joy.

H2: Personal knowledge management has a positive impact on well-being.

4.3. Individual Innovation Behaviour and Well-being

Innovation leads to various types of benefits. These benefits raise the individual's satisfaction (Brulé and Munier, 2021). Moreover, individuals feel happy when they perceive how their innovation or ideas benefit the business or society. Besides, innovation involves having freedom and thinking out of the box and taking the risk. These behaviours enhance the individual's feeling of independence (Sánchez-Hernández et al., 2023). In line with these results, Tan et al. (2021) mentioned that innovative behaviour or creative tasks would result in a positive mood, whereas employees are happier and more active when they are performing innovative behaviours or doing something creative.

H3: Individual innovation behaviour has a positive impact on well-being.

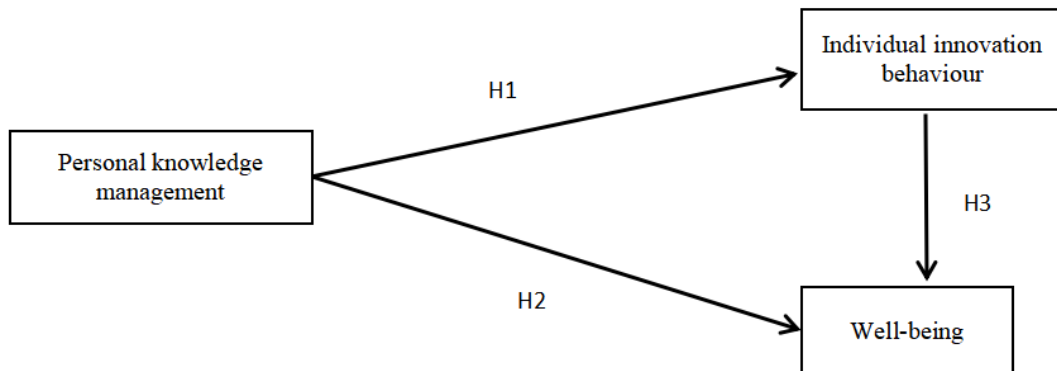


Figure (1): Conceptual framework

Source(s): Author's own work

5. Methods

5.1. Type of Research and Data Collection

A quantitative research method has been conducted as the aim of this study is to determine the influential relationship between the variables (Creswell et al., 2003). A deductive research approach has been used since the study tested hypotheses that are already in an existing theory. 154 responses were collected by an online survey. The online survey may be beneficial because it can reduce bias for a number of reasons. For example, the online survey does not allow respondents to flip ahead to see how many questions are remaining and it must be completed. Besides, the respondent can answer the questions at a convenient time for him/her, so he/she may not rush to answer the survey at a specific scheduled time (Evans and Mathurt, 2005).

5.2. Measures

Personal knowledge management construct was measured by 30 items for the 5 dimensions of knowledge management: 1) Gathering, 2) organizing, keeping, and securing, 3) selecting and evaluating, 4) spreading and sharing, 5) creating, analysing, and presenting. Each dimension has 6 items adopted from Saleem et al. (2021). The individual behaviour construct was measured by 5 items adopted from Slåtten et al. (2020). The individual behaviours measures estimate the individual's ability to generate and use new ideas or techniques to solve problems and develop his/her work. The well-being construct was adopted from Koroglu and Ozmen, (2022). These measures estimate the extent to which individuals feel they are living a meaningful and good life and interested in their daily activities. A 5-point Likert scale was used to measure each of the previous constructs.

5.3. Sampling

Non-probability sampling techniques were used. A convenience sample method was adopted because the target population meets certain criteria to achieve the purpose of the study. Although the convenience sample is not necessarily generalisable to the population, the statistical power of the convenience sample rises as the sample size increases (Etikan et al., 2016).

Faculty staff members such as professors and assistant professors were chosen as a sample unit to answer the questionnaire, because they are the ones who know the answer to these questions. The reason for the non-probability sample is that their names and contacts are not allowed to be shared, thus there is no frame for the society. Moreover, choosing the staff who has the intention to cooperate may reduce the bias rates in the answers (Etikan et al., 2016).

This study targeted the higher education staff of private universities who work in the business department in various specialties. The reasons for choosing private universities can be stated as follows: 1) Private universities are believed to make a great effort in order to survive in a competitive environment; therefore, they pay more attention to the innovative activities to meet the needs and desires of the interested parties (Nasib et al., 2022). 2) Public professors are rarely evaluated and asked about teaching quality. On the contrary, in private universities, professors perceive their students as customers who pay for the service. Thus, professors in private universities care more about developing and innovating new teaching methods or new techniques in solving a problem (Klafke et al., 2020). 3) The business department in Egypt is one of the most important departments for economic growth as it affects both investments and international trade. Although both public and private universities seek development and innovation, private universities have a greater ability to change and innovate. This may be because of the structures, regulations, and policies of the public university (Wagdi and Sharihan, 2021).

6. Results

Structural equation modeling using the Smart-PLS software program was used to test the hypotheses. Convergent validity and reliability indicators were viewed as shown in the following table:

Table (1) AVES and reliability indicators

Construct	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Personal knowledge management as a second order variable:			
- Gathering data.	0.508	0.677	0.804
- Organizing, keeping, securing data.	0.556	0.604	0.790
- Selecting, evaluating data.	0.514	0.686	0.809
- Spreading, sharing data.	0.504	0.753	0.835
- Creating, analyzing, presenting.	0.509	0.758	0.838
Individual innovation behavior	0.517	0.688	0.810
Well-being	0.513	0.762	0.804

Source(s): Author’s own work

Regarding convergent validity, the average variance extracted (AVE) for each measure exceeded the threshold value of 0.50 (Hair et al., 2014), so the convergent validity was established. As for reliability analysis expressed in Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability, it showed that all of the constructs were reliable with a value above 0.6 (Hair et al., 2010).

Discriminant validity indicators were viewed as shown in the following table, No.2.

Table (2) Fornell-Larcker Criterion

	Creating, analyzing, presenting	Gathering data	Individual innovation behavior	Organizing, keeping, securing data	Selecting, evaluating data	Spreading, sharing data	Well-being
Creating, analyzing, presenting	0.713						
Gathering data	0.255	0.712					
Individual innovation behavior	0.221	0.511	0.719				
Organizing, keeping, securing data	0.195	0.256	0.160	0.746			
Selecting, evaluating data	0.058	0.034	0.231	0.172	0.717		
Spreading, sharing data	0.234	0.223	0.024	0.049	0.232	0.710	
Well-being	0.069	0.398	0.218	0.498	0.240	0.243	0.716

Source(s): Author’s own work

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Discriminant validity was established because the correlation between the variable and itself was more than the correlation between the variable and other variables (Hair et al., 2014).

Moreover, the research model is able to predict of well-being by 22%. This percentage is very satisfactory because it exceeds 20%, which is considered an appropriate percentage in social sciences (Hair et al., 2014).

Table (3) R²

V.	Explanation Factor (R ²)
Well-being	0.220

Source(s): Author’s own work

Hypotheses Testing

Based on path analysis findings below, shown in Table (4):

Table (4) Hypotheses testing

Hypothesis	Path coefficient (β)	T Statistics (O/S TDE V)	P Values	Decision
H1: Personal knowledge management -> Individual innovation behavior	0.399	2.416	0.016	Supported
H2: Personal knowledge management -> Well-being	0.454	2.540	0.011	Supported
H3: Individual innovation behavior -> Well-being	0.035	0.210	0.833	Rejected

Source(s): Author’s own work

Personal knowledge management has positive significant effect on individual innovation behaviour ($\beta = 39.9\%$, $p\text{-value} < 0.05$). Personal knowledge management has a positive significant effect on well-being ($\beta = 45.4\%$, $p\text{-value} < 0.05$). Individual innovation behaviour has no effect on well-being.

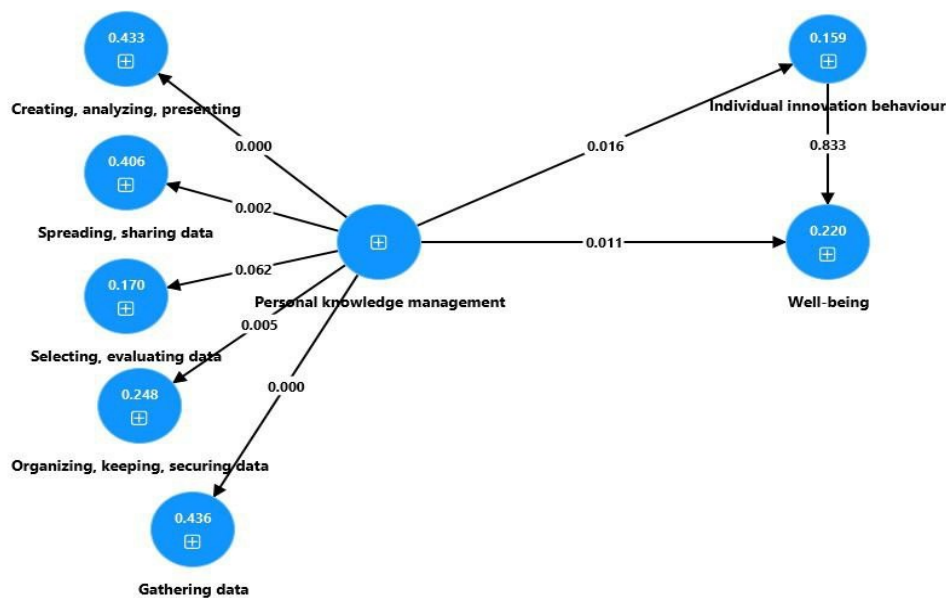


Figure (2): Testing model

Source(s): Author's own work

7. Discussion

This study has found that personal knowledge management plays a critical role in supporting both individual innovation and well-being in the higher education sector. While most of the previous studies have found that innovation has a positive effect on the well-being, this study has found that individual innovation has no significant effect on well-being. Dackert (2010) found that innovation climate has a positive effect on well-being, and it can also decrease work stress. Furthermore, Li et al. (2022) confirmed that innovative behaviours increase the positive mood and play an important role in self-actualisation. They explain these results by noting that individuals tend to feel satisfied when they are engaging in creative activities.

Acar et al. (2021) provided some justifications for the negative or no relationship between innovation and well-being. These justifications can be summarised as follows: 1) Innovation behaviours do not necessarily result in tangible benefits or happiness. The relationship between innovation and well-being can be influenced by the level of creativity and the approach used to

measure it. For instance, results may vary depending on whether the innovation behaviors are everyday practices or more significant, world-changing innovations. Additionally, the exact source of well-being remains unclear—whether it is the innovation behaviors themselves or the social engagements associated with these behaviors that contribute most to well-being. Furthermore, some studies suggest that individuals who pursue perfectionism in academics tend to exhibit higher levels of innovation; however, this drive for excellence may also lead to burnout (Chang et al., 2016; Childs and Stoeber, 2012; Wigert et al., 2012). One possible explanation for these results is that a sense of ownership increases individuals' shared responsibility, making them feel accountable for both the successes and failures of the institution. As a result, they may put significant effort into innovating as part of their responsibilities, yet they may not derive joy or satisfaction from these behaviours (El Bedawy et al., 2017). Based on this discussion, it can be concluded that future research should explore the impact of different types and levels of innovation on well-being. Additionally, individual characteristics may influence this relationship, as some studies suggest that certain personality types—such as those who prefer routine—may not feel comfortable engaging in innovative behaviours.

8. Implications

8.1. Theoretical Implications

This study aims to fill a number of gaps in well-being literature. **First**, higher education staff well-being in literature remains an issue that needs further research, particularly in light of the significant changes and challenges the educational environment has faced recently (Aithal and Aithal, 2023). **Second**, higher education staff deals with much information (Akter and Haque, 2022). Thus, personal knowledge management plays a critical role in their lives. Previous studies have not paid enough attention to knowledge management in the individual level as they have with organisational level of knowledge management. The **third** gap in the higher education literature is the limited focus on innovation within the educational sector. (Gates et al., 2021). Moreover, innovation studies have mostly concentrated on the impact of well-being on innovation.

8.2. Practical Implications

The results of this study can help higher education staff: deans, vice deans, and universities management. In addition, this study highlights the importance of individual knowledge management in supporting both

innovation and well-being in higher education sector. Higher education staff handle vast amounts of information on a daily basis. If this information is not properly organised, it may not be used adequately, potentially hindering the overall performance of the university. The increasingly competitive environment of higher education demands innovation to maintain a competitive edge. Thus, to address this, higher education decision makers should hold seminars and workshops to raise awareness about effective knowledge management practices in universities. Additionally, developing mobile applications or software solutions to assist staff in managing vast amounts of data and information could significantly enhance operational efficiency. Based on the findings of this study, the proposed suggestions can foster innovative behaviours and enhance staff well-being. However, it is important to note that while innovative behaviours may contribute to improved well-being, they do not guarantee it. Higher education management must ensure that the staff clearly perceive the positive impact of innovation. To achieve this, they could link innovative behaviours to performance evaluations, incentives, and promotion opportunities. Given the current high-stress environment, deans and vice deans should also organise recreational activities, stress-relief initiatives, and psychological support programs to foster well-being and resilience among staff to ensure the staff's well-being.

9. Limitation and Future Research

Similar to all studies, this study has some limitations. The hypotheses were tested exclusively in private universities, whereas exploring personal knowledge management, innovation, and well-being in public universities is equally important. A comparative study between private and public institutions would provide valuable insights from both theoretical and practical perspectives. Additionally, expanding the study to examine various types of knowledge would deepen the understanding of personal knowledge management. The staff acquire knowledge from a range of sources—such as audios, videos, books, and research—which may include both theoretical and practical information. Categorising these knowledge types could enhance the understanding of how to effectively manage different forms of knowledge. Last, incorporating interviews in future studies to explore staff perspectives on the innovation process and its impact on higher education would be a valuable contribution to the literature.

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Appendices

Appendix.1 Questionnaire.

Personal knowledge management	
<i>Gathering</i>	(Saleem et al., 2021)
“When I search for information, I try to find the people who have knowledge in the field. “	
“I cope well with gathering information on subject that interest me. “	
“I can use a variety of information resources (I am familiar with them). “	
“I make notes systematically. “	
“I use deep web resources.”	
“I prefer learning from experts, professionals.”	
<i>Organizing, keeping, securing</i>	
“I am trying to order, classify and sort gathered information to be able to find it later easily.”	
“Usually I keep encountered information that I do not need now but might be useful in the future.”	
“I keep information in paper forms (notes, binders). “	
“I keep information in electronic form (hard disk, USB drive).”	
“I try to take note of spoken information that is interesting for me in order to keep it and add to my collection.”	
“I care about making copies of kept materials and saving them.”	
<i>Selecting, evaluating</i>	
“I know how to evaluate information on the Internet (I am able to select valuable information and webpages).”	
“In case of large search results (thousands of links), I have no problems with selecting high quality materials.”	
“Even if I use peer-reviewed journals and books, I have no problems selecting the articles and publications that are the most important for the subject I am working on.”	
“Sometimes I browse documents that I am keeping (both in electronic and paper form), and I throw away unnecessary and redundant materials.”	
“I never browse materials I have kept for the future unless I need them currently.”	
“I think that the knowledge and skills I am gaining during my work will be useful in my professional life.”	

<i>spreading, sharing</i>	
<p>“I like sharing my notes and other materials (photocopies, data) with my peers. “</p> <p>“I like sharing knowledge (spoken information) related to work with my peers.”</p> <p>“My peers share their notes with me.”</p> <p>“My peers share their knowledge (spoken information about our work) with me.”</p> <p>“Generally speaking, I am pleased with the ways and methods of knowledge sharing of my heads.”</p> <p>“Our academic heads are available and advise us cordially.”</p>	
<i>Creating, analysing, presenting</i>	
<p>“I like preparing new subjects (writing tasks, speeches, etc.).”</p> <p>“I have no problem with preparing new subjects that are new to me, with deep analysis.”</p> <p>“I have no problem with searching for and forming new problem statements (analysis of literature, research questions, hypotheses), e.g.”</p> <p>“Conducting empirical studies (surveys, experiments) on my own would not be a problem for me, if that was necessary. “</p> <p>“I am familiar with basic office applications (like Microsoft Office).</p> <p>“I like public speaking (speaking in classes, conferences).”</p>	
Individual innovation	
<p>“I create new ideas to solve problems in my job.”</p> <p>“I search out new working methods or techniques to complete my work.”</p> <p>“I investigate and find ways to implement my ideas.”</p> <p>“I promote my ideas so others might use them in their work.”</p> <p>“I try out new ideas in my work.”</p>	(Slåtten et al., 2020)
Well-being	
<p>“I lead a purposeful life.”</p> <p>“I am competent in the activities that are important to me.”</p> <p>“I am interested in my daily activities.”</p> <p>“I live a good life.”</p> <p>“I lead a meaningful life.”</p>	(Koroglu and Ozmen, 2022)

إطلاق العنان لإمكانيات إدارة المعرفة الفردية: تعزيز الابتكار الفردي

وسعادة ورفاهية الفرد في قطاع التعليم العالي

مستخلص البحث :

هدف البحث : هذه الدراسة تهدف إلى إيجاد طرق لدعم السلوكيات الابتكارية وتحسين سعادة ورفاهية أعضاء هيئة التدريس في قطاع التعليم العالي، وبالتحديد دراسة إذا ما كانت إدارة المعرفة الفردية يمكنها أن تدعم السلوكيات الابتكارية لدى أعضاء هيئة التدريس. بالإضافة إلى اكتشاف تأثير كلٍ من السلوكيات الابتكارية وإدارة المعرفة الفردية على سعادة ورفاهية أعضاء هيئة التدريس.

منهجية البحث : لقد تم تطبيق هذا البحث على الجامعات الخاصة ، وتم جمع ١٥٤ قائمة استقصاء.

وتم تحليل البيانات باستخدام برنامج Smart PLS أحد أساليب نماذج المعادلة الهيكلية ذات المربعات الصغرى ، لاختبار صدق وثبات المتغيرات ، واختبار العلاقات بين المتغيرات محل البحث.

نتائج البحث: أوضحت النتائج أن إدارة المعرفة الفردية تدعم الابتكار الفردي وتحسن سعادة ورفاهية الفرد. كما اتضح أن الابتكار الفردي لا يؤثر على سعادة ورفاهية أعضاء هيئة التدريس في قطاع التعليم العالي.

الإضافة العلمية وأصالة البحث : هذا البحث يحاول سد الفجوات البحثية في الدراسات السابقة، أولاً : من خلال دراسة تأثير إدارة المعرفة الفردية على المستوى الفردي، حيث أن معظم الدراسات السابقة تركز على دراسة إدارة المعرفة على المستوى التنظيمي. ثانياً : معظم الدراسات السابقة قامت بدراسة تأثير سعادة ورفاهية الفرد على الابتكار الفردي ، في حين أن هذه الدراسة تقوم باستكشاف أثر الابتكار الفردي على سعادة ورفاهية الفرد، والتي لم يتم دراستها بشكل كافي في الدراسات السابقة.

الكلمات المفتاحية : إدارة المعرفة الفردية ؛ الابتكار الفردي؛ السعادة والرفاهية؛ قطاع التعليم العالي؛ الجامعات الخاصة.