

FOSTERING CHANGE CHAMPIONING BEHAVIOR IN PUBLIC INSTITUTIONS: THE INTERPLAY OF DIGITAL LEADERSHIP, TRANSACTIONAL LEADERSHIP, AND AGILE ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

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Abstract: Digital transformation and increasingly complex external environmental dynamics are driving public institutions, including the police, to adopt adaptive and strategic leadership approaches. This study aims to examine the direct and indirect effects of Digital Leadership and Transactional Leadership on Change Championing Behaviour, with Agile Organisational Culture as a mediating variable. Using a descriptive and exploratory quantitative approach, primary data were collected from 118 police personnel from Indonesia through structured questionnaires and analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) with the assistance of SmartPLS 3.3.3. The results revealed that both leadership styles have a significant influence on champion behaviour towards change, with Digital Leadership showing a stronger influence in shaping an agile organisational culture. Additionally, Agile Organizational Culture was found to partially mediate the relationship between the two leadership styles and Change Championing Behaviour, with mediation values of 47.55% and 38.45%, respectively. These findings confirm that the success of organisational transformation in the public sector heavily depends on the synergy between strategic leadership and adaptive work culture. This study provides practical implications for

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policymakers to design leadership development programmes and organisational culture revitalisation initiatives to enhance the responsiveness and readiness of public institutions in facing disruptions in the digital era.

Keywords: Digital Leadership; Transactional Leadership; Agile Organisational Culture; Change Champion Behaviour.

JEL CODES: M12, M14, M15, O33, H83.

1. Introduction

Modern police institutions today face technical disturbances, fast social change, and rising public expectations of police services, which require an adaptable and strategic leadership style. Strengthening strategic vision, data-driven decision-making, and technology use helps digital leadership guide companies to produce real efficiency and innovation by means of digital transformation (Harsono et al., 2024; Hinse & Mathieu, 2022). Recent studies underline how important digital leadership in the public sector, especially in police departments, is to increase organizational response to ever-dynamic external issues (Harsono et al., 2024; Gundhus et al., 2021; Ernst et al., 2020). Not only is leadership focused on long-term vision, but it also relies on the capacity to maintain stability in the face of unpredictability. Maintaining order, effectiveness, and excellent control over internal processes depends critically on transactional leadership (Adriansyah et al., 2020). Research underlines the need to merge Digital Leadership with Transactional Leadership to foster leadership cooperation to promote organisational innovation by means of proactive behavioral change. In this regard, the idea of Change Championing Behaviour becomes rather important as adaptive leadership may let people actively participate in the transformation process within the company (Hiçyılmaz & Şahin, 2024).

Agile Organization Culture (AOC) is very important for helping companies to be flexible enough to change. Fostering championing behavior within a public sector company depends on a workplace that enables teamwork, experimentation, and lifelong learning (Jang & Jeong, 2022; Istanti et al., 2022). Particularly in public sector companies in developing nations, empirical research clarifying the mediating function of AOC on leadership style and Change Championing Behaviour suffers from limitations (Jaspin et al., 2021; Ernst et al., 2021). This emphasizes the necessity of further investigation to investigate and clarify this very complicated link and support theoretical growth within the framework of police institutions. Two theories—Social Bond Theory and Social Learning Theory—form the basis of this

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work. Introduced by Hirschi in 1969, Social Bond Theory stresses the need for social ties in encouraging positive behavior (Boamah, 2022). In the framework of police agencies, leadership that stresses values and creative behavior may reinforce current standards to assist transformation within the company (Kumari & Dash, 2022; Ernst et al., 2021). Furthermore, Bandura's 1977 Social Learning Theory on the process of imitation or modeling in behavior (Verawati et al., 2023). These two ideas provide a strong foundation for comprehending how supportive leadership connections help Change Championing Behavior grow. By means of analysis of these relationships, this study also helps to clarify the relevance of the interactions among Digital Leadership, Transactional Leadership, Agile Organisational Culture, and Change Championing Behaviour in the framework of public sector organisations, namely the police. These results not only provide a robust theoretical foundation but also clarify the link between research results and leadership practices and organisational culture change in public sector companies (Yangailo, 2023; Ernst et al., 2021). Thus, this research is intended to be a guide or reference for companies, especially legislators, in enhancing the capacity and efficacy of public organisations in the period of change (Kusumah et al., 2021; Ernst et al., 2021).

This study's novelty lies in its examination of the link between every variable, often separated in previous work. This research primarily addresses the situation of public sector organizations, specifically the police force from Indonesia. This research aims to clarify how cooperation between digital leadership and transactional leadership may build an organisational culture that fosters creativity and innovation in being ready for the difficulties of change experienced by the company. Particularly, the police force, which has been mostly neglected to date, the novelty of this study is anticipated to provide fresh insights into the background of leadership and organisational culture in public sector organizations (Deng et al., 2022). This study offers not only theoretical progress but also explanations of pragmatic consequences that businesses in the public sector might use in deciding leadership strategies and organizational culture change. By means of this strategy, the study findings should provide extra information to enhance the flexibility and responsiveness of public sector organizations like the police to continuous changes and how to handle ever more difficult issues in the future (Haestetika et al., 2023). Study findings will promote greater insight into public sector company leadership dynamics and offer an empirical foundation for policy planning that is more responsive and flexible to the challenges of change.

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2. Literature review

2.1. Grand Theory Model

The Grand Theory model introduced by C. Wright Mills emphasizes the integration of broad social structures and human agency to explain organizational phenomena and behavior (Staubmann, 2021). Its main premise is the interrelationship between individual actions, institutional arrangements, and social context, making it appropriate for understanding leadership behavior and organizational culture in complex environments such as public institutions. Social Bond Theory (SBT) and Social Learning Theory (SLT) in this study are positioned as intermediate theories that operationalize specific aspects of the broader model. Developed by Hirschi (1969), Social Bond Theory (SBT) focuses on the degree to which the quality of relationships between individuals and companies affects behavior. In the SBT model, four core components, attachment, commitment, engagement, and belief, form social relations. The four components together affect people's predisposition to deviant behavior (Meyer et al., 2023; Itzik & Walsh, 2023). Good social connections are also an important safeguard, as discovered in the most recent empirical studies, confirming that individuals with them usually practice good deeds and have a lower tendency to practice deviant behavior (Kocmanová & Marcol, 2024; Itzik & Walsh, 2023). Close social bonds among leaders and subordinates have the ability to enhance loyalty and support proactive behavior that provokes organisational change processes within an organisational setting, all of which is highly imperative when addressing shifting environmental dynamics (Gaherity & Birch, 2021). Current research suggests that effective leaders with strong social bonds have the ability to boost subordinates' emotional commitment and enable them to manage stress during organisational change initiatives (Gaherity & Birch, 2021). On the other hand, Bandura's 1977 Social Learning Theory (SLT) stresses learning by imitation and observation, especially of leaders or authoritative persons thought of as role models (Nguyen, 2021; Yu et al., 2020). Resilience, teamwork, and lifelong learning are underlined in leadership practice as ways to help create an adaptable and responsive corporate culture (Christiansen & Viljoen, 2022). Research shows that employee involvement in change projects is much enhanced by work settings that enable informal learning and creativity, thus building an organisational culture capable of dynamically changing in response to market developments (Teijón, 2021). SBT explains how social cohesion and trust serve as protectors and motivators for positive organizational behavior, while SLT explains how leaders act as role models who shape norms and practices through social influence. Together, these theories enrich

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the grand theory model by providing concrete mechanisms through which digital and transactional leadership styles interact with organizational culture. This theoretical integration is particularly valuable in the context of policing, where leadership effectiveness and cultural agility are crucial for navigating digital transformation and the complexities of the external environment (Ramadhan, 2024; Christiansen & Viljoen, 2022).

2.2. Digital Leadership

The framework of organizational change in the digital era has grown to be a strategic competence of utmost relevance. To fit dynamic changes within the company, a digital leader has to have a clear vision and strong knowledge of technology (Büyükebeşe et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2022). They are in charge of controlling innovation processes and building an organizational culture ready to welcome any disturbances (Karaköse et al., 2021; Zia et al., 2024). Two important aspects of digital leadership that allow companies to create competitive advantage are also collaborative team interactions and decision-making based on data (Khurniawan et al., 2024; Henderikx & Stoffers, 2022). It has been found that not only do digital leadership competencies drive innovation, but they also help to develop synergy between organizational culture and employees' development (Khurniawan et al., 2024; Alajmi, 2022). Thus, digital leadership is seen as a key facilitator of digital transformation success, highlighting the need for leaders who are equipped to tackle challenges and harness the possibilities of digital technology.

2.3. Transactional leadership

Transactional leadership focuses on conditional exchange relationships between followers and leaders, whereby leaders reward or punish followers in accordance with agreed performance (Istiatin et al., 2023; Abiansyah & Sunaryanto, 2023). Recent research illustrates how this strategy can improve employee dedication and engagement, and subsequently, overall organisational performance (Romero et al., 2023; Winingsih, 2022). Particularly in dynamic and unpredictable organisational settings (Nyamota et al., 2024; Montaña et al., 2022), over-emphasis on control systems and reward systems can, however, stifle creativity and innovation. Changing the focus to transactional leadership demonstrates that, for as much success as this leadership style has in realizing short-term objectives, its combination with other leadership styles is absolutely necessary in order to establish organizational sustainability and competitive advantage (Montaña et al., 2022; Abiansyah & Sunaryanto, 2023). Hence, amidst the challenges of digitalisation, a synergistic and balanced leadership style is required to play its optimal role in contributing to

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organisational performance and development (Asim & Siddiqui, 2023; Santosa et al., 2023).

2.4. Agile Organizational Culture

The very basis of success in innovation and agility in a constantly changing company environment is an agile organizational culture. Flexibility of the organization, cross-functional teamwork, decentralization of decision-making, and emphasis on continuous learning and innovation are the features of this concept (Alviani et al., 2024; Hernawaty & Syahrani, 2022). Employee acceptance of change could be easier, and a positive work environment could be the result of a positive and supportive organizational culture (Kumar et al., 2020). Thus, internalization of values like openness, trust, and shared responsibility becomes necessary because these elements enable fast team empowerment and team learning (Arifin & Purwanti, 2023). The other elements that further augment empowerment and employee teamwork are adaptive leadership behavior, which involves servant leadership and psychological support from the organization (Mahalleh et al., 2022; Devie et al., 2023; Carvalho et al., 2023). Leadership approaches that foster cultural diversity and inclusivity have also been shown to enhance organizational adaptability and improve employee performance (Islam et al., 2024). One of the main drivers of the shift towards a more responsive culture (Wicaksana & Isfania, 2022; Pacheco-Cubillos et al., 2024) and enabling responses to exogenous challenges, especially during the era of digitalisation (Ibrahimi & Bencheekroun, 2023), is organisational readiness to break up petrified hierarchies and establish open communication across functions. Innovation in organizational practices is important in maintaining an agile culture that can improve performance outcomes (Bazrkar et al., 2022). Therefore, particularly in dynamic and intricate organisational change (Tripathi, 2024; ÖZDEMİR, 2023), agile culture development is a key prerequisite.

2.5. Change Championing Behavior

Organisational change success depends to a great extent on Change Championing Behavior (CCB), where individuals play an active role as change agents promoting and supporting transformation projects. To speed up the process of change, CCB entails active participation in expressing creative ideas, undertaking required risks, and motivating other workers to accept change with a positive mindset (Kalyal & Grabarski, 2020; Carbery et al., 2021). There is evidence that people engaged in CCB deeply sense the necessity and advantage of continuous change, which is in line with the alignment of their own values to the direction of organisational change (Sprang et al., 2023; Chinman et al., 2023). Moreover, social and cultural aspects of the

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organization profoundly influence CCB levels; peer support and group norms help incorporate championing behavior into everyday tasks (Chhinzer, 2022; Resnick & Hoff, 2020). Variability in the extent of champions' involvement among group members can lead to intricate social dynamics that ultimately shape change results on both individual and group levels (Burningham et al., 2023; Mishra et al., 2023). Therefore, in the general organizational setting, social interactions shape CCB in addition to individual inherent factors.

Table 1. Summary of Empirical Studies on Leadership, Agile Culture, and Change Championing Behaviour

Author(s) & Year	Context	Key Findings	Relevance to This Study	Identified Gap
Bartsch et al. (2020)	European firms during COVID-19	Digital leadership improved psychological stability and supported organizational resilience.	Supports the role of digital leadership in crisis and change.	Limited exploration of the mediating role of agile culture.
Hamzah et al. (2021)	SMEs in Malaysia	Leaders' digital capabilities foster an innovative environment and readiness for change.	Confirms digital skills drive employee innovation.	Lacks a link to change championing behaviour.
Erhan et al. (2022)	Public sector organizations	Digital leadership shapes adaptive organizational culture.	Relevant to the mediating role of agile culture.	Empirical link with change championing behaviour not tested.
Abdelwahed et al. (2023)	Egyptian manufacturing	Transactional leadership enhances role clarity and employee readiness for transformation.	Aligns with the transactional leadership framework.	Mediating factors, such as agile culture, are not considered.
Sujati et al. (2023)	Indonesian SMEs	Transactional leadership increases employee commitment to organizational change.	Confirms the role of the transactional approach.	Does not investigate behavioural outcomes (championing).
Zia et al. (2024)	IT-based organizations	Digital leadership enhances creative behaviour and proactive support of change.	Strengthens the linkage between digital leadership and change-supportive behaviour.	Interaction with agile culture is not examined.

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Author(s) & Year	Context	Key Findings	Relevance to This Study	Identified Gap
Arham et al. (2024)	Service sector, Indonesia	Agile culture supports employee engagement and adaptability.	Validates the mediating role of culture in the leadership-change nexus.	Need for an integrated model with digital and transactional leadership.
Sitorus & Hendratmoko (2024)	Indonesian organizations	Transactional leadership is effective in agile cultural settings for employee engagement.	Demonstrates potential synergy between transactional leadership and agile culture.	Empirical testing of mediation on championing behaviour is missing.

Prior works often analyze leadership styles and cultural contexts separately without testing their combined effects. This study addresses this gap by empirically examining how digital and transactional leadership influence change championing behaviour through agile organizational culture.

3. Conceptual framework & hypothesis development

3.1. Study on Digital Leadership and Change Championing Behaviour

Using technology to enhance communication, teamwork, and organizational agility, digital leadership significantly helps to drive change-supportive behavior within companies. Digital leaders not only provide a strong work environment in the face of disturbance but also help digital employees to be engaged, which finally promotes creative behavior and proactive support of organizational change (Bartsch et al., 2020; Zia et al., 2024). Digital leadership has been shown in uncertain circumstances to improve psychological stability and commitment to change (Bartsch et al., 2020), while leaders' digital capabilities also create an innovative environment that strengthens employees' readiness to face organisational challenges (Hamzah et al., 2021; Erhan et al., 2022). Effective management of technical uncertainty by leaders promotes exploratory innovation and shapes an organisational culture that is sensitive to constant learning (Wang et al., 2022; Sulistiyorini & Zahra, 2023; Karaköse et al., 2021). Therefore, digital leadership not only acts as an adaptive mechanism to technological change but also as a strategic catalyst strengthening the behavior supporting the essential adjustments to guarantee the sustainability of organisational transformation.

H1. Digital Leadership is positively related to Change Championing Behaviour.

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3.2. Study on transactional leadership and change championing behaviour

Strategic in nature, transactional leadership, which stresses transparent channels of communication between leaders and staff via disciplined incentive and punishment systems, helps to increase employee commitment and involvement toward efforts at organizational transformation. This type of leadership demystifies roles, responsibilities, and expectations and thereby makes working stable and organisational design suitable for the deployment of change (Abdelwahed et al., 2023; Sujati et al., 2023; Dipuro et al., 2022). Previous studies show that transactional leadership not only supports organisational behavioural standards but also helps workers become ready to be change agents when objectives, incentives, and feedback are properly handled (Abdelwahed et al., 2023; Young et al., 2020). Moreover, this leadership approach has shown to be beneficial for workers' emotional involvement and organizational dedication, which are very important for active support of organizational development (Wang et al., 2023; Laohavichien & Weerasai, 2024). Thus, it can be expected that consistent and strategic application of transactional leadership greatly helps to strengthen the psychological and behavioral foundations required to guarantee the success of change projects and sustainable organizational performance improvement.

H2. Transactional leadership is positively related to Change Championing Behaviour.

3.3. Study on Digital Leadership and Agile Organisational Culture

Digital leadership may mix digital technology with organisational ideals that encourage flexibility, fast adaptation, and quick decision-making in reaction to market changes. It is acknowledged as a key component in creating an agile organizational culture. The key bases of agile culture are cross-functional cooperation, systematic experimentation, and continuous learning, which digital leaders build in their workplace (Erhan et al., 2022; Shin et al., 2023). While Zia et al. (2024) and Pandey et al. (2023) show that leaders' digital capabilities inspire sustainable innovation in disruptive contexts, research by Schiuma et al. (2021) demonstrates that digital leadership helps organizations to react fast to unanticipated developments. Adoption of digital values also helps to deepen the relationship between leadership and workers' creative activity (Khaw et al., 2022; Tigre et al., 2022), therefore directly improving the capacity of a business to change with agility. Digital leadership also plays a significant part in building individual digital capabilities, which accelerates response to market changes (Bartsch et al., 2020; Khaira et al., 2023) as well as strengthening the organisation's ability to integrate

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technology to address new challenges (Arham et al., 2024; Musid et al., 2024). This theory suggests that the development of agile organisational culture is much influenced by digital leadership.

H3. Digital Leadership is positively related to Agile Organisational Culture.

3.4. Study on transactional leadership and Agile organisational culture

Transactional leadership, although focused on structure and control, plays an important role in shaping an agile organisational culture by creating operational stability and role clarity. This leadership style facilitates team coordination, strengthens open communication, and provides constructive feedback—key components for maintaining organisational agility (AlNuaimi et al., 2022; Bartkowiak & Butlewski, 2023; Alviani et al., 2024). In rapidly changing situations, the structure built through transactional leadership provides an adaptive foundation for innovation and flexibility (Hernawaty & Syahrani, 2022; Kumar et al., 2020). When combined with digital strategies and the social context of the organisation, this leadership also enhances adaptability and competitiveness in dynamic business environments (Peeters et al., 2022; Kocot et al., 2024; Devie et al., 2023). Therefore, transactional leadership is not only appropriate but also crucial in supporting an agile organisational culture.

H4. Transactional leadership is positively related to Agile Organizational Culture.

3.5. Study of Agile Organisational Culture and Change Leader Behaviour

Agile organisational culture plays an important role in encouraging championing behaviour towards change through active participation, collaboration, and open communication that increase trust and commitment to leadership (Dinda & Wahyuni, 2023; Islam et al., 2021; Chen et al., 2022). Additionally, an agile work environment provides psychological support that motivates employees to take initiative in addressing new challenges (Al-Omoush et al., 2020; Chen et al., 2022). Further research indicates that agile culture increases motivation to support innovation due to recognition of individual contributions (Ageri & Omwenga, 2024). Leadership support and active employee involvement strengthen the effectiveness of championing behaviour, particularly in dynamic organisations (Islam, 2023). Agility has also proven to be a key factor in the success of digital transformation and sustainable innovation (Arsawan et al., 2022; Zhang et al., 2023), with agile organisations better prepared to respond to change due to high employee commitment to the vision of change (Zhang et al., 2023). Therefore, agile culture not only improves efficiency but also strengthens employees' proactive behaviour in

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supporting sustainable organisational change (Dinda & Wahyuni, 2023; Islam, 2023).

H5. Agile organisational culture is positively related to Change Championing Behaviour.

3.6. Linking Digital Leadership and Change Championing Behaviour through Agile Organisational Culture as a mediating variable

An agile organisational culture acts as a conduit that strengthens the influence of digital leadership on championing behaviour towards change by creating an adaptive, collaborative, and continuous learning work environment. Digital leadership not only drives technology adoption but also instils values of flexibility and openness that form the foundation of an agile culture (Erhan et al., 2022; Zia et al., 2024; Öngel et al., 2023). When digital leaders encourage innovation and active participation, agile culture supports employee engagement through trust and work structures that enable them to respond actively to change (Tigre et al., 2022; Arham et al., 2024). In such situations, employees are more motivated to actively participate in the change process because they feel that their contributions are valued and supported by a dynamic work system (Sulistiyorini & Zahra, 2023; Schiuma et al., 2021). Therefore, agile culture not only strengthens the effectiveness of digital leadership but also shapes positive employee behaviour in supporting organisational transformation (Zia et al., 2024; Öngel et al., 2023).

H6. Agile organisational culture mediates the relationship between Digital Leadership and Change Championing Behaviour.

3.7. Linking transactional leadership and Change Championing Behaviour through Agile Organizational culture as a mediating variable

Agile organisational culture serves as a bridge between transactional leadership and championing behaviour towards change. Transactional leadership, which prioritises structure, rewards, and role clarity, has been proven to increase employee engagement, especially when supported by an adaptive and collaborative culture (Udin et al., 2022; Ali et al., 2023; Mekonnen & Bayissa, 2023). In this context, agile culture not only provides space for innovation and collaboration but also reinforces the values of change within the organisation, which in turn enhances the effectiveness of leadership influence on employee engagement in the transformation process (Mekonnen & Bayissa, 2023; Sitorus & Hendratmoko, 2024). When transactional leaders fulfil their roles in an environment that supports change, they can create a work atmosphere that consistently encourages championing behaviour (Ali et al., 2023). Therefore, collaboration between transactional leadership and agile

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culture is an important element in encouraging employees to take an active role in the innovation and change processes within an organisation. (Sitorus & Hendratmoko, 2024; Udin et al., 2022).

Based on the theoretical review and previous studies, the following hypothesis is presented:

H7. Agile organisational culture mediates the relationship between transactional leadership and change championing behaviour.

Based on the previous discussion, this study proposes a conceptual model presented in Figure 1.

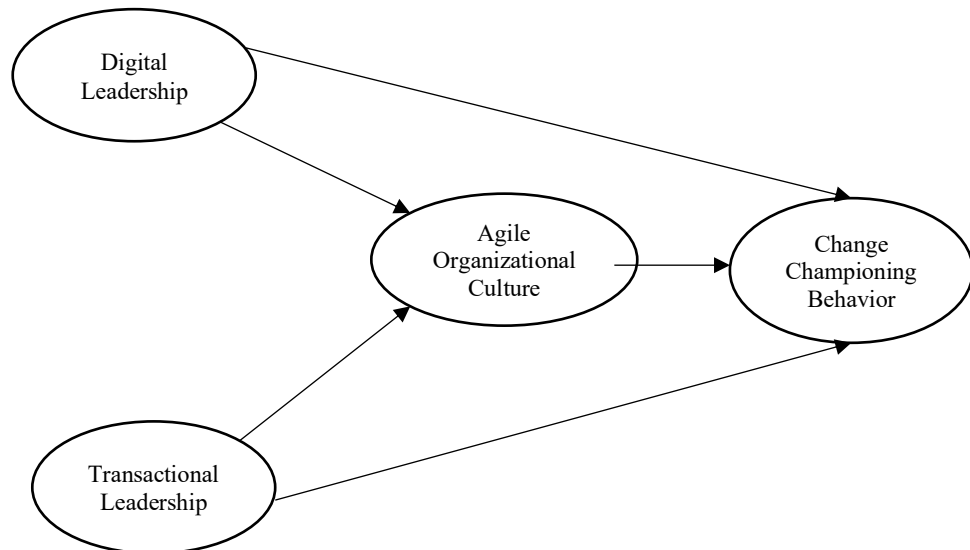


Figure 1. Proposed conceptual model.

Source: author's view

4. Methodology

4.1. Research design

This study is methodologically designed to combine descriptive and exploratory approaches in understanding the relationships between the main constructs: Digital Leadership, Transformational Leadership, Agile Organizational Culture, and Change Championing Behaviour. The exploratory approach is used to identify and investigate existing research gaps through an in-depth literature review and

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conceptual interpretation of previous theories in the context of policing. Meanwhile, in descriptive research, quantitative data analysis was conducted to analyse and confirm the structural relationships involving the mediating role of Agile Organizational Culture. All data were analysed using inferential statistical approaches based on data collected through self-administered questionnaires. The research process followed a structured sequence consisting of (1) conceptual model development, (2) operationalisation of variables, (3) instrument design and pilot testing, (4) data collection, and (5) data analysis using econometric modelling with Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM).

4.2. Data sources

The primary data were collected from 118 Indonesian Police personnel across various departments through structured questionnaires. The survey was conducted between March and May 2024, adopting a cross-sectional research design. Respondents were selected using purposive sampling to ensure representation of different hierarchical levels within the police organisation. Secondary data sources were limited to relevant scientific literature and academic reference books to strengthen the theoretical basis and support conceptual discussions in this study.

4.3. Sampling techniques and sample characteristics

The sampling strategy applied a purposive method with the addition of convenience sampling. The main focus was to obtain data from police personnel serving in the Banjarnegara Police jurisdiction. Respondents were selected based on strict criteria: a minimum of two years of work experience and leadership responsibility for at least one direct subordinate, reflecting a strategic position in the organisational structure. The distribution of questionnaires was conducted through online platforms such as Google Forms shared via social media channels (Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter), as well as through direct approaches and telephone communication to address potential demographic biases. Out of 165 responses collected (response rate of 66%), 118 data points were deemed suitable for analysis after the validation and data cleaning process was completed.

4.4. Measurement instruments

Data collection was conducted using a structured questionnaire consisting of two parts. The first part contained demographic data on respondents, including name, position, department, gender, age, highest qualification, total length of service, length of service at the current organisation, and number of direct subordinates. The second part contained items to measure latent constructs: Digital Leadership, Transactional Leadership, Agile Organizational Culture, and Change Championing

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Behaviour. Each item was rated using a five-point Likert scale (1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree). Digital Leadership is measured through six adaptation statements from Zeike et al. (2019), which evaluate the ability to lead digital transformation, mastery of information technology, and the creation of an innovative environment. Transactional Leadership uses six items from Baskoro (2021) based on the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), which highlights exchange behaviours such as reward giving and active monitoring. Agile Organisation Culture is measured using seventeen items from Denison et al. (2015), which have been adapted by Gholamzadeh et al. (2014) for agile organisations, covering flexibility, responsiveness to change, and continuous learning. Meanwhile, Change Support Behaviour was measured through eleven items from Smith (2006), reflecting individuals' active participation in supporting organisational change processes, including as connectors, motivators, and facilitators. All instruments were linguistically and conceptually adapted to the research context and pilot-tested to ensure content validity and initial reliability. The structural relationships were analysed using PLS-SEM due to its suitability for complex models, predictive objectives, and relatively small-to-medium sample sizes. The structural model equations are specified as follows:

Equation 1 – Direct effects of leadership on change championing behaviour

$$CCB = \beta_1 DL + \beta_2 TL + \beta_3 AOC + \epsilon \quad (1)$$

Description:

CCB (Change Championing Behaviour): the dependent variable representing employees' proactive behaviours in supporting organisational change.

DL (Digital Leadership): an independent variable reflecting leaders' ability to drive digital transformation.

TL (Transactional Leadership): an independent variable representing leadership based on structure, incentives, and monitoring.

AOC (Agile Organisational Culture): a mediating variable describing the organisation's flexibility, collaboration, and learning orientation.

β_1 , β_2 , β_3 : regression coefficients measuring the magnitude of each variable's influence on CCB.

ϵ : error term representing unobserved factors outside the model.

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Equation 2 – Formation of agile organisational culture by leadership

$$AOC = \gamma_1 DL + \gamma_2 TL + \epsilon \quad (2)$$

Description

AOC (Agile Organisational Culture): the dependent variable.

DL (Digital Leadership) and **TL** (Transactional Leadership): independent variables influencing the formation of agile culture.

γ_1, γ_2 : regression coefficients measuring the effects of DL and TL on AOC.

ϵ : error term.

5. Results and discussion

5.1. Descriptive statistics & Pearson correlation

Pearson's Product-Moment Correlation Analysis (r) was used to assess the initial construct validity and detect potential multicollinearity among exogenous variables. According to the criteria established by Nunnally (1978), correlation values below 0.8 indicate no multicollinearity and good construct validity. This study examines the relationship between four latent constructs, namely Digital Leadership, Transactional Leadership, Agile Organizational Culture, and Change Championing Behaviour. Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was used as the main method to analyse the relationships between variables, with the support of SmartPLS software version 3.3.3. The evaluation was conducted in two stages: an outer model to test the validity and reliability of the measurements, and an inner model to test the direction and strength of the relationships between constructs (Hulland, 1999; Dimaunahan & Amora, 2016).

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Table 2. Descriptive statistics & simple correlations (r) between Digital Leadership, Transactional Leadership, Agile Organizational Culture, and Change Championing Behaviour.

Construct	Mean	SD	Digital Leadership	Transactional Leadership	Agile Organizational Culture	Change Championing Behavior
Digital Leadership	3.486	0.828	-	0.679**	0.738**	0.681**
Transactional Leadership	3.531	0.804		-	0.725**	0.658**
Agile Organizational Culture	3.594	0.749			-	0.742**
Change Championing Behavior	3.483	0.758				-

Note: **Significant correlation at the 0.01 level (one-tailed).

Table 3. Measurement model results.

Reference (standard source)	Selective items (after factor analysis)	Loading factor	CA	CR	AVE	VIF
Zeike et al. (2019)	DL1	0.768	0.921	0.934	0.676	1.954-3.215
	DL2	0.877				
	DL3	0.742				
	DL4	0.714				
	DL5	0.756				
	DL6	0.842				
Baskoro (2021)	TL1	0.812	0.925	0.877	0.582	1.962-3.231
	TL2	0.876				
	TL3	0.722				
	TL4	0.732				
	TL5	0.796				
	TL6	0.741				
Denison dkk. (2015); Gholamzadeha dkk. (2014)	AOC1	0.828	0.904	0.934	0.578	1.966-3.209
	AOC2.	0.743				
	AOC4	0.742				
	AOC5	0.763				
	AOC7	0.750				
	AOC9	0.720				
	AOC10	0.793				
	AOC12	0.748				
	AOC13	0.812				

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Reference (standard source)	Selective items (after factor analysis)	Loading factor	CA	CR	AVE	VIF
	AOC16	0.794				
Smith (2006)	CCB1	0.819	0.892	0.918	0.656	1.822-3.148
	CCB2	0.833				
	CCB3	0.788				
	CCB4	0.758				
	CCB5	0.883				
	CCB6	0.759				

Note: All indicators are significant at the 0.001 level ($p < 0.001$); CA, Cronbach's alpha; CR, composite reliability; AVE, average variance extracted; VIF, variance inflation factor; DL: Digital Leadership; TL: transactional leadership; AOC: Agile Organizational Culture; CCB: Change Championing Behaviour.

5.2. Evaluation of the measurement model

The measurement model was evaluated to ensure that the latent constructs used in this study had adequate measurement quality. PLS-SEM with a reflective model was used to analyse the extent to which the indicators were able to reflect the intended constructs. The testing was conducted on three main components: internal reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Internal reliability was measured using two approaches, namely Cronbach's Alpha (CA) and Composite Reliability (CR). CA and CR values greater than 0.70 indicate good internal consistency (Chin, 2010). Convergent validity was evaluated based on the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value, with a minimum value of 0.50 (Fornell & Larcker, 1981), indicating that more than half of the variance in the indicators is explained by the construct being measured. To avoid multicollinearity among indicators, the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were also examined. The recommended VIF values should be below 3.3 (Hair et al., 2011).

Table 4. Discriminant validity and construct correlation coefficients.

Construct	CCB	AOC	DL	TL
Change Championing Behavior	0.814			
Agile Organizational Culture	0.718	0.789		
Digital Leadership	0.716	0.771	0.779	
Transactional Leadership	0.658	0.725	0.679	0.763

Note: Diagonal elements represent square roots of AVE coefficients; off-diagonal elements represent correlations between constructs.

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Discriminant validity in the model was tested using the Fornell and Larcker (1981) approach, with the criterion that the AVE square root value of each construct must be higher than its correlation with other constructs. The results of the analysis indicate that all constructs meet the criteria. These findings suggest that each construct has a clear conceptual distinction, without statistical overlap, thus confirming that discriminant validity is met in accordance with the recommendations (Hair et al., 2011).

5.3. Evaluation of structural models and mediation analysis

A structural model evaluation was conducted to test the causal relationships between latent constructs in the conceptual model that had been developed. Path parameter estimates and statistical significance were obtained using the bootstrapping technique with 5000 subsamples, in accordance with the approach recommended by (Hair et al., 2011). The test results indicate that all paths proposed in the main model are statistically significant at the 95% confidence level, as shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Estimated direct effect parameters.

Hypothesis	Path Relationship	β	SE	T-statistik	p-value	Result
H1	Digital Leadership → Change Championing Behavior	0.361	0.125	2.987	0.004	Supported
H2	Transactional Leadership → Change Championing Behavior	0.286	0.154	2.645	0.000	Supported
H3	Digital Leadership → Agile Organizational culture	0.762	0.047	16.249	0.000	Supported
H4	Transactional Leadership → Agile Organizational culture	0.654	0.168	7.655	0.000	Supported
H5	Agile Organizational culture → Change Championing Behavior	0.438	0.113	3.484	0.004	Supported

Digital Leadership has been proven to have a significant effect on Change Championing Behaviour ($\beta = 0.361$, $p = 0.004$), indicating that digital-based leadership styles can directly increase individual involvement in supporting organisational change. Transactional Leadership also has a significant influence on champion behaviour towards change ($\beta = 0.286$, $p = 0.000$), indicating that

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incentives and structural reinforcement remain relevant in driving employee engagement.

Both types of leadership also significantly influence Agile Organizational Culture. Digital Leadership shows the strongest influence ($\beta = 0.762$, $p < 0.001$), indicating the crucial role of technology and digital leadership in shaping an adaptive organisational culture. Transactional Leadership also contributes to agile culture ($\beta = 0.654$, $p < 0.001$), although its influence is not as strong as that of digital leadership. Additionally, Agile Organizational Culture itself was found to significantly mediate the relationship between leadership and champion behaviour toward change ($\beta = 0.438$, $p = 0.004$).

The results of this study demonstrate that all seven hypotheses (H1–H5) are supported, confirming the significant role of leadership styles and agile organisational culture in shaping Change Championing Behaviour (CCB). This comprehensive acceptance provides strong evidence that both Digital Leadership (DL) and Transactional Leadership (TL) directly influence CCB, while Agile Organisational Culture (AOC) serves as a robust mediating mechanism. H1: DL → CCB was accepted, aligning with Bartsch et al. (2020) and Zia et al. (2024), who found that digital leadership promotes psychological stability, innovation, and proactive engagement. The present findings confirm that DL is a critical driver for inspiring employees to actively support organisational change, especially in contexts of technological disruption.

H2: TL → CCB was also supported, consistent with Abdelwahed et al. (2023) and Sujati et al. (2023), who demonstrated that transactional leadership reinforces role clarity, accountability, and readiness for change. Although TL's effect is weaker than DL, it remains essential for providing structural stability and reinforcing behavioural standards necessary for organisational transformation. H3: DL → AOC was confirmed, showing that DL significantly contributes to the development of agile organisational culture. This result is consistent with Erhan et al. (2022), who highlighted the ability of digital leaders to create adaptive and innovative environments, underscoring that DL is a foundation for cultivating cultural agility.

H4: TL → AOC was accepted, supporting Udin et al. (2022) and Sitorus & Hendratmoko (2024), who found that transactional leadership enhances employee engagement when supported by an adaptive culture. TL can instil discipline and structure, but its success in fostering agility depends on its integration with cultural mechanisms that encourage collaboration and openness. H5: AOC → CCB was accepted, reinforcing the arguments of Arham et al. (2024) and Schiuma et al.

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(2021), who demonstrated that agile cultures empower employees to take initiative, adapt quickly, and proactively support change. This highlights AOC as not merely an outcome of leadership but a strategic driver of championing behaviour.

5.4. Mediation analysis

Mediation analysis was conducted to evaluate the role of Agile Organizational Culture as a mediator in the relationship between Digital Leadership, transactional leadership, and Change Championing Behaviour. Indirect effects were estimated using bootstrapping procedures and are presented in Table 6.

Table 6. Estimated parameters of indirect effects.

Hypothesis	Path Relationship	β	SE	VAF	p-value	Result
H6	Digital Leadership → Agile Organizational culture → Change Championing Behavior	0.345	0.104	0.4755	0.000	Supported, Partial Mediation
H7	Transactional Leadership → Agile Organizational culture → Change Championing Behavior	0.287	0.144	0.3845	0.003	Supported, Partial Mediation

Agile Organizational Culture has been proven to play a partial mediating role in the relationship between Digital Leadership and Change Championing Behaviour ($\beta = 0.345$, $p < 0.001$, $VAF = 47.55\%$). This indicates that nearly half of the total influence of Digital Leadership on change championing behaviour is explained through agile organisational culture. This confirms the view of Öngel et al. (2023) that cultural agility enhances the impact of digital leaders in inspiring change-supportive behaviour. In other words, strong digital leadership is more effective when translated into a flexible, collaborative, and adaptable work culture. A similar pattern emerges in the relationship between Transactional Leadership and Change Championing Behaviour, with an indirect mediation effect of $\beta = 0.287$ ($p = 0.003$, $VAF = 38.45\%$). Although this leadership style is more conventional, its influence on champion behaviour remains significant when facilitated through an agile organisational culture. Both mediation pathways indicate that Agile Organisational Culture is not merely a result of leadership style but also a crucial bridge for fostering organisational behavioural change. This confirms Mekonnen & Bayissa (2023) and Sitorus & Hendratmoko (2024), who highlighted the synergy between transactional leadership and agile culture. Although TL provides a structural basis for organisational order, AOC amplifies its effect by enabling collaboration and

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responsiveness. Overall, the acceptance of all hypotheses demonstrates the complementarity between DL and TL. DL acts as a catalyst for innovation and forward-looking transformation, TL ensures clarity and structural discipline, while AOC bridges both leadership styles to sustain proactive employee behaviour. This integrative model confirms that organisational change in the public sector requires not only effective leadership but also the institutionalisation of agile cultural values.

6. Conclusions and implications

This study provides significant empirical contributions to understanding the role of leadership, particularly Digital Leadership (DL) and Transactional Leadership (TL), in promoting proactive behaviour in support of change (Change Championing Behaviour/CCB) in public sector institutions, specifically in the context of the Indonesian Police. Based on the Social Bond Theory and Social Learning Theory frameworks, the findings of this study support a multidimensional model in which agile organisational culture (AOC) not only acts as a mediator but also as an institutional catalyst in strengthening behavioural responses to change. The results indicate that both DL and TL have a significant direct effect on CCB. This confirms that the integration of visionary digital competencies and a leadership approach based on structure and rewards can synergistically increase individual involvement in organisational change processes. Specifically, DL has been proven to have the strongest influence on the formation of agile organisational culture, emphasising that digital-based leadership is the main foundation in building adaptive and innovative organisations.

Furthermore, AOC was statistically proven as a strong partial mediator in the relationship between leadership and CCB, explaining 47.55% of DL's influence and 38.45% of TL's influence on championing behaviour. This finding emphasises that an agile organisational culture is not merely a consequence of leadership style but a strategic prerequisite for ensuring behavioural engagement in the change process runs sustainably. In other words, effective leadership will only produce optimal results when supported by a flexible, collaborative, and learning-oriented work environment. Theoretically, this study expands the academic discourse by integrating two leadership styles that are often separated in the literature into a single, mutually reinforcing conceptual model. The contextual focus on police institutions in developing countries adds novelty and relevance to the findings for the development of public organisation theory, which has been dominated by Western perspectives.

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In the Indonesian context, these findings highlight the urgent need for leadership development programs within the police force that are not only oriented toward strengthening transactional mechanisms of discipline and control but also toward cultivating digital competencies and agility in organisational culture. Given Indonesia's rapid digital transformation agenda, particularly in the public sector, digital leadership becomes critical in ensuring that police institutions can adapt to technological disruptions, enhance transparency, and improve public trust. Strengthening agile organisational culture can also serve as a safeguard against bureaucratic rigidity, which often hampers reform initiatives in public institutions.

Extending to the Southeast Asian context, where many countries share similar socio-political and institutional challenges—such as hierarchical bureaucracy, limited digital infrastructure, and resistance to organisational change—the results suggest broader implications. Police and other public institutions in countries like Malaysia, the Philippines, or Vietnam can draw lessons from this study to integrate digital leadership competencies with transactional practices to foster agile, adaptive organisational cultures. Such integration is especially relevant in regions where governance reforms and digitalisation are ongoing but still face obstacles due to traditional administrative cultures.

Practically, the results of this study provide strategic directions for policymakers and leaders of public sector institutions. The development of digital leadership competencies and the internalisation of agile values must be prioritised in strengthening institutional responsiveness and resilience to disruption. Hybrid leadership training programmes that balance transformational vision and operational structure are urgently needed to create an innovative and sustainable work ecosystem. This research is limited to police institutions, where the police have specific internal rules and structures, which means specific leadership and organizational culture.

Future research should expand this study to other public institutions using a longitudinal approach to obtain a more in-depth picture of causal relationships. Exploration of new variables such as psychological safety and institutional trust could also enrich our understanding of behavioural dynamics in organisational change. A mixed-methods approach could also provide deeper qualitative insights into the mechanisms at play. Overall, this study presents a new and in-depth perspective on how leadership styles can shape organisational cultures that support change. The findings confirm that leadership is not only a driver of change but also an architect of organisational conditions that enable change to occur effectively and

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sustainably. The interaction between leadership, culture, and behaviour found in this study is a strategic key to transforming public bureaucracy in the digital age.

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Author Contributions

DD conceived the study and was responsible for the conceptualization, methodology, software, validation, and supervision. DD and RP conducted the formal analysis. RP was responsible for data curation and the original draft preparation. RP and BR contributed to the review and editing of the manuscript. BR was responsible for the visualization.

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