The Role of Digital Culture in Mediating Transformational Leadership on Employee Performance

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Abstract: Leadership is one of the factors that influence the business process of an organization. The current era of digitalization is developing rapidly and the leadership factor is still a vital part of changing and improving digital business processes, one of which is in the government sector. This study will examine digital culture in mediating between transformational leadership and employee performance. The study was conducted using quantitative methods. The location of the study was in the work unit of the Human Resources Development Agency of the Ministry of Communication and Informatics. The results of the study indicate that transformational leadership has a strong influence on digital culture and digital culture strongly mediates between transformational leadership and employee performance, but transformational leadership has a weak influence on employee performance.

Keywords: Transformational Leadership, Digital Culture, Employee Performance.

INTRODUCTION

Transformational Leadership has become an interesting and popular research topic in recent decades. This can be seen from the frequency of citations and studies on the theme of leadership that have been studied from various models. (Antonakis et al., 2014). Leadership style significantly influences organizational creativity and innovation. (Shafi et al., 2020). Several research study results also found that transformational leadership has great potential to support individual, team, and organizational performance. (Hoch et al., 2018; Lai et al., 2020; Widodo et la., 2017; Waqas, 2012).

However, there are some things that have not been explained, namely the influence of transformational leadership produces various impacts on employee performance, namely there are results that state positive but there are also those that state negative impacts on employee performance. The positive impact of transformational leadership is stated from quantitative studies conducted in the health, construction, banking and electronics sectors. (Sürücü et al., 2022).

Meanwhile, examples of negative outcomes from the effects of transformational leadership were found in research in the industrial sector. (Mackenzie et al., 2001). In line

with this, transformational leadership has only a small impact on individual creativity and even has a negative impact on group creativity. (Jaussi & Dionne, 2003). This study attempts to clarify the findings of previous research, especially in the scope of State Civil Apparatus (ASN) performance.

Furthermore, transformational leadership is related to employee performance, as found in various studies in companies in the information and communication technology (ICT) sector. (Han et al., 2020), health and education (Avolio et al., 2004). Since scope is an important context in this research, it is related to Porter and Mclaughlin's statement. (2006) that leadership in an organization will be useless without context, leadership requires organizational context (Porter & McLaughlin, 2006). Therefore, this study presents a location in the public sector, namely the Human Resources Development Agency (BPSDM) of the Ministry of Communication and Informatics (Kemenkominfo) which focuses on the development of digital human resources, regulations in the fields of technology, communication, and information.

In the digital sphere, the existence of digital culture is one of the things that needs to be reviewed. The influence of digitalization is currently getting stronger, almost all activities are carried out in digital space ranging from individual activities to organizational activities. Therefore, digital is a factor that needs to be considered in this study. This digital culture is a variable that needs to be considered in improving employee performance. in this study will place digital culture as a mediation between transformational leadership style and employee performance at th

METHOD

This study uses primary data and secondary data with a quantitative method approach. This study was conducted in October - November 2024 by filling out a questionnaire by Employees of the Human Resources Development Agency of the Ministry of Communication and Information. The primary data in this study is the primary data of respondents obtained from respondents when filling out the questionnaire and processed with Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) or Partial Least Squares (PLS) which is used to test direct relationships and mediation effects. While secondary data is data that is not obtained directly by researchers, or other parties who process the data. This study uses a quantitative approach with a population of 669 individuals from various backgrounds. To ensure adequate representation, a proportional random sampling technique was applied, so that each subgroup in the population has an equal chance of being represented. Of the number of samples taken, 251 respondents managed to provide complete and appropriate data for processing. This number has been verified to meet the minimum criteria based on the Slovin formula calculation, with an error rate of 5%.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondent Data Analysis

Respondent data analysis is needed to find out the background of respondents who are used as input to clarify research data. The following is general data on the demographic characteristics of respondents in table 1.

Table 1. Respondent Demographics

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	%
Gender	Man	129	51.39
	Woman	122	48.61
Education	< SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL	29	11.55
	Diploma	15	5.98
	Bachelor (S1)	122	48.61

Characteristics	Category	Frequency	%
	Master (S2)	84	33.47
	Doctoral (S3)	1	0.40
Age	20 - 25 years	13	5.18
	25 - 30 years	61	24.30
	30 - 35 years	48	19.12
	35 - 40 years	51	20.32
	40 - 45 years	54	21.51
	> 45 years	24	9.56
Years of service	< 5 years	65	25.90
	5 - 10 years	70	27.89
	> 10 years	116	46.22
Work unit	BBPSDMP Makassar Communication and Information Technology	17	6.77
	BBPSDMP Medan Communication and Information	13	5.18
	BPPTIK	41	16.33
	BPSDM Center for Communication and Information Technology (West Merdeka Square)	68	27.09
	BPSDMP Bandung City Communication and Information Service	11	4.38
	BPSDMP Banjarmasin Communication and Information	9	3.59
	BPSDMP Jakarta Communication and Information	11	4.38
	BPSDMP Manado Communication and Information	7	2.79
	BPSDMP Surabaya Communication and Information	15	5.98
	BPSDMP Yogyakarta Communication and Information	10	3.98
	Center for Communication and Information Technology Education and Training	9	3.59
	STMM	40	15.94
	Total	**251**	

Source: Research data, 2024

Based on research data, respondents consisted of 129 males (51.39%) and 122 females (48.61%), showing an almost balanced distribution between the two genders. In terms of education, the largest number of respondents had a Bachelor's degree (S1) of 122 people (48.61%), followed by a Master's degree (S2) of 84 people (33.47%). Respondents with education below high school were recorded as many as 29 people (11.55%), Diploma as many as 15 people (5.98%), and Doctorate (S3) only 1 person (0.40%).

In the age category, the 25-30 age group is the largest, namely 61 people (24.30%), followed by the 40-45 age group with 54 people (21.51%). The 35-40 age group was recorded as many as 51 people (20.32%), while the 30-35 age group was recorded as many as

48 people (19.12%). The >45 age group was recorded as many as 24 people (9.56%), and the 20-25 age group was the smallest age group, namely 13 people (5.18%).

Based on work experience, the majority of respondents have more than 10 years of work experience, namely 116 people (46.22%), followed by respondents with 5-10 years of work experience as many as 70 people (27.89%). Respondents with less than 5 years of work experience numbered 65 people (25.90%). In terms of work units, the majority of respondents came from UPT BPSDM with a total of 183 people (72.90%), which is a combination of various cities such as Makassar, Medan, Bandung, Banjarmasin, Jakarta, Manado, Surabaya, and Yogyakarta. while respondents from BPSDM Kominfo numbered 68 people (27.09%).

Convergent Validity

Convergent validity consists of three tests, namely item reliability (validity of each indicator), composite reliability, and average variance extracted (AVE). Convergent validity is used to measure how much the existing indicators can explain the dimensions. This means that the greater the convergent validity, the greater the ability of the dimensions to apply their latent variables.

Reliability Item

Reliability of test items or what we usually call indicator validity. Testing the reliability of test items (indicator validity) can be seen from the loading factor value (standardized loading). The loading factor value is the magnitude of the correlation between each indicator and its construct. A loading factor value above 0.7 can be said to be ideal, meaning that the indicator can be said to be valid as an indicator to measure the construct. However, a standard loading factor value above 0.5 is still acceptable. While a standard loading factor value below 0.5 can be removed from the model (Chin, 1998). The following are the reliability values of test items that can be seen in the standard loading factor.
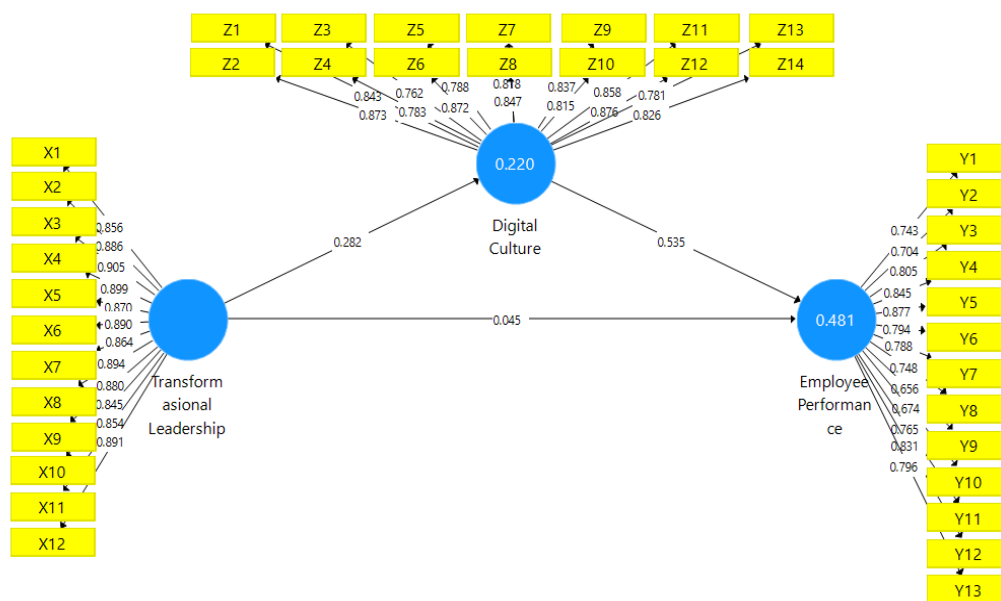

Figure 1. Measurement Model (Standardized Loading Factor)
Source: Researcher Processed Results 2024

The calculation results show that the loading factor values on the Transformational Leadership variable have the following values: X1 is 0.856; X2 is 0.886; X3 is 0.905; X4 is 0.899; X5 is 0.870; X6 is 0.890; X7 is 0.864; X8 is 0.894; X9 is 0.880; X10 is 0.845; X11 is 0.854; and X12 is 0.891. Based on these results, all indicators have loading factor values

above 0.30. Therefore, all indicators are valid to explain the Transformational Leadership variable. The indicator with the highest loading factor value is X3 (Leaders provide good examples for work success). In the Digital Culture variable, the loading factor values are recorded as follows: Z1 is 0.843; Z2 is 0.873; Z3 is 0.762; Z4 is 0.783; Z5 is 0.788; Z6 is 0.872; Z7 is 0.818; Z8 is 0.847; Z9 is 0.837; Z10 is 0.815; Z11 is 0.858; Z12 is 0.876; Z13 is 0.781; and Z14 is 0.826. These results indicate that all indicators are valid with a value of more than 0.30. The indicator with the highest loading factor value is Z12 (Digitalization collaboration to achieve common organizational goals).

Meanwhile, in the Employee Performance variable, the loading factor values are as follows: Y1 is 0.743; Y2 is 0.704; Y3 is 0.805; Y4 is 0.845; Y5 is 0.877; Y6 is 0.794; Y7 is 0.788; Y8 is 0.748; Y9 is 0.656; Y10 is 0.674; Y11 is 0.765; Y12 is 0.831; and Y13 is 0.796. Based on these results, all indicators are valid to explain the Employee Performance variable. The indicator with the highest loading factor value is Y5 (I feel I can complete the work well according to the standards and targets of the agency/company). Thus, all indicators in the three latent variables are declared valid based on the loading factor value exceeding 0.50 and can be used to explain these latent factors.

Composite Reliability

The statistics used in composite reliability or construct reliability are cronbach's alpha and D.G rho (PCA). Cronbach's alpha and D.G rho (PCA) values above 7.0 indicate that the construct has high reliability or dependability as a measuring instrument. A limit value of 0.7 and above means acceptable and above 0.8 and 0.9 means very satisfactory. (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994).

Table 2. Composite Reliability

Construct	Composite Reliability
Digital Culture	0.968
Employee Performance	0.951
Transformational Leadership	0.976

Source: Researcher Processed Results, 2024

Based on Table 2, the composite reliability value for Digital Culture is 0.968; Employee Performance is 0.951; and Transformational Leadership is 0.976. The three latent variables obtained composite reliability values above 0.7, indicating that all three have very good reliability as measuring instruments. Thus, it can be concluded that all factors have high consistency in measuring the intended construct.

Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Average Variance Extracted (AVE) describes the amount of variance that can be explained by an item compared to the variance caused by measurement error. The standard is if the AVE value is above 0.5 then it can be said that the construct has good convergent validity. This means that the latent variable can explain an average of more than half of the variance of its indicators.

Table 3. Average Variance Extracted (AVE)

Construct	AVE
Digital Culture	0.685
Employee Performance	0.599
Transformational Leadership	0.771

Source: Researcher Processed Results 2024

Based on Table 3, the AVE value for Digital Culture is 0.685; Employee Performance is 0.599; and Transformational Leadership is 0.771. The three variables have AVE values

greater than 0.5, indicating that all three have good convergent validation. This means that the latent variable can explain more than half of the variance of its indicators. Thus, it can be concluded that the three constructs can measure relevant indicators well, support convergent validation, and are in accordance with the standards set for measurement model analysis.

Discriminant Validity

The examination of the discriminant validity of the reflective measurement model is assessed based on cross loading and comparing the AVE value with the square of the correlation between constructs. The measure of cross loading is comparing the correlation of the indicator with its construct and the construct from another block. Good discriminant validity will be able to explain the indicator variable higher than explaining the variance of other construct indicators. The following are the discriminant validity values for each indicator.

Table 4. Discriminant Validity

Indicator	Digital Culture	Employee Performance	Transformational Leadership
X1	0.39	0.437	0.856
X10	0.39	0.422	0.845
X11	0.413	0.453	0.854
X12	0.408	0.373	0.891
X2	0.445	0.399	0.886
X3	0.422	0.353	0.905
X4	0.45	0.413	0.899
X5	0.378	0.413	0.87
X6	0.427	0.39	0.89
X7	0.374	0.34	0.864
X8	0.418	0.405	0.894
X9	0.415	0.344	0.88
Y1	0.569	0.743	0.426
Y10	0.394	0.674	0.359
Y11	0.454	0.765	0.309
Y12	0.563	0.831	0.375
Y13	0.601	0.796	0.386
Y2	0.497	0.704	0.331
Y3	0.564	0.805	0.356
Y4	0.592	0.845	0.369
Y5	0.647	0.877	0.374
Y6	0.467	0.794	0.254
Y7	0.517	0.788	0.441
Y8	0.469	0.748	0.304
Y9	0.359	0.656	0.191
Z1	0.843	0.566	0.337
Z10	0.815	0.579	0.365
Z11	0.858	0.596	0.368
Z12	0.876	0.625	0.332
Z13	0.781	0.552	0.249
Z14	0.826	0.62	0.406
Z2	0.873	0.599	0.37
Z3	0.762	0.516	0.474
Z4	0.783	0.55	0.423
Z5	0.788	0.492	0.371
Z6	0.872	0.558	0.438
Z7	0.818	0.488	0.385

Z8	0.847	0.559	0.511
Z9	0.537	0.523	0.368

Based on Table 4 cross-loading, the value of indicator X1 on the Transformational Leadership variable is 0.856 which shows the highest correlation compared to the Digital Culture variable (0.390) and Employee Performance (0.437). The same thing is also seen in the Y1 indicator which has the highest correlation with the Employee Performance variable of 0.743 higher than its correlation with Digital Culture (0.569) and Transformational Leadership (0.426). Likewise with the Z1 indicator which shows the highest correlation on the Digital Culture variable of 0.843 compared to its correlation with Employee Performance (0.566) and Transformational Leadership (0.337). These results show that each indicator has a higher correlation value with the relevant latent variable compared to other variables, thus proving that the indicator meets the criteria for good discriminant validation. Thus, the placement of indicators on each latent variable (Transformational Leadership, Digital Culture, and Employee Performance) can be said to be appropriate and valid in measuring their respective constructs.

Structural Model Analysis

In analyzing the structural model, the significance of the influence between constructs will be carried out through the path coefficient which describes the strength of the relationship between constructs. To validate the model as a whole, the goodness of fit (GoF) introduced by (Hu & Bentler, 1999); (Henseler et al., 2015); (Hair et al., 2019).

This GoF index is a single measure used to validate the combined performance of the measurement model and the structural model. The GoF value is obtained from the Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) and Normal Fit Index (NFI) values.

Table 5. Goodness of Fit *Structural Equation Model* (SEM)

Goodness of Fit	Estimated Model	Criteria	Information
SRMR	0,055	≤0,08	*Good Fit*
NFI	0,858	≥0,90	*Marginal Fit*

Source: Researcher Processed Results 2024

Based on Table 5, the model evaluation results show an SRMR (Standardized Root Mean Square Residual) value of 0.060 which is below the tolerance limit of 0.08. This indicates that the model has a Good Fit. A low SRMR value indicates a small difference between the sample covariance matrix and the estimated model covariance matrix, indicating a good fit between the model and the data. In addition, the NFI (Normed Fit Index) value of 0.809 is below the threshold of 0.90, but higher than the minimum value of 0.50. Thus, the model can be categorized as having a Marginal Fit, meaning that this model is quite good at explaining empirical data although not optimal. Other results, such as the d_ULS (Unweighted Least Squares Discrepancy) value of 2.808 and d_G (Geodesic Discrepancy) of 1.603, indicate a level of difference between the model structure and the data that is still acceptable. Overall, this model can be considered adequate to explain the relationships between latent variables in empirical data.

Causal Relationship Analysis

Statistical testing for the causal relationship of this structural model was carried out with a significance level of 5% so that the critical value of the t-value is ± 1.98. The estimated results of all research causal relationships can be seen in the following Smart PLS3 Output results:
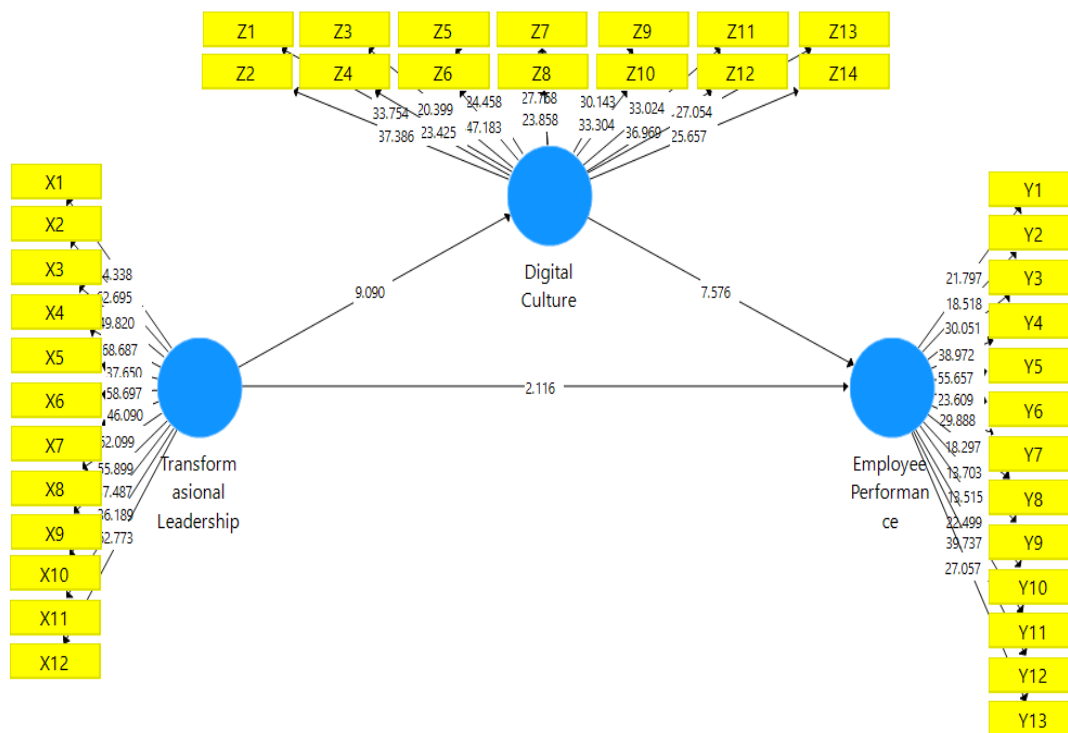
Figure 2. Model Structural (T-Value)
Source: Researcher Processed Results 2024

From the SmartPLS3 output results in Figure 2, it can be seen that for the causal relationship equation above, it can be seen that:

a. t-value and Structural Equation Coefficients

From the causality equation above, if the t value has a large absolute value > 1.98, it means that the path coefficient is significant (Hair et al., 2019). Based on the figure above, it can be seen that there are three significant path coefficients and no insignificant path coefficients. The interpretation of the path coefficient will be explained further in the hypothesis testing section.

b. Coefficient of Determination

Table 6. Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

Latent Variables	R Square Adjusted
Digital Culture	0,220
Employee Performance	0,481

Source: Researcher Processed Results, 2024

Based on the results of the analysis, the R² value found in this study provides important insights into the ability of independent variables to explain variations in dependent variables on the Digital Culture variable, the R² value of 0.220 indicates that around 22% of the variation in Digital Culture can be explained by Transformational Leadership. This shows that although Transformational Leadership makes a significant contribution to the development of digital culture, other factors not included in this model play a greater role in explaining the phenomenon. External factors, such as rapidly evolving technology or

organizational policies related to digitalization, can also influence the level of adoption and development of digital culture in an organization.

For Employee Performance, the R² value of 0.481 indicates that almost 48% of the variation in employee performance can be explained by Transformational Leadership and Digital Culture. This figure reflects the relatively significant contribution of both variables in improving employee performance. This is in line with the literature showing that transformational leadership can increase motivation, job satisfaction, and in turn, performance. In addition, a developing digital culture can affect employees' ability to adapt to technology and improve work efficiency. However, this result also confirms that around 52% of the variation in employee performance is still influenced by other factors, such as individual skills, organizational climate, and other resources.

Overall, although this model is able to explain most of the variation in Digital Culture and Employee Performance, the results of this analysis suggest that additional factors need to be considered to improve understanding of the dynamics that influence both variables. Further research can dig deeper into other factors that have the potential to make a greater contribution in explaining both variables.

Hypothesis Testing
Direct Effect Hypothesis Testing

The t-test results in Figure 2 will be compared with the t-table value or comparing the p-value with a significant level (5%). The following is a hypothesis testing table to answer all research questions.

Table 7. Direct Effect Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Original Sample (O)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Transformasional_Leadership -> Employee_Performance	0.172	0.081	2.116	0.035
Transformasional_Leadership -> Digital_Culture	0.469	0.052	9.090	0.000
Digital_Culture -> Employee_Performance	0.596	0.079	7.576	0.000

Source: Researcher Processed Results, 2024

Table 7 contains the conclusions of the results of the research model hypothesis. The following can be concluded:

1. The effect of transformational leadership on employee performance has a path coefficient of 0.172, a t-statistic of 2.116, and a p-value of 0.035. Although it has a significant effect, the coefficient is relatively small, indicating that the effect of transformational leadership on employee performance is quite weak. This shows that although transformational leadership can affect employee performance, its effect is not as large as the effect of other factors that have the potential to be more dominant. The existing results were also found in studies stating that transformational leadership does not directly affect employee performance and conversely, transformational leadership can actually reduce effectiveness. (Aristana et al., 2024; Widodo et al., 2017; Chen et al., 2018). The weak role of transformational leadership emphasizes the importance of looking at the potential of other factors such as the work environment (Khoiri et al., 2022).

2. The coefficient value of the path of the influence of transformational leadership on digital culture is 0.469 with a t-statistic value of 9.090 and a p-value of 0.000. The t-statistic value which is much greater than 1.96 and a very small p-value (0.000) indicates that the influence of transformational leadership on digital culture is very significant at a

significance level of 5%. This positive coefficient indicates that the stronger the transformational leadership, the stronger the development of digital culture in the organization, this indicates that leaders who have a transformational style tend to be successful in encouraging the development of digital culture in the organization which will ultimately facilitate the acceptance and adoption of digital technology.

3. The influence of digital culture on employee performance shows a path coefficient of 0.596, with a t-statistic of 7.576 and a p-value of 0.000. A very high t-statistic value and a very small p-value indicate that the influence of digital culture on employee performance is very significant. This shows that the development and implementation of a strong digital culture in an organization makes a significant contribution to improving employee performance in adapting to technological developments and in optimizing their performance in an increasingly digitally connected environment. Digital transformation improves employee skills, motivation, and collaboration, contributing to timely and responsible task completion. This is also in line with the fact that digital culture has a positive influence on performance (Nelly et al., 2024).

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Table 8. Indirect Effect Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Original Sample (O)	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P Values
Transformasional_Leadership -> Digital_Culture -> Employee_Performance	0.279	0.053	5.283	0.000

Source: Researcher Processed Results 2024

The results of the study show the path coefficient value of the influence of transformational leadership on employee performance through digital culture of 0.279 with a t-statistic value of 5.283 and a p-value of 0.000. The t-statistic value which is much greater than 1.96 and a very small p-value indicates that the mediating effect of digital culture on employee performance is very significant at the 5% significance level. This positive path coefficient indicates that transformational leadership has a significant influence on digital culture in government organizations which in turn has an impact on improving employee performance. In the context of government organizations facing the challenges of digital transformation and restructuring, digital culture is an important aspect in improving employee efficiency and performance. Transformational leadership that inspires and directs members of the organization to adapt to new technologies contributes to the creation of a stronger digital culture which in turn improves employee performance in managing administrative tasks and public services. Digital culture plays an important mediator in this relationship. Transformational leadership that encourages the acceptance of technology and innovation accelerates the digitalization process in government organizational environments, helping employees become more adaptive in dealing with technological developments. This contributes to improving the quality and productivity of employee performance, especially in the context of government organizations that increasingly require the use of technology to increase transparency, efficiency and better public services.

CONCLUSION

Based on the results of this study, it can be concluded that transformational leadership has a small but significant direct influence on employee performance. This has the potential

to open up the possibility of other factors that can affect employee performance. Transformational leadership has a positive significance on Digital Culture, this is in line with the theory of transformational leadership that supports innovation in intellectual stimulation. (Bass & Riggio, 2006)

Digital culture affects employee performance. This is related to the pattern of digitalization and digital transformation in organizational processes. This is in line with the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) theory which states that a Digital Culture that prioritizes technology training and ease of technology adoption will increase employee productivity and performance. (Davis, 1989)

Digital Culture in mediating transformational leadership towards employees can be said to play an important role in providing positive meaning. The positive role of digital culture in mediating transformational leadership towards employee performance can be concluded to play a role in the form of digital transformation that applies in government, especially in employee performance in public services to the community.

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