

THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL CULTURE AND STATUS QUO TO ENHANCE PUBLIC SERVICE DELIVERY IN PAKISTAN'S PUBLIC SERVICES SECTOR

Fouzia Tariq¹, Prof. Dr. Ahmad bin Jusoh², Prof. Dr. Khalil Md Nor³

¹PhD Candidate, Faculty of Management, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Johor Bahru, Malaysia

²Professor, Faculty of Management, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Johor Bahru, Malaysia

³Professor, Faculty of Management, Universiti Teknologi Malaysia, Johor Bahru, Malaysia

Abstract:

This research study aimed to examine impact of digital culture and status quo on public service delivery in Pakistan's public service sector. Pakistan is a developing country on the globe. It is situated in the Asian continent southernmost section. Pakistan is a federation organised into four significant provinces. However, in the context of public service delivery, the delivery of essential services by the government remains a struggle for the country's people. The public sector in Pakistan like health, administration, education, public housing, etc. all needs reforms and changes. This study aims to explore several critical questions regarding the bureaucracy in Pakistan. Firstly, it examines the effect of digital culture on public service delivery. Secondly, it investigates the impact of the status quo on public service delivery. A descriptive research design was chosen. It is quantitative in nature, study design is cross-sectional. Data Collection was done through questionnaire. In this study, public sector organisations of Pakistan ministries and their attached departments in Islamabad were categorized as a population. The sampling technique employed is purposive sampling. 127 questionnaires were prepared to distribute to head of departments. The 5 points Likert scale for the data collection. Model was tested using Partial Least Square (PLS). The composite reliability of the status quo, Digital culture and public service, the values of factor loading, composite reliability, and AVE for other variables are significant. Creating a digital culture goes beyond individual digital literacy; it involves fostering an organizational mindset that is open to experimentation, adaptable to new technologies, and resilient in the face of challenges. Future research could explore private sector settings to determine the model's applicability across different organizational types.

Introduction:

The strategic shift in the global development agenda from abandoning the state's role in public provision, as reflected in Structural Adjustment Programmes in the 1980s and 1990s, to an emphasis on good governance for poverty reduction in the subsequent decades has pushed public service delivery institutions to the forefront of development (ElMassah & Mohieldin, 2020). With adequate institutional frameworks to disperse national wealth, economic growth will be expanded, particularly in existing inequities (Christophers et al., 2021). Policies promoting inclusive development and redistribution necessitate competent, open, and accountable institutions that facilitate economic transactions among agents while ensuring fair access to essential services for all citizens (Hassan et al., 2021).

However, studies from developing nations demonstrate a need for more faith in the performance of the public sector to provide essential services to residents because both bureaucrats and politicians participate in rent-seeking activities (Monkkonen, 2018). The effective delivery of public services depends on strong governance, which includes open policymaking, a bureaucracy with a professional culture, a responsible executive arm, a civil society active in public affairs, and all operating under the rule of law (O'Connor et al., 2019). Public service delivery institutions continue to be a barrier to the poor and vulnerable access to essential service (Cotlear et al., 2015).

Pakistan is a developing country on the globe. It is situated in the Asian continent southernmost section. Pakistan is a federation organised into four significant provinces: Sind, Punjab, Baluchistan, and the KPK, with federally administered tribal areas and the Islamabad Capital Territory serving as autonomous administrative divisions (Aslam et al., 2011; Jabeen et

al., 2025). However, in the context of public service delivery, the delivery of essential services by the government remains a struggle for the country's people. The primary driver behind the country's economy has underperformed its peers over a relatively prolonged period but is improving now, after years of complex democratic transition and destabilising forces at work (Naveed et al., 2022; Khan, Falahat, et al., 2025).

Problem Statement:

The term "public service delivery" refers to the activities and services provided by the government in the public interest and for the benefit of its citizens. These services include critical sectors such as law enforcement, defense, healthcare, education, and others (Tummers et al., 2015). Effective public service delivery is major concern for all governments across the globe. Efforts to improve public service delivery have focused on citizen-centeredness, quality, efficiency, and the reach of e-services (Urvashi & Nagendra, 2022). Public service delivery in Pakistan has also faces a number of challenges that has an impact on its efficiency and effectiveness.

A survey conducted by Transparency International in Pakistan has findings that 53% of people have found the public sector most inefficient (Ulain & Hussain, 2020; Khan, Falahat, et al., 2025). In Pakistan, people have to stand in a long queues waiting for their signal to get the service, which is why the customers are not satisfied with government delivers the service to them (Jamil, 2021). The public sector in Pakistan like health, administration, education, public housing, public banking system, Excise and taxation services, national airline services, antinarcotics, police, and other law enforcement services all need reforms and changes (Ahmed et al., 2020).

Digital culture and status quo are most considerable variables for public service delivery there are previous studies which measure direct effect of digital culture and dissatisfaction of current status (Naidoo & Xollie, 2011). The current study will significantly fill the gap presented in the literature fist the digital culture and status quo direct effect on public service delivery in one model will be a novel study in context of Pakistan.

Research Questions:

In light of the problem statement presented above, this study aims to explore several critical questions regarding the bureaucracy in Pakistan. Firstly, it examines the effect of digital culture on public service delivery. Secondly, it investigates the impact of the status quo on public service delivery. These questions considered together in a single framework helped to study the impact of digital culture and status quo in Pakistan's Ministries at federal level.

Significance and scope of the study:

The topic "The impact of digital culture and status quo to enhance public service delivery in Pakistan's Public services sector" is significant due to its relevancy to Pakistan's development and progress. According to the literature, most scholars employed a direct relationship of digital culture and status quo with public service delivery. This study will be a theoretical contribution to the existing literature of public service delivery and how the factor and forces effecting public service delivery. On the other hand digital culture prevailing in the society is effecting every one's life so does organizations so this study will give insight that how this digital culture effecting organizations along with study will contribute the literature that how status quo negatively effecting organizations performance.

Research Framework:

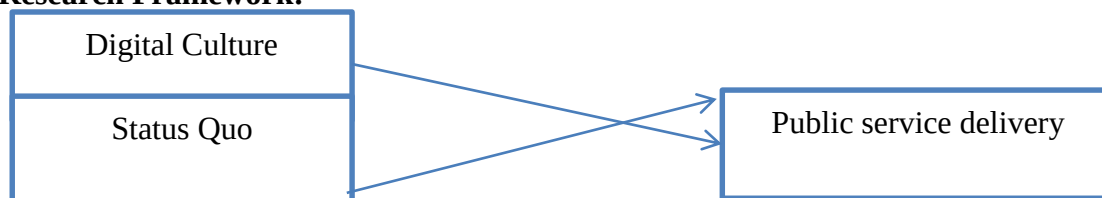


Figure 1 Research Framework

Literature Review:

As new waves of technologies arise, such as the Digital Era Governance paradigm, new ways to public governance emerge. According to (Clarke et al., 2014) "tools for public administration reform have shifted from the New Public Management (NPM) approach, which emphasises fragmentation, competition, and encouragement, to a Digital Era Governance (DEG) approach, which prioritises the reintegration of holistic services for citizens and implements significant digital changes in government administration."

Digital culture is characterised as a participatory culture in which people receive information and participate in several ways (Barnes et al., 2015; Rattanawiboonsom et al., 2025). This transition is visible recently when so-called Web 2.0 or social software has become a significant phenomenon (Barnes et al., 2015). According to a research, this journey toward "digital public service delivery" appears to be nearing a tipping point, with increased appetite within the public sector to deliver services in more innovative ways using open technologies, diversity of delivery agents, including increased involvement of smaller companies, and more agile delivery practises to demonstrate (Brown et al., 2014). In addition, this digital public services revolution is taking place in the context of a much bigger transition in our personal lives and how we do business, which is being pushed by a steady stream of digital technological advancements, optimised production techniques, and flexible global delivery models (Agostino et al., 2021). Consumers now demand technology to be inexpensive, simple to use, consumable like a utility, constantly on, mobile, and open (Gabryelczyk, 2020; Qureshi et al., 2025).

Previous research has mainly focused on the negative consequences of employees' dissatisfaction with their working conditions on job performance. Employees' dissatisfaction with their organisation's ability to meet performance targets (Yuan & Woodman, 2010) can improve their performance ratings if they choose to contribute to organisational effectiveness by being vocal about the possible causes of organisational struggles (Morrison, 2011; Khan, Qureshi, et al., 2025). Employees' perceptions of organisational underperformance pose a resource-intensive danger to their company's survival and job functioning because this bad condition may prohibit their employer from providing proper career assistance (Rayton & Yalabik, 2014). Dissatisfied employees are driven to avoid these undesirable effects by engaging in focused resource-generating activities that identify organisational issue areas.

Material & Methods: (Tool, reliability)

A descriptive research design was chosen in the present study as it helps to discover the association or relationship among different variables. It is quantitative in nature as the numeric data has been tested. The data collection involved cross-sectional study design. Data Collection was done through questioner by personal visits to organizations from head of departments of the organizations. In this study, public sector organisations of Pakistan ministries and their attached

departments in Islamabad were categorized as a population. The sampling technique employed is purposive sampling.

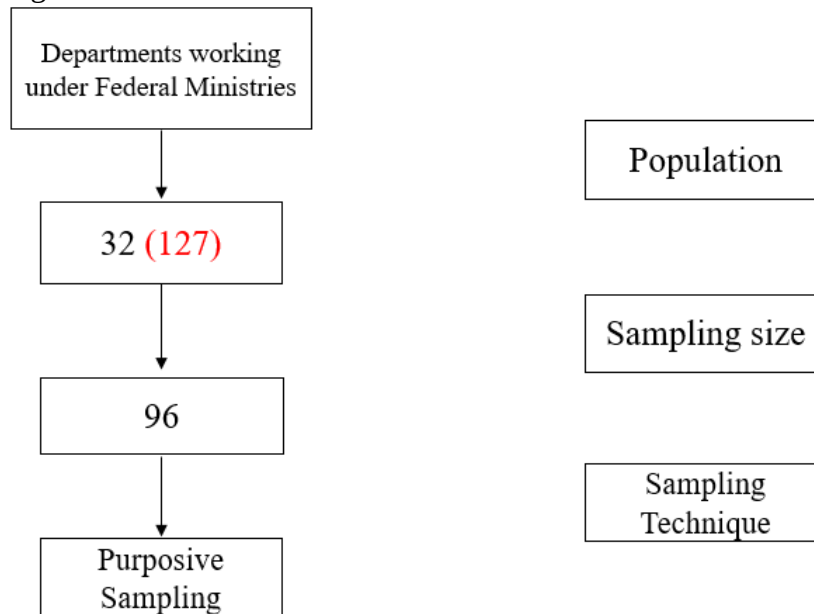


Figure2 Research Population and Sample

127 questionnaires were prepared to distribute to head of departments and with 95 % confidence and 5% error rate 96 of fulfilled questionnaires was selected for this study. 5 points Likert scale for the data collection on the recommendation of Oppenheim, 1966. The instrument for Digital Culture had been adapted from (Levin & Mamlok, 2021; Snyder & psychology, 1974) which consisted of 4 items. 5 item scale from (Wang, 2022) was adapted for status quo and 4 items were adopted from (Afee, 2020) for Public service delivery. The tool used is reliable for the study. Data has been analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science). Validity has been tested using convergent validity and discriminant validity.

Results & Discussion:

The measurement model was accessed by using the Smart PLS 3.2.0 version. The measurement model referred to as “a model that specifies how the observed variables depend on the latent, composite, and unobserved variables” (Arbuckle, 2005 p.89). The main aim of the measurement model is to explain and understand the patterns by which each indicator is loaded on a specific latent variable (Bryne, 2010; Ramayah et al., 2018). Furthermore, it also helped to confirm the internal consistency reliability and construct validity of the latent variables. In the present study, the measurement model was examined into two stages. In the initial stage, the measurement model was examined and items having lower factor loading and average variance extracted (AVE) were discarded. After it, the final measurement model was examined and the values of factor loading and average variance extracted (AVE) were will be examined by following the criteria of Hair et al., (2016).

For assessment of linearity, the scatter plots were checked as they are helpful for identification of linear or curvilinear relationship among variables. Pallent, (2007) came into the view that a linear relationship is recommended only for statistical analysis. Following figure of scatterplot

illustrate the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The figure is interpreted as there is no violation of linearity has been found and the relationship between independent and dependent variables is non- curvilinear.

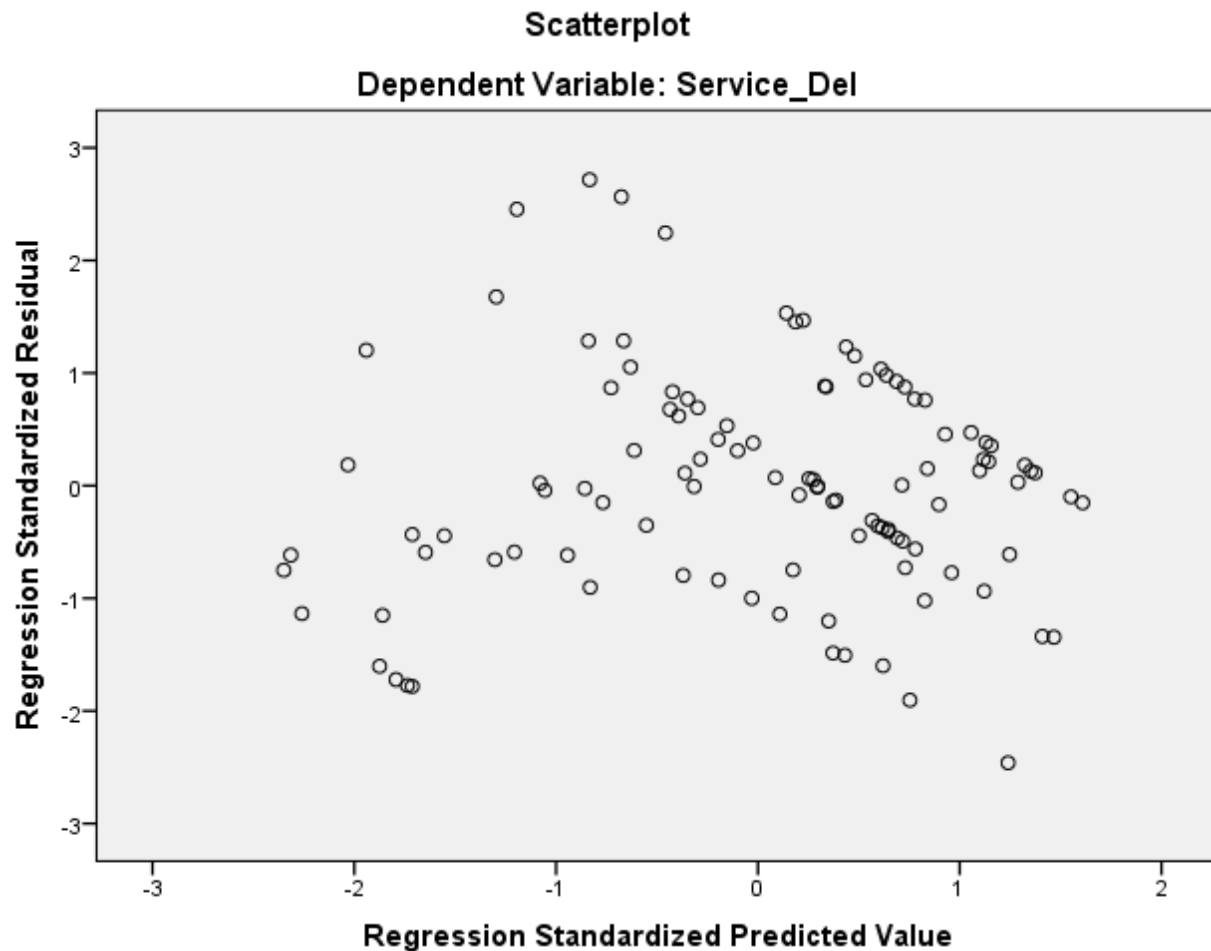


Figure 3
Scatter Plots of Public Service Delivery

Homoscedasticity occurs when most of the values concentrated in center and if the values are scattered. Following figures are illustrating that no violation of Homoscedasticity is found in the data and the assumption of Homoscedasticity is met within the relationship of three independent variables and one dependent variable i.e. public service delivery.

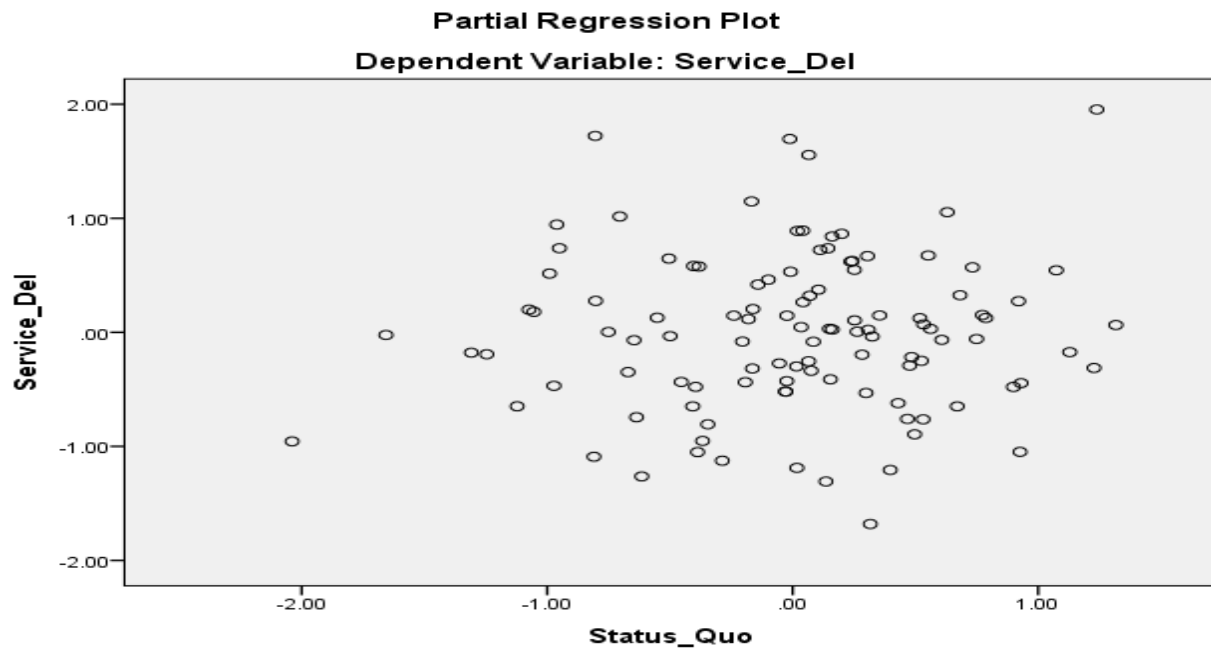


Figure 5:
Scatter plot of Standardized Residuals between Status Quo and Public Service Delivery

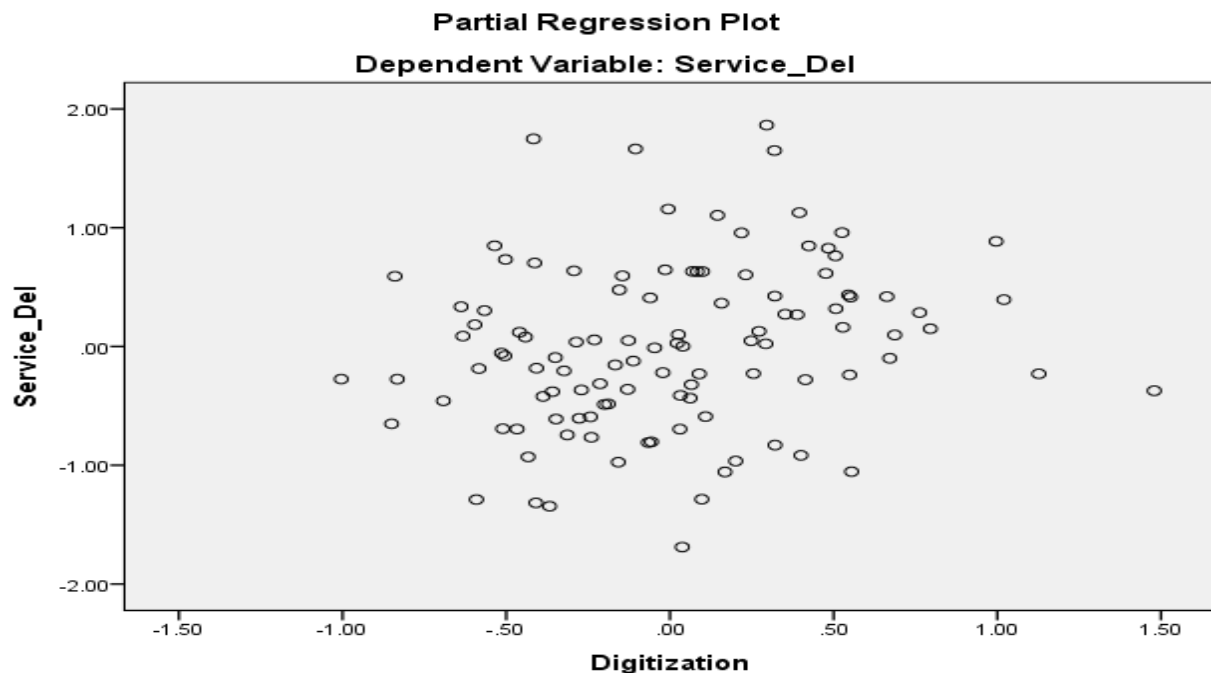


Figure 6:
Scatter plot of Standardized Residuals between Digital Culture and Public Service Delivery

The table presented below is showing the values of AVE against each variable. The table also consisted upon the composite reliability and Cooper and Schindler, (2014) defined the range as above 0.70. All the values presented in the below mentioned table is validating the threshold.

Status Quo is measuring with 4 items and the factor loading of the items revealed 0.857 as minimum value and 0.904 as the higher value. The composite reliability of the status quo is identified as 0.929 and AVE is .766. The values of factor loading, composite reliability, and AVE for other variables i.e. Digital culture and public service Delivery are also falling under the defined range. So, there is no issue or violation have been found in the study.

Table 1

Convergent Validity

Construct	Final Items	Factor Loading	CR	AVE
Status Quo	4	0.857- 0.904	0.929	0.766
Digital Culture	4	0.844-0.904	0.926	0.757
Public Service Delivery	4	0.851-0.938	0.95	0.826

Cooper and Schindler, (2014) defined that the discriminant validity is holding the assumption that the value of correlation among variables should be less than 0.85. The values presented of discriminant validity defined that there is no violation of discriminant validity, and the variables have significant relationship.

Table 2

Discriminant Validity

Constructs	1	2	3
1. Digital Culture	0.870		
2. Status Quo	.188	0.875	
3. Public Service delivery	.617**	.113	0.909

***p<0.000, **p<0.01, *p<0.05

The first hypothesis formulated in the study is “*Digital culture is positively related to public service delivery*”. The results showed the values of $\beta = 0.235$, $t = 2.71$, $p = 0.007$. On the basis of the values, it is interpreted that there is a significant relation of digital culture with public service delivery, so the hypothesis is accepted. For the study the next hypothesis is “*status quo has negative effect on improvement of public service delivery*”. The values through structural modeling shows $\beta = -0.147$, $t = -2.28$, $p = 0.02$ are significantly supporting the hypothesis.

These findings of the study are aligned with the previous researches where it has been defined that the digital culture of a particular organization is important for the achievement of public service delivery. For example, the study of (Karodia, 2018) highlights digital culture as an important determinant of the organization success and it is beyond the initiative of the organization rather it is recognized as an approach to organizing business operations.

Several authors argue that, particularly for public sector organizations, challenging the status quo is essential for achieving desired performance and effectiveness. The status quo can restrict creativity and innovation, which are vital for adapting to the evolving needs of public service (Foster & Organizations, 2013). (Proudfoot & Kay, 2014) further noted that a motivated preference for the status quo can influence organizational attitudes and behaviors, potentially improving efficiency and effectiveness—but only if this preference supports innovation and flexibility.

Conclusion:

This study has explored the transformative role of digitalization in public service delivery and efficiency of these digital transformation initiatives within public sector organizations. As organizations strive to keep pace with rapidly changing digital landscapes, understanding the conditions and organizational capabilities that support successful digital adoption has become crucial. The study sheds light on the critical factors that enable public sector organizations to achieve a higher standard of service delivery, driven by operational efficiency, decision-making transparency, and enhanced user experiences. The findings highlight the importance of a digital culture within public organizations. The study also highlights the importance of cultivating a digital culture within public sector organizations. Creating a digital culture goes beyond individual digital literacy; it involves fostering an organizational mindset that is open to experimentation, adaptable to new technologies, and resilient in the face of challenges. Future research could explore private sector settings to determine the model's applicability across different organizational types.

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