Examining the impact of agile leadership on work commitment: Mediating role of organizational culture

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ABSTRACT

Purpose — *This research aims to investigate the influence of agile leadership in Islamic schools on work commitment, using organizational culture as a mediator.*

Method — *This research employed quantitative causality methods. The study's population comprised all 31 teachers from Azhari Islamic School Rasuna, all of whom were included as samples. The data analysis utilized Structural Equation Model-Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS).*

Result — *The research findings demonstrate a positive influence of agile leadership on organizational culture. However, agile leadership does not significantly affect teacher work commitment, and organizational culture does not mediate the influence of agile leadership on teacher work commitment.*

Contribution — *This research contributes to the existing literature by addressing a gap in previous research, which had not examined the influence of agile leadership on work commitment.*

Keywords: agile leadership, work commitment, organizational culture, teacher

INTRODUCTION

Advancements in science and technology, alongside rapid changes across all fields, have given rise to numerous organizational challenges. Present-day organizations must prepare to navigate unstable and uncertain situations. Similarly, educational institutions need to anticipate and adapt to these conditions by making necessary adjustments and monitoring developments in their surrounding environment. According to data from The World Bank, Indonesia ranks 130th out of 190 countries in the human capital index. Meanwhile, according to www.worldtop20.org, Indonesia's education ranking for 2023 is 67th among all countries worldwide. They highlights the weakness of education in Indonesia, particularly in the teaching profession, emphasizing the importance of focusing on teacher integrity.

One crucial factor influencing the success of educational institutions is the commitment of teachers to their work. This commitment is outlined in the Teacher and Lecturer Law, Number 14 of 2005, article 7 (paragraph 1b), which emphasizes that teachers must be dedicated to enhancing the quality of education, fostering faith, demonstrating piety, and upholding noble morals. When teacher commitment is low, there is a noticeable decline in the quality of education, directly impacting student achievement and overall school performance.

Commitment, in this context, refers to an individual's cognitive, affective, and behavioral attitudes towards their work (Cohen, 2003). Job commitment can be understood as a psychological relationship based on how a person perceives their work (Lee et al., 2000). Employees with high commitment align their personal benefits with the company's goals, ensuring they do not contemplate leaving their positions (Erdoğan & Cavlı, 2019; Raeespoor et al., 2015). They embrace their roles, perform their duties with diligence, show respect for their careers, and willingly fulfill their job duties and responsibilities (Meyer et al., 1993).

Furthermore, a leader takes center stage in steering their institution through these challenging times. In this era of unprecedented uncertainty, often referred to as the VUCA era (Volatile, Uncertain, Complex, and Ambiguous), schools must continuously evolve and innovate. This necessitates a leadership style capable of addressing the unique challenges faced by schools in this VUCA era. According to the consulting and training company, Cprime, as stated in its "Implementing an Agile Transformation" case study within a Fortune 500 company, the leadership competency most crucial for future success is 'Agile.' Agile leaders are viewed as the key to meeting the current leadership criteria (Horney et al., 2010; De Meuse et al., 2010; Joiner & Josephs, 2007).

Modern leadership theory defines Agile leadership as the ability to initiate and navigate change effectively, ensuring success in an uncertain and dynamic environment (Nurcholis & Cahyono, 2019). An Agile leader is one who upholds a strong work ethic (Dai et al., 2013; De Meuse et al., 2010; Tonia Lediju, 2016). Communication and a leader's attributes toward their team members are among the variables influencing work commitment. A leader's presence significantly impacts the productivity of team members, highlighting the critical role leaders play in enhancing employee work integrity (Wang et al., 2010). Therefore, it can be concluded that agile leaders have the potential to influence teachers' work commitment.

Previous research has demonstrated that leadership style significantly impacts employee work commitment (Eilers et al., 2022; Wang et al., 2010). However, Dewi (2017) presented a contrary finding, revealing a negative and insignificant effect of leadership style on employee work commitment. This disparity in findings highlights a notable research gap that researchers aim to address by incorporating organizational culture as a mediating factor and promoting the concept of agile leadership.

Organizations must prioritize their organizational culture to ensure work stability and effectiveness. Culture, in this context, refers to the shared beliefs and values within an organization that shape employees' mindsets and attitudes. Organizational culture acts as a driving force, enabling members to strive and collaborate while providing a shared understanding of goals and the means to achieve them (Narayana, 2017).

One of the key factors influencing employee work commitment is the organizational environment, which encompasses values and culture affecting a person's work behavior (Alkahtani, 2015). In educational institutions, organizational culture holds significant importance as it influences the enhancement of education quality. The behavior and ethics of organizational members reflect the quality of education. Organizational culture within the education sector is interconnected with the activities and regulations within the educational institution. When members of the organization adhere firmly to the institution's values and norms, it contributes to the overall goodness of the institution.

In this case, aiming to address the aforementioned challenges and contribute to the existing literature by bridging the research gap present in previous studies, where the influence of agile leadership on teacher work commitment was not thoroughly investigated, this research will delve into the mediating role of organizational culture in the relationship between agile leadership and teacher work commitment. This study endeavors to provide significant insights and

fresh ideas to enhance understanding within the realm of human resource management studies.

METHOD

This research employs quantitative methods, utilizing theoretical models to discern the mediating role of Organizational Culture in the influence of Agile Leadership on Work Commitment. The Structural Equation Model (SEM) is chosen to evaluate the mediation model based on the interplay of variables, allowing a thorough examination of their relationships (Hamid & Anwar, 2019).

The study is conducted at Azhari Islamic School Rasuna, an educational institution implementing an international curriculum that has been facing challenges regarding teacher work commitment. This issue is apparent through the departure of several teachers from the school for various reasons, averaging three to four teachers per year since 2021-2023. These departures significantly impact the learning system, as new teachers require time to adapt and familiarize themselves with the curriculum. In light of these challenges, this research seeks to explore whether organizational culture plays a mediating role in the relationship between agile leadership and teacher work commitment.

This research utilizes a closed questionnaire, offering predefined answer choices for respondents to select based on their perceptions. The measurement scale employed is the Likert scale, as the study delves into individuals' opinions and perceptions.

The variable measurement employs a 5-level ordinal scale, symbolized to categorize a person's opinion, namely Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree, and Strongly Agree.

In this research, the independent variable is agile leadership, the intervening variable is organizational culture, and the dependent variable is work commitment. The agile leadership scale, consisting of 27 items across 5 dimensions (agility in human relationships, agility in creating results, mental agility, agility in change, and self-awareness), was developed by Yazıcı & Özgenel (2020). For the organizational culture scale, Trang (2013) developed a scale comprising 14 items categorized into 7 dimensions (innovation and risk-taking, attention to detail, results-oriented, people-oriented, team-oriented, aggressive, and stable). Lastly, the work commitment scale is based on the work of Allen & Meyer (1997), consisting of 8 items categorized into 3 dimensions (affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment).

Hypothesis development

The relationship between agile leadership, work commitment, and organizational culture

According to McPherson (2016), agile leadership encourages member involvement in policy-making, fostering a sense of ownership. Additionally, agile leaders empower members to take initiative, identify problems, and propose solutions, leading to increased work commitment. Based on this, we propose:

H1: Agile leadership positively affects work commitment

Joiner & Josephs (2007) posit that agile leaders prioritize transparency and effective communication, fostering a positive culture where information and challenges are shared openly. Agile leadership also promotes continuous learning, fostering innovation and renewal. Consequently, we propose:

H2: Agile leadership positively affects organizational culture

The relationship between organizational culture and work commitment

McKinnon et al. (2003) suggest that an organizational culture promoting innovation and process openness is crucial for effective work performance. Similarly, Özgenel & Koc (2020) emphasize that providing employees with the freedom to innovate fosters a sense of self-esteem, consequently boosting work commitment. Based on this, we propose:

H3: Organizational culture positively affects work commitment

Mediating role of organizational culture on the nexus between agile leadership and work commitment

According to Yazıcı et al. (2022), agile leadership fosters innovation and problem-solving by providing members with the necessary space. Additionally, an organizational culture that encourages collaboration enhances employee engagement, making them feel valued and integral to the organization's success. Consequently, we propose:

H4: Organizational culture mediates the influence of agile leadership on work commitment

Figure 1. Research framework
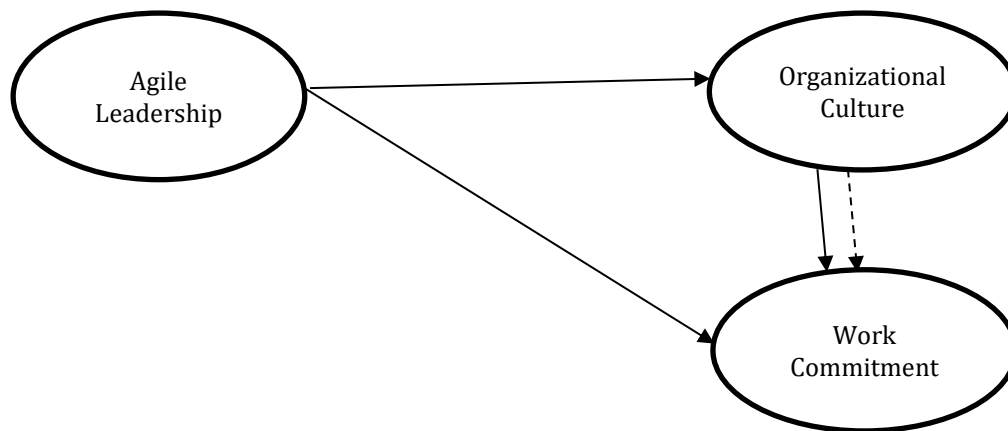
Source: Authors' compilation (2023)

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Validity test

According to Hamid and Anwar (2019), validity tests are used to measure whether a questionnaire is valid or not. This measurement was conducted because the research questionnaire was prepared based on the theoretical construction of each research variable. Indicators were then derived from these variables and explained in each item in the questionnaire. There are two criteria for assessing validity tests in the outer model: Convergent validity and Discriminant validity.

Convergent validity

Convergent validity measures the validity of indicators by assessing the outer loading of each variable indicator. Based on the results of the convergent validity test that has been conducted, the outer loading values of all indicators for variables X1, Z, and Y are greater than 0.5. According to (Chin, 2010), this indicates their validity.

The convergent validity test can also be assessed through the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) value and the square root of AVE, along with the respective AVE values for each variable:

Tabel 1. Convergent validity test results using AVE

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	rho_A	Composite Reliability	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Agile Leadership	0.984	0.988	0.985	0.715
Organizational culture	0.972	0.974	0.975	0.733
Work Commitment	0.927	0.951	0.939	0.662

Source: Processed data (2023)

Based on the above results, it is evident that the AVE value for each variable exceeds 0.5, confirming the fulfillment of discriminant validity.

Discriminant validity

Discriminant validity aims to assess the extent to which a latent construct is distinct from other constructs. A high discriminant validity value indicates that a construct is unique and effectively explains measurable phenomena. Below are the results of the square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE):

Table 2. AVE root value results

Variable	Agile Leadership	Organizational Culture	Work Commitment
Agile Leadership	0.846		
Organizational culture	0.530	0.856	
Work Commitment	0.483	0.613	0.813

Source: Processed data (2023)

The square root of the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for each variable surpasses the AVE root of its correlation with other variables, confirming the fulfillment of discriminant validity.

Reliability test

According to Hamid and Anwar (2019), reliability is a measurement tool for assessing a questionnaire, which serves as an indicator of a variable or construct. The reliability test for a construct with reflexive indicators can be conducted using two methods: Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability. A construct is considered reliable if both the Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability

values exceed 0.7 for confirmatory research; values within the range of 0.6 to 0.7 are still deemed acceptable.

Table 3. Cronbach's Alpha and composite reliability result

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability
Agile Leadership	0.984	0.985
Organizational culture	0.972	0.975
Work Commitment	0.927	0.939

Source: Processed data (2023)

Based on the results above, both the Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values surpass 0.7, indicating their acceptability.

Structural evaluation of the model (inner model)

According to Hamid and Anwar (2019), structural model testing involves examining the relationships between constructs. These relationships are evaluated by considering the significance value and R-Square value for each independent latent variable, which reflects the predictive power of the structural model. The assessment of the model's structural validity is based on these values.

An R-Square value of 0.75 indicates a strong model, while 0.50 suggests a moderate model, and 0.25 implies a weak model. The following presents the R-Square values obtained in this study:

Table 4. R-Square

Variable	R-Square
Organizational Culture	0.281
Work Commitment	0.411

Source: Processed data (2023)

Based on the obtained results, it is evident that the R-Square for the Path I model is 0.281, implying that Agile Leadership's capacity to elucidate Organizational Culture accounts for 28.1%. This indicates a weak model. Similarly, the R-Square for the Path II model is 0.411, signifying that Agile Leadership's impact on work commitment through Organizational Culture is 41.1%, categorizing it as a weak model as well.

In addition to examining R-Square values, the researcher evaluated the F-Square value to determine the extent of influence between variables. An F-Square value of 0.02 signifies a small influence, 0.15 indicates a moderate influence, and 0.35 implies a substantial influence. The F-Square values are outlined below:

Table 5. F-Square result

Variable	Agile Leadership	Organizational Culture	Work Commitment
Agile Leadership		0.392	0.059
Organizational Culture			0.301
Work Commitment			

Source: Processed data (2023)

Based on the results above, the influence of Agile Leadership on Organizational Culture is calculated at 0.392, indicating a substantial influence. The influence of Agile Leadership on Work Commitment stands at 0.059, representing a moderate level of influence. Furthermore, the influence of Organizational Culture on Work Commitment is measured at 0.301, signifying a significant influence.

Hypothesis test

The subsequent step involves hypothesis testing for the inner model. Assessing the significance of the estimated parameters is crucial as it offers valuable insights into the relationships between the research variables.

Table 6. Direct impact results

Variable	Original Sampling	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values
Agile Leadership -> Organizational Culture	0.530	0.573	0.203	2.616	0.009
Agile Leadership -> Work Commitment	0.220	0.211	0.251	0.875	0.382
Organizational Culture -> Work Commitment	0.497	0.529	0.232	2.137	0.033

Source: Processed data (2023)

First hypothesis

Based on the above results, it is evident that the Agile Leadership variable exerts a positive influence on Work Commitment, with a coefficient of 0.220. However, this influence is not deemed statistically significant, as indicated by a P-value of 0.382. Consequently, we interpret the results as rejecting the initial hypothesis,

suggesting that there is no significant influence between Agile Leadership and Work Commitment.

Second hypothesis

The results show that the Agile Leadership variable has a significant and positive influence on Organizational Culture, with a coefficient of 0.530 and a low P-value of 0.009. Therefore, we accept the second hypothesis, confirming a notable influence between Agile Leadership and Organizational Culture.

Third hypothesis

The finding indicates a positive and significant influence of the Organizational Culture variable on Work Commitment, with a coefficient of 0.497 and a P-value of 0.033. Consequently, we accept the third hypothesis, affirming a significant influence between Organizational Culture and Work Commitment.

Apart from direct relationships between variables, researchers also examined indirect relationships between variables, yielding the following results:

Table 9. Indirect effect results

Variable	Original Sampling	Sample Mean	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Values
Agile Leadership -> Organizational Culture -> Work Commitment	0.263	0.308	0.198	1.329	0.185

Source: Processed data (2023)

The indirect influence of Agile Leadership on Work Commitment through Organizational Culture is positive, with a coefficient of 0.263. However, this indirect influence is not statistically significant, as indicated by a P-value of 0.185, which is greater than the common significance level of 0.05. Consequently, we interpret the results as rejecting the fourth hypothesis, suggesting that Organizational Culture does not mediate the influence of Agile Leadership on Work Commitment.

Discussion

Based on the result, Agile Leadership is found to have a positive influence on Work Commitment, although this influence is not statistically significant. The research findings suggest that the principal's leadership style is not the primary determinant of teachers' work commitment within the school. It appears that teachers prioritize factors such as the overall comfort and harmony of their work environment over the specific leadership style of the principal. The study indicates that Agile Leadership alone may not significantly contribute to teachers' commitment to their work. Teachers' commitment can also be influenced by external factors, such as receiving better job offers from elsewhere or encountering challenges in their current school environment. These findings diverge from the research conducted by Eilers et al. (2020).

The research also indicates a significant and positive influence of Agile Leadership on Organizational Culture. This finding is likely attributed to the principal, who holds a key role as a policy maker within the school, shaping and instilling positive values and norms within the school environment. These results align with Subhana's (2007) research, which also demonstrated a positive and significant effect of Agile Leadership on Organizational Culture.

Furthermore, the research also affirms a significant and positive influence of Organizational Culture on Work Commitment. This outcome is likely attributed to the prevailing values and norms within schools, which encourage teachers to be more active, enthusiastic, and comfortable in their work environment, consequently fostering a strong commitment. These findings are consistent with previous research by McKinnon et al. (2001), demonstrating a positive and significant effect of Organizational Culture on Work Commitment.

Regarding the influence of Agile Leadership on Work Commitment through Organizational Culture, it is observed to be positive but not statistically significant. This suggests the presence of other potential mediating variables between Agile Leadership and Work Commitment. Variables like motivation, organizational citizenship behavior, and work ethics could potentially serve as mediators. Interestingly, there is a dearth of research exploring these specific mediating variables, presenting an opportunity for further investigation in this area.

CONCLUSION

The objective of this research was to ascertain the mediating role of organizational culture in the influence of agile leadership on teacher work commitment. Upon thorough analysis and discussion of the findings, it is evident

that Agile Leadership has a positive and significant impact on Organizational Culture. Furthermore, Agile Leadership exerts a positive influence on work commitment, although the influence is not statistically significant. The mediating role of Organizational Culture on the influence of Agile Leadership on Work Commitment is also positive but lacks statistical significance.

In light of these findings, this research offers recommendations for consideration. Schools are encouraged to strengthen their existing organizational culture through initiatives like counseling or socialization programs focused on organizational culture, ensuring its deep-rooted integration among teachers.

For future researchers, there is potential to introduce other variables as moderators. Additionally, it is advisable to select research locations in diverse fields, as results may vary based on the context.

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