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From Vision to Velocity: Digital Leadership and Organisational Agility

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ABSTRACT - Digital transformation has made it essential for organisations to build leadership strengths that enable technology uptake, quick responsiveness and lasting performance. This paper tests how three digital leadership competencies (digital vision, digital fluency and change facilitation) shape organisational agility and the outcomes of digital transformation. A cross-sectional quantitative approach was adopted. Primary data came from a structured five-point Likert questionnaire completed by managers and employees who are involved with, or familiar with, digital transformation in several sectors. Peer-reviewed studies, industry reports and organisational documents served as secondary sources that give context to the survey results. The responses were processed in SPSS using descriptive statistics, Cronbach's alpha, correlation and ANOVA. The results are expected to show that these competencies are significant positive predictors of agility, and that agility in turn supports better transformation outcomes such as efficiency, competitive standing and technology adoption. By placing leadership competencies, agility and outcomes in one integrated model, the paper adds to digital leadership research and offers guidance to organisations building leadership capacity during technological change.

Keywords: digital competencies; digital leadership; digital transformation; organisational agility; transformation outcomes

INTRODUCTION

Data analytics, artificial intelligence, cloud platforms and automation are reshaping how firms operate, compete and generate value. Taking up such technologies is not a single project with an end date. It is an ongoing change that touches strategy, structure, routines and the behaviour of employees. When digital initiatives disappoint, the reason frequently lies less in the technology than in the way leaders guide people through the transition. Whether digital spending turns into real performance gains therefore depends heavily on leadership.

Digital leadership, as used here, means the abilities leaders need to guide their organisations through technology-led change. Three are examined. Digital vision is the ability to set out clearly how digital technologies will shape the future of the business. Digital fluency is a leader's comfort and confidence with digital tools and platforms. Change facilitation is the ability to listen to employee concerns, reduce resistance and help people settle into new ways of working. Together, these abilities help employees see why change is needed, trust those leading it and feel able to contribute.

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Organisational agility is an organisation's ability to notice changes in its surroundings and react quickly by shifting resources, working across functions and adjusting decisions. In fast-moving digital markets, agile firms can capture opportunities and counter threats ahead of competitors. Agility also offers a credible bridge between leadership and results: leaders with strong digital competencies can shape structures, culture and decision processes that make the organisation more responsive. Agile organisations may in turn achieve better transformation outcomes, including smoother technology adoption, employee adjustment, greater efficiency and a stronger market position.

Each of the three themes has drawn substantial scholarly interest, but they are usually studied separately. Empirical work that joins leadership competencies, agility and transformation outcomes in a single framework is scarce, and very little of it draws on both managers and employees from several sectors. This paper fills that gap by testing an integrated model with data from 102 respondents. The findings should help organisations decide which leadership capabilities deserve the most investment, and they extend the existing digital leadership literature.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

(Al Naim, 2023) investigated how technological integration and skills-development programmes influence workforce productivity and organisational agility, treating low organisational trust as a moderating factor. Drawing on 186 employees of Saudi organisations, the study found that both technology integration and skills development raised productivity, while low trust weakened these effects, with the exception of the technology–agility link. The author recommends that firms combine technology and training spending with efforts to build trust.

(Srinath T K, 2026) explored how AI adoption relates to organisational agility, with organisational context as an additional variable, applying PLS-SEM to survey responses from professionals in different industries. AI adoption had a strong positive effect on administrative agility ($\beta = 0.708$, $p < 0.001$), whereas organisational context had a significant negative effect ($\beta = -0.378$, $p = 0.013$). The authors conclude that AI strengthens agility only where structures are flexible, guidance is adaptive and the culture encourages innovation.

(Yamin T, 2023) analysed how digital technology, transformational leadership and agility connect to organisational performance, using PLS-SEM on questionnaires from 207 respondents in Indonesia. Digital technology improved agility and performance, and transformational leadership had positive effects on technology, agility and performance. Agility also lifted performance and partly mediated the influence of technology and leadership on it. The study advises firms to invest in both digital technology and transformational leadership to become more agile and perform better.

(Zhang J, 2026) looked at the part digital leadership plays in organisational agility within China's fast-changing business setting, analysing 800 valid survey responses in SPSS. A significant relationship emerged between the dynamic business environment and agility, suggesting that quick technological change, regulation, competition and shifting consumer behaviour push firms to become more agile. The authors read this as support for contingency theory and the dynamic capabilities view, and they argue that firms able to adjust to external change are better placed to succeed.

(Anas Ayoub Abed Alhameed, 2026) studied how digital transformational leadership affects organisational performance through agility and digital transformation, with digital culture as a moderator. Using PLS-SEM, the study surveyed 284 senior and middle managers in 13 Palestinian commercial banks. Digital transformational leadership significantly strengthened both agility and digital transformation, which then improved performance, with the two acting as parallel and sequential mediators. Digital culture moderated these effects, although the interactions were negative, which may mean that tightly entrenched digital norms limit flexibility. The authors conclude that leadership by itself is not enough and needs agile structures and a supportive culture.

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Research Objectives

1. To study how digital leadership competencies are related to organisational agility.
2. To assess whether organisational agility is associated with digital transformation outcomes.
3. To test whether digital transformation outcomes differ with the level of digital leadership competencies.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study follows a quantitative, cross-sectional design to find out how digital vision, digital fluency and change facilitation affect organisational agility and digital transformation outcomes. It looks at how managers and employees perceive these competencies in their organisations, how the competencies relate to agility, and how both connect to outcomes, namely technology adoption, employee adaptation, operational efficiency and competitive positioning. Primary data were collected with a structured questionnaire. Secondary material from peer-reviewed literature, industry reports and organisational documents gives background to the survey results.

Sampling Design

The population comprises managers and employees who take part in, or know about, digital transformation initiatives in various sectors. **[Purposive / convenience]** sampling was used so that every respondent had some exposure to digital transformation at work. A total of 102 valid responses were obtained through **[online / face-to-face]** administration..

Data Collection Tools

The main instrument was a structured questionnaire **[that was pre-tested for clarity and reliability]**, divided into three parts:

1. Respondent profile: involvement in digital transformation, designation or role level, and years of work experience.
2. Digital leadership competencies and organisational agility: five statements per construct. The leadership items cover digital vision, digital fluency, experimentation and risk-taking, employee empowerment and change facilitation. The agility items cover responsiveness, resource reallocation, cross-functional collaboration, environmental scanning and decentralised decision-making.
3. Digital transformation outcomes: four statements on tool adoption, employee adaptation, operational efficiency and competitive position, plus one overall rating of the organisation's transformation journey.

Every statement used a five-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Agree, 5 = Strongly Disagree). Scale reliability was checked using Cronbach's alpha.

Data Analysis

The data were coded and processed in SPSS. Frequencies, percentages and means summarised the respondent profile and the views on each construct, and Cronbach's alpha tested reliability. The objectives were examined as follows:

- Objective 1: Pearson's correlation, to measure the link between leadership competencies and agility.

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- Objective 2: Cross-tabulation with the Chi-square test, to check the association between agility and transformation outcomes.
- Objective 3: One-way ANOVA, to compare transformation outcomes across levels of leadership competencies.

A 5 per cent significance level ($p < 0.05$) applied to all tests. Results were read against the objectives, and implications were drawn for organisations aiming to build leadership capacity during digital change.

Research Hypothesis

1. Digital leadership competencies and organisational agility are positively and significantly related.
2. Organisational agility and digital transformation outcomes are significantly associated.
3. Digital transformation outcomes differ significantly across levels of digital leadership competencies.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Table 1: Digital transformation initiatives within the organisation

	Frequency	Percent
Yes, directly	36	35.3
Yes, partially/indirectly	54	52.9
No	12	11.8
Total	102	100.0

Most respondents have direct exposure to digital transformation: 35.3% (36) lead initiatives themselves and 52.9% (54) take part partially or indirectly, leaving only 11.8% (12) with no involvement. Since 88.2% have first-hand experience, their ratings can be treated as credible.

Table 2: Designation of Respondents

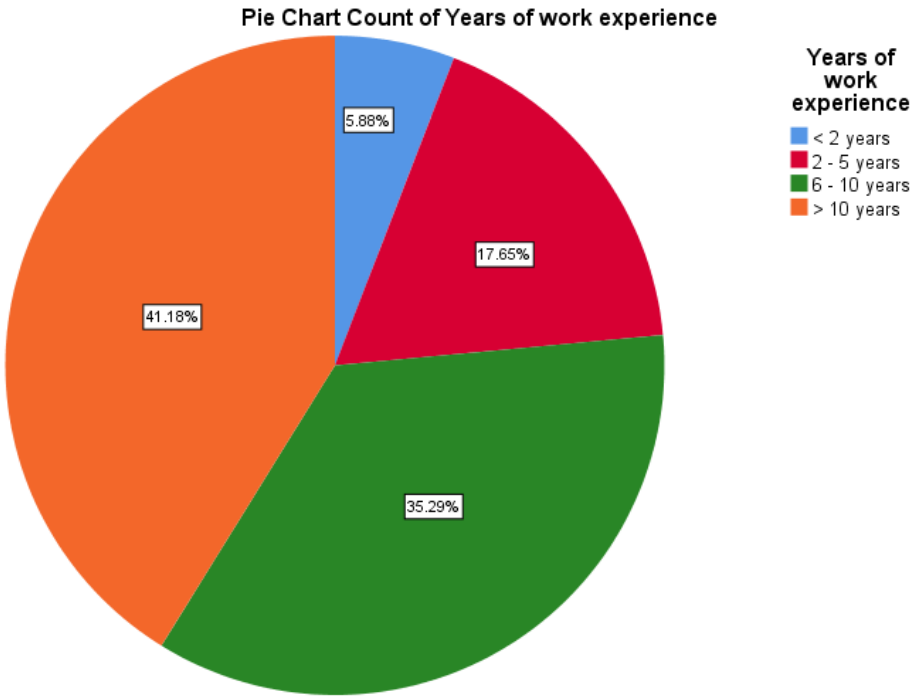
	Frequency	Percent
Senior Management	12	11.8
Middle Management	66	64.7
Junior/Executive Level	24	23.5
Total	102	100.0

Middle managers form the bulk of the sample at 64.7% (66), followed by junior/executive staff at 23.5% (24) and senior managers at 11.8% (12). The sample thus reflects mainly those who turn strategy into action, which fits a study of leadership and agility, although senior management is under-represented.

Chart 1: Years of experience of respondents

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Respondents are largely seasoned: 41.18% have over 10 years of experience and 35.29% have 6–10 years, so roughly 76.5% have more than six years. Just 17.65% have 2–5 years and 5.88% less than two. They are well placed to judge how leadership and agility in their organisations have evolved.

Table 3: Digital leadership Competencies

	1	2	3	4	5
My organisation's leaders articulate a clear vision for how digital technologies will shape the business's future.	48	54	-	-	-
Leaders in my organisation demonstrate strong personal fluency with digital tools and platforms.	54	36	12	-	-
Leaders encourage experimentation and calculated risk-taking with new digital initiatives.	42	42	12	6	-
Leaders empower employees to make decisions autonomously during digital change efforts.	42	30	24	6	-
Leaders actively facilitate change by addressing employee concerns and resistance during digital transformation.	48	36	12	6	-

Footnote: 1 – Strongly Agree; 2 – Agree; 3 – Neutral; 4 – Disagree; 5 – Strongly Disagree

Respondents rate their organisations' digital leadership favourably, with 84.7% of responses at Strongly Agree or Agree and an overall mean of 1.73. Digital vision scores highest (100% agreement, mean 1.53), followed by digital fluency (88.2%). Employee empowerment scores lowest (70.6%, mean 1.94). Leaders are thus perceived as good at setting direction but weaker at handing over decision-making authority.

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Table 4: Organisational Agility

	1	2	3	4	5
My organisation responds quickly to shifts in market or customer demands enabled by digital technology.	42	36	18	6	-
My organisation can reallocate resources (people, budget, technology) rapidly when priorities change.	36	36	30	-	-
Cross-functional teams in my organisation collaborate effectively on digital initiatives.	30	60	6	6	-
My organisation continuously senses and scans the external environment for emerging digital trends.	48	36	12	6	-
Decision-making in my organisation is decentralised enough to allow fast, flexible responses to change.	36	36	24	6	-

Footnote: 1 – Strongly Agree; 2 – Agree; 3 – Neutral; 4 – Disagree; 5 – Strongly Disagree

Agility is also viewed positively, with 77.6% of responses in agreement, 17.6% neutral and 4.7% in disagreement, and an overall mean of 1.89. Cross-functional collaboration is the strongest area (88.2%, mean 1.88), then scanning the environment for digital trends (82.4%, mean 1.76) and fast response to market shifts (76.5%, mean 1.88). Resource reallocation and decentralised decision-making are weakest (both 70.6%); reallocation has the largest neutral share (29.4%) and decentralisation the highest mean (2.00). Organisations collaborate and sense change well but are less flexible in shifting resources and pushing decisions downward.

Table 5: Digital Transformation Outcome

	1	2	3	4	5
My organisation has successfully adopted new digital tools/platforms in the past two years.	54	36	12	-	-
Employees in my organisation have adapted well to digitally driven changes in how work is done.	36	48	12	6	-
My organisation's digital transformation efforts have improved operational efficiency.	48	36	12	6	-
My organisation's digital transformation efforts have strengthened its competitive position.	48	30	18	6	-

Footnote: 1 – Strongly Agree; 2 – Agree; 3 – Neutral; 4 – Disagree; 5 – Strongly Disagree

Transformation outcomes are rated favourably as well: 82.4% agreement, 13.2% neutral, 4.4% disagreement, mean 1.76. Adoption of new digital tools is the best outcome (88.2%, mean 1.59, no disagreement), followed by operational efficiency and employee adaptation (both 82.4%). Competitive position is the weakest (76.5%,

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17.6% neutral, mean 1.82). Organisations have been more successful at adopting technology and improving internal processes than at converting digital effort into a clear market edge.

Objective 1: To study how digital leadership competencies are related to organisational agility.

- **H0:** Digital leadership competencies and organisational agility are not significantly related.
- **H1:** Digital leadership competencies and organisational agility are significantly and positively related.

Table 6: Correlation

		Digital Leadership Competencies	Organisational Agility
Digital Leadership Competencies	Pearson Correlation	1	.841
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	102	102
Organisational Agility	Pearson Correlation	.841	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	102	102

The correlation is r = .841 (p = .000 < .05, N = 102), a strong positive relationship. With $r^2 \approx 0.71$, roughly 71% of the variation in agility is shared with leadership competencies. H0 is rejected and H1 is accepted. Organisations whose leaders show stronger vision, fluency and change facilitation are clearly more agile. As both constructs are scored in the same direction, the positive sign means they move together.

Objective 2: To assess whether organisational agility is associated with digital transformation outcomes.

- **H0:** Organisational agility and digital transformation outcomes are not significantly associated.
- **H2:** Organisational agility and digital transformation outcomes are significantly associated.

Table 7: Chi-Square Tests

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	538.050	64	.000
Likelihood Ratio	325.410	64	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	71.760	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	102		

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The Pearson chi-square is 538.050 (df = 64, p = .000) and the likelihood ratio is 325.410 (df = 64, p = .000). The linear-by-linear value of 71.760 (df = 1, p = .000) shows the association follows a clear order: higher agility accompanies better outcomes. A df of 64 points to a 9×9 cross-tabulation, giving a Cramér's V of about 0.81, which is a very strong association. H0 is rejected and H2 is accepted.

Objective 3: To test whether digital transformation outcomes differ with the level of digital leadership competencies.

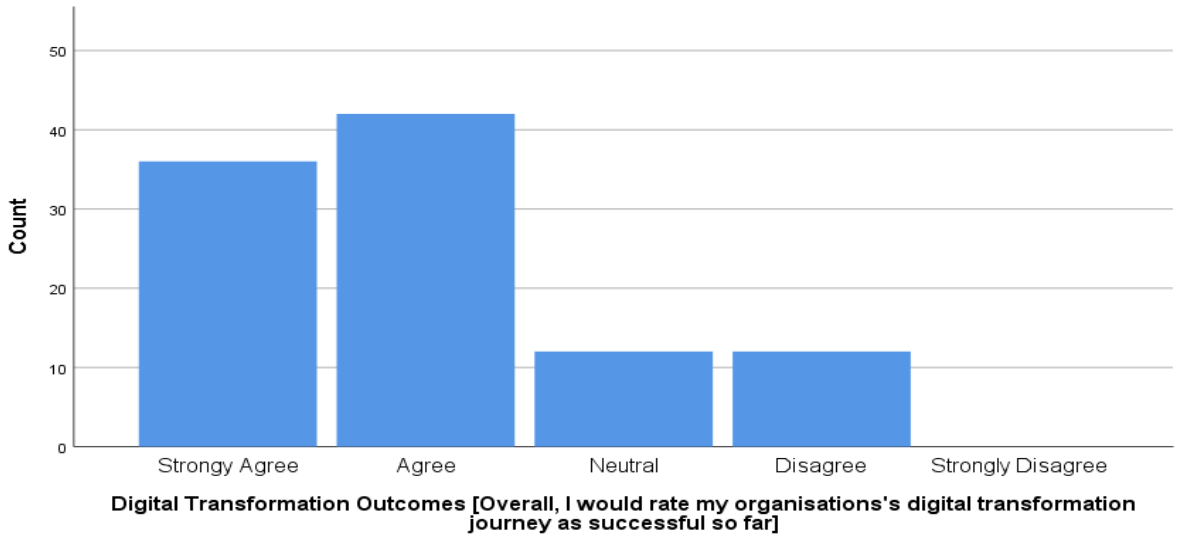
- **H0:** Transformation outcomes do not differ significantly across levels of leadership competencies.
- **H3:** Transformation outcomes differ significantly across levels of leadership competencies.

Table 8: ANOVA

Digital Leadership Competencies and Digital Transformation Outcomes					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	35.900	8	4.487	50.697	.000
Within Groups	8.232	93	.089		
Total	44.132	101			

The ANOVA gives F(8, 93) = 50.697, p = .000. Variance between groups (MS = 4.487) greatly exceeds variance within groups (MS = 0.089). Eta-squared is 35.900 / 44.132 ≈ 0.81, so about 81% of the variation in outcomes is accounted for by leadership-competency level, a very large effect. H0 is rejected and H3 is accepted. Organisations at different leadership levels clearly differ in transformation outcomes, which supports the view that leadership capability drives results.

Chart 2: Organisational successful digital transformation



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Bar chart: "On the statement "Overall, I would rate my organisation's digital transformation journey as successful so far", 42 respondents (41.2%) agree and 36 (35.3%) strongly agree, so 76.5% regard their journey as successful. Twelve (11.8%) are neutral, 12 (11.8%) disagree and none strongly disagree. The responses lean positive, in line with the item means above. The 23.5% who are neutral or negative indicate that a sizeable minority has not yet seen clear success, so progress differs across organisations.

FINDINGS

1. Respondent profile: 88.2% are directly or partially involved in digital transformation, middle managers are the largest group (64.7%), and 76.5% have over six years of experience.
2. Leadership competencies receive favourable ratings (84.7% agreement, mean 1.73). Digital vision is strongest (100%) and employee empowerment weakest (70.6%).
3. Agility is rated positively but is the lowest-rated construct (77.6%, mean 1.89). Cross-functional collaboration leads, while resource reallocation and decentralised decision-making trail.
4. Transformation outcomes are rated favourably (82.4%, mean 1.76). Tool adoption is strongest (88.2%) and competitive positioning weakest (76.5%). Overall, 76.5% call their transformation journey successful.
5. Leadership competencies and agility are strongly and positively correlated ($r = .841$, $p = .000$); H1 is accepted.
6. Agility and transformation outcomes are significantly associated ($\chi^2 = 538.050$, $df = 64$, $p = .000$); H2 is accepted.
7. Outcomes differ significantly across leadership-competency levels ($F = 50.697$, $p = .000$; $\eta^2 \approx 0.81$); H3 is accepted.

CONCLUSION

This paper explored how digital vision, digital fluency and change facilitation relate to organisational agility and digital transformation outcomes, using data from 102 managers and employees. Respondents view leadership, agility and outcomes favourably, and the three constructs prove to be closely connected. Leadership competencies are strongly and positively linked to agility, agility is significantly associated with outcomes, and outcomes vary significantly with the level of leadership competency. All three hypotheses are supported. Organisations led by people who set a clear digital direction, use digital tools confidently and support employees through change tend to be more agile and to achieve stronger results.

The study also exposes weak spots. Leaders score highest on vision and fluency but lowest on empowering employees to make decisions. Agility is the lowest-rated construct, especially in reallocating resources and decentralising decisions. Competitive positioning is the weakest outcome, suggesting that organisations adopt digital tools more readily than they convert them into market advantage.

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