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Pro-Human Rights Leadership on Human Rights-Based Digitalization: Moderating Role of Organizational Culture in University

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Abstract
This research aims to examine the effect of pro-human rights leadership on human rights-based digitalization with organizational culture as a moderating variable in universities. This study uses a quantitative approach with an explanatory design. Data were collected from lecturers and students at Universitas Peradaban using purposive sampling. A total of 455 respondents participated in this research. Data analysis employed Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to examine the direct and moderating relationships among variables. The findings indicate that pro-human rights leadership positively and significantly affects human rights-based digitalization. Leaders who prioritize fairness, inclusiveness, transparency, and human rights protection are more capable of encouraging ethical and human-centered digital transformation in universities. Furthermore, organizational culture significantly strengthens the relationship between pro-human rights leadership and human rights-based digitalization. Universities with organizational cultures that support human rights values and digital ethics tend to enhance the effectiveness of leadership in implementing inclusive and responsible digital systems. The novelty of this research lies in integrating human rights perspectives into digital transformation studies in higher education and introducing organizational culture as a moderating factor in the relationship between pro-human rights leadership and human rights-based digitalization.

Keywords:
Pro-Human Rights Leadership; Organizational Culture; Human Rights-Based Digitalization; University.

1. INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation becomes a critical development in the university in Industry 4.0 and Society 5.0. The university needs to adopt digital technology to improve the quality, efficiency, and effectiveness of its educational services. Academic information systems, e-learning, digital administration service, big data, and artificial intelligence in the learning process can improve institutional decision-making (Rahmi et al., 2026). Digital technology helps universities to improve academic and administrative activities and interaction between lecturers, students, educational staff, and other stakeholders. Universities have a moral responsibility to establish an educational ecosystem that supports fairness, inclusiveness, and human values (Jiang et al., 2025; Maleki, 2026). In this case, digitalization in universities needs to be seen beyond modernization, which is a social transformation that involves aspects of ethics, individual rights, and sustainability.

Digitalization presents some challenges. Intensive technology adoption can increase risks of data misuse, privacy violations, digital access inequality, and the emergence of technology-based discriminatory

practices (Yu et al., 2025). In this case, besides infrastructure preparation, universities also need to have institutional capability to manage social and human impacts of digitalization.

On one hand, digital transformation in universities brings ease in academic and administrative processes. On the other hand, digitalization also gives challenges in the protection of human rights. First, a wider digital transformation can lead to privacy violations in the data of students, lecturers, and academic staff. Digital academic data collection and storage without sufficient protection can lead to private data and information leakage (Gebremeskel et al., 2023). Second, algorithm-based technology and artificial intelligence can lead to discrimination against specific groups if they are not established fairly and transparently (Bui et al., 2026). Third, digitalization brings technology access inequality in universities (Martini & Sgambato, 2025). Not all academic civitas have equal economic ability, digital literacy, and access to infrastructure to enjoy digital facilities. In this case, it creates unfairness in information and education services. Fourth, digitalization brings cyberbullying and hate speech (Marolla-Gajardo & Lozano Mas, 2025).

Human rights-based digitalization is an approach that can be used to put human rights as the main principle in technology development and adoption. Human rights-based digitalization allows digital technology to give equal benefits for all users without discrimination, privacy violation, freedom of expression, information access rights, and safety feelings in the digital space (Alsharif & Hnit, 2025). In universities, human rights-based digitalization represents the digital system, policy, and service that is based on human values and academic civitas interests. Universities need to ensure that the implemented technology can be accessed fairly by all students and lecturers without considering social, economic, or literacy background. Digital data is also managed transparently and responsibly without harming the user.

Successful human rights-based digitalization depends on leadership quality in universities. Pro-human rights leadership is one of the leadership qualities that focuses on respect for human rights as the main basis of decision-making and organizational management (Hoddy & Gray, 2023). In the context of digital transformation, leaders with pro-human rights tend to consider ethical aspects in digital technology, including data protection, equal access, and freedom of expression. Pro-human rights leaders also encourage more transparent, accountable, and responsive digital policy for minority in universities.

Organizational culture can facilitate the way pro-human rights leaders implement human rights-based digitalization. Organizational culture represents values, norms, and behavioral patterns in an institution (Bogale & Debela, 2024). An organizational culture that supports human rights encourages the creation of an inclusive, transparent, and diverse academic ecosystem. In the context of digital transformation, organizational culture has an important role in building how academic civitas uses technology, interacts in digital space, and respects human rights. When organizational culture supports values of transparency, inclusivity, and human rights, pro-human rights leaders' directives will be more easily translated into ethical digital policies and practices (Schrempf-Stirling & Buren, 2024).

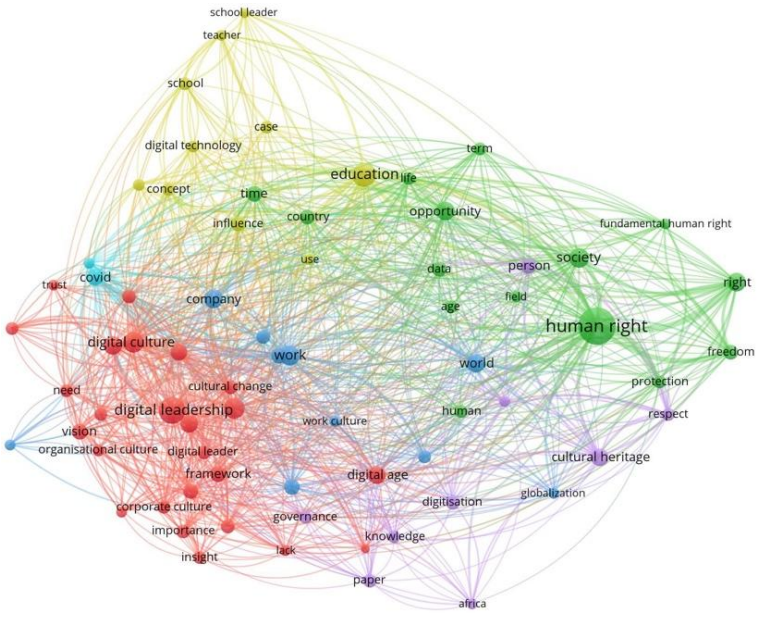

Figure 1. Previous Studies

Based on Figure 1, there are previous studies that focus on leadership and organizational culture in digital transformation (Cyfert et al., 2025; Sacavém et al., 2025), digitalization in academic institutions (Potocan et al., 2025), human rights and digitalization (Khazanchi & Saxena, 2025), working culture and digitalization (Kraus et al., 2023), and digitalization and culture (Alsaleh, 2024; Shan, 2024). Most previous

studies examine pro-human rights leadership, organizational culture in universities, and digitalization separately, which gives an incomplete picture of how leadership and organizational culture can improve human rights-based digitalization. Also, in Indonesia, there are limited studies of human rights-based digitalization in universities. This research is expected to fill the gap by giving a deeper insight into organizational factors that can create an inclusive and fair digital transformation.

This research aims to examine the effect of pro-human rights leadership on human rights-based digitalization with organizational culture as a moderating variable. Theoretically, this research contributes to extending the concept of pro-human rights leadership and organizational culture in the context of digital transformation in universities. This research also contributes to the literature of digital governance based on human values in universities. Integration of the human rights perspective and digitalization is still relatively new. Practically, this research is expected to support universities in formulating inclusive, safe, and fair digital transformation policies. This research can also give recommendations for universities to establish an organizational culture that supports digital ethics and rights protection for academic civitas.

1.1. Theoretical Framework

This research uses some theories. The grand theory uses sociotechnical systems theory. The sociotechnical systems theory explains that the success of technology implementation depends on social and technical systems (Schünemann et al., 2024). In this case, the sociotechnical systems theory captures human rights-based digitalization as the implementation of a technical system (digitalization) and social system (pro-human rights leadership and organizational culture).

Middle theory includes transformational leadership theory and organizational culture theory. Transformational leadership theory explains that leaders' characteristics can determine organizational changes (Vu et al., 2025). In this case, transformational leadership determines organizational orientation into human rights and digital innovations. Organizational culture theory explains that values, norms, and assumptions determine organizational behavior (Bogale & Debela, 2024). In this context, organizational culture can reinforce pro-human rights leadership.

Applied theory uses the theory of planned behavior. The theory of planned behavior explains attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control as behavior determinants (Hagger & Hamilton, 2025). In this case, pro-human rights leadership reflects attitude, organizational culture represents subjective norms, while human rights-based digitalization captures perceived behavioral control.

In this research, sociotechnical systems theory is used to explain that human rights-based digitalization is not only a technical aspect of academic activities in the university but also highlights the alignment between the digital system and the social aspect. The technical aspect refers to digital academic and administrative service, while the social aspect refers to university leadership style and culture that support human rights. Transformational leadership theory is used to explain how university leaders can communicate human rights, ethical guidance, and inclusive decisions that relate to digital academic and administrative services. Organizational culture theory is used to explain university culture as a contextual condition that relates to values of inclusivity, transparency, ethical behavior, and human rights. The theoretical framework can be seen in Figure 2.

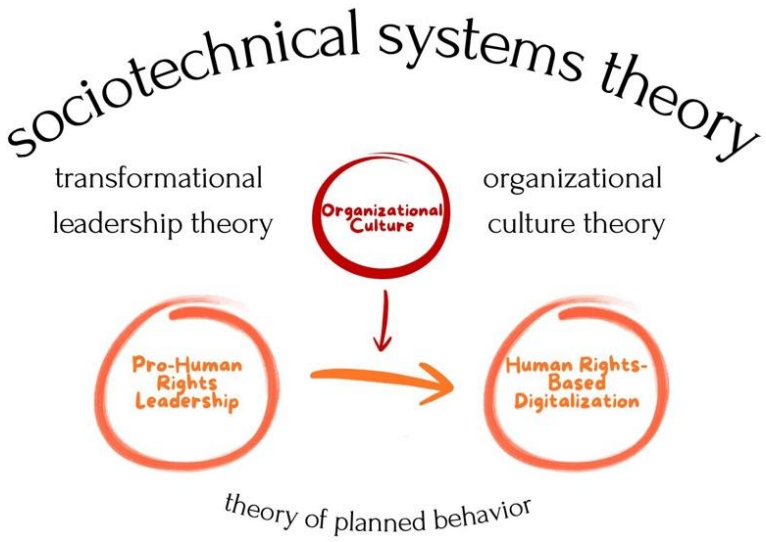

Figure 2. Theoretical Framework

1.2. Pro-Human Rights Leadership and Human Rights-Based Digitalization

Pro-human rights leadership is a leadership that puts human rights as a basis in organizational decision-making (Hoddy & Gray, 2023), including in the digital transformation process in educational institutions.

Leaders who have a human rights orientation focus on fairness, inclusivity, privacy protection, and individuals' safety, especially in digital system implementation. In the context of universities, pro-human rights leaders make digital policy that supports transparency, students' and lecturers' data protection, equal technology access, non-discrimination, and non-violation of individual rights. In this case, leadership style plays a critical role in determining the direction of digitalization to support human rights in universities.

The relationship between pro-human rights leadership and human rights-based digitalization can be explained by sociotechnical systems theory. Sociotechnical systems theory suggests that successful technology implementation does not only come from the technical aspect, but also the social aspect, including values, culture, organizational structure, and human behavior (Schünemann et al., 2024). In this case, digital transformation in universities should create a balance between technical infrastructure and human interest and rights. Universities' leaders play an important role in integrating social and technical aspects to ensure that digitalization not only improves organizational efficiency but also protects the rights of academic civitas. Pro-human rights leadership becomes a key factor to create an inclusive, safe, and human-oriented values digital system.

Transformational leadership theory explains that transformational leaders can determine organizational member behavior by vision, inspiration, motivation, and attention to individual needs. Transformational leaders are concerned with organizational changes by building shared commitment to institutional values and goals (Vu et al., 2025). In the context of human rights-based digitalization, leaders who orient to human rights can bring changes in implementing both digitalization and human rights protection. The leaders can establish ethical awareness in data protection, digital inclusiveness, and individuals' rights when implementing digital transformation.

The theory of planned behavior explains that individuals' behavior is determined by attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behavioral control (Hagger & Hamilton, 2025). When universities implement human rights-based digital transformation, pro-human rights leaders shape a positive attitude of academic civitas towards ethical and human rights-respecting technology adoption. The leaders also create organizational norms that can support digital rights protection and convince organizational members to use digital technology safely and responsibly.

Previous studies find that ethical and human values-oriented leadership has a positive impact on successful digital transformation in an organization (Domnic, 2026; Kamal et al., 2025). Kamal et al. (2025) find that digitalization can generate unethical issues in an organization. Domnic (2026) suggests that ethical leadership supports technological innovations. Previous studies only explain ethical issues in general, and do not specifically examine human rights. Previous studies also capture general organization and do not capture specific conditions or characteristics of the organization. This research extends previous studies to the issue of human rights in universities since universities have a moral responsibility to establish an educational ecosystem that supports fairness, inclusiveness, and human values (Jiang et al., 2025; Maleki, 2026).

H1: pro-human rights leadership improves human rights-based digitalization in universities.

1.3. Organizational Culture, Pro-Human Rights Leadership, and Human Rights-Based Digitalization

Organizational culture refers to the system of values, norms, beliefs, and behavioral patterns developed in an organization and becomes a guideline for members to act and make decisions (Bogale & Debela, 2024). In the context of universities, organizational culture represents the way universities establish social interaction, manage changes, and develop technology to support academic and administrative activities. There are principles of inclusivity, transparency, collaboration, diversity protection, and digital ethics when organizations have a culture that supports human rights. An organizational culture that supports human rights can create an adaptive ecosystem for digital transformation and rights protection for academic civitas.

Sociotechnical systems theory focuses on the alignment between technical and social aspects (Schünemann et al., 2024). The effectiveness of leaders' guidelines to align technology and human rights depends on the social condition of the organization, including the culture. An organizational culture that supports human values and digital ethics reinforces the digital policy made by the leaders.

Organizational culture theory explains that an organization has a big impact on members' behavior, including making decisions or facing changes (Bogale & Debela, 2024). An adaptive culture of ethical values encourages human rights-based digital transformation. In the context of universities, an organizational culture that promotes inclusivity, participation, and human rights protection reinforces digital implementation made by leaders. It is easier for leaders to run the digitalization policy that is based on human rights when there are already human rights values embedded in the university.

Based on the theory of planned behavior, organizational culture builds attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioral control (Camacho et al., 2025). In universities, organizational culture establishes social norms that determine the behavior of academic civitas on digital adoption. An organization's culture that supports human rights creates collective norms that encourage the members to implement safe, inclusive, responsible digital adoption.

Basically, leaders have limitations in supervising all organizational behavior directly. In this case, organizational culture becomes an important tool in ensuring that human rights values are consistently upheld by organizational members, including in digitalization in universities. When organizational culture supports inclusivity, ethics, transparency, and rights protection, human rights-based digitalization that is initiated by the leaders can be effectively and easily implemented. On the other hand, if organizational culture tends to avoid human rights, organizational members have no motivation to implement human rights-based digitalization, although there is already direction from the leaders.

Previous studies have found that organizational culture increases the success of digital transformation (Cyfert et al., 2025) and leadership impact on technology adoption (Çetinkaya & Sürücü, 2025; Sacavém et al., 2025). Some previous findings also provide evidence that ethical culture improves data protection policy and digital governance (Eke & Stahl, 2024; Stahl, 2025). Cyfert et al. (2025) show that digital transformation is determined by organizational culture, leadership, and competence. Çetinkaya and Sürücü (2025) and acavém et al. (2025) find that leadership style can create innovation and lead to technology implementation. Eke and Stahl (2024) and Stahl (2025) find that digitalization is used in the governance mechanism. However, previous studies examine organizational culture, leadership, and digitalization separately, and also do not consider specific organizational contexts such as universities. This research integrates organizational culture, leadership, and digitalization by putting organizational culture as a moderating variable. This research also extends the context of human rights to universities.

H2: organizational culture moderates the effect of pro-human rights leadership on human rights-based digitalization in universities.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

2.1. Research Design

This research uses a quantitative approach with an explanatory type that aims to explain the effect of pro-human rights leadership on human rights-based digitalization, with organizational culture as a moderating variable in the context of a university. This approach examines the causality relationship between variables empirically (Wu et al., 2024) by using analysis of structural equation modelling (SEM) (Hair & Alamer, 2022).

2.2. Population and Sample

The population includes lecturers and students in Universitas Peradaban, Brebes, Central Java. Universitas Peradaban is one of the developing universities and has initiated a digital system for academic, administrative, and service functions for lecturers and students. Based on the Indonesian Higher Education Database (Pangkalan Data Pendidikan Tinggi or PDDIKTI) in https://pddikti.kemdiktisaintek.go.id/, the population includes 98 lecturers and 6,265 students.

Sample selection uses purposive sampling with some criteria. First, samples actively involved in teaching, learning, and academic activities for over a year. Second, samples actively use digital academic and administrative services for over a year. A period of one year aims to maintain familiarity with leadership type, organizational culture, and digital service.

This research uses 3 methods to determine the minimal sample size. First, this research uses Slovin as in equations 1-2. By using a population size of 98 lecturers and 6,265 students with a significance of 0.05, the sample size is 79 lecturers and 376 students with a total of 455 samples.

$$Lecturers = \frac{Population}{1+Population\ (error)^2} = \frac{98}{1+\ 98\ (0.05)^2} = 78.7 \approx 79 \quad (1)$$

$$Students = \frac{Population}{1+Population\ (error)^2} = \frac{6.265}{1+\ 6.265\ (0.05)^2} = 375.9 \approx 376 \quad (2)$$

Second, this research follows methodological literature of SEM that usually needs 200-400 respondents to generate a reliable estimation (Gaskin et al., 2025). Third, by using power analysis of G*Power with a moderate effect (f^2 = 0.15), significance level of 0.05, and statistical power of 0.80 (Haile, 2023), the minimum sample size is 43 respondents. In conclusion, this research uses 455 samples since it already meets the statistical power consideration to detect the moderate effect in the structural model.

2.3. Data Collection

Data is collected by using a 5-point Likert questionnaire based on a previous study (Musah et al., 2025). Questionnaires are distributed directly and via Google Form. Questionnaires consist of indicators to measure the variables. Indicators are adjusted to the research context. Details of questionnaires can be seen in Table 1.

Table 1. Research Questionaries

Variable	Indicator	Question Items	Source
Pro-Human Rights Leadership	Fairness	- Does not discriminate between lecturers/students - Treats lecturers/students fairly and equally - Makes principled and fair decisions	(Almanbahi et al., 2025)
	Authorities Separation	- Provides opportunities for lecturers/students in decision-making - Listens to lecturers/students' ideas - Listens to lecturers/students' concerns	
	Role Clarification	- Communicates Responsibilities - Communicates Expectations - Communicates Performance	
	People Oriented	- Cares for Lecturers/students - Respects Lecturers/students - Supports Lecturers/students	
	Integrity	- Consistency in Words and Actions - Keeps Promises	
	Human Rights Guidance	- Communicates Human Rights Upholding - Explains Human Rights Upholding - Promotes Human Rights Upholding - Rewards Human Rights Upholding	
Human Rights-Based Digitalization	- Data Privacy Security - Data Use Security - Non-Discrimination in Data Access - Fairness in Data Access		(Eke & Stahl, 2024)
Organizational Culture	- The University Disciplines Human Rights Violations When They Occur - Lecturers/students feel that people who violate human rights still receive formal recognition (reversed value) - Sanctions for human rights violations are strictly enforced at the university - Human rights violations are punished at the university - The university upholds high human rights standards - Human rights advocates are recognized at the university - The university regularly demonstrates concern for human rights - The university upholds human rights violations (reversed value) - Human rights are the norm at the university - The university directs decision-making in a direction that supports human rights - Human rights advocates are recognized at the university - Human rights values are consistent with university values		(Musah et al., 2025)

2.4. Common Method Bias Test

To mitigate the potential of common method bias, this research performs procedural and statistical corrections. In a procedural way, respondents are told to participate voluntarily and anonymously. Respondents are informed that there is no right or wrong answer to lead respondents to answer honestly. In a statistical way, this research addresses common method variance. Since this study relies on self-reported data collected from a single respondent in each case and employs a cross-sectional research design, the potential presence of common method bias was carefully examined. To ensure that the observed relationships among constructs were not artificially inflated due to measurement method effects, this study conducted statistical tests to detect common method variance. First, Harman's single-factor test was performed by loading all measurement items into an exploratory factor analysis without rotation. Second, a common latent factor (CLF) was incorporated into the structural equation model to capture potential shared variance among indicators. A comparison of standardized factor loadings before and after the inclusion of the common latent factor revealed that the differences in loadings were below the recommended threshold of 0.20.

2.5. Data Analysis

Data analysis uses path analysis by structural equation modeling. First, this research evaluates the outer model to ensure validity and construct reliability. Convergent validity is examined by using values of outer loading and average variance extracted (AVE) (Hair & Alamer, 2022). Construct reliability is evaluated by using composite reliability (CR) and Cronbach's Alpha with a benchmark of 0.70 (Hair & Alamer, 2022).

Second, this research evaluates the inner model. Inner model aims to determine how far the structural model represents sufficient empirical data (goodness of fit). Goodness of fit is performed by using the ratio of chi-square to degrees of freedom (CMIN/DF), root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker-Lewis's index (TLI), normed fit index (NFI), and goodness of fit index (GFI). Third, this research examines path analysis. Path analysis aims to investigate direct effect and serial mediation. Hypotheses are accepted if the coefficient of path analysis is significant.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Results

3.1.1. Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 shows that the range value of pro-human rights leadership is 2.143 - 5.000, with an average value of 4.128 and a deviation of 0.561. The range value of organizational culture is 2.250 - 5.000, with an average value of 4.067 and a deviation of 0.604. The range value of human rights-based digitalization is 2.000 - 5.000, with an average value of 4.215 and a deviation of 0.523.

Table 2. Descriptive Statistics

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Pro-Human Rights Leadership	455	2.143	5.000	4.128	0.561
Organizational Culture	455	2.250	5.000	4.067	0.604
Human Rights-Based Digitalization	455	2.000	5.000	4.215	0.523

Source: statistical output

3.1.2. Outer Model

Table 3 shows the result of the outer model evaluation. All indicators have loading factor values above 0.70, which indicates that the indicators' variance can be explained by the latent construct. The AVE values are above 0.50, which indicates strong convergent validity. The composite reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values are above 0.7, which indicates consistent and reliable constructs.

Table 3. Outer Model

Variable	Indicator	Outer Loading	AVE	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha
Pro-Human Rights Leadership	PHRL1	0.812	0.673	0.962	0.957
	PHRL2	0.845			
	PHRL3	0.801			
	PHRL4	0.836			
	PHRL5	0.828			
	PHRL6	0.851			
	PHRL7	0.824			
	PHRL8	0.817			
	PHRL9	0.846			
	PHRL10	0.831			
	PHRL11	0.858			
	PHRL12	0.839			
	PHRL13	0.844			
	PHRL14	0.82			
	PHRL15	0.833			
	PHRL16	0.849			
Organizational Culture	OC1	0.811	0.688	0.951	0.944
	OC2	0.827			
	OC3	0.845			
	OC4	0.809			
	OC5	0.856			
	OC6	0.842			
	OC7	0.819			
	OC8	0.801			
	OC9	0.834			
	OC10	0.848			
	OC11	0.822			
	OC12	0.837			

Human Rights-Based Digitalization	HRBD1	0.841	0.721	0.912	0.871
	HRBD2	0.856			
	HRBD3	0.832			
	HRBD4	0.873			

Source: statistical output

3.1.3. Inner Model

Based on Table 4, the evaluation of the inner model shows that the structural model has good fitness. The CMIN/DF value of 1.842 is below 3.000, which shows good model fitness. RMSEA value of 0.043 (below 0.080) and SRMR value of 0.051 (below 0.080) show the acceptable approximation errors. The values of CFI, TLI, NFI, and GFI are above 0.900, which shows that the model is suitable with empirical data. The AGFI value of 0.887 (above 0.800) shows that the model is in the marginal fitness. In general, a structural model is fit to be used in path analysis.

Table 4. Inner Model

Goodness of Fit Index	Cut-off Value	Result	Conclusion
Chi-square/df (CMIN/DF)	≤ 3.000	1.842	Good Fit
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	≤ 0.080	0.043	Good Fit
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	≥ 0.900	0.951	Good Fit
Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI)	≥ 0.900	0.944	Good Fit
Normed Fit Index (NFI)	≥ 0.900	0.927	Good Fit
Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	≥ 0.900	0.913	Good Fit
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)	≥ 0.800	0.887	Marginal Fit
Standardized Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR)	≤ 0.080	0.051	Good Fit

Source: statistical output

3.1.4. Common Method Bias

Based on Table 5, this research uses Harman's Single Factor Test by examining all indicators in non-rotation exploratory factor analysis. The result shows that the first factor can only explain the variance of 34.276%, which is below 50%. It indicates that there is no one dominant factor that explains overall data variance. This research also uses Common Latent Factor (CLF) to detect potential shared variances for all indicators. The result shows that the factor loading value before and after CLF shows a gap between 0.031 and 0.117, which is below 0.200. In conclusion, common method bias does not determine the research result significantly, and the data can be used for further analysis. In this case, the structural relationship between pro-human rights leadership, organizational culture, and human rights-based digitalization can be interpreted with higher confidence, although the data is self-reported.

Table 5. Common Method Bias

Test	Criteria	Result	Conclusion
Harman's Single Factor Test	First factor variance < 50%	34.28%	No common method bias
Common Latent Factor (CLF)	Difference in loading < 0.200	0.031 – 0.117	No significant common method bias

Source: statistical output

3.1.5. Path Analysis

Table 6 shows that the path of Pro-Human Rights Leadership on Human Rights-Based Digitalization (PHRL → HRBD) has a coefficient of 0.487 with a t-statistic of 8.921 (significant at 0.01) and a p-value of 0.000. H1 is accepted where pro-human rights leadership improves human rights-based digitalization in universities. The interaction between Pro-Human Rights Leadership and Organizational Culture on Human Rights-Based Digitalization (PHRL x OC → HRBD) has a coefficient of 0.214 with a t-statistic of 3.756 (significant at 0.01) and a p-value of 0.000. H2 is accepted where organizational culture moderates the effect of pro-human rights leadership on human rights-based digitalization in universities.

Table 6. Path Analysis

Relationship	Path Coefficient (β)	t-Statistic	p-Value
PHRL → HRBD	0.487	8.921*	0.000
PHRL x OC → HRBD	0.214	3.756*	0.000

*Significant at 0.01, PHRL = Pro-Human Rights Leadership, OC = Organizational Culture, HRBD = Human Rights-Based Digitalization

Source: statistical output

3.2. Discussion

Based on data analysis, pro-human rights leadership improves human rights-based digitalization in universities. The higher orientation of human rights by the leaders, the better digital implementation that supports the protection of academic civitas rights.

The finding supports the sociotechnical systems theory that suggests the alignment between technical and social aspects. Digitalization in universities does not only rely on technological features, but also on leadership aspects as a part of the organizational social system. Pro-human rights leaders have a role to ensure that the technology is used ethically, safely, and does not violate individuals' rights. In this case, leadership helps integrate human interest with digital technology adoption, which leads to efficiency and rights protection. The finding also supports transformational leadership theory that suggests transformational leaders can establish a vision of organizational changes and inspire organizational members to accept digital transformation that is oriented to human values. Pro-human rights leadership can create collective awareness on digital ethics, data protection, and inclusivity in technology implementation. Leaders can also bring motivation and commitment for academic civitas to implement digital transformation responsibly and fairly. The finding also supports the theory of planned behavior that suggests pro-human rights leadership can create a positive attitude toward ethical and respectful technology implementation.

The finding is consistent with previous findings that ethical leadership (Domnic, 2026; Kamal et al., 2025) and transformational leadership (Abukalusa & Oosthuizen, 2025; Tagscherer & Carbon, 2025) improve technology transformation. The finding gives new development since it specifically puts human rights as a core of leadership in the context of university digitalization. This research not only discusses general digital leadership but also introduces the concept of pro-human rights leadership in the university.

Data analysis also shows that organizational culture moderates the effect of pro-human rights leadership on human rights-based digitalization in universities. The positive effect of pro-human rights leadership becomes stronger when universities have an organizational culture that supports values of inclusivity, ethics, transparency, and human rights.

The finding supports sociotechnical systems theory that suggests digital transformation not only needs leaders' direction but also needs a social environment that supports human rights values in using technology. An organizational culture that supports digital ethics helps create harmonization between technology and humans. The finding also supports organizational culture theory that determines norms, behavior, and interaction patterns in facing digital transformation. When universities have an organizational culture that supports human rights, leaders' policy and direction become easier to accept by academic civitas. Values of human rights not only become formal policy but also become collective norms. The finding also supports the theory of planned behavior that suggests organizational culture becomes a subjective norm that encourages the implementation of human rights-based digitalization.

The finding is consistent with previous findings that organizational culture improves technology adoption (Çetinkaya & Sürücü, 2025; Cyfert et al., 2025; Sacavém et al., 2025) and digital governance (Eke & Stahl, 2024; Stahl, 2025). This research makes a contribution by putting organizational culture as a moderating variable in the relationship between pro-human rights leadership and human rights-based digitalization. This research integrates organizational culture, pro-human rights leadership, and human rights-based digitalization in a single research model.

Although research findings support theoretical arguments, there are some limitations to interpretation. The positive effect of pro-human rights leadership on human rights-based digitalization may also be determined by the university's readiness to adopt digital systems in ethical and inclusive ways. Internal policy, regulation pressure, and digital infrastructure can also contribute to human rights-based digitalization in a university. In this case, these findings are interpreted just in a single university context and can be considered by specific internal characteristics that can be different in other universities in Indonesia. Future research can examine other universities, use other multi-resources, and take a longitudinal approach from time to time.

4. CONCLUSION

This research aims to examine the effect of pro-human rights leadership on human rights-based digitalization with organizational culture as a moderating variable in universities. The findings indicate that pro-human rights leadership has a positive effect on human rights-based digitalization. This result shows that leaders who emphasize fairness, inclusiveness, transparency, and human rights protection are more capable of encouraging the implementation of digital systems that respect the rights of academic civitas. In addition, organizational culture significantly strengthens the relationship between pro-human rights leadership and human rights-based digitalization. Universities with organizational cultures that support human rights values, digital ethics, collaboration, and inclusiveness tend to enhance the effectiveness of leadership in implementing ethical and human-oriented digital transformation.

Theoretically, this research contributes to the development of sociotechnical systems theory by emphasizing that successful digital transformation depends not only on technical systems but also on social systems such

as leadership and organizational culture. This research also extends transformational leadership theory and organizational culture theory into the context of human rights-based digitalization in higher education institutions. Furthermore, this research enriches the application of the theory of planned behavior by explaining how leadership and organizational culture shape attitudes, subjective norms, and behavioral control toward ethical digital practices in universities. The integration of human rights perspectives and digital transformation also provides novelty in the literature of digital governance in higher education.

Practically, this research suggests that universities should strengthen leadership orientation toward human rights in digital policy formulation and implementation. Universities are encouraged to establish digital governance systems that prioritize data privacy, inclusiveness, transparency, and ethical technology use. In addition, universities also need to develop organizational cultures that support human rights values and responsible digital behavior among academic civitas. These efforts are important to ensure that digital transformation in universities does not merely focus on technological modernization but also supports fairness, safety, and human dignity in digital environments.

This research has several limitations. First, the study was conducted only in one university, limiting the generalizability of the findings to other higher education institutions. Second, the research uses a cross-sectional design, which limits the ability to observe long-term changes in leadership, organizational culture, and digital transformation. Third, this study relies on self-reported questionnaire data, which may potentially contain respondent subjectivity despite statistical tests showing no significant common method bias.

Future research is recommended to involve multiple universities with broader geographical coverage and different institutional characteristics. Future studies may also employ longitudinal or mixed-method approaches to gain deeper insights into the dynamics of leadership, organizational culture, and digital transformation. In addition, future research may include other relevant variables such as digital ethics, artificial intelligence governance, digital literacy, trust in digital systems, and cybersecurity awareness to extend the understanding of human rights-based digitalization in higher education institutions.

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