

Employee Engagement as Mediator Between Digital Competence, Organizational Culture, and Digital Signature Innovation

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to analyze the influence of digital competencies and organizational culture on the digital signature (DS) innovation, with employee engagement as a mediating variable. The background of this research is the importance of digital transformation in the public sector which has not been balanced with innovation in the optimal use of technology. The research was conducted on employees of the Dinas Kominfo Kota Pekalongan using a quantitative approach and SEM-PLS analysis method. The results show that organizational culture has a positive and significant effect on employee engagement and innovation in the use of DS. Meanwhile, digital competence has no significant effect on both. Employee engagement has been shown to have a significant effect on innovation and is able to mediate the influence of organizational culture on innovation, but does not mediate the relationship between digital competence and innovation. These findings show that innovation in the use of DS is more influenced by a supportive work environment than by individual technical abilities. The implication is that strengthening organizational culture is a key strategy to increase employee engagement and encourage digital service innovation in government agencies.

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1. Introduction

Bureaucracy acceleration has become a national strategic agenda in governance reform in Indonesia. The government continues to encourage digital transformation in public services to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, and accountability of organizational performance. One of the tangible forms of this policy is the implementation of the Sistem Pemerintahan Berbasis Elektronik (SPBE), which is regulated through Presidential Regulation Number 95 of 2018. This Presidential Regulation is an implementation of the instruction of the President of the Republic of Indonesia in encouraging all government agencies to reduce slow and high-cost bureaucratic procedures, and replace them with integrated, efficient, and accountable digital processes. In this context, Digital signatures (DS) are one of the key instruments in supporting the acceleration of digital bureaucracy.

As part of the national SPBE strategy, the government also regulates the need to provide certified electronic certificate services, which are managed by Penyelenggara Sertifikat Elektronik (PSrE). This aims to ensure that the use of DS has the same legal force as manual signatures, while providing legal protection against potential forgery or manipulation of digital documents. The implementation of DS in the administrative process aims to cut the time and costs needed in the ratification of documents. DS allows officials or Aparatur Sipil Negara (ASN) to sign documents digitally without having to be in the same location. This not only saves time, but also allows for flexibility in work.

Dinas Komunikasi dan Informatika (Dinkominfo) Kota Pekalongan has the main task of organizing local government affairs in the fields of communication and informatics, statistics, and encryption in accordance with regional authority and the Mayor's policy. The functions of Dinkominfo include the formulation of technical policies, the implementation of public services in the field of information and communication technology, the management of SPBE, the development of network and application infrastructure, the management of public information and public relations of local governments, as well as data protection and information security through encryption. Dinkominfo also acts as a facilitator of digital literacy for the community and civil servants to encourage digital transformation towards transparent, effective, and accountable governance.

Dinkominfo as an agency that coordinates government information technology policies, has a great responsibility in implementing SPBE optimally. Currently, the implementation of DS has begun to be implemented in various administrative processes, such as the signing of official leDSrs, performance reports, to cooperation documents between agencies. This innovation not only increases the speed of service, but also strengthens the principles of transparency and accountability of the bureaucracy, but its implementation is not optimal.

Based on initial findings, there are still a number of employees who continue to do the signature process manually, especially on internal or inter-field documents. In addition, not all ASN have shown optimal enthusiasm or readiness in utilizing the DS system in a sustainable manner. It was also found that the success of DS innovation does not only depend on technological infrastructure, but also on human factors within the organization.

One of the keys to success in the digitalization process is the ability of human resources in the field of digital technology (Damanhuri & Hartono, 2022). Digital competence is a major concern, because not all employees have adequate abilities to adapt to the digitalization process (Klasean & Suwitho, 2023). Digital competence is an ability that plays a role in shaping confidence, critical power, and individual capacity to work, learn, develop self-potential, and contribute to social life (Baharrudin et al., 2021). Employee digital competencies play an important role in ensuring they are able to understand, use, and optimize the DS system.

On the other hand, the organizational culture that supports innovation and collaboration also influences how DS is adopted across the board. Organizational culture not only serves as a differentiator between organizations and identities for employees, but also has a crucial role in fostering a sense of belonging, becoming a tool of internal control, and encouraging improvement in service quality and accelerating the achievement of organizational goals and targets together (Pranantya & Shofiyuddin, 2025). However, these two factors do not necessarily have a direct effect if they are not accompanied by employee engagement, namely emotional, cognitive (related to the thought process), and affective (related to the feelings, attitudes, and values) of employees in the work and innovations carried out. Employee engagement has proven to be an important element in driving

increased productivity and performance, while stimulating the emergence of innovative behaviors that are able to generate creative solutions to various organizational challenges (Amanda et al., 2024).

There has been no previous research that examined the variables of digital competence, organizational culture and employee engagement in relation to the implementation of innovations in the use of digital signatures, but there have been several previous studies that have discussed each of these variables separately. Previous research by (Pratiwi & Purbojo, 2025), (Liana et al., 2023) shows that digital competence has a significant positive effect on employee performance. Then another study by (Islam et al., 2025) shows that digital competence has a significant positive effect on employee performance. In the study with organizational culture variables by (Al Qusaeri et al., 2023), (Putranto & Wahyuningsih, 2020) shows the results that organizational culture has a significant positive effect on innovation. Meanwhile, in the study with the variable employee engagement, previous research by (Amanda et al., 2024) which shows that employee engagement has a significant positive effect on work innovation.

Therefore, it is important to understand how digital competencies and organizational culture play a role in driving innovation in the use of DS, with employee engagement as a factor that bridges these relationships. This approach is expected to provide a more comprehensive picture of the internal factors that affect the success of technology implementation in the government environment. Theoretically, this research contributes to enriching studies in the field of human resource management, especially in the context of digital transformation. Meanwhile, practically, the results of this research are expected to be the basis for formulating policies that support the creation of a more adaptive and innovative work environment in government agencies.

This study aims to (1) analyze the influence of digital competencies on digital signature innovation; (2) analyze the influence of organizational culture on digital signature innovation; (3) analyzing the influence of digital competencies on employee engagement; (4) analyze the influence of organizational culture on employee engagement; (5) analyze the influence of employee engagement on digital signature innovation; (6) examining the mediating role of employee engagement in the relationship between digital competencies and digital signature innovation; and (7) examining the mediating role of employee engagement in the relationship between organizational culture and digital signature innovation.

2. Literature Review

Digital Competence

According to (Ferrari, 2012) Digital competence includes knowledge, skills, and attitudes in utilizing digital technology for various activities such as completing tasks, communicating, sharing information, and creating content. In other words, digital competence is an individual's ability to understand and use digital media, including various types of digital content available today. Competence does not just include passive knowledge, but also includes the ability to apply that knowledge effectively in certain situations.

An employee may have a high level of intelligence, but if he is not able to implement his intelligence in productive actions in the work environment, then that intelligence becomes less useful. Therefore, competence is not only about knowing what needs to be done, but also about the ability to apply it meaningfully.

Organizational Culture

According to (Robbins & Judge, 2008), organizational culture can be understood as the construction of a system of values and meanings that are understood and believed in together by the members of the organization, thus creating a distinctive feature that distinguishes it from other organizations. According to (Rizky, 2022) Interpreting organizational culture as a system of beliefs, values, norms, and assumptions that grow in the organizational environment, which serves as a code of behavior for its members in facing the challenges of external adaptation and internal integration. Other opinions by (Putranto & Wahyuningsih, 2020) states that organizational culture is a human invention that creates togetherness and meaning and inspires commitment and productivity.

According to (Sutrisno, 2010) Organizational culture is an invisible social force, which can move people in an organization to carry out work activities. Organizational culture is basically the basic values, habits, expectations and beliefs that all members of the organization have which are used as a guideline in running levers to achieve organizational success (Firanti et al., 2021).

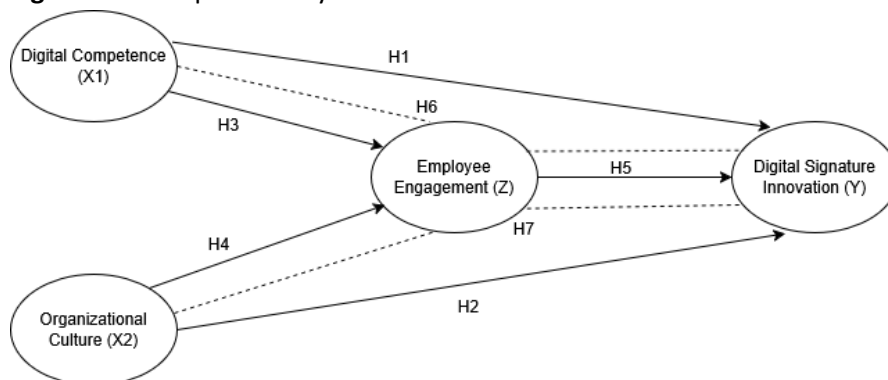
Employee Engagement

Employee engagement is an employee's effort in the form of commitment, discretion, talent distribution, and dedication that is able to provide benefits to the organization and themselves (Turner, 2020). Employee engagement is a positive value and view of work associations that is characterized by enthusiasm, contribution, and spirit (Irfan et al., 2024).

Employee engagement is a key element in encouraging optimal work performance. Other opinions by (Alviana & Imron, 2024) Employee engagement is an emotional and psychological connection between employees and organizational values and their level of commitment to the company's goals. Therefore, organizations need to ensure that employees feel engaged so that they are motivated and enthusiastic in carrying out their duties. Other opinions by (Magfijar & Ekhsan, 2024) states that well-growing employee engagement can be influenced by individual resilience. This resilience has a positive impact because it helps employees in responding to various situations they face while carrying out their work.

Conceptual Study Framework

Figure 1. Conceptual Study Framework



Source : Data Processed by Researchers, 2025

Based on the conceptual study framework in Figure 1, the **Research Hypothesis** in this study can be formulated as follows:

H1: Digital competence affects the innovation of the use of DS.

H2: Organizational culture affects the innovation of the use of DS.

- H3:** Digital competencies affect employee engagement.
- H4:** Organizational culture affects employee engagement.
- H5:** Employee engagement affects the innovation of the use of DS.
- H6:** Employee engagement mediates the influence of digital competencies on the innovation of DS use.
- H7:** Employee engagement mediates the influence of organizational culture on the innovation of the use of DS.

3. Method, Data, and Analysis

This study employs a quantitative approach involving systematic stages, including problem formulation, theoretical and hypothesis development, data collection, statistical analysis, and drawing conclusions. The research was conducted at the Dinas Komunikasi dan Informatika Kota Pekalongan, involving all 66 active employees as the population and sample using a saturated sampling technique (census).

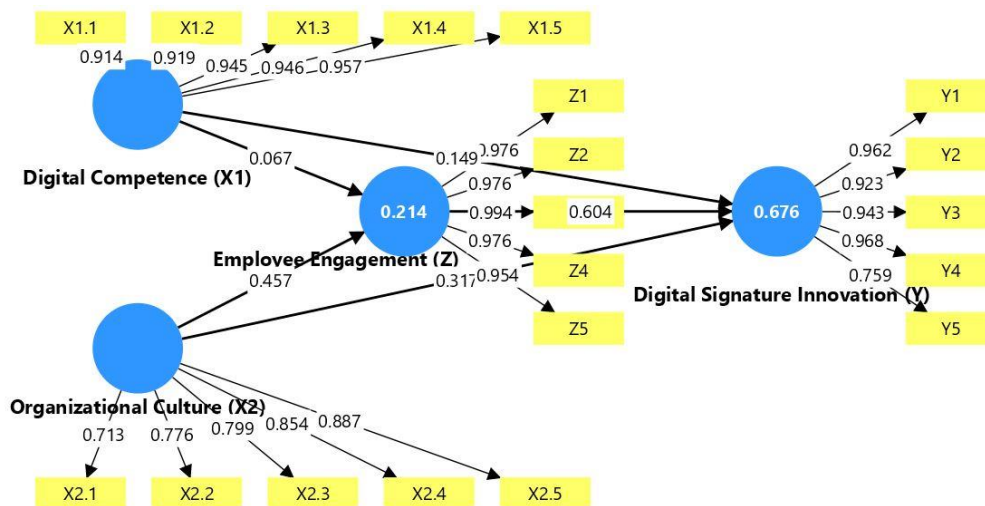
Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1). The study examines the influence of Digital Competency (X1) and Organizational Culture (X2) on Digital Signature Innovation (Y), mediated by Employee Engagement (Z). Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) with the assistance of SmartPLS version 4.1.1.3.

4. Result and Discussion

Testing Measurement Model (Outer Model)

This study uses SmartPLS version 4.1.1.3 analysis for data processing. The PLS Algorithm model in the measurement model (outer model) in this study is shown in the following figure:

Figure 2. PLS Algorithm Model



Source : Data Processed by Researchers, 2025 (using SmartPLS 4.1.1.3 software)

The measurement model test (outer model) in this study uses three criteria to analyze the data, including convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability which are described as follows:

1. Convergent Validity Test

The results of the convergent validity test of this study can be observed using the outer loading value summarized in the following table.

Table 1. Outer Loading Value

Construct	Outer Loading Value	AVE	Information
X1.1	0.914		
X1.2	0.919		
X1.3	0.945	0.877	Valid
X1.4	0.946		
X1.5	0.957		
X2.1	0.713	0.653	
X2.2	0.776		
X2.3	0.799		Valid
X2.4	0.854		
X2.5	0.887		
Y1	0.962		
Y2	0.923		
Y3	0.943	0.836	Valid
Y4	0.968		
Y5	0.759		
Z1	0.976		
Z2	0.976		
Z3	0.994	0.951	Valid
Z4	0.976		
Z5	0.954		

Source : Data Processed by Researchers, 2025 (using SmartPLS 4.1.1.3 software)

Judging from table 1 above, the overall value of outer loading > 0.60 and the AVE value > 0.50. These results show that all instrument items of digital competency variables, organizational culture, employee engagement and innovation in the use of digital signatures used in this study are declared valid.

2. Discriminant Validity Test

In the discriminant validity test, it is necessary to show a Fornell Lacker Criterion value of more than 0.7 for each construct.

Table 2. Fornell Lacker Criterion

Construct	Digital Competence (X1)	Digital Signature Innovation (Y)	Employee Engagement (Z)	Organizational Culture (X2)
Digital Competence (X1)	0.936			
Digital Signature Innovation (Y)	0.194	0.914		
Employee Engagement (Z)	0.071	0.760	0.975	
Organizational Culture (X2)	0.008	0.595	0.458	0.808

Source : Data Processed by Researchers, 2025 (using SmartPLS 4.1.1.3 software)

Based on Table 2, the entire construct meets the Fornell-Larcker criteria. This can be seen from the diagonal values which are the square root of AVE and all of them have higher values compared to the correlation values between the constructs in the row and column in question.

3. Reliability Test

The results of the reliability test in this study were carried out using two methods consisting of Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability and which are shown in the following table.

Table 3. Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability Outputs

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Information
Organizational Culture (X2)	0.872	0.975	Reliable
Employee Engagement (Z)	0.987	0.989	Reliable
Digital Signature Innovation (Y)	0.950	0.956	Reliable
Digital Competence (X1)	0.966	1.001	Reliable

Source : Data Processed by Researchers, 2025 (using SmartPLS 4.1.1.3 software)

In PLS-SEM-based quantitative research, the value of **Cronbach's Alpha** ≥ 0.70 and value **Composite Reliability** ≥ 0.70 is considered to indicate that the construct is reliable (Hair et al., 2017). By **Table 3**, the entire construct has Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values that are well above the minimum recommended threshold.

Structural Model Testing (Inner Model)

After the outer test requirements of the model are met, then determine the inner test requirements of the model by looking at the R-square value of the output, the following data is obtained:

Table 4. Output Inner Model R-Square

Construct	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted
Employee Engagement (Z)	0.214	0.189
Digital Signature Innovation (Y)	0.676	0.661

Source : Data Processed by Researchers, 2025 (using SmartPLS 4.1.1.3 software)

Based on the results in table 4, it indicates that the R-Square value (R^2) for the variable Digital Signature Innovation (Y) is 0.676, while the R-Square Adjusted value is 0.661. Indicating all exogenous constructs together exerted an influence of 67.6% on the Innovation in the Use of Digital signatures, which is considered a moderate influence. While the remaining 66.1% can be explained by other variables and indicators.

Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing in this study was carried out using data analysis with SmartPLS, especially through bootstrapping results. The hypothesis is considered acceptable if the value of T Statistics $> T_{table}$ (1.96) with a significance level of less than 0.05. Conversely, the hypothesis is rejected if the T-statistical value $< T_{table}$ (1.96) with a significance level of more than 0.05.

Direct Effect Test Results

Table 5. Output Bootstrapping Direct Effect

Construct	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Information
Digital Competency (X1) -> Digital Signature Innovation (Y)	1.791	0.073	Hypothesis Rejected
Organizational Culture (X2) -> Digital Signature Innovation (Y)	3.851	0.000	Accepted Hypothesis
Digital Competency (X1) -> Employee Engagement (Z)	0.619	0.536	Hypothesis Rejected

Construct	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Information
Organizational Culture (X2) -> Employee Engagement (Z)	4.765	0.000	Accepted Hypothesis
Employee Engagement (Z) -> Digital Signature Innovation (Y)	9.735	0.000	Accepted Hypothesis

Source : Data Processed by Researchers, 2025 (using SmartPLS 4.1.1.3 software)

From table 5 above, the following is an explanation of the results of the direct effect test:

- Based on the results of the T Statistics score, which is 1.791, it is smaller than the t table 1.96, so **hypothesis 1 is rejected**. These results indicate that directly Digital Competence has a **positive and insignificant effect** on the Innovation in the Use of Digital signatures.
- Based on the results of the T Statistics score, which is 3.851, which is greater than the t table of 1.96, so **hypothesis 2 is accepted**. These results indicate that directly Organizational Culture has a **positive and significant effect** on the Innovation in the Use of Digital signatures.
- Based on the results of the T Statistics score of 0.619, it is smaller than the t table of 1.96, so **hypothesis 3 is rejected**. These results indicate that Digital Competence directly has a **positive and insignificant effect** on Employee Engagement.
- Based on the results of the T Statistics score of 4.765 is greater than the t table of 1.96, so **hypothesis 4 is accepted**. These results indicate that Organizational Culture directly has a **positive and significant effect** on Employee Engagement.
- Based on the results of the T Statistics score of 9.735 which is greater than the t table of 1.96, so **hypothesis 5 is accepted**. These results indicate that directly Employee Engagement has a **positive and significant effect** on the Innovation in the Use of Digital signatures.

Indirect Test Results

Table 6. Output Bootstrapping Indirect Effect

Construct	T Statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Information
Digital Competency (X1) -> Employee Engagement (Z) -> Digital Signature Innovation (Y)	0.624	0.533	Hypothesis Rejected
Organizational Culture (X2) -> Employee Engagement (Z) -> Digital Signature Innovation (Y)	4.138	0.000	Accepted Hypothesis

Source : Data Processed by Researchers, 2025 (using SmartPLS 4.1.1.3 software)

From table 6 above, the following is an explanation of the results of the indirect effect test:

- Based on the results of the T Statistics score, which is 0.624 smaller than the t table of 1.96, so **hypothesis 6 is rejected**. These results indicate that indirectly the Employee Engagement variable is not able to mediate the influence of Digital Competence on the Innovation in the Use of Digital signatures.
- Based on the results of the T Statistics score, which is 4.138, which is greater than the t table of 1.96, so **hypothesis 7 is accepted**. These results indicate that indirectly the Employee Engagement variable is able to mediate the influence of Organizational Culture on the Innovation in the Use of Digital signatures.

Hypothesis Discussion

a. **The Influence of Digital Competency on Innovation in the Use of Digital signatures**

The test results showed that Digital Competency had a positive but not significant effect on the Innovation in the Use of Digital signatures. This means that even though employees have good digital skills, this is not strong enough to encourage them to innovate in using Digital signatures.

b. **The Influence of Organizational Culture on the Innovation of the Use of Digital signatures**

The test results show that Organizational Culture has a positive and significant effect on Innovation in the Use of Digital signatures. This shows that a work environment that encourages innovation, openness, and collaboration plays a major role in increasing the utilization and development of the use of Digital signatures. Research This is in line with research Previous by (Al Qusaeri et al., 2023), (Putranto & Wahyuningsih, 2020).

c. **The Influence of Digital Competence on Employee Engagement**

The test results showed that Digital Competence had a positive but not significant effect on Employee Engagement. This suggests that having digital capabilities does not automatically make employees feel emotionally, cognitively, or physically engaged in their work.

d. **The Influence of Organizational Culture on Employee Engagement**

The test results show that Organizational Culture has a positive and significant effect on Employee Engagement. This means that if an organizational culture creates a sense of security, collaboration, and supports individual development, then employees will feel more engaged and excited about their work. This is in line with research by (Singal et al., 2023).

e. **The Influence of Employee Engagement on Innovation in the Use of Digital signatures**

The test results show that Employee Engagement has a positive and significant effect on the Innovation in the Use of Digital signatures. This means that the higher the involvement of employees in their work, the greater their tendency to innovate, including in the use of technology such as digital signatures. This research is in line with previous research by (Amanda et al., 2024) which obtained results that Employee Engagement has a positive and significant effect on innovation.

f. **The Role of Employee Engagement Mediation in the Relationship of Digital Competence to Innovation in the Use of Digital signatures**

The test results show that Employee Engagement is not able to mediate the relationship between Digital Competence and Innovation in the Use of Digital signatures significantly.

g. **The Role of Employee Engagement Mediation in the Relationship of Organizational Culture to Innovation in the Use of Digital signatures**

The test results show that This means that a conducive organizational culture (e.g. open to change, encouraging innovation, collaborative) will increase employee engagement, and it is this engagement that further drives innovation in the use of digital signatures.

5. Conclusion and Suggestion

This study aims to test and analyze the influence of Digital Competence and Organizational Culture on the Innovation of the Use of Digital signatures, with Employee Engagement as a mediating variable. Based on the results of the research, it can be concluded that innovation in the use of Digital signatures at the Dinas Kominfo Kota Pekalongan is more influenced by organizational culture factors than by employees' digital competencies. Organizational culture has been proven to have a positive and

significant influence on innovation in the use of Digital signatures, both directly and indirectly through increasing employee engagement.

On the other hand, digital competence, although it shows a positive relationship direction, has no significant effect on innovation or employee engagement. This indicates that employees' digital capabilities are not yet strong enough to drive engagement or generate real innovation. Employee engagement has proven to be an important factor that drives innovation, as well as acting as a significant mediator in the relationship between organizational culture and innovation. Thus, efforts to increase innovation in the use of Digital signatures should be focused on strengthening a positive and supportive organizational culture, which will also indirectly increase employee involvement in supporting digital transformation.

This study has limitations in the scope of the variables studied, which only includes Digital Competence, Organizational Culture, Employee Engagement, and Innovation in the Use of Digital signatures, so it is not able to comprehensively describe other factors that may also affect technological innovation in the public organization environment. Taking into account the limitations in the scope of variables and research objects, further studies are recommended to integrate other variables that have the potential to influence digital innovation, such as leadership support, organizational digital culture, perception of technological usability, and innovation climate. The addition of these variables is expected to provide a more comprehensive understanding of organizational dynamics in adopting technology. In addition, the expansion of research objects to other government agencies is also recommended to obtain more representative findings and allow generalization of research results in various institutional contexts.

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