

The Effect of Flexible Working Perception, Digital and Agile Organizational Culture on Technology Use: a Study from the Employees' Perspective¹

Gökçe Akdemir Ömür

Istanbul University

Istanbul University Central Campus, Faculty of Political Sciences, 34349 Beyazıt, Istanbul, Turkey

email: gakdemir@istanbul.edu.tr

<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-5327-8474>

Mesut Öztirak

Istanbul Medipol University

Güney campus, Göztepe Mah, Kavacık, Atatürk Cd. No:40, 34810 Beykoz, Istanbul, Turkey

email: mesut.oztirak@medipol.edu.tr

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-4828-7293>

Ayşe Meriç Yazıcı

Istanbul Gelisim University

Cihangir Mah. Şehit Jandarma Komando Er Hakan Öner Sk., No:1, 34310 Avcılar, Istanbul, Turkey

email: ayazici@gelisim.edu.tr

<https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6769-2599>

Hüseyin Çiçeklioğlu

Mersin University

Faculty of Tourism, Çiftlikköy Kampüsü, 33110, Yenişehir, Mersin, Turkey

email: huseyinciceklioglu@gmail.com

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3922-6755>

Abstract:

The purpose of this study is to examine the interaction of flexible working perception with digital and agile organizational cultures and the effects of this interaction on technology use from the perspective of employees. The research was carried out with data collected from 382 employees operating in different

sectors (technology, finance, education, health) on the European Side of Istanbul. The data were collected using structured questionnaires and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), item-total correlation, Cronbach Alpha methods, correlation analysis and path analysis method were used within the scope of validity and reliability studies of the scales. In the study, a positive and significant relationship was found between the variables of flexible working and digital and agile organizational culture and technology use, while the perception of flexible working had a positive and significant effect on the perception of technology use. The study also concluded that digital and agile organizational culture has a significant effect on the perception of technology use. According to the results of the study, the perception of flexible working and digital and agile organizational cultures have a positive and significant effect on employees' use of technology.

Keywords: Perception of Flexible Working, Digital Organizational Culture, Agile Organizational Culture, Technology Use

1. Introduction

The business world of 2020 and beyond is experiencing a radical transformation with the impact of rapidly changing technology and digitalisation. Flexible working models, digital and agile organizational cultures play an important role in this transformation process. Employees' adaptation to these new business dynamics and their attitudes towards the use of technology directly affect the sustainable success of organizations. In this context, how the perception of flexible working interacts with digital and agile organizational culture and how this interaction shapes the use of technology stands out as a current research topic.

While the perception of flexible working reflects employees' perceptions on work-life balance, time management and work efficiency, digital and agile organizational culture is characterised by innovation, speed and adaptability. These two cultural constructs play a key role in determining how employees adopt the use of technology and how effectively they use these technologies. Especially the Covid 19 pandemic period and the flexible working models that became widespread rapidly afterwards have made digital transformation and agile methods even more important. For example, in a study conducted in 2022, it was found that 85% of employees in organizations that adopt flexible working models use digital tools more effectively, while this rate remained at 60% in organizations based on traditional working models (United Nations, 2023).

Digital and agile organizational cultures are a driving force in the adoption and diffusion of technological innovations. While these cultures encourage employees' continuous learning and self-renewal skills, they also enable the organization to make quick decisions and adapt quickly to changing conditions. In a survey conducted in Europe in 2023, it was determined that 78% of employees in organizations with digital and agile organizational cultures quickly adopt technological innovations and implement them in their daily business processes (McKinsey, 2023; Öztırak, 2023). This rate remained around 55% in organizations with traditional organizational cultures. This clearly shows how digital and agile culture positively affects the use of technology.

On the other hand, the relationship between the perception of flexible working and technology use is also an important area of investigation. The flexible working model has made the use of digital technologies mandatory in business processes by offering time and space

independence to employees. Employees with a high perception of flexible working tend to use digital tools more effectively and efficiently. While this situation increases the work efficiency of employees, it also reinforces their trust in technology. According to research, there is a positive correlation of 68% between the perception of flexible working and the effective use of digital tools (Sirait & Nugroho, 2021). In light of this information, this study aims to address how both flexible working models and digital and agile cultures shape the use of technology with a comparative analysis and statistics.

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1. Perception of Flexible Work

The concept of flexible working has emerged as a result of the striking changes and developments in information and communication technologies. The basis of the concept of flexible working is to be able to keep up with current situations. According to the International Labor Organization (ILO), the concept of flexible working defines the rigidity or flexibility related to the ability to keep up with economic, social and technological conditions and the determined labor market (Bayrak, 2015). In other words, it can be expressed as individuals having control over the timing of their work. The concept of flexibility is ultimately expressed as the flexibility of rules and less regulation for organizations, flexibility of dismissal and employment for employers, and the ability of employees to adapt working conditions and types within the framework of their own autonomous situations in order to establish a work-life balance (Demir and Gerşil, 2008).

When the relevant literature is examined, it is seen that there are various flexible working models. These are as follows:

- **Part-Time Working:** When flexible working models are examined, it is seen that the type with the widest application area and mass is the part-time working model. Part-time working is defined by the OECD (Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development) as “a type of working that is based on voluntary work and has shorter working hours than full-time working hours” (Méda, 2004); and by the ILO (1996) (International Labour Organization) as a type of working that is established as a result of mutual agreements between employers and employees and covers a period shorter than normal working hours.

- **Teleworking:** A working model carried out away from the work environment and separately from co-workers. Similar to working from home, teleworking is preferred and considered beneficial by individuals who are dependent on home, especially women and adults, and it also significantly increases participation in the workforce (Parkkola, 2003).

- **Home Working:** ILO (International Labor Organization) defines home working as a place where the organization, employer or employees leave the place where they will work to themselves, and this place is usually the employees' homes. The raw materials, tools and equipment required for the home working model are provided by the organization, employer or employees (Tozlu, 2011).

- **Job Sharing:** It is a working method in which employees' working hours are shortened in order to prevent layoffs and a full-time job is shared between at least two employees (Robbins and Judge, 2007). In job sharing, fair sharing is made in matters such as the work to be done and the wages and social rights to be obtained afterwards, and these sharings are determined by employment contracts (Thakur et al., 2018).

- **On-Call Working:** It is a working method based on the principle of providing employees from the employee pool during periods when work is intense. On-call working is often applied in hotels and restaurants operating in the service sector (Özdemir and Parlak, 2011).

- **Loaned Employment Relationship:** It is also called the general employment relationship and is the temporary employment of employees in another organization with the consent of their employers and in return for a specific employment contract (Tilev, 2018).

2.2. Digital and Agile Organizational Culture

Digital organizational culture is the sum of values, beliefs, and behavioral norms that affect how an organization adopts digital technologies and integrates them into its business processes. This culture shapes employees' attitudes toward using digital tools, innovating, and adapting to change. Digital organizational culture creates an environment that encourages collaboration, supports continuous learning, and enables rapid adaptation. In this context, the digitalization process is important for the organization to achieve its strategic goals. The development of employees' digital skills, their inclination to teamwork, and their ability to produce innovative solutions are the basic elements of digital organizational culture (Cameron and Quinn, 2006). Innovation, strategy, market share, and technology are important variables for businesses, but a unique organizational culture also allows companies to stand out from their competitors. Establishing a system through digital organizational culture helps employees evaluate events, create an evaluation system, and ensure continuity. Having a strong organizational culture requires working with people who will adapt to this culture. Culture is a social order that is not clearly stated in an organization and largely directs behavior (Groysberg et al., 2018). In this context, it is important to organize the organizational culture with a digital understanding in the digitalization process. In response to developing technologies, organizations should raise their work culture to a higher level to integrate advanced technologies into their work (Tilson et al., 2010; Zhen et al., 2021). Most companies know that achieving their digital goals depends on transforming their culture (Haffke et al., 2017). Organizations envision creating a successful organizational culture in digital transformation based on the following principles (Trushkina et al., 2020):

- The institutional environment (vision and values, personnel development methods, tools and resources, leadership, informal communication, organizational structure, personnel development, performance management) should be created to implement institutional development strategies and encourage desired behaviors.

- Teams and employees work results-oriented. They are committed to the organization's goals and are ready to do everything necessary in this direction.

Employees work to develop corporate strategy.

An important point in the formation of digital culture is the necessity of employees' participation in digital productivity training. In this context, managers or leaders' support for digital initiatives and motivating employees play a major role. The digital culture environment is created through a research environment where employees are encouraged to use digital tools outside of working hours (Jantti and Hyvarinen, 2018)

Agile organizational culture refers to an organizational structure that is flexible, collaborative and focused on continuous improvement in order to quickly adapt to changing market conditions, prioritize customer needs and encourage innovation. In this culture, small, autonomous

teams work effectively through open communication and feedback loops; thus, fast decision-making processes and adaptation skills develop (Känsälä and Tokumaru, 2023).

Agile organizational culture is an approach based on flexibility, customer focus and continuous communication to adapt to rapidly changing market conditions. In this culture, where small, autonomous teams increase their effectiveness, innovation is encouraged and processes are constantly reviewed and improved. The ability to respond quickly to customer feedback helps organizations gain a competitive advantage, while an atmosphere of experimentation without fear of making mistakes supports the learning and development process (Kuchel et al., 2023).

Having competent people in various areas in an agile organization stands out as a necessity arising from many important elements. First of all, decentralization of decision processes allows teams to make more effective decisions on their own. High level of flexibility provides the ability to adapt quickly to changing conditions, helping teams to develop new strategies quickly, and the absence of specific plans to follow increases the freedom of teams to produce creative and innovative solutions.

Agile companies focus on creating self-organizing teams by adopting an approach based on leadership and collaboration. This structure allows information to flow horizontally (Ajayi and Udeh, 2024). Face-to-face communication and collaboration facilitate information sharing and coordination, while creating strong synergy within the team. The emphasis on teamwork allows individuals to interact and exchange ideas, and enables processes to change and adapt quickly.

Adopting a transparent management approach reduces confusion and increases harmony and collaboration. In this context, trusting relationships established between team members increase motivation and create a strong commitment to achieving common goals. As a result, agile organizations strengthen their ability to cope with change and uncertainty by adopting a culture focused on continuous learning and development. When these elements come together, agile teams can work more dynamically, efficiently and innovatively (Magistretti and Trabucchi, 2024).

In order for an organization to have an agile mindset, it is extremely important for members to adopt this approach and be committed to continuous development. A successful agile transformation requires members to internalize this mindset. The agile mindset focuses on constantly progressing rather than staying at a certain level, and on confronting and overcoming problems rather than escaping them (AlSaied and Alkhoraif, 2024). Situations that the traditional mindset perceives as threats are evaluated as opportunities by the agile mindset. The goal of continuous improvement forms the basis of the agile ideology; therefore, members who make mistakes are not punished. Mistakes are a natural part of the continuous improvement process and the important thing is to learn from these mistakes and improve through feedback (Daraojimba et al., 2024).

2.3. Use of Technology

In the digital age, the use of technology has had profound effects on organizational culture and agility. The rapid development of technology is changing the way employees do business and increasing the need to create more agile organizations. In the 2020s, employees stand out as individuals who can use technology effectively, access information quickly, and integrate this information into business processes (Deng and Yu, 2023).

The tools provided by technology facilitate communication and collaboration, allowing the adoption of horizontal hierarchies. Employees interact with each other more effectively through

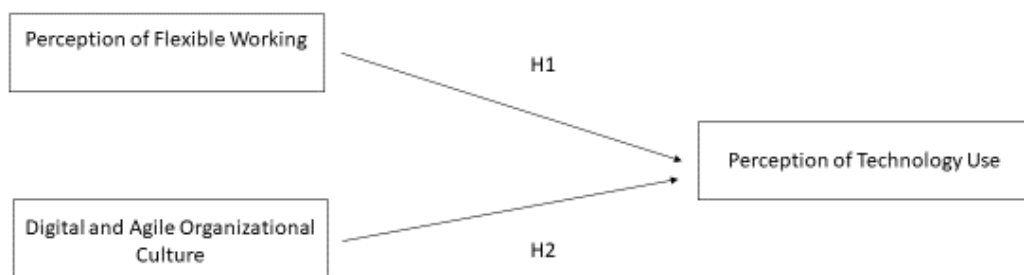
cloud-based platforms and communication applications, which helps teams organize themselves. This is considered one of the foundations of an agile organizational culture. Because the fast and transparent flow of information enables processes to be managed more efficiently (Strzelecki, 2023). In addition, digital tools increase employees' opportunities for continuous learning and development. Agile organizations encourage employees to acquire new skills and thus create a structure that can quickly adapt to changing market conditions. In this environment where mistakes are considered as learning opportunities, employees do not hesitate to take risks and are encouraged to produce innovative solutions (Hazzam and Wilkins, 2023). The use of technology in the digital age enables employees to be more effective in an agile organizational culture. This process contributes to the continuous development and transformation of not only individuals but also organizations. Therefore, integration with technology and an agile approach are becoming the key to success in the modern business world.

It is seen that transforming global markets and technological innovations cause organizations to transition to a completely different universe. This process, also called the digital era, means that the concept of organizational culture has also undergone a radical change (Nambisan et al., 2017). However, at this point, it should not be forgotten that organizational cultures are an important element in order to adapt technological innovations to the organization (Yoo et al., 2010). In other words, it is important for organizations experiencing technological transformations to adapt their organizational cultures to this situation for the sake of continuity. Because organizational culture means common values shared by employees and in this context, it is one of the most important concepts for the organization (Punnet and Ricks, 1990).

3. Method

The aim of this study is to examine the interaction of flexible working perception with digital and agile organizational cultures and the effects of this interaction on technology use from the employees' perspective. The hypothesis model is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Research Model



According to the research model, the following hypotheses will be tested:

H1: Flexible working perception has a positive and significant effect on the perception of technology use.

H2: Digital and agile organizational culture has a positive and significant effect on the perception of technology use.

4. Methodology

The research was conducted with data collected from 382 employees operating in different sectors (technology, finance, education, health) on the European Side of Istanbul. The data were collected with a survey form. This form consists of four structural categories: demographic characteristics, flexible working, digital and agile organizational culture, and technology use. Demographic characteristics consist of six questions. In order to measure the perception of flexible working, the Flexible Working Perception scale consisting of 8 items within the scope of two dimensions, namely structural flexibility and temporal flexibility, was preferred by Akpolat and Çetin (2020). It was deemed appropriate to use the Technology Usage Scale, which was developed by Zincirkıran and Tiftik (2014) and translated into Turkish by Aksoy (2018), consisting of a single dimension and 13 items. In addition, the Digital and Agile Organizational Culture scale consisting of 33 items consisting of 5 dimensions, namely agile organizational structure, agile teams, agile transformation, digital transformation, and agile human resources, was preferred by Coşar (2020). Responses in the survey were taken on a 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree).

5. Findings

5.1. Data Analysis and Findings

In this study, SPSS 21.0 and AMOS 22.0 statistical software were used in the analysis of data. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA), item total correlation, Cronbach Alpha methods were used within the scope of validity and reliability studies of the scales.

Table 1 includes descriptive statistics for scale scores.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics of Scale Scores

Scale and Sub-dimensions	N	Min.	Max.	\bar{X}	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Perception of Flexible Working	382	1,00	5,00	3,42	0,81	0,096	-0,038
Digital and Agile Organizational Culture	382	1,00	5,00	3,44	0,84	-0,072	0,008
Perception of Technology Use	382	1,00	5,00	3,54	0,79	-0,248	0,669

According to Table 1, the mean score of the EWC scale was found to be $3,42 \pm 0,81$; the mean score of the DCOC scale was found to be $3,44 \pm 0,84$ and the mean score of the TKP scale was found to be $3,54 \pm 0,79$. According to the minimum (1) and maximum (5) scores that can be obtained from the scales, it was determined that the perceptions of flexible working, digital and agile organizational culture and technology use of the employees participating in the research were at a medium level.

5.2. Findings Related to the Relationship Between Variables

Table 2 shows the Pearson correlation analysis results between the perception of flexible working, digital and agile organizational culture and perception of technology use.

Table 2. Relationship Between Variables

Variables	PFW	PTU	DAOC
Perception of Flexible Working	1		
Digital and Agile Organizational Culture	0,456**	1	
Perception of Technology Use	0,312**	0,394**	1

According to Table 2, there is a positive and significant relationship between flexible working ($r=0.46$; $p<0.05$) and digital and agile organizational culture ($r=0.31$; $p<0.05$) variables and technology use.

Table 3 presents the path analysis and hypothesis test results of the research.

Table 3. Path Analysis Results

Independent variable	Path	Dependent variable	B	SE	H	β	t	p	R ²
PFW	→	PTU	0,003	0,001	1	0,17	2,656	0,008	0,221
DAOC	→	PTU	0,001	0,001	2	0,36	5,513	0,000	
X ² /sd=4,509 SRMR=0,047 GFI=0,902 NNFI=0,911 CFI=0,930 RMSEA=0,096									
: (Soper, 2024). *: p<0,05 **: p<0,01 SIE: Standardize Indirect Effect STS: Sobel Test Statistic R ² : Variance Due to Indirect Effects									

H₁ Accepted: Perception of flexible working has a positive and significant effect on perception of technology use ($\beta=0.17$; $t=2.66$; $p<0.05$).

H₂ Accepted: Digital and agile organizational culture has a positive and significant effect on perception of technology use ($\beta=0.36$; $t=5.51$; $p<0.05$).

6. Conclusion

With the industrial revolution, it is seen that the alternative methods of doing business and working tools compatible with the current technology of the relevant period, which made it possible for all functions of the organization to be effective and efficient, are being renewed within the scope of a continuous development and change process. It is observed that the value-added change parameter of the business world is changing with the Covid-19 pandemic, which has made its presence felt since the 2020s but has been the subject of an indescribable creative destruction. It is seen that the skill of using technology at the application level and the degree of closeness to related concepts are at the center of the parameters. The practical and theoretical reflections of this situation in technological advances are also frequently emphasized in the literature in the relevant field.

Digitalization and developments in information technologies, which are important accelerators of technological advances, not only enable the production, processing and

dissemination of data, but also facilitate the uninterrupted and instantaneous maintenance of communication. This situation also makes its effects felt in the success recipes that organizations use to achieve competitive advantage. It is seen that organizations prioritize different focuses in order to realize proactive and reactive strategic goals that will shape the future, beyond preserving the current situation. The scope of these priorities is shaped as implementing business processes that can support an agile organizational culture with high maneuverability, adopting business methods and having employees who can comply with the guidelines compatible with these, beyond producing organizational structure-centered solutions. As a natural result of this situation, it is observed that flexible working is preferred more and more by organizations every day due to the positive aspects of the relative opportunity cost it contains. In addition; It is remarkable that the use of technology, which is an extension of the digital transformation momentum with the Covid 19 pandemic, has become an important element in business life regardless of sectoral differences. As a natural result of the mentioned conjecture, the determination of the interaction between flexible work, digital and agile organizational culture and technology use was the main motivation of this research.

7. Discussion

Within the scope of our study, analyses were conducted on the pattern between flexible work, digital and agile organizational culture and technology use based on data obtained from 382 employees from different sectors. The findings of our study contribute to the literature on the impact of flexible work perception and digital and agile organizational cultures on employees' use of technology. The positive impact of flexible work arrangements on employees during the adaptation process to technology is clearly evident. Especially after the pandemic period, increasing flexible work arrangements increased employees' ability to integrate their work processes with digital technologies and enabled them to use technology more effectively. The results obtained as a result of the research are parallel to the existing literature. For example, in the study conducted by Işık and Uygun (2023), it is stated that flexible work models contribute to employees' adaptation processes to technology.

The research findings showed that the perception of flexible work has a positive effect on technology use ($\beta=0.17$). This finding is consistent with studies arguing that flexible work models enable employees to adapt to technology more quickly (Şen, 2024). The findings regarding the effect of digital and agile organizational culture on technology use are important both in terms of clarifying the gray areas in the relevant literature and in terms of presenting original results. The study concluded that digital and agile cultures positively affect technology use ($\beta=0.36$). This finding supports studies conducted to spread digital transformation processes in organizations. Another study also drew attention to the contribution of digital organizational culture to employees' use of technology (Velyako and Musa, 2023). In digitalizing organizations, the need for employees to be more agile and flexible increases, which makes technology use mandatory (Örnek et al., 2023).

Our study was designed to establish a relationship between flexible work, digital and agile organizational culture, and technology use with an inductive approach and to determine the direction of the possible effect. According to the findings of the analyses in question, there is a positive and significant relationship between flexible working and the use of technology. However, it has been observed that this relationship also affects compatibility with technological business

processes. In addition, it has been determined that digital and agile culture creates an effect that supports flexible working and compatibility with technology use. As a result; it has been determined in our research that there is a positive relationship between flexible working, the use of technology in business processes and digital and agile organizational culture.

Studies show that organizational culture and flexible working methods are important in digital transformation and innovation processes. Ajayi and Udeh (2024) emphasize that flexible structure is the key to organizational success by addressing the role of agile working cultures in the information technology sector and human resources departments in encouraging innovative supply chains. Agile approaches increase the rapid adaptation capabilities of teams and make business processes more efficient. On the other hand, the research conducted by Leso et al. (2023) examined the interaction of organizational culture, structure and leadership in the digital transformation processes of SMEs. This study reveals that a strong organizational culture and flexible structures accelerate the adoption of digital technologies. In addition, it was stated that effective leadership practices are an important element supporting the transformation process. Käsälä and Tokumaru (2023) examined the interaction between agile methods and organizational culture and revealed how agile practices overlap with cultural dynamics. In this context, the adoption of agile methods progresses with changes in organizational culture, and in this process, the culture of cooperation, communication and learning is strengthened. The combination of these studies clearly reveals the importance of the integration of agile work cultures and organizational factors in both digital transformation and innovation processes of organizations.

Recent studies emphasize the difficulties in implementing agile culture and the importance of organizational agility. Kuchel et al. (2023) address the challenges faced by agile culture in practice, revealing that the adoption of agile methods by organizations is a complex process related not only to structure but also to human behavior. These challenges include conflicts between traditional hierarchical structures and agile practices, lack of communication within the team and resistance to change management. Mattajang (2023) focuses on how organizational agility can be supported by human resources practices in the digital age. In a rapidly changing business environment, the adoption of flexible human resources strategies enables organizations to adapt to change more quickly. In this context, practices such as talent development, flexible working models and employee participation stand out as the basic elements of organizational agility.

Fachridian et al. (2024) conducted a review on the implementation of organizational agility strategies to cope with digital transformation in government organizations. This study shows that the adoption of agile strategies in the digital transformation processes of government institutions strengthens the ability to increase service quality and respond quickly to social demands. These three studies emphasize that agile culture and practices play an important role in overcoming the challenges encountered in change management as well as organizational success.

8. Recommendations

The findings of the study on flexible work, digital and agile organizational culture and technology use provide suggestions for both researchers and practitioners regarding the impact on employees, the active or passive role of organizational culture, and the importance of possible associations in sectoral differences. First of all, it should be noted that the positive impact of flexible work arrangements on employees should not be ignored. Especially in digital transformation processes, the widespread use of flexible work practices and the creation of an organizational culture for

employees to use technology will accelerate the adaptation process of employees to technology. At this point, it is recommended that organizations make flexible work policies more widespread. This suggestion is also supported by published studies in the relevant field.

Secondly, considering the impact of digital and agile organizational cultures on technology use, these cultures need to be strengthened in organizations. It is important for organizations to adopt agile approaches, especially in order to adapt to digitalization processes and increase technology use. In this context, human resources policies need to be revised to support digital and agile culture. It is also emphasized in the literature that in organizations where agile cultures are supported, the speed of employees' adaptation to technology increases (Şakar and Şahin, 2021).

Finally, research to be conducted in different sectors can help us better understand the effects of flexible work and organizational cultures on technology use. Therefore; It can be considered to support the determination of implicit knowledge in the pattern centered on flexible work, digital and agile organizational culture and technology use with qualitative research methods. This situation can provide a multidimensional in-depth analysis and increase the power to explain the interaction between the relevant variables. In this context; future studies can offer suggestions suitable for the dynamics of each sector, taking into account sectoral differences. In this regard, it is thought that studies to be conducted especially in the health and education sectors can shed more light on the impact of digital and agile cultures on technology use.

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Notes

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