

ORIGINAL ARTICLE**Developing a Structural Model of the Impact of Organizational Culture on Technology Acceptance Among Managers of Sports and Youth Departments in Iraqi Province****Vajiheh Javani^{1*}**, **Faisir Haqi Ismail Al-Geburi²**, **Yaghoub Badri Azarin³**

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EXTENDED A B S T R A C T**Introduction**

In today's rapidly evolving environment, understanding why individuals and organizations accept or resist new technologies has become a central research concern, particularly as organizations continue to expand their investment in information technology (Koens & Sentmeir, 2020). Davis, Bagozzi, and Warshaw (1992) define technology adoption as the implementation of hardware and software within an organization aimed at enhancing productivity, competitive advantage, and the speed and accessibility of information processing. Numerous theories have since evolved, often as extensions of one another (Momani & Jamous, 2017), including the Theory of Reasoned Action, the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1980), and the Technology Acceptance Model, which replaces attitude toward behavior with perceived usefulness and perceived ease of use.

Although sport industry leaders increasingly view digital technology as a driver of fundamental innovation rather than merely incremental efficiency (Porto, 2020), organizational culture, despite its well-documented influence on innovation and competitive advantage (Akpa, Asikhia, & Nneji, 2021; Aboramadan et al., 2021; Gleeson, 2015; Eskiler et al., 2016)—remains rarely examined as a determinant of technology acceptance. Sport organizations are widely urged to restructure and embrace innovation to professionalize their operations (Winand & Anagnostopoulos, 2016), spanning social, technological, commercial, and organizational domains (Tjønndal, 2017; Hoeber et al., 2015; Askin, 2021). Technology adoption is shown to improve productivity, communication, and performance monitoring in sport organizations (Key et al., 2024; Mohammadi & Aysannejad, 2018), yet challenges such as financial constraints, skill gaps, and resistance to change persist (Best et al., 2021), amid ongoing innovations such as augmented reality and AI-based coaching (Marinho & Neiva, 2018).

Given this gap, the limited attention paid to organizational culture as a determinant of technology acceptance among sport managers, the present study develops a structural model of the impact of organizational culture on technology acceptance among managers of sport and youth departments across Iraqi provinces. Findings are expected to deepen understanding of the interaction between organizational culture and technology acceptance in sport settings, and to offer managers and policymakers practical guidance for building innovation-supportive organizational cultures and facilitating digital transformation in sport organizations.

Methodology

This study is applied in terms of purpose and descriptive-survey in terms of methodology. The statistical population comprised managers and senior experts of Sport and Youth Departments across 19 Iraqi provinces, working at various managerial levels (senior managers, middle managers, and responsible experts). Data were collected using a composite questionnaire consisting of three standardized instruments: the Denison Organizational Culture Questionnaire, the Technology Acceptance Model questionnaire, and the Hurt Innovation Questionnaire (1977). To adapt the questionnaire to the research topic, the opinions of five academic experts in sport management and information technology were first obtained. Based on expert opinions and the Content Validity Ratio, items scoring below 0.6 were removed, resulting in a final questionnaire comprising 48 items. Data collection was conducted over a three-month period through an online

questionnaire distributed via social media and specialized groups of sport managers.

Following Hooman's (2005) recommendation of a minimum sample size of 5 to 15 observations per variable in structural equation modeling, the minimum required sample size was estimated at 240 participants (5×48). Prior to selecting the analytical method, the distribution of the data was examined using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, the results of which indicated that the assumption of normal distribution was not confirmed. Given the presence of latent variables in the model and the non-normal distribution of the data, Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) was employed for data analysis. This method is preferred over other covariance-based approaches, as it is component-based and is well-suited to non-normally distributed data, smaller sample sizes, and situations involving multicollinearity.

To ensure the effectiveness of the 48-item composite questionnaire, its validity was assessed through cross-loadings of items, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. The reliability of the questionnaire was also examined using composite reliability and Cronbach's alpha. All analyses were performed using SmartPLS 3 software.

Findings

The reliability and convergent validity indices for the fifteen research variables, including organizational culture and its dimensions, innovation and its dimensions, and technology acceptance and its dimensions, were all found to fall within acceptable ranges. Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.701 (behavioral intention to use) to 0.906 (perceived ease of use), all exceeding the acceptable threshold of 0.7. Composite reliability values ranged between 0.833 and 0.941, well above the standard threshold of 0.7, confirming the satisfactory reliability of the measurement instrument. Furthermore, the average variance extracted (AVE) for all variables ranged from 0.627 to 0.841, exceeding the benchmark value of 0.5, thereby confirming the acceptable convergent validity of the research constructs. These results collectively indicate that the measurement instrument used in this study demonstrates strong reliability and convergent validity across all constructs.

Following the completion of the analyses related to the measurement model, this stage proceeds to the evaluation of the structural model, which represents the relationships among the latent variables. The conceptual model tested is presented in Figure 1. The numbers displayed on the connecting paths represent the standardized coefficients, or path coefficients, derived from the regression analyses between the variables.

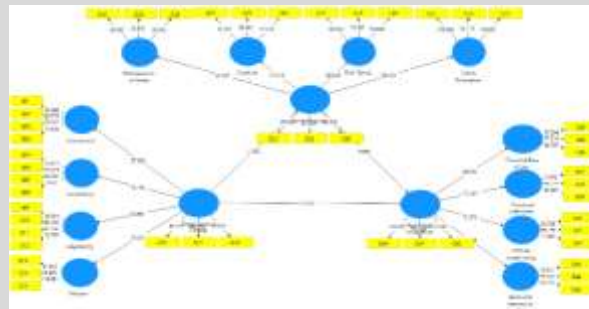


Figure 1. Path coefficient values

Table 1 presents the path coefficient, standard deviation, t-statistic, and significance level for each path in the technology acceptance model among managers of Sport and Youth Departments in Iraqi provinces.

Table 1. Path coefficients and t-test results of the structural model

Research Path	Path Coefficient	Standard Deviation	t-value	Significance Level
Organizational Culture → Innovation	0.587	0.051	11.565	0.001
Innovation → Technology Acceptance	0.401	0.044	9.080	0.001
Organizational Culture → Technology Acceptance	0.556	0.041	13.472	0.001

Based on the results presented in Table 6 and the significance of the path coefficients, it was determined that sport organizational culture (path coefficient = 0.556) and innovation (path coefficient = 0.401) significantly influence technology acceptance among managers of Sport and Youth Departments in Iraqi provinces. In addition, sport organizational culture (path coefficient = 0.587) significantly influences innovation. In this study, the Variance Accounted For (VAF)

index was used to measure the strength of the indirect effect through the mediating variable. This index, which ranges between 0 and 1, indicates that the closer its value is to 1, the stronger the indirect effect. VAF measures the ratio of indirect effects to the total effect and was calculated using Formula (1). In this research, the VAF value was obtained as 0.639. This finding indicates that more than 63% of the effect of sport organizational culture on technology acceptance among managers of Sport and Youth Departments in Iraqi provinces is explained indirectly, through the mediating variable of innovation.

Discussion and Conclusion

The results of this study reveal that both sport organizational culture and innovation significantly influence technology acceptance among managers of Sport and Youth Departments in Iraqi provinces. Establishing a supportive organizational culture and fostering innovation within these organizations can substantially enhance managers' acceptance of technology. Consistent with these findings, Nichols, Cuen, and Omar (2008) found that risk-tolerant organizational environments encourage sport leaders to adopt new technologies to improve performance and efficiency, while Best, Sibson, and Morgan (2024) noted that such adoption yields benefits including increased productivity, improved communication, and expanded remote-work capabilities. Conversely, conservative, change-resistant cultures can pose serious barriers to technology acceptance, as highlighted by Marques, Cianfrone, and Kellison (2020), who identified prior conditions, perceived technology characteristics, and situational structures such as trust and cost as key determinants of leaders' innovation-adoption decisions.

The findings also confirm that sport organizational culture directly shapes innovation. Cultures emphasizing risk-taking, creativity, flexibility, and support for new ideas foster higher innovation levels, encouraging employees and managers to think creatively and implement novel ideas, whereas cultures rooted in traditionalism and power-orientation tend to suppress innovation—consistent with Eskiler et al. (2016) and Kajor, Razavi, and Taghipourian (2017).

Innovation was further shown to mediate the relationship between organizational culture and technology acceptance, acting as a bridge that encourages managers in innovation-valuing environments to adopt new technologies more readily, particularly given the competitive challenges sport organizations face. This aligns with Reddy et al. (2020), who noted that early technology adopters can gain first-mover advantages and shape industry standards. However, this relationship is shaped by additional factors, including perceived technology characteristics, implementation costs, complexity, employee resistance, and leadership style, with transformational leadership shown to further promote information technology adoption (Bunjak, Bruch, & Černe, 2022).

These findings suggest that sport managers should simultaneously cultivate innovative cultures and create favorable conditions for technology adoption, forming multidisciplinary teams and aligned strategies to build a dynamic ecosystem where innovation and technology continuously reinforce one another, ultimately enhancing performance, productivity, and stakeholder experience.

KEY WORDS

Innovation Sports, Organizational Culture, Structural Equation Modeling, Technology Acceptance, Main Subjects, Conceptualization

