

Being Lenient and Being Strict: A Study on the Mechanism of Ambidextrous Leadership Driving Employees' Digital Technology Adoption

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Abstract

The adoption of digital workplace technologies has emerged as a critical organizational strategy, enabling enterprises to enhance operational efficiency, strengthen innovation capabilities, and improve market responsiveness. Employees constitute pivotal actors in organizational digital technology adoption, with their adoption behaviors serving as a critical determinant of technological value actualization. Existing research has primarily focused on organizational and managerial adoption of digital technology, whereas studies on employees' adoption behaviors remain relatively limited. Grounded in the Theory of Planned Behavior, this study investigates how Ambidextrous Leadership—characterized by the simultaneous enactment of empowerment and directive behaviors—facilitates employees' digital technology adoption. Specifically, it examines the chain mediating roles of perceived behavioral control and employees' digital readiness and assesses the moderating effect of digital technology use satisfaction on this mediation process. Based on survey data from 230 Chinese employees, this study employed hierarchical regression and bootstrap methods for empirical analysis. The findings reveal that: (1) Ambidextrous Leadership exerts a positive influence on employees' digital technology adoption; (2) perceived behavioral control and employees' digital readiness serve as mediators in the positive impact of Ambidextrous Leadership on digital technology adoption behavior, with a serial mediation effect observed; (3) digital technology usage satisfaction positively moderates this serial mediation by amplifying the effect of digital readiness on technology adoption. These findings enrich the literature on the antecedents of employees' digital technology adoption and offer practical implications for advancing digital technology applications in organizations. Specifically, organizations are advised to prioritize employees' digital technology use experience and adopt Ambidextrous Leadership strategies that flexibly integrate empowerment and directive approaches, thereby strengthening employees' digital capabilities and promoting intelligent digital transformation and upgrading.

Keywords

Ambidextrous Leadership, Digital Readiness, Adoption of Digital Technology, Perceived Behavioral Control, Usage Satisfaction