

The Effect of Empowering Leadership, Digital Leadership and Motivation on Investigator Performance Through Innovation as a Mediation

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Abstract

The performance of investigators in law enforcement institutions is a critical factor in ensuring professional, accountable, and responsive public services, particularly in handling complex special crimes, such as corruption, economic crimes, and cybercrimes. However, law enforcement organizations often face challenges in optimizing investigator performance due to limitations in leadership approaches, work motivation, and innovative work behavior. This study analyzed the effects of empowering leadership, digital leadership, and motivation on investigator performance at the Special Criminal Investigation Directorate (Direktorat Reserse Kriminal Khusus/Ditreskrimsus) of the Bali Regional Police. A quantitative approach was employed, with data collected through questionnaires distributed to investigators at Ditreskrimsus of the Bali Regional Police. The data were analyzed using the Partial Least Squares (PLS) method to examine both direct and indirect relationships among the variables. The results showed that empowering leadership, digital leadership, motivation, and innovation had positive and significant effects on investigator performance. Furthermore, empowering leadership, digital leadership, and motivation had positive and significant effects on innovation. The mediation analysis indicated that innovation partially mediated the effects of empowering leadership, digital leadership, and motivation on investigator performance. These findings demonstrate that investigator performance is influenced not only by leadership quality and motivation but also by innovation in carrying out investigative tasks. Therefore, the Bali Regional Police should improve investigator performance by strengthening digital leadership capabilities and fostering a culture of innovation within the organization.

INTRODUCTION

Human resources are strategic assets that determine an organization's success in achieving its objectives. In public sector organizations, particularly law enforcement institutions, employee performance is a key factor in delivering professional, accountable, and responsive public services. The advancement of digital technology, increasing crime complexity, and growing demands for transparency encourage organizations to continuously improve employee performance through effective human resource management. In the context of investigations, performance is assessed not only based on the number of cases resolved but also on the quality of investigation processes, timeliness, adherence to procedures, and the ability to adapt to changes in the work environment (Purnama & Indrawijaya, 2022)

One factor considered to influence performance is empowering leadership, which refers to a leadership style that emphasizes employee empowerment through trust, responsibility, and

opportunities for capability development (Yulita et al., 2022). Previous studies conducted by (Rahayu & Muna, 2021), (Ariska et al., 2023) (Salavina & Astuti, 2023), (Antikasari, 2024), (Arsas, 2023), and (Yulita et al., 2022) demonstrated that empowering leadership can improve employee performance and innovative behavior. However, other studies, such as (Boudrias et al., 2010) found that its influence was not always significant, as organizational conditions may affect the relationship. Therefore, inconsistencies remain regarding the effect of empowering leadership on employee performance.

Furthermore, digital leadership has become an important aspect in the era of digital transformation. Leaders with digital competencies are able to encourage technology adoption, strengthen collaboration, and develop adaptive work cultures, thereby potentially improving organizational performance (Samuel & Ramli, 2024). Although studies by (Zeike et al., 2019) and (Saptaprasetya et al., 2025) demonstrated a positive relationship between digital leadership and performance, other studies, such as Yulianti and (Maharani & Efa Yonnedi, 2023) and (Andriani & Azhar, 2025), reported different findings. These differences indicate that the relationship between digital leadership and performance requires further empirical examination.

Another factor influencing investigator performance is work motivation, which refers to internal and external drives that affect employee enthusiasm, commitment, and persistence in completing tasks (Octavia et al., 2025). Investigators with high motivation tend to demonstrate better performance because they are more capable of dealing with work pressure and achieving optimal results (Yuliani et al., 2021). Research by (Noorrachman & Effendi, 2025) found that work motivation had a significant positive effect on employee performance. However, studies by (Laily & Anwar, 2025) and (Wahyudi et al., 2020) revealed that motivation does not always directly influence performance, particularly when organizational support and other work-related factors are limited.

The inconsistencies in previous research findings indicate the need to incorporate innovation as a mediating variable to explain the relationship between empowering leadership, digital leadership, motivation, and performance. Innovation enables employees to develop improved work methods, optimize technology utilization, and enhance work processes to achieve greater effectiveness. Several studies support the mediating role of innovation, although its effectiveness depends on organizational characteristics. (Yulita et al., 2022) emphasized that empowering leadership encourages innovative behavior, which subsequently improves work effectiveness. (Chen et al., 2021) also demonstrated that digital leadership enhances productivity through technological innovation. Furthermore, (Nugroho & Amirudin, 2022)) and (Juarini & Indrawati, 2024) stated that innovation can mediate the relationship between leadership variables and employee performance. However, (Woods, 2009) noted that innovation does not always strengthen the relationship between motivation and performance, particularly in bureaucratic and rigid organizational environments, such as police institutions.

This research was conducted among investigators at the Directorate of Special Criminal Investigation (Direktorat Reserse Kriminal Khusus/Ditreskrimsus) of the Bali Regional Police because this unit is responsible for handling various special crimes, including corruption, economic crimes, and cybercrimes, which have become increasingly complex due to advances in information technology. These characteristics require investigators to possess professional, adaptive, and innovative capabilities in performing their duties. Furthermore, studies

integrating empowering leadership, digital leadership, motivation, innovation, and investigator performance within law enforcement organizations remain limited, creating a research gap that requires further investigation. Therefore, this study aimed to analyze the effects of empowering leadership, digital leadership, and motivation on investigator performance, with innovation as a mediating variable at Ditreskrimsus of the Bali Regional Police.

Resource-Based Theory (RBT) explains that organizational excellence is determined by the ability to manage valuable, rare, difficult-to-imitate, and irreplaceable resources (Armiani et al., 2021). These resources include tangible and intangible assets, such as human resource competencies, technology, and organizational knowledge (Yudiani et al., 2023). In public sector organizations, employee performance improvement can be achieved through optimizing leadership, motivation, and innovation as strategic capabilities (Lestari & Farida, 2022). Therefore, RBT provides a theoretical foundation explaining that empowering leadership, digital leadership, and motivation represent internal organizational resources that can improve performance through innovation as a dynamic capability (Maryati & Siregar, 2022).

Empowering leadership is a leadership style that focuses on empowering employees by providing trust, authority, support, and opportunities for independent decision-making. This leadership approach aims to improve employee competence, responsibility, motivation, and autonomy, thereby enhancing performance (Bertazzi et al., 2021). In this study, empowering leadership was positioned as an independent variable expected to influence investigator performance through innovation. The indicators of empowering leadership include delegation of authority, accountability, skill development, shared decision-making, and opportunities for initiative (Ariska et al., 2023).

Digital leadership refers to the ability of leaders to guide digital transformation through technology utilization, digital communication, innovation, and data-driven decision-making (Yulianti & Maharani, 2024). Digital leadership plays an important role in creating organizations that are adaptive to technological developments while improving work effectiveness and efficiency (Samuel & Ramli, 2024). The indicators of digital leadership include technological adaptability, encouragement of digital innovation, effective digital communication, technology-based work process transformation, and the development of a digital organizational culture (Nurazila et al., 2025; Tricahyadinata & Robiansyah, 2023).

Motivation is an internal or external drive that encourages individuals to achieve organizational and personal goals (Yuliani et al., 2021). In the workplace, motivation influences enthusiasm, persistence, commitment, and task performance quality (Octavia et al., 2025). Employees with high motivation tend to demonstrate better performance compared with those with lower motivation. The motivation indicators used in this study include responsibility, work attitude, achievement, development opportunities, performance recognition, and fulfillment of employee needs (Nuraini et al., 2015).

Innovation refers to the process of generating, developing, and implementing new ideas, methods, or work approaches that provide benefits to organizations (Yulita et al., 2022). Innovative behavior involves not only generating ideas but also applying them to improve work effectiveness. The innovation process includes opportunity identification, idea development, promotion of implementation, and application of innovations in work processes (Istanti et al., 2020).

Employee performance refers to the results achieved by individuals based on the quality and quantity of work performed according to assigned responsibilities (Febriari & Ayu, 2023). Performance evaluation is necessary to measure organizational goal achievement and serve as a basis for human resource development (Santika et al., 2023). Employee performance assessment also serves as a mechanism for improving employee capabilities and outcomes (Wahdiniawati et al., 2024). According to (Mustika, 2022), employee performance represents the achievements obtained by individuals within a certain period based on organizational standards and criteria. In this study, performance indicators consisted of work (Mangkunegara, 2016).

To the best of the authors' knowledge, limited studies have integrated empowering leadership, digital leadership, and motivation with innovation as a mediating variable within the context of law enforcement organizations, particularly in Indonesia. This represents the novelty and methodological contribution of the present study, distinguishing it from previous research that has predominantly examined these variables separately or within business and general government settings.

Therefore, this study aimed to analyze the effects of empowering leadership, digital leadership, and motivation on investigator performance at the Directorate of Special Criminal Investigation (Direktorat Reserse Kriminal Khusus/Ditreskrimsus) of the Bali Regional Police, with innovation as a mediating variable. The findings are expected to provide both theoretical and practical contributions. Theoretically, this study contributes to human resource management and public sector leadership literature by providing empirical evidence regarding the role of innovation as a mediator in the relationship between leadership, motivation, and investigator performance. Practically, this research provides insights for Ditreskrimsus of the Bali Regional Police and other law enforcement organizations in developing empowering leadership strategies, strengthening digital leadership capabilities, increasing work motivation, and fostering innovation cultures to improve the effectiveness and quality of investigator performance.

METHOD

Type and Design

This study employed a quantitative approach with an explanatory research design to examine the effects of empowering leadership, digital leadership, and motivation on investigator performance, with innovation as a mediating variable. Primary data were collected through questionnaires distributed to respondents and analyzed using the Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) approach with SmartPLS 4 software. This method was selected to examine both direct and indirect relationships among variables. The study involved five variables: empowering leadership, digital leadership, and motivation as independent variables; innovation as a mediating variable; and investigator performance as the dependent variable. Each variable was measured using indicators adapted from previous research instruments in the fields of human resource management and organizational behavior.

Data and Data Sources

The research data consisted of quantitative data sourced from respondents' answers to a questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale. Data collection was conducted through

observation, interviews, and questionnaire distribution as the primary research instrument. Prior to analysis, the instrument was tested for validity using Pearson Product Moment correlation and reliability using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient with a minimum limit of 0.70.

Data Collection Technique

The study population comprised all 114 investigators within the Bali Regional Police's Directorate of Special Criminal Investigation. The sample was selected using a purposive sampling technique, with the criteria being investigators actively serving in Subdirectorate II of Fismondev and having a minimum tenure of one year. Based on these criteria, 35 respondents were obtained, thus making the entire population within the work unit the research sample (total sampling within the subdirectorate studied).

Data Analysis

Data analysis began with descriptive statistics to describe the data characteristics, followed by SEM-PLS analysis. Evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) was conducted through factor loading, Average Variance Extracted (AVE), cross loading, Cronbach's Alpha, and Composite Reliability tests. Furthermore, the structural model (inner model) was evaluated using R^2 and Q^2 predictive relevance values, as well as path coefficient significance testing through a bootstrapping procedure. The hypothesis was accepted if the t-statistic value was > 1.96 at a significance level of 5%.

The mediating role of innovation is analyzed through testing the indirect effect using the bootstrapping and Variance Accounted For (VAF) methods. The VAF value is used to determine the type of mediation, namely full mediation if the VAF is $> 80\%$, partial mediation if the VAF is in the range of 20–80%, and non-mediation if the VAF is $< 20\%$.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data collection for this study was conducted by distributing questionnaires to 35 investigators from the Bali Regional Police's Directorate of Special Criminal Investigation. The respondent profile for this study will outline the criteria for the 35 respondents based on gender, age, and domicile. The following detailed identity data is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Respondent Characteristics.

No	Variables	Classification	Number of people)	Percentage (%)
1	Gender	Man	33	94.3
		Woman	2	5.7
		Total	35	100.0
2	Age (Years)	17 - 27 Years	12	34.3
		28 - 38 Years	3	8.6
		39 - 49 Years	10	28.6
		50 - 60 Years	8	22.9
		>60 Years	2	5.7
		Total	35	100.0
3	Work experience	1-2 Years	4	11.4
		3-4 Years	8	22.9
		5-6 Years	6	17.1
		>6 Years	17	48.6

No	Variables	Classification	Number of people)	Percentage (%)
		Total	35	100.0

Source: Primary data, 2026

The respondent characteristics presented in Table 5.1 indicate that respondents who are investigators at the Bali Regional Police's Special Criminal Investigation Directorate come from a variety of genders, ages, and work experiences. Grouping respondents by gender shows that 94.3 percent of respondents are male, while 5.7 percent are female. This indicates that the composition of respondents at the Bali Regional Police's Special Criminal Investigation Directorate is dominated by men. This dominance reflects that the staffing structure, particularly in the special criminal investigation field, tends to be filled by more male personnel than female personnel. This condition is likely influenced by the characteristics of the tasks and responsibilities of the job, which require physical readiness, high mobility, and the handling of special cases, which are generally carried out more by men.

Respondent data by age shows that the largest percentage is 34.3 percent, namely in the age range of 17 to 27 years. This indicates that the majority of investigators at the Bali Regional Police's Directorate of Special Criminal Investigation are young or early productive age. This condition indicates that the agency is dominated by personnel with high energy, good adaptability to change, and the potential for long career development. Furthermore, the dominance of young age can also reflect the regeneration within the organization, which is expected to improve performance through new ideas and the use of technology in carrying out tasks. However, in terms of work experience, this age group may still be in the development stage, so they still require guidance, training, and mentoring to improve competence and professionalism in carrying out investigative duties.

When viewed in terms of length of service, the data shows that 17 respondents, or 48.6 percent, have worked for more than 6 years. This indicates that the majority of investigators at the Bali Regional Police's Directorate of Special Criminal Investigation have a relatively long tenure, namely more than 6 years. This condition indicates that most respondents have sufficient work experience in their fields, so it is expected to have a good understanding of procedures, investigative techniques, and the dynamics of the work faced. Furthermore, length of service also reflects a high level of loyalty and commitment to the organization. With this experience, investigators tend to be more skilled in making decisions, solving cases, and facing various challenges in carrying out their duties. However, it is important for organizations to continue to provide training and competency development on an ongoing basis so that their abilities remain relevant to current developments and job demands.

This study uses a Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis approach to test the previously stated research hypotheses. The results of the empirical model analysis using Partial Least Squares (PLS) analysis can be seen in Figure 1.

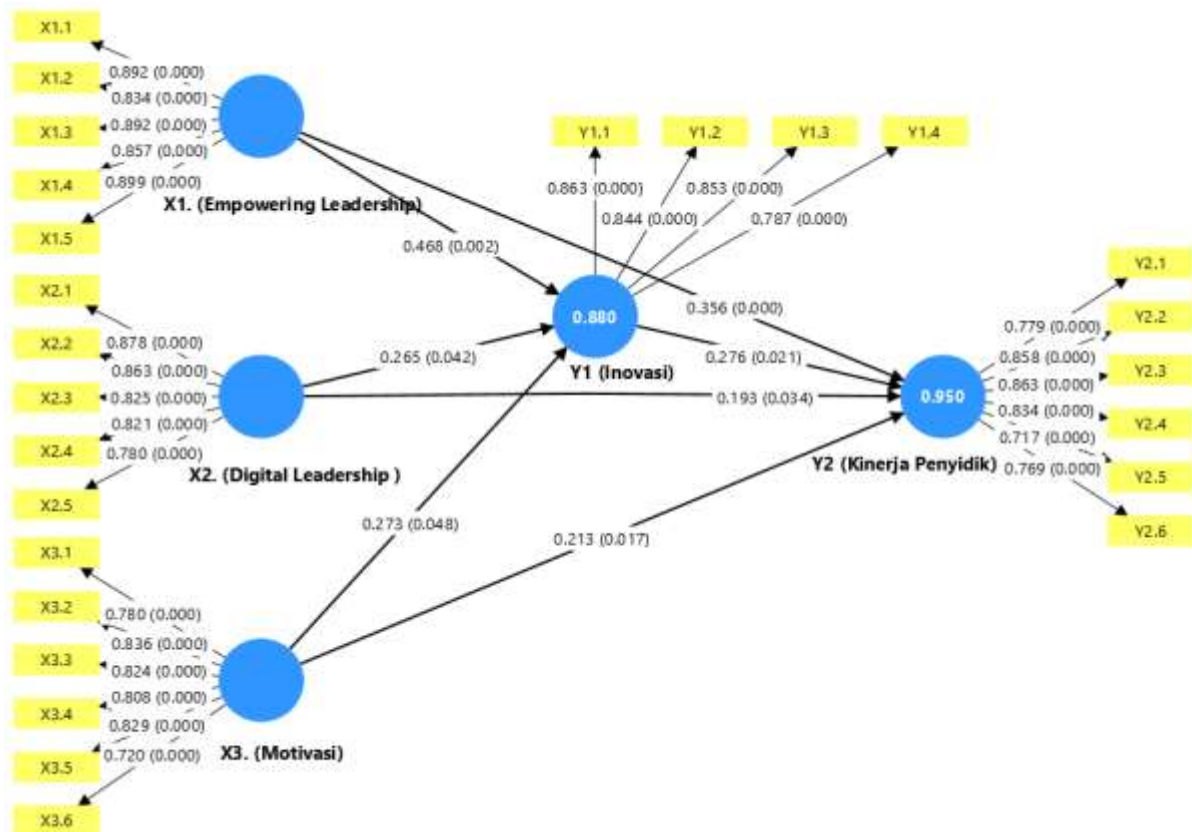


Figure 1. Bootstrapping Model

Source: Primary data processed using SmartPLS 4, 2026.

The results of the path coefficient validation test on each path for direct influence can be presented in Table 2 below.

Table 2. Results of Direct Effect Test (Path Coefficient).

	Relationship between variables	Path Coefficient	T Statistics	P Value	Information
H1	X1. (Empowering leadership) -> Y2 (Investigator performance)	0.356	3,754	0.000	Significant Positive
H2	X2. (Digital Leadership) -> Y2 (Investigator performance)	0.193	2.122	0.034	Significant Positive
H3	X3. (Motivation) -> Y2 (Investigator performance)	0.213	2,384	0.017	Significant Positive
H4	Y1 (Innovation) -> Y2 (Investigator performance)	0.276	2,304	0.021	Significant Positive
H5	X1. (Empowering leadership) -> Y1 (Innovation)	0.468	3,129	0.002	Significant Positive

H6	X2. (Digital Leadership) -> Y1 (Innovation)	0.265	2,037	0.042	Significant Positive
H7	X3. (Motivation) -> Y1 (Innovation)	0.273	1,980	0.048	Significant Positive

Source: Data Processing Results, 2026

Information from Table 2 shows that empowering leadership has a positive and significant effect on investigator performance. This result is indicated by a positive path coefficient of 0.356 with a t-statistic of 3.754 (t-statistic > 1.960) and a p-value of 0.000 < 0.050. Thus, the hypothesis can be proven. The results obtained can be interpreted as meaning that the better the empowering leadership, the better the performance of investigators at the Bali Regional Police's Special Criminal Investigation Directorate.

Digital leadership has been shown to have a positive and significant impact on investigator performance. This result is indicated by a positive path coefficient of 0.193 with a t-statistic of 2.122 (t-statistic > 1.960) and a p-value of 0.034 < 0.05. Thus, the hypothesis can be proven. The results obtained can be interpreted as the better the digital leadership provided, the better the performance of investigators at the Bali Regional Police's Special Criminal Investigation Directorate.

Motivation has been shown to have a positive and significant effect on investigator performance. This result is indicated by a positive path coefficient of 0.213 with a t-statistic of 2.384 (t-statistic > 1.960) and a p-value of 0.017 < 0.050, thus, the hypothesis can be proven. The results obtained can be interpreted that the higher the motivation, the better the performance of investigators at the Bali Regional Police's Special Criminal Investigation Directorate.

Innovation has been shown to have a positive and significant impact on investigator performance. This result is indicated by a positive path coefficient of 0.276 with a t-statistic of 2.304 (t-statistic > 1.960) and a p-value of 0.021 < 0.050. Thus, the hypothesis can be proven. The results obtained can be interpreted as indicating that the higher the innovation, the better the performance of investigators at the Bali Regional Police's Special Criminal Investigation Directorate.

Empowering leadership has been shown to have a positive and significant impact on innovation. This result is indicated by a positive path coefficient of 0.468 with a t-statistic of 3.129 (t-statistic > 1.960) and a p-value of 0.002 < 0.050. Thus, the hypothesis can be proven. The results obtained can be interpreted as the better the empowering leadership, the more innovation investigators at the Bali Police Criminal Investigation Directorate will increase.

Digital leadership has been shown to have a positive and significant impact on innovation. This result is indicated by a positive path coefficient of 0.265 with a t-statistic of 2.037 (t-statistic > 1.960) and a p-value of 0.042 < 0.050. Thus, the hypothesis can be proven. The results obtained can be interpreted as the more attractive the digital leadership provided, the more innovation will be increased by investigators at the Bali Police's Special Criminal Investigation Directorate.

Motivation has been shown to have a positive and significant effect on innovation. This result is indicated by a positive path coefficient of 0.273 with a t-statistic of 1.980 (t-statistic > 1.960) and a p-value of 0.048 < 0.050. Thus, hypothesis 7 (H7) can be proven. The results

obtained can be interpreted as meaning that the higher the motivation, the more innovative investigators at the Bali Regional Police's Criminal Investigation Directorate will be.

Table 3. Results of the Indirect Effect Test (Specific Indirect Effect)

	Original sample (O)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values
X1. (Empowering leadership) -> Y1 (Innovation) -> Y2. (Investigator performance)	0.129	2,133	0.033
X2. (Digital leadership) -> Y1 (Innovation) -> Y2 (Investigator performance)	0.073	2,223	0.034
X3. (Motivation) -> Y1 (Innovation) -> Y2 (Investigator performance)	0.075	2,331	0.028

Source: Data Processing Results, 2026

Based on Table 3, the results obtained that empowering leadership on investigator performance through innovation obtained a correlation value of 0.129 with a t statistic of $2.133 > 1.960$, and a p value of $0.033 < 0.050$, so that Empowering leadership on investigator performance has a significant positive indirect effect through innovation. Digital leadership on investigator performance through innovation obtained a correlation value of 0.073 with a t statistic of $2.223 > 1.960$, and a p value of $0.034 < 0.050$, so that digital leadership on investigator performance has a significant positive indirect effect through innovation. Motivation on investigator performance through innovation obtained a correlation value of 0.075 with a t statistic of $2.331 > 1.960$, and a p value of $0.028 < 0.050$, so that motivation on investigator performance has a significant positive indirect effect through innovation.

The mediating variables examined in this study will examine the mediating role of innovation variables in the indirect influence of empowering leadership, digital leadership, and motivation on investigator performance. The indirect influence examined in this study can be seen in the explanation of the analysis results in Table 1.4.

Table 4. Recapitulation of Mediating Variable Test Results

Mediating Variables	Effect				Information
	(A)	(B)	©	(D)	
<i>Empowering leadership</i> (X1) → Innovation (M) → Investigator performance (Y)	0.129 (Sig. 0.033)	0.356 (Sig. 0.000)	0.468 (Sig. 0.002)	0.276 (Sig. 0.021)	<i>Partial Mediation</i>
<i>Digital leadership</i> (X2) → Innovation (M) → Investigator performance (Y)	0.073 (Sig. 0.034)	0.193 (Sig. 0.034)	0.265 (Sig. 0.042)	0.276 (Sig. 0.021)	<i>Partial Mediation</i>
Motivation (X3) → Innovation (M) → Investigator performance (Y)	0.075 (Sig. 0.028)	0.213 (Sig. 0.017)	0.273 (Sig. 0.048)	0.276 (Sig. 0.021)	<i>Partial Mediation</i>

Source: Data Processing Results, 2026

Description: significance (Sig.) = t-statistic > 1.960 at $\alpha = 5\%$

- (A) : indirect influence of independent variables on dependent variables
- (B) : direct influence of independent variables on dependent variables
- (C) : direct influence of independent variables on mediating variables
- (D) : the direct influence of the mediating variable on the dependent variable

Based on the criteria in examining the mediation effect, then from Table 4 above, it can be obtained information that innovation is able to mediate positively on the indirect effect of empowering leadership on investigator performance. This result is shown from the mediation test conducted, namely that effects C and D are significant, but effect A which is the indirect effect of the independent variable (empowering leadership) on the dependent variable (investigator performance) by involving the mediating variable has a significant value. Thus, innovation is able to partially mediate the effect of empowering leadership on investigator performance. Based on these results, it can be interpreted that the performance of investigators at the Bali Regional Police's Special Criminal Investigation Directorate can be further improved if the Bali Regional Police's Special Criminal Investigation Directorate has better empowering leadership and investigators have high work innovation.

Innovation is able to positively mediate the indirect influence of digital leadership on investigator performance. This result is shown from the mediation test conducted, namely that effects B; C; and D have significant positive values, and effect A, which is the indirect influence of the independent variable (digital leadership) on the dependent variable (investigator performance) by involving the mediating variable, has a significant value. Thus, innovation is able to partially mediate the influence of digital leadership on investigator performance. Based on these results, it can be interpreted that the performance of investigators at the Bali Regional Police's Special Criminal Investigation Directorate can be further improved if the Bali Regional Police's Special Criminal Investigation Directorate has better digital leadership and investigators have high innovation.

Innovation is able to positively mediate the indirect influence of motivation on investigator performance. This result is shown from the mediation test conducted, namely that effects B; C; and D have significant positive values, and effect A, which is the indirect influence of the independent variable (motivation) on the dependent variable (investigator performance) by involving the mediating variable, has a significant value. Thus, innovation is able to partially mediate the influence of motivation on investigator performance. Based on these results, it can be interpreted that the performance of investigators at the Bali Regional Police's Special Criminal Investigation Directorate can be further improved if the Bali Regional Police's Special Criminal Investigation Directorate has better motivation and investigators have high levels of innovation.

The Influence of Empowering Leadership on Investigator Performance

The results of the study indicate that empowering leadership has a positive and significant effect on the performance of investigators at the Bali Regional Police's Special Criminal Investigation Directorate. The higher the level of empowerment practices carried out by leaders, the better the investigators' performance. This finding aligns with Resource-Based Theory (RBT), which views human resources as a strategic asset capable of creating organizational excellence when managed through appropriate leadership. Providing trust,

autonomy, and support to investigators strengthens competence and responsibility, thereby increasing the effectiveness of investigations. These results are consistent with the findings of Arnold et al. (2000), Ahearne (2005), Amundsen & Martinsen (2015), Damayanti (2021), Arsas (2023), and Salavina & Astuti (2023), which state that empowering leadership improves employee performance.

The Influence of Digital Leadership on Investigator Performance

Digital leadership has been shown to have a positive and significant impact on investigator performance. Leadership that is able to direct the use of technology encourages the effectiveness of work processes, accelerates decision-making, and improves the quality of investigations. From an RBT perspective, digital capabilities are a strategic resource capable of enhancing organizational excellence. These findings also support the digital leadership theory of El Sawy et al. (2016) and research by Gozman et al. (2018), Warner & Wäger (2019), Zeike et al. (2019), Samuel & Ramli (2024), Nurshinta et al. (2025), Saptaprasetya et al. (2025), and Andriani & Azhar (2025).

The Influence of Motivation on Investigator Performance

Motivation has a positive and significant impact on investigator performance. Investigators with high motivation tend to have better commitment, perseverance, and work ethic, enabling them to achieve optimal work results. Within the RBT framework, motivation is an intangible resource that strengthens the quality of human resources. This finding aligns with the findings of Robbins & Judge (2019) and Luthans (2011) and is supported by research by Supriyanto et al. (2020), Yuliani et al. (2021), Noorachman & Effendi (2025), and Octavia et al. (2025).

The Influence of Innovation on Investigator Performance

Research shows that innovation has a positive and significant impact on investigator performance. The ability to generate and implement new work methods helps improve the effectiveness, efficiency, and quality of investigative task completion. This finding supports West & Farr's (1990) theory of organizational innovation and research by Scott & Bruce (1994), Suhendar & Wibowo (2021), Nugroho & Amirudin (2022), and Juarini & Indrawati (2024).

The Influence of Empowering Leadership on Innovation

Empowering leadership has a positive effect on innovation. Granting trust, delegating authority, and opportunities to participate in decision-making encourage innovative behavior among investigators. The RBT perspective explains that empowering human resources can create innovative capabilities that become organizational strengths. This finding supports research by Zhang & Bartol (2010), Arsas (2023), Antikasari (2024), and Yulita et al. (2022).

The Influence of Digital Leadership on Innovation

Digital leadership has a positive and significant impact on investigator innovation. Leaders who encourage the use of technology and digital learning create a work environment conducive to the emergence of new ideas. This finding aligns with the theory of Kane et al. (2015) and the RBT perspective, which positions technology and digital competencies as strategic organizational resources. The study's findings also align with those of Li et al. (2021), Weber et al. (2021), and Zeike et al. (2019).

The Influence of Motivation on Innovation

Motivation has been shown to enhance investigator innovation. Highly motivated individuals are more driven to seek new solutions and develop more effective work methods. This finding is supported by Amabile's (1988) creativity theory and RBT, which view motivation as a valuable psychological resource. The study's findings are consistent with those of Janssen (2000), Nurhadi et al. (2021), and Octavia et al. (2025).

The Role of Innovation Mediation in the Relationship between Empowering Leadership and Investigator Performance

The results of this study indicate that innovation partially mediates the effect of empowering leadership on investigator performance. Empowering leadership encourages innovation, which subsequently improves investigator performance. This finding supports the mediation theory of Baron & Kenny (1986) and RBT, and is consistent with research by Jada et al. (2019), Lee et al. (2020), and Yulita et al. (2022).

The Role of Innovation Mediation in the Relationship between Digital Leadership and Investigator Performance

Innovation has also been shown to partially mediate the relationship between digital leadership and investigator performance. Digital leadership encourages the use of technology and the creation of innovative work processes, thus increasing performance effectiveness. These results support RBT and research by Tian et al. (2021), Pereira & Romero (2017), and Chen et al. (2021).

The Mediating Role of Innovation in the Relationship between Motivation and Investigator Performance

Research shows that innovation partially mediates the effect of motivation on investigator performance. High motivation encourages investigators to innovate in work methods and processes, thereby improving performance. This finding reinforces Resource-Based Theory, which positions motivation and innovation as internal organizational capabilities, and is supported by research by Nugroho & Amirudin (2022) and Juarini & Indrawati (2024).

Novelty and contribution

Previous research has generally examined the influence of empowering leadership, digital leadership, motivation, or innovation on performance separately, and has been conducted primarily in business organizations or government agencies. Research integrating these four variables into a single conceptual model, particularly in law enforcement organizations, is still very limited. Furthermore, studies on the role of innovation as a mediating variable in explaining the relationship between empowering leadership, digital leadership, motivation, and investigator performance are still rare.

The novelty of this research lies in the development of a model that integrates empowering leadership, digital leadership, and motivation as determinants of investigator performance, with innovation as a mediating mechanism. This research also expands the application of Resource-Based Theory (RBT) to the context of law enforcement organizations by demonstrating that leadership, motivation, and innovation are internal capabilities capable of sustainably improving investigator performance.

This research's contributions encompass both theoretical and practical aspects. Theoretically, this study enriches the literature on human resource management and public

sector leadership by providing empirical evidence regarding the role of innovation as a mediating variable in the relationship between leadership, motivation, and investigator performance. Practically, the results of this study can serve as a basis for the Bali Regional Police's Directorate of Special Criminal Investigations and other law enforcement organizations in formulating empowering leadership development policies, strengthening digital leadership, increasing work motivation, and building a culture of innovation to enhance the effectiveness and quality of investigator performance.

Limitation and future study

This research was conducted at only one agency, the Bali Regional Police's Directorate of Special Criminal Investigation (Ditreskrimsus), so the results are limited in their generalizability to other agencies or regions. The variables used in this study were limited to empowering leadership, digital leadership, motivation, innovation, and investigator performance, and therefore did not include other factors that may also influence performance, such as organizational culture, workload, or job satisfaction. Data collection using questionnaires has the potential to introduce subjective bias among respondents, as answers can be influenced by individual perceptions. This study used a quantitative approach, so it was not able to explore the phenomena occurring in the field in depth. A qualitative approach can be used in future research to gain a more comprehensive understanding.

Implications and suggestions

This research contributes to the development of human resource management science, particularly regarding the role of empowering leadership, digital leadership, and motivation in improving performance through innovation as a mediating variable. The results reinforce the theory that innovation acts as a crucial intervening variable that bridges the influence of leadership and motivation on performance.

Practically, the results of this study provide input for the Bali Regional Police's Directorate of Special Criminal Investigations to improve the quality of empowering leadership to encourage active participation by investigators. Optimize the implementation of digital leadership through the use of technology in the investigation process. Increase work motivation through a reward system, career development, and a supportive work environment. Promote a culture of innovation as a key strategy for improving investigator performance.

The results of this study can be a basis for policy makers in designing HR management strategies, especially in improving the performance of law enforcement officers through a modern and innovation-based leadership approach.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion section aims to help readers understand the significance of the research after reviewing the study. A conclusion is not merely a summary of the findings or a restatement of the research problem; rather, it provides a synthesis of the most important insights derived from the study. In most cases, a well-developed paragraph is sufficient to present the conclusion, although additional paragraphs may be used when necessary. The conclusion should not only reiterate the research findings but also explain their meaning and implications. It should demonstrate consistency between the research objectives presented in the Introduction and the results discussed in the Results and Discussion sections. Furthermore, the conclusion may highlight opportunities for further development of the research findings

and potential directions for future studies. The conclusion must directly address the research objectives and describe the contributions, innovations, or improvements provided by the study to existing knowledge. The use of bullet points or numbering should be avoided.

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