

Blockchain Digital Transformation Impacts OCB: Mediating Leadership, Innovation, Commitment: Moderating Trust

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Abstract

The present paper dwells on the mediating (through blockchain) digital transformation (DT) on the relationship between transformational leadership (TL), innovative work behavior (IWB), organizational commitment (OC), and organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) with a moderating influence of the trust. The quantitative cross-sectional study design was used to gather data. 360 HR professionals were gathered that worked in the organization which implemented blockchain-based employee benefits systems, the data was analyzed with the help of structural equation modeling. Results indicate that all three antecedent OCB associations (H8 H10) are significantly mediated by DT, but there is a significant mediating effect of trust and OCB (H11) on the relationship mediated by DT. OCB was also directly affected by TL, IWB and OC. The model describes 57 percent of the variance in OCB and provides both theoretical and practical information on the transformation of HR by blockchain.

Keywords: Blockchain, organizational citizenship behavior, transformational leadership, trust, innovative work behavior.

Introduction

The intersection of blockchain technology and human resource management is a new field of scholarly frontier, which needs to be carefully researched empirically. The HR operations, such as automated payroll, decentralized insurances, and automated leave management with the use of smart contracts, are gradually being transformed by digital transformation (DT) being based

on blockchains and the traditional employment relationships have been fundamentally altered (Bhutada, 2024). In this technologically reconfigured organizational environment, the behavioral reactions of its employees, especially their organizational citizenship (OCB), are both theoretically interesting and essential. Such discretionary employee behavior that goes beyond the formal job requirements and plays a role in organizational performance has been repeatedly associated with the quality of leadership, behavioral innovativeness, and affective commitment (Saad et al., 2024). Nevertheless, it is conspicuously under-investigated how the mechanisms by which blockchain-enabled DT enhances or diminishes these well-known antecedent-OCB links work.

Scope of the Study

The literature at hand tends to look into DT and OCB individually, without considering the conditional boundaries scenario, under which governance frameworks such as trust subject to the technological-mediated behavioral consequences. Additionally, the concomitant presentation of the transformational leadership (TL), innovative work behavior (IWB) as well as the organizational commitment (OC) as antecedents of DT, as a mediating process to OCB, addresses a significant gap in the HR technology literature. The operationalization of the adoption of blockchain as the DT construct within the context of an employee benefit system, used in the current research, therefore, grounds the abstract technological constructs in the context of a realistic HR activity.

Research Objectives

- To check the direct impacts of TL, IWB and OC on OCB.
- The research seeks to investigate the influence of TL, IWB and OC on blockchain-based DT.
- To determine the mediation of the relationships among TL, IWB, OC and OCB by DT.
- To evaluate the existence of trust in moderating the association between DT and OCB in an HR blockchain-based environment.

Research Questions

- Are TL, IWB and OC direct predictors of OCB in organizations which adopt blockchain?
- Are blockchain-based DT predictors of TL, IWB and OC?
- Do blockchain-powered DT mediate between the antecedent-OCB relationships?
- Does trust moderate the relationship between DT and OCB or not?

Literature Review

One of the most important re-conceptualizations of the organizational processes is the so-called digital transformation (DT) due to the strategic integration of digital technologies (Wurm et al., 2025). The blockchain technology is a disruptive innovation in the sphere of human resource management, and it has provided the decentralized, immutable, and transparent payroll and benefits management system, as well as employee transactions, accomplished with the assistance of cryptographically secured

smart contracts (Ucha et al., 2024). Procedural justice, organizational support perception and the processes of reciprocal exchange are transforming the employment relationships that are established on blockchain-enabled platforms unlike traditional centralized HR systems (Sharif & Ghodoosi, 2022). Although there has been an increase in practitioner interest, empirical studies that focus on the effect of blockchain-based transformation on employee discretionary behaviors, especially organizational citizenship behavior (OCB), are still in its infancy.

Organizational citizenship behavior is a conceptualized behavior, which was first introduced by Organ (1988) as discretionary behavior that transcends the formal reward system and has a positive impact on work of the entire organization. OCB acquires even a higher role in technologically mediated environments, as organizations depend on how flexible employees can be, on the ability to share knowledge, and to resolve issues in a team to benefit most of the digital investments (Wu & Kane, 2021). The current theoretical framework is the social exchange theory: workers reciprocate the kind treatment in the organization with voluntary contributions bigger than the necessary ones (Pro, 2025). Nevertheless, the current body of OCB studies focuses on stable organizational settings, whereas the role of blockchain-driven changes to re-organize the exchange relationships as the basis of citizenship practices is under-researched. The theory of transformational leadership suggests that an idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration were the way a leader can alter the behaviors of his or her followers (Lu & Tung, 2023).

WB is an activity that deals with conscious development, promotion and implementation of novel concepts, and innovative employees are the initial ones to embrace and become change champions in the blockchain adoption process (Boateng et al., 2023). Organizational commitment among highly committed companies means that there is a sense of psychological attachment to organizational objectives and that kind of employees are more apt to accept technology initiatives because they consider organizational success to be something that cannot go without personal well-being (Jacob & Dixson, 2024).

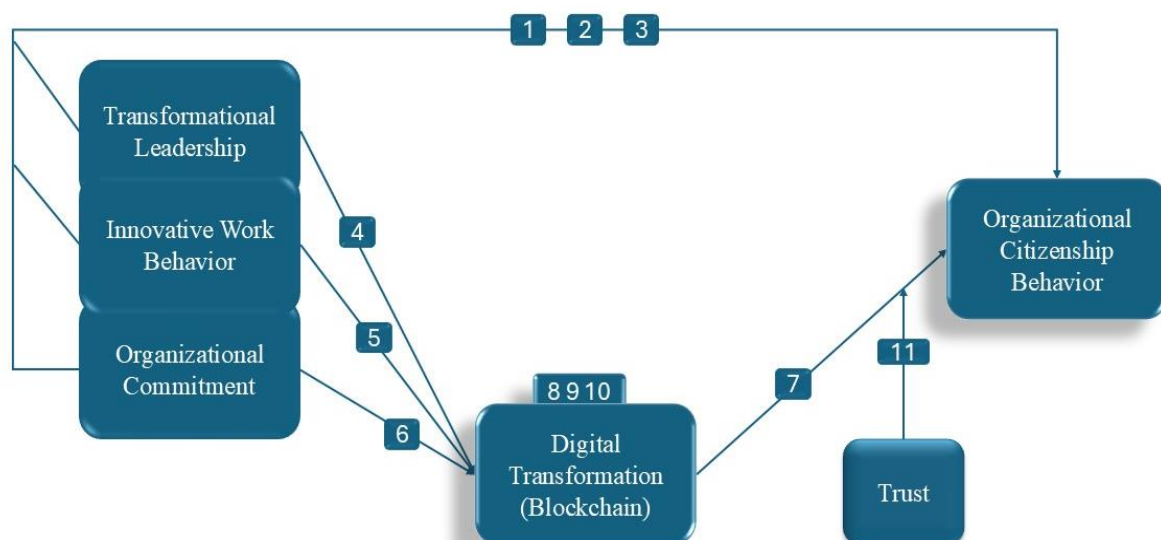
Trust constitutes a prominent system of governance in technology mediated relations that are regulated at system, organizational and institutional levels. Although cryptographic verification renders blockchain appear to be trustless, the behavioral response of the workers is highly reliant on the trust perception with regards to fairness, privacy, and goodwill of the (De Filippi et al., 2020). Trust is a mediator of the success of digital transformation since it brings psychological safety, which assists employees to feel that technological changes are an investment in the organizations that can be returned by offering reciprocal citizenship (Lau & Höyng, 2022).

Hypotheses Development

- H1: Transformational Leadership has a positive connection with Organizational Citizenship Behavior.

- H2: Organizational Citizenship Behavior has a positive relationship with Innovative Work Behavior.
- H3: Organizational Commitment and Organizational Citizenship Behavior have a positive relationship.
- H4: Transformational Leadership has a positive impact on Digital Transformation that is powered by blockchain.
- H5: Digital Transformation of the innovations in work Behavior is positively associated with Blockchain.
- H6: Organizational Commitment and Digital Transformation based on Blockchain have a positive relationship.
- H7: There is a positive relationship between Digital Transformation and Organizational Citizenship Behavior and blockchain-based.
- H8: There is a mediating relationship between Blockchain-driven Digital Transformation and Transformational Leadership and Organizational Citizenship Behavior.
- H9: Innovative Work Behavior and Organizational Citizenship Behavior have a mediating relationship that is mediated by Digital Transformation Blockchain-powered.
- H 10: Organizational commitment and Organizational Citizenship Behavior have a mediating relationship due to Digital Transformation Blockchain-driven.
- H11: Trust is a moderator of the relationship between Blockchain-motivated Digital Transformation and Organizational Citizenship Behavior, with positive impact of Digital Transformation on Organizational Citizenship Behavior being greater when Trust is high.

Figure 1. Research Framework



Methodology

The paper used a quantitative, cross-sectional survey research design with respondents being HR professionals that work in organizations where

blockchain-based employee benefit systems, such as payroll, insurance, and leave administration, are in place. A purposive sampling approach was used to make sure that the respondents had first-hand experience of blockchain-based HR practices. A total of 360 valid respondents provided data, which was identified through the G + Power analysis to have sufficient statistical power to analyze the hypothesized structural model (Hair et al., 2021).

The constructs were measured with the help of the developed five-point Likert scales (1 = Strongly Disagree; 5 = Strongly Agree).

The analysis of data was conducted with the help of the IBM SPSS to provide descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation and SmartPLS to provide structural equation modeling with path coefficients, mediation through bootstrapping (5,000 iterations), moderated mediation, and model fit indices. The bias of common method was measured by single-factor test of Harman.

Data Analysis and Results

Descriptive Statistics

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics (N = 360)

Variable	N	Min	Max	Mean	SD	Variance	Kurtosis
TL	360	1.00	5.00	3.469	0.862	0.743	-0.299
IWB	360	1.00	5.00	3.413	0.889	0.790	-0.848
OC	360	1.20	5.00	3.506	0.838	0.702	-0.405
DT	360	1.20	5.00	3.417	0.870	0.757	-0.668
OCB	360	1.60	5.00	3.399	0.778	0.606	-0.568
TRUST	360	1.20	5.00	3.402	0.855	0.731	-0.618

Note. TL = Transformational Leadership; IWB = Innovative Work Behavior; OC = Organizational Commitment; DT = Digital Transformation; OCB = Organizational Citizenship Behavior.

The means (on a five-point scale) of all constructs are fairly high (between 3.399 and 3.506) which denotes positive perceptions among respondents. The value of kurtosis lies within reasonable limits (|human| > The values of kurtosis are within reasonable ranges (kurtosis values are less than 2) which validates the approximate normality of the distributions. Standard deviation values between 0.778 and 0.889 indicate that there is no extreme compression of scores and respondents are heterogeneous (Bibi et al., 2026).

Correlation

Table 2: Pearson Correlation Matrix

	TL	IWB	OC	DT	OCB	TRUST
TL	1					
IWB	-.006	1				
OC	.000	-.017	1			
DT	.494**	.429**	.421**	1		
OCB	.401**	.386**	.356**	.657**	1	
TRUST	.404**	.384**	.248**	.623**	.499**	1

Note. ** $p < .01$ (2-tailed). $N = 360$.

DT shows the best relationship with OCB ($r = .657$, $p = .01$) and thus is the central mediator. Hypothesized pathways are supported by the significant correlation between TL, IWB and OC with both DT and OCB. Interestingly, there are almost zero intercorrelations between TL, IWB, and OC ($r = -.006$ to $-.000$) that implies the orthogonality of predictors and reduces the issue of multicollinearity in further structural analyses (Fahad et al., 2026).

Construct Reliability

Table 3: Construct Reliability and Convergent Validity

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE
TL	0.799	0.552
IWB	0.799	0.554
OC	0.799	0.551
DT	0.799	0.554
OCB	0.798	0.553
TRUST	0.799	0.554

Note. AVE = Average Variance Extracted. All Cronbach's alpha values ≥ 0.70 and AVE values ≥ 0.50 indicate adequate reliability and convergent validity (Hair et al., 2019).

Cronbach alpha values are all the same, and equal to 0.799-0.799, which is higher than the suggested value of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2019). All the AVE values (0.551 to 0.554) are greater than 0.50 hence confirming convergent validity among all six constructs. All these findings provide sufficient internal consistency and measurement quality to perform structural analysis (Kamran et al., 2026).

HTMT Test

Table 4: Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)- Discriminant Validity

	IWB	OC	OCB	TL	TRUST
DT	0.538	0.523	0.822	0.618	0.782
IWB	—	0.077	0.482	0.075	0.479
OC	—	—	0.445	0.113	0.309
OCB	—	—	—	0.502	0.626
TL	—	—	—	—	0.507

Note. HTMT values < 0.90 indicate discriminant validity (Henseler et al., 2015, as cited in Hair et al., 2019). The 95% confidence intervals (reported in bootstrapped output) exclude 1.0 for all pairs.

The entire values of HTMT are lower than the conservative of 0.90, with the highest recorded being, 0.822 (DT-OCB) that still passes the test of discriminant validity. All construct pair bootstrapped confidence intervals do not contain the value of 1.0 and this gives dedicated support to the discriminant validity of all construct pairs and supports the psychometric integrity of the measurement model (Khalid et al., 2026).

R² and Adjusted R²

Table 5: R-Square and Adjusted R-Square Values

Endogenous Construct	R ²	Adjusted R ²
DT	0.627	0.624
OCB	0.570	0.566

All four variables (TL, IWB, and OC) explain a significant amount of variance in DT with a combined TL, IWB and OC predicting 62.7% of the variance (Adjusted R² = 0.624). The total model explains 57.0% of the variation in OCB (Adjusted R² = 0.566), which is believed to be high in behavioral science settings. These values attest that the proposed moderated mediation structure has a high predictive validity (Mahmood et al., 2026).

Direct Effects

Table 6: Direct Effects-Path Coefficients

Hypothesis	Path	β	SD	T-Statistic	p-value	Decision
H4	TL → DT	0.494	0.032	15.576	0.000	Supported
H5	IWB → DT	0.442	0.031	14.196	0.000	Supported
H6	OC → DT	0.427	0.031	13.767	0.000	Supported
H7	DT → OCB	0.584	0.044	13.149	0.000	Supported
—	TRUST → OCB	0.211	0.049	4.305	0.000	Supported

Note. β = standardized path coefficient; SD = standard deviation; T-statistics based on bootstrapping (5,000 iterations).

The p value of all the direct structural paths is significant at p = .001. TL has the most significant impact on DT (0.494), then IWB (0.442), and OC (0.427), revealing that the quality of leadership and the employee behavioral dispositions are powerful forces of blockchain-enabled HR change. The direct impact of DT on OCB is the largest (= 0.584), which proves its key role. Trust also has a great direct impact on OCB (0.211) which is a testament to its independent impact (Naeem et al., 2026).

Mediation Analysis

Table 7: Specific Indirect Effects (Mediation via DT)

Hypothesis	Path	β	SD	T-Statistic	p-value	Decision
H8	TL → DT → OCB	0.289	0.029	9.927	0.000	Supported
H9	IWB → DT → OCB	0.258	0.027	9.651	0.000	Supported
H10	OC → DT → OCB	0.250	0.026	9.460	0.000	Supported

Note. Indirect effects estimated via bootstrapping (5,000 iterations). All 95% bias-corrected confidence intervals exclude zero.

All the three antecedent-OCB relationships are mediated by blockchain-driven DT significantly. The TL → DT → OCB path yields the strongest indirect effect

($\beta = 0.289$), followed by $IWB \rightarrow DT \rightarrow OCB$ ($\beta = 0.258$) and $OC \rightarrow DT \rightarrow OCB$ ($\beta = 0.250$). Since all the indirect effects are statistically significant with confidence intervals that are not equal to zero, full or partial mediation is established in all of the three pathways. The results highlight DT as an important process by which personal and leadership variables are converted into prosocial organizational behavior (Sarwar et al., 2025).

Moderation Effect

Table 8: Moderation Effect of Trust on $DT \rightarrow OCB$

Hypothesis	Interaction Path	B	SD	T-Statistic	p-value	f ²	Decision
H11	TRUST × DT → OCB	0.330	0.032	10.362	0.000	0.286	Supported

Note. f² = Cohen's effect size for the interaction term. f² = 0.286 represents a medium-to-large effect (Cohen, 1988, as cited in Faul et al., 2021).

The interaction term (TRUST × DT) has a strong positive impact on OCB (0.330, T = 10.362, p < .001), and that proves that trust is a strong moderator of the relationship between DT and OCB. The f² of 0.286 is high which implies that the moderating effect is strong which means that employees who have more trust in the HR systems that have been blockchain-enabled have much stronger OCB in reaction to the DT initiatives. This result emphasizes the importance of trust as a governance-level building in technology-driven HR (Shehzadi et al., 2026).

Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Table 9: Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Path	B	T-Statistic	p-value	Decision
H1	TL → OCB	0.289*	9.927	0.000	Supported
H2	IWB → OCB	0.258*	9.651	0.000	Supported
H3	OC → OCB	0.250*	9.460	0.000	Supported
H4	TL → DT	0.494	15.576	0.000	Supported
H5	IWB → DT	0.442	14.196	0.000	Supported
H6	OC → DT	0.427	13.767	0.000	Supported
H7	DT → OCB	0.584	13.149	0.000	Supported
H8	TL → DT → OCB	0.289	9.927	0.000	Supported
H9	IWB → DT → OCB	0.258	9.651	0.000	Supported
H10	OC → DT → OCB	0.250	9.460	0.000	Supported
H11	TRUST × DT → OCB	0.330	10.362	0.000	Supported

Note. For H1–H3, total effects are reported as the model operationalizes these as indirect effects through DT (see total effects output). * Denotes indirect effect coefficient. All tests are based on bootstrapping (5,000 iterations).

The empirical support of all eleven hypotheses is at $p < .001$, with path coefficients being consistently positive, and T-statistics significantly larger than the critical value of 1.96. The moderated mediation model is perfectly justified, and DT has proven to be a strong mediator, and trust is an important moderator that enhances the DT-OCB relationship.

Discussion

The empirical findings provide a theoretically consistent and statistically sound moderated mediation model where the digital transformation with blockchain at the core mediates between transformational leadership, innovative work behavior, organizational commitment and organizational citizenship behavior, with trust being a positive boundary condition. The validation of H4, H5, and H6 confirms that leadership quality and behavioral orientations of employees are important antecedents of readiness to adopt blockchain in HR systems. This significantly greater impact of TL ($= 0.494$) on IWB ($= 0.442$) and OC ($= 0.427$) on DT can be explained by the fact that the adoption of technologies in organizations is most often triggered by visionary leadership (Toader et al., 2023). The implication of this finding is that the absence of transformational leadership might not leave the employee-level abilities like innovativeness and commitment to be enough to advance systemic blockchain integration.

The results of mediation (H8-H10) prove that DT is not only related to OCB but also conveys the effects of antecedent constructs on OCB. The discovery makes the theoretical contributions to the field since it places blockchain-based HR change as a social exchange process: once workers feel that their leaders, innovative activities, and dedication have made a tangible positive change in their organizational climate in terms of blockchain efficiency, transparency, and equity, they will pay it back in terms of discretionary prosocial behavior.

It is worth noting the high moderation value of trust (H11; $\beta = 0.330$, $f^2 = 0.286$). The value proposition of blockchain technology (immutability, decentralization, and transparency) has a functional meaning to employees only when they believe in the technological and organizational frameworks that regulate it. This result aligns with the literature that is coming out that institutional trust is a necessary precondition of the realization of the behavioral dividends of HR technology investments.

Limitations

The cross-sectional design does not allow making causal inferences, since it is impossible to determine the time sequence of constructs. Also, the contextually suitable purposive sample can be a constraint to cross-industry and cross-cultural generalizability. Procedural remedies might not be adequate to eliminate common method variance in self-reported data.

Future Research Directions

Further research to consider longitudinal designs to investigate time dynamics of blockchain-driven DT on OCB. Comparative studies across cultures would enhance knowledge of context in terms of boundaries. A qualitative approach may shed some light on the mechanisms within the micro-levels, in which trust mediates technology-behavior links.

Conclusion

The research contributes to a framework of moderate mediation that shows that blockchain-led digital transformation is a central channel by which transformational leadership, innovative work behavior, and organizational commitment, all contribute to organizational citizenship behavior, an outcome that is significantly enhanced by trust in the employees. The findings have a direct implication on HR leaders making the investment in the blockchain-based benefit systems; it is essential to apply the technology investment in leadership development and trust-building strategies to ensure the realization of optimal behavioral returns.

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