ABSTRACT

This study examined the effect of digital leadership on organisational resilience within the higher education sector of Ghana. It further explored the mediating roles of digital maturity and innovation culture in this relationship. Anchored on the Transformational Leadership Theory (TLT) and the Dynamic Capabilities Theory (DCT), the research sought to deepen understanding of how leadership in the digital era fosters institutional resilience in dynamic and uncertain environments. A sequential explanatory mixed-methods design was employed. In the quantitative phase, data were collected from 395 respondents across public and private higher educational institutions (HEIs) and analysed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM). Seven hypothesised relationships were tested, all of which were supported, confirming both the direct effects of digital leadership on organisational resilience and the mediating roles of digital maturity and innovation culture. Multi-group analysis (MGA) revealed no significant differences between public and private universities on five of the seven hypothesised paths, suggesting broad consistency across institutional types. The qualitative phase involved in-depth interviews with seven participants, analysed thematically using Braun and Clarke's (2020) reflexive thematic analysis with NVivo software. This phase generated seven themes and four sub-themes that illuminated how digital leadership practices manifest within Ghanaian HEIs and provided rich contextual insights that reinforced and explained the quantitative findings. Overall, the study validated a comprehensive model linking digital leadership, digital maturity, innovation culture, and organisational resilience. It contributes to theory by integrating TLT and DCT to explain the mechanisms through which digital leadership enhances institutional adaptability. Practical implications are offered for leadership development, digital transformation strategies, and policy formulation in higher education. Limitations are acknowledged, and directions for future research are proposed.