

## ABSTRACT

This study aims to explain how empowering leadership (EL) and digital organizational culture (DOC) influence individual work performance (IWP) of employees in digital startups through the mechanisms of autonomous strategic control (ASC) and innovative work behavior (IWB), grounded in the Conservation of Resources (COR) framework. A survey was conducted among employees of digital startups in Jakarta, and the data were analyzed using a covariance-based structural equation modeling (CB-SEM) approach. The findings reveal that EL does not directly enhance IWP but functions as a primary resource that is amplified through ASC. ASC acts as a meta-resource that integrates autonomy, strategic alignment, and adaptive control, thereby exerting a direct influence on performance while also stimulating IWB. Meanwhile, DOC does not directly affect performance but instead creates a digital ecosystem that fosters IWB, which subsequently improves IWP. Together, these mechanisms form a complementary architecture: a structural-cognitive pathway through ASC and a cultural-behavioral pathway through IWB.

**Keywords:** empowering leadership; autonomous strategic control; digital organizational culture; innovative work behavior; individual work performance; COR theory; startups.