Entrepreneurial Dynamic Capabilities and Digital Leadership as Drivers of Agility, Innovation, and Performance in the Hotel Industry: Evidence from Phuket, Thailand

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Abstract **– This study aims to analyze the role of entrepreneurial dynamic capabilities (EDC) in shaping digital leadership (DL), organizational agility (OA), innovation capability (IC), and the performance of hotel businesses in Phuket, Thailand. Using structural equation modelling (SEM), data from 300 hotel managers confirmed that EDC significantly enhances DL, OA, and IC. DL was found to positively influence OA and IC, while OA and IC directly improved HBP. The strongest effect was observed between EDC and DL ($\beta = 0.680$), emphasizing the role of dynamic entrepreneurial behaviour in digital transformation. The model demonstrated good fit ($\chi^2/df = 2.15$, RMSEA = 0.062, CFI = 0.95), explaining 72% of the variance in HBP. This study expands the theoretical discourse on dynamic capabilities in service sectors and delivers practical recommendations for hotel entrepreneurs who aim to improve organizational agility, promote innovation, and achieve stronger competitive outcomes. Future research should explore longitudinal effects and broader contexts to validate these results.**

Keywords **– Organizational agility, innovation capability, hotel business performance, structural equation modelling.**

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1. Introduction

The past decade has witnessed notable transformations in the hospitality sector, largely influenced by global integration, rapid digital innovation, and changes in consumer behavior. Within this context, Thailand's hotel sector, particularly in Phuket, has emerged as a critical economic engine, attracting millions of international tourists annually [1]. Phuket's hotels face both opportunities and challenges, including the need to adapt to fluctuating tourist demands, intensifying competition, and uncertainties such as natural disasters and pandemics. The post-COVID-19 era has further emphasized the necessity for hotel businesses to develop capabilities that enable swift responses to environmental changes, highlighting the strategic importance of organizational agility and innovation in sustaining business performance [2]. Despite this, many hotel entrepreneurs in Phuket still operate under traditional management models, lacking the dynamic competencies required to thrive in an increasingly digital and volatile market.

Responding to these challenges, recent studies have emphasized the importance of entrepreneurial dynamic capabilities (EDC), understood as entrepreneurs' ability to combine, renew, and transform organizational resources so as to adapt to rapidly evolving market conditions [3], [4].

EDC encompasses dimensions such as opportunity recognition, strategic flexibility, and proactive decision-making, which are essential for fostering digital leadership (DL), the capacity of leaders to drive digital transformation and leverage technology for competitive advantage [5]. While prior research in dynamic capabilities has predominantly focused on large enterprises or technology sectors, its application within the hospitality industry, especially in small and medium-sized hotels, remains underexplored [6]. Moreover, the influence of EDC on cultivating effective DL in hotel contexts is not yet fully understood, representing a critical research gap in aligning entrepreneurial behavior with leadership competencies suited for digital environments.

Organizational agility (OA) is commonly described as an organization's ability to recognize and respond promptly to emerging opportunities and potential threats in a dynamic environment. In this context, OA functions as an important mediating mechanism linking strategic capabilities with overall organizational performance [7], [8]. Agile organizations typically adopt more decentralized decision-making structures, allowing them to respond more rapidly to market changes while encouraging continuous innovation. Innovation capability (IC), defined as a firm's capacity to generate, refine, and implement new ideas, products, or processes, is widely regarded as a critical determinant of firm success. This capability is particularly significant in the service industries such as hospitality, where rapidly evolving customer expectations require organizations to continuously adapt and innovate in order to remain competitive [9], [10]. However, the dynamic interaction between OA and IC, and their collective impact on hotel business performance (HBP), especially in emerging markets like Thailand, has not been adequately addressed in the literature. Existing models often treat these constructs in isolation, neglecting their integrated effects on organizational success.

This study aims to fill the existing research gaps by analyzing the interconnected roles of entrepreneurial dynamic capabilities, digital leadership, organizational agility, and innovation capability in shaping hotel business performance in Phuket's hotel industry. Through the development and validation of a structural equation model (SEM), the study offers an integrated perspective on how entrepreneurial and digital leadership competencies shape agility and innovation, thereby driving organizational success. By examining these relationships, the study is expected to enrich theoretical discussions on dynamic capabilities and leadership within the hospitality context while also providing practical recommendations for hotel entrepreneurs and policymakers aiming to strengthen agility and encourage innovation in an increasingly digital and competitive tourism market [11], [12].

Through this study, hotel businesses in Phuket can better align their strategic competencies with the demands of the contemporary market, ensuring long-term sustainability and growth.

2. Literature Review

This section reviews the theoretical foundations and prior empirical studies related to the key constructs examined in this research. The discussion is organized around five main constructs: Entrepreneurial dynamic capabilities (EDC), digital leadership (DL), organizational agility (OA), innovation capability (IC), and hotel business performance (HBP). The section also develops the hypotheses that guide the proposed structural model.

2.1. Entrepreneurial Dynamic Capabilities (EDC)

Dynamic capabilities have become a prominent theoretical framework for explaining how organizations maintain competitive advantage in volatile and rapidly changing environments. Building on the resource-based view (RBV), which highlights the strategic value of internal resources that are valuable, rare, difficult to imitate, and non-substitutable, the dynamic capabilities perspective emphasizes a firm's capacity to continually adapt and reconfigure its resource base in response to environmental change [13]. Dynamic capabilities have been conceptualized as an organization's ability to sense emerging opportunities, seize them through strategic actions, and transform organizational resources to remain aligned with changing external conditions [3]. In entrepreneurial contexts, EDC refer to the processes through which entrepreneurs utilize flexibility, proactiveness, and strategic decision-making to address uncertainty and exploit new market opportunities [4]. This perspective is particularly applicable to small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) operating in the hospitality industry, where fluctuations in customer preferences, technological developments, and market dynamics require continuous adaptation and resource reconfiguration.

Scholarly research indicates that EDC significantly influences the development of DL, as dynamic entrepreneurs are better equipped to envision and implement digital strategies aligned with technological advancements. Organizations with strong dynamic capabilities are better positioned to develop digital-savvy leadership, enabling them to align technological advancements with strategic objectives and effectively drive digital transformation [5]. Dynamic capabilities are recognized as a foundation for strategic decision-making, which in turn shapes DL, particularly in industries experiencing rapid digital disruption [6].

Entrepreneurial agility, as a key component of EDC, has been shown to enhance digital literacy, strengthen innovation orientation, and support the ability to drive organizational change through technology, capabilities that are essential for effective DL [14]. The results demonstrate a supportive and synergistic relationship between EDC and DL, suggesting that stronger entrepreneurial dynamic capabilities are closely linked to the development of digital leadership within hotel ventures.

Moreover, EDC have been widely regarded as critical enablers of OA, as they empower firms to rapidly adjust operations and reconfigure resources in response to evolving market dynamics. When these capabilities are systematically embedded within organizational routines, they enhance both timely responsiveness and strategic flexibility [15]. This adaptability underpins OA, allowing firms to respond flexibly to external shocks and evolving customer needs. Strategic agility, as a core dimension of organizational agility (OA), is grounded in an organization's ability to continuously realign its strategic focus, which is largely derived from EDC [7]. In the hotel industry, entrepreneurs who exhibit high EDC can swiftly adapt service offerings, operational models, and customer engagement strategies, thereby enhancing the overall agility of their organizations.

Moreover, EDC plays a crucial role in strengthening innovation capability (IC) by fostering a culture of experimentation, knowledge sharing, and resource recombination. Entrepreneurs with dynamic capabilities actively seek new ideas, leverage internal and external networks, and promote continuous learning environments, all of which contribute to enhanced innovation outcomes [16]. Dynamic capabilities serve as a fundamental mechanism that enables organizations to integrate and deploy diverse knowledge resources in ways that stimulate innovation, particularly in the development of new products and services [17]. Within the hospitality industry, where differentiation in service quality and customer experience is critical, EDC strengthen a firm's ability to implement innovative solutions, improve service processes, and maintain a competitive edge through continuous innovation.

Based on this theoretical foundation, the following hypotheses are proposed to examine the influence of entrepreneurial dynamic capabilities on key organizational outcomes:

H1: *Entrepreneurial dynamic capabilities have a positive influence on digital leadership.*

H2: *Entrepreneurial dynamic capabilities have a positive influence on organizational agility.*

H3: *Entrepreneurial dynamic capabilities have a positive influence on innovation capability.*

2.2. Digital Leadership (DL)

In today's digital landscape, the notion of leadership has shifted markedly from conventional top-down structures toward more agile, tech-enabled models. DL encapsulates a leader's capability to harness digital tools and platforms to promote innovation, steer organizational change, and generate strategic value in rapidly evolving environments [18]. This leadership paradigm emphasizes visionary thinking, agility, and the capability to integrate digital tools with strategic objectives. While rooted in the principles of transformational leadership, DL goes further by integrating digital fluency, analytical thinking based on data insights, and a proactive stance toward technological change and innovation [19]. As organizations increasingly adopt digital business models, DL becomes essential for guiding change and fostering a culture of continuous innovation.

Empirical studies have highlighted the influence of EDC on the emergence and effectiveness of DL. Entrepreneurs with strong EDC are more likely to develop the strategic foresight and flexibility required to lead digital initiatives successfully [6]. EDC provide a fundamental basis DL by enabling leaders to identify digital opportunities, pursue them through innovative strategies, and reconfigure organizational processes accordingly [6]. In addition, dynamic entrepreneurial behavior contributes to the development of DL by strengthening leaders' capacity for customer-centric innovation and digital business model reconfiguration [14]. These findings suggest that EDC acts as a catalyst for cultivating DL in fast-changing industries such as hospitality, where digital engagement with customers and stakeholders is critical.

Digital leadership is also instrumental in strengthening organizational agility, as leaders with strong digital competencies foster quick adaptation by enabling decentralized structures and leveraging digital technologies to support real-time decision-making and responsiveness [20]. Digital leadership facilitates the development of "digital options," which enhance organizational flexibility and enable firms to adjust their strategic direction more effectively [21]. Within the hotel sector, digital leadership empowers managers to adopt technologies such as online reservation platforms, customer data analytics, and mobile-based service tools. These innovations enhance the firm's responsiveness to shifting consumer preferences and evolving market needs. Leaders who embrace digital transformation create agile organizational cultures that are open to experimentation and responsive to change.

Moreover, DL directly influences IC by shaping the organizational environment in which innovation can thrive.

Digital leaders foster open communication, support cross-functional collaboration, and invest in digital infrastructure that enables ideation and rapid prototyping [22]. Digital leadership is recognized as a key driver of organizational innovation, as it integrates strategic vision with technological empowerment, enabling firms to explore new market opportunities and enhance operational efficiency [23]. In the hotel industry, DL contributes to innovations in service design, customer experience, and back-end operations, which are essential for sustaining competitiveness in a digitally connected marketplace.

Given these roles, the following hypotheses are proposed to examine the effects of digital leadership on organizational agility and innovation capability:

H4: *Digital leadership has a positive influence on organizational agility.*

H5: *Digital leadership has a positive influence on innovation capability.*

2.3. Organizational Agility (OA)

Organizational agility can be described as a firm's ability to quickly recognize changes in its external environment and respond through strategic adjustments, operational adaptability, and flexible organizational structures [7]. This concept has emerged as a critical capability in dynamic and competitive markets, enabling organizations to adapt to uncertainty, innovate continuously, and maintain alignment with evolving customer needs [24]. Rooted in contingency theory and dynamic capabilities theory, OA emphasizes decentralized decision-making, cross-functional collaboration, and a proactive organizational culture that values speed and adaptability [25]. In the hospitality sector, OA is particularly important as hotels must frequently adjust their service offerings, pricing strategies, and customer engagement methods in response to seasonal demand fluctuations and shifting traveler preferences.

EDC significantly contribute to fostering organizational agility, as entrepreneurs with high dynamic capability can swiftly mobilize and reconfigure internal resources to meet changing demands [3], [4]. Dynamic capabilities provide a strategic foundation for organizational agility by enabling firms to leverage existing strengths while adapting to emerging opportunities [15]. Firms with strong EDC can also translate strategic intent into agile responses by fostering experimentation and continuous learning within the organization [4]. In hotel enterprises, EDC supports the rapid deployment of new service innovations and flexible staffing models, which are essential for achieving agility in a customer-centric environment. Thus, EDC directly contributes to the enhancement of OA by empowering entrepreneurs to lead adaptive change.

DLis widely recognized as an important driver of OA, as leaders with strong digital competencies utilize technological tools to design flexible organizational structures and responsive operational processes. Digital leadership contributes to the development of "digital options," which refer to technological capabilities that enable firms to remain adaptable and responsive to changing market conditions [21]. Such capabilities often involve the use of advanced digital infrastructures, including real-time analytics, cloud computing systems, and mobile technologies that facilitate timely decision-making and scalable operations [26]. Within the hospitality sector, digital leadership enhances organizational agility by enabling hotel managers to implement dynamic pricing strategies, tailor guest experiences through data-driven insights, and streamline supply chain coordination.

Moreover, by encouraging a digitally oriented and adaptive mindset, digital leaders cultivate a work environment in which employees are empowered to take initiative, adjust responsibilities when needed, and actively participate in ongoing organizational improvement. Moreover, OA has been identified as a key driver of IC, providing the necessary structural and cultural conditions for innovation to thrive. Organizations with high levels of agility tend to engage in continuous experimentation, rapidly iterate solutions, and implement changes efficiently to maximize value creation in dynamic environments [8]. Organizational agility fosters a learning-oriented culture where feedback loops, rapid prototyping, and cross-functional teamwork are integral to innovation processes [27]. In hospitality contexts, OA enables hotels to introduce novel service concepts, explore alternative business models, and respond to customer feedback effectively. As such, OA not only supports immediate responsiveness but also sustains long-term innovation efforts that drive competitive advantage.

In line with this perspective, the following hypotheses are proposed to examine the impact of organizational agility on innovation capability and hotel business performance:

H6: *Organizational agility has a positive influence on innovation capability.*

H7: *Organizational agility has a positive influence on hotel business performance.*

2.4. Innovation Capability (IC)

Innovation capability denotes an organization's capacity to create, evolve, and apply novel ideas, methods, or offerings that enhance value creation and strengthen its competitive position in the market [9].

This capability encompasses both technological and non-technological innovations, including improvements in service delivery, business models, and organizational practices [28]. IC originates from a firm's accumulated knowledge resources, organizational learning mechanisms, and its openness to experimentation and calculated risk-taking [29]. In hospitality settings, the importance of innovation is particularly pronounced, as hotels must continuously respond to evolving guest expectations, technological advancements, and increasing competitive pressures. Through strong innovation capability, hotels are able to create distinctive service offerings, enhance operational efficiency, and develop adaptive market strategies that strengthen their competitive positioning.

Furthermore, OA serves as an enabler of IC by creating a flexible and adaptive environment conducive to innovation. Agile organizations are characterized by their ability to pivot quickly, experiment with new ideas, and integrate feedback into continuous improvement cycles [8]. Organizational agility (OA) enhances innovation by reducing bureaucratic constraints, promoting cross-functional collaboration, and accelerating decision-making processes [8]. In hotel contexts, OA allows for the rapid testing of new service concepts, adaptation to customer preferences, and the integration of novel technologies into daily operations. The synergy between OA and IC ensures that innovation is not a one-time effort but a sustained capability embedded in the organization's culture and strategy.

Based on this reasoning, the following hypothesis is proposed to examine the impact of innovation capability on hotel business performance:

H8*: Innovation capability has a positive influence on hotel business performance.*

2.5. Hotel Business Performance (HBP)

HBP reflects the degree to which hotel firms fulfill their strategic and operational goals, including indicators such as profitability, service excellence, customer satisfaction, and competitive positioning in the market [31]. In the hotel sector, evaluating performance often involves a combination of quantitative metrics, such as occupancy rate, average revenue per available room (RevPAR), and net profit margins, and qualitative factors like customer satisfaction and brand image perception [32]. Because the hotel industry is highly competitive and strongly service-oriented, improving business performance requires not only efficient use of resources but also the capability to respond quickly to evolving customer expectations and market dynamics.

Organizational characteristics such as agility and innovation capability are widely recognized as important drivers of HBP. Hotels that possess OA are better equipped to respond promptly to shifting market conditions, modify their service offerings, and sustain operational effectiveness, which ultimately supports stronger performance outcomes [8]. In a similar vein, IC allows hotel firms to develop new service concepts, enhance guest experiences, and establish differentiation within highly competitive markets. These capabilities contribute to greater customer satisfaction as well as improved financial performance [10]. Consequently, cultivating both agility and innovation within hotel organizations becomes a critical strategy for maintaining superior business performance in an increasingly dynamic and digitally evolving tourism landscape.

3. Research Methodology

This subsection describes the research design and analytical approach used to examine the proposed relationships among the study variables.

3.1. Research Design

This study adopts a quantitative research approach to investigate the relationships among entrepreneurial dynamic capabilities, digital leadership, organizational agility, innovation capability, and hotel business performance. SEM was employed as the primary analytical technique to test the proposed conceptual framework and hypotheses. The empirical analysis is based on cross-sectional data collected through a survey of hotel entrepreneurs operating in Phuket, Thailand.

3.2. Population and Sample

The target population for this research consists of hotel owners and senior-level managers from small and medium-sized hotel enterprises operating in Phuket. The required sample size was estimated based on commonly recommended guidelines for SEM, which suggest recruiting approximately 10–20 respondents for each observed variable included in the model [33]. To achieve adequate statistical power and ensure the stability of the model estimation, a total sample size of 300 respondents was established as the study target. Participants were selected using purposive sampling, focusing on individuals who possessed a minimum of three years of managerial or entrepreneurial experience within the hotel industry.

3.3. Data Collection Method

Data for this study were gathered using a structured questionnaire distributed through both online channels and direct face-to-face approaches. Before launching the main survey, a pilot study with 30 hotel entrepreneurs was conducted to assess the clarity and appropriateness of the questionnaire items and to confirm the instrument's validity. Based on the feedback obtained from the pilot phase, several measurement items were revised and improved. The finalized questionnaire was then distributed to respondents over a two-month data collection period.

3.4. Data Analysis Techniques

Descriptive statistical analysis was first conducted to summarize the demographic information and overall characteristics of the respondents. The reliability and construct validity of the measurement model were then assessed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). To examine the proposed relationships among the research variables, SEM was subsequently performed with the LISREL software. The adequacy of the model was evaluated using several goodness-of-fit indicators, including χ^2/df, RMSEA, GFI, AGFI, CFI, and TLI.

3.5. Measurement Instruments

This subsection describes the measurement instruments used to operationalize the five latent constructs in the proposed research model. The questionnaire items were adapted from established scales in prior studies and modified to fit the context of hotel entrepreneurs in Phuket, Thailand. All constructs were measured using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree.

3.5.1. Entrepreneurial Dynamic Capabilities (EDC)

The measurement items for entrepreneurial dynamic capabilities (EDC) were adapted from established studies in the dynamic capabilities literature [3], [17]. This construct was measured using four items:

- Ability to recognize and seize new business opportunities.
- Flexibility in adjusting strategies to environmental changes.
- Capacity to reconfigure resources effectively.
- Proactivity in responding to market trends.

3.5.2. Digital Leadership (DL)

The measurement items for digital leadership (DL) were adapted from established studies in the digital leadership and digital transformation literature [5], [23]. This construct was measured using four items:

- Visionary use of digital technologies in business.
- Encouragement of digital innovation among employees.
- Integration of technology in decision-making processes.
- Leadership in driving digital transformation initiatives.

3.5.3. Organizational Agility (OA)

The measurement items for organizational agility (OA) were adapted from established studies in the organizational agility literature [7], [8]. This construct was measured using four items:

- Speed in adapting to market changes.
- Flexibility in business operations and service delivery.
- Ability to reallocate resources swiftly.
- Responsiveness to customer feedback and demands.

3.5.4. Innovation Capability (IC)

The measurement items for innovation capability (IC) were adapted from established studies in the innovation capability literature [9]. This construct was measured using four items:

- Generation of new service ideas.
- Implementation of innovative solutions.
- Continuous improvement in service quality.
- Investment in new technologies for service enhancement.

3.5.5. Hotel Business Performance (HBP)

The measurement items for hotel business performance (HBP) were adapted from established studies in the business performance literature [31], [32]. This construct was measured using four items:

- Achievement of financial performance targets.
- Improvement in customer satisfaction levels.
- Growth in market share and competitiveness.
- Overall operational efficiency.

4. Research Results

This section presents the empirical findings of the study. The results are organized into three main parts: Respondent profile, assessment of the measurement model, and assessment of the structural model. The respondent profile describes the demographic and business characteristics of the sample, while the measurement model evaluates reliability and validity. Finally, the structural model assessment examines the hypothesized relationships among the constructs.

4.1. Respondent Profile

The empirical data were collected from a total of 300 hotel entrepreneurs and senior managers operating in Phuket, Thailand. The respondents reflected a diverse range of demographic characteristics and professional backgrounds, which strengthens the reliability and representativeness of the study results. In terms of gender composition, 54% of the participants were male, while 46% were female. The largest proportion of respondents (40%) fell within the age range of 35–44 years, followed by 27% aged 45–54 years, 24% aged 25–34 years, and 9% aged over 55 years. With respect to professional experience in hotel management or entrepreneurship, 39% of respondents reported having 6–10 years of experience, 31% had more than 10 years of experience, and the remaining 30% had between 3 and 5 years of experience. This profile suggests that the majority of respondents possess substantial industry experience, thereby enhancing the credibility and relevance of the insights obtained from the survey.

With respect to the characteristics of their businesses, 41% of the respondents managed boutique hotels, 32% operated resorts, 16% managed budget hotels, and the remaining 11% oversaw other types of accommodations such as villas or hostels.

In terms of hotel size, 34% of the hotels had fewer than 30 rooms, 38% had between 31 to 60 rooms, and 28% had more than 60 rooms. The sample thus reflects a balanced representation across various hotel categories and sizes, capturing a comprehensive view of the entrepreneurial landscape in Phuket's hotel industry.

4.2. Assessment of the Measurement Model

The measurement model was assessed using CFA to evaluate the validity and reliability of the constructs employed in this study. The CFA results indicated that all standardized factor loadings for the observed variables ranged from 0.62 to 0.85, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.50, thereby confirming acceptable indicator reliability [33].

To further assess internal consistency, CR and Cronbach's alpha were calculated for each construct. The CR values ranged from 0.81 to 0.89, while Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.78 to 0.87, both surpassing the recommended minimum threshold of 0.70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency reliability [33].

In addition, convergent validity was evaluated using the AVE. The results showed that all constructs exhibited AVE values ranging from 0.56 to 0.71, which exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.50 [33]. This finding suggests that a substantial proportion of variance in the observed variables is explained by their respective latent constructs.

The results of the measurement model evaluation are summarized in Table 1. Overall, these findings demonstrate that the measurement model exhibits adequate construct validity, including both convergent validity and internal consistency reliability, thereby confirming the suitability of the measurement instruments for subsequent structural model analysis.

Table 1. Construct reliability and convergent validity results

Construct	Factor Loadings	CR	AVE	Cronbach's alpha
Entrepreneurial dynamic capabilities (EDC)	0.68–0.83	0.86	0.62	0.84
Digital leadership (DL)	0.65–0.85	0.88	0.67	0.87
Organizational agility (OA)	0.62–0.81	0.81	0.56	0.78
Innovation capability (IC)	0.66–0.79	0.83	0.61	0.8
Hotel business performance (HBP)	0.70–0.85	0.89	0.71	0.86

To evaluate discriminant validity, the Fornell–Larcker criterion was applied. This approach examines whether the square root of the AVE for each construct exceeds the correlations between that construct and other constructs in the model. As presented in Table 2, all diagonal elements (√AVE) were greater than the corresponding inter-construct correlation coefficients, indicating satisfactory discriminant validity within the measurement model [34].

In addition, the Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT) was calculated as a complementary assessment of discriminant validity. The HTMT values ranged from 0.42 to 0.78, which are well below the conservative threshold of 0.85, thereby providing further evidence supporting the discriminant validity of the constructs [34].

Table 2. Fornell-Larcker Criterion for discriminant validity

Construct	EDC	DL	OA	IC	HBP
Entrepreneurial dynamic capabilities (EDC)	0.79				
Digital leadership (DL)	0.58	0.82			
Organizational agility (OA)	0.54	0.61	0.75		
Innovation capability (IC)	0.5	0.55	0.64	0.78	
Hotel business performance (HBP)	0.49	0.52	0.59	0.68	0.84

Note: Diagonal values represent the square root of AVE.

These results confirm that the measurement model demonstrates satisfactory levels of reliability and validity, with strong evidence supporting both convergent validity and discriminant validity across all constructs. Therefore, the constructs are considered appropriate for subsequent analysis in the structural model evaluation.

4.3. Assessment of the Structural Model

To examine the structural relationships among the latent constructs, the structural model was analyzed using SEM with the maximum likelihood estimation (MLE) method. The goodness-of-fit statistics indicated that the proposed model provided an adequate representation of the observed data.

The model fit indices demonstrated an acceptable level of fit: $\chi^2/df = 2.15$, RMSEA = 0.062, GFI = 0.91, AGFI = 0.89, CFI = 0.95, and TLI = 0.93. These values meet the commonly recommended thresholds for satisfactory model fit, suggesting that the structural model adequately represents the empirical data [33].

The hypothesis testing results revealed that all eight direct effect relationships proposed in the research model were statistically supported.

Table 3 presents the standardized path coefficients (Estimate β), standard errors (S.E.), critical ratios (C.R.), and significance levels (p-values) for each hypothesized path. The critical ratios, all exceeding 1.96, and p-values below 0.05 confirm that each relationship is significant at the conventional confidence levels. The results demonstrate that EDC exert significant direct effects on DL, OA, and IC. Likewise, digital leadership has a significant impact on both OA and IC, while OA and IC serve as key predictors of HBP.

The strongest path was observed between EDC and DL ($\beta = 0.680$, C.R. = 15.81, $p < 0.001$), underscoring the critical role of dynamic entrepreneurial behavior in fostering effective digital leadership within hotel enterprises. The influence of Innovation Capability on HBP was also substantial ($\beta = 0.490$, C.R. = 12.25, $p < 0.001$), highlighting innovation as a core driver of business success. These findings validate the proposed conceptual framework and confirm the integrated role of agility and innovation in achieving high hotel business performance. The detailed results of the hypothesis testing are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Hypotheses testing results

Hypothesis	Path	Estimate (β)	S.E.	C.R.	p-value	Result
H1	EDC → DL	0.680***	0.043	15.81	<0.001	Supported
H2	EDC → OA	0.550***	0.045	12.22	<0.001	Supported
H3	EDC → IC	0.420**	0.044	9.55	<0.01	Supported
H4	DL → OA	0.470**	0.046	10.22	<0.01	Supported
H5	DL → IC	0.380*	0.048	7.92	<0.05	Supported
H6	OA → IC	0.510***	0.041	12.44	<0.001	Supported
H7	OA → HBP	0.440***	0.043	10.23	<0.001	Supported
H8	IC → HBP	0.490***	0.04	12.25	<0.001	Supported

**p-value < 0.05, ** p-value < 0.01, *** p-value < 0.001 (one-tailed test)*

Additionally, the explanatory power of the structural model was evaluated using the R^2 values of the endogenous constructs. The results indicate that the R^2 value for DL was 0.46, suggesting that EDC explain 46% of the variance in DL. For OA, the R^2 value was 0.59, indicating that EDC and DL together explain 59% of the variance in OA. Meanwhile, IC showed an R^2 value of 0.65, suggesting that EDC, DL, and OA collectively account for 65% of the variance in IC.

Finally, HBP demonstrated the highest explanatory power, with an R^2 value of 0.72, indicating that OA and IC jointly explain 72% of the variance in HBP. Overall, these results indicate moderate to high explanatory power, supporting the robustness and predictive capability of the proposed structural model.

The hypothesis testing results revealed empirical support for all eight hypothesized relationships within the proposed structural model.

Each path demonstrated statistically significant effects, as indicated by the standardized path coefficients (β) and their associated p-values, thereby affirming the robustness and explanatory power of the conceptual framework. These findings indicate that EDC play a foundational role in influencing DL, OA, and IC. Additionally, DL significantly contributes to the development of OA and IC, while OA and IC are crucial drivers of HBP.

The strongest relationship observed was between EDC and DL (β = 0.68), highlighting the dynamic entrepreneurial competencies substantially enhance digital leadership within hotel enterprises. The relationships between OA and IC (β = 0.51), as well as IC and HBP (β = 0.49), further emphasize the mediating role of agility and innovation in translating strategic capabilities into performance outcomes.

All path coefficients exceeded 0.38, demonstrating meaningful and significant impacts across the model.

To visualize these results, Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework with the standardized coefficients (β) for each relationship. This diagram illustrates the structural integrity of the model and the strength of the causal links between constructs.

These results support the theoretical framework and demonstrate that organizational agility and innovation capability serve as key mediators in achieving superior business performance in the hotel industry.

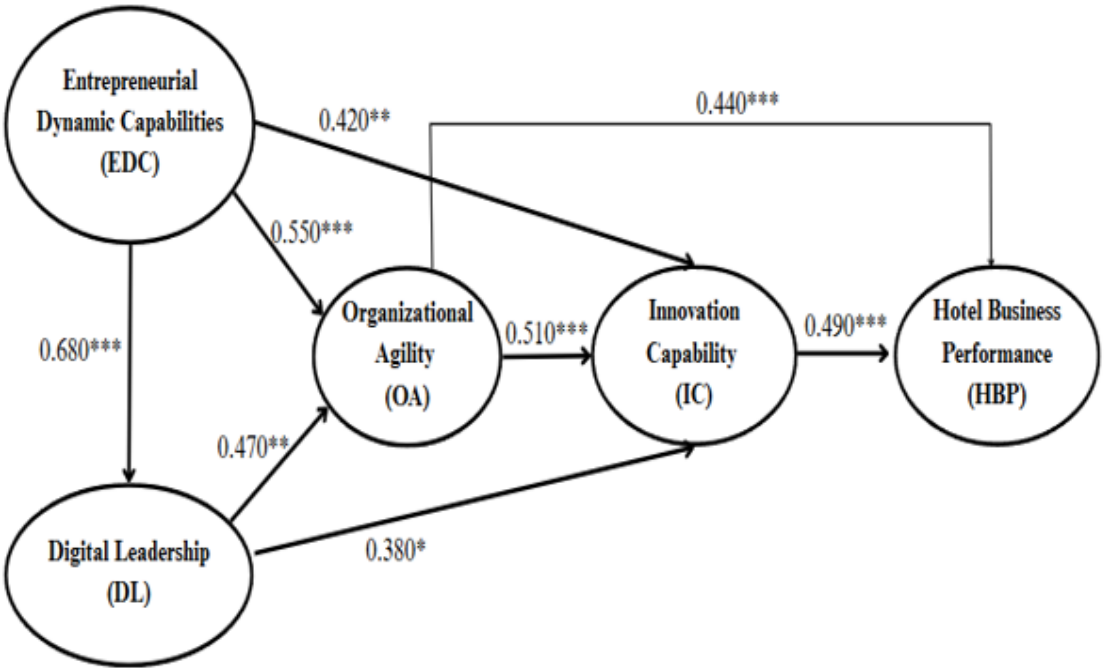

Figure 1. Structural equation model
*(*p-value < 0.05, ** p-value < 0.01, *** p-value < 0.001 (one-tailed test)*

5. Discussion

This section discusses the key findings of the study in relation to the proposed research framework and existing literature. The discussion is organized into three parts: An overview of the main findings, an interpretation of the results in comparison with prior studies, and the theoretical contributions of the research. This approach provides a comprehensive understanding of how the study extends current knowledge in the field.

5.1. Overview of Key Findings

The findings of this research offer robust empirical validation for the proposed relationships among entrepreneurial dynamic capabilities, digital leadership, organizational agility, innovation capability, and hotel business performance, thereby reinforcing the theoretical underpinnings and practical relevance of the conceptual framework. All eight hypotheses proposed in the conceptual framework were statistically supported, indicating that dynamic entrepreneurial competencies and leadership play a vital role in shaping organizational responsiveness and innovation in the hotel sector.

Specifically, EDC were found to have a strong and significant influence on DL ($\beta = 0.680$, $p < 0.001$), highlighting that entrepreneurs who can flexibly adapt and seize opportunities are more likely to develop effective digital leadership practices. Furthermore, EDC also demonstrated significant positive effects on OA ($\beta = 0.550$, $p < 0.001$) and IC ($\beta = 0.420$, $p < 0.01$), reinforcing its foundational role in driving adaptive and innovative organizational behaviors.

In addition, the findings revealed that both OA and IC play significant mediating roles in enhancing HBP. Among the predictors, innovation capability demonstrated the strongest direct effect on HBP ($\beta = 0.490$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that innovation is a key driver of business success in the hospitality sector. This finding highlights the importance of continuous innovation in areas such as service delivery, customer experience, and operational efficiency within hotel enterprises. Furthermore, organizational agility also exhibited a significant positive effect on HBP ($\beta = 0.440$, $p < 0.001$), supporting the notion that the ability to rapidly adapt to environmental changes is essential for maintaining organizational competitiveness. Overall, the structural model demonstrated strong explanatory power, accounting for 72% of the variance in hotel business performance through the combined influence of organizational agility and innovation capability. These findings emphasize the strategic importance of developing dynamic capabilities, digital leadership, and organizational adaptability in order to enhance performance outcomes in the hotel industry.

5.2. Interpretation of Findings in Relation to Literature

The relationship between EDC and DL emerged as the strongest path in the structural model ($\beta = 0.680$, $p < 0.001$), highlighting the critical role of entrepreneurial dynamic capabilities in fostering digital leadership competencies. This finding is consistent with prior research indicating that entrepreneurs with strong dynamic capabilities are more capable of integrating digital technologies into strategic decision-making, thereby supporting organizational transformation [6]. In addition, such capabilities enable leaders to identify emerging digital trends and respond proactively, which facilitates successful digital transition processes [5]. The empirical evidence thus reinforces theoretical perspectives that view adaptability, resource reconfiguration, and proactive opportunity recognition as foundational to effective digital leadership in volatile and technology-driven environments.

The influence of EDC on organizational agility ($\beta = 0.550$, $p < 0.001$) is consistent with existing literature, which suggests that dynamic capabilities enable firms to respond flexibly to external changes through the reconfiguration of internal processes [4].

Furthermore, prior research indicates that dynamic capabilities serve as a foundation for organizational agility by facilitating rapid and strategic adjustments within firms [15]. In the hotel industry, this relationship suggests that entrepreneurs who actively develop and leverage dynamic capabilities are more likely to lead organizations that can swiftly adapt to market fluctuations and customer needs.

Regarding the relationship between EDC and IC, the study found a significant positive effect ($\beta = 0.420$, $p < 0.01$). This finding is consistent with prior research indicating that dynamic capabilities support continuous innovation by enabling firms to recombine resources and exploit emerging opportunities [17]. In addition, EDC strengthen a firm's absorptive capacity, allowing organizations to acquire, assimilate, and apply new knowledge that is essential for innovation development [30]. These results confirm that EDC not only drives adaptation but also fosters a culture of ongoing innovation crucial for competitive advantage [35].

The relationship between digital leadership and organizational agility was also confirmed ($\beta = 0.470$, $p < 0.01$), supporting the view that digital leadership contributes to the development of "digital options," which enhance organizational flexibility and responsiveness [21]. Digital leadership in the hotel sector enables quick integration of technologies such as real-time booking systems and customer data analytics, promoting agility in both strategic and operational dimensions. Similarly, the effect of digital leadership on innovation capability ($\beta = 0.380$, $p < 0.05$) is consistent with prior research indicating that digital leadership plays a critical role in fostering innovation by promoting technological adoption and cross-functional collaboration [23]. These findings highlight that DL is a critical enabler of both agility and innovation in digitally transforming industries.

The study further established that Organizational Agility significantly influences innovation capability ($\beta = 0.510$, $p < 0.001$), which is consistent with prior research indicating that agile organizations are better positioned to support iterative innovation processes and the rapid implementation of new ideas [8].Agile hotel enterprises can adapt their services quickly, experiment with new concepts, and incorporate customer feedback into innovation efforts, reinforcing the interconnected nature of agility and innovation.

Finally, both organizational agility and innovation capability were found to be significant predictors of HBP. The positive effect of OA on HBP ($\beta = 0.440$, $p < 0.001$) is consistent with prior research suggesting that organizational agility enables firms to maintain strategic alignment and achieve superior outcomes in uncertain environments [7].

Likewise, the strong influence of IC on HBP ($\beta = 0.490$, $p < 0.001$) aligns with existing studies indicating that innovation drives competitive differentiation and enhances customer satisfaction, ultimately leading to improved business performance [10]. These findings affirm that in the hotel industry, both the ability to adapt and to innovate are central to achieving sustainable business success [36].

5.3. Theoretical Contributions

This study advances theoretical understanding by contextualizing Dynamic Capabilities Theory within the hospitality sector, with a particular focus on small and medium-sized hotel enterprises operating in emerging economy settings. By applying this theoretical lens to a service-intensive and rapidly evolving industry, the research highlights how entrepreneurial and leadership capabilities can be strategically leveraged to navigate environmental volatility and enhance competitive positioning. This contribution not only extends the scope of dynamic capabilities research but also addresses a noted gap in empirical applications within tourism and hospitality domains of developing regions. While previous research has predominantly examined dynamic capabilities in technology-intensive or manufacturing sectors, this study demonstrates that EDC are equally critical in service-oriented industries facing rapid environmental change. By empirically validating the influence of EDC on both DL and OA, this research highlights the dynamic and interrelated nature of entrepreneurial competencies in shaping adaptive leadership behaviors and organizational responsiveness. The integration of EDC into models of digital leadership and innovation offers a nuanced understanding of how entrepreneurial behavior supports digital transformation in non-technology sectors, thereby filling a gap in the current theoretical discourse.

Furthermore, this study introduces an integrative conceptual framework that interconnects entrepreneurial orientation, digital leadership, organizational agility, and innovation capability as synergistic drivers of firm performance. By empirically validating the mediating roles of OA and IC in enhancing HBP, the findings emphasize the critical function of internal organizational processes in translating entrepreneurial and technological competencies into measurable strategic outcomes. This multidimensional perspective advances existing strategic management theories by providing deeper insights into how firms navigate complexity through adaptability and innovation.

In doing so, the study refines and extends the theoretical boundaries of strategic agility and innovation theory, positioning these constructs not only as reactive consequences of turbulent environments but also as proactive enablers that bridge micro-level capabilities with macro-level performance in dynamic, service-oriented sectors.

6. Conclusion

This study examined the influence of EDC on DL, OA, IC, and ultimately on HBP, using empirical data from hotel entrepreneurs in Phuket, Thailand. By applying SEM, the study confirmed that EDC serves as a foundational capability that enables entrepreneurs to foster digital leadership, enhance organizational agility, and promote innovation within their businesses. The results demonstrated that DL significantly contributes to both OA and IC, reinforcing the role of technology-driven leadership in shaping flexible and innovative organizations. Moreover, both OA and IC were identified as critical mediators, linking strategic capabilities to superior business performance outcomes.

The findings of this study offer meaningful theoretical insights by contextualizing dynamic capabilities within service-based industries, with a specific focus on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the hospitality sector. While much of the extant literature has concentrated on manufacturing and technology-driven firms, this research underscores that the core tenets of dynamic capabilities, particularly agility and innovation, are equally crucial for driving competitiveness and long-term viability in hotel enterprises. By synthesizing EDC, DL, OA, and IC into an integrated conceptual model, the study advances existing frameworks and elucidates the mechanisms through which entrepreneurial behavior catalyzes organizational performance amidst environmental uncertainty and change.

From a practical standpoint, this study highlights the imperative for hotel entrepreneurs, particularly within the SME sector, to proactively foster dynamic capabilities as a strategic foundation for resilience and competitiveness. Embracing digital transformation is no longer optional but essential, requiring leaders to integrate emerging technologies with core business processes. Moreover, nurturing a culture that supports agility and innovation is vital for navigating uncertainty, responding swiftly to market shifts, and continuously enhancing service value. These practices not only enable hotels to meet evolving customer expectations but also position them for sustained growth in an increasingly volatile and digitally driven environment.

These capabilities enable hotels to respond effectively to market uncertainties, differentiate their services, and enhance customer satisfaction, ultimately leading to improved financial and operational performance. Policymakers and industry stakeholders should also consider supporting capacity-building initiatives that enhance entrepreneurial skills, digital leadership, and innovation practices within the hospitality sector. Future research may deepen these insights by integrating additional contextual variables, such as organizational culture, market turbulence, or digital maturity into the model. Employing longitudinal data would also allow for the examination of causal relationships over time, thus strengthening the robustness of the findings. Furthermore, applying this model across varied cultural, geographic, and economic settings could enhance its generalizability and provide comparative perspectives that inform strategic decision-making in global hospitality contexts.

The findings of this study provide several practical implications for hotel entrepreneurs and managers seeking to enhance business performance in an increasingly dynamic and competitive environment. First, the significant role of EDC in driving both DL and OA suggests that entrepreneurs should invest in developing their ability to sense and seize market opportunities, adapt strategies flexibly, and continuously reconfigure resources. Training programs and workshops focusing on entrepreneurial mindset development, opportunity recognition, and strategic flexibility could be beneficial in strengthening these dynamic capabilities. Additionally, hotel managers should be encouraged to embrace digital technologies not merely as operational tools but as strategic assets that enable innovation and agile decision-making. Fostering digital leadership through leadership development initiatives can help create a culture that is responsive to technological changes and customer demands.

Second, the study highlights the importance of OA and IC as key mediating mechanisms linking strategic competencies to improved business performance. Hotel businesses should prioritize creating an agile organizational structure by decentralizing decision-making, promoting cross-functional collaboration, and implementing systems that allow for rapid response to market shifts. Innovation should be embedded as a core organizational value, with support for idea generation, experimentation, and investment in new service development. Policymakers and industry associations can also play a role by providing support mechanisms such as access to digital infrastructure, innovation funding, and platforms for knowledge sharing among hotel entrepreneurs.

By focusing on enhancing agility and fostering innovation, hotel enterprises can better position themselves to sustain competitive advantage and achieve superior performance in an increasingly digitalized tourism industry.

While this study provides meaningful insights into the relationships among entrepreneurial dynamic capabilities, digital leadership, organizational agility, innovation capability, and hotel business performance, several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional research design limits the ability to draw causal conclusions, as the data were collected at a single point in time. Future studies employing longitudinal approaches could explore how these relationships evolve, particularly amid external disruptions like economic downturns or pandemics. Second, the sample was limited to hotel entrepreneurs in Phuket, which, while significant, may not reflect conditions in other regions or cultural settings. Broader sampling across diverse geographic and economic contexts would improve generalizability. Third, the reliance on self-reported data may introduce potential common method bias. Therefore, future research should consider incorporating objective performance indicators or multi-source data to enhance the robustness of the findings. Furthermore, this study focused on five primary constructs, additional variables such as market orientation, organizational learning, or environmental turbulence may enrich the model. Finally, qualitative approaches like case studies or interviews could yield deeper contextual understanding and uncover nuanced mechanisms behind the observed relationships.

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