

## Sustainable Organisational Identity In State Higher Education Institutions

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Submitted 22-02-2024

Reviewed 26-03-2024

Revised 01-04-2024

Accepted 02-04-2024

Published 31-10-2024

**Abstract:** This research examines the antecedent, consequence, and moderating factors for sustainable organisational identity. Specifically, based on the Resource View Theory, this research aims to examine the effects of anthropomorphism and agile leadership on sustainable organisational identity, the effect of sustainable organisational identity on competitive advantage, and the moderating effect of planned organisational change between sustainable organisational identity and competitive advantage. The sample was 74 state universities in Indonesia. Variable measurement uses questionnaires. Data analysis uses path analysis. Based on data analysis, anthropomorphism positively affects sustainable organisational identity in state higher education institutions. Second, agile leadership positively affects sustainable organisational identity in state higher education. Third, sustainable organisational identity positively affects competitive advantage in state higher education institutions. Fourth, planned organisational change strengthens the positive effect of sustainable organisational identity on competitive advantage in state higher education.

**Keywords:** Sustainable Organisational Identity; Anthropomorphism; Agile Leadership; Competitive Advantage; Planned Organisational Change.

**Abstrak:** Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji antededen, konsekuensi, dan faktor moderasi identitas organisasi berkelanjutan. secara spesifik berdasarkan Resource Based View Theory penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menguji pengaruh antropomorfisme dan agile kepemimpinan terhadap identitas organisasi berkelanjutan, pengaruh identitas organisasi berkelanjutan terhadap keunggulan kompetitif, dan pengaruh moderasi perubahan organisasi terencana antara identitas organisasi berkelanjutan dan keunggulan kompetitif. Sampelnya adalah 74 perguruan tinggi negeri di Indonesia. Pengukuran variabel menggunakan kuesioner. Analisis data menggunakan analisis jalur. Berdasarkan analisis data, pertama, antropomorfisme berpengaruh positif terhadap keberlanjutan identitas organisasi pada perguruan tinggi negeri. Kedua, kepemimpinan tangkas mempunyai efek positif terhadap identitas organisasi yang berkelanjutan di negara-negara pendidikan tinggi. Ketiga, identitas organisasi berkelanjutan berpengaruh positif terhadap keunggulan kompetitif pada perguruan tinggi negeri. Keempat, perubahan organisasi yang direncanakan memperkuat efek positif dari identitas organisasi yang berkelanjutan terhadap keunggulan kompetitif di negara-negara pendidikan tinggi.

**Kata Kunci:** Identitas Organisasi Berkelanjutan; Antropomorfisme; Kepemimpinan Agile; Keunggulan Kompetitif; Perubahan Organisasi Terencana.

## INTRODUCTION

Resources that are not easily imitated and are unique to the organisation require extensive learning curves or significant changes in organisational climate and culture. RBV helps organisations to understand why competencies can be considered the most critical organisational assets that can be used to improve organisational performance



(Barney et al., 2021). The RBV accepts that attributes related to the past, organisational culture and competence are critical to organisational success (Davis & DeWitt, 2021). Superior resources are organisational assets considered unique (idiosyncratic), such as patent brands identified as a determining factor for gaining competitive advantage (Beamish & Chakravarty, 2021).

Organisational identity is an exciting construct since it is a complex concept. Organisational identity is built internally where the organisational identity generates understanding for the organisation's members to know their organisation's values and project the values to external parties (Flint et al., 2018). Currently, organisational identity is developed to capture the sustainable, persistent, and long-term identity called sustainable organisational identity (Frostenson, 2022). Understanding sustainable organisational identity modifies the statement that sustainable IO is the perception of organisational members towards the characteristics and values of a sustainable organisation to create long-term performance (Ren & Jackson, 2020; Romani et al., 2019). Sustainable organisational identity is a construct that can help organisations to have guidance to achieve long-term and sustainable performance. Sustainable organisational identity also helps organisations to build positive image and public trust (Dumay et al., 2017).

Positive image and public trust are essential for higher education institutions since higher education institutions are in the public sector industry and are concerned more about public interests. There is a demand for education sectors, significantly higher education institutions, to develop member loyalty and have common goals by learning higher education institutions (Flint et al., 2018). On the other hand, the external public is interested in popular opinions that relate to higher education institutions' reputations and images. Popular opinions refer to unique characteristics through exposed competitive advantages by higher education institutions. The state higher education market has tight competition that leads state higher education institutions to have higher competencies, including effective strategy formulation, human resource management, image and reputation management, students' readiness in the labour market, and performance evaluation (Setia et al., 2023; Amtu et al., 2021; Filho et al., 2020; Jusuf et al., 2020). A competitive market leads higher education institutions to manage their reputation and image in front of all stakeholders. In this case, sustainable organisational identity can contribute to state higher education institutions having a good market position in the competitive state higher education market.

Sustainable organisational identity is a relatively new concept and is still limited in organisational identity research. (Bednar et al., 2019) suggest that organisational identity still has temporal factors that must be developed into the concept of sustainability awareness since sustainability plays an important role in determining long-term performance. Although (Bednar et al., 2019) already promote the concept of sustainable organisational identity, the theory needs to be built based on empirical findings. Previous research still needs more findings on sustainable organisational identity.

This research contributes to filling the gap in the literature. First, by investigating the sustainable organisational identity, this research mitigates the loophole of "*Is it temporary?*" as a gap between organisational identity and long-term achievement. Examining the sustainable organisational identity can eliminate the "question of temporal" characteristic. Second, this research generates new evidence of sustainable organisational identity, especially in state higher education institutions in Indonesia. Indonesia has a



competitive market for state higher education since the public chooses state higher education institutions over private (Rinawiyanti et al., 2023; Amtu et al., 2021).

To comprehensively capture sustainable organisational identity, this research uses the resource-based view theory (Rinawiyanti et al., 2023). This research uses the resource-based theory to determine the model that shows the antecedents, consequences, and moderating factors in implementing sustainable organisational identity. Based on (Amtu et al., 2021), this research determines anthropomorphism and agile leadership as antecedents, competitive advantage as a consequence, and planned organisational change as the moderating role of sustainable organisational identity.

This research introduces innovation in sustainable Organizational Identity (IO) studies, particularly in higher education, by incorporating anthropomorphism, agile leadership, competitive advantage, and planned organisational change based on the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory. It significantly contributes to developing distinctive core competencies within organisations and facilitates growth aligning with their characteristics. This new context provides valuable insights into IO understanding within public organisations, especially in the higher education sector, previously underexplored in academic literature (Natifu, 2016; Puusa & Kekäle, 2015; Leslie et al., 2018). With higher education institutions as a significant growth focus, this research fills knowledge gaps by exploring IO within a relevant context, opening up space for a deeper understanding of competition dynamics and organisational identity development in the rapidly evolving higher education landscape.

## THEORETICAL REVIEW

**Sustainable Organisational Identity.** Initially, three organisational concepts existed (Romani et al., 2019; Ren & Jackson, 2020). First, solidarity brings the feeling of having each other, emotional solid engagement, self-reflection of being an organisation's member, and pride to the organisation's members. Second, the concept of loyalty and support leads the members to have enthusiasm and loyalty to achieve organisational goals and maintain organisational values. Third, the concept of similarity brings organisations' members to feel similar values between members and organisational interests.

Organisational identity must maintain the continuity of members' interpretation of their organisation (Cloutier & Ravasi, 2020). In this case, the organisation must consider solidarity, loyalty, and similarity awareness in sustainable resources (Romani et al., 2019). The concept of sustainability in organisational identity generates the establishment of a sustainable organisational identity. Sustainable organisational identity refers to typical, unique, and sustainable internal resources (Romani et al., 2019). In this case, organisational identity is a tool to generate the organisation's sustainability that can be maintained and manifested as an identity for the members (Frostenson, 2022). (Cloutier & Ravasi, 2020) define sustainable organisational identity as an identity with sustainability as the key element where persistent sustainability must be continuously maintained. An organisational identity that can create sustainability leads members to feel and think about a long-term commitment to achieve organisational goals (Frostenson, 2022).

To build a sustainable organisational identity, organisations must be actively involved in certain activities that create sustainability (Islam et al., 2021; Brienza & Katsoyiannis, 2017). Sustainable organisational identity naturally relates to the internal constituents' understanding of who establishes sustainability in the organisation (Bednar



et al., 2019). Organisations need continuous action, reflection, and work to harmonise sustainability with organisational vision, culture, and image (Kantabutra, 2021).

The existence and succession of organisations' human resources inherently come from organisational and members' capacities to survive in complex conditions. Sustainability provides the capacity to make a system where organisations can survive under pressure to find opportunities (Kendal et al., 2018; Zen, 2023) formulating sustainability for the organisation and putting sustainability into the organisational process (Mitra & Buzzanell, 2018). By framing sustainability as the best practice for organisations, researchers believe sustainability can be broken down into technical function levels (Köhler et al., 2019). Sustainability has the potential to be implemented as a guide for organisations to negotiate and mitigate risks, especially in a crisis condition (Mitra & Buzzanell, 2018). The sustainability framework can be used as an alternative strategy for long-term resilience. Since the sustainability framework plays an important role, this research uses the sustainability framework in the concept of organisational identity to capture organisations' member's perceptions toward sustainable organisational characteristics and values to create long-term performance.

#### **Anthropomorphism and Sustainable Organisational Identity.**

Anthropomorphism refers to the tendency to attribute human characteristics, attitudes, and intentions to non-human objects (Köhler et al., 2019). Anthropomorphism occurs when non-human objects are perceived as humans with certain personalities and emotions (Bednar et al., 2019). Anthropomorphism leads organisations' members to feel intimate relationships and friendship with the objects (Bednar et al., 2019). Furthermore, organisation members feel close to their organisations, which makes them have strong motivation and positive attitudes toward the organisational businesses (Paramita et al., 2022). Since anthropomorphism generates a strong organisational culture by personifying an organisation as an entity that has human traits, the organisation's members can easily internalise and implement organisational norms and cultures (Ashforth, Blake et al., 2020).

(Martin, 2021) suggests that unique organisational characteristics make an organisation a fit target by anthropomorphism. Anthropomorphism invites organisations' members to think, feel, and act based on organisational characteristics (Ashforth et al., 2020). Individuals respect and respond more positively to anthropomorphised objects (Martin, 2021). Businesses that have been anthropomorphised tend to have strong entrepreneurial and survival abilities (Paramita et al., 2022). Anthropomorphised objects benefit from positive perception, so there is a significant potential for them to survive more (Xie et al., 2020).

Organisational identity can be established effectively in sustainability (Frostenson, 2022). The sustainability aspect makes organisational identity lead members to feel, think, and commit to sustaining and persistent organisational achievements (Onkila et al., 2018). (Ashforth, 2020) suggests that organisations need to have an identity based on human characteristics since organisations' members are the agents who speak on behalf of organisations. (Ashforth et al., 2020) find that anthropomorphism is the key role of organisational identity in effectively supporting members' engagement, loyalty, and performance. In this case, since anthropomorphism aims to make perception towards an organisation from "what" into "who", organisational identity can be more established. In the context of sustainability, anthropomorphism also helps organisations' members perceive organisations to have human traits in the long term. Since the public perceives most higher education institutions from their lecturers' characteristics (Rumbidzai Muzira





& Maupa Bondai, 2020), it is relevant to examine whether the perception of lecturers' competence can create organisational identity, especially for state higher education institutions.

**H1:** Anthropomorphism has a positive effect on sustainable organisational identity in state higher education institutions.

**Agile Leadership and Sustainable Organizational Identity.** (Eilers et al., 2022) suggest that organisational environments have non-static, dynamic, and complex uncertainty. Agile leadership gives organisations more activity agility (Alt et al., 2020). Agility has become among the top 10 organisational and leadership concerns (Kappelman et al., 2020). In this case, agile leadership can be essential in developing organisational identity.

In the context of organisational identity, leadership is the symbolism of organisational identity since the leaders have the power and authority to affect the organisation's members, including how organisation members feel and think about the organisation (Ernst & Jensen Schleiter, 2021; Turner & Chacon-Rivera, 2019). Organisational identity comes from leaders' interpretation and belief to guide and manage organisational behaviour (Turner & Chacon-Rivera, 2019) since the main objective of leadership is to build an integrated identity for the organisation (Till et al., 2018). Agile leadership can help the organisation maintain its identity, especially by considering members' engagement in crisis, uncertain, and changing situations (K Aitken & von Treuer, 2021). (Attar & Abdul-Kareem, 2020) find that the leaders of organisations need to be agile to improve and adjust organisational identity when there is an urgency to align the identity with the new strategy and condition to achieve competitive advantage. Agile leadership is essential to creating new knowledge and effectively improving the members' responses and feedback (Cleveland & Cleveland, 2020).

This research argues that agile leadership also contributes to sustainable organisational identity. First, agile leadership can lead to changes and uncertainty and create adaptability in rapidly changing and dynamic conditions (Eilers et al., 2022). Since sustainability can be achieved by ensuring survival in any condition, agile leadership can promote adaptability to survive in any condition. Second, agile leadership can promote an innovation culture to create active participation in decision-making, the creation of new ideas, and controllable risk-taking (Chen et al., 2022). Again, since sustainability leads to survival and long-term performance, innovation can be the key for an organisation to have sustained and persistent performance. Third, agile leadership promotes the space for the organisation's members to develop their ability, responsibility, and role to achieve organisational goals (Kappelman et al., 2020). In this case, agile leadership can adjust organisational identity to have an aspect of sustainability, especially in uncertain and crisis conditions (Eilers et al., 2022; Attar & Abdul-Kareem, 2020)

The state higher education market is dynamic. First, there is always a change of leaders since the leaders can only take office in a limited period. In this case, the internal policy can also be dynamic. Second, the government launched "*Merdeka Belajar Kampus Merdeka*," leading state higher education institutions to dynamically evaluate the industry participants involved in the learning process. Third, the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology continually adjusts the regulations to the current



condition. In this case, state higher education institutions' leaders must be agile and adjust the organisational identity to the current conditions.

**H2:** Agile leadership has a positive effect on sustainable organisational identity in state higher education institutions.

**Sustainable Organisational Identity and Competitive Advantage.** Most organisations want to optimise their performance to achieve and maintain competitive advantage. Competitive advantage contributes to long-term success for organisations (Gareche et al., 2019). (Kadhim et al., 2018) Strong and innovative internal resources are an absolute factor in generating competitive advantage. Organisational identity is vital as an internal resource since it cannot be imitated and brings positive consequences to create a competitive advantage (Rockwell, 2019).

Since organisational identity provides multilevel constructs to improve ideas and material in adaptive behaviour (Kump, 2019), organisational identity can be the primary competence to create competitive advantage (Romani et al., 2019). Organisations must utilise unique resources, such as organisational identity, to differentiate themselves from competitors to achieve a competitive advantage (Pant & Ramachandran, 2017) and create value for stakeholders (Cloutier & Ravasi, 2020). (Mahdad et al., 2020) find that identity affects organisational members' attitudes and behaviour. More identification brings organisations' members to work together, improve competitiveness, and create competitive advantage.

Since competitive advantage helps achieve long-term performance, it is relevant to involve sustainability in the relationship between organisational identity and competitive advantage. Sustainable organisational identity determines how to achieve long-term performance, including by creating a competitive advantage. Based on (Rockwell, 2019), who defines organisational identity as a unique resource, sustainable organisational identity can also be defined as a unique, irreplaceable, sustainable, and persistent resource. Sustainable organisational identity can be used to strengthen, support, and maintain competitive advantage.

State higher education institutions have specific measurements for competitive advantage evaluation. The government periodically evaluates them based on "*Indikator Kinerja Utama*" (hereafter IKU). This research examines whether organisational identities built by state higher education institutions can bring higher competitive advantage.

**H3:** Sustainable organisational identity has a positive effect on competitive advantage in state higher education institutions.

**Organisational Change, Sustainable Organisational Identity, and Competitive Advantage.** Planned organisational change is a particular feature that influences operational and strategic activities. Organisational change can happen dramatically, traumatically, and full of failure risks (Židonis & Raišienė, 2020). Organisational change must lead to human behaviour and organisational processes to manage change effectively to create adaptability and flexibility (Mac Carte & Fariña, 2021). (Kim Aitken & von Treuer, 2021) suggest that organisational change is critical in implementing organisational identity. There are interaction points in establishing and developing organisational



identity, which show the organisational change in organisational process and performance achievement (J Ernst & Jensen Schleiter, 2021).

Organisational identity in higher education institutions is also essential to be examined, especially in organisational paradigms (Lašáková et al., 2017). Organisational change in higher education institutions includes planned change, transformation, and adjustment to the current situation. When higher education institutions establish a competitive advantage, higher education institutions need to formulate organisational identities that relate to dynamic situations. Sustainable organisational identity can symbolise a vision and mission to create a competitive advantage (Yu et al., 2021), especially when higher education institutions face changes in the market and organisation (Muhammad et al., 2020). A sustainable organisational identity is essential to guide higher education institutions to achieve a competitive advantage in changing situations (Dumay et al., 2017).

Organisational change is predicted to strengthen the relationship between sustainable organisational identity and competitive advantage. First, (Simões & Sebastiani, 2017) explain that organisational change can be a bridge to align organisational identity and stakeholders' interests. Second, explain that organisational identity is essential to stimulate adaptability for an organisation to face changes in society and the environment to build a reputation in front of the public and achieve a unique competitive advantage. Third, organisational change stimulates an innovation culture and leads to a sustainable organisational identity to create new opportunities. World Economic Forum suggests aligning organisational change and goals can create innovative solutions for public challenges. When organisational change happens to improve the organisation's identity, organisations can effectively manage uncertainty risks (Baumgartner & Rauter, 2017). By having effective risk management, organisational change can create a sustainable organisational identity and create more competitive advantages.

**H4:** Planned organisational change strengthens the positive effect of sustainable organisational identity on competitive advantage in state higher education institutions.

## METHODS

**Research Sample and Data.** Research objects include state higher education institutions in Indonesia. First, based on Webometrics ([https://www.webometrics.info/en/Asia/Indonesiaper\\_cent20](https://www.webometrics.info/en/Asia/Indonesiaper_cent20)), in 2023, the top 20 universities in Indonesia consist of 17 state higher education institutions. In this case, state higher education institutions have a higher competitive advantage than private ones. Second, candidates of university students tend to choose state higher education institutions rather than private ones (Amtu et al., 2021). Third, evaluating state higher education institutions uses a standardised measurement from the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, IKU. With the exact evaluation measurement, the competitive advantage of state higher education institutions can be compared to another.

The research subject includes leaders who can influence policies at the university level of state higher education institutions. First, organisational identity comes from leaders' interpretation and beliefs to guide and manage organisational behaviour (Tourky et al., 2020). Second, since this research also examines agile leadership, using respondents from leaders of state higher education institutions (leaders of universities) is relevant. In



the context of sampling, the purposive sampling technique was employed, guided by criteria set by the researcher. Respondent criteria in this study include holding a leadership position at the university level, being deemed capable of representing the organisation in understanding organisational identity (IO) and having the capacity to intervene in policies. The total sample size for this study includes 140 public universities comprising institutes, polytechnics, universities, and Islamic universities in Indonesia. Three respondents represent each public university, and the results will be aggregated to represent one sample. To ensure the justification of aggregating data at the organisational level, analyses were conducted using two intra-class correlation coefficients, namely  $rw_g$  and  $ICC_1$  and  $ICC_2$ . The  $rw_g$  coefficient reflects the homogeneity of individual perceptions within the organisation, with a value considered sufficient if it reaches 0.700. If the  $rw_g$  value falls below this threshold, group assessments of the research construct must be eliminated from further analysis.

Data collection uses questionnaires. Details of questionnaires can be seen in variable measurement. Questionnaires were distributed to 140 state higher education institutions. Ninety-two questionnaires were sent back, and 74 met the requirements to be processed at the following research stage.

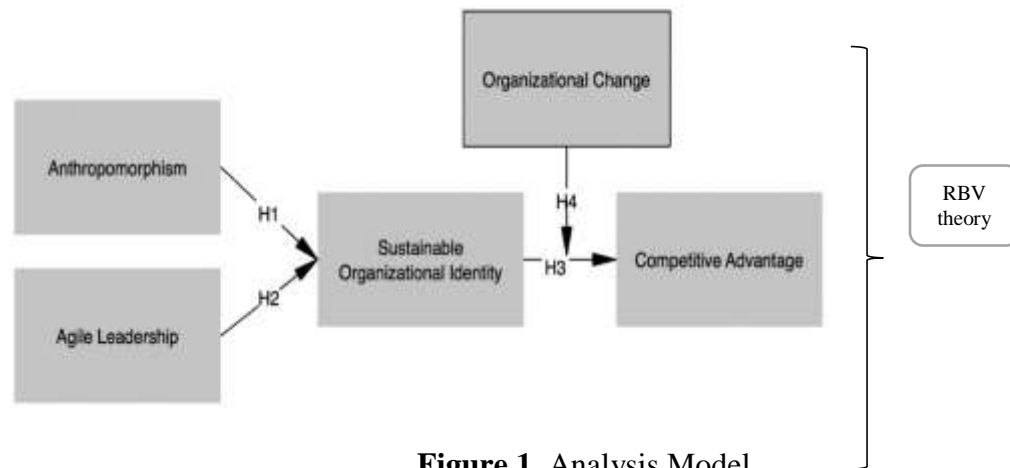
**Variable Measurement.** Research variables include sustainable organisational identity, anthropomorphism, agile leadership, competitive advantage, and organisational change. 5 Likert-scale questionnaires measure all variables. The scale is from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Questionnaires of sustainable organisational identity consist of 12 questions based on modifications from (Yang et al., 2019). Questionnaires of anthropomorphism consist of 13 questions based on (Golossenko et al., 2020). Questionnaires of agile leadership consist of 32 questions based on Joiner and Josephs (Muafi & Uyun, 2019). Questionnaires of competitive advantage consist of 27 questions based on IKU indicators, which are included in the regulation of *Keputusan Direktur Jenderal Pendidikan Tinggi, Riset, dan Teknologi Kementerian Pendidikan, Kebudayaan, Riset, dan Teknologi Republik Indonesia No. 210/M/2023*. Questionnaires of organisational change consist of 13 questions based on Rafferty and Griffin (Rabiul & Yean, 2021). All questionnaires are distributed to 140 state higher education institutions. There are 92 questionnaires sent back to the authors, and 74 could be used further in the following analysis stage.

**Data Analysis.** This research examines the research hypotheses using path analysis of structural equation modelling. Before running the path analysis, this research also does validity and reliability tests. SEM-PLS runs path analysis with an analysis model, as in Figure 1. This research uses the SEM-PLS approach with consideration of its supporting capacity for research questions, according to (Hair et al., 2017); because it uses a complex and exploratory model involving five latent variables and observed indicators, this research uses a sample size of 140. It tends to be small, so PLS-SEM is used, which is known for its robustness in handling situations where the sample size is limited; PLS-SEM can handle non-normal and non-linear data more effectively and is relevant in research with organisational units of analysis, where variables may not always follow a distribution, this research modelling is predictive. This modelling focuses on forecasting and maximising the predictive power of the model. PLS-SEM is suitable for exploring this research as it emphasises predictions rather than testing specific theoretical relationships; this research uses normative and reflective measurement models. Therefore, PLS-SEM can accommodate situations where constructs are measured with reflective indicators (causally





influenced by the underlying construct) or formative indicators (indicators that collectively form a construct).



**Figure 1. Analysis Model**  
Source: Model Created By Researchers

## RESULTS

**Table 1** shows that The respondents in this study are individuals representing their respective organisations with characteristics of university-level leadership. The variables include the type of public university, gender, age, educational level, additional duties, length of service, previous organisational experience, and tenure. Table 1. presents information regarding the respondents' characteristics. From a positional perspective, 54.951 per cent of the respondents hold the position of Vice Rector/Vice Director. Most of the sample comes from Public Service Agency (BLU) status universities, reaching 47.291 per cent. All respondents (100 per cent) have worked in their current organisation for more than one year, meeting the participation criteria for this study.

Demographic information indicates that most respondents are male, accounting for 75.683 per cent, while females represent 24.317 per cent. About 60.811 per cent of the respondents fall within the 51 to 60 age group, totalling 135 respondents. Furthermore, most respondents have a Doctoral degree, reaching 77.470 per cent.

**Table 1. Respondent Characteristic**

No.	Job Information	Category	Total	Percentage
1.	Additional duties carried out	by the Chancellor/Director	26	11.713
		Vice Chancellor/Deputy Director	122	54.951
		Others (university-level officials)	74	33.336
2.	Type of Legal Entity	Legal entity -Berbadan Hukum (BH)	16	21.625
		Public Service Agency - Badan Layanan Umum (BLU)	35	47.291
		Work Unit - Satuan Kerja (Satker)	23	31.084



No.	Demographic Information	Category	Total	Percentage
3.	Length of work	Less than 12 months	-	0
		More than 12 months	222	100
1.	Gender	Male	168	75.683
		Female	54	24.317
2.	Age	Less than 30 years	2	0.901
		31 to 40 years	4	1.804
		41 to 50 years	49	22.720
		51 to 60 years	135	60.811
		More than 60 years	32	14.412
3.	Last level education	Bachelor's Degree	-	-
		Master's Degree	50	22.524
		Doctoral Degree	172	77.476

Source: Data Proceed

The  $rw_g$  coefficient on individual perceptions in the organisation shows homogeneity. There is no agreed standard value for determining whether the  $rw_g$  value adequately represents the level of homogeneity of perceptions or judgments of group members. Measuring the level of agreement (interrater agreement) of group members states that a value of 0.700 is considered an acceptable limit. In contrast, an index value below 0.700 indicates that the group's assessment of the research construct should be eliminated and not used in further analysis (Eckardt et al., 2021).

Based on the  $rw_g$  calculation results in **Table 2.**, all organisational groups have an average value of more than 0.700. Therefore, the entire sample can be included in this study in the subsequent analysis.

**Table 2.** Aggregation test table ( $rw_g$ )

No.	Variable	Kappa	Description
1.	respondent 1* respondent 2*	0.841	Supported
2.	respondent 1* respondent 3*	0.784	Supported
3.	respondent 2* respondent 3*	0.831	Supported

Source: Data Proceed

**Table 3** shows presents the aggregate justification results of organisation-level metrics. The  $ICC_1$  index was used to assess within-unit variation. In the context of this research, the  $ICC_1$  index was used to assess the impact of organisational membership on individual assessments of anthropomorphism and organisational-focused leadership. According to (Eckardt et al., 2021), an  $ICC_1$  index value between 0.010 and 0.1000 is considered small, a value between 0.100 and 0.250 is considered medium, and a value of more than 0.250 is considered large. This research shows that the aggregation results for the five research variables show a large  $ICC_1$  index value above 0.250.

The  $ICC_2$  index measures the average consistency of organisations among existing organisations (between variance). In this study, the  $ICC_2$  index provides information about the reliability of the average assessment of individuals in one organisation among other organisations. The recommended  $ICC_2$  index is greater than 0.750 (Eckardt et al., 2021).



The results of this study show that the research aggregation results show an ICC<sub>2</sub> index value greater than 0.750. The level of agreement (interrater agreement) of individuals' perceptions and assessments of data at the organisational level meets the criteria for validity and reliability (Eckardt et al., 2021).

**Table 3.** Aggregation test table (ICC<sub>1</sub> and ICC<sub>2</sub>)

No.	Variable	ICC1	ICC2	Description
1.	Sustainable organisational identity	0.476	0.916	Supported
2.	Anthropomorphism	0.440	0.911	Supported
3.	Agile Leadership	0.494	0.969	Supported
4.	Competitive advantage	0.400	0.944	Supported
5.	Planned organisational change	0.239	0.804	Supported

Source: Data Proceed

**Table 4** shows that the average value of sustainable organisational identity (SOI) is 4.406, with a deviation of 0.2581. The average anthropomorphism (AN) value is 4.316, with a deviation of 0.282. The average value of agile leadership (AL) is 4.310, with a deviation of 0.289. The average competitive advantage (CA) value is 4.392, with a deviation of 0.250. The average organisational change (OC) value is 4.207, with a deviation of 0.253.

**Table 4.** Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
SOI	4.406	0.258
AN	4.316	0.282
AL	4.310	0.289
CA	4.392	0.250
POC	4.207	0.253

Source: Data Proceed

**Table 5** shows the factor loading values. (Hair et al., 2017) describe that outer loading improves interpretation by reducing possible ambiguity in indicators. The results of the validity indicator analysis can be found in **Table 5**. Furthermore, the factor loading value is considered valid if it exceeds 0.700 and needs to be maintained for confirmatory research.

**Table 5.** Evaluation Results Of The Measurement Model (Outer Model).

Indicator	Result	Cut-off	Notes [73]
Chi-Squared	1.038	less than 4.319	A sufficient number of variables
SRMR	0.038	less than 0.080	No problem, of misspecification model
RMS theta	0.042	less than 0.120	Small error correlation
VIF	less than 5	less than 5.000	Having no multicollinearity problems
GFI	0.951	0.900	Model fitting data
AGFI	0.939	0.900	Model fitting data
CFI	0.938	0.900	Model fitting data

Source: Data Proceed



NFI	0.949	0.900	Model fitting data
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Meanwhile, values between 0.500 and 0.700 are accepted in exploratory research, whereas if it is less than 0.500, the indicator variable needs to be removed (Hair et al., 2017) **Table 5**. It also shows the AVE value. The expected factor loading value is equal to or greater than 0.500 to meet convergent validity criteria. The rule of thumb used, based on (Hair et al., 2017), stated that for the initial examination of the factor matrix, a value of 0.300 is considered sufficient as the minimum level, a loading value is equal to or greater than 0.400 is considered better, and a loading value is equal to or greater than 0.500 is considered practically significant.

**Table 5** shows details the convergent validity testing results for each AVE value. Next, convergent validity is checked through reliability tests. Reliability testing aims to test the consistency of the instruments used in research so that retesting using the instruments can provide the same results. In this research, internal testing was carried out to see the composite reliability and Cronbach's Alpha values. Composite reliability and Cronbach's Alpha are considered valid in presenting reliability measures in research that uses structural equation models. Composite reliability values follow the rules of thumb from (Hair et al., 2017), namely above 0.700, indicating a reliable research instrument. According to (Hair et al., 2017), Cronbach's Alpha is the most common measure, with a lower limit, generally at 0.700.

**Table 6.** Model Fitness

Variables	Factor Loading more than 0.700	AVE	Composite Reliability	Alpha
Sustainable Organisational Identity (SOI)	SOI3, SOI4, SOI5, SOI7, SOI8, SOI9, SOI10, SOI11, SOI12	0.689	0.961	0.960
Anthropomorphism (AN)	AN5, AN6, AN7, AN8, AN9, AN10, AN11, AN12	0.718	0.970	0.968
Agile Leadership (AL)	AL3, AL5, AL6, AL7, AL12, AL13, AL14, AL15, AL16, AL17, AL18, AL19, AL20, AL21, AL22, AL23, AL24, AL25, AL26, AL27, AL28, AL29, AL30, AL31, AL32	0.617	0.989	0.988
Competitive Advantage (CA)	CA1, CA6, CA7, CA9, CA10, CA11, CA12, CA14, CA16, CA17, CA18, CA19, CA22	0.548	0.978	0.975
Planned Organisational Change (POC)	OC3, OC6, OC8, OC9	0.742	0.963	0.560

**Table 6** shows the model fitness, which indicates how good the model is in the research. The value of the Chi-squared is 1.038 (below 4.139), which indicates that the model has a sufficient number of variables. The Standard Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) value is 0.038 (below 0.080), indicating no misspecification model. The value of Root Mean Square (RMS) theta is 0.042 (below 0.120), indicating a slight correlation between errors in the model.





The value of Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) is below 5.000, implying no multicollinearity problem between independent variables. The values of the Goodness of Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness Fit of Index (AGFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), and Normed Fit Index (NFI) are above 0.900, which indicates that the model fits with the data.

**Table 7** shows that the path of anthropomorphism on sustainable organisational identity (AN -more than SOI) has a coefficient of 0.696 with a t-value of 4.027 and a P-value of 0.000 (significant in 0.010). The result shows that anthropomorphism increases sustainable organisational identity. Based on the result, H1 is accepted where anthropomorphism positively affects sustainable organisational identity in state higher education institutions.

**Table 7.** Path Analysis

Path	Coefficient	t-value	P values	Notes	R-Square
AN -more than SOI	0.438	4.059	0.000*	H1 is supported	0.666
AL -more than SOI	0.356	2.888	0.000*	H2 is supported	
SOI -more than CA	0.390	3.548	0.008*	H3 is supported	
OC x SOI -more than CA	-0.121	1.703	0.089*	H4 is not supported	

\*significant in 0.010

Source: Data Proceed

The path of agile leadership on sustainable organisational identity (A-more than SOI) has a coefficient of 0.438, a t-value of 4.059, and a p-value of 0.000 (significant in 0.010). The result shows that agile leadership increases sustainable organisational identity. Based on the result, H2 is accepted where agile leadership positively affects sustainable organisational identity in state higher education institutions.

The path of sustainable organisational identity on competitive advantage (SOI more than CA) has a coefficient of 0.390, a t-value of 3.548, and a p-value of 0.000 (significant in 0.010). The result shows that sustainable organisational identity increases competitive advantage. Based on this result, H3 is accepted where sustainable organisational identity positively affects competitive advantage in state higher education institutions.

The interaction between organisational change and sustainable organisational identity on competitive advantage (OC x SOI more than CA) has a coefficient of -0.121, a t-value of 1.703, and a P-value of 0.089 (significant in 0.010). So, the moderating effect has yet to be proven to positively and significantly affect competitive advantage. Therefore, hypothesis 4 is not supported.

## DISCUSSION

This research examines the antecedent, consequence, and moderating factors for sustainable organisational identity. Specifically, this research aims to examine the effects of anthropomorphism and agile leadership (antecedent) on sustainable organisational identity, the effect of sustainable organisational identity on competitive advantage (consequence), and the moderating effect of organisational change (moderating factor) between sustainable organisational identity and competitive advantage. This research



contributes to mitigating the "*Is it temporary?*" loophole as a gap between organisational identity and long-term achievement. This research also gives news evidence of sustainable organisational identity in state higher education institutions in Indonesia.

Based on data analysis, there are some findings. First, H1 is accepted where anthropomorphism positively affects sustainable organisational identity in state higher education institutions. The result is consistent with Ashforth, (Blake et al., 2020), who find that anthropomorphism is the key role of organisational identity in effectively supporting members' engagement, loyalty, and performance. When anthropomorphism occurs, organisations' members tend to attribute human attributes to their organisation. Human attributions give organisations an identity, especially a sustainable identity. Since anthropomorphism generates a strong organisational culture by personifying an organisation as an entity that has human traits, the organisation's members can easily internalise and implement organisational norms and cultures. In this case, when state higher education institutions' members give the institution human characteristics, the identity of state higher education institutions is established.

Second, H2 is accepted where agile leadership positively affects sustainable organisational identity in state higher education institutions. The result is consistent with (Attar & Abdul-Kareem, 2020), who find that agile leadership can adjust organisational identity to have an aspect of sustainability, especially in uncertain and crisis conditions. Leaders are symbolic of organisational identity since they have the power and authority to affect the organisation's members, including how the organisation's members feel and think about the organisation. In the context of agile leadership, first, agile leadership in state higher education institutions can lead to changes and uncertainty that can create adaptability in institutions. Second, agile leadership in state higher education institutions can promote an innovation culture to create active participation in decision-making and the creation of new ideas and innovations. Third, agile leadership in state higher education institutions promotes the space for the members to develop their ability, responsibility, and role to achieve organisational goals.

Third, H3 is accepted where sustainable organisational identity positively affects competitive advantage in state higher education institutions. The result is consistent with (Kadhim et al., 2018) and (Rockwell, 2019), who find that organisational identity affects organisational members' attitudes and behaviour to be competition. Sustainable organisational identity can be defined as a unique, irreplaceable, sustained, and persistent resource. Sustainable organisational identity can be used to strengthen, support, and maintain competitive advantage. In this case, a stronger sustainable organisational identity leads state higher education institutions to have higher IKU.

Fourth, H4 must support the idea that organisational change does not strengthen the relationship between sustainable organisational identity and competitive advantage in state universities. Based on previous literature, no research shows that planned organisational change cannot strengthen competitive advantages in public organisations. Nevertheless, several previous studies emphasise that change management in public organisations can be challenging, requiring careful planning and implementation to achieve the desired results (Wandi, 2019). Planned change in public organisations involves the need to develop a culture of change and pay attention to changes involving stakeholders (Elgohary & Abdelazyz, 2020), as well as ensuring effective communication to guarantee the successful implementation of change (Ouedraogo et al., 2021).



Several factors may account for planned organisational changes that do not strengthen the link between sustainable IO and competitive advantage in public organisations. First, the level of communication is tiered, often caused by complex bureaucratic structures (Elgohary & Abdelazyz, 2020). A complex bureaucratic structure in an organisation is often one of the main factors that hinder the change process. Various levels of bureaucracy with complex procedures can influence communication in decision-making and the implementation of effective organisational change. Communication in a complex bureaucratic environment often slows the determination of clear responsibilities regarding a particular change (Mederake et al., 2022).

Second, the existence of resistance in an organisation (Cinite & Duxbury, 2018). Resistance to change in the public sector is usually moderate, indicating that this problem requires special attention in planning and managing organisational change (Elgohary & Abdelazyz, 2020). Public organisations often have strong cultures that have been established over many years. When organisational culture emphasises respect for specific ways of working, organisational members tend to be resistant and reluctant to change things that have become the organisational culture. (Elgohary & Abdelazyz', 2020) study concluded that external factors, such as changes in government policy, political pressure, or societal demands, can also influence resistance to change in public organisations. In addition, organisational members may need more skills to respond to organisational changes (Cinite & Duxbury, 2018). In implementing digital transformation and information systems, organisational members often face resistance, feel anxious, or uncomfortable with new technologies that require learning new adaptations (Ouedraogo et al., 2021). Third, change strategies must be more compatible with sustainable IO. Third, change strategies must be more compatible with sustainable IO. Sometimes, planned changes need to align with the organisation's existing identity. Aange strategy can have a competitive advantage if it does not reinforce the core values or vision.

Fourth, the nature of the buffering between sustainable IO and planned organisational change is related to the characteristics of each organisation, especially in the context of the organisation's initial status as a public university. Public universities have a sustainable IO that is deeply rooted; planned organisational changes can significantly disrupt the consistency of the organisation that has been entrenched. Sustainable IO embedded in public universities creates a framework of values and culture that is difficult to change, so planned changes can create obstacles in maintaining organisational consistency and stability. On the other hand, in newly nationalised organisations from the private sector, planned organisational changes may have less influence than in state organisations. This is caused by the need for IO to be firmly embedded in the organisational structure. Newly nationalised organisations may still be in the stage of developing a more solid organisational identity and culture. This is reinforced by research conducted by (Eilstrup-Sangiovanni, 2020), which shows that institutional changes, especially changes in regulations and practices, can trigger the emergence of IO issues, for example, IO ambiguity, legitimacy crises, and perceived identity obsolescence. Therefore, planned organisational changes have little impact on public universities. Planned organisational changes may not disrupt organisational consistency in established public universities. Thus, the nature of this buffering reflects the complexity of the relationship between ongoing organisational identity and planned organisational change, which is influenced by the history and characteristics of the organisation, especially in terms of the organisation's initial status as a state institution.



Based on the 3 points of proof of the hypothesis above and supported by the RBV theory, this research strengthens the statement that sustainable OI is a resource that is not easily imitated and is unique to organisations (Davis & DeWitt, 2021; Beamish & Chakravarty, 2021; Barney et al., 2021). This research helps organisations understand why sustainable IO can be considered the most critical organisational asset that can be used to improve organisational performance, which leads to competitive advantage through the variables above.

This research delves into novel territories by leveraging the Resource-Based View theory to explore sustainable Organizational Identity (IO) within the higher education sector, shedding light on the pivotal role of internal resources in achieving competitive advantage. It aligns with Rockwell's assertion on the significance of sustainable internal resources with unique, intangible, and scarce characteristics to optimise organisational functions, particularly within sustainable IO. The study advances the understanding of anthropomorphism as a robust antecedent for sustainable IO, elucidating its impact on organisational commitment, participation, and pro-social behaviour. Moreover, it underscores the empirical contribution by examining agile leadership as a precursor for sustainable IO, aligning with complexity theory principles and emphasising the importance of adaptive leadership in fostering organisational responsiveness to change. The contextual contribution is evident in its focus on sustainable IO within the organisational setting of the public sector, addressing a gap in the literature and offering practical insights for organisational practitioners to enhance sustainable IO as a foundation for competitive excellence. Through anthropomorphism and agile leadership, organisations can fortify their sustainable IO, paving the way for enduring competitive advantage and organisational resilience amidst dynamic and complex global challenges.

## CONCLUSION

This research examines the antecedent, consequence, and moderating factors for sustainable organisational identity. Specifically, this research aims to examine the effects of anthropomorphism and agile leadership (antecedent) on sustainable organisational identity, the effect of sustainable organisational identity on competitive advantage (consequence), and the moderating effect of organisational change (moderating factor) between sustainable organisational identity and competitive advantage. This research examines the antecedents, consequences, and moderating variables of sustainable IO, carried out at the organisational level with samples from the public sector, especially at public universities in Indonesia. The purpose of selecting public universities is to complete references for understanding sustainable IO in the context of public organisations and highlight the importance of sustainable IO in public universities, which previously received little attention. Four hypotheses were tested in this study.

First, the results of hypothesis testing show that anthropomorphism has a positive effect on sustainable IO, supporting the findings of (Ashforth et al., 2020), who highlight that organisational anthropomorphism allows organisational members to understand the organisation as an entity with a human identity. Anthropomorphism involves attributing human characteristics to non-human entities involving appearance, morality, cognitive experience, and emotionality. Therefore, anthropomorphism is considered relevant as an antecedent factor of sustainable IO. The anthropomorphisation of organisations can form a psychological contract between organisational members and the organisation itself





(Bankins & Formosa, 2020). In organisational studies, anthropomorphism provides an understanding of organisational members' interactions with the organisation. Sustainable IO becomes the basis for organisational members' identification with the organisation, creating conditions for ongoing strong connectedness. By applying anthropomorphism to sustainable IO, an atmosphere of interconnectedness is created within the organisation, and members identify with the "human" characteristics and values attributed to the organisation. From the perspective of psychological ownership, a sense of belonging is realised through the meaning and emotions associated with the ownership of an object, in this case, an organisation. Thus, the involvement of anthropomorphism in sustainable IO can create members who have an emotional attachment to the organisation.

Second, agile leadership positively impacts sustainable IO, similar to the philosophy of anthropomorphism. Agile leadership tends to create a culture that encourages continuous collaboration by focusing on the dimensions of results, team orientation, granting authority in leadership, flexibility, speed, and change orientation. Several previous studies have demonstrated the positive impact of leadership on IO, and this study confirms these findings by proving that agile leadership is one of the antecedents of sustainable IO. This finding is consistent with (Muradli & Ahmadov, 2019) study, which states that leadership involves a series of processes that can bring an organisation to move or adapt to significant change, define the future, align other parties with the vision, and inspire other parties to face challenges and achieve goals. As an organisational identity, leadership can influence sustainable IO in maintaining existence and achieving competitive advantage. (Okwir et al., 2018) illustrate how complex organisational systems interact and adapt to dynamic environments. An agile leadership atmosphere can help organisations build sustainable IO by developing an identity as an organisation that is responsible, oriented towards sustainable values, innovative, and responsive to change (Cleveland & Cleveland, 2020).

Third, competitive advantage as a result of sustainable IO, as shown in this research, shows that sustainable IO has a positive impact on competitive advantage. This finding found that IO influences the attitudes and behaviour of organisational members to become more competitive. Sustainable IO is defined as unique, irreplaceable, sustainable, and persistent resources (Rockwell, 2019). Sustainable IO can be used to strengthen, support and maintain competitive advantage. This research is also relevant to the RBV theory. RBV focuses on company attributes that are difficult to imitate as a source of superior performance in achieving competitive advantage (Beamish & Chakravarty, 2021). Superior performance is an organisational asset considered unique (idiosyncratic), such as brands and patents identified as determining factors for gaining competitive advantage (Davis & Witt, 2021).

The final hypothesis, namely regarding planned organisational change moderating the positive influence of sustainable IO on competitive advantage, did not find support in this study. Researchers suspect this could be related to several factors, including (1) the high standard deviation of the sustainable organisational change variable and the planned organisational change variable score, which causes high fluctuations. The limited number of samples causes this, so that measurement optimality has not been achieved; (2) tiered levels of communication, which are often influenced by complex bureaucratic structures and lengthy procedures; (3) resistance in an organisation; (4) incompatibility of change strategies with sustainable IO (Cinite & Duxbury, 2018).



Thus, these results highlight the importance of implied state higher education institutions. First, the institution needs to invest the characteristics of anthropomorphism in the organisation's members so they can effectively build a sustainable organisational identity and achieve a higher competitive advantage. Second, the leaders (including leaders, deans, and heads of departments) need to implement an agile leadership style effectively to build a sustainable organisational identity and achieve a higher competitive advantage. Third, state higher education institutions must formulate a strategy that can face uncertainty and sudden change and optimise the role of sustainable organisational identity to achieve competitive advantage.

This research also implies that regulators, especially the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology, formulate a specific regulation. For example, the Indonesian Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology makes regulations that can cover the training of leaders to be agile.

This research also applies to the public in Indonesia. The Indonesian public, especially the student candidates, should evaluate the competitive advantage that state higher education institutions have before they apply and submit their application to be university students.

This research only examines the organisations of state higher education since there are official indicators to evaluate the competitive advantage of state higher education institutions. Future research is expected to examine competitive advantage from other organisations so the results can be generalised to other organisations.

The hypothesis in this research is also unable to confirm the theory of organisational change and development, which focuses more on procedural, structural, or technical aspects of planning and implementing change. The relationship between organisational change, sustainable IO, and competitive advantage can be complex. RBV theory has a limited approach to integrating sustainable IO and competitive advantage. Each organisation has a different context, culture, and challenges; these theories often provide a general framework.

This study acknowledges its limitations and offers recommendations for future research. It recognises its focus on the public sector, specifically Indonesian State Universities (PTN), which may limit the generalizability of findings to similar organisational contexts worldwide. Future studies are encouraged to explore diverse research contexts to comprehensively understand sustainable IO's antecedents, consequences, and moderating factors across various higher education institutions and countries. Additionally, the study views sustainable IO as multidimensional, utilising a modified version of the Organizational Identity Questionnaire (OIQ). Future research could complement this by examining sustainable IO through a unidimensional lens, such as using the Identity-based Reputation Scale.

Furthermore, data collection relied on self-reported measures through cross-sectional questionnaires, suggesting potential biases. Subsequent research could enrich these findings by employing different methodologies like longitudinal studies or mixed methods to provide deeper insights into the construct of sustainable IO. It also highlights the importance of carefully considering sample characteristics for better representativeness. It calls for further exploration of alternative organisational theories to enhance understanding and application of sustainable IO within unique organisational contexts.



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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the invaluable financial support provided by Universitas Gadjah Mada for this research project. The funding has been crucial in enabling the successful completion of all research activities. Furthermore, I am indebted to Universitas Tidar for their generous contribution towards the publication of this article in a reputable journal. The combined support from both institutions has been a driving force behind this research endeavor.

