

Emotional Intelligence and Quality of Work Life in Digital Workplaces: A Conceptual Framework Integrating Digital Work Stress and Digital Resilience

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Abstract:

Digital transformation has fundamentally changed organizational work systems by integrating artificial intelligence, cloud computing, digital collaboration platforms, automation, and advanced communication technologies into everyday business operations. While these developments have improved organizational efficiency and flexibility, they have simultaneously introduced new psychological demands that challenge employee well-being. Continuous digital connectivity, information overload, virtual collaboration, and rapidly evolving technological systems have contributed to increasing levels of digital work stress, making the maintenance of employees' Quality of Work Life (QWL) a significant organizational concern. Existing studies have examined emotional intelligence, digital work stress, digital resilience, and Quality of Work Life largely as independent constructs, resulting in fragmented theoretical explanations of employee adaptation within digitally transformed workplaces. This paper develops an integrated conceptual framework that synthesizes these constructs using the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) Theory and the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory. The framework proposes that emotional intelligence functions as a critical personal resource that enables employees to regulate emotional responses and cope effectively with digital work demands, while digital resilience strengthens employees' capacity to recover from technological disruptions and sustain workplace well-being. Four conceptual postulates are advanced to guide future empirical investigations and theoretical refinement. The paper contributes to organizational behaviour and digital workplace literature by offering a multidisciplinary perspective that links psychological resources with digital work demands. It also discusses theoretical contributions, managerial implications, and future research directions for promoting sustainable employee well-being during organizational digital transformation.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence; digital work stress; digital resilience; quality of work life; digital transformation; employee well-being.

1. Introduction

Digital transformation has become one of the most significant forces shaping contemporary organizations. Advances in artificial intelligence (AI), cloud computing, automation, enterprise resource planning (ERP) systems, big data analytics, the Internet of Things (IoT), and collaborative digital platforms have fundamentally transformed organizational operations and employee work practices. Digital technologies are no longer confined to supporting administrative functions; instead, they have become integral to communication, decision-making, knowledge management, customer engagement, innovation, and strategic planning (Westerman et al., 2014). As organizations increasingly depend on digital technologies to enhance competitiveness and organizational agility, employees are expected to continuously update their digital competencies and adapt to rapidly evolving technological environments (Vial, 2019).

The expansion of digital technologies has generated substantial organizational benefits. Automated processes have improved operational efficiency by reducing repetitive tasks and minimizing human error, while cloud-based systems and collaborative platforms have enhanced communication and knowledge sharing across geographical

boundaries. Similarly, digital technologies have enabled organizations to implement flexible work arrangements, including remote and hybrid work models, thereby expanding access to global talent while providing employees with greater flexibility in balancing professional and personal responsibilities. Kane et al. (2015) argued that successful digital transformation extends beyond technology implementation and requires organizational changes that promote innovation, learning, and workforce adaptability. Consequently, digital transformation has become a strategic priority across manufacturing, healthcare, education, financial services, and public administration.

Despite these advantages, digital transformation has simultaneously introduced new workplace challenges. Employees are increasingly expected to manage multiple digital platforms, process large volumes of information, respond to continuous streams of electronic communication, and rapidly learn emerging technologies. These changing work requirements demand sustained cognitive effort and emotional adjustment, often increasing workplace pressure and psychological strain. Furthermore, the integration of artificial intelligence, algorithm-driven decision-making, and digital performance monitoring has intensified organizational expectations regarding productivity, responsiveness, and continuous availability. As noted by Davenport and Kirby (2016), intelligent technologies are fundamentally changing employee roles by shifting routine work toward higher-order cognitive activities that require continuous learning and adaptation. Consequently, digitally transformed workplaces have become environments where technological opportunities coexist with increasing psychological demands.

One of the most important consequences of this transformation is the emergence of digital work stress. Earlier studies primarily employed the concept of technostress to describe stress arising from the use of information and communication technologies (Brod, 1984). However, the contemporary workplace has evolved substantially beyond traditional computer-based environments. Employees now experience psychological pressure arising from permanent digital connectivity, virtual collaboration, information overload, digital multitasking, artificial intelligence, algorithmic management, and continuous technological adaptation. Tarafdar et al. (2019) argued that technology simultaneously functions as an organizational resource and a workplace stressor, creating a paradox in which digital innovation enhances productivity while increasing employee stress. Consequently, the broader concept of digital work stress more accurately reflects the multidimensional challenges experienced by employees in digitally intensive workplaces.

2. Theoretical Foundation

2.1 Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) Theory

The Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) Theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding employee well-being by explaining the interaction between workplace demands and available resources. According to Demerouti et al. (2001), every occupation comprises job demands, which require sustained physical or psychological effort, and job resources, which help employees achieve work goals, reduce stress, and promote personal development. The model has been widely applied to explain employee engagement, burnout, and organizational performance across diverse work settings (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). In digitally transformed organizations, continuous connectivity, information overload, technology complexity, and virtual collaboration constitute important digital job demands that may increase employees' psychological strain (Tarafdar et al., 2019). Conversely, emotional intelligence and digital resilience function as valuable personal resources that enable employees to regulate emotions, adapt to technological changes, and cope effectively with digital work stress (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). Therefore, the JD–R Theory provides an appropriate theoretical foundation for explaining how digital work demands influence employees' Quality of Work Life.

2.2 Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory

The Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory explains workplace stress by proposing that individuals strive to acquire, preserve, and protect valuable personal and organizational resources. Hobfoll (1989) argued that stress occurs when resources are threatened, lost, or insufficient to meet environmental demands. These resources include emotional capabilities, knowledge, social support, energy, and psychological resilience. Employees possessing stronger personal resources are generally more capable of adapting to challenging work environments and recovering from stressful experiences (Halbesleben et al., 2014). Within digitally transformed organizations,

continuous technological change, digital communication, and increasing work complexity require employees to invest substantial cognitive and emotional resources. Emotional intelligence enables employees to regulate emotional responses during technological uncertainty, while digital resilience strengthens adaptive learning and recovery from digital disruptions (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013). Accordingly, the COR Theory complements the JD–R Theory by explaining why employees differ in their ability to cope with digital work stress and maintain a higher Quality of Work Life.

3. Critical Literature review

A critical review of the existing literature reveals three important research gaps. First, relatively few conceptual studies have integrated emotional intelligence, digital work stress, digital resilience, and Quality of Work Life within a single theoretical framework capable of explaining employee well-being in digitally transformed organizations. Second, previous studies have largely focused on direct relationships among individual constructs while paying comparatively less attention to the interaction between technological job demands and employees' psychological resources. Third, despite increasing recognition of digital resilience, limited attention has been devoted to its strategic role in supporting employee adaptation during continuous digital transformation.

To address these gaps, the present paper develops a conceptual framework integrating emotional intelligence, digital work stress, digital resilience, and Quality of Work Life. The framework is grounded in the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) Theory proposed by Demerouti et al. (2001) and the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory developed by Hobfoll (1989). Together, these complementary theoretical perspectives explain how employees respond to demanding work environments, preserve psychological resources, and maintain well-being under conditions of continuous technological change. Integrating these theories provides a comprehensive explanation of employee adaptation within digitally transformed organizations.

The paper makes three important contributions to the literature. First, it integrates four complementary constructs into a unified conceptual framework that advances understanding of employee well-being in digital workplaces. Second, it extends existing theory by conceptualizing digital work stress as a multidimensional organizational challenge reflecting technological, cognitive, and emotional demands associated with contemporary digital work environments. Third, it develops a set of conceptual postulates that provide a theoretical foundation for future empirical research while offering practical guidance for organizations seeking to achieve sustainable digital transformation through human-centred management practices.

3.1 Emotional Intelligence in Digital Workplaces

Emotional intelligence (EI) has emerged as one of the most influential constructs in organizational behaviour because it explains how individuals recognize, understand, regulate, and apply emotions in workplace interactions. The concept was first introduced by Salovey and Mayer (1990), who described emotional intelligence as a form of social intelligence involving the ability to monitor one's own emotions and those of others, discriminate among emotional states, and use emotional information to guide thinking and behaviour. This conceptualization challenged the traditional emphasis on cognitive intelligence by proposing that emotional competencies are equally important for effective decision-making and workplace performance.

The theoretical understanding of emotional intelligence expanded considerably during the following decade. Mayer and Salovey (1997) refined the construct by proposing the four-branch ability model comprising emotional perception, emotional facilitation of thought, emotional understanding, and emotional regulation. Unlike conventional intelligence measures, this model emphasized that emotional abilities enable individuals to process emotional information systematically and apply it to problem-solving and interpersonal relationships. Petrides and Furnham (2001) subsequently differentiated between ability-based emotional intelligence and trait emotional intelligence, arguing that emotional self-perceptions also play a significant role in determining workplace behaviour and psychological adjustment. These developments broadened the theoretical foundations of emotional intelligence and stimulated extensive organizational research.

Alternative conceptualizations further strengthened the practical relevance of emotional intelligence in organizational settings. Bar-On (2006) proposed that emotional intelligence comprises emotional and social

competencies, including self-awareness, interpersonal skills, adaptability, stress management, and general mood. This multidimensional perspective shifted attention from emotional abilities alone toward broader psychological capabilities that enable individuals to respond effectively to environmental demands. Similarly, Goleman (1998) emphasized that emotional intelligence is fundamental to leadership effectiveness because emotionally competent leaders inspire trust, motivate employees, and create supportive organizational cultures that facilitate long-term performance.

The importance of emotional intelligence has increased substantially as organizations have become more knowledge-intensive and collaborative. Modern workplaces require employees to communicate effectively across functional, cultural, and geographical boundaries while simultaneously managing interpersonal conflicts and organizational change. According to Cherniss (2010), emotionally intelligent employees demonstrate superior emotional regulation, stronger interpersonal relationships, and greater adaptability under stressful conditions. These competencies contribute to improved collaboration, reduced workplace conflict, and higher organizational effectiveness. Boyatzis (2008) similarly argued that emotional competencies represent critical managerial capabilities that distinguish outstanding performers from average employees across diverse organizational contexts.

Research has consistently demonstrated the positive relationship between emotional intelligence and workplace outcomes. O'Boyle et al. (2011), through a comprehensive meta-analysis, reported that emotional intelligence contributes significantly to job performance beyond traditional measures of cognitive intelligence and personality. Joseph and Newman (2010) further found that emotional intelligence enhances employee performance by improving emotional labour, communication quality, and interpersonal effectiveness. These findings indicate that emotional intelligence is not merely a desirable personal attribute but an important organizational resource influencing employee effectiveness and workplace sustainability.

The relevance of emotional intelligence has become even more pronounced within digitally transformed workplaces. Digital technologies have fundamentally altered communication patterns by replacing many face-to-face interactions with virtual meetings, enterprise messaging systems, cloud-based collaboration platforms, and asynchronous communication channels. Such digital environments frequently reduce non-verbal communication cues, increasing the likelihood of misunderstanding, interpersonal conflict, and emotional detachment. Huy (1999) argued that emotional capability enables organizations to adapt successfully to continuous change by strengthening employees' capacity to regulate emotions and maintain productive relationships during periods of uncertainty. Consequently, emotional intelligence has become increasingly important for sustaining effective collaboration in technology-mediated work environments.

The widespread adoption of remote and hybrid work has further reinforced the importance of emotional intelligence. Virtual teams rely heavily on trust, empathy, communication, and relationship management because opportunities for informal interaction are considerably reduced. Druskat and Wolff (2001) demonstrated that emotionally competent teams establish behavioural norms that strengthen cooperation, mutual trust, and collective performance. Likewise, Gooty et al. (2010) observed that emotionally intelligent employees are better equipped to interpret emotional cues within virtual communication, thereby improving collaboration despite geographical separation and cultural diversity.

Another significant contribution of emotional intelligence concerns employee well-being. Employees possessing stronger emotional competencies generally demonstrate greater resilience when responding to organizational challenges and workplace uncertainty. Schutte et al. (2007) found that emotional intelligence is positively associated with psychological health and negatively associated with emotional exhaustion. Kotsou et al. (2019) further reported that emotional intelligence training improves emotional regulation, adaptive coping, and psychological well-being, suggesting that emotional competencies can be systematically developed within organizations. These findings are particularly relevant for digitally intensive workplaces, where employees continuously experience technological change, increasing cognitive demands, and evolving organizational expectations.

Recent studies have also linked emotional intelligence with employees' capacity to manage digital work stress. Miao et al. (2017) demonstrated that emotionally intelligent employees regulate workplace emotions more effectively, reducing the adverse effects of occupational stress on job attitudes and organizational commitment. In digitally transformed organizations, where employees must continuously adapt to new technologies and changing work processes, emotional intelligence enables individuals to interpret technological challenges as manageable rather than threatening. Consequently, emotionally intelligent employees generally exhibit greater adaptability, stronger learning orientation, and higher confidence during digital transformation initiatives.

Despite extensive scholarly attention, important limitations remain within the existing literature. Most empirical studies continue to examine emotional intelligence in relation to leadership effectiveness, organizational commitment, or employee performance, while comparatively limited attention has been devoted to its strategic role within digitally intensive workplaces. Furthermore, emotional intelligence has frequently been investigated independently from digital work stress and digital resilience, limiting theoretical understanding of how these constructs collectively influence employees' Quality of Work Life during digital transformation. Existing research therefore provides only a partial explanation of employee adaptation within increasingly technology-dependent organizational environments.

Drawing upon the reviewed literature, the present study conceptualizes emotional intelligence as a strategic psychological resource that supports employee adaptation within digitally transformed workplaces. Rather than viewing emotional intelligence solely as an individual competency, the proposed framework positions it as a multidimensional capability that strengthens emotional regulation, interpersonal effectiveness, technological adaptability, and psychological well-being. By integrating emotional intelligence with digital work stress, digital resilience, and Quality of Work Life, the study advances a more comprehensive explanation of employee well-being in the digital era.

3.2 Digital Work Stress as a Contemporary Job Demand

The increasing dependence on digital technologies has fundamentally transformed the nature of work and introduced new forms of occupational stress. The earliest attempt to explain technology-related stress was made by Brod (1984), who introduced the concept of technostress to describe the inability of individuals to cope effectively with computer technologies. Since then, workplaces have evolved far beyond traditional computing environments, incorporating cloud computing, artificial intelligence (AI), enterprise applications, mobile technologies, and virtual collaboration platforms. Consequently, scholars have increasingly argued that the broader concept of digital work stress provides a more comprehensive explanation of employees' psychological experiences in technology-intensive organizations.

Digital work stress refers to the psychological strain that arises when employees perceive that digital workplace demands exceed their cognitive, emotional, or behavioural resources. Unlike conventional occupational stress, it develops gradually through continuous interaction with digital technologies rather than isolated workplace events. Ayyagari et al. (2011) observed that frequent technological changes, complex information systems, and increasing digital demands collectively contribute to higher levels of employee stress. These challenges require continuous adaptation, making digital work stress one of the defining characteristics of modern organizations.

Information overload has emerged as one of the most widely discussed dimensions of digital work stress. The unprecedented growth of digital communication enables organizations to generate and disseminate information almost instantaneously. While rapid information exchange enhances organizational responsiveness, employees frequently struggle to process excessive volumes of information within limited time. According to Eppler and Mengis (2004), excessive information reduces employees' capacity to prioritize tasks, make effective decisions, and maintain sustained concentration. Consequently, information overload has become an important contributor to cognitive fatigue and declining workplace well-being.

Continuous digital connectivity represents another major source of workplace stress. Advances in mobile technologies, enterprise communication platforms, and cloud-based collaboration systems have enabled employees to remain connected regardless of time or location. Although these technologies increase

organizational flexibility, they simultaneously reduce employees' opportunities for psychological recovery. Mazmanian et al. (2013) demonstrated that continuous connectivity creates an autonomy paradox in which greater technological flexibility is accompanied by increasing expectations of permanent availability. As professional and personal boundaries become increasingly blurred, employees experience higher levels of emotional exhaustion and work–life conflict.

Technology complexity also contributes significantly to digital work stress. Organizations continuously introduce new software platforms, cybersecurity procedures, artificial intelligence applications, and digital workflows, requiring employees to update their knowledge while maintaining productivity. Frequent technological change may generate uncertainty, particularly among employees who perceive themselves as lacking adequate digital competence. Ragu-Nathan et al. (2008) found that technology complexity, technology overload, and technology uncertainty significantly increase employees' perceptions of workplace stress and reduce overall job satisfaction.

The rapid emergence of artificial intelligence has further expanded the nature of digital work stress. AI-enabled systems increasingly support decision-making, automate routine tasks, monitor employee performance, and influence work allocation. While these developments improve organizational efficiency, they also create uncertainty regarding professional roles, skill requirements, and career security. Jarrahi (2018) argued that the future workplace will increasingly depend on collaboration between humans and intelligent systems, requiring employees to develop new competencies while simultaneously adapting to changing organizational expectations. Such continuous adaptation may intensify psychological demands, particularly among employees with limited confidence in emerging technologies.

Recent research also emphasizes that digital work stress cannot be explained solely by technological characteristics. Organizational culture, leadership support, communication practices, and workload management significantly influence employees' perceptions of digital demands. Califf et al. (2020) reported that supportive organizational environments reduce the negative consequences of technology-related stress by improving employee confidence and facilitating adaptive coping strategies. This finding suggests that digital work stress results from the interaction between technological demands and organizational context rather than technology itself.

Another emerging concern is digital fatigue, which has gained prominence following the expansion of remote and hybrid work arrangements. Prolonged exposure to virtual meetings, continuous screen interaction, and extensive digital communication contributes to mental exhaustion and reduced attentional capacity. Bailenson (2021) explained that prolonged video conferencing increases cognitive effort because employees continuously process visual information while remaining highly self-aware of their digital presence. Consequently, digital fatigue has become an increasingly important component of employees' overall digital work stress.

Despite substantial advances in technology-related stress research, the literature remains conceptually fragmented. Researchers continue to employ different terms such as technostress, ICT stress, information overload, digital fatigue, and digital stress to describe closely related phenomena. This diversity has enriched the literature but has also limited theoretical integration and reduced conceptual consistency across studies. The present paper therefore adopts the broader concept of digital work stress to encompass the multiple technological, cognitive, emotional, and organizational demands experienced by employees in digitally transformed workplaces.

Within the proposed conceptual framework, digital work stress is positioned as the principal job demand influencing employees' Quality of Work Life. However, its impact is unlikely to be uniform across individuals because employees differ in their emotional competencies and adaptive capabilities. This observation provides the theoretical basis for examining emotional intelligence and digital resilience as complementary personal resources that may reduce the adverse consequences of digital work stress and contribute to sustainable employee well-being.

3.3 Digital Resilience as an Adaptive Capability

Continuous technological change has increased the importance of employees' ability to adapt successfully to digital work environments. While technical competence enables employees to perform digital tasks effectively,

successful adaptation requires broader psychological capabilities that support learning, flexibility, and recovery during technological change. This capability is increasingly described as digital resilience.

Digital resilience represents an individual's capacity to adapt positively to digital transformation, recover from technology-related challenges, and continue functioning effectively despite continuous technological change. Unlike general psychological resilience, digital resilience specifically addresses adaptation within technology-intensive organizational environments. It combines confidence in using digital technologies, willingness to learn new systems, psychological flexibility, and the ability to recover from technological disruptions.

The emergence of digital resilience reflects the recognition that technological change has become a permanent organizational reality rather than an occasional event. Employees are expected to update digital skills continuously, integrate new technologies into daily work, and respond positively to changing organizational processes. Those who possess stronger digital resilience generally perceive technological change as an opportunity for development rather than a source of uncertainty.

An important component of digital resilience is continuous learning. Digital transformation requires employees to acquire new competencies throughout their careers. Employees who actively engage in learning demonstrate greater confidence during technological transitions and are more likely to adopt innovative work practices. Learning orientation therefore strengthens employees' capacity to cope with changing digital environments.

Digital resilience also includes psychological recovery. Technology failures, software updates, cybersecurity incidents, and changing organizational systems are unavoidable features of digital workplaces. Employees possessing higher digital resilience recover more rapidly from these challenges because they maintain confidence in their ability to adapt and solve problems. Consequently, they experience lower levels of frustration and sustain higher levels of workplace engagement.

Organizations also influence the development of digital resilience. Leadership support, continuous learning opportunities, mentoring, collaborative organizational cultures, and accessible technical assistance encourage employees to develop adaptive capabilities. Digital resilience should therefore be viewed as both an individual capability and an organizational outcome that can be strengthened through appropriate management practices.

Although digital resilience has attracted increasing scholarly attention, conceptual development remains limited. Existing studies define the construct differently and frequently examine it independently from emotional intelligence and employee well-being. Little research has investigated how digital resilience interacts with digital work stress to influence Quality of Work Life.

The present paper addresses this limitation by conceptualizing digital resilience as a strategic adaptive capability that complements emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence primarily supports emotional regulation, whereas digital resilience facilitates behavioural adaptation and technological learning. Together, these capabilities strengthen employees' capacity to maintain well-being during continuous digital transformation.

3.4 Quality of Work Life

Growing digital work stress has significant implications for employees' Quality of Work Life (QWL). Quality of Work Life is widely recognized as a multidimensional construct reflecting employees' perceptions of physical, psychological, social, and professional well-being within the workplace. Walton (1973) proposed that QWL encompasses dimensions such as fair compensation, safe working conditions, opportunities for growth, constitutionalism, social integration, work-life balance, and the social relevance of work. More recently, Sirgy et al. (2001) argued that employees evaluate workplace quality according to the extent to which work satisfies their economic, social, developmental, and psychological needs. However, the rapid digitalization of work suggests that these traditional dimensions require further expansion because employees increasingly evaluate workplace quality according to their ability to manage digital work demands while maintaining psychological well-being and professional satisfaction.

Employees do not respond uniformly to digital workplace demands because individual psychological capabilities influence how technological change is interpreted, managed, and integrated into everyday work practices. Among

these capabilities, emotional intelligence has emerged as one of the most influential constructs within organizational behaviour research. Salovey and Mayer (1990) defined emotional intelligence as the ability to perceive, understand, regulate, and utilize emotions effectively. Subsequent research demonstrated that emotionally intelligent employees generally exhibit greater emotional regulation, interpersonal effectiveness, adaptability, and resilience during periods of organizational change (George, 2000). These capabilities become increasingly valuable within digitally transformed workplaces where virtual communication, technological uncertainty, and continuous learning have become integral aspects of organizational life.

Another capability receiving growing scholarly attention is digital resilience. Although resilience has traditionally been examined within psychology and organizational behaviour, recent research has extended the concept to digital work environments. Digital resilience refers to an individual's capacity to adapt successfully to technological change, recover from digital disruptions, continuously acquire new technological competencies, and maintain effective performance in digitally intensive work environments. Fletcher and Sarkar (2013) emphasized that resilience is a dynamic process that enables individuals to respond positively to changing environmental demands rather than merely recovering from adversity. Applied to digital workplaces, this perspective suggests that employees possessing stronger digital resilience are more confident when adopting new technologies, demonstrate greater adaptability during digital transformation, and are less likely to experience prolonged psychological strain associated with digital work demands.

Although emotional intelligence, digital work stress, digital resilience, and Quality of Work Life have each attracted considerable scholarly attention, these constructs have largely developed within separate academic traditions. Emotional intelligence has predominantly been examined within organizational behaviour, leadership, and psychology research (Bar-On, 2006). Digital work stress has evolved mainly within information systems and technology management literature (Ayyagari et al., 2011). Quality of Work Life has traditionally been investigated within human resource management and occupational health (Sirgy et al., 2001), whereas digital resilience has emerged more recently within organizational resilience, digital transformation, and information systems research (Bardoel et al., 2014). This disciplinary separation has resulted in fragmented theoretical explanations of employee adaptation within digitally transformed workplaces.

3.5 Critical Synthesis and Research Gap

The preceding review demonstrates that emotional intelligence, digital work stress, digital resilience, and Quality of Work Life have each emerged as significant areas of inquiry within organizational research. Although these constructs have received substantial scholarly attention, they have largely evolved within separate disciplinary domains, including organizational behaviour, information systems, occupational psychology, human resource management, and organizational resilience. Consequently, theoretical explanations of employee adaptation in digitally transformed workplaces remain fragmented and lack an integrated perspective. As noted by Grant et al. (2014), digital transformation requires multidisciplinary approaches because technological changes simultaneously influence employee behaviour, organizational processes, and workplace well-being.

Research on emotional intelligence has consistently demonstrated its positive influence on leadership effectiveness, organizational commitment, employee engagement, and interpersonal relationships. Studies have shown that emotionally intelligent employees regulate emotions more effectively, communicate constructively, and demonstrate greater adaptability during organizational change (O'Boyle et al., 2011). Likewise, Joseph and Newman (2010) reported that emotional intelligence contributes significantly to job performance through improved emotional regulation and interpersonal competence. However, most studies continue to examine emotional intelligence within conventional organizational settings, while comparatively limited attention has been devoted to understanding its strategic role in digitally intensive workplaces characterized by artificial intelligence, virtual collaboration, and continuous technological change.

Similarly, research on digital work stress has evolved considerably from early investigations of technostress to broader examinations of technology-enabled workplace demands. Scholars have examined information overload, technology complexity, continuous connectivity, electronic interruptions, virtual communication, and digital fatigue as important sources of employee stress (Ayyagari et al., 2011). More recent studies have highlighted the

influence of artificial intelligence, algorithmic management, and hybrid work arrangements on employee well-being (Molino et al., 2020). Nevertheless, much of the existing literature continues to adopt a technology-centred perspective by focusing primarily on technological stressors while paying comparatively less attention to the psychological capabilities that enable employees to adapt successfully to digitally transformed work environments.

Quality of Work Life research has also undergone significant conceptual development. Traditional frameworks emphasized fair compensation, safe working conditions, employee participation, and opportunities for career advancement as the primary determinants of workplace quality (Sirgy et al., 2001). Contemporary workplaces, however, increasingly require employees to function within digitally mediated environments characterized by remote work, virtual collaboration, and continuous technological learning. Guest (2017) argued that employee well-being should be viewed as a strategic organizational objective rather than merely an outcome of human resource practices. Despite these developments, relatively few studies have examined how emotional intelligence, digital work stress, and digital resilience collectively influence employees' Quality of Work Life within digitally transformed organizations.

Digital resilience represents the newest and least integrated construct among the four variables reviewed in this study. Existing research primarily conceptualizes digital resilience as an individual's ability to adapt to technological disruption, recover from digital setbacks, and sustain effective performance under conditions of continuous technological change (Bardoel et al., 2014). Fletcher and Sarkar (2013) further emphasized resilience as a dynamic process involving adaptation rather than simple recovery from adversity. However, digital resilience has frequently been examined within information systems, education, or organizational resilience literature without adequate integration into organizational behaviour research. Consequently, limited theoretical attention has been devoted to understanding how digital resilience interacts with emotional intelligence and digital work stress in shaping employees' workplace experiences.

Another important limitation concerns the predominance of linear models within the existing literature. Most empirical investigations examine direct relationships between pairs of variables, such as emotional intelligence and job performance, technostress and burnout, or resilience and employee well-being. While these studies have generated valuable insights, they provide only partial explanations of employee adaptation within digitally transformed workplaces. Modern organizational environments are characterized by complex interactions among technological demands, individual psychological resources, organizational support, leadership practices, and workplace culture. As observed by Day et al. (2014), sustainable organizational adaptation requires understanding these interconnected influences rather than examining individual variables in isolation.

The review also indicates that traditional conceptualizations of technostress no longer adequately reflect the realities of contemporary digital workplaces. Artificial intelligence, machine learning, algorithmic management, cloud computing, enterprise collaboration platforms, and permanent digital connectivity have fundamentally changed employees' work experiences. These developments have expanded the nature of workplace stress beyond technology use alone, necessitating broader conceptualizations that encompass cognitive, emotional, behavioural, and organizational dimensions of digital work (Tarafdar et al., 2019). The concept of digital work stress therefore provides a more comprehensive explanation of employees' psychological experiences within digitally transformed organizations.

Based on the critical synthesis of the literature, this paper proposes an integrated conceptual framework that brings together emotional intelligence, digital work stress, digital resilience, and Quality of Work Life within a single theoretical model. Grounded in the Job Demands–Resources Theory (Demerouti et al., 2001) and the Conservation of Resources Theory (Hobfoll, 1989), the proposed framework explains how employees' emotional and adaptive resources influence their responses to digital workplace demands and ultimately shape their Quality of Work Life. The following section presents the proposed conceptual framework and develops the conceptual postulates that constitute the principal theoretical contribution of this study.

4. Proposed Conceptual Framework

Figure 1. Proposed Conceptual Framework

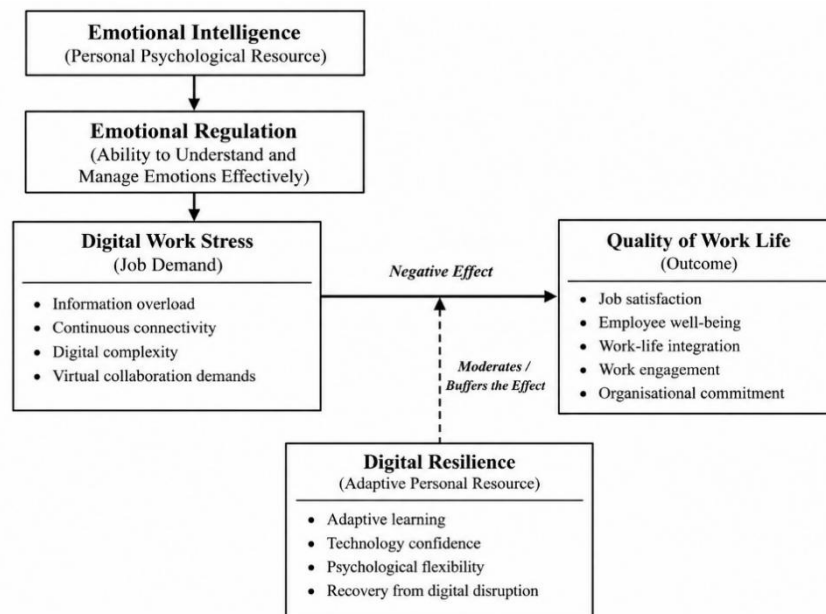


Figure 1

presents the proposed conceptual framework. Emotional intelligence acts as a personal psychological resource that shapes employees' responses to digital workplace demands. Digital work stress represents the psychological mechanism through which digital job demands influence employee well-being. Digital resilience strengthens employees' adaptive capacity by reducing the adverse effects of digital work stress and supporting favourable workplace experiences. Together, these constructs explain how employees maintain a satisfactory Quality of Work Life within digitally transformed organizations.

The rapid pace of digital transformation has fundamentally redefined organizational work environments by embedding digital technologies into nearly every aspect of business operations. Advances in artificial intelligence (AI), cloud computing, enterprise information systems, big data analytics, intelligent automation, and virtual collaboration platforms have transformed how employees communicate, make decisions, solve problems, and perform routine tasks. These technological developments have enhanced organizational efficiency, flexibility, and innovation while simultaneously creating new cognitive, emotional, and behavioural demands for employees (Vial, 2019). Consequently, employee well-being in contemporary organizations should no longer be viewed solely as an outcome of organizational policies or human resource practices but rather as the result of a continuous interaction between digital job demands and employees' psychological resources (Demerouti et al., 2001).

The literature reviewed in the preceding sections demonstrates that emotional intelligence, digital work stress, digital resilience, and Quality of Work Life represent closely related constructs that collectively influence employees' workplace experiences. Nevertheless, previous studies have generally examined these variables independently or through isolated direct relationships. Emotional intelligence has predominantly been associated with leadership effectiveness and employee performance (Joseph & Newman, 2010), digital work stress has been examined mainly from an information systems perspective (Tarafdar et al., 2019), Quality of Work Life has traditionally been investigated within human resource management (Sirgy et al., 2001), and digital resilience has largely evolved within organizational resilience and digital transformation research (Bardoel et al., 2014). The absence of an integrated theoretical perspective has limited understanding of how these constructs interact to influence employee well-being in digitally transformed workplaces.

The proposed conceptual framework addresses this gap by integrating these four constructs within a unified theoretical model grounded in the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) Theory and the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory. The framework conceptualizes employee well-being as a dynamic process in which technological demands interact continuously with employees' emotional and adaptive capabilities. This perspective is consistent with the argument of Xanthopoulou et al. (2007), who emphasized that personal resources strengthen employees' capacity to cope with demanding work environments while sustaining motivation and psychological well-being.

Within the proposed framework, emotional intelligence functions as the principal personal psychological resource influencing employees' responses to digitally intensive work environments. Employees possessing higher emotional intelligence demonstrate greater self-awareness, emotional regulation, empathy, and interpersonal competence, enabling them to interpret technological challenges more constructively and respond effectively to organizational change (Bar-On, 2006). Rather than perceiving technological uncertainty as a threat, emotionally intelligent employees are more likely to regulate negative emotions, maintain constructive workplace relationships, and adapt successfully to changing digital work requirements. As argued by Goleman (1998), emotional competence enables employees to maintain effective performance under conditions of increasing organizational complexity and continuous change.

Digital work stress occupies the central position within the framework because it represents employees' immediate psychological response to technology-enabled job demands. Contemporary workplaces require employees to process vast amounts of digital information, collaborate through virtual platforms, respond continuously to electronic communication, and learn emerging technologies within increasingly compressed timeframes. These demands generate cognitive overload, emotional exhaustion, and psychological strain when employees perceive that available personal resources are insufficient to cope effectively (Ayyagari et al., 2011). Consistent with the JD–R perspective, the framework proposes that digital work stress arises not merely from technology itself but from employees' subjective evaluation of technology-related demands relative to their available psychological resources (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014).

The framework further positions digital resilience as a complementary adaptive capability that strengthens employees' ability to cope with digital workplace challenges. While emotional intelligence primarily facilitates emotional regulation and interpersonal adaptation, digital resilience emphasizes continuous learning, technological confidence, psychological flexibility, and recovery from digital disruptions (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013). Employees possessing stronger digital resilience are more likely to embrace technological innovation, recover rapidly from technology-related setbacks, and maintain confidence during periods of organizational digital transformation. Luthans (2002) suggested that resilience enables employees to transform workplace challenges into opportunities for learning and professional growth, thereby reducing the adverse psychological consequences of continuous organizational change.

The interaction among these personal resources ultimately influences employees' Quality of Work Life. Employees who successfully regulate emotions, adapt to emerging technologies, and recover from digital challenges are more likely to experience higher levels of psychological well-being, work engagement, organizational commitment, and work-life integration. Conversely, employees experiencing persistent digital work stress in the absence of adequate emotional and adaptive resources are more vulnerable to emotional exhaustion, declining job satisfaction, reduced organizational commitment, and poorer overall Quality of Work Life (Guest, 2017). The framework therefore conceptualizes Quality of Work Life as the cumulative outcome of employees' ability to balance increasing technological demands with available psychological resources.

The proposed conceptual framework extends existing literature in several important ways. First, it integrates four previously fragmented research streams into a comprehensive explanation of employee adaptation within digitally transformed workplaces. Second, it reconceptualizes digital work stress as a multidimensional organizational challenge influenced by both technological demands and employees' psychological capabilities. Third, it positions emotional intelligence and digital resilience as complementary personal resources that jointly reduce the adverse effects of digital work stress while strengthening employee well-being. Finally, by integrating the Job Demands–Resources Theory with the Conservation of Resources Theory, the framework provides a stronger theoretical

foundation for explaining sustainable employee adaptation within increasingly digital organizational environments (Halbesleben et al., 2014).

Overall, the proposed framework suggests that successful digital transformation depends not only on technological investment but also on the development of employees' emotional competence and adaptive resilience. Organizations that simultaneously strengthen digital capability and human capability are more likely to achieve sustainable organizational performance while preserving employee well-being. Accordingly, the conceptual framework presented in this study provides the theoretical basis for the conceptual postulates developed in the following section and offers a comprehensive foundation for future empirical investigation into employee well-being in the digital era.

5. Conceptual Postulates

Conceptual papers seek to advance theory by proposing theoretically grounded propositions rather than empirically testable hypotheses. Drawing upon the literature synthesis and theoretical integration presented in this paper, four conceptual postulates are proposed.

Postulate 1

Emotional intelligence functions as a strategic personal resource that enables employees to regulate emotional responses and cope effectively with digital workplace demands.

Employees possessing higher emotional intelligence are expected to interpret technological change more positively, regulate emotional reactions more effectively, and demonstrate greater psychological stability during digital transformation. Consequently, emotional intelligence strengthens employees' capacity to adapt successfully to technology-intensive work environments.

Postulate 2

Digital work stress represents a critical psychological mechanism through which increasing digital workplace demands influence employees' Quality of Work Life.

Continuous exposure to digital technologies, information overload, virtual collaboration, and permanent connectivity consumes employees' cognitive and emotional resources. When these demands remain unmanaged, employees experience declining workplace well-being, reduced work-life integration, and lower overall Quality of Work Life.

Postulate 3

Digital resilience strengthens employees' adaptive capacity by reducing the negative consequences of digital work stress during organizational digital transformation.

Employees with stronger digital resilience recover more quickly from technological disruption, adapt more confidently to new digital systems, and sustain effective performance despite continuous technological change. Consequently, digital resilience serves as an important adaptive capability supporting employee well-being.

6. Discussion

The rapid expansion of digital technologies has fundamentally transformed the relationship between employees and organizations. While digital transformation has generated significant improvements in organizational efficiency, flexibility, and innovation, it has also introduced new psychological demands that challenge employee well-being. The proposed conceptual framework advances existing knowledge by integrating emotional intelligence, digital work stress, digital resilience, and Quality of Work Life into a unified theoretical model grounded in the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) Theory and the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory. Unlike earlier studies that examined these constructs independently, the present framework explains employee well-being as a dynamic outcome of the interaction between digital job demands and employees' psychological resources (Demerouti et al., 2001).

The proposed model reinforces the central assumption of the JD–R Theory that employee well-being depends on balancing workplace demands with available personal and organizational resources. In digitally transformed organizations, employees experience increasing demands arising from continuous digital connectivity, virtual collaboration, information overload, artificial intelligence, and rapidly evolving technologies. These technology-enabled demands require sustained cognitive and emotional effort and may gradually contribute to digital work stress when employees perceive that available resources are insufficient (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). The framework therefore extends the application of the JD–R model by positioning digital work stress as a contemporary job demand that reflects the realities of modern digital workplaces rather than traditional occupational stress alone (Tarafdar et al., 2019).

The framework further demonstrates the complementary relevance of the Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory in explaining individual differences in employees' responses to digital transformation. According to COR Theory, individuals continuously strive to obtain, preserve, and protect valuable psychological resources, and stress emerges when these resources are threatened or depleted (Hobfoll, 1989). Employees possessing higher emotional intelligence and stronger digital resilience are likely to maintain greater psychological stability because these personal resources enable them to regulate emotions, adapt to technological uncertainty, and recover more effectively from digital disruptions. Consequently, the integration of JD–R and COR theories provides a richer explanation of employee adaptation than either theory independently.

One of the principal contributions of the proposed framework lies in reconceptualizing digital work stress beyond the traditional notion of technostress. Earlier research primarily focused on stress associated with information and communication technologies, whereas contemporary digital workplaces expose employees to broader technological demands, including artificial intelligence, algorithmic management, hybrid work arrangements, continuous digital communication, and digital performance monitoring (Ayyagari et al., 2011). The concept of digital work stress therefore reflects a broader psychological phenomenon that incorporates cognitive overload, emotional strain, technological complexity, and continuous adaptation. This broader conceptualization aligns with recent developments in digital workplace research that emphasize the human consequences of digital transformation (Molino et al., 2020).

The framework also advances the organizational behaviour literature by positioning emotional intelligence as a strategic psychological resource rather than merely a leadership competency. Previous studies have consistently demonstrated that emotionally intelligent employees regulate emotions more effectively, establish stronger interpersonal relationships, and perform better under stressful conditions (Joseph & Newman, 2010). The present framework extends these findings by proposing that emotional intelligence also enhances employees' capacity to interpret technological change positively and cope with digital workplace demands. This interpretation supports the argument that emotional competencies are becoming increasingly important as organizations rely more extensively on virtual collaboration, geographically dispersed teams, and technology-mediated communication (Cherniss, 2010).

Another important contribution concerns digital resilience. Although resilience has traditionally been examined within psychology and organizational resilience literature, comparatively limited research has investigated its specific role in digitally intensive workplaces. The proposed framework conceptualizes digital resilience as an adaptive capability that enables employees to learn continuously, recover from technological disruptions, maintain confidence in adopting new systems, and respond positively to ongoing digital transformation. This perspective is consistent with the view that resilience is not merely recovery from adversity but a dynamic capability supporting continuous adaptation under changing environmental conditions (Fletcher & Sarkar, 2013). By integrating digital resilience with emotional intelligence, the framework provides a more comprehensive explanation of employees' capacity to sustain well-being during technological change.

The proposed framework further contributes by expanding the traditional understanding of Quality of Work Life. Earlier studies primarily associated QWL with organizational policies, compensation, working conditions, career development, and work–life balance (Walton, 1973). Contemporary organizations, however, increasingly require employees to perform within digitally connected environments where psychological adaptation to technology has

become equally important. The present framework therefore suggests that Quality of Work Life should also encompass employees' ability to manage digital work demands while maintaining emotional well-being, technological confidence, work engagement, and sustainable work–life integration. This broader interpretation reflects the evolving nature of work within digitally transformed organizations and complements more recent conceptualizations of employee well-being (Guest, 2017).

Another important implication emerging from the framework concerns the interaction among psychological resources. Rather than functioning independently, emotional intelligence and digital resilience appear to complement one another in reducing the negative consequences of digital work stress. Emotional intelligence primarily supports emotional regulation, interpersonal effectiveness, and adaptive communication, whereas digital resilience strengthens technological confidence, behavioural flexibility, and recovery from digital challenges. Together, these complementary resources enhance employees' ability to cope with increasingly complex digital work environments. This integrated perspective moves beyond earlier linear models by recognizing that employee adaptation results from the combined influence of multiple psychological capabilities rather than a single organizational or technological factor (Xanthopoulou et al., 2007).

The discussion also highlights the practical relevance of adopting a human-centred perspective toward digital transformation. Organizations frequently invest substantial resources in advanced technologies while paying comparatively less attention to employees' emotional and adaptive capabilities. The proposed framework suggests that sustainable digital transformation depends not only on technological infrastructure but also on investments in emotional intelligence development, digital learning, supportive leadership, and organizational practices that strengthen employee resilience. Such an approach is consistent with recent arguments that successful digital transformation requires simultaneous development of technological capability and human capability (Vial, 2019).

Finally, the proposed framework establishes a strong theoretical platform for future empirical research. The conceptual postulates developed in this study provide opportunities for quantitative validation across different industries, organizational contexts, and national cultures. Future research may also examine potential mediating and moderating variables, including digital competence, psychological safety, perceived organizational support, leadership style, organizational learning, and digital organizational culture. Such investigations would further refine understanding of employee adaptation within increasingly digital work environments and contribute to the development of more comprehensive theories of sustainable employee well-being (Day et al., 2014).

Overall, the discussion demonstrates that employee well-being in the digital era cannot be explained solely through technological factors or traditional human resource practices. Instead, it emerges from the continuous interaction between digital job demands and employees' emotional and adaptive resources. By integrating emotional intelligence, digital work stress, digital resilience, and Quality of Work Life within the complementary perspectives of the JD–R and COR theories, the present study provides a more holistic explanation of employee adaptation during digital transformation and offers a meaningful foundation for future theoretical and empirical advancement.

7. Theoretical Contributions

The proposed conceptual framework contributes to the literature by integrating emotional intelligence, digital work stress, digital resilience, and Quality of Work Life into a unified explanation of employee well-being in digitally transformed organizations. Although these constructs have individually attracted considerable scholarly attention, they have generally evolved within separate research traditions, resulting in fragmented theoretical explanations of employee adaptation to digital work environments. By synthesizing these perspectives, the present study develops a multidisciplinary framework that enhances understanding of sustainable employee well-being during digital transformation.

The first contribution lies in extending the concept of Quality of Work Life beyond its traditional boundaries. Earlier studies primarily associated QWL with organizational policies such as compensation, working conditions, career opportunities, and work–life balance. While these dimensions remain important, they do not adequately reflect the realities of digitally enabled workplaces. Employees increasingly evaluate their work experiences in

terms of digital flexibility, continuous learning, psychological safety, and their ability to manage technology-related demands. The proposed framework therefore broadens the conceptualization of QWL by incorporating psychological adaptation as an essential component of employee well-being.

A second contribution concerns the conceptualization of digital work stress. Existing literature has largely relied on the concept of technostress, which originally focused on employees' responses to information and communication technologies. Contemporary organizations, however, operate within environments characterized by artificial intelligence, hybrid work, enterprise platforms, algorithmic management, and continuous digital connectivity. These developments have expanded the sources of workplace stress beyond technology use alone. The present framework introduces digital work stress as a broader construct that captures the cognitive, emotional, and behavioural pressures associated with modern digital work environments. This perspective provides a more comprehensive explanation of employee experiences in contemporary organizations.

The third contribution relates to emotional intelligence. Previous research has primarily examined emotional intelligence in relation to leadership effectiveness, interpersonal relationships, job performance, and organizational commitment. Comparatively less attention has been devoted to its role in supporting employee adaptation during digital transformation. The proposed framework positions emotional intelligence as a strategic personal resource that enables employees to regulate emotions, interpret technological change positively, and maintain psychological stability within digitally intensive workplaces. This perspective extends the application of emotional intelligence beyond traditional organizational behaviour research.

The framework also advances understanding of digital resilience. Existing research frequently describes digital resilience as the ability to adapt to technological disruption or recover from digital setbacks. However, the concept remains theoretically fragmented and is seldom integrated with broader organizational outcomes. The present paper conceptualizes digital resilience as a multidimensional capability encompassing adaptive learning, technological confidence, psychological flexibility, and recovery from digital challenges. By integrating digital resilience with emotional intelligence and digital work stress, the framework highlights its strategic role in sustaining employee well-being and organizational effectiveness.

Another important contribution involves the integration of the Job Demands–Resources Theory and the Conservation of Resources Theory. While both theories have been widely applied in occupational stress research, relatively few conceptual studies have combined them to explain employee adaptation in digital workplaces. The present framework demonstrates that digital work stress emerges when technology-enabled job demands exceed employees' available psychological resources. Emotional intelligence and digital resilience function as complementary personal resources that preserve psychological energy and strengthen employees' capacity to adapt to technological change. Integrating these theories provides a richer explanation of employee well-being than either theory offers independently.

The framework further contributes by shifting attention from isolated relationships to a systems perspective. Employee well-being is conceptualized as a dynamic process resulting from continuous interaction between digital work demands and psychological resources. This perspective reflects the complexity of modern organizations, where technological innovation and human capability develop simultaneously. Such an approach encourages future researchers to examine more comprehensive models that incorporate organizational, technological, and psychological variables.

Finally, the four conceptual postulates proposed in this paper provide a structured agenda for future empirical investigation. Unlike hypotheses developed for immediate statistical testing, these postulates offer theoretically grounded directions for validating and extending the framework across different industries, organizational contexts, and cultural settings. Consequently, the study contributes both to conceptual development and to the future evolution of digital workplace research.

Collectively, these contributions position the proposed framework as an integrative model that connects organizational behaviour, human resource management, occupational psychology, and digital workplace studies.

The framework demonstrates that successful digital transformation depends not only on technological capability but also on employees' emotional competence and adaptive resilience.

8. Managerial Implications

The proposed framework offers several practical implications for organizations undertaking digital transformation. While organizations have invested heavily in digital technologies to improve efficiency, innovation, and competitiveness, many transformation initiatives continue to encounter resistance, employee stress, and declining workplace well-being. These challenges indicate that successful digital transformation requires equal attention to technological systems and human capability.

The framework suggests that organizations should adopt a human-centred approach to digital transformation. Investments in artificial intelligence, cloud computing, automation, and digital infrastructure should be complemented by initiatives that strengthen employees' emotional and adaptive capabilities. Such an approach recognizes that technological success depends upon employees' willingness and ability to engage positively with continuous organizational change.

Human resource managers should incorporate emotional intelligence into talent management practices. Recruitment and selection processes should evaluate emotional competencies alongside technical expertise, particularly for roles requiring virtual collaboration, continuous learning, and cross-functional communication. Leadership development programmes should similarly emphasize emotional regulation, empathy, communication, and conflict management to prepare managers for leading digitally connected teams.

Organizations should also recognize digital work stress as a strategic organizational issue rather than an individual limitation. Regular assessments of digital workload, communication overload, technology complexity, and employee well-being can help identify emerging challenges before they develop into burnout or disengagement. Clear policies regarding digital communication, after-hours availability, and virtual meeting practices can further reduce unnecessary psychological strain.

Developing digital resilience should become a central component of organizational learning strategies. Continuous training, mentoring, peer learning, and technology support programmes can strengthen employees' confidence in adapting to new digital systems. Equally important is the creation of psychologically safe workplaces where employees can experiment with new technologies, seek assistance, and learn from mistakes without fear of criticism.

Leadership also plays a critical role in supporting employee adaptation. Managers should communicate digital transformation initiatives transparently, involve employees in change processes, and provide continuous support throughout technological transitions. Such leadership behaviours foster trust, reduce uncertainty, and encourage positive attitudes toward organizational change.

Finally, organizations should expand their assessment of employee well-being beyond traditional performance indicators. Measures such as digital work stress, psychological well-being, digital adaptability, work-life integration, and Quality of Work Life provide valuable insights into the sustainability of digital transformation initiatives. Monitoring these indicators enables organizations to balance technological advancement with employee well-being, thereby supporting long-term organizational performance.

Overall, the proposed framework emphasizes that sustainable digital transformation requires organizations to invest simultaneously in technological capability and human development. Emotional intelligence and digital resilience should therefore be regarded as strategic organizational assets that enhance employees' ability to manage digital work demands while maintaining a high Quality of Work Life.

9. Future Research Agenda

Digital transformation continues to redefine organizational work systems, employee roles, and workplace relationships. Although research on emotional intelligence, digital work stress, digital resilience, and Quality of Work Life has expanded rapidly, important theoretical and empirical gaps remain. The conceptual framework

proposed in this paper provides several avenues for future investigation that can enrich digital workplace research and strengthen organizational theory.

First, future studies should empirically validate the proposed conceptual framework across different organizational settings. Quantitative methods such as structural equation modelling, longitudinal research, and multilevel analysis can examine the relationships among emotional intelligence, digital work stress, digital resilience, and Quality of Work Life. Qualitative studies may also provide deeper insights into employees' lived experiences during digital transformation.

Second, comparative research across industries is required. Digital work environments differ considerably between sectors such as healthcare, education, manufacturing, financial services, information technology, and public administration. Future studies should examine whether the proposed relationships remain consistent across industries or whether sector-specific factors influence employee adaptation to digital work.

Third, cross-cultural investigations are needed. Employees' responses to technology, leadership, work-life balance, and organizational support vary across national cultures. Comparative international studies can determine whether cultural values strengthen or weaken the relationships proposed in this framework.

Fourth, future research should examine the influence of emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, generative AI, intelligent automation, and algorithmic management. These technologies are transforming work design and employee responsibilities, creating new forms of digital work stress that require further conceptual and empirical examination.

Fifth, future studies should explore additional organizational variables that may strengthen the explanatory power of the framework. Leadership style, perceived organizational support, digital competence, psychological safety, organizational learning, and digital organizational culture may function as important antecedents or contextual conditions influencing employee well-being.

Sixth, researchers should develop and validate comprehensive measurement scales for digital work stress. Existing instruments primarily measure traditional technostress and may not adequately capture the broader psychological demands associated with AI-enabled workplaces, hybrid work, permanent connectivity, and continuous digital collaboration.

Finally, future research should continue integrating perspectives from organizational behaviour, information systems, psychology, and human resource management. Such interdisciplinary research will contribute to the development of more comprehensive theories explaining sustainable employee well-being in increasingly digital organizations.

The conceptual framework presented in this paper provides a foundation for these future investigations by highlighting the importance of balancing technological advancement with employees' emotional and adaptive capabilities. Continued empirical refinement of the framework will contribute to the development of more human-centred approaches to digital transformation.

10. Conclusion

Digital transformation has fundamentally reshaped contemporary organizations by changing how employees communicate, collaborate, learn, and perform their work. While digital technologies have improved organizational efficiency and innovation, they have also introduced new psychological demands that increasingly influence employee well-being. Continuous technological change, permanent connectivity, information overload, and virtual work environments have made it essential for organizations to understand the human dimensions of digital transformation alongside its technological benefits.

This paper has developed a conceptual framework integrating emotional intelligence, digital work stress, digital resilience, and Quality of Work Life to explain employee adaptation within digitally transformed organizations. Drawing upon the Job Demands–Resources Theory and the Conservation of Resources Theory, the framework proposes that emotional intelligence functions as a personal psychological resource enabling employees to

regulate emotional responses to digital workplace demands. Digital work stress is conceptualized as the mechanism through which technology-enabled job demands influence employee well-being, while digital resilience strengthens employees' ability to recover from technological disruption and adapt to continuous organizational change. Together, these constructs provide a comprehensive explanation of sustainable employee well-being in digital workplaces.

The paper makes several theoretical contributions. It broadens the conceptualization of Quality of Work Life by incorporating digital workplace realities, introduces digital work stress as a contemporary extension of traditional technostress, and positions digital resilience as a strategic adaptive capability that complements emotional intelligence. By integrating these constructs within a single framework, the study bridges organizational behaviour, occupational psychology, human resource management, and information systems research, offering a multidisciplinary perspective on employee well-being.

From a managerial perspective, the framework emphasizes that successful digital transformation requires balancing technological investment with human capability development. Organizations should view emotional intelligence and digital resilience as strategic resources that enhance employees' capacity to cope with digital work demands while maintaining psychological well-being. Human-centred digital transformation strategies that integrate leadership support, continuous learning, employee well-being initiatives, and supportive organizational cultures are more likely to achieve sustainable organizational performance.

The four conceptual postulates developed in this paper provide a theoretical platform for future empirical investigation. Researchers are encouraged to validate the framework across different industries, organizational settings, and cultural contexts while exploring additional organizational and psychological variables that influence employee adaptation to digital workplaces.

In conclusion, digital transformation should not be viewed solely as a technological initiative but as an organizational process that depends fundamentally on employees' ability to adapt, learn, and maintain well-being. Organizations that simultaneously invest in digital innovation and human capability development will be better positioned to create resilient, productive, and sustainable workplaces. By integrating emotional intelligence, digital work stress, digital resilience, and Quality of Work Life into a coherent conceptual framework, this paper contributes to the growing body of knowledge on digital workplace management and provides a foundation for future theoretical and empirical advancement.

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