

Leadership in the Era of Digitalization: Addressing Technostress to Promote Well Being of the Employee and Fostering SDGS - A Study on Higher Educational Institution

Debashree Talukder

ABSTRACT

The rapid development and integration of digital technologies have significantly transformed the operational landscape of higher educational institutions. These changes, while largely aimed at improving efficiency, communication, and access to resources, have intense implications for employees' work-life balance. This case study investigates the miscellaneous impact of digitalization on the professional and personal lives of employees at a higher educational institution, focusing specifically on the experiences of academic and non-teaching as well as administrative staff including IT personnel. Additionally, what will be the role of the leaders in minimizing the technostress and fostering SDG – 3, which aims to promote good health and well-being of the employee.

The study is grounded in qualitative research, employing in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and structured surveys conducted within a renowned private university over a period of one year. The sample includes faculty members, administrative personnel and IT support staff ensuring a holistic view of how digitalization affects various roles within the institution. The research seeks to understand how digital tools—such as online teaching platforms, learning management systems (LMS), virtual meeting software, and instant messaging applications—have reconceptualized job responsibilities, altered time management patterns, and influenced the boundary between professional obligations and personal time.

In sum, this case study highlights the multifaceted nature of digitalization in higher education workplaces, how they are relevant to different SDGs and calls for thoughtful, inclusive policies that safeguard employee well-being in an increasingly connected academic environment.

KEYWORDS: Digitalization, technostress, work life balance, faculty, administrative staffs, educational institutions, well – being, leadership, SDGs

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Secretariat of Government and Digital Transformation of the PCM of Peru, 2023: Set of competencies, skills and knowledge that allow employees to use and develop digital technologies effectively in their work environment.

Huarcaya & Dávila, 2023: In other areas, it is usually considered as Digital Competencies, the same that are associated with skills and technical knowledge necessary to handle digital tools and technologies.

Inga-Avila et al., 2023: Having an IT culture makes employees more productive and proactive in their work areas and able to share their experiences with others.

Austin, 2016: An important component of digital talent is the Digital Innovation and Creativity possessed by the collaborator; this is the ability to apply innovative and creative thinking in problem solving and process improvement through digital technologies.

Hamid, 2022: Similarly, it is important that collaborators possess personal capabilities and characteristics oriented to adaptability and continuous learning, which gives them the willingness and ability to use new technologies () from training and continuous training, as well as by self-learning

Perrons, 2003, pp. 68-72; Simpson, 2000; White et al., 2003: - To respond to the new conditions, organizations demand higher performance and commitment from their employees, which is translated into expectations for working longer and for prioritizing work over personal life.

Parasuraman and Simmers, 2001; Hardy and Adnett, 2002; Felstead et al., 2002: - stated that there are still many important issues that ought to be addressed within the subject of work-life balance. Work-life balance has been mainly judged to relate to individuals, especially women, who are in corporate employment and have family obligations even though not considered closely.

Wise and Bond, 2003: - This study told that because of narrowness in the consideration of work-life balance, pertinent organizational actions are mostly oriented towards the implementation of “family- friendly” policies.

Cully et al., 1999: - This survey showed that a substantially higher proportion of employed men than employed women in the United Kingdom work “long hours” and empirical evidence suggests that men were experiencing lower work-life balance than their female counterparts.

Parasuraman and Simmers, (2001): - found that it is not only family obligations that constitute an issue in work-life balance. Any types of activities (e.g., hobbies, time with friends) that the individual desires to pursue outside one’s work obligations pertain to work-life balance.

Wright and McMahan (2011): - discovered that HR managers have adopted a range of practices in today's dynamic workplace with the goal of boosting staff productivity for success at all levels of the company, whether it be individual, group, or corporate.

Barrera (2007): The idea is defined as employers collaborating positively with employees to create plans that balance the needs of the company with the personal lives of their staff members.

Haar, Russo, Sune, and Ollier-Malaterre (2014): - It is a person's assessment of how well they manage multiple responsibilities in life.

INTRODUCTION:

In the last few decades, the world has witnessed a profound transformation driven by the rapid development and implementation of digital technologies. These technological advances have impacted directly or indirectly every sector, including healthcare, finance, manufacturing, and education. In higher education, digitalization has become not only a catalyst for innovation in teaching, learning, and administration, but also a disruptive force that has reshaped traditional academic work structures and routines. The use of digital tools has greatly improved the accessibility, flexibility, and efficiency of academic processes.

The study is based on the qualitative research, employing in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and structured surveys conducted within a renowned private university over a period of one year. The sample size of 250 employees which includes not only the faculty members but also the administrative personnel including IT support staff, transport department, security staffs even vendors for an overall view of how digitalization affects various roles within institution and outside the institution. The research seeks to understand how digital tools—such as online teaching platforms, learning management systems (LMS), virtual meeting software, and instant messaging applications, digital money transfer systems—have reconceptualized job responsibilities, altered time management patterns, and influenced the boundary between professional obligations and personal time.

There are several studies which have proved the positive correlation between digital talent and job satisfaction of administrative staff in institutions ([Chinchilla & Cely, 2021](#); [García-Izquierdo et al., 2022](#)). Also increased job satisfaction is associated with higher level of job performance. The employees of the institution reported increased flexibility in managing their schedules, greater accessibility to institutional systems, and the ability to work remotely, which were particularly beneficial during the post pandemic or geo-political crisis. The study on the admission department of the institution finds that digitalization added a great benefit in admitting foreign students or working professionals. In case of the Human Resource Management, digitalization reduces the tendency of absenteeism among the employee. Online tools enabled faculty to deliver lectures from home. Digital tools allowed administrators to process documents electronically, and facilitated seamless communication across departments. Many participants highlighted the convenience of digital workflows and the reduction in commuting time as significant contributors to an improved work–life interface. The development of digital skills allows workers to be more autonomous and efficient in their work, allowing them to have better opportunities for personal and professional development, collaborate and communicate more effectively with their colleagues, streamline their work and feel updated ([Decision Science Letters, 2024](#)).

Work–life balance is generally comprehended as the equilibrium between the demands of the one’s occupation and one’s personal life, including family responsibilities, social activities, and health and well-being. It describes an employee being able to prioritize own professional and personal aspects or activities ([Sanfilippo, 2021](#)). Employees attitudes, health and well-being are always influenced by work life balance ([Linda & Fitria, 2016](#)). Maintaining this balance is critical to employee satisfaction, productivity, mental health, and organizational commitment. However, as

work environments evolve under the influence of digitalization, the boundaries between professional and personal time have become increasingly permeable.

The research reveals that digitalization has introduced both opportunities and challenges. The capacity to work virtually from anywhere, communicate at any hour, and access institutional systems continuously has blurred the boundary lines between professional and personal life, potentially placing undue strain on employees. Excessive stress can cause concerns such as poor work-life balance and job performance and it can be challenging to address these issues if it is not addressed or acknowledged right away (*International Journal for Research in Applied Science & Engineering Technology (IJRASET)*, 2024). Therefore, professional life and personal life are increasingly mixed. Always being busy in personal calls at work and sending work e-mails at home after working hours has become a norm or a socially accepted practice (*Impact of Digitalization on Employees' Work Life Balance In Corporate, IJCRT*, 2020). With lots of advantages in digitalization there are substantial drawbacks as well. An easy access to data from anywhere anytime is blurring of boundaries between work and personal life. The expectation of constant availability—stimulated by mobile technology as well as cloud storage and a culture of immediacy—led to extended work hours, intrusion of work-related communications during personal time, and a sense of being perpetually “on call.” Faculty members, in particular, noted increased workloads related to online content creation, digital assessments, and responding to student inquiries outside of conventional hours. Administrative staff reported similar pressures due to round-the-clock system monitoring and support demands. IT support team its almost 24/7 duties as the query can arise by the students or the faculty members anytime of the day and they need to revert back immediately.

Though, it is easier for the marketing staffs especially the staffs from the admission departments to get connected with the foreign students or the students from the distant place, which anyways add revenue directly to the organization thereby, advocating SDG – 8, which aims at decent work and economic growth. Additionally, for the employees from the department of career counselling it is easier to connect with different companies nationwide in-fact worldwide due to digital platform. This is reinforcing SDG 9 which deals with betterment of industry focusing on innovation and infrastructure.

Another significant finding is the disparity in digital competence and adaptability among employees. While some staff members mainly male employees and relatively from young age groups get conversant with the digital transition enthusiastically, others mostly many female employees or the staff members from the older age groups experienced stress and anxiety related to new technologies, due lack of training, or insufficient support as well as day long screen time. This digital segregation not only affect the job performance but also exacerbate the feelings of isolation and burnout, particularly among older employees who are not well versed with digitalization or those with limited prior exposure to digital tools. “Technostress” is impacting the health and the well-being of the employee which is negatively impacting SDG – 3, which focuses to ensure healthy lives and promote well – being for all at all ages.

This case study seeks to explore the specific impact of digitalization on job satisfaction, job performance, technostress of employees within a higher educational institution. It focuses on faculty members, non-teaching administrative staff, marketing staffs and IT support employees et.al recognizing that the implications of digital transformation differ across roles, responsibilities, and levels of digital fluency. (*Safaria et al. 2011*), reported that decreased employee productivity is one of the negative consequences of role conflict-induced occupational stress. The aim is to identify not only the advantages and opportunities provided by digital tools, but also the stressors, conflicts, and coping mechanisms experienced by employees navigating this rapidly changing landscape. The study identifies various measures adopted by the management and leadership to reduce techno stress and enhance job satisfaction, which is directly proportional to job performance and overall productivity of an employee.

The Digital Transformation of Higher Education

The digitalization in the field of higher education refers to the systematic adoption of digital technologies in core institutional functions, including teaching, administration, communication, research, security purposes and student services. This transformation has accelerated particularly in response to the pandemic or during any geo-political crisis which forced institutions worldwide to adopt remote learning or examination and virtual coordination as well as collaboration models.

Digital platforms such as Learning Management Systems (LMS), virtual classrooms (e.g., Zoom, Microsoft Teams), online assessment tools, and cloud-based administrative systems have become standard components of the academic ecosystem. These technologies have enabled greater flexibility and efficiency, allowing faculty to conduct lectures from remote locations, students to access learning materials at their convenience, and administrators to manage records and processes electronically. Moreover, they have supported the globalization of higher education by facilitating cross-border collaboration, international programs, and online degree offerings. *This is supporting SDG-4 which aims to promote quality education for all.*

However, the transition to digital modes of working has not been flawless or uniformly beneficial. While some employees have thrived in digital environments, others have struggled with the increased pace of work, lack of face-to-face interaction, which they feel that there is a lack in emotional connectivity, and the erosion of traditional work boundaries. The impact on work–life balance has emerged as a critical concern, especially as the expectation to be "always connected" has become an untold trend in academic culture. (Perrons, 2003, pp. 68-72; Simpson, 2000; White et al., 2003) To respond to the digital transition, the management demand higher performance and commitment from the employees, which is translated into expectations for long working hours and for prioritizing work over personal life.

In this digital era, how can you explain what is work – life balance of an employee working in a higher educational institution, for example a university?

Work–life balance has no longer been a subject of academic inquiry, but the inception of technological revolution, which has initiated a re-evaluation of traditional models. In the past decade, work and personal life were defined by physical and temporal boundaries—employees left their workplace at a set time and returned to their personal lives with negligible overlapping. Digitalization has fundamentally altered this dynamic. Digitalization has made it possible to check emails late at night, attend virtual meetings from home, or work on documents during weekends has made it increasingly difficult to extricate from professional responsibilities or commitments. (Wise and Bond, 2003) There is a study which finds that because of narrowness in the consideration of work-life balance, pertinent organizational actions are mostly oriented towards the implementation of “family- friendly” policies (Parasuraman, S., & Simmers, C. , 2001). It is found that not only family obligations which constitute an issue in work-life balance, but also any types of activities (e.g., hobbies, time with friends) that the individual desires to pursue outside one’s professional obligations pertain to work-life balance.

In higher education, this phenomenon is particularly pronounced. Faculty are expected to balance teaching, research, mentoring, and administrative duties, many of which now involve digital platforms. Administrative staff, too, must navigate online systems, respond to digital queries, and manage data in real-time. The consequence is a work culture in which employees may feel compelled to remain accessible beyond standard working hours, driven by institutional expectations, higher authority’s demand, peer pressure, or professional upliftment or growth. (Richardson and Benbunan-Fich, 2011) assert that in the digital world, the after -hours work connectivity is higher for those who have wireless enabled devices (WEDs), though specific alongside with also organizational factors are found to play a role in this, as most of the organization are providing the wireless device to the employees to get connected beyond specified working hours.

This has led to what scholars term the "autonomy paradox"—the notion that while digital technologies offer greater flexibility and control over one’s schedule, they simultaneously introduce new pressures and demands that compromise that very autonomy. (Digital talent and job satisfaction in the administrative staff of a public university with WarpPLS, 8.0 2024) It is important that collaborators possess personal capabilities and characteristics oriented to adaptability and continuous learning, which gives them the willingness and ability to use new technologies (Hamid, 2022) from training and continuous training, as well as by self-learning. Employees may find themselves working for longer hours, struggling to "switch off," and experiencing conflict between their professional and personal roles. These tensions can be apparent in stress, burnout, reduced job satisfaction due to lack of employee engagement, and even mental health issues. (Hilbrecht et al. 2013) highlight that (a) the flexible, digitalization-based environment of workers requires an additional need to contain work time and space; (b) family and availability for children often takes priority; and (c) the importance of leisure is diminished. This, in turn, might translate into less time for family and friends and civic engagement and might therefore increase this group’s risk of social exclusion (Schier et al., 2011; Yates & Leach, 2006). According to (Hänsel & Kaz and Boehm et al. 2023, 2024), healthy leadership is a new promising management

approach, whereby an employer raises awareness for the topics of health and well-being at work, which will eventually raise to job satisfaction and job performance for a better output.

Higher educational institution mostly occupies a unique position in the digital transformation. Unlike corporate settings, universities often function as hybrid environments where knowledge creation, teaching, administration, and student engagement intersect. They hold a diverse workforce that includes faculty, administrative personnel, technical support staff, and researchers—each with distinct work patterns and exposure to digital tools. Digital talent of an employee encompasses not only technical skills, but also the ability to innovate and continuously adapt to new challenges (Diaz-Chao et al., 2022) and plays a crucial role in influencing employee job performance. An effective leadership identifies the best digital tool to get the overall involvement of the employee. A structured and well-defined information technology and digital competence have a powerful impact on better outcome or result from the employee (Ethem et al., 2022; Hidayat et al., 2023).

Furthermore, the academic profession is characterized by high levels of autonomy, self-directed work, and intellectual labor. Digitalization intersects with these attributes in complex ways. For instance, while digital tools can support innovative pedagogies and research collaboration, they can also lead to increased surveillance, data-driven performance evaluation, and administrative burdens. The use of digital technologies in work adds pressure on individuals to engage in exhausting emotional labour and increases technocratic and peer control, leading to technostress (Ayyagari et al., 2011) and ‘zoom fatigue’ (Fosslie and Duffy, 2020). Faculty may be required to track student engagement metrics, participate in online forums, or fulfill additional reporting requirements that were previously absent in face-to-face settings. The easy access to different platform and search engines makes the present generation student quite smarter and knowledgeable, therefore it is quite challenging for the faculty members to get the students engaged in the classroom by delivering lectures. The faculty members need to be more enlightened or extra – ordinary to get students involvement in the class. Faculty members may feel over-burdened. The management has to be more efficacious and encourage different training programmes and workshops for the faculty members so that they can learn and adopt various effective teaching learning methods used in different countries. This will be a step ahead towards achieving SDG – 4, that is quality education to all.

Administrative staff, who form the backbone of institutional operations, face similar challenges. The shift to digital record-keeping, automated workflows, and online communication demands a high degree of adaptability and often requires employees to master multiple software and systems. Moreover, many support roles have become 24/7 in nature, especially in areas like IT, admissions, and virtual student services like career counselling or career service departments. The need for requesting connectivity, the inability to get disconnected from work, and the intrusive interruptions leading to work pressure or techno-stress (Sarker et al., 2012) which will directly affect the job performance of individuals in a digitalized work environment in a higher educational institution. As a result, these employees may experience heightened workloads which will deteriorate their performance and reduced ability to maintain work–life balance.

Given to this context, a focused case study within a higher educational institution provides a valuable direction which compel us to examine the subtle effects of digitalization. It allows to concentrate for a grounded analysis that considers institutional culture, job role variation, digital infrastructure, and employee perceptions in a specific, real-world environment.

The study finds that while digitalization can enhance work–life balance by offering flexibility and autonomy, it simultaneously risks eroding personal boundaries and increasing job stress if not managed effectively. Therefore, the management must adopt balanced digital transformation strategies that include clear guidelines on digital communication expectations, robust training programs, and mental health support systems or workshops. Leadership should prioritize digital well-being and consider the diverse needs of their workforce and employee engagement to ensure that technology serves as a facilitator of positive change rather than a source of chronic strain. Then only the institution can heads towards achieving the SDG 8 aiming decent work and economic growth and SDG 9 considering industry, innovation and infrastructure.

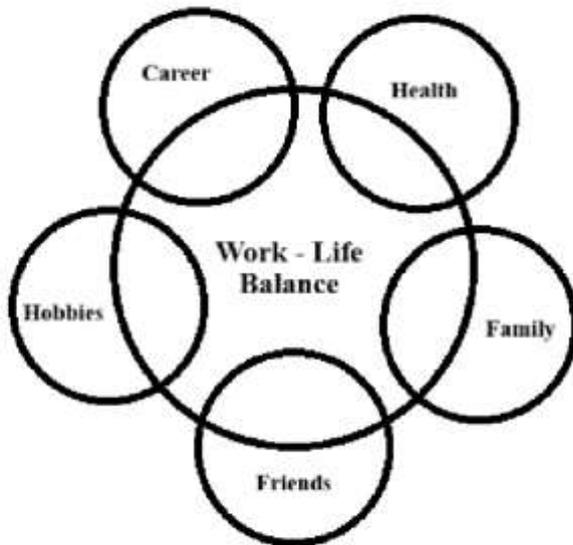


Figure: Balancing five things in work life balance PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary purpose of this case study is to investigate within a higher educational institution how digitalization has influenced the work–life balance of employees, also what initiatives are being taken by the management or leadership to reduce techno-stress among the employees and enhance their job performance by motivating and inducing job satisfaction among them. By examining the practical experiences of faculty and administrative staff, the study aims to uncover the mechanisms through which digital tools and processes affect time management, role conflict, stress levels, job satisfaction, employee engagement and personal well-being and a good work – life balance.

The key objectives of the study are as follows:

- To identify the digital tools and platforms most commonly used by employees in the higher educational institution.
- To explore the perceived benefits of digitalization on work flexibility, productivity, and communication.
- To examine the challenges and stressors associated with digital work environments.
- To assess the impact of digitalization on the ability of employees to maintain boundaries between work and personal life.
- To provide recommendations for institutional policies and practices and leadership that can promote job satisfaction and healthy work–life integration in the era of digitalization.
- The different sustainable development goals related with each and every action. How to achieve the SDGs targets by 2030.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study contributes to both scholarly and practical understanding in several important ways. First, it addresses a timely and under-researched issue—how digital transformation impacts the well-being of higher education employees. While much attention has been paid to the pedagogical and operational benefits of digitalization for the students, relatively little is known about its implications, particularly in terms of job satisfaction and work–life balance for the employees of the institution.

Second, the study offers actionable insights for university administrators, policymakers, and HR professionals. By highlighting employee experiences and area of expertise and identifying points of friction and how to avoid those, the research can inform strategies for managing digital workloads, setting realistic expectations, and fostering a supportive institutional culture. These insights are critical as institutions continue to navigate hybrid models of education and work in a post-pandemic world.

Finally, the case study approach allows for depth and modulation that might be missed in large-scale surveys or

quantitative analyses. Through interviews, focus groups, and propositional analysis, the study captures the voices of those most affected by digital change, ensuring that their concerns, aspirations, and suggestions are represented in the discussion on digital well-being by reducing techno stress and enhancing job satisfaction. Additionally, a step towards achieving different SDGs targets.

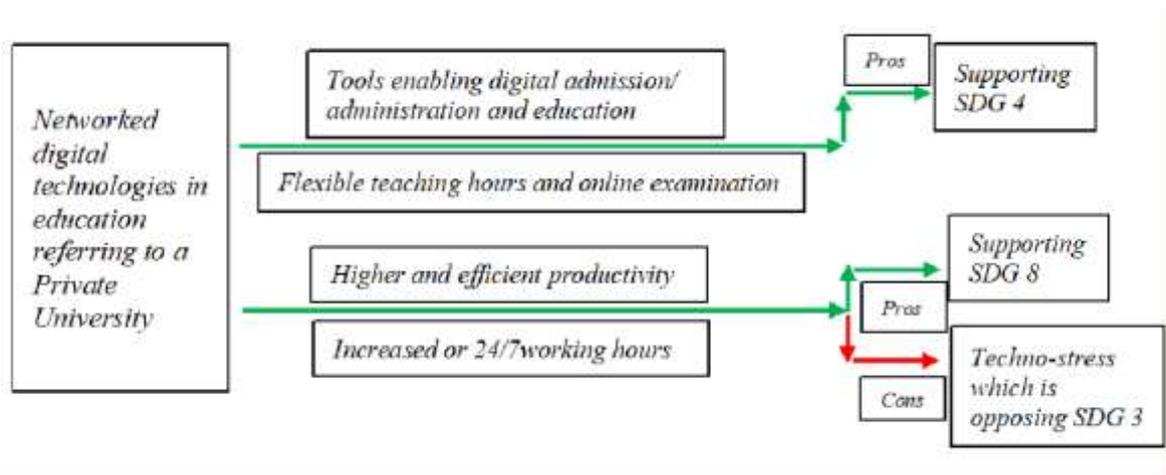


Figure 2: Conceptual Model of the mechanisms through which different types of networked digital technologies and tools used in a university which influence work-life balance, job satisfaction and different SDGs.

HYPOTHESIS:

H0 (Null Hypothesis): Digitalization has no significant impact on the work-life balance or job-satisfaction of employees in higher educational institutions

H1 (Alternative Hypothesis): Digitalization has both positive and negative impacts on the work-life balance and job-satisfaction of employees in higher educational institution

The alternative hypothesis is further categorized as follows:

H1a (Coordination): Digitalization improves coordination among the departments and colleagues, though increases work-time.

H1b (Communication): Digitalization has a positive impact on the communication among the employees but may lead to information overload and pressure of immediate response.

H1c (Knowledge Sharing): Digitalization makes sharing of knowledge easier among the employees but increasing work pressure

H1d (Decision Making): Digitalization helps in decision making simultaneously making employees more technology dependent

H1e (Work Life Balance): Work life is well balanced due to digitalization though the employee are unable to disconnect from the work

H1f (Job Performance): Digitalization improves job performance of the employees though it can lead to techno-complexity

H1g (Affordance for Digital Workflow Transparency): Flow of work becomes transparent due to digitalization on the other hand making employee anxious about job stability.

H1h (Additional Moderating Variable): Digitalization is accepted by all employees as it adds betterment to their work life though sometimes the employee feel discomfort in adapting new tools or systems.

Hypothesis testing:

Pearson Correlation Coefficient (r) is calculated:

$$r = \frac{n\sum XY - \sum X \sum Y}{\sqrt{[n\sum X^2 - (\sum X)^2][n\sum Y^2 - (\sum Y)^2] - (\sum XY)^2}}$$

To perform Significance Test:

t-test for correlation is used:

$$t = \frac{r\sqrt{n-2}}{\sqrt{1-r^2}}$$

Where:

- Pearson correlation coefficient = r
- number of paired observations = n
- Degrees of Freedom = n-2

p value from **t-distribution** is to be found out.

Compare the **p-value** or the **t-value** with a significance level (commonly $\alpha = 0.05$).

$$p = 2 * (1 - T.DIST(t, n-2, TRUE))$$

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This study uses primary data collected from a small survey done on the employees working in different roles in a private university making the use of digitalization in their regular activities related to the work. The focus of the survey was to determine the amount, type and influence of digitalization use on the randomly representative sample of non-teaching staffs of a higher education institution. All the individuals are surveyed (n=250) self – identified as full-time teaching, part-time or guest lecturers and non-teaching staffs including administrative executives, admission team, career services team, Finance department, IT personnel as well as transport and security department. Digitalization was defined as use of computer, internet, email, instant messaging, or cell phone use.

The case study is formulated on the basis of questionnaire and SPSS analysis software and MS Excel is used to produce the result or Estimations.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Finding an equilibrium between the professional and private lives is the aim of work-life balance. This study investigates the pros and cons of digitalization, the factors that impact it, the influence it has on employee of the higher education institution.

The way we operate has always been transformed by digital. We have greater flexibility to design our work-life balance, but it also creates boundaries between the personal and professional lives.

This case study addresses the conflicting demands of work and family, examines various work-life balance strategies, and outlines what will be the role of leadership to guide the employees to put those into effect.

The goal of this is to identify the variables influencing employees' work-life balance. It shows how well employees are able to manage their personal, social, and organizational responsibilities. This research determined the different strategies that the management or the leadership institution should take to enhance workers' quality of life at work and create an atmosphere that inspires motivation and satisfaction. Enhancing employee's quality of life including employee engagement while increasing chances for professional advancement and paid work is the target of a balanced work-life which will be the aim motto of the management or a competent leadership.

Measures Dependent Variables:

Table 1:

| |
|--------------------------------|
| Dependent Variable (DV) |
| Work Life Balance (WLB) |
| Coordination (Co) |
| Communication (Cm) |
| Decision Making (DM) |
| Job Performance (JP) |
| Work Flow (WF) |

Measures Independent Variables: Digital based Work Practices

Digitalization and Work Extension: This concept is assessed through two index variables that reflect the extent of work extension due to the use of email or telephone. Interviews session are conducted with different employees with few questions like how frequently they check work-related emails during: 1) weekends, 2) vacations, 3) before work, 4) after work, 5) while and sick. The answers are open ended where most of the employee had answered that they spend more than 12 hours/ day (approx.) on different digital platform. The same set of questions was asked about telephone use. Most of them answered that in this digital era there is no such definite time period when they do not answer to the telephone or MS - Teams calls and WhatsApp messages from the students, their parents or work place, in this case a higher education institution.

Measuring Digitalization:

Digitalization in the workplace can be comprehensively measured through a multidimensional approach, capturing its impact across various functional areas. One of the key dimensions is the coordination and support of work activities, where digital tools help harmonize, coordinate, and support tasks, enabling employees to express concerns and issues more effectively. Communication enhancement is another vital aspect, as digitalization fosters frequent, spontaneous as well as personal communication. It promotes accountability in the flow of information and encourages the transparent exchange of ideas and updates among employees.

In terms of knowledge management, digitalized work process significantly contributes to the routine sharing and seeking of knowledge and ideas. It facilitates collaboration and allows team members to make better use of one another's expertise. This creates an environment where colleagues are more willing to support each other and actively share their best insights during meetings. Additionally, digital tools enhance decision-making processes by ensuring access to relevant, timely, and accurate information. They support communication and interaction among stakeholders and help manage complex decision scenarios more effectively and on – time.

Digitalization also plays a vital role in improving work-life balance and flexibility. It allows employees to manage family commitments more easily, gain more personal time, and create a conducive environment for planning and thinking—even when working remotely. With respect to job performance, digital systems assist employees in completing duties, meeting performance expectations, and consistently fulfilling responsibilities.

Moreover, digital platforms improve visibility and tracking of workflows. Employees can easily monitor the status of tasks and requests, identify responsible individuals in administrative processes, and minimize the need for manual follow-ups.

However, there are several negative effects of working in a digital environment. Many employees report feeling overwhelmed by the sheer number of tools they are required to use and get adapted to those, experiencing mental fatigue, and struggling to keep up with frequent updates. The pressure to remain constantly available through digital channels

and the disruption caused by technical issues—such as poor connectivity or system errors—can increase stress, which is commonly termed as techno-stress. Learning new digital platforms and software may also cause anxiety, especially when employees face repeated changes or lack adequate training.

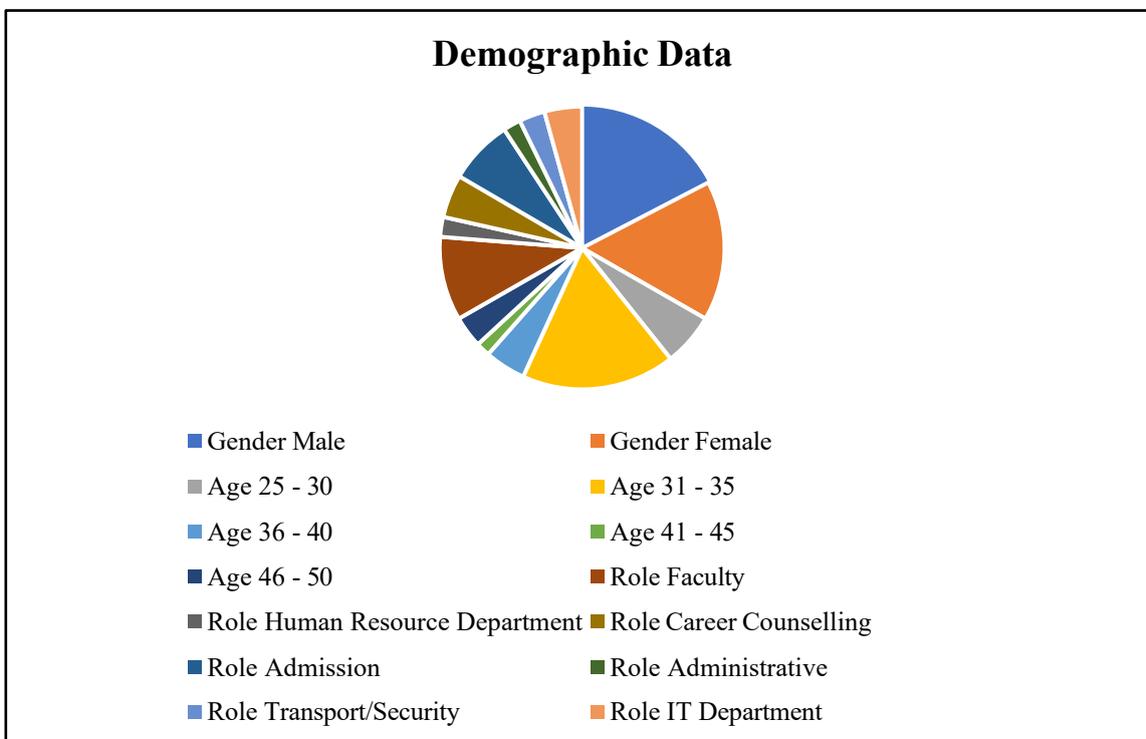
Sustainable Development Goals:

To build a better world for people and our planet by 2030, the Member States of United Nations has adopted the world’s best plan, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015. The 17 SDGs are a call for action by all countries – poor, rich and middle-income – to promote prosperity while protecting the environment. They identify that to end poverty must go hand-in-hand with strategies that build economic growth and address a range of social needs including education, health, equality and job opportunities while tackling climate change and working to preserve our ocean and forests.

Most of all the SDGs are integrated/interrelated, that is, if there is any action in one area it will affect outcomes in others, and that is why development must balance social, economic and environmental sustainability.

In the above case study, we have identified that though digitalization is indispensable for the holistic development of an organization and also the job performance of an employee which is fostering SDG 8, decent work and economic growth, on the other hand it is causing techno stress among the employee, which is hampering their mental health thereby negatively affecting SDG – 3, which aims to provide good health for all. To minimize the above-mentioned factors to get the better job performance from the employee without raising to techno-stress, the strategies and the roles of the leadership needs to be very strong. A competent management can plan or design the structure of the organization to enhance job satisfaction without mental stress among the employee in this digital era.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS:



Data collected (n = 250) from the employees of the different departments of the higher education institution, here a private university.

DIGITALIZATION Vs WORK LIFE BALANCE

The **two-tailed p-value** is approximately:

$p \approx 0.012014$

- Since $p \approx 0.012014 < 0.05$, the result is **statistically significant**.
- The null hypothesis can be rejected and alternative hypothesis can be accepted.

The correlation was statistically significant, $t(248) = 2.610887$, $p \approx 0.012014$, indicating a meaningful relationship between digitalization and work–life balance.

DIGITALIZATION Vs COORDINATION

The **two-tailed p-value** is approximately:

$$p \approx 0.000108$$

- Since $p \approx 0.000108 < 0.05$, the result is **statistically significant**.
- The hypothesis can be accepted.

The correlation was statistically significant, $t(248) = 4.220959$, $p \approx 0.000108$, indicating a meaningful relationship between digitalization and Coordination.

DIGITALIZATION Vs COMMUNICATION

The **two-tailed p-value** is approximately:

$$p \approx 0.000108$$

- Since $p \approx 0.000424 < 0.05$, the result is **statistically significant**.
- The hypothesis can be accepted.

The correlation was statistically significant, $t(248) = 3.787685$, $p \approx 0.000424$, indicating a meaningful relationship between digitalization and Communication.

DIGITALIZATION Vs KNOWLEDGE SHARING

The **two-tailed p-value** is approximately:

$$p \approx 0.000108$$

- Since $p \approx 0.021099 < 0.05$, the result is **statistically significant**.
- The hypothesis can be accepted.

The correlation was statistically significant, $t(248) = 2.384558$, $p \approx 0.021099$, indicating a meaningful relationship between digitalization and knowledge sharing.

DIGITALIZATION Vs DECISION MAKING

The **two-tailed p-value** is approximately:

$$p \approx 0.017622$$

- Since $p \approx 0.017622 < 0.05$, the result is **statistically significant**.
- The hypothesis can be accepted.
- The correlation was statistically significant, $t(248) = 2.458239$, $p \approx 0.017622$, indicating a meaningful relationship between digitalization and decision making.

DIGITALIZATION Vs JOB PERFORMANCE

The **two-tailed p-value** is approximately:

$$p \approx 0.001134$$

- Since $p \approx 0.001134 < 0.05$, the result is **statistically significant**.

- The hypothesis can be accepted.

The correlation was statistically significant, $t(248) = 3.462892$, $p \approx 0.001134$, indicating a meaningful relationship between digitalization and job performance

DIGITALIZATION Vs WORK FLOW

The **two-tailed p-value** is approximately:

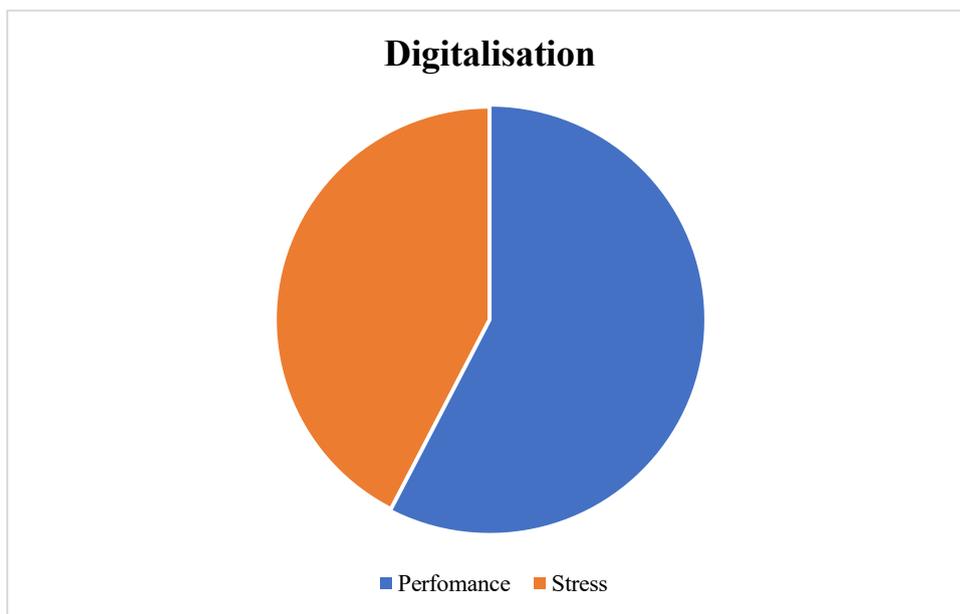
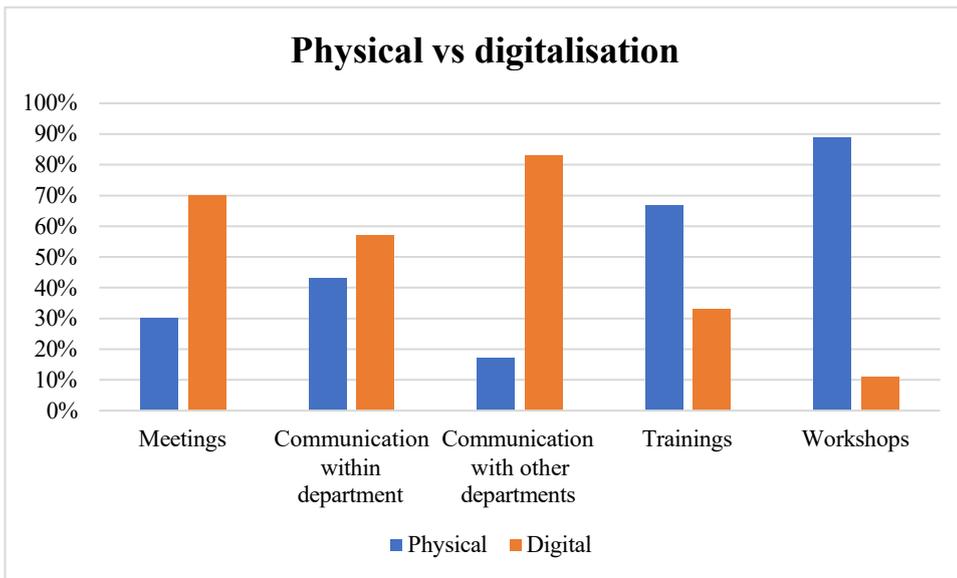
$$p \approx 0.001173$$

- Since $p \approx 0.001173 < 0.05$, the result is **statistically significant**.
- The hypothesis can be accepted.

The correlation was statistically significant, $t(248) = 3.451412$, $p \approx 0.001173$, indicating a meaningful relationship between digitalization and work flow.

Hence the following alternatives hypothesis are accepted and concluded.

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|------------------------------------|---|
| H1 (Alternative Hypothesis) | Digitalization has a significant impact on the work–life balance and job satisfaction of employees in higher educational institutions. Though the impacts are both positive and negative. |
| H1a (Coordination) | Though digitalization improves coordination among the departments and colleagues, but also increases work-time. |
| H1b (Communication) | Digitalization has a positive impact on the communication among the employees but may lead to information overload and pressure of immediate response. |
| H1c (Knowledge Sharing) | Sharing of knowledge becomes easier among the employees because of digitalization but it also work-pressure |
| H1d (Decision Making) | Digitalization helps in decision making as mostly relevant, correct, real time information is available, simultaneously making employees more technology dependent |
| H1e (Work Life Balance) | Work life is well balanced due to digitalization though the employee are unable to disconnect from the work |
| H1f (Job Performance) | In spite of techno-complexity, digitalization improves job performance of the employees though it can lead to techno-complexity |
| H1h (Work Flow) | As the flow of work becomes transparent due to digitalization on the other hand making employee anxious about job stability. |



At an average about 42 percent of the employees report an increase in stress that they believe is connected to digitalization, while more than 56 percent report that their performance has increased because of digitalization.

Thus, a sense that though digitalization is enhancing productivity yet stress due to digitalization is prevalent in this sample of employees. Digitalization supports flexible working hours for the employees which in turn increases the productivity of the employees. The strategies or policies that support job satisfaction and work-life balance benefit employees at work. In order to reconcile work and family, many employees desire a flexible schedule, which can increase productivity. Employees who successfully manage their personal and professional lives are less stressed and more productive. Studies reveal that persons who have healthy work-life balance are better at managing their time and juggling their personal and professional lives. Thus, a positive company culture can enhance worker’s work-life harmony.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

This research draws the findings how employees' work-life balance has changed in the digital era. The following adjustments and recommendations should be made in light of this study:

- The advantage of digitalization is that it has made easier for employees to work remotely, by providing them with flexible work schedules.

- Employees should get relaxation to promote effective time management to improve work-life balance.
- The employees require a holiday or a complete cut-off from their demanding jobs and a break from the stress in their personal and professional lives.
- Employees should get a provision to talk to their managing officer about any concerns they are having at work, get a chance to come up with solutions, and resolve the issues.
- Employees should get flexible schedules to enable them to harmoniously balance work and family obligations.
- Employees should have an option to leave their job at office and refrain from bringing it home, as this leads to conflict and miscommunication within the family.

LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

First of all, the hypotheses were evaluated on the cross-sectional data, that prevented actual conclusions. Therefore, future researchers are recommended to conduct the study on the longitudinal data to get a proper conclusion. Secondly, the study is conducted on the outcome and the feedback from the employee but how a transformational leadership should work to maximize job satisfaction to get better output is not yet figured out. Also, the Maslow's effect to be studied in the future research plan. Finally, the same research should be conducted in other universities/ higher education institutions to get a better conclusion.

CONCLUSION

The case study on the impact of digitalization on employees' work-life balance within a higher educational institution reveals several important findings. Overall, digitalization has had a positive influence on employees, contributing to greater flexibility, improved task efficiency, and better time management. These improvements have enabled many staff members to manage their personal and professional responsibilities more effectively, thus enhancing their overall work-life balance.

The majority of respondents were mid-career professionals aged between 31 and 40, primarily from administrative, IT, and admission departments. These roles reported the greatest benefits from digital tools, as digitalization streamlined routine tasks and improved workflow coordination. Communication and coordination across departments also improved significantly through digital platforms, allowing for quicker responses, more frequent interactions, and easier participation in meetings and discussions, both formal and spontaneous.

Although the sample included a fairly balanced gender representation (46% female, 54% male), Administrative (Executive Office) and HR roles were notably underrepresented. As such, while the findings broadly reflect positive perceptions of digitalization among support and technical staff, experiences of faculty and senior employees may differ—particularly with challenges related to online teaching, digital fatigue, or blurred boundaries between work and home life.

In conclusion, digitalization has enhanced work-life balance for many employees in the institution by increasing efficiency, flexibility, and communication. However, to ensure these benefits are inclusive and sustainable, further support and tailored strategies are needed for academic staff and leadership roles, along with clear digital boundaries to prevent overwork.