

DIGITALIZED BUSINESS STRATEGY AND EMPLOYEE BEHAVIORAL DYNAMICS: A CORPORATE PATHWAY TO SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract

This study examines the role of digitalized business strategy in shaping employee behavioral dynamics and its subsequent contribution to social development within the corporate sector. In an era of rapid digital transformation, organizations are increasingly embedding digital technologies into their strategic frameworks, fundamentally altering how employees perceive, respond to, and execute organizational goals. Drawing on strategic management and behavioral theory perspectives, this research conceptualizes digitalized business strategy as a multidimensional construct that influences employee cognition, motivation, collaboration, and adaptive behavior. The study further explores how these behavioral shifts act as a mediating mechanism through which corporate organizations generate broader social development outcomes, including community engagement, sustainability practices, and socio-economic value creation. Theoretical development suggests that digitally enabled strategies enhance transparency, decision-making efficiency, and employee empowerment, thereby fostering pro-social and innovation-oriented behaviors. Consequently, organizations become not only profit-driven entities but also active contributors to societal progress. This research contributes to the literature by integrating business strategy, digital transformation, and employee behavior into a unified framework that explains corporate social impact. The findings provide implications for managers seeking to align digital strategy with human behavior to achieve sustainable and socially responsible organizational outcomes in a competitive corporate environment.

INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation has emerged as a dominant force reshaping contemporary business

strategy, fundamentally altering how organizations create, deliver, and capture value.

In corporate sectors globally, digitalization is no longer viewed as a supportive tool but as a core strategic driver influencing competitiveness and sustainability. Scholars argue that digital technologies are deeply embedded in strategic decision-making processes, enabling firms to reconfigure business models and enhance responsiveness to dynamic environments (Bharadwaj et al., 2013). This shift has repositioned business strategy from a static planning function to a continuously evolving digital capability that integrates technology, data, and organizational intelligence.

In recent literature, digitalized business strategy is increasingly associated with organizational transformation and adaptability. The concept of digital transformation extends beyond technology adoption and includes changes in organizational structures, processes, and value creation mechanisms (Vial, 2019). Firms that successfully integrate digitalization into their strategic frameworks are better positioned to develop dynamic capabilities that enhance innovation and resilience (Warner & Wäger, 2019). As a result, digital strategy has become central to corporate sustainability and long-term performance in competitive markets.

Parallel to strategic transformation, employee behavioral dynamics have gained significant attention as a critical determinant of successful digital implementation. Digital environments require employees to exhibit adaptability, learning orientation, collaboration, and innovation-driven behavior. Research suggests that digital transformation reshapes employee cognition and work patterns by influencing motivation, autonomy, and engagement levels (Verhoef et al., 2021). Consequently, employee behavior acts as a bridge between digital strategy formulation and its effective execution within corporate settings.

Beyond organizational boundaries, corporate digital strategies increasingly contribute to broader societal outcomes, particularly social development. Social development in this context refers to improvements in community well-being, inclusivity, and sustainable socio-economic

progress. Contemporary corporate responsibility perspectives emphasize that firms are not only economic actors but also social contributors through ethical, environmental, and developmental initiatives (Porter & Kramer, 2011). Digitalization enhances this role by enabling transparency, efficient resource allocation, and scalable social impact initiatives through data-driven decision-making systems.

Therefore, integrating digitalized business strategy with employee behavioral dynamics provides a comprehensive lens to understand how corporate actions translate into social development outcomes. This study positions employee behavior as a critical mediating mechanism that connects digital strategic orientation with societal impact. By synthesizing insights from strategic management, organizational behavior, and sustainability literature, this research contributes to an emerging interdisciplinary framework that explains how digitally enabled corporations can simultaneously achieve performance excellence and social value creation.

Problem Statement

The rapid acceleration of digital transformation has fundamentally reshaped corporate business strategies, yet many organizations struggle to effectively align digitalized strategies with human behavioral systems. Although firms are increasingly investing in digital technologies, the strategic integration of these technologies into organizational behavior remains inconsistent. Scholars argue that digital business strategy requires not only technological adoption but also deep structural and cultural alignment within organizations (Bharadwaj et al., 2013; Vial, 2019). However, most corporate entities face a critical gap between digital strategy formulation and employee-level behavioral execution, leading to suboptimal strategic outcomes and limited value realization.

Furthermore, existing literature indicates that while digital transformation enhances operational efficiency, its influence on employee behavioral dynamics and broader social development remains underexplored. Employees

often experience uncertainty, resistance, and capability misalignment in digitally evolving environments, which restricts their ability to contribute effectively to organizational and societal goals (Verhoef et al., 2021; Warner & Wäger, 2019). Consequently, the disconnect between digitalized business strategy and employee behavioral adaptation creates a significant barrier to achieving sustainable social development outcomes. This gap highlights the need for a more integrated understanding of how digital strategy influences employee behavior and how such behavior translates into corporate contributions to society.

Research Statement

This study investigates how digitalized business strategy influences employee behavioral dynamics and how these behavioral changes contribute to social development in the corporate sector. It proposes that employee behavior acts as a critical mediating mechanism between digital strategy implementation and societal outcomes, thereby offering a more holistic understanding of corporate digital transformation.

Significance

This research is significant in both theoretical and practical domains. Theoretically, it contributes to the integration of digital transformation literature with organizational behavior and social development perspectives. Prior studies emphasize digital strategy as a technological and structural phenomenon (Kane et al., 2015; Bharadwaj et al., 2013), but this study extends the discourse by incorporating employee behavioral dynamics as a central explanatory mechanism. It further strengthens the strategic management literature by linking micro-level behavioral responses to macro-level social outcomes, thereby advancing interdisciplinary understanding of digitalized business ecosystems.

Practically, the study provides valuable insights for corporate leaders and policymakers aiming to maximize the impact of digital investments. While organizations increasingly adopt digital

strategies, many fail to translate these investments into meaningful employee engagement and social value creation (Verhoef et al., 2021). This research highlights how aligning digital strategy with employee behavioral transformation can enhance organizational effectiveness and societal contribution. It offers a strategic framework for designing human-centered digital transformation initiatives that support both corporate performance and sustainable social development.

Research Question

The following are some research questions:

- How does digitalized business strategy influence employee behavioral dynamics in corporate organizations?
- What specific employee behaviors are most affected by digital transformation initiatives?
- How do changes in employee behavior contribute to social development outcomes?
- What role does employee behavior play as a mediating mechanism between digital business strategy and social development?

LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital transformation has become a central construct in contemporary strategic management literature, emphasizing the integration of digital technologies into business models, processes, and organizational structures. Early foundational work conceptualizes digital business strategy as a fusion of technology and strategy, where digital tools reshape value creation and competitive advantage (Bharadwaj et al., 2013). More recent studies reinforce that digital transformation is not merely technological adoption but a systemic organizational change affecting strategy, culture, and processes (Vial, 2019; Warner & Wäger, 2019). This shift provides the conceptual basis for understanding how digitalized business strategy influences organizational outcomes.

The literature consistently highlights that digital transformation requires continuous strategic renewal and dynamic capabilities. Organizations must develop adaptability and learning mechanisms to remain competitive in digitally disrupted environments (Warner & Wäger,

2019; Fatima, Iqbal & Ahmed, 2023). Similarly, Vial (2019) argues that digital transformation involves reconfiguration of organizational resources and capabilities, enabling firms to respond effectively to environmental uncertainty. These perspectives position digital strategy as an evolving process rather than a static planning tool, emphasizing its deep organizational embedding.

A significant stream of research focuses on the role of business strategy in enabling digital transformation success. Studies indicate that firms that align digital initiatives with strategic objectives achieve higher levels of performance and innovation (Grover & Kar, 2020; Fareed & Iqbal, 2024). Additionally, empirical evidence suggests that digital transformation enhances operational efficiency, customer engagement, and innovation capacity when strategically integrated (Verhoef et al., 2021). However, strategic misalignment often leads to transformation failure, highlighting the importance of coherence between digital initiatives and organizational direction (Kane et al., 2015; Hassan et al., 2021). Employee behavioral dynamics have emerged as a critical determinant of successful digital transformation. Research shows that digital environments influence employee motivation, innovation behavior, and adaptability (Verhoef et al., 2021; Fahim et al., 2020). Studies further demonstrate that digital transformation fosters employee innovative behavior through organizational culture, leadership support, and psychological appraisal mechanisms (Employee innovative behavior in digital transformation study, 2025). This indicates that employee behavior is not only affected by digital strategy but also actively shapes its implementation outcomes.

Organizational behavior literature suggests that digital transformation requires employees to adopt new cognitive and behavioral patterns. Employees are expected to engage in continuous learning, collaboration, and technological adaptability in digitally enabled workplaces (Warner & Wäger, 2019; Iqbal, Farhan, & Atif, 2025). Resistance to change, skill gaps, and

uncertainty remain key challenges in behavioral adaptation during digital transformation processes (Vial, 2019). Therefore, employee behavior becomes a mediating factor between strategic intent and operational success (Nawaz et al., 2022).

Leadership and organizational culture are repeatedly identified as key enablers of employee behavioral change (Zaheer, Iqbal & Chishti, 2024). Transformational leadership and supportive organizational culture significantly enhance employee engagement in digital initiatives (Bagga et al., 2023). Furthermore, digital transformation success depends on aligning leadership practices with employee empowerment and innovation support systems (Kane et al., 2015). This suggests that behavioral dynamics are shaped by both structural and cultural organizational factors (Kanwal et al., 2023).

Recent literature also emphasizes the importance of human-centered digital transformation approaches. Scholars argue that employee involvement in digital processes strengthens organizational resilience and transformation sustainability (Digital transformation sustainability and employee empowerment study, 2023). Moreover, organizations are increasingly adopting citizen development and participatory digital models to enhance employee engagement in transformation initiatives (Carroll & Conboy, 2020; Iqbal & Omercic, 2024). These developments highlight the growing importance of behavioral integration in digital strategies.

Social development outcomes have become an emerging focus in digital transformation research. Digital business strategies are increasingly linked with broader societal impacts, including sustainability, inclusivity, and economic development (Porter & Kramer, 2011). Studies indicate that digital transformation contributes to societal improvement through enhanced transparency, efficiency, and innovation diffusion (Vial, 2019; Responsible digital transformation and societal impact study, 2025). This expands the scope of corporate strategy beyond profit maximization toward shared value creation.

Corporate digitalization also plays a significant role in addressing sustainability and social responsibility goals. Research suggests that firms adopting digital strategies can better align operations with environmental and social governance objectives (Verhoef et al., 2021; Iqbal et al., 2025). Digital tools enable organizations to measure, monitor, and improve their social impact more effectively. This reinforces the idea that digital transformation serves as a catalyst for corporate social responsibility and sustainable development.

However, the literature also highlights a persistent gap between digital strategy and social impact realization. While digital transformation enhances efficiency and innovation, its translation into social development outcomes is not automatic (Grover & Kar, 2020; Zaheer, Iqbal & Yousuf, 2023). Many organizations fail to extend digital benefits beyond internal performance improvements to societal contributions. This gap necessitates a deeper understanding of mediating mechanisms such as employee behavior (Rizvi et al., 2022).

Employee behavior is increasingly recognized as a bridge between organizational strategy and societal outcomes. Behavioral alignment ensures that digital strategies are not only implemented effectively but also translated into socially responsible actions (Warner & Wäger, 2019). Employees act as carriers of organizational values,

influencing how digital initiatives impact external stakeholders. Thus, behavioral dynamics play a central role in extending corporate influence to social development.

Integrating digital strategy and employee behavior provides a more comprehensive understanding of organizational transformation. Recent studies emphasize the need for multi-level frameworks that connect strategic intent, behavioral execution, and societal impact (Bharadwaj et al., 2013; Vial, 2019). This integration allows researchers to examine how micro-level behavioral changes contribute to macro-level social outcomes. It also supports the development of more holistic digital transformation models (Rizvi et al., 2025).

In conclusion, existing literature establishes strong linkages between digital business strategy, employee behavior, and organizational performance, but limited attention has been given to their combined impact on social development (Iqbal, Omercic & Bukhari, 2024). Although digital transformation literature is rapidly expanding, its behavioral and societal dimensions remain fragmented. This study addresses this gap by proposing an integrated framework that positions employee behavioral dynamics as a critical pathway between digitalized business strategy and social development outcomes.

Author/Year	Research Focus	Research Gap	Research Contribution	Relevancy with This Research
Bharadwaj et al. (2013)	Digital business strategy as integration of IT and strategic management	Limited behavioral and social outcome integration in digital strategy	Established foundation of digital business strategy as a strategic construct	Provides conceptual base for linking digital strategy with organizational outcomes
Vial (2019)	Framework of digital transformation and organizational change	Limited focus on employee behavioral mechanisms	Developed comprehensive digital transformation framework	Supports understanding of digitalization as organizational transformation
Warner & Wäger (2019)	Dynamic capabilities in digital	Lack of micro-level behavioral	Explained strategic renewal through	Relevant for linking strategy with

Author/Year	Research Focus	Research Gap	Research Contribution	Relevancy with This Research
	transformation	explanation	dynamic capabilities	adaptability and behavior
Grover & Kar (2020)	Value creation in digital initiatives	Weak linkage between strategy and societal outcomes	Developed value framework for digital transformation	Supports strategic value creation argument in research
Kane et al. (2015)	Role of strategy in digital transformation success	Overemphasis on technology rather than human factors	Highlighted leadership and strategy alignment importance	Relevant for aligning digital strategy with behavior
Verhoef et al. (2021)	Multidisciplinary digital transformation impacts	Limited integration of employee behavior and social development	Provided integrated digital transformation research agenda	Directly supports multi-level framework development
Porter & Kramer (2011)	Shared value and corporate social responsibility	Limited integration with digital employee behavior	Introduced shared value concept linking business and society	Foundation for linking corporate strategy and social development
Bagga et al. (2023)	Leadership and organizational culture in digital change	Limited focus on long-term behavioral transformation	Explained role of transformational leadership in digital adoption	Supports behavioral adaptation under digital strategy
Carroll & Conboy (2020)	Agile and employee involvement in digital systems	Limited scalability of behavioral integration models	Highlighted employee participation in digital transformation	Relevant for employee-centered digital strategy approach

METHODOLOGY

Research Approach

This study adopts a theoretical development (conceptual) research approach, aimed at building an integrated framework that explains the relationship between digitalized business strategy, employee behavioral dynamics, and social development outcomes. Rather than testing hypotheses empirically, the study synthesizes and extends existing literature from strategic management, digital transformation, and organizational behavior domains. The approach is interpretivist in nature, focusing on understanding how digital strategies shape behavioral and societal outcomes through conceptual integration and theoretical reasoning. This approach is suitable for emerging and complex phenomena where empirical models are

still evolving (Vial, 2019; Verhoef et al., 2021; Iqbal, 2025).

Research Design

The research follows a qualitative conceptual research design based on systematic and critical literature synthesis. The design involves identifying, comparing, and integrating prior theoretical contributions related to digital business strategy, employee behavior, and social development. Key studies from strategic management, organizational behavior, and sustainability literature are analyzed to identify patterns, inconsistencies, and conceptual gaps. The outcome of this design is the development of a novel conceptual framework that explains how digitalized strategies influence employee behavior and ultimately contribute to social development in the corporate sector. This design is appropriate

for theory-building studies where empirical data collection is not the primary objective (Bharadwaj et al., 2013; Warner & Wäger, 2019).

Inductive and Deductive Reasoning

This study primarily employs an inductive reasoning approach, as it derives new theoretical insights from existing literature. Through systematic interpretation of prior studies, the research identifies recurring themes such as digital transformation, behavioral adaptation, and social impact creation. These insights are then synthesized to construct a new integrated conceptual model. However, a deductive element is also present, as established theories such as dynamic capabilities theory and strategic management theory are used as guiding lenses to structure the conceptual relationships. This combination ensures both theoretical grounding and innovative conceptual development (Grover & Kar, 2020; Kane et al., 2015).

Philosophical Underpinning

The philosophical foundation of this research is rooted in interpretivism with a constructivist orientation. Interpretivism assumes that organizational realities are socially constructed and shaped by human interpretation, particularly in complex digital environments. Since employee behavior, strategic intent, and social outcomes are context-dependent and dynamically evolving, this philosophy is appropriate for exploring their interrelationships. Constructivism further supports the idea that knowledge is developed through interpretation of multiple perspectives in existing literature rather than objective measurement alone. This philosophical stance enables the development of a rich, context-sensitive theoretical framework that explains how digitalized business strategy translates into behavioral and societal outcomes (Vial, 2019; Verhoef et al., 2021).

DISCUSSION

The first research question examined how digitalized business strategy influences employee behavioral dynamics in corporate organizations. The findings from the synthesized literature

indicate that digitalized strategies fundamentally reshape employee cognition, work practices, and interaction patterns by embedding technology into everyday organizational processes. Digital platforms, data-driven decision-making systems, and automation tools require employees to develop higher adaptability, digital literacy, and collaborative competencies. Studies suggest that digital transformation not only changes what employees do but also how they think and respond to organizational goals, creating a shift from routine task execution toward innovation-oriented behavior (Verhoef et al., 2021; Vial, 2019).

The second research question focused on identifying the specific employee behaviors most affected by digital transformation initiatives. The analysis reveals that the most significantly impacted behaviors include adaptability, learning orientation, innovation behavior, and digital collaboration. Employees in digitally transformed organizations demonstrate greater willingness to experiment with new tools, engage in continuous learning, and participate in cross-functional digital ecosystems. However, the literature also highlights behavioral resistance, digital anxiety, and skill gaps as persistent challenges that hinder full behavioral alignment with digital strategies (Warner & Wäger, 2019; Bagga et al., 2023). Thus, digital transformation simultaneously enables and disrupts employee behavioral patterns.

The third research question explored how changes in employee behavior contribute to social development outcomes. The discussion indicates that employee behavioral transformation acts as a critical mechanism through which organizations extend their impact beyond economic performance toward societal value creation. Employees who adopt innovation-driven and socially responsible behaviors contribute to sustainability initiatives, community engagement, and ethical decision-making within corporate structures. This aligns with the shared value perspective, which emphasizes that firms can generate economic value in a way that also produces social benefits (Porter & Kramer, 2011;

Responsible Digital Transformation Study, 2025). Therefore, employee behavior becomes a bridge connecting organizational strategy with broader societal outcomes.

The fourth research question investigated the mediating role of employee behavior between digital business strategy and social development. The synthesized evidence strongly supports the proposition that employee behavior functions as a central mediating mechanism. Digitalized strategies alone do not directly produce social impact; rather, it is the interpretation, adoption, and enactment of these strategies by employees that determines societal outcomes. Employees act as behavioral carriers of strategic intent, translating digital capabilities into socially meaningful actions such as sustainability practices and inclusive innovation (Grover & Kar, 2020; Warner & Wäger, 2019). This mediation highlights the importance of human-centric digital transformation models.

Overall, the integrated discussion confirms that digitalized business strategy, employee behavioral dynamics, and social development are interdependent constructs. The evidence suggests that corporate digital transformation is most effective when it simultaneously aligns strategic intent with behavioral adaptation and societal responsibility. Without behavioral alignment, digital strategies risk remaining technologically advanced but socially disconnected. Therefore, the study establishes a multi-level linkage where employee behavior serves as the pivotal mechanism driving the transition from digital strategy to social development impact.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that digitalized business strategy plays a transformative role in shaping employee behavioral dynamics within corporate organizations. The integration of digital technologies into strategic frameworks significantly alters employee roles, expectations, and competencies, leading to increased adaptability, innovation, and collaboration. However, this transformation is not automatic; it depends on how effectively organizations manage

behavioral adaptation processes. The findings emphasize that digital strategy must be viewed as a socio-technical phenomenon where human behavior is central to its success.

Furthermore, the study concludes that employee behavior is the critical pathway through which digitalized strategies translate into social development outcomes. Employees act as intermediaries who convert digital capabilities into socially responsible and development-oriented actions. When effectively aligned, employee behavior contributes to sustainability initiatives, ethical practices, and community engagement. This demonstrates that corporate social development is not solely a strategic outcome but a behavioral consequence of digital transformation.

Finally, the study establishes that an integrated framework linking digital business strategy, employee behavior, and social development provides a more comprehensive understanding of modern corporate transformation. This multi-level relationship highlights the need to move beyond technology-centric views of digitalization toward human-centered strategic models. The study contributes to theory by reinforcing the idea that sustainable social impact in the corporate sector is achieved through the alignment of strategy, behavior, and societal objectives.

Policy Implications

From a policy perspective, organizations and regulators should prioritize the development of human-centered digital transformation frameworks that integrate employee behavioral development into strategic planning. Corporate policies should emphasize continuous digital skill development, training programs, and behavioral adaptation mechanisms to ensure that employees can effectively engage with evolving digital systems. Without such policies, digital investments may fail to produce meaningful organizational or societal outcomes.

Additionally, policymakers should encourage corporations to adopt digital transformation strategies that explicitly incorporate social

development goals. This can be achieved by linking corporate digital initiatives with sustainability reporting, ESG frameworks, and social impact assessments. By institutionalizing the connection between digital strategy and social outcomes, policymakers can ensure that corporate digitalization contributes not only to economic performance but also to broader societal progress.

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