

DIGITAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES ENHANCING EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT AND ORGANISATIONAL RESILIENCE IN HYBRID WORKPLACES**Dr. Dhanashri Y Jadhav¹**

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ORC id:0000-0002-6321-4423, yuvraj.jadhav@bharativedyapeeth.edu**Abstract**

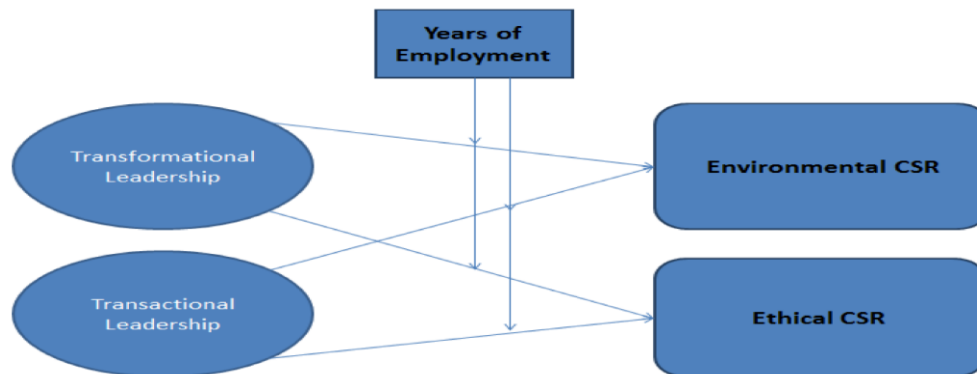
Digital leadership has become increasingly important due to the trend of hybrid workplaces to ensure a high level of employee engagement and organisational resilience. The paper explores the merits of the use of digital leadership practices based on technology-based communication, development of trust, and development of adaptive decisions in encouraging participation of the workforce and organisational resilience amid uncertainty. The article will consider the recent studies to focus on the integrated nature of leadership, digital technologies, and the welfare of employees as an element in the assurance of sustainable performance in a hybrid work environment.

1. Introduction

The development of hybrid employment systems has transformed the nature of organisational leadership in significant ways, and new practices are needed to sustain the engagement of employees and foster resilience in identity workplaces. Most recent works have further pointed out that digital leadership, characterised by the application of technology, trust building and virtual support, positively impacts employee engagement in hybrid workplaces, in the case that the digital communication is high-quality and trust mechanisms are in place (Nurhidayah and Muliansyah, 2024). The appearance of hybrid models is antithetical to traditional leadership due to the remote teams and the increased reliance on digital tools. The versatility of leadership and digital savvy are the two key variables to the sustainability of the organisation and participation in the uncertain and changing environment. The trends present the urgency of digital leadership in establishing the organisational outcomes of the hybrid environments.

2. Evolution of Leadership in Hybrid Work Environments

Transformational and transactional leadership models are considered the most used of the traditional models of leadership, and they have traditionally defined organisational practice in terms of vision, rewards and role-based exchanges; the models include exchanges of influence in co-located teams with a leader and formal power (Aarons, 2020). As working together became decentralised, the Intelligence Community saw the limitations of the previous models of digitally mediated coordination, which resulted in the development of the new discipline of digital and e-leadership: now a leader must be digitally savvy, capable of communicating online and able to facilitate mediate communication capable of sustaining motivation and creativity remotely (Lin, 2025).

**Figure 1: Transformational and transactional leadership**

(Source: Lin, 2025)

Digital leadership is a fusion of technological proficiency and relationship practice (trust building, psychological safety, asynchronous coordination) and rebranding experience of leadership as a facilitation of digitally-assisted work over hierarchical-command (Öngel *et al.*, 2023). Simultaneously, the emergence of the hybrid workplaces, where the office and the distance work are regularly switched, has been growing more popular following the pandemic, and a shift in the attitudes towards the flexibility, autonomy, and work indicators; according to the empirical studies, many hybrid work systems are changing the work-life balance and maintaining the productivity, yet bringing new issues related to the engagement, equity, and the standards of communication (Lauring and Jonasson, 2025).

3. Digital Leadership: Foundations and Organisational Context

Digital leadership refers to skills, habit and practices that cause leaders to streamline people, technology and organisational processes so that they can meet the strategic goals in digitally mediated worlds. Core competencies include competencies related to digital fluency (digital tools and data knowledge), digital transformation strategic vision, change management, and socio-emotional core competencies (trust-building and psychological safety in virtual teams). The updated frameworks also highlight competency bundles (strategy, people, technology, and governance) in the form of a portfolio, which the leaders ought to incorporate to be able to effect digital change effectively (Khaw *et al.*, 2022).

3.1 Core Digital Leadership Competencies

Empirical research has emphasised the existence of four areas of competence that are practical: (1) technological and data literacy; (2) transformational change (visioning, experimentation) capabilities; (3) relational skills to work remotely and be trusted; and (4) governance and risk-consciousness (cybersecurity, ethical use of data). With such a set of capabilities in leaders, the process of implementing digital can become faster and healthier because they can address the needs of the staff and organise the organisational process to align the technical investment (Ongena *et al.*, 2024).

3.2 Digital Leadership in Hybrid Organisations

The hybrid contexts Digital leaders reorganise routines to support distributed work by creating norms of asynchronous communication, designing hybrid meetings as, well as the use of metrics that recognise outcomes and not facetime. Evidence Case-based research shows that the adaptive reaction to digital leadership (e.g. hybrid governance rituals, digital town-halls) supports innovation and coordination of dispersed teams (Bellis *et al.*, 2024).

3.3 Leadership Styles and Employee Engagement

The meta-analytic findings are positive regarding the association between positive leadership styles (transformational, engaging, servant) and higher employee engagement; digital leadership can improve the outcomes as it allows quality virtual communication and trust, which mediate the engagement in virtual environments. Leaders who use strengths-based and empowering practices through online media achieve better engagement and performance outcomes (Decuyper and Schaufeli, 2021).

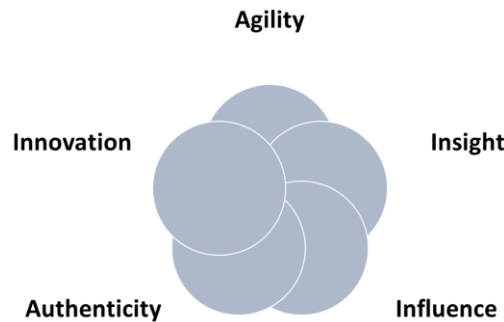


Figure 2: Digital Leadership
(Source: Self-Developed)

3.4 Digital Leadership and Organisational Culture

Organisational culture co-constructs and co-learns digital leadership: a learning, psychologically secure culture facilitates the quicker process of digital experimentation, high-profile digital leaders facilitate the institutionalisation of norms (digital etiquette, data-driven decision making) that inculcate resiliency and continuous improvement. Empirical studies have asserted that one of the mediating variables between leadership behaviours and transformation success is the digital culture (Basalamah and Basalamah, 2025).

4. Employee Engagement in Hybrid Workplaces

The employee engagement in the hybrid workplace is a multi-dimensional construct comprising six components: cognitive (focus and absorption), emotional (commitment and pride) and behavioural (discretionary effort and advocacy) dimensions. The analysis of hybrid work has revealed that individual resources (autonomy, role clarity) cannot be considered the only factors of engagement and that the team-based ones, such as coordination, shared norms, and the adjustment of remote and office work boundaries, are also relevant (Handke *et al.*, 2024).

4.1 Dimensions of Employee Engagement

Empirical literature points to the existence of three dimensions that interact and include the psychological meaningfulness (value of work), social connectedness (belonging and inclusion), and energetic resources (vigour and recovery). Having expectations of results and meaningful work improves engagement in the hybrid environment compared to social connectedness that minimises isolation associated with low rates of remote work (Mäkikangas *et al.*, 2022).

4.2 Digital Tools and Engagement Mechanisms

This can be supported by constant feedback, recognition, and the availability of learning resources (via digital platforms, collaboration suites, pulse-survey tools), which research has shown to ensure that the participants remain engaged with it when used in a purposeful way (not to add to surveillance, as such). Studies have established that devices promoting asynchronous teamworking and observable rewards increase staff autonomy, and perceived organisational support raises the level of engagement (Shokrollahi, 2023).

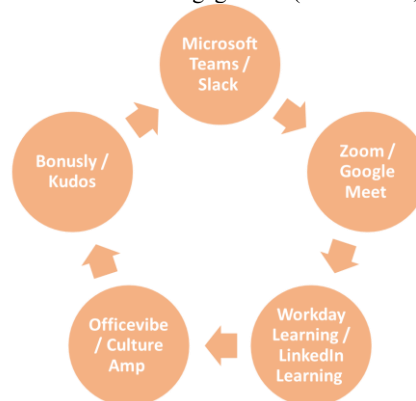


Figure 3: Digital Tools
(Source: Self-Developed)

4.3 Communication, Collaboration, and Trust

The communication should be of high quality, and the rituals of collaboration and collaboration should be predictable (e.g., organised hybrid meetings, conventions on response time). Trust is one of the mediators: the credible behaviours and other activities of leaders that sustain a state of psychological safety directly influence the engagement in hybrid teams (Krishnan *et al.*, 2025).

4.4 Challenges to Engagement in Hybrid Settings

Proximity bias (in-office employees have an advantage), coordination overhead, social isolation, and blurred work-life boundaries are some of the leading pitfalls. Without being created specifically (just practices in meetings, participative rituals, and result-driven assessment), hybrid

models are likely to cause an unequal flow of communication and the absence of team spirit. New literature suggests that there is a need to engage in leadership, investments in digital capabilities, and cultural work to remain engaged and resilient (Effiyaldi *et al.*, 2025).

5. Organisational Resilience in the Digital Era

The capacity to foresee, plan, react, and adjust to disruptive shocks, so that the process of creating value by the organisation may continue, is called organisational resilience. Resilience is now being considered as a multi-dimensional meta-capability, which is constituted with situational awareness, adaptive capacity and recovery mechanisms in contrast to a one-time reactive capability (Hillmann and Guenther, 2021).

5.1 Concept of Organisational Resilience

The modern scholarship employment considers resilience to be made up of three steps, i.e. (1) anticipation (sensing of risks and early warning), (2) response/adaptation (flexible re-configuration of processes and resources), and (3) recovery/learning (recovery of operations and learning of lessons). The central point of such framing is that resilience is based on both technical systems (redundancy, distributed IT) and social systems (leadership, culture) (Hillmann, 2021).

5.2 Leadership Role in Building Resilience

The three aspects of resilience that leaders develop are sense-making, psychological safety, and enabling decentralised decision-making. Empirical research has demonstrated that leaders with exemplary openness, open communication patterns and empowerment of groups are far more successful in reacting reactively and improving the well-being of the workforce during the period of crisis. Leadership does the job of the glue that coordinates the resources, quick decision-making and the learning loops that are needed to possess long-term resilience (Grimes *et al.*, 2022).

5.3 Technology-Enabled Resilience Strategies

The technical component of resilience is based on computer technologies. Elasticity, quick recovery and resilience of operations (e.g. multi-region deployments, automated failover) are provided by cloud architecture, a distributed data platform and automation. Organisational agility during shock Microsoft advice on resiliency and case work suggests that cloud-based redundancy, quick-to-provision and collaboration tooling are the most significant enabling factors of organisational agility to a shock (Microsoft, 2020). The big data, cloud and omnichannel have facilitated retailers like Walmart in offering fulfilment and customer access in case the demand spikes. They are governance-aligned technology investments (incident playbooks, cyber resilience) to be in a position to scale extremely rapidly and decrease downtime.

5.4 Adaptive Capacity and Change Management

The adaptive capacity of the resources, modular processes, and the ability to restructure supply chains are the key constituents of bouncing forward. In the (COVID-19) supply-chain research, multi-sourcing coupled with flexible contracts, buffer solutions and near-real-time inventory visibility are physical interventions that enhanced shock absorption and recovery of the firms. Companies that also joined the technical practices with explicit change management (effective communication, training and after-action learning) were more successful in transforming short-term changes to long-term resilience changes. Along with the examples of global firms working during the pandemic (e.g., the research of Amazon and major retailers), the application of technology in itself proves to be ineffective; additional organisational learning and leadership commitment are necessary to lead to the creation of quantifiable resilience (Das *et al.*, 2022).

6. Integrating Digital Leadership, Engagement, and Resilience

The result of resilience should have a clear outline between the capabilities of a leader and engagement processes, and the outcomes to attain an effective combination of digital leadership, engagement, and resilience. To enhance the responsiveness and recovery of the organisations in the fast-changing hybrid work settings, digital leaders employ trust-based practices, which must be technology-enabled to open opportunities to enhance connectivity, flexibility, and learning (Sağbaşı and Erdoğan, 2022).

6.1 Conceptual Framework

The framework stipulates that digital leadership behaviours are the primary antecedent of engagement, which mediates the impact on resilience. Frequent and high-quality electronic communication and performance indicators based on results complement perceived organisational support and discretionary effort; the engaged employees have an opportunity to detect the issues more quickly and find ad hoc solutions in case of disruption. Systemic and conceptual reviews imply viable levers (e.g. leader-led digital feedback loops, hybrid meeting equity protocols) that organisations can introduce to improve engagement as well as resilience (Manzini *et al.*, 2025).

6.2 Leadership Practices for Sustainable Performance

Practical interventions in the area of leadership include the development of asynchronous access channels with stipulated SLAs, a pulse survey as a proactive measure of wellness and periodical implementation of resilience exercises to train incident response. The real-life experience of international corporations is providing its testimony: the work of Microsoft and the focus on mapping resilience capabilities and the application of digital collaboration tools to keep working under stress proved how digital platforms could assist to scale quickly during the peak and make timely decisions under pressure from top management. As illustrated by these examples of companies, it is important to use leadership routines to support technical architectures so that sustained performance can be realised (Rickard, 2024; Campbell, 2024).

6.3 Risk, Uncertainty, and Workforce Wellbeing

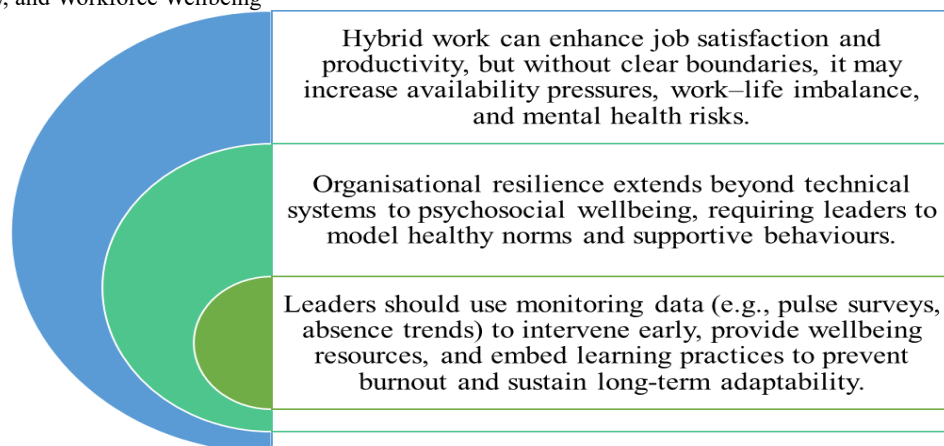


Figure 4: Risk, Uncertainty, and Workforce Wellbeing
(Source: Self-Developed)

7. Discussion

Employee engagement and organisational resilience (the combination of digital leadership and employee engagement) demonstrate a complex but positive relationship, which is determined by the evolving work practices. As has been established, digital leadership, specifically transformational and agile, has the ability to improve employee engagement in terms of hybrid and remote working conditions significantly by utilising technology in communicating, supporting, and recognising employees, which cannot be done with other leadership initiatives (Mendrofa, 2024). The strategies provide trust, transparency, and psychological safety required to maintain the interaction in distributed teams.

The hybrid work models underline that the organisational investments in digital infrastructure and leadership strategies, with the additional flexibility of the working arrangement and autonomy, are the components that are answerable to the engagement of the staff members. The leader approach and the quality of communication are strong predictors of the outcomes of engaging in hybrid environments, which confirm that the leaders must be attentive to fostering inclusiveness and similar frameworks in the realms of digital and physical settings (Tawalbeh, 2025).

Furthermore, organisational resilience literature suggests that job crafting and proactive behaviours through online leadership contribute to adaptiveness to volatility and uncertainty that safeguard firms. Leaders ensure that collective resilience is formed by making the employees redefine their job descriptions and incorporate digital tools and resources into their workflows. The literature identifies the fact that the hybrid workplace requires leaders who are capable of being digitally fluent and relational simultaneously and able to create an environment that could enable stimulating, responsive and continued performance even in disruptive change (Ye, 2025).

8. Conclusion

Digital leadership in a hybrid workplace is critical to support the development of trust, adaptive communication, and proactive behaviours to engage employees and maintain organisational resilience with the help of digital tools and inclusive practices.

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