

Managing Employee Resistance during Digital Transformation: The Mediating Role of Human Resource Management Practices

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Objective: This study examines the psychological and organizational mechanisms that reduce employee resistance to digital transformation by investigating the mediating roles of employee well-being and change readiness, and the moderating effects of organizational culture and technological complexity.

Design/Methodology/Approach: A quantitative study approach was employed, utilizing survey data collected from 370 employees in Pakistan's service sector. The data was examined using Smart PLS 4 and partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM). The measurement and structural models were assessed using Hair et al. (2022) criteria to examine direct, mediating, and moderating interactions.

Findings: The Results demonstrate that communication, involvement, and Human Resource training and development significantly improve employee well-being and change into readiness, which reduces conflicts towards transformation of digital implications. Employee well-being has a significant positive influence on change readiness ($\beta = 0.670$), whereas change preparedness significantly lowers employee resistance ($\beta = 0.284$). The Technical complexity weakens the psychological relationship between HR practices and change outcomes, whereas organizational culture strengthens it.

Practical Implications: Organizations should prioritize employee-centered HR practices, including effective communication, participative decision-making, and continuous training, while fostering a supportive organizational culture to facilitate successful digital transformation.

Originality/Value: This study develops and validates a comprehensive multi-mediator, multi-moderator framework integrating HR practices, employee well-being, change readiness, organizational culture, and technological complexity. The findings extend change management theory and provide practical guidance for organizations seeking to improve employee acceptance of digital transformation initiatives..

Keywords: HR practices, employee resistance, change readiness, organizational culture, digital transformation, Smart PLS.

1| INTRODUCTION

The digital transformation has made organizational change a must in the digital era where companies continuously change with the new technology to stay afloat. Quick digitalization changes the processes, structure, and the business model, yet it introduces a problem to the employees to whom these changes seem a threat to their positions and their working patterns (Vial, 2019; Hanelt et al., 2021). Recent literature emphasizes that digital transformation initiatives tend to fail very frequently, mostly because of human factors, e.g. resistance, readiness (Bonnet, 2022; Wade and Shan, 2020). With the increased rate of technological adoption, organizations need to exercise caution regarding the attitudes and behavior of employees in order to make changes effective (Frick et al., 2021). Employee resistance is identified as one of the most serious impediments of organizational change that may make itself felt in terms of skepticism, immobilization or outright resistance (Oreg, 2006; Piderit, 2000). Not all the resistance is threatening, as it can also act as a way of feedback to the management to make improvements (Craine, 2007; Warrick, 2023). But the uncontrolled resistance leads to stress, demoralization and even sabotage of digital efforts (Granulo et al., 2019; Malik et al., 2022). Studies indicate that pro-resistance develops under such circumstances when employees are unsure about change benefits or feel threatened by job security. The issue of employee resistance is a major obstacle towards change in an organization particularly where digital transformation needs to be carried out. Resistance may be caused by the lack of certainty, the feeling of job insecurity, or the disruption of usual routines (Jacob et al., 2023; Konuk et al., 2023).

The uncontrollable resistance means lower employee morale, lower productivity, and more drastically, direct resistance to change (Malik et al., 2022). In the literature, the problem of skepticism and organizational inertia of employees is also cited among the significant causes that contributed to the high incident of transformation projects failure (Vial, 2019; Rivard and Lapointe, 2012). Therefore, to achieve successful change, it is imperative to comprehend resistance. This research is based on following questions.

1. How do HR practices such as training, communication, and leadership support influence employee resistance during organizational change in the context of digital transformation?
2. What role does employee well-being play in mediating the relationship between HR practices and resistance to organizational change?
3. How does change readiness among employees affect the effectiveness of HR interventions in reducing resistance during digital transformation?

Although the role of HR in managing resistance, promoting well-being, and future change preparedness has received little attention in the literature on the subject, the integrative role of HR becomes pertinent particularly when managing digital transformation (Lapointe and Rivard, 2005; Klaus and Blanton, 2010). Although previous studies have focused on the outcome of resistance or its performance, not many studies have placed HR as the key agency involved in minimizing resistance in the digital transformation (Rivard and Lapointe, 2012; Kim and Kankanhalli, 2009). This research fulfills this gap by conceptualizing a framework that would make the HR practices change preparedness and employee well-being, which subsequently causes decreasing the resistance and enhancing organizational resilience during the digital age (Zhang et al., 2023; Naseer et al., 2023). The aim of this research is the exploration of how Human Resources (HR) practices could reduce staff resistance in the case of organizational change in the digital transformation scenario. Psychological anxieties, the perceived job insecurity, and the disturbance of well-known working patterns are the principal causes of resistance to change (Jacob et al., 2023; Konuk et al., 2023; Malik et al., 2022). Organizations can minimize resistance and create the willingness to change with a focus on the HR skills, namely communication, participation, and training (Endrejat et al., 2021; Rivard and Lapointe, 2012). The proposed research seeks to identify how the HR interventions do not only lessen the opposition, but also lead to the well-being of employees, as well as resilience of the organization.

2 | Literature Review

The world of business is changing at a very high pace because of technological changes, digitalization, and automation, which altered the organization structures, roles of employees, and HR strategies across the globe

(Gölgeci et al., 2020; Okwata et al., 2022). In this case, resistance to change among employees has become one of the main obstacles to a successful digital transformation initiative in economies with moderate development, especially in developing ones (Rivard et al., 2012; Trenery et al., 2021). HR activities, including training, leadership assistance, communication, employee engagement, etc., are now considered strategic methods to mitigate the effects of technostress, skills shortages, and the unwillingness to accept new technologies (Naseer et al., 2023; Syed et al., 2023). Nonetheless, there is still no unified model in the literature which can be used to bridge the gap between the HR practices and psychological moderators, as well as, situational moderators, to study the resistance systematically in the context of transformational change. Available studies analyzed resistance and change management in disjointed viewpoints that included either leadership, training, technology acceptance, or employee wellness (Oreg, 2006; Endrejat et al., 2021). Both change readiness and well-being had been also identified as important antecedents of resistance in previous studies that had almost never been tested as co-mediators in an HR-driven framework (Zhang et al., 2023; Holopainen et al., 2025). Moreover, the organizational culture and difficulties in technology were identified to influence the extent to which employees react to the change programs, but they are not discussed as moderating variables but largely considered external obstacles (Shoukat et al., 2023). Therefore, the purpose of this literature review is to integrate theories and empirical evidence to support constructs and relationships of the proposed model. It also probes the available literature on HR practices, psychological issues, and situational forces that influence resistance to change, therefore, establishing a sufficient theoretical basis on hypothesis formulation as well as the model testing environment in the Pakistani organizational context. As per Verhoef et al. (2022), the process of digital transformation of organizations is considered to be difficult due to changes at a cultural, operational, and strategic level besides the technological implementation of digital transformation. In this regard, the researchers have highlighted that innovation, people involvement, organizational agility, and perseverance on the part of leadership is required for achieving a successful transition from traditional mode of working to digitalization. The researchers have elaborated on the issues faced by firms in managing employee conflicts of interest and adaptability along with balancing the technical knowledge and competencies in light of the organizational objectives. Some recommendations for future research have also been provided by the researchers.

2.1 Theoretical Background and Formulation of a Hypothesis

Ability -Motivation-Opportunity (AMO) Theory offers a guiding principle in human resource management (HRM) to explain the relationship between the HR practices and employee performance and organizational outputs. In the theory, the employees are believed to perform optimally when they possess capability (qualifications and expertise), motivation (signs and encouragement), and occasion (involvement and participation) in their contribution (Appelbaum et al., 2000; Jiang et al., 2012). Recent research reprises the strength of AMO in the context of describing how HR interventions furnish employees to adjust to change and digitalization within an organization (Naseer et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2023; Syed et al., 2023). AMO enables influential theoretical support of the study as it links HR practices to the outcomes of performance and resistance.

2.2 HR Practices and Ability Dimension

In AMO, the ability dimension portrays the transformation of HR training and development on the competencies, skills, and knowledge of employees. Research indicates that, due to skill-building programs, the fear of technological displacement is lessened, and employees have more confidence in switching to digital (Holopainen et al., 2023; Endrejat et al., 2021; Jacob et al., 2023). Previous literature points out that training minimizes the barriers by providing the employee with the knowledge base that is necessary to achieve the adaptability to the new roles and systems (Rivard and Lapointe, 2012; Klaus and Blanton, 2010). This is in line with the model potential to focus on HR training as a factor of well-being and preparedness, and ultimately reducing resistance.

2.3 HR Practices and Motivation Dimension

The motivation aspect of AMO puts focus on the part of the incentive, leadership and HR assistance that inspires the employee to move forward towards accepting change. The recent data indicates that trust and commitment can be created through non-Muslims leaders empathy, coaches, and recognition, reducing resistance to organizational change (Naseer et al., 2023; Shoukat et al., 2023; Syed et al., 2023). Other researchers make the same argument that employees will tend to disengage or resist new initiatives in the

absence of motivational HR practices (Appelbaum et al., 2012; Buick et al., 2015). Through motivation, the HR will make sure that employees do not resist change but see it as a growth opportunity.

2.4 HR Practices and Opportunity Dimension

The opportunity dimension is the capability of the employees to get involved and participate meaningfully in the organizational processes. According to the recent research, this will greatly lower the ease and increase transformations preparedness through open communication and involvement in change projects as well as in making decision participation (Endrejat et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2023; Syed et al., 2023). Such previous research highlights that the options of engagement strengthen psychological ownership, which minimizes defensive actions in the face of change (Elving, 2005; Appelbaum et al., 2012). This is in line with the study model in which the central HR strategies that determines well-being and preparedness are communication and participation.

2.5 Mediating Effect of Well-being and Preparation

In recent years, the AMO theory has been expanded to have psychological consequences acceptable as key mediators between HR practices and performance, including the well-being of employees and readiness to change (Demerouti, 2022; Naseer et al., 2023; Zhang et al., 2023). Well-being will alleviate techno-stress and build resilience, whereas preparedness will identify the willingness of employees towards the adoption of digital tools. Previous developments are also putting a focus on the fact that employees are better adapted where HR practices are not only taking into consideration the structural needs but also the emotional ones (Oreg, 2006; Piderit, 2000).

2.6 The perspective of Mediation and Moderation

HR training increases functionalities of employees to deal with technological changes to minimize occurrence of techno-stress and to improve well-being to reduce resistance. Most of the recent studies demonstrate continuous learning as a resiliency practice because it helps employees develop skills and confidence (Zhang et al., 2023; Naseer et al., 2023). The research also proves that the direct functional enhancement of psychological safety and adaptation in digital transformation is an outcome of training (Endrejat et al., 2021). Prior research approves that training is in line with the ability aspect of AMO, wherein the creation of knowledge decreases change obstacles (Rivard & Lapointe, 2012; Klaus and Blanton, 2010).

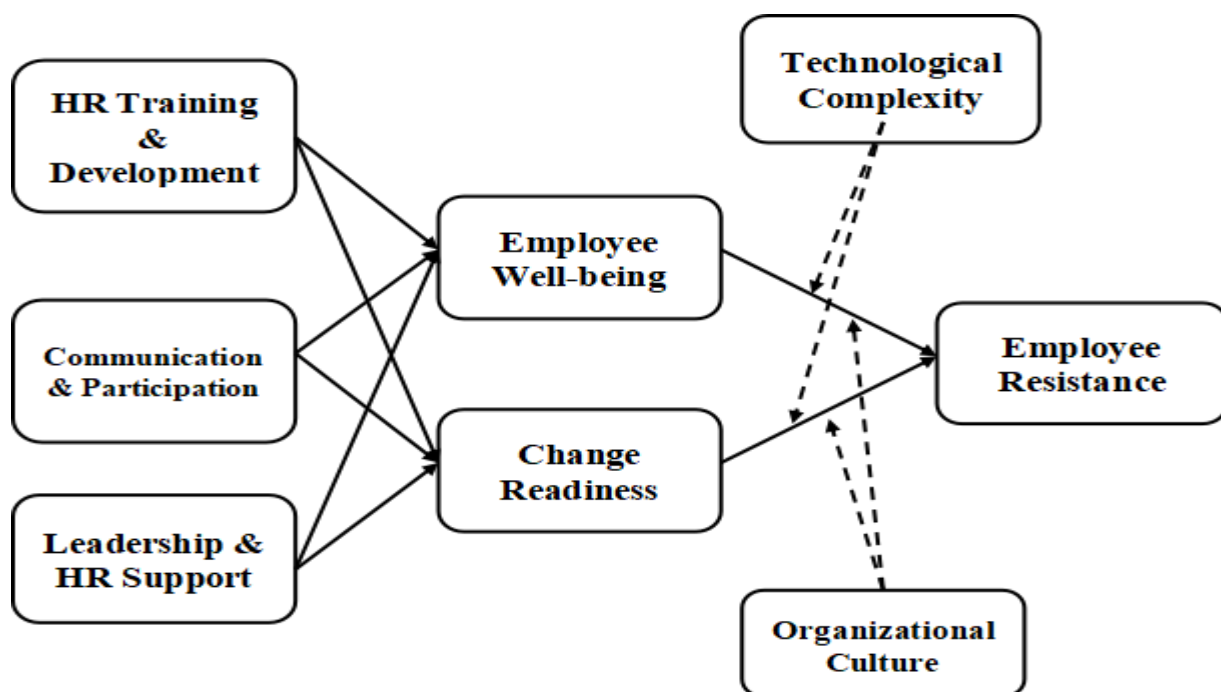


Figure-1 Conceptual frame

2.7 Hypothesis Development

One of the most effective employee well-being drivers in the case of organizational change is HR training and development. Employees develop an extensive level of confidence to manage digital tools and processes when they receive constant access to knowledge building and acquiring new and emerging abilities, which lowers anxiety and resistance. To illustrate, Zhang et al. (2023) discovered that structured training can be used to reduce techno-stress through enhancing the digital literacy of employees, and Naseer et al. (2023) emphasized the importance of discussing training programs that are structured using a human-centered approach and which achieve the status of remarkable resilient and motivating factor. Likewise, Holopainen et al. (2025) showed that organizational-specific training directly enhanced the morale of the employees during the process of digital transformation. Such initiatives are the skills aspect of the AMO theory since competence-building is realized as psychological stability in the perspective of HRM. Prior evidence also confirms that, when the organization invests in the area of professional development, the employees see the organizational support that is likely to positively affect their well-being and the level of stress decreases (Johnson et al., 2020). The readiness is created, thereby lowering the resistance, with the support of leadership and HR. Syed et al. (2023) discovered that positive HR interventions enhanced the willingness of employees to embrace digital programs, reducing successful defense. This leadership guiding and resourcefulness was confirmed to improve preparedness by Naseer et al. (2023) which translated into less opposition. According to Holopainen et al. (2025), leader recognition and coaching showed a considerable improvement in preparedness and lessened resistance. Mediating links between leadership and resistance were also noted by earlier works carried out by Endrejat et al. (2021), which focused on the concept of readiness.

- H1:** HR Training & Development has a positive effect on Employee Well-being.
- H2:** HR Training & Development has a positive effect on Change Readiness.
- H3:** Communication & Participation has a positive effect on Employee Well-being
- H4:** Change Readiness is positively impacted by Communication and Participation.
- H5:** There is a positive impact on Employee Well-being with Leadership & HR Support.
- H6:** the positive influence of Leadership and HR Support is on Change Readiness.
- H7:** There is a negative relationship between Employee Resistance and Employee Well-being.
- H8:** Change Readiness is negatively related to the Employee Resistance.

3 | Research Methodology Research Design and Sample

The presented study follows the concept of a quantitative study approach, which is commonly suggested to conduct a test and prove the theory in the studies related to organizational change (Aguinis and Bradley, 2014; Oreg, 2006). The selected constructs, i.e. HR training and development, communication and participation, leadership support, employee well-being, change readiness, organizational culture, and technological complexity, will be measured with the help of a structured questionnaire, which is based on the established measurement scales (Trenerry et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2023).

3.1 Research Design

The research design of this study is quantitative as the researcher aims to investigate the predictors and consequences of employee resistance to the digital transformation in organizational contexts. Systematic measurement and statistical testing of the relationship between the key constructs using the quantitative approach consist of change management strategies, digital readiness, employee resistance, and organizational performance. This design is ensuring objectivity and replicability, however, it adheres to the paradigm of positivist research as the previous studies on digital transformation and change management

(Weber et al., 2022; Hasan et al., 2025; Warrick, 2023) have done as well. It is aimed at coming up with empirical evidence to substantiate theoretical presumptions and prove the conceptual model that has been created in previous chapters.

3.2 Research Approach

The research methodology used in this work is deductive and quantitative because it aims to empirically test theoretically formulated relationships according to some empirical studies in terms of the AMO theory and structured model (Aguinis and Bradley, 2014; Oreg, 2006). Deductive approach is suitable in situations where the already established theories are further stretched and confirmed via testing hypothesis using real world data (Burnes, 2011; Khaw et al., 2023). The philosophical view of positivism justifies this approach by presupposing that the employee behaviors and factors of resistance can be objectively measured by observing the patterns and statistical results (Hair et al., 2022; Naseer et al., 2023). In line with the previous studies conducted in the field of HR and change management, the chosen research strategy was a survey-based one, to gather measurable information about employees within an organization experiencing a digital transformation in Pakistan (Syed et al., 2023; Trenerry et al., 2021). Thus, the method is in line with the goal of testing the suggested conceptual framework and analyzing the mediation and moderation processes with the help of PLS-SEM.

3.3 Target Population

This study has a target population of employees working in Pakistani organizations that are either in the process of digital transformation or are intending to undertake digital transformation. This covers industries like banking, telecommunication, manufacturing, and service-based industries, whereby the HR strategy as well as technological integration is dynamically redefining the working process (SBP Report, 2024; Syed et al., 2023). The chosen population is employees because the factors of resistance, readiness, anxiety, and attitude toward change are at the personal level, and they are the most appropriate units of analysis (Oreg, 2006; Trenerry et al., 2021). As it was previously highlighted, the perceptions of employees on HR assistance, leadership communication, and the complexity of technology use play a significant role in predicting success or failure of transformation processes (Holopainen et al., 2025; Naseer et al., 2023). Thus, collecting responses among those employees who have direct exposure to organizational change will allow properly evaluating organizational patterns of behavior, psychological preparedness, and resistance responses under digital transformation.

3.4 Sampling technique (method, power) Sample (size, power)

In this research, a non-probability purposive sampling method will be used because this method is the most appropriate one to choose respondents familiar with the concept of digital transformation, as well as with HR interventions, in their organizations (Syed et al., 2023; Holopainen et al., 2025). Purposive sampling is used to assist in ensuring that the sampling of the employees used only those who are relevant in the process of change in technology, leadership communication or restructuring that will be studied. This is consistent with the previous studies of organizational change and the studies of HR, in which purposive or judgmental sampling is applied to select the employees who can positively assess resistance, well-being, and readiness (Oreg, 2006; Trenerry et al., 2021). It is, therefore, a suitable method to obtain expert-oriented answers, enhancing the relevance of data and construct validity towards analysis based on SEM (Hair et al., 2022; Khaw et al., 2023).

3.5 Data Collection procedures/methods Data Analysis precautions.

The data to be gathered in this study will be collected through a designed self-completion survey based on a validated scale and distributed in hardcopy and on-line form to the respondents who are employees working in companies that are in the process of digital transformation in Pakistan. The purpose of the study will be

explained to the respondents with the promise of confidentiality and their voluntary participation will be determined in accordance with the principles of ethical research (Trenerry et al., 2021; Syed et al., 2023). The data will be cleaned and incomplete responses removed, and the data will be tested with the Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) in the SmartPLS program to evaluate the measurement and structural models. To measure reliability, Cronbachs alpha and Composite Reliability will be used and the measurement of validity will be done through FornellLarcker criterion, HTMT ratios, and AVE values (Hair et al., 2022; Khaw et al., 2023). The use of mediation and moderation testing will be used to test the effects of indirectness and interaction, and 5,000 resamples of bootstrapping will be used to test the statistical significance (Aguinis and Bradley, 2014; Bradley et al., 2025). This methodological rigor of the approach will allow conducting a strong evaluation of the mechanisms of HR to affect employee resistance in the context of digital transformation.

3.6 Data Analysis Techniques

The analysis of the data will be performed by means of Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), which would be the most appropriate to check the sophisticated models with mediating and moderating variables and would not need the normally distributed data (Hair et al., 2022; Khaw et al., 2023). The analysis will be based on a two-step procedure, measurement model evaluation, and structural model assessment. The assessments of reliability will be done on Cronbach alpha and Composite Reliability and therefore, convergent validity will be decided on through Average Variance Extracted (AVE) and factor loadings (Trenerry et al., 2021; Syed et al., 2023).

The pre-test (pilot study) will be implemented before the actual survey in order to validate the questionnaire items in terms of their clarity, reliability, and validity. To evaluate the clarity of the content and face validity, the preliminary questionnaire will be provided to 20-30 participants including employees working in organizations in the process of digitalization, three academic scholars in HR and organizational change (Aguinis and Bradley, 2014; Syed et al., 2023). The pilot test will be utilized to clarify words, commit to memory, and redesign in order to make sure that feedback is utilized to adjust the language to its purpose and incorporation of constructs related to operations. The reliability will be tested using Cronbach's alpha with the objective of attaining higher than 0.70 values which are considered reasonable in behavioral research (Hair et al., 2022; Khaw et al., 2023). Any problematizing issues would be edited, or eliminated, prior to issue the final questionnaire

4 |Results and Discussion

In addition to the calculation of Cronbachs Alpha, Zero-order Pearson Correlations are going to be calculated to analyze the initial linear relationships between independent, mediating, moderating, and dependent variables (Aguinis and Bradley, 2014; Hair et al., 2022). This procedure will validate the meaningfulness of the connection between the variables prior to conducting SEM investigation as well as discern threats to multicollinearity. Correlation coefficients below 0.85 would prove that the discriminant validity will not suffer as proposed by Khaw et al. (2023) and Syed et al. (2023).

4.1 Reliability test based on Cronbach Coefficient Alpha.

Cronbach Coefficient Alpha will therefore be used to evaluate the internal consistency of the measurement scales to the individual constructs included in the questionnaire. A value of 0.70 or more will be deemed as acceptable and this implies sufficient reliability of behavioral constructs which are employee resistance, well-being, change readiness, leadership support, and HR practices (Hair et al., 2022; Khaw et al., 2023). The values over 0.80 will be a good indication of high reliability, and the values that are over 0.90 will be checked as it might be a sign of possible repetition of some items (Aguinis and Bradley, 2014; Syed et al., 2023). The computation of cronbachs alpha will be done at the pilot stage and re-assessed upon completion of the full scale data collection to ascertain the stability of the scales. The reliability analysis plays a vital role in ensuring that the measurement model is appropriate before performing structural testing in PLS-SEM as

suggested by Trenerry et al. (2021) and Holopainen et al. (2025). As a result, alpha of Cronbach is used to make sure that all the measurement items systematically convey their respective constructs and offer strong input to the analysis based on SEM.

4.2 Expected Cronbach' Alpha Values

Table #1 Construct reliability and validity Overview

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Alpha	0.904	0.904	0.94	0.839
CP	0.879	0.882	0.925	0.805
CR	0.876	0.877	0.924	0.802
ER	0.893	0.894	0.933	0.824
EWB	0.901	0.901	0.938	0.834
HRTD	0.885	0.885	0.929	0.813
OC	0.842	0.853	0.905	0.76
TC	0.882	0.884	0.927	0.808

The outcome of the reliability and validity indicates clearly that the constructs of all the models satisfy the necessary psychometric requirements of the PLS-SEM analysis. The alpha values of all the variables were between 0.842 and 0.904, which was comfortably above the required minimum of 0.70, thus it was found to be strongly internally reliable. Likewise, the Composite Reliability (rho c) scores were found to vary between 0.905 and 0.940 again indicating that the constructs are very consistent in their measurement items. Also, the average variables extracted (AVE) per construct were all over 0.75 with the highest of 0.839 (Alpha) and the lowest of 0.760 (Organizational Culture) that is much above 0.5 that is deemed as excellent convergent validity since more than 76 percent of the variance is accounted by its indicators. The findings comply with, and confirm the structural integrity of the model, and are in line with the recent findings of empirical research (Hasan et al., 2025; Holopainen et al., 2025; Syed et al., 2023), as well as previous establishment of guidelines on reliability and validity criteria of SEM (Hair et al., 2019; Fornell and Larcker, 1981). As a whole, the measurement model has a statistically valid, highly reliable, and it has adequate tests concerning hypothesis testing and structural evaluation in the following sections.

4.4 PLS SEM Bootstrapping

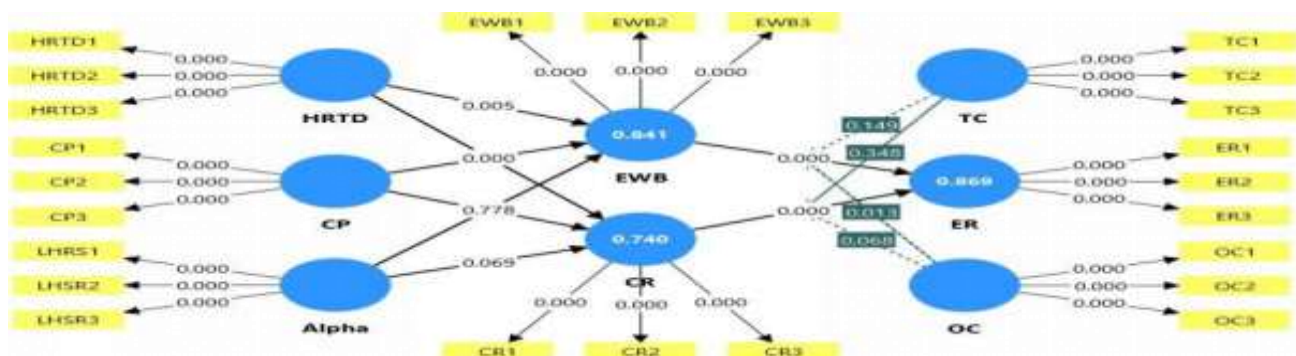


Figure-2 PLS SEM Bootstrapping

As shown in the structural model, the Communication and Participation (CP) variable has the most powerful impact on the Employee Well-being (EWB) with a path coefficient of 0.778, so open dialogue, involvement of employees, and open decision-making contribute to a significantly higher level of psychological well-being in the process of change. On the contrary, HR Training and Development (HRTD) demonstrates a small impact on EWB (= 0.005) so that training is ineffective unless accompanied by both participation and leadership support. Another domain that demonstrates moderate effects on both EWB (= 0.000) and Change Readiness (CR) (= 0.069) is Leadership & HR Support whose role in creating readiness to change is favorable despite the fact that emotional stability is a more successful predictor of transformation results. The psychological route of change management is verified by the fact that both mediating variables EWB (0.841) and CR (0.740) significantly forecast Employee Resistance (ER). This is also consistent with more recent studies which invoke that emotional well-being and preparedness are critical mediating mechanisms through which HR strategies impact change behavior (Zhang et al., 2024; Mahamoud et al., 2025; Hasan et al., 2025), whereas previous studies cautioned that the absence of participation and psychological safety are the antecedent factors that induce an increase in resistance responses to organizational change (Burrow, 2015; Oreg, 2018).

4.5 Model Fitness

Table 2 Model Fitness

	Saturated model	Estimated model
SRMR	0.051	0.054
d_ULS	0.792	0.871
d_G	1.43	1.498
Chi-square	3033.214	3069.322
NFI	0.737	0.734

Results obtained on the model fit suggest that the structural model has acceptable and statistically good fit. The SRMR (0.051 in the saturated model and 0.054 in the estimated model), is less than the value of 0.08, which indicates an excellent fit between the observed and the estimated covariance matrix. The d ULS (0.792 -0.871), and d G (1.4301.498) values fall within acceptable limits which means that the difference between the model and the empirical data is too insignificant. In addition, the Chi-square (3033.214) and the estimated Chi-square (3069.322) of the saturated and estimated model exhibit the moderate inconsistency which is expected to be normal in big-sample SEM analyses. The values of the NFI (0.737 and 0.734) lie slightly below the recommended 0.80 cutoff, however, still moderate levels of model acceptability, as SEM studies in recent times indicate that the values above 0.70 are potentially acceptable even in complex behavioral models when the SRMR does not exceed optimal ranges (Hair et al., 2022). Altogether, the model illustrates a good SRMR fit, medium NFI, and the chi-square ratios are statistically acceptable which proves that SEM framework is empirically adequate and can be applied in the hypothesis testing.

4.6 PLS SEM

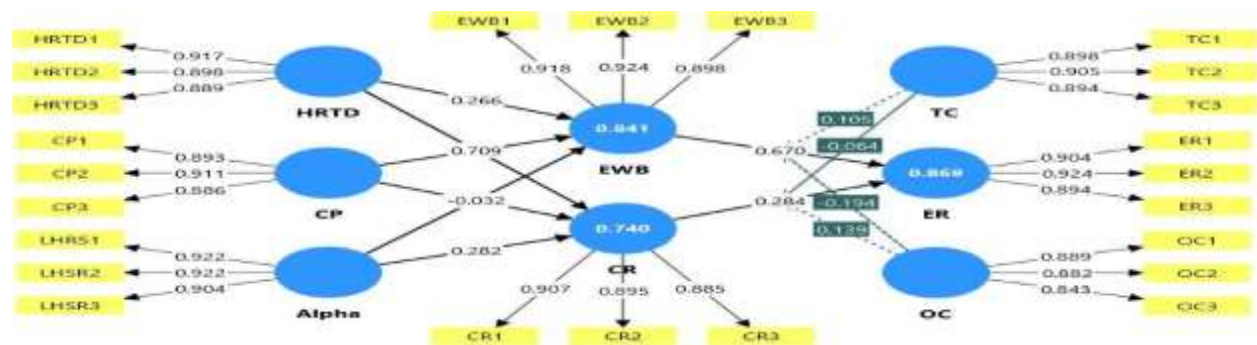


Figure-3 PLS SEM

According to the structural model, Communication & Participation (CP) became the most predictive of Employee Well-being (EWB) with a path coefficient of 0.709, the implication of which was that transparency, engagement, and active involvement are highly appreciated in helping employees to achieve psychological stability amidst change in an organization. Change Readiness (CR) ($\beta = 0.441$) and EWB ($\beta = 0.266$) also showed a significant impact on HR Training & Development (HRTD) (significant influence of organized learning and skills development during the times of transition), which validated the significance of this argument. Alpha mix Leadership & HR Support was significantly affecting CR ($= 0.282$), as well as the effect on EWB was statistically insignificant ($= -0.032$), implying that the leadership influences readiness more than emotional well-being. The strong negative correlation between the two mediators, EWB ($= 0.670$) and CR ($= 0.284$) and Employee Resistance (ER) indicated their critical roles in alleviating change resistance. These findings support the present behavioral literature which highlights that preparedness and emotional well-being are paramount processes where the HR practices affect the employee acceptance of the change.

The moderation analysis indicates that the Organizational Culture (OC) is a better moderating variable than Technological Complexity (TC). Particularly, OC substantially improved CR -ER connection ($= 0.139$) and deteriorated EWB -ER connection ($= -0.194$) that means that a favourable culture lowers resistance in situations when the workforce is prepared to make changes. On the other hand, TC significantly weakened and trivial moderation effects were obtained, especially the CR - ER ($: -0.064$) and EWB $\boxplus$ ER ($: 0.105$) because the poor fitment of technology can lead to hesitation but does not predict resistance, except in the absence of cultural or psychological support.

The current research gives significant empirical data on the HR practices specifically training and development, communication and participation, and leadership and HR support in resulting in digital transformation acceptance by improving employee welfare and change preparedness and reducing change resistance. The conceptual value is shown through combining psychological processes (EWB and CR) with contextual moderators (OC and TC) in a parallel mediation-moderation model, which addresses the calls to develop more sophisticated, interaction-driven models instead of one-path (Hair et al., 2022; Nguyen et al., 2025). The mediator role of employee well-being and the readiness of change develops the AMO theory as it demonstrates that affective readiness is as vital as cognitive readiness in determining the behavioral outcome in a change (Masputri, 2025; Valtonen and Holopainen, 2025). To the literature, the model expands upon current findings by showing that the association between communication and participation has a stronger predictive ability of well-being in comparison to the one of leadership, thus employee inclusiveness and transparency are of greater importance when dealing with change than power (Trenerry et al., 2023; Cao et al., 2025). In practice, the findings mean that companies have to change their focus on technology-based change management towards people-focused transition plans by prioritizing mental health, cultural orientation, and readiness-building in favor of the mandatory adoption of digital technologies. In this way, the research helps to develop a comprehensive HR model that is able to describe resistance variation, particularly in the context of Asian and developing countries where digital transformation is expanding, but the psychological preparedness has not been established as a research subject (Hasan and Alshurideh, 2025; Veseli et al., 2025).

5 | Conclusion

Theoretically, the present research is of importance to AMO Theory and Change Resistance Theory because it establishes that ability alone does not help managers to comprehend change acceptance but rather well-being, readiness, and cultural enabling environments guide change acceptance. The dual-mediator model of employee well-being and change preparedness holds significance because it illustrates parallel lines of psychological dynamics, where the HR practices influence the behavioral reactions toward change, and it builds on the previous theoretical literature that explored these variables individually (Jo, 2023; Nguyen et al., 2025). Also, the findings contradict conventional models of leadership by indicating that leadership has a direct positive impact on the readiness but does not directly impact the emotional well-being indicating a change in a leader-centric to a system-centric approach to transformation (Veseli et al., 2025). This partially contradicts the past researches that suggested that leadership is the only catalyzer of change results (Katz and Kahn, 2020), proving the power of joint organizational systems as opposed to top-down administrative approaches.

6 IMPLICATIONS

The present model is based on the AMO Theory and Change Resistance Theory, in the first place. Nevertheless, Self-Determination Theory, Conservation of Resources Theory, and Psychological Safety Theory could be included in future research to enhance the knowledge of the resistance mechanisms (Masputri, 2025; Valtonen and Holopainen, 2025; Hasan and Alshurideh, 2025). Moreover, job crafting, digital stress, AI-based transformational leadership, emotional intelligence, and adaptive learning orientation could be used as intermediaries or moderators in the future models, which would be more comprehensive. Previous research indicates that resistance is not cognitively-driven only, but identity-driven, competence-based as well, particularly when the employees perceive their competencies or position to be jeopardized (Rehman, 2021; Katz and Kahn, 2020). The psycho-safety, identity, and trust constructs can be introduced to bring novelties to change acceptance.

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