

WORK DYNAMICS AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN BANKING: DIGITAL ESCAPISM AND JOB STRESS AS DUAL MECHANISMS

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ABSTRACT: This study examines the influence of work conflict, job training, transformational leadership, and organizational communication on employee performance, with digital escapism as a mediating variable and job stress as a moderating variable. Using a quantitative approach with data collected from 150 employees on Indonesian Banks. The analysis was performed using the SmartPLS method. The findings show that work conflict negatively affects employee performance, while job training, transformational leadership, and organizational communication have positive effects. Work conflict, leadership, and communication significantly influence digital escapism, though escapism itself does not affect performance or mediate any relationships. Job stress has a direct positive impact on performance but does not moderate the escapism, performance relationship. These results highlight the crucial role of organizational and leadership factors in improving employee performance within the context of digital transformation.

Keywords: Work Conflict; Job Training; Transformational Leadership; Digital Escapism; Job Stress

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid digitalization of the banking industry has reshaped operational systems, service delivery models, and organizational work patterns. Technologies such as mobile banking, internet banking, big data analytics, and cybersecurity protocols now demand high adaptability and digital competence from employees to sustain optimal performance. In Indonesia, Bank BPD Bali has accelerated this transition by cultivating a digital work culture through digital awareness training, cybersecurity workshops, and the implementation of a Digital Awareness Learning Management System (LMS). These initiatives have strengthened service quality, improved operational efficiency, and supported the bank's expanding portfolio of digital services.

Despite these gains, intensifying technological pressures create new organizational challenges. Disparities in digital competence, uneven task allocation, and ineffective virtual communication often give rise to work conflict, which can erode performance and trigger digital escapism—a psychological tendency to withdraw into digital media to avoid work-related stress. APJII (2024) reports that 96.3 percent of banking employees access social media during working hours, with 42 percent doing so specifically to reduce stress. This pattern echoes prior findings that workplace stressors and interpersonal conflict increase escape-oriented digital behavior (Kuss & Griffiths, 2015; Przybylski et al., 2013). These dynamics raise critical questions about whether work conflict diminishes performance directly, whether structured job training can counteract these effects, whether transformational leadership can strengthen employee engagement in digital environments, and whether organizational communication can maintain performance during digital transition.

Existing scholarship has explored how digitalization intersects with workload, leadership, and performance, yet studies rarely examine digital escapism as a psychological mechanism through which organizational variables shape employee outcomes. Even fewer works consider job stress as a moderating factor that may amplify or weaken the influence of digital escapism on performance, particularly within Indonesia's regional development banking sector. These omissions leave unresolved whether digital escapism mediates the effects of work conflict, job training, transformational leadership, and organizational communication on employee performance, and whether heightened job stress intensifies the performance consequences of digital escapism.

Against this backdrop, the present study proposes a distinctive analytical model that positions digital escapism as a central psychological channel linking key organizational factors to performance, while incorporating job stress as a boundary condition that shapes the strength of these relationships. By applying this framework to Bank BPD Bali, the study offers a nuanced understanding of how employees navigate digital transformation pressures and how organizations can manage digital behavior to sustain long-term performance. This integrative perspective provides both theoretical advancement and strategic managerial insight for banking institutions undergoing rapid digitalization.

THEORETICAL REVIEW

McClelland's Need Theory provides an important psychological foundation for understanding why individuals respond differently to organizational demands. By proposing that human motivation is shaped by the needs for achievement, power, and affiliation, McClelland (1961) places individual motives at the core of workplace behavior. Employees driven by achievement seek mastery and measurable outcomes; those oriented toward power aim to influence their environment; and those who prioritize affiliation value belonging and harmonious relationships. These dominant needs shape how employees interpret workplace events, respond to pressure, and engage with organizational goals. In environments undergoing digital transformation, such as modern banking institutions, these motivational tendencies can amplify or mitigate the ways employees react to organizational demands.

Within this motivational landscape, work conflict becomes a salient organizational condition that triggers behavioral and psychological responses. Robbins (2001) conceptualizes work conflict as a perception that another party has hindered or will hinder something of personal value. Conflicts may stem from task disagreements, strained relationships, unclear processes, structural barriers, or communication breakdowns. Each form of conflict disrupts employees' ability to align their motives with organizational expectations. Individuals high in the need for achievement may become frustrated by process or structural conflict, while those high in affiliation may be more sensitive to relationship conflict. When these tensions remain unresolved, they create psychological friction that can spill over into performance outcomes and digital behavior.

Job training serves as a stabilizing mechanism in this environment. Sikula describes training as a structured intervention designed to improve employees' knowledge, skills, and attitudes for effective performance. High-quality training articulates clear objectives, identifies genuine learning needs, employs relevant materials and methods, evaluates outcomes systematically, and depends on competent facilitators. In the context of digital transformation, training becomes a buffer that reduces uncertainty, enhances employees' sense of competence, and mitigates conflicts rooted in uneven digital proficiency. Well-designed training programs can strengthen employees' intrinsic motivation, especially for those high in achievement needs, thereby supporting adaptive responses to technological change rather than avoidance or disengagement.

Leadership further shapes the motivational climate in which employees navigate conflict and training experiences. Transformational leadership, as articulated by Burns, elevates both leaders and followers by inspiring them toward higher purpose, shared vision, and moral growth. Leaders who embody idealized influence, articulate compelling motivation, stimulate intellectual innovation, and offer individualized consideration generate trust and psychological safety. These qualities encourage employees to reinterpret conflict as a challenge rather than a threat, embrace continuous learning, and remain aligned with organizational values. Transformational leadership can also

energize employees whose dominant needs lie in power or affiliation, making them feel valued and connected during periods of change.

Effective organizational communication ties these elements together by providing the clarity and coordination required in dynamic work settings. Robbins and Judge (2013) define communication as the process of transmitting information to ensure organizational alignment. When communication flows vertically and horizontally, blends formal and informal channels, incorporates nonverbal and cross-cultural elements, and uses digital technologies effectively, it reduces ambiguity and prevents unnecessary conflict. Transparent communication also reinforces leadership messages, enhances the impact of training, and helps employees make sense of rapid digital shifts. In contrast, communication breakdowns can magnify conflict, heighten uncertainty, and fuel stress reactions.

These organizational conditions ultimately shape employee performance, which Mangkunegara (2015) describes as the quality and quantity of outcomes achieved according to assigned responsibilities. Performance reflects not only skill and motivation but also the social and psychological environment surrounding employees. When conflict is well managed, training is adequate, leadership is supportive, and communication is clear, employees exhibit higher quality of work, timely completion of tasks, adaptability, teamwork, and organizational commitment. Conversely, deficiencies in these areas can erode performance by creating friction between employees' motives, capacities, and workplace expectations.

Job stress enters the framework as a pivotal psychological force that alters how employees experience and respond to organizational demands. Robbins and Judge (2015) characterize stress as a dynamic condition triggered when job requirements exceed the individual's ability to cope. Stressors include heavy workload, role ambiguity, resource constraints, interpersonal tensions, and unstable or technology-driven environments. As stress intensifies, employees' cognitive, emotional, and physical resources become strained. In digitalizing workplaces, stress may also arise from continuous connectivity, rapid technological learning curves, and fears of obsolescence.

When stress escalates, digital escapism emerges as a common psychological coping mechanism. Subudhi et al. (2020) note that escapism reflects an individual's attempt to withdraw from stressful real-world conditions. Drawing from Stenseng, Rise, and Kraft (2012), digital escapism can be understood as occurring along two pathways: self-suppression, where individuals use digital media to avoid unwanted thoughts or pressures, and self-expansion, where digital engagement offers stimulation or a sense of possibility unavailable in the immediate work environment. In the workplace, prolonged or maladaptive escapism may reduce attention, weaken engagement, and disrupt performance, especially in environments where stressors and conflict remain unmanaged.

These theoretical perspectives create a coherent lens for understanding how motivational forces, organizational conditions, and psychological responses interact during digital transformation. Dominant needs shape how employees interpret conflict; training and leadership influence whether they cope adaptively; communication structures determine whether ambiguity escalates

into stress; and digital escapism becomes the behavioral outlet through which employees attempt to manage unmet demands. This integrated framework allows the present study to examine not only how organizational factors influence performance but also how digital escapism and job stress function as psychological channels that connect these forces in the context of a rapidly digitalizing banking sector. Figure 1 displays this research idea being presented and constructed in subsequent manners of hypotheses.

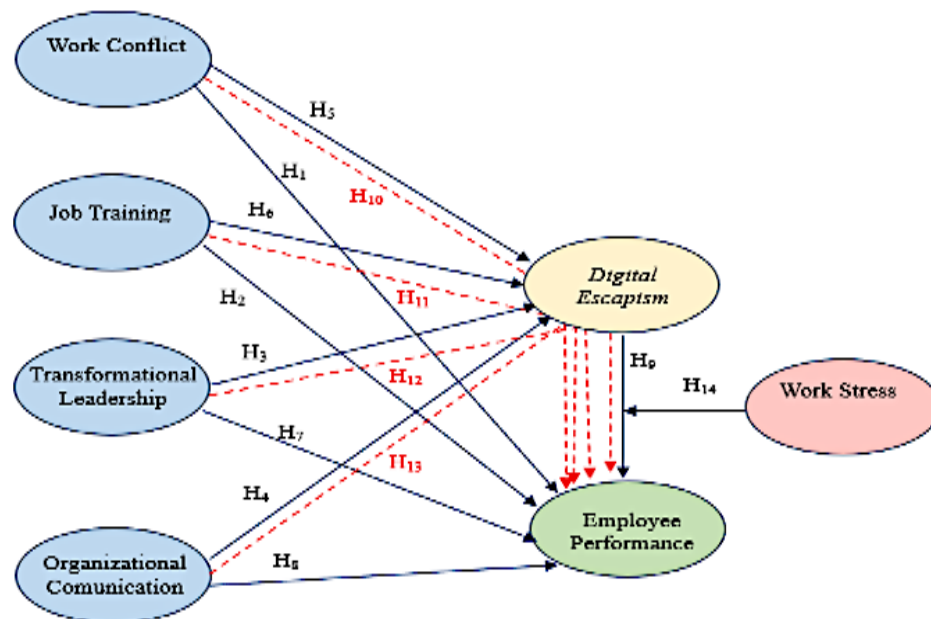


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

- H1: Work conflict has a significant effect on employee performance in banks.
H2: Job training has a significant effect on employee performance in banks.
H3: Transformational leadership has a significant effect on employee performance in banks.
H4: Organizational communication has a significant effect on employee performance in banks.
H5: Work conflict has a significant effect on employees' digital escapism behavior in banks.
H6: Job training has a significant effect on employees' digital escapism behavior in banks.
H7: Transformational leadership has a significant effect on employees' digital escapism behavior in banks.
H8: Organizational communication has a significant effect on employees' digital escapism behavior in banks.
H9: Digital escapism behavior has a significant effect on employee performance in banks.
H10: Digital escapism behavior significantly mediates the effect of work conflict on employee performance in banks.
H11: Digital escapism behavior significantly mediates the effect of job training on employee performance in banks.

H12: Digital escapism behavior significantly mediates the effect of transformational leadership on employee performance in banks.

H13: Digital escapism behavior significantly mediates the effect of organizational communication on employee performance in banks.

H14: Job stress significantly moderates the effect of digital escapism behavior on employee performance in banks.

METHODOLOGY

This study employs an explanatory quantitative design to test the causal relationships among work conflict, job training, transformational leadership, organizational communication, job stress, digital escapism, and employee performance. A quantitative approach is appropriate because the study aims to measure these variables objectively and assess their relationships through statistical modeling. The research was conducted in the banking sector, a context characterized by rapid digital transformation, high accuracy requirements, strict service standards, and increasing technological demands. This environment provides a suitable setting for examining how organizational conditions and digital pressures influence employee behavior and performance.

The population consists of employees working in banking institutions. Bank employees were selected because their daily tasks involve complex digital systems, time-sensitive financial processes, and continuous adaptation to technological updates, making them highly relevant to the variables examined. Following Ferdinand's (2014) guideline for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), which recommends a sample size of five to ten times the number of indicators, the minimum required sample for this study was 150 respondents. With 30 indicators included, the study met this threshold by collecting data from 150 employees. A purposive sampling technique was used to ensure that respondents met specific criteria: at least one year of work experience, active use of digital banking applications or internal digital platforms, and placement in divisions with high digital interaction or workload intensity. These criteria enhance internal validity by ensuring that participants are adequately exposed to the digital work environment analyzed.

Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire, the primary instrument in this study. The questionnaire comprised demographic items (age, gender, education, tenure) and measurement items for the seven principal constructs: Work Conflict, Job Training, Transformational Leadership, Organizational Communication, Job Stress, Digital Escapism, and Employee Performance. All measurement items used a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), enabling standardized capture of perceptions, experiences, and behavioral tendencies. The structured format ensured consistency across respondents and supported large-scale data collection efficiently.

Data analysis was performed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM). This method was selected because it accommodates complex models involving mediation and moderation, emphasizes prediction, and remains effective with moderate sample sizes. PLS-

SEM also handles non-normal distributions well, making it suitable for behavioral data. The analysis proceeded through several stages: assessment of indicator reliability and construct validity, evaluation of the measurement model, estimation of the structural model, and examination of mediating and moderating effects.

The research process followed rigorous procedures to enhance reproducibility. Instrument development included expert validation to ensure content accuracy. After questionnaire distribution, all returned responses underwent screening for missing values, outliers, and inconsistencies. Only cleaned and validated data were included in the final analysis. The analytical steps—including reliability testing, validity assessment, path coefficient estimation, and significance testing—were conducted using established PLS-SEM protocols to ensure methodological transparency.

Ethical standards were upheld at every stage of the study. Participants provided informed consent and were assured that their involvement was voluntary. All responses were anonymous, and no personally identifiable information was collected. Access to the research site was granted by banking management, and the data were used exclusively for academic purposes. These measures safeguard participants' rights and align the study with accepted principles of research integrity.

RESULTS

The demographic profile of the sample begins with gender distribution, which shows that female employees constitute 58.7 percent of respondents, while male employees account for 41.3 percent. This composition reflects the actual staffing pattern in the participating banking units and provides an initial view of the workforce contributing data to the study.

The age distribution indicates that most respondents fall within the 25–35 year range (83 individuals), followed by those aged 36–45 years (41 individuals). Smaller proportions appear in the below-25 group (18 individuals) and the above-45 group (8 individuals). This pattern suggests that most participants represent early to mid-career segments, a stage commonly associated with active engagement in organizational systems and adaptive interaction with work technologies. Reporting age distribution at this stage allows the study to situate subsequent analyses within a workforce generally positioned in its productive years.

Educational background provides additional context for understanding the composition of the sample. Respondents holding a bachelor's degree form the largest group (90 individuals), with diploma holders (29 individuals) and senior high school graduates (26 individuals) following in smaller proportions. A limited number of respondents hold postgraduate degrees (7 individuals). Presenting this distribution helps clarify the educational grounding of the employees whose perceptions, attitudes, and behavior inform the variables examined in this research.

Work tenure contributes another layer of descriptive insight. The largest group has been employed for one to three years (60 individuals), followed by

those with four to six years of tenure (51 individuals). Respondents with more than six years of experience account for 28 individuals, while those with less than one year total 11 individuals. Describing tenure at this point establishes the range of organizational exposure present in the sample, which becomes relevant when interpreting responses related to work routines, digital interaction, and organizational practices. These demographic characteristics provide a structured picture of the respondent pool and set the stage for the subsequent analysis of relationships among work conflict, job training, transformational leadership, organizational communication, job stress, digital escapism, and employee performance. The descriptive profile does not imply findings but instead offers a foundation upon which the analytical sections of the study proceed.

Measurement Model Analysis

The measurement model was first assessed to ensure that each construct demonstrated satisfactory reliability and convergent validity before proceeding to structural analysis. All indicators were evaluated through standardized factor loadings, Cronbach's alpha, and the Average Variance Extracted (AVE). As shown in Table 1, these results provide initial evidence that the measurement model is statistically sound and capable of supporting the subsequent analysis.

Table 1. Measurement Model Results: Factor Loadings, Reliability, and AVE

Construct	Indicator	Loading Factor	Cronbach's Alpha	AVE
Work Conflict	M1	0.939	0.924	0.814
	M2	0.905		
	M3	0.906		
	M4	0.856		
Job Training	X1.1	0.849	0.916	0.796
	X1.2	0.911		
	X1.3	0.911		
	X1.4	0.895		
Transformational Leadership	X2.1	0.859	0.912	0.793
	X2.2	0.941		
	X2.3	0.856		
	X2.4	0.902		
Organizational Communication	X3.1	0.913	0.946	0.86
	X3.2	0.929		
	X3.3	0.939		
	X3.4	0.929		
Job Stress	X4.1	0.87	0.911	0.785
	X4.2	0.878		
	X4.3	0.914		
	X4.4	0.88		
Employee Performance	Y1	0.968	0.962	0.898
	Y2	0.909		
	Y3	0.951		
	Y4	0.961		
Digital Escapism	Z1	0.842	0.903	0.778
	Z2	0.869		
	Z3	0.965		
	Z4	0.845		

Source: Adapted SmartPLS Output, 2025.

All loading values exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70, indicating strong indicator reliability. Cronbach's alpha values for each construct are above 0.90, demonstrating excellent internal consistency across the scales used. Similarly, all AVE values exceed 0.50, confirming that each construct adequately explains the variance of its indicators. To complement the assessment of convergent validity, the study next evaluates discriminant validity using the Fornell-Larcker criterion. This step ensures that each construct in the model is empirically distinct from the others, an essential requirement given the conceptual overlap that may emerge among variables such as job stress, work conflict, and digital escapism. The Fornell-Larcker approach compares the square root of each construct's AVE with its correlations with other constructs, confirming whether each construct shares more variance with its own indicators than with any external construct. This analysis strengthens the credibility of the measurement model by demonstrating that the theoretical boundaries between constructs are preserved statistically. The results of the Fornell-Larcker test are presented in the table 2.

Table 2. Discriminant Validity Results

No.	Construct	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Work Conflict	0.902	0.207	0.041	-0.208	0.243	-0.099	-0.077
2	Job Training	0.207	0.892	0.011	0.052	0.17	-0.233	-0.172
3	Transf. Leadership	0.041	0.011	0.89	0.068	0.03	0.566	0.618
4	Org. Communication	-0.208	0.052	0.068	0.927	-0.172	0.233	0.214
5	Job Stress	0.243	0.17	0.03	-0.172	0.886	0.045	-0.059
6	Employee Performance	-0.099	-0.233	0.566	0.233	0.045	0.948	0.689
7	Digital Escapism	-0.077	-0.172	0.618	0.214	-0.059	0.689	0.882

Source: Adapted SmartPLS Output, 2025

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, which compares the square root of each construct's AVE with its correlations with other constructs. As shown in Table X, the diagonal values exceed the corresponding inter-construct correlations across all cases, indicating that each construct shares more variance with its own indicators than with any other latent variable. This pattern provides evidence that the measures capture conceptually distinct constructs—an essential requirement given the conceptual proximity among variables such as work conflict, job stress, and digital escapism. The results therefore support the adequacy of the measurement model for subsequent structural analysis.

Path Coefficient and Bootstrapping Results

The structural model was evaluated to test all fourteen hypotheses specified in the study, covering direct effects, mediating mechanisms, and the moderating role of job stress. Each hypothesized relationship was examined using bootstrapped path coefficients, t-statistics, and p-values to assess statistical significance. This approach allows the model to capture both the primary associations between organizational factors and employee performance, as well as the indirect pathways involving digital escapism and the potential boundary

conditions introduced by job stress. Table X presents the full set of hypothesis testing results in an integrated format, aligning each hypothesis directly with its corresponding structural path to provide a clear and coherent summary of the model's empirical outcomes.

Table 3. Path Coefficients and Bootstrapping Results

Hypothesis & Structural Path	Effect (β)	t-value	p-Value
H1: Work Conflict → Employee Performance	-0.037	0.641	0.522
H2: Job Training → Employee Performance	-0.175	2.778	0.005
H3: Transformational Leadership → Employee Performance	0.271	3.375	0.001
H4: Org. Communication → Employee Performance	0.145	2.631	0.009
H5: Work Conflict → Digital Escapism	-0.007	0.574	0.566
H6: Job Training → Digital Escapism	-0.002	0.293	0.770
H7: Transformational Leadership → Digital Escapism	0.007	0.596	0.551
H8: Organizational Communication → Digital Escapism	-0.007	0.528	0.597
H9: Digital Escapism → Employee Performance	0.482	5.530	0.000
H10: Work Conflict → Digital Escapism → Employee Perf.	-0.007	0.574	0.566
H11: Job Training → Digital Escapism → Employee Perf.	-0.002	0.293	0.77
H12: Transf. Leadership → Digital Esc. → Employee Perf.	0.007	0.596	0.551
H13: Org. Communication → Digital Esc. → Employee Perf.	-0.007	0.528	0.597
H14: Job Stress mod. Digital Esc. → Employee Performance	-0.021	0.718	0.473

Source: Adapted SmartPLS Output, 2025.

The structural model results indicate that the organizational variables exhibit differentiated effects on employee performance, with job training, transformational leadership, organizational communication, and job stress emerging as significant predictors. Transformational leadership demonstrates the strongest positive effect, highlighting its relevance in shaping employee outcomes in digitally intensive work settings. Digital escapism also shows a strong positive association with performance, suggesting that in this context digital retreat may function as a short-term regulatory or coping mechanism rather than purely dysfunctional avoidance. By contrast, work conflict does not exhibit a meaningful direct effect on performance, implying that conflict within this organizational environment does not immediately manifest in decreases in task execution or output levels. The negative effect of job training warrants further reflection, as it may indicate transitional strain following new learning, heightened post-training expectations, or misalignment between training content and real-time job demands.

The antecedent paths leading to digital escapism reveal a uniform pattern of insignificance: work conflict, job training, transformational leadership, and organizational communication do not predict escapism behavior. This finding is reinforced by the absence of supported mediation effects across all indirect paths, indicating that digital escapism does not operate as a mechanism linking organizational conditions to employee performance within this model. Moreover, the interaction between job stress and digital escapism shows no moderating influence on performance, suggesting that the impact of escapism is stable across stress levels rather than contingent on strain intensity. Taken together, these results suggest that digital escapism in this context functions as an independent behavioral tendency rather than a derivative response to organizational dynamics, and that its performance implications arise directly

rather than through the traditional stress-strain pathways often discussed in the literature.

DISCUSSION

The hypothesis testing results offer a complex picture of how organizational conditions shape employee performance in the banking context. Although H1 is rejected, the direction of the coefficient remains consistent with Robbins and Judge (2017), Ekhsan and Septian (2021), Yasa (2017), Wardhana (2021), and Agustian (2015), all of whom link dysfunctional conflict with performance decline. Yet the lack of significance suggests that conflict at Bank BPD Bali may be absorbed by rigid operational routines or moderated by experience-based coping. This resonates with the idea proposed by Widiastuti, Novarini, and Saraswati (2023) that conflict can yield mixed outcomes depending on how it is managed. Conflict related to workload pressure, target demands, and technological adaptation differences may still produce tension, as noted by Mangkunegara (2017), yet the evidence here indicates that such pressures do not automatically erode performance. The implication is that conflict management and communication systems—not conflict elimination—are critical levers for sustaining performance.

In contrast, H2 is accepted, confirming that job training contributes positively to employee performance, consistent with Astutik and Yulianto (2021), Tambing, Manullang, and Medinal (2019), and Mangkunegara (2017). Training in digital services, cybersecurity, and customer handling appears to heighten competence, motivation, and job confidence, as echoed by Robbins and Judge (2018). At the same time, the result suggests the need for training programs that balance technical and behavioral aspects, ensuring that employees do not merely accumulate skills but also develop adaptive capacities for digital transformation. This reinforces the strategic importance of organizational learning systems at Bank BPD Bali.

Transformational leadership demonstrates a clear and significant effect on employee performance, leading to acceptance of H3. This aligns with Mangkunegara (2017), Robbins and Judge (2017), and the empirical findings of Lindawati and Parwoto (2021) and Setia Budi and Purwandari (2024). The results affirm the role of inspirational leadership in mobilizing psychological energy, creativity, and commitment during digital transition. Transformational leadership appears to anchor employees amid changing demands, strengthening their willingness to embrace new tasks and contribute proactively to organizational goals.

Communication also remains a consistent driver of performance, supporting H4. The positive and significant result reflects the importance of clarity, openness, and information flow, consistent with Nasrullah, Askolani, and Sutrisna (2023) and Wulan and Sulandjari (2022). Effective communication appears to support task execution, reduce ambiguity, and promote coordination across units engaged in digital processes.

Digital escapism reveals a different pattern across hypotheses. Although the effect of work conflict on digital escapism is positive and significant, leading

to acceptance of H5, this reinforces findings by Puspita and Sudiro (2023) that conflict can trigger technology-based coping. However, H6 is rejected because job training shows no meaningful effect on escapism, echoing Widihartono and Ahmadi (2024) and Silalahi, Nadapdap, and Purba (2023), who highlight that training may improve technical ability without shifting behavioral or emotional tendencies.

Transformational leadership reduces digital escapism, resulting in the acceptance of H7, consistent with Avolio and Bass (1999) and Ariviana and Siswanto (2025). Strong leadership reduces employees' inclination to withdraw digitally by offering direction, purpose, and psychological assurance. In contrast, H8 is accepted because organizational communication appears to increase digital escapism, echoing Robbins and Judge (2017), Husna (2020), and Parlindungan (2022). This may reflect communication overload or ambiguous messaging that drives employees toward non-productive digital activity.

Despite these antecedent dynamics, H9 is rejected because digital escapism shows no significant effect on performance. This aligns with Robbins and Judge (2017), Hafizh (2022), and Farid, Akkas, and Mande (2024), who argue that moderate escapism used as coping may not disrupt work outcomes. This suggests that some forms of digital retreat may operate as micro-recovery episodes rather than productivity threats.

The mediation hypotheses (H10, H11, H12, and H13) are all rejected. Digital escapism does not mediate the effects of work conflict, job training, transformational leadership, or organizational communication on performance. This pattern reinforces earlier findings by Luthans (2011), Hafizh (2022), Farid, Akkas, and Mande (2024), Noe (2017), Kamila and Muafi (2023), and Sari (2019), who highlight that digital coping behavior does not necessarily bridge organizational pressure and performance. The implication is that escapism in this context behaves independently rather than as a conduit through which organizational dynamics influence work outcomes.

Finally, H14 is rejected, indicating that job stress does not moderate the relationship between digital escapism and performance. This parallels Rudianto (2019), suggesting that structural controls and layered supervision in banking may buffer performance results from fluctuations in stress and digital withdrawal. Escapism appears to maintain a stable performance relationship regardless of employees' stress levels.

The findings complicate conventional stress-strain models by showing that digital escapism is neither a significant mediator nor a stress-dependent behavior in this context. Managerially, the results underscore the importance of leadership, communication clarity, and ongoing skill development in navigating digital change. Theoretically, the study encourages rethinking digital escapism as a nuanced behavioral pattern whose effects depend heavily on workplace structure, cultural norms, and the nature of digital demands.

FURTHER STUDY

This study examined how work conflict, job training, transformational leadership, organizational communication, job stress, and digital escapism shape

employee performance within a digitally transforming banking environment. The results highlight the central importance of leadership, communication, and well-designed training in enhancing performance, confirming long-standing organizational behavior frameworks while extending them into a digital context. Transformational leadership emerges as the most influential factor, underscoring the need for leaders who can inspire, guide, and stabilize employees amid continuous technological change. At the same time, the findings complicate common assumptions about conflict, stress, and digital coping. Work conflict does not significantly diminish performance, suggesting that structured banking environments may absorb interpersonal tension more effectively than expected. Digital escapism, often framed as counterproductive, also shows no detrimental effect on performance, indicating that employees may be engaging in controlled digital micro-breaks that do not undermine task execution. The absence of mediation and moderation effects further demonstrates that digital escapism operates independently rather than as a pathway linking organizational pressures to performance. Overall, the study provides a more nuanced understanding of digital-era work behavior, emphasizing that performance is shaped more by leadership and communication quality than by employees' stress responses or digital retreat tendencies.

Several limitations should be considered when interpreting these findings. The study relies on self-reported data, which may introduce social desirability bias or perceptual inaccuracies, particularly when assessing constructs such as conflict, stress, and escapism. The cross-sectional design limits causal inference; while structural modeling identifies directional relationships, the temporal dynamics of digital escapism and performance cannot be fully captured. The context of a single banking institution also constrains generalizability. Digital norms, monitoring intensity, and organizational culture vary widely across banks and industries, potentially shaping how employees experience conflict, training, and digital engagement. In addition, the study focuses on broad constructs rather than fine-grained dimensions of digital escapism (e.g., hedonic vs. avoidance-driven) or communication quality (e.g., clarity vs. overload), which may explain some nonsignificant results.

Future research should consider using longitudinal or experimental designs to trace how digital escapism unfolds across different phases of workload, stress, or training cycles. Multi-source or behavioral data—such as system logs, performance dashboards, or peer assessments—would help overcome biases inherent in self-reported measures. Exploring variations across industries or comparing public and private sector banking would broaden generalizability and reveal institutional mechanisms that regulate digital behavior. Given the surprising independence of digital escapism from organizational antecedents, qualitative investigations may illuminate deeper cultural or psychological factors that determine how employees use digital media during work. Finally, future models could differentiate between adaptive and maladaptive forms of escapism or explore how digital micro-breaks interact with concepts such as psychological detachment, flow, and technostress. These directions would refine theoretical understanding while offering practical insights for managing digital behavior in increasingly hybrid and technologically mediated work environments.

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