HR Digital Transformation, Digital Work Culture, and Local Values: Evidence from Gorontalo University

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Abstract

Digital transformation in human resource management is increasingly essential for regional universities seeking to improve competitiveness and efficiency. This study examines how HR digital transformation affects employee performance, focusing on the mediating role of digital work culture rooted in local values. Using a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design, data were collected from 136 lecturers and administrative staff at Gorontalo University, Indonesia. The quantitative phase employed Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS), followed by thematic analysis of interviews with 10 key informants. The results indicate that HR digital transformation significantly affects employee performance, both directly ($\beta = 0.61$; $p < 0.001$) and indirectly through digital work culture as a partial mediating variable ($\beta\_indirect = 0.17$; $p < 0.01$). Digital transformation also has a positive effect on digital work culture ($\beta = 0.58$; $p < 0.001$), and digital work culture positively influences employee performance ($\beta = 0.29$; $p < 0.01$). The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.73$) shows that the model explains 73% of the variance in employee performance, with an adequate Goodness of Fit level (SRMR = 0.065). The qualitative findings reinforce the quantitative results by revealing the emergence of "digital kinship," a form of collaborative digital solidarity rooted in the local value of *mosidara* (mutual respect and cooperation). This study offers new insights by integrating the Resource-Based View and Dynamic Capability Theory, showing that successful digital transformation relies not only on technology adoption but also on cultivating a digital work culture grounded in local wisdom and digital work ethics.

Keywords: Digital Transformation, Digital Work Culture, Human Resource Management, Local Values, University Performance.

1. Introduction

The development of digital technology over the past decade has brought fundamental changes to the paradigm of human resource (HR) management across various sectors, including higher education. Digital transformation is no longer merely a strategic option but has become an institutional necessity to ensure efficiency, transparency, and sustainable competitiveness (OECD, 2021). Universities, as both academic entities and public organizations, are required to integrate technology into all aspects of their operations ranging from academic governance and learning systems to HR management (UNESCO, 2023).

Globally, HR digitalization has become a key indicator of an institution's readiness to face the challenges of the Fourth Industrial Revolution (Industry 4.0) and Society 5.0. This transformation requires universities to develop data-driven management systems, enhance

the digital competencies of academic staff, and foster an organizational culture that is adaptive to change (Lee & Kim, 2022). The World Economic Forum (2023) reports that 70% of higher education institutions in Southeast Asia have initiated HR digitalization, yet only 35% have successfully integrated it into their organizational work culture (World Economic Forum, 2023; Dwivedi et al., 2021; Pradhan et al., 2020).

In Indonesia, national policies such as *Merdeka Belajar-Kampus Merdeka* (MBKM) serve as crucial catalysts for accelerating the digitalization of higher education governance. The Ministry of Education, Culture, Research, and Technology (Kemendikbudristek) emphasizes the importance of building a Digital Talent Ecosystem that enables lecturers and educational staff to optimize digital technology for learning and academic administration. However, various studies indicate that the implementation of digital policies in many universities still faces challenges such as limited technological infrastructure, organizational culture resistance, and low digital literacy among academic staff.

Within this context, Gorontalo University provides an interesting case of a regional university attempting to adopt a digital-based HR management system. As an institution deeply rooted in local values, the university faces unique challenges: how to harmonize traditional social values such as *mosidara* (mutual respect and togetherness) with a digital work system that demands efficiency and speed. The digital HR transformation at Gorontalo University includes the implementation of e-HRM systems, the use of Learning Management Systems (LMS), and digital attendance systems for lecturers and staff. However, the extent to which these changes affect employee performance still requires rigorous empirical investigation.

Conceptually, this study is grounded in theoretical frameworks linking digital transformation, digital work culture, and employee performance. Previous research has explored the relationship between digital transformation and organizational performance (Bharadwaj, 2020; Rahim & Nugroho, 2023), yet most studies focus on industry and government sectors, leaving higher education especially in non-metropolitan regions relatively underexplored. Furthermore, there is limited research examining digital work culture as a mediating variable in the relationship between HR digital transformation and employee performance, particularly considering local cultural dimensions.

To explain this relationship, the study integrates two main theoretical frameworks: Resource-Based View (RBV) and Dynamic Capability Theory (DCT). RBV (Barney, 1991) assumes that organizational advantage stems from resources that are valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable. In universities, these resources are not limited to technological assets but also include the digital competencies and work ethics of lecturers and staff, who serve as the main drivers of change. Digital technology becomes a strategic strength only when supported by intangible capital, such as digital literacy, digital intelligence, and digital ethics (Ibrahim & Aduah, 2025).

However, because RBV is relatively static and less responsive to rapidly changing environments, it is complemented by Dynamic Capability Theory (DCT). Teece (2018) argues that resilient organizations are those capable of shaping, combining, and reconfiguring internal and external resources to remain competitive amid change. Three critical pillars in DCT include sensing (the ability to identify digital opportunities), seizing (the ability to allocate resources effectively), and transforming (the ability to adapt organizational structures and culture to change). In the context of regional universities such as Gorontalo, this capability encompasses not only technology adoption but also embedding social-cultural values such as *mosidara* to foster solidarity and digital trust among employees.

Accordingly, digital work culture becomes a crucial dimension connecting technological transformation with human behavior in organizations. Digital work culture is defined as the set of values, norms, and behaviors that support collaboration, transparency, and innovation in technology-based work environments. Locally, this study introduces the concept of digital kinship, a fusion of traditional solidarity and technological connectivity. This concept draws inspiration from *mosidara*, a unique value in Gorontalo emphasizing togetherness, mutual respect, and mutual assistance, which now manifests in digital interactions among staff.

Thus, a digital work culture rooted in local values not only facilitates the digital transformation process but also provides a moral foundation that strengthens organizational social cohesion. Digital kinship can be regarded as a new form of organizational culture resilience or a culture capable of maintaining local identity while adapting to global challenges.

Therefore, this study not only examines inter-variable relationships but also emphasizes the importance of cultural embedding in every stage of digital transformation in Indonesian higher education. Digitalization is not a process of dehumanization but a strategy to enhance human capacity through culturally meaningful technology. This approach underscores that the success of HR digitalization in regional universities largely depends on the synergy between technological capabilities, managerial theories (RBV and DCT), and local cultural values that constitute the organizational soul.

Based on the background and theoretical framework described earlier, this study aims to analyze the effect of human resource digital transformation on employee performance, with digital work culture as a mediating variable rooted in the local value of *mosidara* at Gorontalo University. Specifically, this research examines the direct effect of HR digital transformation on employee performance and how digital work culture mediates this relationship. To answer these questions, several hypotheses are formulated.

H1: HR digital transformation has a positive effect on employee performance.
H2: HR digital transformation has a positive effect on digital work culture.
H3: Digital work culture has a positive effect on employee performance.
H4: Digital work culture mediates the relationship between HR digital transformation and employee performance.

Thus, this study is expected to provide a theoretical contribution to the development of the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Dynamic Capability Theory (DCT) within the context of Indonesian higher education, as well as practical implications for strengthening digital work culture based on local wisdom.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Digital Transformation of Human Resources (HR)

Digital transformation in human resource management (HRM) is now a strategic need in various sectors, including higher education. HR digitalization supports operational efficiency, transparency, and data-driven management systems that strengthen organizational competitiveness (OECD, 2021; UNESCO, 2023). Research by Wulandari et al., (2023) emphasizing that HR digitalization not only increases productivity and data-driven decision-making, but also expands inter-generational competencies and strengthens cross-digital communication in the work environment.

In the context of Indonesia, Faidz (2024) explained that the development of digital human resources requires a transformation strategy based on technology training, digital competency adaptation, and a culture of continuous learning. They emphasized the importance of learning management systems (LMS) and digital upskilling to maintain the

relevance of the workforce in the era of technological disruption. Challenges in HR digitalization in Indonesian universities include limited technology infrastructure, organizational cultural resistance, and digital literacy gap (Mandulangi et al., 2025; Tarigan et al., 2022). In the context of Gorontalo, the Independent Learning- Independent Campus (MBKM) policy is an accelerator for the digitalization of university governance which requires the formation of a sustainable digital talent ecosystem.

2.2. Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory

The Resource-Based View (RBV) theory assumes that an organization's competitive advantage is determined by resources that are valuable, scarce, difficult to replicate, and irreplaceable (Barney, 1991). In the context of universities, these resources include digital technology, human resource capacity, and social capital that supports change (Wang Z et al., 2022). According to Wulandari et al. (2023) and Aisha et al. (2025), effective digital transformation can only be achieved if organizations leverage intangible assets such as adaptive culture and organizational values that support innovation. The integration of local values such as mosidara in Gorontalo enriches the organization's social resources and becomes an ethical foundation in building digital trust among employees. In addition, Faidz (2024) emphasized that investment in the development of digital literacy, cybersecurity, and data analysis is a crucial element of strategic resources in the digital era. This is in line with the RBV concept, where digital human resources with technological fluency become intangible assets that are difficult for competitors to imitate.

2.3. Dynamic Capability Theory (DCT)

As a complement to RBV, Dynamic Capability Theory (DCT) highlights an organization's ability to integrate, reshape, and adapt resources to environmental changes (Teece, 2018). The three main pillars of DCT include sensing (recognizing digital opportunities), seizing (allocating resources effectively), and transforming (adjusting organizational structure and culture). Research by Aisha et al. (2025) shows that organizations with an adaptive digital culture have strong dynamic capabilities in responding to disruption and accelerating business innovation. In the context of higher education in Gorontalo, this adaptive ability is manifested in the integration of the values of mosidara which strengthens solidarity and digital trust between employees. Habibani & Frinaldi (2025) added that dynamic capabilities in Indonesia's public sector require transformative leadership, collaboration, and continuous digital literacy training. Thus, DCT provides a theoretical foundation for regional universities to develop digital capabilities oriented to local social and ethical values.

2.4. Digital Work Culture as a Mediating Variable

Digital work culture represents values, norms, and behaviors that support collaboration, transparency, and innovation in a technology-based environment. Wulandari et al. (2023) emphasized that the success of HR digital transformation is highly dependent on the readiness of a work culture that supports collaboration and communication across generations. Aisha et al. (2025) confirm that organizations with flexible, inclusive, and collaborative digital cultures tend to have higher operational efficiency and significant innovation speed. In the context of higher education, a digital work culture that incorporates the values of *mosidara* creates the concept of digital kinship or digital solidarity that connects technological efficiency with human values and social cohesion. In addition, Faidz (2024) emphasized the importance of building a continuous learning culture that supports adaptation to new technologies. This culture of continuous learning is the main mediator in maintaining a balance between digitalization and the welfare of human resources at universities.

2.5. Previous Research

Various previous studies have consistently shown a close relationship between HR Digital Transformation, Digital Work Culture, and improving organizational performance. A study by Mandulangi et al. (2025) revealed that strengthening human resource capacity through the use of digital technology significantly increases operational efficiency and work motivation, especially in an organizational environment that is adapting to digital disruption. Furthermore, Wulandari et al. (2023) emphasized that an effective HR transformation strategy not only focuses on technology implementation, but also emphasizes the importance of cross-generational training and participatory leadership to ensure the involvement of all levels of employees in the digitalization process. In line with that, Faidz (2024) found that the application of e-learning-based training and the use of big data analytics play an important role in increasing the effectiveness of human resource competency development, because both allow for an adaptive and sustainable learning process.

Meanwhile, Aisha et al. (2025) highlight that organizations that successfully carry out digital transformation holistically tend to show significant improvements in competitiveness, speed of innovation, as well as the ability to create technology-based added value. On the other hand, Dipoatmodjo (2025) gives a cultural dimension to this phenomenon by emphasizing that the success of HR transformation in the education sector is not only determined by technological and system aspects, but also by the integration of local cultural values such as digital ethics, work solidarity, and the spirit of togetherness (*mosidara*) which is the moral foundation for the creation of a humanist and sustainable digital transformation. Overall, the findings show that the success of human resource digitalization depends on the synergy between technological innovation, human competency development, and the preservation of socio-cultural values that are rooted in the organization.

3. Methods

3.1. Research Design

This study employed a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design, integrating quantitative and qualitative approaches to comprehensively analyze the effects of human resource digital transformation (HRDT) on employee performance, with digital work culture (DWC) as a mediating variable. The quantitative phase aimed to test causal relationships among constructs through Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS), while the qualitative phase was designed to deepen understanding through thematic exploration using NVivo 12 Plus. This design allowed for both statistical generalization and contextual interpretation, enhancing methodological transparency (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

3.2. Participants and Sampling Procedures

The target population comprised all academic and administrative employees of Gorontalo University (N = 212). Using proportional stratified random sampling, participants were drawn from academic and administrative strata to ensure representativeness. A total of 160 questionnaires were distributed, with 136 valid responses returned, yielding an 85% response rate after excluding incomplete data. Demographic characteristics indicated that 57% were lecturers, 43% were administrative staff, 52% were female, and 48% were male. The majority (68%) had worked for more than five years, representing a well-experienced institutional cohort. The sample size adequacy was verified using G*Power 3.1, with an effect size ($f^2 = 0.15$), $\alpha = 0.05$, and power $(1-\beta) = 0.95$, which suggested a minimum of 119

participants. Thus, the obtained sample (n = 136) met the statistical requirement for PLS-SEM (Hair et al., 2021).

3.3. Measures and Instruments

Three main constructs were measured using previously validated instruments, adapted and contextualized for higher education settings in Indonesia. All items used a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree").

1) HR Digital Transformation (HRDT) was measured using six items adapted from Kane et al., (2021) and Wang Z et al., (2022), focusing on digital integration in HR systems, e-governance, and data-driven management.

2) Digital Work Culture (DWC) included five items developed from Hidayat & Yusuf, (2021) and Shahzad et al., (2022) assessing digital collaboration, adaptability, and openness to change.

3) Employee Performance (EP) was assessed using five items derived from the validated Individual Work Performance Scale by Koopmans et al., (2014), measuring task proficiency, adaptability, and efficiency in digital settings.

All items were translated and back-translated into Bahasa Indonesia following the guidelines of Brislin (1986) to ensure linguistic and conceptual equivalence. The content validity index (CVI), assessed by three subject-matter experts, yielded a score of 0.91, indicating excellent relevance.

3.4. Ethical Considerations

This research received ethical approval from the Research Ethics Committee of Gorontalo University (Ref. No. 022/KEP-UNG/III/2025). All participants were informed of the study's objectives, confidentiality, and their right to withdraw at any time. Written informed consent was obtained prior to participation. No identifiable personal data were collected, and all procedures adhered to the ethical principles of the Declaration of Helsinki (World Medical Association, 2013).

3.5. Procedures and Data Collection

The quantitative survey was conducted between March and May 2025 through an online form distributed via institutional channels. To minimize common method bias (CMB), several procedural remedies were applied, such as ensuring respondent anonymity, randomizing item order, and separating predictor, criterion measures within the instrument (Podsakoff, P. M MacKenzie & Podsakoff, 2012). Post hoc statistical tests confirmed the absence of serious bias: Harman's single-factor test revealed that a single factor accounted for 32.7% of variance, below the 50% threshold, and all Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values ranged from 1.21 to 2.34, indicating no multicollinearity.

3.6. Quantitative Data Analysis (SEM-PLS)

Data analysis was performed using SmartPLS 4.0, following the two-step approach recommended by Hair et al. (2021). First, the measurement model (outer model) was assessed to confirm indicator reliability and construct validity. All factor loadings exceeded 0.70, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) ranged between 0.63 and 0.71, indicating good convergent validity. Cronbach's alpha values (0.84-0.89) and Composite Reliability (CR) values (0.88-0.92) demonstrated internal consistency, while discriminant validity was established via the Fornell–Larcker criterion and HTMT ratios (<0.85).

In the structural model (inner model), collinearity was absent (VIF < 3.3), and the R^2 values were 0.73 for employee performance and 0.68 for digital work culture, reflecting strong

explanatory power. Effect sizes (f²) were within the medium range (0.15-0.21), while predictive relevance ($Q^2 = 0.58$) confirmed high model predictive accuracy. Bootstrapping with 5,000 resamples indicated significant path coefficients ($p < 0.01$), and the SRMR value (0.065) met the acceptable threshold (<0.08), confirming good model fit.

3.7. Qualitative Phase and Thematic Analysis

The second phase involved a qualitative exploration to deepen understanding of the quantitative findings. Ten key informants (five lecturers, three administrative heads, and two senior staff members) were selected using purposive sampling, with inclusion criteria of at least three years of digital system usage and involvement in digital transformation programs.

Semi-structured interviews lasting 45–60 minutes were conducted via secure online platforms and recorded with consent. Transcripts were analyzed using NVivo 12 Plus following Braun & Clarke (2019) six-step reflexive thematic analysis framework. The process included open coding (52 initial codes), axial coding (7 subthemes), and selective coding, which yielded three core themes: digital adaptation and relearning, digital kinship and collaboration, and performance improvement through digital efficiency.

Two independent coders analyzed the transcripts, and inter-coder reliability achieved a Cohen's Kappa (κ) of 0.86, indicating excellent agreement (Miles et al., 2014). Member checking and triangulation (method and data source) were conducted to ensure trustworthiness and confirmability (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Data saturation was achieved by the tenth interview, confirming analytical sufficiency.

3.8. Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

Integration of results occurred at the interpretation stage using a joint display matrix that juxtaposed statistical findings with thematic evidence. For example, the significant mediation effect of digital work culture (β_indirect = 0.17, $p < 0.01$) was contextualized by qualitative themes describing *mosidara*-based digital collaboration. This integrative interpretation aligned with the triangulation protocol recommended by Fetters et al. (2013), ensuring that qualitative evidence enriched the explanatory strength of quantitative relationships.

4. Results and Discussion

This section presents the quantitative and qualitative findings obtained through a mixed methods sequential explanatory approach. The analysis was conducted in stages, beginning with the quantitative model testing using SEM-PLS to assess the relationships among variables, followed by the interpretation of qualitative results to enrich the meaning of the statistical findings.

4.1. Quantitative Analysis Results

The model analysis was conducted using SmartPLS 4.0, including the evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) and the structural model (inner model).

4.1.1. Measurement Model Evaluation (Outer Model)

The convergent validity test indicated that all indicators had a loading factor ≥ 0.70 and an Average Variance Extracted (AVE) ≥ 0.50. Construct reliability was also met, with Cronbach's Alpha and Composite Reliability values > 0.80, indicating good internal consistency. The detailed results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Construct Validity and Reliability Test

Construct	Number of Indicators	AVE	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	Description
Human Resource Digital Transformation (DHRT)	6	0.63	0.86	0.90	Valid & Reliable
Digital Work Culture (DWC)	5	0.68	0.84	0.88	Valid & Reliable
Employee Performance (EP)	5	0.70	0.88	0.91	Valid & Reliable

Source: Primary data processed (SmartPLS), 2025

These results indicate that all indicators have adequate explanatory power and can be used for further analysis in the structural model.

4.1.2. Structural Model Evaluation (Inner Model)

The structural model was tested by examining R^2, Q^2, and the significance of the path coefficients. The R^2 value of 0.73 for the performance variable indicates that the model explains 73% of the variance in employee performance, while the predictive relevance Q^2 of 0.58 indicates strong predictive relevance of the model. The full results of the structural model evaluation are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Structural Model Test Results (Path Coefficients and Significance)

Variable Relationship	Path Coefficient (β)	t-Value	p-Value	Description
DHRT → Employee Performance	0.61	4.82	<0.001	Significant
DHRT → Digital Work Culture	0.58	5.15	<0.001	Significant
Digital Work Culture → Employee Performance	0.29	3.94	<0.01	Significant
DHRT → DWC → Performance (Indirect Effect)	0.17	3.10	<0.01	Significant (Partial Mediation)

Source: SmartPLS data processing, 2025

Figure 1 presents the SEM-PLS structural model generated from the SmartPLS output, illustrating the relationships among the study variables.
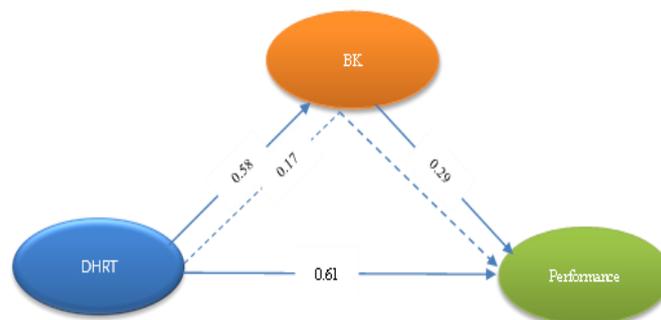

Figure 1. SEM-PLS Structural Model (SmartPLS Output)

The Goodness of Fit value (SRMR) of 0.065 < 0.08 confirms the overall model fit. Consequently, hypotheses H1 to H4 are accepted. Table 3 provides a summary of the quantitative results, outlining the key statistical findings derived from the SEM-PLS analysis.

Table 3. Summary of Quantitative Results

Hypothesis	Statement	Result	Conclusion
H1	DHRT positively affects Employee Performance	β = 0.61, p < 0.001	Accepted
H2	DHRT positively affects Digital Work Culture	β = 0.58, p < 0.001	Accepted
H3	Digital Work Culture positively affects Employee Performance	β = 0.29, p < 0.01	Accepted
H4	Digital Work Culture mediates the effect of DHRT on Employee Performance	β_indirect = 0.17, p < 0.01	Accepted

Source: Data processed, 2025

These findings indicate that human resource digital transformation has both direct and indirect effects on employee performance, with digital work culture acting as a partial mediator that strengthens this effect.

4.1.3. Qualitative Analysis Results (NVivo 12 Plus)

Qualitative analysis was conducted on 10 in-depth interviews with key informants representing lecturers, administrative staff, and unit leaders. Data were analyzed using a reflective thematic approach with the assistance of NVivo 12 Plus (Aisha et al., 2025; Dipoatmodjo, 2025; Habibani & Frinaldi, 2025; Wulandari et al., 2023).

The thematic analysis progressed through three stages. Open coding initially identified 48 open code nodes from the data. These nodes were then grouped through axial coding, resulting in 7 subthemes. Finally, selective coding revealed three main themes that describe the dynamics of digital transformation at Gorontalo University.

1)   Themes and Descriptions of Qualitative Results

This section presents the qualitative findings, highlighting the key themes that emerged from the NVivo analysis. The identified themes and their corresponding descriptions are summarized in Table 4.

Table 4. Main Themes from NVivo Analysis

Main Theme	Subtheme	Brief Description	Representative Quote
Digital Adaptation and Relearning	- Technology resistance - Basic digital literacy	Employees initially struggled to adapt but improved competence after training.	"At first, we were reluctant to use the new system, but after training, it turned out to be easier and more transparent." (Informant D1)
Collaboration and Digital Kinship	- Online collaboration - Technological solidarity	*Mosidara* values were adapted into the digital realm, fostering solidarity and ownership in the virtual workspace.	"We still work together even through online systems that is digital *mosidara*." (Informant S3)
Impact on Performance and Satisfaction	- Administrative efficiency - Job satisfaction	Use of digital systems improved efficiency and minimized administrative burden.	"Now reports are faster and no longer require waiting for physical signatures." (Informant T2)

Source: NVivo 12 Plus analysis results (2025)

This research has several limitations that need to be considered. First, the research was only conducted at one university, namely Gorontalo University, so the results could not be generalized to the context of other institutions with different characteristics. Second, the research design is a cross-sectional portrait, so it has not captured the long-term dynamics of

the digital transformation process. Third, the number of qualitative informants is still limited and focuses on academic and administrative staff, therefore, the views of other layers of employees are not fully represented (Aisha et al., 2025; Wulandari et al., 2023).

In addition, the use of perceptual data has the potential to cause common method bias, while local cultural values such as mosidara have not been measured quantitatively. Managerially, the results of this study affirm the importance of integrating local values in digital transformation strategies, building a collaborative and ethical digital work culture, strengthening innovation and trust-oriented digital leadership, and developing an integrated data-driven digital ecosystem and continuous training to improve human resource competence and university competitiveness in the digital transformation era.

2)   Thematic Interpretation

Qualitative analysis shows that the success of digital transformation at Gorontalo University is not solely due to technology implementation but also to strengthening a collaborative culture based on local values. The *mosidara* value serves as a moral foundation that supports technology acceptance, creating digital kinship or a form of new solidarity in the digital workspace.

These findings reinforce the quantitative results, which show the mediating role of digital work culture. Empirically, an open, adaptive organizational culture based on digital solidarity strengthens the link between technological innovation and performance improvement.

4.2. Discussion

The results support the Resource-Based View (RBV) perspective, which posits that digital HR capabilities are strategic resources contributing to organizational performance improvement (Barney, 1991). At Gorontalo University, these capabilities are reflected in the use of e-HRM, LMS, and digital data management systems, which enhance efficiency and accountability. Moreover, the consistency of the results highlights the importance of Dynamic Capability Theory (DCT), where the success of digital transformation depends not only on resources but also on organizational learning and adaptability (Teece, 2018). This is evident in the re-learning process experienced by employees during the digital system transition.

Digital work culture also emerges as a crucial mediator bridging technology and performance. A collaborative and trust-based work culture enables employees to adopt new systems more positively. This aligns with Hidayat & Yusuf (2021), which found that successful digitalization in regional universities is highly influenced by the readiness of an adaptive work culture. Qualitative findings further support the theoretical argument by introducing the concept of "digital kinship," a manifestation of *mosidara* values within the digital ecosystem. This concept provides a novel contribution to the educational management literature, demonstrating how local cultural values can transform into soft capabilities that support successful digital transformation.

Therefore, this study emphasizes that the success of HR digitalization in higher education is not only a technological issue but also a matter of cultural embedding, the organization's ability to integrate social values into digital systems to ensure a meaningful and sustainable transformation (Eden & Ackermann, 2018; Puspitasari et al., 2023).

4.2.1. Integrative Synthesis of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

This section provides an integrative synthesis of the quantitative and qualitative findings, showing how both strands of evidence complement and reinforce one another. The combined insights are summarized in Table 5.

Table 5. Synthesis of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

Aspect	Quantitative Results (SEM-PLS)	Qualitative Results (NVivo)	Integrative Interpretation
Effect of DHRT on Performance	β = 0.61, p < 0.001	Increased administrative efficiency	Digital technology accelerates performance, especially through more accountable online work systems.
Effect of DHRT on Digital Work Culture	β = 0.58, p < 0.001	Adaptation of *mosidara* values into digital collaboration	Digital transformation strengthens virtual cooperative culture.
Effect of DWC on Performance	β = 0.29, p < 0.01	Increased solidarity and motivation	Digital work culture reinforces moral and social aspects of productivity.
Mediation Effect of DWC	β_indirect = 0.17, p < 0.01	Digital kinship as cultural adaptation	Digital work culture bridges technological innovation and performance improvement.

Source: Processed data, 2025

The findings highlight that digitalization grounded in local values can produce a more human-centered and contextual transformation model. Digital work culture rooted in *mosidara* becomes a social energy that strengthens technology acceptance and promotes cross-unit collaboration. Thus, digital transformation in regional universities should be seen not merely as a technological shift but as a process of cultural reengineering which is reshaping work practices while remaining grounded in local social values.

5. Conclusion

This study demonstrates that human resource (HR) digital transformation has a significant effect on the performance of lecturers and administrative staff, both directly and indirectly through digital work culture as a partial mediating variable. The SEM-PLS analysis confirms that HR digital transformation enhances employee performance directly (β = 0.61; p < 0.001) and indirectly through digital work culture (β_indirect = 0.17; p < 0.01), with an R^2 value of 0.73, indicating the model's strong explanatory power. Qualitative findings further support these results by highlighting the emergence of the concept of *digital kinship* which is a form of digital solidarity grounded in the local value of *mosidara* (mutual respect and cooperation).

Practically, the findings underscore that the success of HR digitalization in higher education institutions is determined not only by technology adoption but also by the extent to which the organization embeds adaptive, collaborative, and locally grounded digital work culture values. Accordingly, universities should develop an integrated digital ecosystem encompassing interconnected e-HRM systems, learning management systems (LMS), and digital administration platforms, complemented by continuous training to enhance employees' digital literacy and competence. The internalization of local values such as *mosidara* into digital work culture is also crucial to strengthen trust and solidarity within online work environments. This should be accompanied by the implementation of data-driven performance evaluation systems and the reinforcement of digital leadership oriented toward innovation and HR capacity development.

From an academic perspective, this study contributes to strengthening the Resource-Based View (RBV) and Dynamic Capability Theory (DCT) within the context of locally rooted higher education. However, this research is limited to a single university. Future studies are therefore recommended to conduct comparative analyses across universities in different

provinces, include additional variables such as digital leadership or employee engagement, and employ longitudinal designs to capture the dynamic nature of HR digital transformation over time. In this way, HR digitalization in higher education should be viewed not merely as a technological process but as a cultural and organizational transformation that enhances university competitiveness in the digital era.

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