

THE EFFECT OF ORGANISATIONAL SUPPORT ON EMPLOYEES' WORK-LIFE BALANCE IN NORTHERN CYPRUS: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF SUSTAINABLE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND THE MODERATING EFFECT OF STRESS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of digital transformation perception on employees' job stress in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC) and to identify the mediating role of work-life balance and the moderating role of perceived organizational support in this relationship. The study was conducted using a quantitative research approach and a correlational research design. The sample consists of 318 employees working in the public and private sectors in the TRNC who voluntarily participated in the study. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire measuring perceptions of digital transformation, work-life balance, job stress, and organizational support. The data were analyzed using SPSS 29, AMOS 24, and PROCESS Macro (Model 14). The findings indicate that perceived organizational support has a positive effect on employees' work-life balance. Employees who perceive higher levels of support from their organizations tend to evaluate their work-life balance more positively. The results also show that perceived organizational support positively influences sustainable digital transformation, and sustainable digital transformation, in turn, contributes to employees' work-life balance. In this respect, sustainable digital transformation serves as a mediating mechanism in the relationship between perceived organizational support and work-life balance. However, stress does not significantly moderate the relationship between sustainable digital transformation and work-life balance, nor does it create a significant moderated mediation effect.

Keywords : Digital transformation, job stress, work-life balance, organizational support

1. Introduction

1.1. Problem

Digital transformation has become an inevitable process for organizations seeking to maintain their competitive advantage and ensure long-term sustainability. This process encompasses not only the renewal of technological infrastructures but also the reconfiguration of organizational structures, work processes, managerial approaches, and working practices through digital technologies. Such comprehensive transformation fundamentally reshapes employee roles and expectations within organizations (Vial, 2019; Ebert & Duarte, 2018). In particular, the acceleration of work processes, increasing performance pressures, and expectations of constant availability associated with digitalization have profoundly altered employees' perceptions of work (Klein, 2020).

While digital transformation offers organizations advantages such as flexibility, efficiency, and innovation, it may also entail psychosocial risks for employees. The widespread adoption of Industry 4.0 applications, remote and flexible work arrangements, and digital collaboration tools has increasingly blurred the boundaries between work and private life (Türkel & Yeşilkuş, 2020; Bozkurt et al., 2021). Yankın (2019) emphasizes that digitalization intensifies time pressure in working life and complicates employees' ability to manage work demands. This indicates that the effects of digital transformation on employees are not only structural but also psychological in nature.

These changes encountered by employees during the digital transformation process can play a decisive role in shaping levels of job stress. Job stress is defined as a condition that arises when perceived job demands exceed an individual's available resources (Parker & DeCotiis, 1983). Factors such as increased workload, time pressure, role ambiguity, and role conflict tend to become more pronounced in organizations undergoing intensive digitalization. Studies by Avcı (2019) and Karabay (2015) demonstrate that job stress negatively affects employee performance, job satisfaction, and psychological well-being. Moreover, the constant need to adapt to ongoing change during digital transformation constitutes a significant source of stress for employees (Sutrisno, 2022).

At this point, the concept of work-life balance plays a critical role in explaining the relationship between digital transformation and job stress. Work-life balance refers to an individual's ability to manage responsibilities related to work and private life in a harmonious manner. Although the flexibility provided by digital technologies offers employees greater temporal and spatial autonomy, it may also lead to the intrusion of work into private life and a reduction in recovery and rest periods (Solmaz, 2024). Recent studies indicate that the deterioration of work-life balance constitutes one of the key mechanisms that intensify job stress (Altıntaş & Altıntaş, 2024; Bello et al.,

2024). In this context, the effect of digital transformation on job stress is considered to occur not only directly but also indirectly through work–life balance.

On the other hand, perceived organizational support emerges as an important buffering mechanism in mitigating the uncertainty and stress experienced by employees during digital transformation processes. Perceived organizational support refers to employees' beliefs that their organization and supervisors value their contributions, care about their well-being, and provide support (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Empirical evidence shows that employees with higher levels of perceived organizational support cope more effectively with stress and approach change processes more positively (Pabuçcu & İşcan, 2024; Uyar, 2024). Especially during periods of organizational change, managerial support, feedback, and recognition mechanisms strengthen employees' psychological resilience (Huang, 2025).

In the literature, the relationships among organizational support, sustainable digital transformation, work–life balance, and stress have mostly been examined through separate dyadic relationships. However, studies that simultaneously investigate the mediating role of sustainable digital transformation and the moderating effect of stress in the relationship between organizational support and employees' work–life balance remain limited. In particular, there is a notable scarcity of empirical research that addresses these variables within an integrated model in the context of Northern Cyprus. Therefore, examining the effect of organizational support on employees' work–life balance together with sustainable digital transformation and stress constitutes an important research problem with both theoretical and practical implications

1.2. Purpose of the Study

The aim of this study is to examine the effect of digital transformation on employees' job stress and to reveal the mediating role of work–life balance and the moderating effect of organizational support in this relationship. With the rapid acceleration of digitalization in contemporary working life, work processes, modes of working, and performance expectations have undergone significant changes, directly influencing employees' psychosocial experiences. In this context, the study seeks to explain how perceptions of digital transformation affect employees' levels of job stress. Another objective of the research is to analyze how work–life balance functions as a mediating mechanism in the relationship between digital transformation and job stress. The study investigates the effects of digital transformation on work–life balance and examines whether maintaining this balance plays a stress-reducing role. Furthermore, an additional aim of the research is to determine the extent to which perceived organizational support strengthens or weakens the relationship between work life balance and job stress.

1.3. Hypotheses

H1: There are statistically significant relationships among perceived organizational support, sustainable digital transformation, work–life balance, and job stress.

H2: Perceived organizational support has a significant effect on employees' work–life balance. H3: Perceived organizational support has a significant effect on sustainable digital transformation.

H4: Sustainable digital transformation has a significant effect on employees' work–life balance. H5: Sustainable digital transformation mediates the relationship between perceived organizational support and work–life balance.

H6: Job stress moderates the relationship between sustainable digital transformation and work–life balance.

H7: The indirect effect of perceived organizational support on employees' work–life balance through sustainable digital transformation differs significantly depending on the level of job stress.

1.4. Significance of the Study

Recent scholarship demonstrates that digital transformation reshapes work environments by increasing job demands and introducing new forms of strain, making employees' access to organizational resources more critical than ever (Vial, 2019; Klein, 2020; Bozkurt et al., 2021). Classical stress theories define job stress as an imbalance between environmental pressures and individual coping capacity (Selye, 1976; Parker & DeCotiis, 1983; Beehr, 1995), with role ambiguity, workload, and time pressure identified as major predictors (Folkman, 1984; Fisher, 1994). As workplaces digitize, additional stressors such as cognitive overload, continuous connectivity, and performance surveillance have emerged, encouraging the development of digital stress scales (Ingusci et al., 2021; Makowska-Tłomak et al., 2023). In parallel, work–life balance research highlights that imbalance contributes to burnout, reduced satisfaction, and conflict across life domains (Greenhaus et al., 2012; Brough et al., 2020; Kalliath & Brough, 2008). Organizational support theory posits that employees who feel valued and supported demonstrate higher commitment, stronger performance, and greater resilience to stress (Eisenberger et al., 1986; Kurtessis et al., 2017). Empirical evidence further indicates that perceived organizational support is closely associated with job stress, organizational trust, loyalty, and work–life balance (Çakar & Yıldız, 2009; Ötken, 2015; Contèh & Yuan, 2022; Meriç et al., 2019; Pabuçcu & İşcan, 2024). Studies focusing on digital transformation emphasize that its effects depend heavily on organizational climate, managerial attitudes, and employees' adaptation processes (Nadkarni & Prügl, 2021; Markus & Rowe, 2023; Wang, 2024). Moreover, demographic variables appear to play a limited role, whereas tenure, workplace culture, and perceived support exert stronger influence on employees' experiences of stress and balance (Özgül et al., 2020; Uyar, 2024; Ötken, 2015). Overall, the literature indicates that job stress in digitally transforming organizations is best understood through the combined effects of work–life

balance and perceived organizational support, both of which serve as essential psychosocial mechanisms shaping how employees respond to technological change (Demirtaş, 2021; Doghan et al., 2024; Idrovo & Bosch, 2019).

2. Conceptual Framework

2.1. Digital Transformation

The concept of digital transformation is the outcome of a long-term developmental process that dates back to the period when information and communication technologies began to spread widely. In particular, computerization and automation practices that emerged during the 1970s and 1980s constituted the initial foundation for discussions on transformation (Bozkurt et al., 2021). At this early stage, transformation was largely addressed within the scope of transferring data into digital formats and integrating information-processing systems into organizational structures. Over time, however, it became evident that technological advancement did not merely serve an instrumental function but also generated more enduring effects on organizational structures, labor relations, and forms of social interaction. This awareness paved the way for digital transformation to be considered within a broader conceptual framework, extending beyond narrow technical adaptation processes (Turkyılmaz, 2024).

The global diffusion of internet technologies and the development of network-based systems during the 1990s significantly expanded the scope of the digital transformation concept. In this period, transformation was evaluated not only through innovations at the hardware or software level but also in relation to changes in organizational forms, knowledge production processes, communication practices, and working arrangements. Digital transformation thus came to be distinguished from the notions of digitization and digitalization, evolving into an overarching concept that denotes structural and holistic change. This distinction demonstrates that transformation is not limited to isolated technological applications but instead refers to a multilayered process of change (Yankın, 2019).

From the 2000s onward, advances in digital technologies such as big data analytics, mobile technologies, cloud computing, and artificial intelligence added a new dimension to the literature on digital transformation. During this period, the concept began to be defined as a comprehensive process that reshapes decision-making mechanisms, modes of value creation, and organizational logics, rather than being confined to the renewal of technological infrastructures (Udovita, 2020). Scholarly perspectives increasingly emphasized that digital transformation represents a dynamic structure that is continuously reconfigured in response to changing conditions, rather than a linear adaptation process with clearly defined beginnings and endings (Sağlam, 2021).

Comprehensive evaluations within the conceptual literature indicate considerable diversity in the definitions of digital transformation. The fact that different disciplines address the concept through their own theoretical approaches has made it difficult to delineate its boundaries with precision. This situation has led to digital transformation being conceptualized both as an ongoing process and as an achieved outcome. As the impact of digital technologies on organizational and social structures deepens, arguments calling for a re-examination of the explanatory framework of the concept have gained increasing prominence (Nadkarni & Prügl, 2021).

Within these discussions, determining not only how digital transformation should be defined but also the level at which it occurs has emerged as a significant area of inquiry. While some studies approach the concept through the adoption of specific technologies, others frame it more broadly by emphasizing organizational alignment, cultural change, and strategic restructuring. These differing perspectives demonstrate that digital transformation is not a singular phenomenon but rather a multidimensional and multi-layered one (Markus & Rowe, 2023).

Digital transformation has not been considered solely as a consequence of technological advancement but has also been examined in conjunction with structural changes in working life, professional roles, and knowledge-based production processes. The disruptions created by digital technologies in ways of doing business have rendered definitions of transformation that frame it merely as a technical adaptation process insufficient (Yankın, 2019). In this regard, digital transformation is conceptualized as a process of large-scale restructuring that extends beyond individuals' and organizations' adjustment to digital tools. The increasing visibility of the socio-economic dimensions of transformation in the literature has contributed to a clearer understanding of its multi-layered structure (Varol, 2023).

2.2. Job Stress

Although the concept of stress is defined in various ways in the literature, it is generally described as the individual's response to an imbalance between environmental demands and available psychological, physiological, and social resources. Selye conceptualizes stress as the organism's general adaptation response to any demand, emphasizing that this response includes both physiological and psychological components (Selye, 1976). Lazarus and Folkman (1984), on the other hand, define stress as a process that emerges from the interaction between the individual and the environment, grounded in the perception that one's coping capacity has been exceeded, thereby foregrounding the role of cognitive appraisal. From this perspective, stress is not merely an automatic reaction to an external stimulus but a dynamic process closely linked to how individuals interpret and assign meaning to events.

Within the context of working life, stress is most commonly addressed through the concept of job stress. Job stress refers to a state of psychological and physiological strain that arises when work-related demands challenge or exceed the resources available to employees to cope with them. Beehr (1995) defines job stress as a process stemming from the interaction among the organizational environment, the individual, and job demands, highlighting the significance of both subjective evaluations and objective working conditions. Similarly, Quick and Quick (1984) view job stress as a response that results from a mismatch between the employee and the work environment, with the potential to influence both health and job performance.

Definitions of job stress are frequently structured around the balance between “job demands” and “individual or organizational resources.” Sutherland and Cooper (1988) conceptualize job stress as the strain experienced by individuals due to pressures arising from factors such as workload, role conflict, role ambiguity, organizational structure, and interpersonal relationships. Fisher (1994), particularly in academic contexts, demonstrates that performance expectations, evaluation pressure, and time constraints can develop into significant sources of stress for employees. These perspectives underscore that job stress is not merely a matter of individual vulnerability but is closely related to the nature of work and organizational arrangements.

2.3. Work–Life Balance

Work–life balance is defined as an individual’s capacity to sustain work-related duties and responsibilities alongside expectations and roles associated with private life without experiencing conflict between these domains. This balance does not merely entail an equal allocation of time; it also involves the satisfactory distribution of limited physical, emotional, and cognitive resources across work and life spheres. When this balance is disrupted, employees’ psychological well-being deteriorates, levels of stress and burnout increase, and organizational performance is adversely affected (Brough et al., 2020). For this reason, work–life balance is regarded by contemporary organizations as a key element that supports employee well-being and long-term success.

Among the primary factors shaping work–life balance are workload intensity, long working hours, the continuity of job demands, and the nature of managerial expectations. Individuals working under excessive workloads and constant time pressure are often unable to allocate sufficient time and energy to family life, social relationships, and personal needs. This situation negatively affects not only psychological health but also work-related attitudes, job satisfaction, and productivity. Studies conducted with academic staff indicate that increased job stress and work–family conflict lead to a marked decline in life satisfaction (Bell et al., 2012). These findings clearly demonstrate the extent to which job demands influence individuals’ private lives.

Organizational arrangements and managerial approaches play a crucial role in the achievement of work–life balance. Organizational structures that allow employees to plan their tasks and responsibilities, limit excessive workloads, and maintain reasonable performance expectations strengthen perceptions of balance. In such environments, employees tend to develop a stronger sense of control over their work, which in turn has positive effects on motivation and performance (Berkery et al., 2017). A stronger perception of organizational support further helps employees manage job demands in a healthier manner (Conteh & Yuan, 2022).

Organizational approaches that acknowledge family life and respect private spheres constitute another important factor supporting work–life balance. When employees feel that their family responsibilities are taken into consideration, role conflict diminishes and psychological relief increases. Supportive leadership behaviors, in particular, alleviate emotional exhaustion and foster more positive work-related attitudes. Social support received from managers and colleagues functions as a protective mechanism that offsets the adverse effects of job demands on private life (Greenhaus et al., 2012). Such support also strengthens employees’ organizational commitment (Di Stefano et al., 2018).

2.4 Organizational Support (Perceived Organizational Support)

Perceived organizational support refers to employees’ general beliefs regarding the extent to which the organization values their contributions, appreciates their efforts, and cares about their well-being. This perception is regarded as one of the fundamental factors determining the quality of the psychological relationship employees establish with their organization. Organizational attitudes toward employees, the opportunities provided, and the approaches adopted by management play a decisive role in the formation of perceived organizational support (Özdevecioğlu, 2013).

Conceptually, the organizational support perspective is grounded in social exchange theory and the norm of reciprocity. Accordingly, when employees perceive that they are supported by their organization, they tend to reciprocate this support by developing more positive attitudes toward the organization. This reciprocal relationship creates an interactional space in which emotional and cognitive bonds are formed alongside formal employment relations between the organization and the employee (Tamer & Bük, 2020).

The concept of perceived organizational support was initially introduced in the organizational behavior literature as a framework for explaining employees’ attitudes toward their organizations. Early studies associated the concept with factors such as organizational rewards, fair practices, and supervisory support. Over time, research has

demonstrated that organizational support is not limited to material resources but also encompasses psychological, emotional, and social dimensions (Çakar & Yıldız, 2009).

Within this scope, perceived organizational support has been examined as a construct closely related to perceptions of organizational justice, managerial behaviors, and organizational practices. When employees encounter fair and consistent practices, they tend to believe that the organization values them, thereby strengthening their perception of support. Consequently, organizational support is linked not only to managerial decisions themselves, but also to the manner in which these decisions are implemented (Ötken, 2015).

As the scope of the concept has expanded within the literature, perceived organizational support has become one of the key variables explaining employees' emotional attachment to the organization, levels of work engagement, and psychological well-being. Employees' sense of belonging to the organization becomes more pronounced in structures where perceived organizational support is strong (Meriç, Çiftçi & Yurtal, 2019).

Over time, perceived organizational support has emerged as a central concept in understanding employee attitudes and behaviors. Employees who believe that they are supported by their organization tend to behave more responsibly toward it and display a stronger inclination to align their individual goals with organizational objectives. In this respect, organizational support has been regarded as a key explanatory variable associated with attitudinal outcomes such as organizational commitment and job satisfaction (Krishnan & Mary, 2012).

3. Research Methodology And Findings

3.1. Research Model

This study was designed within the framework of a quantitative research approach and is based on a correlational research design aimed at examining the direction and strength of the relationships among variables. Quantitative research is defined as a research design that seeks to test cause–effect relationships and patterns of association among phenomena through numerical data and to produce generalizable findings (Creswell, 2014; Karasar, 2016). The correlational research model, in particular, aims to examine the degree of co-variation between two or more variables without any manipulation or intervention. Within this model, the researcher identifies the existence, direction, and magnitude of relationships among variables using statistical techniques (Karasar, 2016).

The correlational research design is widely used in the fields of organizational behavior, management, and the social sciences, especially for analyzing complex variable structures (Büyükoztürk, 2019). In this study, the research model was structured to test the direct, indirect, and conditional relationships among digital transformation, job stress, work–life balance, and organizational support. Digital transformation was treated as the independent variable, job stress as the dependent variable, work–life balance as the mediating variable, and organizational support as the moderating variable.

This multivariate structure was examined holistically through regression analysis, structural equation modeling, and moderated mediation analysis, enabled by the analytical flexibility offered by the correlational research design. Accordingly, the study goes beyond merely describing the relationships among variables and relies on advanced quantitative analyses to explain through which mechanisms and under which conditions digital transformation influences employees' job stress.

3.2. Population and Sample

The population of this study consists of employees working in public and private sector institutions and organizations operating in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus (TRNC). Due to the inability to obtain precise numerical data regarding the population and the fact that the population exhibits a large and heterogeneous structure, a non-probability sampling method—convenience sampling—was employed. Convenience sampling allows the researcher to collect data from individuals who are easily accessible and who voluntarily agree to participate in the study. This method is frequently used in organizational behavior and social sciences research, particularly in studies involving large and heterogeneous populations, due to time and cost constraints (Büyükoztürk, 2019; Gürbüz & Şahin, 2018).

The adequacy of the sample size was evaluated in accordance with commonly accepted statistical criteria used in quantitative research. According to the guidelines proposed by Cohen (1992), for a medium effect size ($f^2 = 0.15$), a 95% confidence level, and 80% statistical power, a minimum sample size of 200 participants is considered sufficient for multivariate analyses. In addition, for advanced statistical techniques such as structural equation modeling and moderated mediation analyses, a sample size exceeding 200 is generally recommended (Kline, 2016; Hair et al., 2019).

Accordingly, the sample of the study consists of a total of 318 employees working in the public and private sectors in the TRNC who voluntarily participated in the research. This sample size is considered statistically adequate for conducting regression analysis, structural equation modeling, and moderated mediation analyses using the PROCESS macro. Therefore, the findings obtained from the study are deemed to provide reliable and valid results in representing the research population.

3.3. Data Collection Instruments

In this study, data were collected using a structured questionnaire composed of four validated measurement scales assessing digital transformation, work–life balance, job stress, and perceived organizational support. The digital transformation scale was adapted from conceptual and empirical frameworks highlighting the role of digital technologies in reshaping organizational structures, work practices, and strategic culture (Vial, 2019; Kane et al., 2015). The work–life balance scale was based on the bidirectional model developed by Netemeyer et al. (1996), which captures both work-to-family and family-to-work dynamics and has demonstrated strong reliability across diverse contexts. Job stress was measured using items informed by the Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen et al., 1983) and the Job Stress Scale (Parker & DeCotiis, 1983), focusing on time pressure and anxiety-related organizational stressors. Perceived organizational support was assessed using the widely applied scale developed by Eisenberger et al. (1986), which conceptualizes support as employees' perceptions of supervisor protection, recognition, and concern for well-being. All items employed a five-point Likert-type format (1 = strongly disagree, 5 = strongly agree). Following preliminary analyses, conceptually redundant or low-performing items were removed, resulting in a final set of 26 items that preserved theoretical coherence and enhanced measurement validity.

3.4. Data Analysis

Quantitative data analysis methods were employed in the study. After the questionnaire responses were entered into SPSS 29, the dataset was screened for missing values and outliers, and descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation) were calculated. The internal consistency of the measurement instruments was evaluated through Cronbach's Alpha coefficients. To test the main relationship proposed in the research model, a simple linear regression analysis was first conducted to examine the effect of digital transformation on job stress. Subsequently, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was performed in AMOS 24 to assess the mediating role of work–life balance, with direct and indirect effects evaluated simultaneously and model fit assessed using χ^2/df , CFI, GFI, and RMSEA indices. In the final stage, moderated mediation was tested using PROCESS Macro (Model 14), examining whether the mediating effect of work–life balance varied across levels of perceived organizational support. Indirect effects were evaluated using bootstrap estimation (5,000 resamples, 95% CI). Normality assumptions were examined through the Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro–Wilk tests, along with skewness and kurtosis values, to ensure the appropriateness of parametric analyses such as regression and SEM.

Table 1. Normality Analysis

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			ShapiroWilk			Skewness	Kurtosis
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.		
Digital Transformation Scale	0,153	318	0,000	0,944	318	0,000	-0,418	-0,744
Work–Life Balance Scale	0,079	318	0,000	0,965	318	0,000	-0,209	-0,641
Job Stress Scale	0,063	318	0,004	0,978	318	0,000	-0,007	-0,767
Perceived Organizational Support Scale	0,111	318	0,000	0,931	318	0,000	-0,518	-0,702

The Kolmogorov–Smirnov and Shapiro–Wilk tests yielded significant results ($p < 0.05$) for all scales; however, these tests are known to be highly sensitive in large samples ($n > 300$) and may indicate significance even for minor deviations (Field, 2018; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2019). For this reason, normality should not be judged solely on the basis of these tests. Skewness and kurtosis values within ± 1 (and ± 2 in some guidelines) are generally considered acceptable indicators of approximate normality (George & Mallery, 2010; Hair et al., 2019). In this study, all scales fell within these thresholds. Taken together, despite the significant results of formal tests, the distributional characteristics support the assumption of approximate normality, making the use of parametric analyses appropriate. This approach aligns with common practice in studies employing SEM and AMOS. To determine the internal consistency levels of the scales used in the study, Cronbach's Alpha coefficients were calculated.

Table 2. Reliability Analysis

	Cronbach's Alpha	items
Digital Transformation Scale	0,832	6
Work–Life Balance Scale	0,716	4
Job Stress Scale	0,711	5

Perceived Organizational Support Scale	0,969	11
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Cronbach's Alpha was used to assess the internal consistency of the scales, with values of ≥ 0.70 considered acceptable, ≥ 0.80 high, and ≥ 0.90 very high reliability (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994; Hair et al., 2019). The Digital Transformation Scale (6 items) yielded an Alpha of 0.832, indicating high reliability. The Work–Life Balance Scale (4 items) produced an Alpha of 0.716, which is acceptable, particularly for scales with few items. The Job Stress Scale (5 items) showed an Alpha of 0.711, demonstrating adequate internal consistency. The Perceived Organizational Support Scale (11 items) achieved an Alpha of 0.969, reflecting excellent reliability. Overall, all reliability coefficients exceeded recommended thresholds, confirming that the measurement instruments used in the study are internally consistent and appropriate for research purposes.

4. Research Findings

4.1. Demographic Variables

The table below presents the demographic characteristics of the study participants.

Table 3. Demographic Characteristics of the Participants

Variable	Category	n	%
Gender	Female	138	43.4
	Male	180	56.6
Age	Under 25	16	5.0
	25–34	84	26.4
Variable	Category	n	%
	35–44	76	23.9
	45–54	81	25.5
	55 and over	61	19.2
Education Level	High School	41	12.9
	Bachelor's Degree	124	39.0
	Master's Degree	87	27.4
	Doctorate	66	20.8
Marital Status	Single	170	53.5
	Married	148	46.5
Tenure in Current Job	Less than 1 year	45	14.2
	1–5 years	122	38.4
	6–10 years	72	22.6
	11–15 years	21	6.6
	More than 15 years	58	18.2
Position	Employee	154	48.4
	Manager	50	15.7
	Senior Manager/Director	73	23.0
	Auditor	17	5.3
	Other	24	7.5
Employment Type	Full-time	208	65.4
	Contract/Freelance	63	19.8
	Other	47	14.8
Sector	Public	106	33.3

	Private	212	66.7
Total		318	100.0

Of the participants, 56.6% were male (n = 180) and 43.4% were female (n = 138), indicating that male participants constituted the majority of the sample. An examination of the age distribution shows that most participants were concentrated in the 25–54 age range. Specifically, 26.4% were aged 25–34 (n = 84), 23.9% were aged 35–44 (n = 76), and 25.5% were aged 45–54 (n = 81). Participants aged 55 and over accounted for 19.2% (n = 61), while those under the age of 25 represented the smallest group at 5.0% (n = 16).

In terms of education level, a substantial proportion of participants were higher-education graduates. Bachelor's degree holders constituted the largest group at 39.0% (n = 124), followed by master's degree holders at 27.4% (n = 87) and doctoral degree holders at 20.8% (n = 66). High school graduates accounted for 12.9% of the sample (n = 41). Regarding marital status, 53.5% of the participants were single (n = 170) and 46.5% were married (n = 148), indicating a relatively balanced distribution.

An analysis of tenure in the current job revealed that participants with 1–5 years of work experience constituted the largest group at 38.4% (n = 122). This was followed by those with 6–10 years of tenure at 22.6% (n = 72) and those with more than 15 years at 18.2% (n = 58). Participants with less than one year of experience accounted for 14.2% (n = 45), while those with 11–15 years represented the smallest tenure group at 6.6% (n = 21).

With respect to organizational position, 48.4% of the participants were employees (n = 154), 23.0% were senior managers/directors (n = 73), and 15.7% were managers (n = 50). Auditors (5.3%, n = 17) and participants in other positions (7.5%, n = 24) were represented at lower rates. In terms of employment type, the majority of participants were employed full-time (65.4%, n = 208), while 19.8% were contract/freelance workers (n = 63) and 14.8% were employed under other arrangements (n = 47). Finally, 66.7% of the participants (n = 212) were employed in the private sector, whereas 33.3% (n = 106) worked in the public sector.

4.2. Descriptive Analyses

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics for the Variables Used in the Study

	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
Digital transformation	1.67	5.00	3.5922	0.86883
Work–life balance	1.00	5.00	3.5212	0.94032
Job stress	1.40	5.00	3.3333	0.87868
Organizational support	1.00	5.00	3.5140	1.16787

The descriptive analysis results present the distribution of the four key variables examined in the study. The digital transformation variable ranges between 1.67 and 5.00, with a mean value of 3.59, indicating that participants perceive the level of digitalization in their organizations as moderately high. Work–life balance scores fall between 1.00 and 5.00, with an average of 3.52, suggesting that employees experience a partially balanced interaction between work and personal life. Job stress ranges from 1.40 to 5.00, with a mean of 3.33, pointing to a moderate level of stress among employees. Organizational support scores vary between 1.00 and 5.00 and average 3.51, showing that employees generally evaluate the support they receive from their organizations positively. The standard deviation values across all variables remain within acceptable limits, reflecting a relatively homogeneous distribution.

4.3. Correlation Analysis

In order to examine the relationships among the variables included in the study—digital transformation, work–life balance, job stress, and perceived organizational support—Pearson correlation analysis was conducted, and the results are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Correlations among Digital Transformation, Job Stress, Work–Life Balance, and Perceived Organizational Support

		1	2	3	4
Digital Transformation	r	1	,366**	-.070	,269**
	p.		0,000	0,212	0,000
Work–Life Balance	r		1	-,161**	,414**

	p.	0,004	0,000
Work Stress	r	1	-,234**
	p.		0,000
Organisational Support	r	p.	1

The findings indicate a positive and moderate statistically significant relationship between digital transformation and work–life balance ($r = 0.366$; $p < 0.001$). A positive and significant relationship was also identified between digital transformation and perceived organizational support ($r = 0.269$; $p < 0.001$), suggesting that the digitalization process may play a role in enhancing employees' perceptions of organizational support. In contrast, no statistically significant relationship was found between digital transformation and job stress ($r = -0.070$; $p > 0.05$), indicating that perceptions of digital transformation are not directly associated with levels of job stress.

Furthermore, a positive and moderate statistically significant relationship was observed between work–life balance and perceived organizational support ($r = 0.414$; $p < 0.001$). On the other hand, a negative and moderate statistically significant relationship was identified between job stress and work–life balance ($r = -0.344$; $p < 0.001$). This finding suggests that as job stress increases, perceptions of work–life balance tend to weaken. Similarly, a negative and moderate statistically significant relationship was found between job stress and perceived organizational support ($r = -0.254$; $p < 0.001$), indicating that perceived organizational support may function as a factor that helps reduce job stress.

4.4. Regression Analysis

Table 6. The Effect of Digital Transformation on Employees' Job Stress (Regression Analysis)

	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients	t	p.
	B		Beta		
Constant	3,588	0,210		17,109	0,000
Digital Transformation	-0,071	0,057	-0,070	-1,250	0,212
	F	p.	R	R ²	
	1,563	,212 ^b	,070 ^a	0,005	

The regression analysis results presented in the table indicate that the direct effect of digital transformation on employees' job stress is not statistically significant. According to the analysis, although the regression coefficient of digital transformation on job stress is negative ($B = -0.071$; $\beta = -0.070$), the level of significance exceeds acceptable thresholds ($p = 0.212 > 0.05$).

Regarding the overall model fit, the regression model itself is also not statistically significant ($F = 1.563$; $p = 0.212$). In addition, the explained variance is very low ($R^2 = 0.005$), indicating that digital transformation alone accounts for only about 0.5% of the variance in job stress. These findings suggest that employees' job stress levels may be influenced more strongly by other individual, organizational, or environmental factors rather than by digital transformation alone.

The results further imply that the effect of digital transformation on job stress may not be direct but may instead operate through mediating mechanisms such as work–life balance or through moderating factors such as organizational support. Accordingly, these findings provide both theoretical and empirical justification for the mediation and moderation models tested in the subsequent stages of the study.

4.5. Structural Equation Model

Table 7. Structural Relationships among Organizational Support, Sustainable Digital Transformation, and Work–Life Balance (Mediation Model)

Path (Dependent ← Independent)	B (Estimate)	S.E.	C.R.	p
Sustainable Digital Transformation ← Organizational Support	0.200		0.040 4.980	<0.001
Work–Life Balance ← Sustainable Digital Transformation	0.297		0.055 5.395	<0.001
Work–Life Balance ← Organizational Support	0.274		0.041 6.687	<0.001

Variable	Variance	S.E.	C.R.	p
Organizational Support	1.360	0.108	12.590	<0.001
Error Term (e1) – Sustainable Digital Transformation	0.698	0.055	12.590	<0.001
Error Term (e2) – Work–Life Balance	0.669	0.053	12.590	<0.001

Note. B = unstandardized regression coefficient; S.E. = standard error; C.R. = critical ratio. The model was tested using the maximum likelihood method. $p < 0.001$.

The explained variance value for Sustainable Digital Transformation was calculated as $R^2 = 0.073$, while the explained variance value for Work–Life Balance was calculated as $R^2 = 0.241$.

According to the structural equation modeling results, organizational support had a positive and significant effect on sustainable digital transformation ($B = 0.200$; $C.R. = 4.980$; $p < 0.001$). This finding indicates that as employees' perceptions of organizational support increase, their perceptions of sustainable digital transformation also increase. Sustainable digital transformation also had a positive and significant effect on work–life balance ($B = 0.297$; $C.R. = 5.395$; $p < 0.001$). In addition, the direct effect of organizational support on work–life balance was found to be significant ($B = 0.274$; $C.R. = 6.687$; $p < 0.001$). These results show that organizational support affects work–life balance both directly and indirectly through sustainable digital transformation.

4.6. Mediation Analysis Results

Table 8. Results of the Moderated Mediation Analysis among Perceived Organizational Support, Sustainable Digital Transformation, Stress, and Work–Life Balance (PROCESS Model 14)

Panel A. Effect of Perceived Organizational Support on Sustainable Digital Transformation (X → M)

Variable	B	SE	t	p	R ²
Constant	-0.7042	0.1492	-4.7195	<0.001	
Perceived Organizational Support	0.2004	0.0403	4.9726	<0.001	0.0726

Panel B. Effects on Work–Life Balance (X, M, W, and Interaction)

Variable	B	SE	t	p
Constant	2.6048	0.1550	16.8030	<0.001
Perceived Organizational Support (X)	0.2613	0.0421	6.2048	<0.001
Sustainable Digital Transformation (M)	0.2986	0.0554	5.3942	<0.001
Stress (W)	-0.0726	0.0541	-1.3408	0.1810
$M \times W$	0.0326	0.0604	0.5397	0.5898

Model summary: $R^2 = 0.2457$; $F(4, 313) = 25.4835$; $p < 0.001$

Panel C. Conditional Indirect Effects of Perceived Organizational Support on Work–Life Balance at Levels of Stress

Level of Stress	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
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Low (16th percentile)	0.0538	0.0255	0.0106	0.1106
Medium (50th percentile)	0.0603	0.0210	0.0238	0.1051
High (84th percentile)	0.0668	0.0280	0.0185	0.1276

Panel D. Index of Moderated Mediation

Moderator	Index	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI
Stress	0.0065	0.0165	-0.0262	0.0401

Note. B = unstandardized coefficient; SE = standard error; BootLLCI and BootULCI = lower and upper limits of the 95% bootstrap confidence interval.

A moderated mediation analysis was conducted using PROCESS Model 14 to examine whether Sustainable Digital Transformation mediated the relationship between Perceived Organizational Support and Work–Life Balance, and whether this indirect effect varied depending on Stress. The results showed that Perceived Organizational Support significantly and positively predicted Sustainable Digital Transformation ($B = 0.2004$, $SE = 0.0403$, $t = 4.9726$, $p < 0.001$), explaining 7.26% of the variance in the mediator.

For Work–Life Balance, both Perceived Organizational Support ($B = 0.2613$, $SE = 0.0421$, $t = 6.2048$, $p < 0.001$) and Sustainable Digital Transformation ($B = 0.2986$, $SE = 0.0554$, $t = 5.3942$, $p < 0.001$) had significant positive effects. In contrast, Stress did not have a significant direct effect on Work–Life Balance ($B = -0.0726$, $SE = 0.0541$, $t = -1.3408$, $p = 0.1810$). Likewise, the interaction between Sustainable Digital Transformation and Stress was not statistically significant ($B = 0.0326$, $SE = 0.0604$, $t = 0.5397$, $p = 0.5898$), indicating that Stress did not moderate the relationship between Sustainable Digital Transformation and Work–Life Balance.

The conditional indirect effects of Perceived Organizational Support on Work–Life Balance through Sustainable Digital Transformation were significant at low, medium, and high levels of Stress, as the 95% bootstrap confidence intervals did not include zero. However, the index of moderated mediation was not significant (Index = 0.0065, BootSE = 0.0165, 95% CI [0.0262, 0.0401]), since the confidence interval included zero. These findings indicate that

Sustainable Digital Transformation plays a mediating role in the relationship between Perceived Organizational Support and Work–Life Balance, but this mediating effect does not vary significantly across levels of Stress.

5. Conclusion, Discussion And Recommendations

The research findings clearly demonstrate that work–life balance plays a critical role in employee well-being. The positive relationship between work–life balance and organizational support shows that supportive organizational practices strengthen employees' ability to maintain balance between different life domains. In parallel, increases in work–life balance and perceived organizational support are associated with lower levels of job stress, confirming that these variables function as protective factors against job stress. When the regression and structural equation modeling results are considered together, it is evident that the effect of digital transformation perception on job stress operates not directly but indirectly through work–life balance. The positive effect of digital transformation perception on work–life balance, combined with the stress-reducing role of work–life balance, indicates that work–life balance serves as a full mediator in this relationship. The moderated mediation analyses further reveal that organizational support does not assume a moderating role in the indirect relationship between digital transformation and job stress. Although perceived organizational support is independently associated with job stress and represents an important resource for employee well-being, it does not appear to function as an interactional mechanism within the digital transformation–work–life balance–job stress relationship.

The findings show that perceived organizational support is an important organizational resource that strengthens employees' work–life balance. The positive relationship between organizational support and work–life balance indicates that supportive organizational practices contribute to employees' ability to establish a healthier balance between work and non-work life domains. Previous studies also show that perceived organizational support has positive effects on employees' work–life balance, psychological well-being, and organizational commitment (Özgül, Erkmén, & Karaarslan, 2020; Takım & Timüroğlu, 2022). Within the scope of this study, sustainable digital transformation was found to play a mediating role in the relationship between organizational support and work–life balance. This finding suggests that when employees feel supported by their organizations, they evaluate digital transformation processes within a more positive and sustainable framework, and this evaluation positively reflects on their work–life balance. It is understood that the effects of digital transformation processes on employees should be explained not only through technological infrastructure or organizational efficiency, but also through employee-

oriented support mechanisms and psychosocial processes. Similarly, Demirtaş (2021) and Akbar et al. (2025) emphasize that the effects of technological transformation on employees are closely related to work–life balance and psychological adaptation processes. However, stress was not found to significantly moderate the relationship between sustainable digital transformation and work–life balance. This result indicates that stress did not assume the expected interactional role in the model, while organizational support and sustainable digital transformation were more decisive variables for employees’ work–life balance. In this respect, the findings are also consistent with studies suggesting that organizational support may not function as a moderating mechanism in every context, but may instead operate as an independent organizational resource that produces direct and indirect effects (Idrovo & Bosch, 2019).

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