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The Effects of Digital Communication and Work Environment on Employee Job Satisfaction: The Moderating Role of Transformational Leadership

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Abstract

This study examines the effects of digital communication and the work environment on employee job satisfaction and the moderating role of transformational leadership at CV Enha Utama Sandang in Yogyakarta. An explanatory quantitative approach was employed, with data collected through structured questionnaires from 98 employees using a total sampling technique. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling based on Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with SmartPLS 4.1.1.8. The results show that digital communication has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.345$; $t = 5.862$; $p < 0.001$), while the work environment also has a positive and significant effect ($\beta = 0.328$; $t = 5.471$; $p < 0.001$). However, transformational leadership significantly weakens the positive effects of digital communication ($\beta = -0.230$; $t = 4.424$; $p < 0.001$) and the work environment ($\beta = -0.161$; $t = 3.009$; $p = 0.001$) on job satisfaction. These findings indicate that excessive transformational demands may increase information overload and technostress, reducing the effectiveness of communication and the work environment in fostering job satisfaction. The study highlights the importance of balancing transformational leadership with employees' capacity and well-being.

Keywords : Digital communication, work environment, job satisfaction, transformational leadership

1. Introduction

The progressive growth of the Indonesian economy is closely associated with the strategic contribution of the manufacturing sector, which remains a major driver of national economic development. The Ministry of Industry targets the sector to contribute 18.56 percent to national GDP and achieve 5.51 percent growth in 2026, supported by an investment target of IDR 852.9 trillion (Hutagaol, 2026). One important subsector is the textile and textile products industry, including garment businesses, which are labor intensive and highly dependent on employee performance. In Yogyakarta, garment businesses rely on employee coordination, accuracy, and productivity to maintain product quality (Wijaya et al., 2023). Therefore, maintaining employee job satisfaction is essential for productivity, operational continuity, and organizational sustainability.

CV Enha Utama Sandang is a garment company whose activities include sales, administration, production, packaging, warehousing, and delivery, requiring effective coordination across departments. The company uses WhatsApp Groups, email, and social media to facilitate digital communication. However, preliminary observations indicate information overload, delayed responses, communication misunderstandings, and repeated clarification of work instructions, particularly among production employees who cannot continuously monitor digital devices. These conditions may increase psychological work demands and negatively influence job satisfaction. Previous studies generally indicate that digital communication can improve job satisfaction through information accessibility, work effectiveness, and workplace flexibility (Alamanda et al., 2025; Bhatnagar & Grosse, 2019; Xu & Jiang, 2022). Nevertheless, excessive technology related demands may also reduce employee well being and job satisfaction (Aktan & Toraman, 2022; Mansuroğlu & Smith, 2026), indicating that its effects may depend on organizational context.

The work environment is another important factor influencing job satisfaction. At CV Enha Utama Sandang, production areas experience machine noise, relatively high temperatures, and limited air circulation, while warehouse activities involve considerable physical demands with limited comfort facilities. Such conditions may reduce employee concentration, comfort, and work effectiveness. Previous research has confirmed that a supportive work environment contributes positively to job satisfaction (Anasi, 2020; Wardhani & Ali, 2025). However, employee satisfaction may also depend on how leaders respond to workplace challenges. Contingency Theory suggests that leadership effectiveness depends on situational conditions (Suharyanto & Dwi Lestari, 2020), while Bass & Avolio (1995) emphasize transformational leadership through inspirational motivation, individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, and idealized influence. Ellen et al., (2025) further demonstrated that transformational leadership can moderate the relationship between organizational practices and job satisfaction.

Despite previous evidence, a research gap remains because studies on digital communication, work environment, and job satisfaction have largely focused on banking, education, service, and technology-based organizations. Limited attention has been given to labor intensive garment enterprises, particularly regarding transformational leadership as a moderating variable. Haryanto et al., (2022) found that transformational leadership can moderate the relationship between work conflict and employee performance, while Vo et al., (2024) showed that its effectiveness depends on organizational and individual contexts. This suggests that transformational leadership may determine whether digital communication and workplace conditions produce more favorable or unfavorable outcomes for employees. In this context, individualized consideration may help leaders address

information overload and communication difficulties, while inspirational motivation may help employees maintain positive attitudes despite unfavorable physical working conditions.

Accordingly, transformational leadership may function as a contextual resource that strengthens the positive effects of effective digital communication and reduces the negative consequences of less favorable working conditions. Examining this moderating role is important for extending the literature on job satisfaction within labor intensive manufacturing contexts and for providing practical insights into communication, workplace, and leadership management. Therefore, this study aims to examine the effects of digital communication and work environment on employee job satisfaction and to determine whether transformational leadership moderates these relationships at CV Enha Utama Sandang in Yogyakarta. The findings are expected to provide both theoretical contributions to the development of job satisfaction research and practical implications for improving employee management in garment enterprises.

2. Research Method

This study employed a quantitative explanatory research design to examine the causal relationships between digital communication, work environment, and employee job satisfaction, as well as the moderating effect of transformational leadership (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The study was conducted at CV Enha Utama Sandang Yogyakarta, with the population consisting of 98 employees. Given the relatively small population and the accessibility of all employees, a census sampling technique was applied, resulting in 98 respondents. Primary data were collected through structured questionnaires distributed both physically and online. Respondents were required to be permanent employees with at least one year of work experience, actively use digital communication media in their work, and voluntarily participate in the study. The questionnaire employed a five point Likert scale ranging from 1 for strongly disagree to 5 for strongly agree (Hair et al., 2019). Digital communication was measured through channel richness, accessibility, interactivity, and personalization (Sun et al., 2023); work environment was assessed through physical and non physical conditions, including cleanliness, lighting, air circulation, safety, and interpersonal conditions (Sedarmayanti, 2017); job satisfaction was measured through the work itself, rewards, promotion opportunities, supervision, and coworkers (Robbins & Judge, 2017); and transformational leadership was measured using the Four I dimensions, namely individualized consideration, intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence (Bass & Avolio, 1995). Secondary data were obtained from company profiles, organizational documents, operational information, and relevant scholarly literature.

Data were analyzed using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling with SmartPLS version 4.1.1.8. The analysis consisted of measurement model and structural model assessment following the recommended procedures for PLS SEM (Hair et al., 2019). The measurement model was evaluated using outer loadings, average variance extracted, Fornell Larcker criterion, cross loadings, Cronbach's alpha, and composite reliability to establish convergent validity, discriminant validity, and internal consistency. The structural model was subsequently assessed using the coefficient of determination, predictive relevance, effect size, path coefficients, and bootstrapping to determine the significance of the hypothesized relationships. The moderating role of transformational leadership was examined by assessing the interaction effects between transformational leadership and each independent variable, namely digital communication and work environment, on employee job satisfaction. The significance of the interaction paths was evaluated using bootstrapped t statistics and p values, with the moderation effect interpreted based on the direction and significance of the interaction coefficients.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 Respondent Descriptive Analysis

Convergent validity evaluates the degree to which indicators measuring the same construct are strongly correlated with one another. According to Hair et al., (2019), an ideal loading factor value exceeds 0.70, although values above 0.60 remain acceptable, and the Average Variance Extracted must be greater than 0.50.

Table 1. Respondents' Demographic Characteristics

Demographic Characteristics	Category	Number of Respondent	Percentage (%)
Gender	Female	58	59.18%
	Male	40	40.82%
Education	Junior High School	21	21.43%
	Senior High School	73	74.49%
	Bachelor's Degree	4	4.08%
Employee Age	25 to 35 years	49	50%
	Other Age Groups	49	50%
Tenure	More than 3 years	52	53.06%
	Less than 3 years	46	46.94%
Total		98	100%

Source: Primary data, processed by the researchers (2026)

Based on Table 1, the respondents were predominantly female (59.18%), while male respondents accounted for 40.82%. In terms of educational attainment, most respondents had completed senior high school (74.49%), followed by junior high school (21.43%) and a bachelor's degree (4.08%). Regarding age, 50.00% of respondents were between 25 and 35 years old, while the remaining 50.00% belonged to other age groups. In addition, 53.06% of respondents had more than three years of

tenure, whereas 46.94% had worked for less than three years. Overall, the respondent profile indicates that the sample was largely composed of female employees with senior high school education and relatively established work experience.

3.2 Outer Model Test Results

3.2.1 Convergent Validity: Average Variance Extracted

The measurement model was first evaluated to determine whether the indicators adequately represented their respective latent constructs. Convergent validity was assessed using the Average Variance Extracted (AVE), which indicates the proportion of indicator variance captured by a construct. A construct is generally considered to demonstrate adequate convergent validity when its AVE exceeds 0.50, indicating that the construct explains more than half of the variance in its indicators.

The AVE assessment is particularly important because it provides evidence that the indicators assigned to each construct share sufficient common variance and collectively represent the underlying theoretical concept. Therefore, the AVE results provide an initial basis for establishing the adequacy of the measurement model before proceeding to the evaluation of discriminant validity and the structural model. The results of the AVE assessment are presented in Table 2.

Table 2. Results of the Average Variance Extracted Test

Variable	AVE	Description
Transformational Leadership	0.564	Valid
Job Satisfaction	0.607	Valid
Digital Communication	0.567	Valid
Work Environment	567	Valid

Source: Primary data, processed by the researchers (2026)

Based on Table 4.8, all constructs demonstrate AVE values above the minimum threshold of 0.50. Transformational Leadership has an AVE of 0.564, Job Satisfaction has an AVE of 0.607, Digital Communication has an AVE of 0.567, and Work Environment has an AVE of 0.567. These results indicate that each construct captures more than 50 percent of the variance in its respective indicators. The highest AVE is observed for Job Satisfaction, suggesting that this construct has the strongest level of shared variance among its indicators. Overall, the findings confirm that all four constructs possess adequate convergent validity and are therefore suitable for subsequent measurement model and structural model evaluation.

3.2.2 Latent Variable Correlation and Fornell Larcker Criterion

Latent variable correlation and the Fornell Larcker criterion were assessed to examine the relationships among constructs and establish discriminant validity. The Fornell Larcker criterion is satisfied when the square root of the AVE for each construct exceeds its correlations with other constructs, indicating that each construct shares greater variance with its own indicators than with other constructs. The results obtained using SmartPLS 4.1.1.8 are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Results of Latent Variable Correlation and Fornell Larcker Criterion

Variables	Transformational Leadership	Job Satisfaction	Digital Communication	Work Environment
Transformational Leadership	1.000	0.650	0.448	0.404
Job Satisfaction	0.650	1.000	0.549	0.550
Digital Communication	0.448	0.549	1.000	0.165
Work Environment	0.404	0.550	0.165	1.000

Source: Primary data, processed by the researchers (2026)

Based on Table 3, the strongest correlation is observed between Transformational Leadership and Job Satisfaction (0.650), while the weakest is between Digital Communication and Work Environment (0.165). All interconstruct correlations are below 0.90, indicating no excessive correlation among the constructs. Furthermore, the square root of AVE for each construct exceeds its correlations with all other constructs. Transformational Leadership (0.751), Job Satisfaction (0.779), Digital Communication (0.753), and Work Environment (0.753) therefore meet the Fornell Larcker criterion. These findings confirm adequate discriminant validity and demonstrate that the constructs are empirically distinct, supporting further structural model analysis.

3.2.3 Reliability Test

Construct reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability to evaluate the internal consistency of the indicators associated with each latent construct. A construct is considered reliable when both Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability exceed the recommended threshold of 0.70. The analysis was performed using SmartPLS version 4.1.1.8, and the results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4. Construct Reliability Results

Variables	Cronbach Alpha	Composite Reliability	Description
Transformational Leadership	0.959	0.963	Reliable
Job Satisfaction	0.838	0.885	Reliable
Digital Communication	0.873	0.902	Reliable
Work Environment	0.874	0.902	Reliable

Source: Primary data, processed by the researchers (2026)

Based on Table 4, all constructs meet the recommended reliability criterion, with Cronbach's alpha values ranging from 0.838 to 0.959 and composite reliability values ranging from 0.885 to 0.963. Transformational Leadership demonstrates the highest level of internal consistency, followed by Digital Communication, Work Environment, and Job Satisfaction. These findings confirm that the indicators consistently represent their respective constructs, indicating that the measurement model has adequate reliability for subsequent structural model analysis and hypothesis testing.

3.3 Inner Model Test Result

3.3.1 Inner Model Evaluation

After the measurement model (outer model) fulfilled the required criteria for validity, reliability, and model fit, the analysis proceeded to evaluate the structural model (inner model). The structural model was evaluated to assess its explanatory power and predictive capability. The evaluation included R^2, Q^2, and hypothesis testing based on path coefficients and bootstrapping results. According to Chin (1998), R^2 values of 0.67, 0.33, and 0.19 indicate substantial, moderate, and weak explanatory power, respectively. The R^2 results obtained using SmartPLS 4.1.1.8 are presented in Table 5.

Table 5. Results of the R Square Test

	R-Square	R-Square Adjusted
Job Satisfaction	0.729	0.714

Source: Primary data, processed by the researchers (2026)

Based on Table 5, Job Satisfaction has an R^2 value of 0.729 and an Adjusted R^2 value of 0.714. According to Chin (1998), this value indicates substantial explanatory power, meaning that 72.9% of the variance in Job Satisfaction is explained by the predictors in the model, while the remaining 27.1% is attributable to other factors. The close R^2 and Adjusted R^2 values also indicate that the model maintains stable explanatory power after adjustment for the number of predictors.

3.4 Direct Effects

3.4.1 Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis testing was conducted using the bootstrapping procedure in SmartPLS 4.1.1.8 to assess the significance and direction of the proposed relationships. The evaluation was based on the original sample, t statistic, and p value, with a relationship considered significant when the t statistic exceeded 1.96 and the p value was below 0.05.

The analysis examined both direct effects and moderating effects. The direct effect analysis assessed the influence of digital communication and work environment on job satisfaction, while the moderating analysis examined the role of transformational leadership in these relationships. The results are presented in Table 4.15.

Table 6. Bootstrapping Results of Direct Effect and Indirect Effects

Path Coefficient	Original sample (o)	T Statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values	Information
Digital Communication → Job Satisfaction	0.345	5.862	0.000	Supported
Work Environment → Job Satisfaction	0.328	5.471	0.000	Supported
Transformational Leadership → Digital	-0.230	4.424	0.000	Supported

Communication → Job Satisfaction				
Transformational Leadership → Work Environment → Job Satisfaction	-0.161	3.009	0.001	Supported

Source: Primary data, processed by the researchers (2026)

Based on Table 6, all four proposed hypotheses are statistically supported. Digital communication has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.345$, $t = 5.862$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H1, while work environment also shows a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.328$, $t = 5.471$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H2. Furthermore, transformational leadership significantly moderates the relationships between digital communication and job satisfaction ($\beta = -0.230$, $t = 4.424$, $p < 0.001$) and between work environment and job satisfaction ($\beta = -0.161$, $t = 3.009$, $p = 0.001$), supporting H3 and H4. The negative interaction coefficients indicate that transformational leadership weakens the positive effects of digital communication and work environment on job satisfaction. These findings confirm that the proposed direct and moderating relationships are statistically significant.

3.5 Discussion

3.5.1 The Effect of Digital Communication on Employee Job Satisfaction (H1)

The results support H1, indicating that digital communication has a positive and significant effect on employee job satisfaction at CV Enha Utama Sandang, with a path coefficient of 0.345, a t statistic of 5.862, and a p value of 0.000. As shown in Table 1, effective digital communication facilitates information accessibility, work coordination, and clarity of instructions, thereby enabling employees to perform their tasks more efficiently. In the garment industry, where production activities require timely and accurate information, these communication advantages can reduce miscommunication and enhance employees' positive perceptions of their work.

This finding is consistent with Organizational Communication Theory and the Digital Workplace concept, which emphasize the role of effective digital communication in improving workplace flexibility and employee experience. It also supports Alamanda et al., (2025), Bhatnagar & Grosse (2019) Xu & Jiang (2022), who found that digital communication and workplace digitalization contribute positively to employee job satisfaction. The finding therefore suggests that digital communication represents not merely a technological facility but an organizational resource that can strengthen employees' work experiences and satisfaction.

3.5.2 The Effect of Work Environment on Employee Job Satisfaction (H2)

H2 is supported, demonstrating that the work environment has a positive and significant effect on employee job satisfaction, with a path coefficient of 0.328, a t statistic of 5.471, and a p value of 0.000. Based on Table 1, a conducive work environment provides employees with physical comfort, safety, and positive interpersonal conditions that support the effective completion of daily tasks. These conditions are particularly relevant in production environments where employees are exposed to repetitive and technically demanding activities. A supportive workplace can consequently strengthen employees' perceptions of organizational care and contribute to greater job satisfaction.

The finding is consistent with Herzberg's Two Factor Theory, which identifies working conditions as an important hygiene factor, and is supported by Lelo (2024) Wardhani & Ali (2025). It also aligns with the Servicescape perspective discussed by Kearney et al., (2023) and the findings of Anasi (2020) regarding the importance of physical working conditions for employee satisfaction. These results reinforce the view that maintaining a safe, comfortable, and socially supportive work environment is a strategic human resource practice that can directly enhance employee job satisfaction.s

3.5.3 The Moderating Role of Transformational Leadership in the Relationship Between Digital Communication and Employee Job Satisfaction (H3)

H3 is supported, as transformational leadership significantly weakens the positive relationship between digital communication and employee job satisfaction. As shown in Table 1, the interaction coefficient is −0.230, with a t statistic of 4.424 and a p value of 0.000. This negative moderation suggests that the benefits of digital communication become less pronounced when transformational leadership is applied more intensively. Although transformational leaders promote vision, innovation, and change, excessive communication of these demands through digital channels may increase information overload, perceived monitoring, and technostress.

This finding supports Vo et al., (2024), who emphasized that the effects of transformational leadership vary across organizational contexts, and is consistent with the perspective of Bass & Avolio (1995) that high performance expectations may become less beneficial when not accompanied by adequate support. The finding highlights an important boundary condition of transformational leadership: digital communication may improve satisfaction when it facilitates work, but its positive effect can diminish when digital channels become associated with excessive demands and continuous availability.

3.5.4 The Moderating Role of Transformational Leadership in the Relationship Between Work Environment and Employee Job Satisfaction (H4)

H4 is supported, indicating that transformational leadership significantly weakens the positive relationship between the work environment and employee job

satisfaction. As reported in Table 1, the interaction coefficient is −0.161, with a t statistic of 3.009 and a p value of 0.001. This finding suggests that although a supportive work environment enhances satisfaction, its contribution becomes less pronounced when transformational leadership places greater emphasis on organizational change, innovation, and challenging performance expectations. Employees may consequently devote more cognitive and emotional resources to adapting to new demands than to experiencing the benefits of workplace comfort and stability.

The finding is consistent with the Substitutes for Leadership perspective proposed by Kerr & Jermier, which explains that leadership effects may vary according to situational conditions. It also supports Ellen et al., (2025) and Haryanto et al., (2022), who highlight the capacity of transformational leadership to change employee perceptions and organizational relationships. Thus, transformational leadership should be implemented with an appropriate balance between performance demands and employee support so that the pursuit of organizational change does not unintentionally reduce the positive contribution of a conducive work environment to job satisfaction.

4. Conclusion

This study concludes that digital communication and the work environment have positive and significant effects on employee job satisfaction at CV Enha Utama Sandang Yogyakarta. Digital communication facilitates information accessibility, work coordination, and clarity of instructions, while a conducive work environment provides physical comfort, safety, and supportive interpersonal conditions. However, transformational leadership significantly weakens both relationships. The findings indicate that intensive transformational leadership, particularly when accompanied by high performance expectations and continuous digital communication, may generate information overload, technostress, and additional cognitive demands. Similarly, strong emphasis on organizational change and performance may reduce the extent to which employees perceive the benefits of a comfortable and supportive work environment.

These findings highlight the importance of implementing transformational leadership in a balanced manner by combining performance oriented expectations with adequate employee support, empathy, and appropriate communication boundaries. Organizations should optimize digital communication by limiting unnecessary communication outside working hours and maintain a comfortable physical work environment, particularly in production areas. Future research is recommended to examine other contextual factors that may explain these moderating effects, such as technostress, information overload, perceived organizational support,

or employee resilience, and to apply longitudinal or comparative designs across different industries and organizational settings to strengthen the generalizability of the findings.

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