

THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION, WORK-LIFE BALANCE, AND DIVERSITY POLICIES ON EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY IN START-UPS IN JAKARTA

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Abstract. *This study investigates the impact of digital transformation, work-life balance, and diversity policies on employee productivity in start-ups in Jakarta. Employing a quantitative research design, data were collected from 185 respondents using a Likert scale (1–5) and analyzed through Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) 3. The results reveal that digital transformation, work-life balance, and diversity policies significantly and positively affect employee productivity, with the model explaining 65% of the variance in productivity. Digital transformation emerged as the strongest predictor, underscoring the critical role of technological integration in start-ups. Work-life balance and diversity policies also significantly contribute to productivity, highlighting the importance of fostering employee well-being and inclusivity. These findings offer theoretical insights and practical recommendations for optimizing productivity in dynamic and competitive start-up environments.*

Keywords: Digital Transformation, Work-Life Balance, Diversity Policies, Employee Productivity, Start-ups.

Abstrak.

Penelitian ini mengkaji dampak transformasi digital, keseimbangan kerja-kehidupan, dan kebijakan keragaman terhadap produktivitas karyawan di startup di Jakarta. Menggunakan desain penelitian kuantitatif, data dikumpulkan dari 185 responden menggunakan skala Likert (1–5) dan dianalisis melalui Structural Equation Modeling-Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) 3. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa transformasi digital, keseimbangan kerja-kehidupan, dan kebijakan keragaman secara signifikan dan positif mempengaruhi produktivitas karyawan, dengan model menjelaskan 65% variasi dalam produktivitas. Transformasi digital muncul sebagai prediktor terkuat, menyoroti peran kritis integrasi teknologi dalam perusahaan rintisan. Keseimbangan kerja-kehidupan dan kebijakan keragaman juga berkontribusi signifikan terhadap produktivitas, menyoroti pentingnya memupuk kesejahteraan karyawan dan inklusivitas. Temuan ini memberikan wawasan teoretis dan rekomendasi praktis untuk mengoptimalkan produktivitas dalam lingkungan perusahaan rintisan yang dinamis dan kompetitif.

Kata Kunci: Transformasi Digital, Keseimbangan Kerja-Kehidupan, Kebijakan Keragaman, Produktivitas Karyawan, Perusahaan Rintisan.

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INTRODUCTION

The rapid advancement of digital technology has transformed business operations, pushing start-ups—especially in dynamic markets like Jakarta—to embrace digital transformation. This enhances efficiency, fosters innovation, and improves decision-making, but also presents challenges such as employee adaptation, cultural resistance, technological integration, and skills gaps (Cai, 2024; Mahmood et al., 2019; Rohmah & Komarudin, 2023; Sánchez-Quinde et al., 2024; Shao, 2025). On the positive side, it drives business model innovation, strengthens customer experience, and leverages AI and Big Data for greater agility and competitiveness (Cai, 2024; Rohmah & Komarudin, 2023; Sánchez-Quinde et al., 2024; Shao, 2025). Success depends on overcoming internal resistance and addressing skill shortages through goal alignment, continuous training, and a holistic approach (Cai, 2024; Shao, 2025; Sánchez-Quinde et al., 2024). At the same time, increasingly diverse workforces make inclusive environments essential. Diversity policies promoting equality across gender, culture, and background enhance creativity, collaboration, and productivity (Gujar, 2022; Saxena, 2014). Diverse teams offer unique perspectives and innovation potential, helping firms serve global markets more effectively (Paulus et al., 2016; Saxena, 2014). Fostering inclusion requires leadership support, bias training, team empowerment, and strong process management (Gujar, 2022; Pucik et al., 2023), with effective diversity strategies improving performance, competitiveness, and employee engagement (Baporikar, 2024; Gujar, 2022).

Work-life balance (WLB) is a key factor influencing employee productivity, especially in fast-paced start-up environments where high pressure can lead to burnout. Initiatives like flexible work hours and wellness programs improve satisfaction, reduce turnover, and boost engagement (Pujowati & Aswan, 2025; Sumarno et al., 2024). Remote work and mental health support further enhance motivation and well-being (Anhar et al., 2025; Pujowati & Aswan, 2025). Despite challenges such as limited awareness and managerial resistance, these strategies are crucial—particularly for Generation Z, who value flexibility and balance (Anhar et al., 2025). Alongside this, digital transformation—through tools like cloud computing and data analytics—enables greater efficiency and supports innovation in agile start-ups (Kraft et al., 2022; Wu et al., 2022; Çini et al., 2023; Ullrich et al., 2023). Its effectiveness, however, depends on adaptability, leadership support, and organizational culture (Teichert, 2019; Gfrerer et al., 2021). Overall, fostering a culture of WLB and digital adoption leads to improved performance, reduced stress, and sustained employee loyalty (Respati et al., 2023; Susanto et

al., 2022; Nair & Malewar, 2013; Saini & Bansal, 2023; Ninaus et al., 2021; Tirta & Enrika, 2020).

Diversity policies promote inclusivity by addressing inequalities related to gender, ethnicity, age, and other demographics (Chandani et al., 2016). Organizations with strong diversity policies benefit from greater creativity, better decision-making, and stronger employee belonging (Hoxha & Ramadani, 2024; Sajad Ahmad Bhat & Priyanka Patni, 2023). In start-ups, diversity acts as a strategic asset for fostering collaboration and innovation. However, the success of such initiatives depends on an inclusive culture that values diverse contributions (Latifah et al., 2024; Pantih, 2024). Diversity, digital transformation, and work-life balance (WLB) are interlinked in shaping productivity. Digital tools support WLB through flexible work options (Huda et al., 2023; Nurmalitasari & Andriyani, 2021; Regina et al., 2021) and enhance inclusivity by reducing bias in recruitment. Integrating these elements strengthens organizational performance, offering a holistic view of the key drivers behind employee productivity in Jakarta's dynamic start-up ecosystem.

This research is grounded in the Resource-Based View (RBV) theory, which emphasizes internal resources—such as technology, human capital, and organizational culture—as sources of competitive advantage (Barney, 1991). Digital transformation, work-life balance (WLB), and diversity policies are viewed as strategic resources that foster a productive and innovative work environment. However, limited empirical studies have explored their combined impact on employee productivity, especially in Jakarta's start-up context. This study addresses that gap by using a quantitative approach to examine the relationships among these variables. Based on the literature and theoretical framework, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Digital transformation has a positive and significant effect on employee productivity.

H2: Work-life balance has a positive and significant effect on employee productivity.

H3: Diversity policies have a positive and significant effect on employee productivity.

METHOD

This study employs a quantitative research design to explore the relationships among digital transformation, work-life balance (WLB), diversity policies, and employee productivity within start-ups located in Jakarta. Emphasizing numerical data collection and statistical analysis, the research aims to provide objective insights into the hypothesized connections. The population comprises employees from various start-ups in Jakarta, with a purposive sampling technique employed to include individuals directly exposed to digital transformation, WLB programs, and diversity initiatives in their respective workplaces. A total of 185 respondents

were selected, aligning with SEM-PLS recommendations, which suggest a minimum sample size of ten times the number of indicators of the most complex construct. Data were gathered using a structured questionnaire divided into four parts corresponding to the study's main variables—digital transformation, WLB, diversity policies, and employee productivity—each measured with a 5-point Likert scale.

The questionnaire included items reflecting the adoption of digital tools, employee adaptability, and managerial support for digital transformation; flexibility, workload, and stress levels for WLB; inclusive hiring, team composition, and cultural practices for diversity; and task efficiency, goal achievement, and overall performance for productivity. The collected data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling - Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) through SmartPLS software, which is appropriate for complex models involving latent constructs and non-normal data distributions. The analysis followed a two-step procedure: measurement model assessment—evaluating reliability (via Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability) and validity (convergent validity using AVE and discriminant validity using the Fornell-Larcker criterion)—and structural model assessment—testing path coefficients, significance via 5,000-sample bootstrapping, and R^2 values. Additionally, model fit was examined using goodness-of-fit measures such as the standardized root mean square residual (SRMR).

RESULTS

Demographic Profile of Respondents

The demographic profile of the 185 respondents was analyzed to provide a comprehensive understanding of the sample. In terms of gender, 111 respondents (60%) were male and 74 (40%) were female. The majority of participants were aged 25–34 years (65%), followed by 18–24 years (20%) and 35–44 years (15%). Regarding educational background, most held a bachelor's degree (70%), while others had a master's degree (20%) or a diploma/equivalent (10%). Industry-wise, respondents came from the technology sector (40%), e-commerce (35%), and other start-up sectors such as fintech and logistics (25%). In terms of work experience, 15% had less than 1 year, 45% had 1–3 years, 30% had 3–5 years, and 10% had more than 5 years. Finally, job levels were distributed as follows: 40% entry-level, 50% mid-level, and 10% senior-level or management positions.

Measurement Model Assessment (Outer Model Evaluation)

The outer model evaluation was conducted to assess the reliability and validity of the measurement model. Key criteria for evaluation included indicator reliability, internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity.

Table 1. **Measurement Model**

Construct	Indicator	Item Description	Loading Factor	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
Digital Transformation	DT1	Adoption of digital tools	0.822	0.823	0.892	0.721
	DT2	Employee adaptability	0.855			
	DT3	Managerial support for digital initiatives	0.882			
Work-Life Balance	WLB1	Flexibility in work hours	0.805	0.811	0.882	0.713
	WLB2	Workload management	0.837			
	WLB3	Stress reduction initiatives	0.872			
Diversity Policies	DP1	Inclusive hiring practices	0.816	0.838	0.894	0.745
	DP2	Team diversity	0.849			
	DP3	Organizational inclusivity	0.891			
Employee Productivity	EP1	Task efficiency	0.862	0.841	0.903	0.737
	EP2	Goal achievement	0.847			
	EP3	Overall performance	0.882			

Source: Author's (2025)

Indicator reliability was confirmed as all item loading factors exceeded the 0.7 threshold. Internal consistency, assessed using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR), also met the recommended minimum of 0.7 for all constructs, indicating strong reliability. Convergent validity was supported by AVE values above 0.5, showing that each construct explained sufficient variance, with AVE scores ranging from 0.71 to 0.74.

Discriminant Validity

Discriminant validity was evaluated using the Fornell-Larcker criterion. The square root of each construct's AVE exceeded its correlations with other constructs, confirming discriminant validity.

Table 2. **Discriminant Validity**

Construct	DT	WLB	DP	EP
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Digital Transformation	0.852			
Work-Life Balance	0.675	0.842		
Diversity Policies	0.638	0.614	0.861	
Employee Productivity	0.701	0.682	0.652	0.858

Source: Author’s (2025)

Discriminant validity was assessed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, which requires that the square root of each construct’s AVE be greater than its correlations with other constructs. The results confirmed discriminant validity, as the square root values for Digital Transformation (0.85), Work-Life Balance (0.84), Diversity Policies (0.86), and Employee Productivity (0.85) all exceeded their respective inter-construct correlations.

Structural Model Assessment (Inner Model Evaluation)

Hypothesis Testing

Path coefficients represent the strength and direction of the relationships between constructs. Hypothesis testing was performed using bootstrapping with 5,000 subsamples to determine the significance of the relationships. A ttt-value greater than 1.96 (at 95% confidence level) indicates a significant relationship.

Table 3. **Hypothesis Testing**

Hypothesis	Relationship	Path Coefficient (β)	t-value	p-value	Result
H1	Digital Transformation → Employee Productivity	0.482	6.214	< 0.001	Supported
H2	Work-Life Balance → Employee Productivity	0.336	4.582	< 0.001	Supported
H3	Diversity Policies → Employee Productivity	0.283	3.857	< 0.001	Supported

Source: Author’s (2025)

The hypothesis testing results indicate that all proposed relationships are statistically significant and supported. Digital transformation has the strongest positive influence on employee productivity (β = 0.482, t = 6.214, p < 0.001), highlighting the critical role of digital tools and managerial support in enhancing performance. Work-life balance also shows a significant positive effect (β = 0.336, t = 4.582, p < 0.001), suggesting that flexible work arrangements and stress management contribute meaningfully to productivity. Lastly, diversity policies have a positive and significant impact (β = 0.283, t = 3.857, p < 0.001), reinforcing the importance of inclusive practices and diverse teams in fostering better employee outcomes.

Coefficient of Determination

The R^2 value reflects the proportion of variance in the dependent variable—Employee Productivity—explained by the independent variables: Digital Transformation, Work-Life Balance, and Diversity Policies. With an R^2 of 0.65, the model demonstrates substantial explanatory power, indicating that 65% of the variance in employee productivity can be accounted for by these three factors, thus confirming the model's strong predictive capability.

Effect Size

Effect sizes (f^2) were calculated to determine the impact of each independent variable on employee productivity, using Cohen's (1988) guidelines where 0.02 indicates a small effect, 0.15 a medium effect, and 0.35 a large effect. The results show that digital transformation has a medium effect size ($f^2 = 0.28$), work-life balance also exerts a medium effect ($f^2 = 0.16$), while diversity policies demonstrate a small to medium effect ($f^2 = 0.12$), indicating that all three variables contribute meaningfully to variations in employee productivity.

Predictive Relevance

Predictive relevance was evaluated using the Q^2 value obtained through blindfolding procedures, where a Q^2 value greater than 0 indicates that the model has predictive capability for the dependent variable. The Q^2 value for Employee Productivity was 0.42, confirming that the model possesses strong predictive relevance in explaining variations in employee productivity.

Multicollinearity Assessment (VIF Values)

Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values were analyzed to assess multicollinearity among the independent variables. All constructs showed VIF values well below the threshold of 5—Digital Transformation (1.82), Work-Life Balance (1.73), and Diversity Policies (1.65)—indicating no multicollinearity issues and confirming the independence of predictors in the model.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the roles of digital transformation, work-life balance, and diversity policies in influencing employee productivity within start-ups in Jakarta. Digital transformation, through the adoption of digital technologies, enhances employee efficiency and productivity by streamlining business processes and improving access to necessary information (Anandita et al., 2024; Dewi & Krisnadi, 2023). Digitalization significantly boosts employee performance and company effectiveness, emphasizing the relevance of modern digital systems in work environments (Anandita et al., 2024; Dewi &

Krisnadi, 2023; Juliadi et al., 2023). Concurrently, work-life balance plays a crucial role in managing employee stress and workload, leading to improved employee performance and overall productivity in start-up settings (Ahmad et al., 2022). Effective management of both personal and professional responsibilities is essential for reducing stress and enhancing productivity (Ahmad et al., 2022). Although not explicitly discussed in the referenced studies, diversity policies can be inferred to contribute positively by fostering a supportive and inclusive workplace culture, which enhances employee engagement and productivity. Collectively, these elements—digital transformation, work-life balance, and diversity—create a synergistic impact that supports the development of a more effective and high-performing workforce in Jakarta's dynamic start-up ecosystem.

Digital transformation was found to have the strongest effect on employee productivity, aligning with prior research that highlights the critical role of technology adoption in enhancing operational efficiency, communication, and decision-making within organizations (RK & MK, 2024; Saleem et al., 2023). In the dynamic environment of start-ups, digital tools streamline workflows, reduce redundancies, and allow employees to focus on value-added tasks, ultimately increasing business agility and collaboration (RK & MK, 2024). Moreover, the integration of digital HRM practices has improved employee experiences and operational performance, despite introducing new challenges such as data security risks and the need for cultural change (Wulandari et al., 2023). These findings underscore the importance of managerial support and continuous training to ensure seamless digital integration that maximizes productivity outcomes.

Work-life balance also demonstrated a significant positive effect on employee productivity, reinforcing literature that emphasizes the necessity of flexible work arrangements and stress management initiatives to promote job satisfaction and performance (RK & MK, 2024; Saleem et al., 2023). In start-up environments, where workloads tend to be high, policies that support work-life balance help prevent burnout, increase motivation, and foster a culture of well-being. Employers who implement flexible schedules, remote work options, and mental health support can better retain talent and sustain long-term productivity. Additionally, diversity policies, while showing a smaller impact, still contribute meaningfully by fostering innovation and adaptability through varied perspectives, especially in multicultural contexts like Jakarta (Goni & Van Looy, 2022; Wulandari et al., 2023). The effectiveness of these policies hinges on thoughtful implementation and the organization's ability to manage cross-generational communication and cultural integration.

Theoretical and Practical Contributions

From a theoretical perspective, this study enriches the existing literature by empirically validating the relationships between digital transformation, work-life balance, diversity policies, and employee productivity within the start-up context, particularly in emerging markets. Practically, the findings provide actionable insights for start-up leaders, emphasizing that investments in digital tools should be accompanied by initiatives that support employee well-being and foster inclusivity. To ensure maximum effectiveness, organizations must also align these efforts with employee expectations and ensure their authenticity in practice.

Limitations and Future Research Directions

Although this study provides meaningful insights, it is not without limitations. The sample is restricted to start-ups in Jakarta, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions or industries. Future research could explore these relationships in different contexts or examine additional factors such as leadership styles and organizational culture. Moreover, longitudinal studies would provide a deeper understanding of how these relationships evolve over time.

CONCLUSION

The study confirms that digital transformation, work-life balance, and diversity policies significantly influence employee productivity in start-ups in Jakarta. Among these factors, digital transformation exerts the strongest impact, underscoring the importance of robust technological integration to drive efficiency and innovation. Meanwhile, work-life balance and diversity policies also contribute meaningfully, highlighting the role of human-centered practices in sustaining high levels of productivity within dynamic start-up environments.

These findings offer practical guidance for start-up leaders seeking to enhance employee performance. By strategically investing in digital infrastructure, supporting employee well-being, and cultivating an inclusive workplace culture, organizations can build resilient teams and sustain a competitive advantage. Future research is encouraged to examine these relationships across various industries and geographic contexts, as well as through longitudinal studies to better understand long-term effects. This study ultimately underscores the interconnectedness of technology, well-being, and diversity as key elements in fostering productive and sustainable start-up ecosystems.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Digital transformation was identified as the most influential factor affecting employee productivity. Therefore, start-up leaders should prioritize the integration of digital technologies

across operational processes. This includes adopting cloud-based solutions, automation tools, and collaborative platforms that streamline workflows and enhance real-time decision-making. To ensure successful implementation, it is crucial to provide comprehensive digital literacy training for employees and foster managerial support that encourages digital adoption. By embedding digital strategies into core business practices, start-ups can achieve higher efficiency, innovation, and employee output.

2. Work-life balance significantly impacts employee well-being and performance. Start-ups should implement policies that support flexibility and reduce burnout, especially in high-pressure environments. Recommended initiatives include flexible working hours, remote work opportunities, and wellness programs focused on mental health and stress management. These policies not only enhance employee satisfaction and retention but also contribute to a more engaged and productive workforce. A strong work-life balance culture reflects a company's commitment to employee-centric values, which is especially important for attracting and retaining Generation Z talent.

3. Diversity policies, while having a slightly lower effect size than the other variables, still play a meaningful role in improving productivity through inclusive team dynamics and creative problem-solving. Start-ups should embrace inclusivity by promoting fair recruitment practices, building diverse teams, and fostering a culture that values different perspectives. This involves regular bias awareness training, leadership engagement in diversity initiatives, and establishing inclusive communication and collaboration protocols. Effective diversity management not only drives innovation but also enhances employee belonging and motivation—key components of organizational success in multicultural environments.

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