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The Mediating Effect of HR Service Quality on the Relationship between Technology Adoption and Job Satisfaction in the Context of Digital Transformation in the Sharjah Government

Sultan Mohamed Maedad Huwaiden Alketbi

Institute of Technology Management and Entrepreneurship, Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka, Malaysia

Dr. Zanariah Jano (Zanne) (Corresponding author)

Institute of Technology Management and Entrepreneurship, Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka, Malaysia

E-mail: zanariahjano@utem.edu.my

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Abstract

This study examines the effect of Technology Adoption on Job Satisfaction within the context of digital transformation in the Sharjah Government, with HR Service Quality examined as a mediating variable. The study is grounded in the literature on digital transformation, e-HRM, service quality, and public-sector job satisfaction, and develops a conceptual framework linking Technology Adoption, HR Service Quality, and Job Satisfaction. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire distributed to employees in Sharjah public-sector organisations who had experience using HR-related digital systems. Following data screening procedures, 519 usable responses were retained for analysis. The measurement model demonstrated satisfactory reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Structural model analysis revealed that Technology Adoption had a positive and significant effect on both Job Satisfaction and HR Service Quality. HR Service Quality also had a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction. In addition, the mediation analysis confirmed that HR Service Quality significantly mediates the relationship between Technology Adoption and Job Satisfaction. The findings suggest that digital HR systems improve employee satisfaction primarily when they enhance the quality, accessibility, responsiveness, and reliability of HR

services. However, the relatively small direct effect of Technology Adoption indicates that technology alone is insufficient to substantially improve employee satisfaction without effective service support mechanisms. The model explained 29.1% of the variance in Job Satisfaction, indicating moderate explanatory power. The study contributes to the e-HRM and public-sector digital transformation literature by demonstrating that the impact of technology adoption on employee satisfaction is largely service-dependent rather than purely technology-driven. The findings further highlight the importance of adopting an employee-centered and service-oriented approach to HR digital transformation within public-sector organisations.

Keywords: technology adoption, job satisfaction, HR service quality digital transformation

1. Introduction

Technology adoption has become a critical driver of organisational transformation within public-sector human resource management (Stone et al., 2015; Budhwar et al., 2023). Governments increasingly rely on digital technologies and electronic human resource management (e-HRM) systems to improve administrative efficiency, service delivery, and employee-related processes. In the United Arab Emirates (UAE), public-sector digital transformation has accelerated significantly in line with national initiatives aimed at strengthening innovation, operational efficiency, and digital government services (Alzarooni et al., 2024; FAHR, 2025). Within this context, technology adoption is no longer viewed merely as an operational tool, but as a strategic mechanism for improving organisational performance and employee experience.

The Government of Sharjah has actively implemented digital transformation initiatives across public-sector departments to modernize HR operations and improve service effectiveness. Through the adoption of digital HR systems, organisations aim to streamline HR processes, improve communication, increase accessibility to HR services, and enhance employee support mechanisms. Existing studies suggest that technology adoption can positively influence employee outcomes by improving work efficiency, reducing administrative complexity, and strengthening service responsiveness (Bolli & Pusterla, 2022; Fleischer & Wanckel, 2023). Similarly, studies on technology acceptance indicate that employees are more likely to respond positively to digital systems when they perceive them as useful, efficient, and easy to use (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh et al., 2003; Venkatesh et al., 2012). In public-sector environments, digital transformation has also been associated with improved employee satisfaction when technological systems effectively support workplace needs and organisational objectives (Waladali & Rabaiah, 2022).

Despite these potential benefits, technology adoption does not necessarily guarantee positive employee outcomes. The implementation of digital systems may also create additional workplace pressure, technological uncertainty, employee resistance, and work-related stress if systems are poorly designed, inadequately supported, or disconnected from employee expectations (Lane et al., 2023; Ren & Chowdhury, 2025). Recent discussions on artificial intelligence and workplace transformation further suggest that employees may experience uncertainty regarding changing work roles, increased digital dependence, and evolving organisational expectations during digital transformation processes (Arslan et al., 2022; Budhwar et al., 2023). Consequently, the relationship between technology adoption and job satisfaction remains inconsistent and insufficiently understood, particularly within public-sector HR environments undergoing digital transformation.

Job satisfaction itself remains one of the most important employee-related outcomes in organisational research because it directly influences employee commitment, motivation, performance, productivity, and turnover intention (Locke, 1969; Zeffane, 2017; Bellet et al., 2024). Previous studies have demonstrated that organisational support, employee well-being, HR practices, and workplace environment significantly contribute to employee satisfaction and organisational effectiveness (Abdullah et al., 2021; Elrehail et al., 2020; Jo & Shin, 2025).

In the UAE context, job satisfaction among public-sector employees has become increasingly important due to ongoing organisational reforms, workforce digitalisation, and changing service expectations (AlMarzooqi et al., 2025). However, limited studies have specifically examined how HR technology adoption contributes to employee satisfaction within digitally transforming government organisations.

One important factor that may explain this relationship is HR Service Quality. In digitally transforming organisations, employees interact with HR technologies through recruitment systems, employee portals, performance management platforms, leave management systems, and communication channels. The effectiveness, reliability, responsiveness, and accessibility of these services may significantly shape employees' experiences with digital transformation initiatives. Service quality literature suggests that positive service experiences can improve satisfaction, trust, and organisational perceptions when services are delivered efficiently and responsively (Parasuraman et al., 1988; Parasuraman et al., 2005; Hogreve et al., 2021). Similarly, studies on e-HRM indicate that digital HR systems can enhance HR service quality and employee-related outcomes when they are designed around user needs and operational effectiveness (Shahreki et al., 2024; El Saeed et al., 2025).

Nevertheless, existing literature has largely examined technology adoption and HR service quality as separate organisational constructs rather than investigating HR Service Quality as a mediating mechanism that explains how technology adoption influences employee job satisfaction. Although technology acceptance theories such as the Technology Acceptance Model (TAM) and Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology (UTAUT) explain user adoption behavior (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh et al., 2003; Ayaz & Yanartas, 2020), these models provide limited explanation regarding how technology adoption contributes to employee satisfaction through organisational service experiences. Furthermore, while service quality studies frequently focus on customer satisfaction and external service delivery (Biswas et al., 2024; Malathi & Jasim, 2022), fewer studies have examined internal HR service quality within public-sector digital transformation contexts.

This limitation is particularly evident in UAE government organisations, where digital transformation research frequently emphasizes technological implementation, operational innovation, and service modernization while giving comparatively less attention to employee-centered outcomes and HR-related service experiences (Abuzanjal & Bashir, 2024; Alzarooni et al., 2024). Existing UAE studies have explored job satisfaction and public-sector organisational factors separately (Zeffane, 2017; AlMarzooqi et al., 2025), yet limited empirical evidence explains whether technology adoption improves employee job satisfaction through enhanced HR service quality within government organisations.

Furthermore, the rapid expansion of digital technologies, automation systems, and AI-supported HR services has intensified expectations for public-sector organisations to provide efficient and employee-centered HR support (FAHR, 2025; Zhou et al., 2022). Employees increasingly expect HR systems that are responsive, user-friendly, transparent, and capable of supporting workplace efficiency and career development. If digital HR systems fail to meet these expectations, employees may experience dissatisfaction, frustration,

and reduced organisational commitment despite technological advancement.

Therefore, the problem addressed in this study is the limited empirical understanding of how Technology Adoption influences Job Satisfaction and the extent to which HR Service Quality mediates this relationship within the context of digital transformation in the Sharjah Government. Existing studies have not sufficiently explained whether the successful adoption of HR technologies directly improves employee satisfaction or whether such effects occur through improvements in HR service delivery and employee support mechanisms.

To address this gap, the present study develops a conceptual framework that examines the direct relationship between Technology Adoption and Job Satisfaction while positioning HR Service Quality as a mediating variable. The framework proposes that Technology Adoption directly influences Job Satisfaction and indirectly influences Job Satisfaction through improvements in HR Service Quality. By examining these relationships, the study seeks to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how digital transformation initiatives shape employee outcomes within public-sector HR environments.

By focusing on the HR Development Department of the Government of Sharjah, this study contributes to the growing literature on e-HRM, public-sector digital transformation, and employee satisfaction. The findings are expected to provide practical insights for policymakers and HR practitioners in designing technology-enabled HR systems that not only improve operational efficiency but also enhance HR service quality and employee job satisfaction during digital transformation processes.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Technology Adoption in Public-Sector Human Resource Management

Technology adoption has become a central issue in public-sector human resource management as governments increasingly use digital systems to improve service delivery, administrative efficiency, and employee support. In HRM, technology adoption refers to the extent to which employees and organisations accept, use, and integrate digital tools into HR-related functions such as employee services, communication, performance management, training, and administrative processes. The Technology Acceptance Model explains adoption through users' perceptions of usefulness and ease of use (Davis, 1989), while the Unified Theory of Acceptance and Use of Technology extends this view by emphasising performance expectancy, effort expectancy, social influence, and facilitating conditions (Venkatesh et al., 2003).

In public-sector organisations, technology adoption is particularly important because digital systems are expected to improve not only operational efficiency but also the quality of internal and external services. Recent research shows that digital transformation in the UAE public sector has produced important benefits, including improved responsiveness, service innovation, and administrative modernisation (Alzarooni et al., 2024). Similarly, e-HRM studies suggest that digital HR systems can improve HR service delivery when they are properly implemented and aligned with organisational needs (Shahreki et al., 2024; Zhou et al., 2022). However, technology adoption alone does not guarantee positive employee

outcomes. Its effectiveness depends on how employees experience the system, whether the system improves work processes, and whether it supports broader organisational priorities.

2.2 Job Satisfaction in Public-Sector Organisations

Job satisfaction is commonly understood as employees' positive emotional and evaluative response to their job and work environment (Locke, 1969). It is an important employee outcome because satisfied employees are more likely to remain committed, perform effectively, and contribute positively to organisational objectives. In public-sector organisations, job satisfaction is especially important because government entities depend on stable, motivated, and service-oriented employees to deliver public value.

Previous studies show that job satisfaction is influenced by organisational support, HR practices, leadership, fairness, work conditions, and employee perceptions of organisational performance (Al Kurdi et al., 2021; Elrehail et al., 2020; Jo & Shin, 2025). In the UAE context, Zeffane (2017) found that job satisfaction is closely related to perceived organisational performance and turnover intention. More recent evidence also shows that job satisfaction among UAE public-sector employees is shaped by multiple organisational and contextual factors (AlMarzooqi et al., 2025). These findings suggest that job satisfaction in public-sector settings should be examined not only as an individual attitude but also as an outcome of organisational systems, including HR digitalisation.

2.3 Technology Adoption and Job Satisfaction

The relationship between technology adoption and job satisfaction has received growing attention in recent research. Digital technologies can improve job satisfaction by increasing work efficiency, reducing administrative burden, improving access to information, and supporting employee autonomy. Bolli and Pusterla (2022) found that digitalisation can positively influence workers' job satisfaction, particularly when it enhances task efficiency and work autonomy. Fleischer and Wanckel (2023) also showed that digital transformation in the public sector can influence job satisfaction through changes in job autonomy.

In the public-sector context, Waladali and Rabaiah (2022) found that e-government maturity had a positive effect on public servants' job satisfaction. This suggests that more mature digital systems may improve employees' work experience by making public administration more efficient and responsive. However, the effect of technology adoption is not always positive. New technologies, including AI-enabled systems, may create stress, uncertainty, or resistance when employees feel unsupported or when systems are poorly integrated into daily work (Lane et al., 2023; Ren & Chowdhury, 2025). Therefore, technology adoption may affect job satisfaction both directly and indirectly, depending on the organisational conditions that shape employees' experience of digital systems. Based on this discussion, the study proposes that Technology Adoption has a positive effect on Job Satisfaction.

2.4 HR Service Quality as a Mediating Mechanism

Service quality refers to users' evaluation of the reliability, responsiveness, assurance, empathy, and tangibility of services received (Parasuraman et al., 1988). In digital service

environments, service quality also includes system accessibility, efficiency, ease of use, and the quality of electronic interactions (Parasuraman et al., 2005). Within HRM, HR Service Quality reflects employees' perceptions of how effectively HR services meet their needs in terms of speed, reliability, responsiveness, accessibility, and usefulness.

Technology adoption can improve HR Service Quality by simplifying HR processes, reducing waiting times, improving access to HR information, and enabling more consistent service delivery. Recent e-HRM research indicates that digital HR systems can deliver better HR services when they are designed around employee needs and service effectiveness (Shahreki et al., 2024). El Saeed et al. (2025) further suggest that HRM service quality plays an important role in explaining the relationship between electronic HRM and perceived organisational outcomes.

HR Service Quality is also closely linked to job satisfaction. Abdullah et al. (2021) found that internal service quality positively affects employee job satisfaction, commitment, and performance. This indicates that employees are more likely to feel satisfied when internal organisational services support their work effectively. Therefore, in the context of HR technology adoption, HR Service Quality may explain how digital HR systems influence Job Satisfaction. Technology adoption may not improve satisfaction simply because systems are introduced, but because those systems improve the quality of HR services experienced by employees. Accordingly, this study positions HR Service Quality as a mediating variable between Technology Adoption and Job Satisfaction.

2.5 Research Gap and Conceptual Framework Development

Previous studies have provided significant insights into technology adoption, job satisfaction, and HR service quality within organisational and digital transformation contexts. Earlier research has extensively examined technology adoption from the perspectives of user acceptance, system usability, and organisational efficiency (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh et al., 2003). Similarly, several studies have investigated the influence of digitalisation on employee attitudes, workplace performance, and job satisfaction (Bolli & Pusterla, 2022; Fleischer & Wanckel, 2023; Waladali & Rabaiah, 2022). In addition, HR service quality has been recognized as an important organisational factor influencing employee perceptions, service effectiveness, and workplace experiences (El Saeed et al., 2025; Queiroz et al., 2020).

Despite these contributions, the existing literature remains conceptually fragmented. Most studies examine technology adoption and job satisfaction as direct relationships without sufficiently explaining the organisational mechanisms through which technology adoption shapes employee outcomes. In many cases, HR service quality is treated as an independent organisational construct rather than as a mediating mechanism that may influence the relationship between technology adoption and employee satisfaction. Consequently, limited empirical research has integrated Technology Adoption, HR Service Quality, and Job Satisfaction into a single mediation framework capable of explaining both the direct and indirect effects of digital transformation on employee outcomes.

This limitation is particularly relevant in the context of public-sector digital transformation in

the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Government institutions in the UAE, including the Sharjah Government, are rapidly implementing digital transformation initiatives to improve service delivery, operational efficiency, and employee productivity. However, while technological transformation within public organisations continues to expand, limited studies have critically examined how employees perceive these technological changes and how HR-related service quality influences employee satisfaction during digital transformation processes. Existing UAE studies primarily focus on digital government implementation, technology infrastructure, or service efficiency, with comparatively less attention given to employee-centered outcomes such as job satisfaction and organisational support mechanisms (AlMarzooqi et al., 2025; Alzarooni et al., 2024).

Furthermore, digital transformation may not automatically improve employee satisfaction simply through the adoption of new technologies. Employees are more likely to experience positive workplace outcomes when technological systems are supported by effective HR services, responsive organisational practices, and employee-oriented support mechanisms. Therefore, HR Service Quality may play a significant mediating role in determining whether technology adoption positively contributes to employee job satisfaction within digitally transforming organisations.

To address this gap, the present study develops the conceptual framework illustrated in Figure 1. The framework examines the direct relationship between Technology Adoption and Job Satisfaction while positioning HR Service Quality as a mediating variable. Specifically, the model proposes that Technology Adoption directly influences Job Satisfaction. At the same time, Technology Adoption is also expected to indirectly influence Job Satisfaction through improvements in HR Service Quality. The framework therefore provides a theoretical basis for examining both the direct and mediating effects of technology adoption on employee satisfaction within the context of digital transformation in the Sharjah Government.

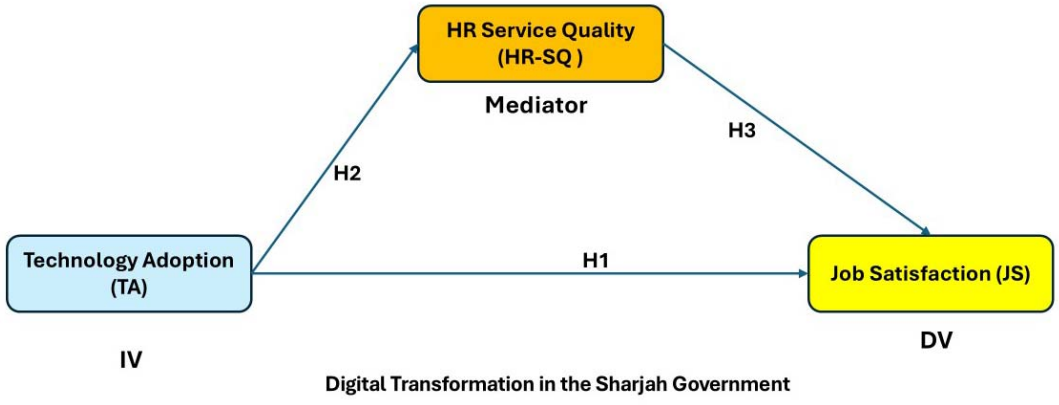

Figure 1. The conceptual framework

Based on the conceptual framework developed for this study, the following hypotheses are proposed to examine the relationships between Technology Adoption, HR Service Quality,

and Job Satisfaction within the context of digital transformation in the Sharjah Government:

H1: Technology Adoption has a significant positive effect on Job Satisfaction.

H2: Technology Adoption has a significant positive effect on HR Service Quality.

H3: HR Service Quality has a significant positive effect on Job Satisfaction.

H4: HR Service Quality significantly mediates the relationship between Technology Adoption and Job Satisfaction.

3. Methodology of Data Collection

Data for this study were collected using a structured questionnaire designed to measure employees' perceptions of Technology Adoption, HR Service Quality, and Job Satisfaction. A quantitative survey design was considered appropriate because the study examined employee-level perceptions across Sharjah public-sector organisations and aimed to test direct and mediating relationships among latent constructs. Questionnaire-based designs are widely used in business and management research because they allow standardised data to be collected from a defined population and analysed statistically (Sekaran & Bougie, 2019; Saunders et al., 2020).

3.1 Population and Sampling Procedure

The target population consisted of employees working in Sharjah public-sector organisations who had experience with HR-related digital systems or services. These included HR employees who provide HR services through digital platforms and non-HR employees who use HR technologies such as employee self-service portals, e-HR applications, digital training platforms, and electronic performance-management systems. The unit of analysis was the individual employee, as the study focused on employees' perceptions of technology adoption, HR service quality, and job satisfaction.

A proportionate stratified sampling approach was used to improve representativeness across government entities, departments, and job levels. Stratification was appropriate because employees in Sharjah public-sector organisations may differ in their exposure to HR digital systems depending on their department, role, and organisational level. Therefore, the survey was distributed across different employee categories to ensure that both HR staff and general employees were represented. Where direct random selection was not fully possible due to organisational access restrictions, the researcher used a stratified distribution approach through HR focal persons to ensure proportional coverage across relevant groups.

3.2 Questionnaire Development and Scale Sources

The questionnaire consisted of two main sections. The first section collected general respondent information, while the second section measured the four main study constructs: Technology Adoption, HR Service Quality, and Job Satisfaction. The instrument included 39 substantive questionnaire items, excluding the respondent identification field.

The questionnaire items were developed based on established theories and prior empirical

studies. Items measuring Technology Adoption were informed by the Technology Acceptance Model and UTAUT literature, particularly perceived usefulness, ease of use, facilitating conditions, and system acceptance (Davis, 1989; Venkatesh et al., 2003). HR Service Quality items were adapted from service quality and electronic service quality literature, focusing on reliability, responsiveness, accessibility, usefulness, and quality of service interaction (Parasuraman et al., 1988; Parasuraman et al., 2005). Strategic Alignment items were developed based on the strategic IT alignment literature, which emphasises the alignment between technology initiatives and organisational goals (Coltman et al., 2015; Queiroz et al., 2020). Job Satisfaction items were informed by established job satisfaction literature, particularly employees' evaluative and emotional responses to their work environment (Locke, 1969).

All items were measured using a Likert-type scale, allowing respondents to indicate their level of agreement with each statement. This format is suitable for measuring perceptions, attitudes, and behavioural responses in organisational research (DeVellis, 2016). The questionnaire was reviewed to ensure clarity, relevance, and consistency with the study constructs. Where necessary, wording was adjusted to suit the Sharjah public-sector HR context while preserving the conceptual meaning of the original scales.

3.3 Survey Administration Procedure

The survey was administered using a mixed-mode approach to maximise coverage across government entities, departments, and job levels. The primary mode of data collection was online distribution through a secure survey platform such as Qualtrics or Google Forms. The survey link was circulated through official government email systems, HR departments, and internal HR portals. This approach was suitable because digital platforms are increasingly used in public-sector and HR service environments to support efficient communication and employee access to services (Alzarooni et al., 2024; Shahreki et al., 2024).

Where digital access was limited, printed questionnaires were distributed through HR focal persons and collected in sealed envelopes to preserve confidentiality. Each survey packet included an introductory cover page explaining the purpose of the study, voluntary participation, anonymity assurances, and estimated completion time. To improve the response rate, two reminders were issued approximately two and four weeks after the initial distribution, consistent with recommended practice for organisational survey administration (Saunders et al., 2020).

3.4 Ethical Considerations

Ethical requirements were strictly observed throughout the data collection process. Respondents received clear information about the study and were required to provide informed consent before participating. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed that they could withdraw from the survey at any time without penalty. No personally identifying information, such as names, staff numbers, or traceable identifiers, was collected.

All data were reported in aggregated form only to protect respondent confidentiality. The

collected data were stored securely on password-protected devices and were accessible only to the researcher and supervisory team. These procedures are consistent with established ethical principles in business research, particularly voluntary participation, informed consent, anonymity, confidentiality, and secure handling of research data (Sekaran & Bougie, 2019; Saunders et al., 2020).

3.5 Data Screening and Final Dataset

Before analysis, the returned questionnaires were screened to ensure data quality and suitability for structural equation modelling. The screening process involved checking for incomplete responses, duplicate entries, inconsistent response patterns, and obvious response irregularities. Responses with substantial missing data or clear irregularities were excluded from the analysis. This step was necessary because data screening improves the reliability of statistical results and ensures that the dataset is appropriate for SEM analysis (Hair et al., 2017; Hair et al., 2019).

After data screening, the final dataset contained 519 usable cases. Each case represented one respondent and included responses to the measurement items for the four study constructs. The achieved sample size was considered sufficient for structural equation modelling and mediation testing, as SEM requires an adequate sample size to produce stable estimates, reliable model assessment, and valid statistical inferences (Hair et al., 2017; Hair et al., 2019).

Overall, the data collection methodology provided a systematic and ethically sound basis for testing the proposed conceptual framework. The use of a structured questionnaire, stratified sampling procedure, validated scale sources, mixed-mode survey administration, and careful data screening produced a sufficiently large and relevant dataset for examining the direct and mediating effects among Technology Adoption, HR Service Quality, and Job Satisfaction.

4. Modelling the Conceptual Framework

This section presents the modelling of the conceptual framework developed to examine the effect of Technology Adoption on Job Satisfaction, mediated by HR Service Quality and Strategic Alignment. The framework is based on the theoretical and empirical arguments discussed in the literature review, which suggest that technology adoption may influence employee satisfaction both directly and indirectly through organisational mechanisms.

The model consists of three main constructs: Technology Adoption (TA), HR Service Quality (HR-SQ), and Job Satisfaction (JS). Technology Adoption is positioned as the independent variable, Job Satisfaction as the dependent variable, while HR Service Quality is included as mediating variables. The model proposes that employees' adoption of HR digital systems can improve their job satisfaction directly, and also indirectly by enhancing the quality of HR services and strengthening the alignment between HR digital initiatives and organisational objectives.

The conceptual framework was tested using a two-stage analytical procedure. First, the measurement model was assessed to confirm the reliability and validity of the constructs.

Second, the structural model was evaluated to examine the direct and indirect relationships among the constructs. This approach ensures that the constructs are measured adequately before testing the hypothesised relationships.

4.1 Measurement Model Assessment

The measurement model was assessed to confirm the reliability and validity of the constructs before examining the structural relationships. Since the study uses latent constructs, namely Technology Adoption, HR Service Quality, and Job Satisfaction, it was necessary to ensure that the retained indicators adequately measured their respective constructs. The assessment focused on internal consistency reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability were used to assess reliability, while average variance extracted (AVE) was used to assess convergent validity. Discriminant validity was examined using the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the Heterotrait–Monotrait ratio (HTMT).

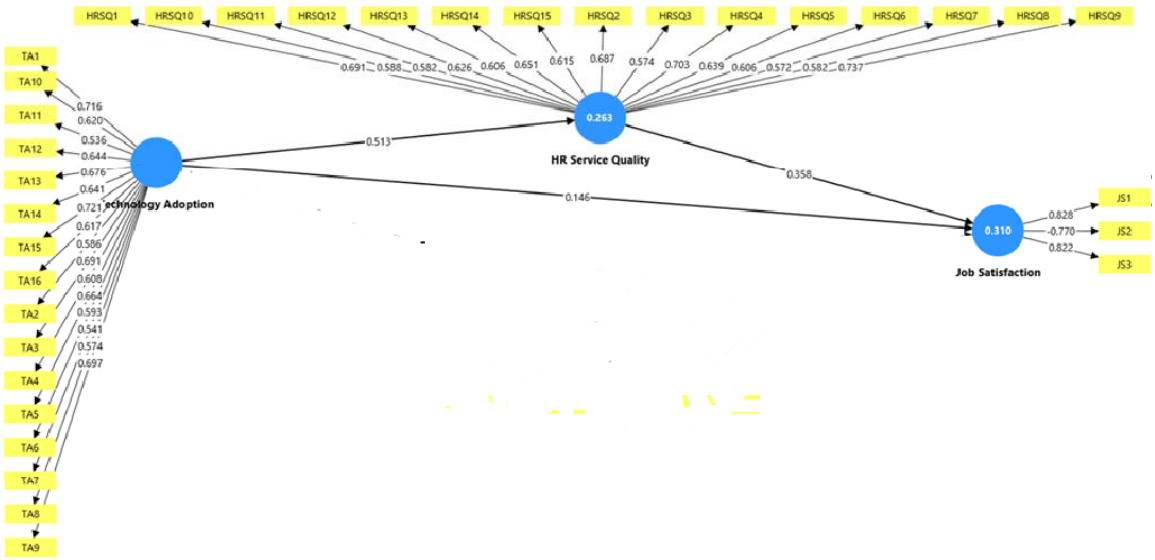

Figure 2. The structured model

Figure 2 presents the structural model showing the relationships among Technology Adoption, HR Service Quality and Job Satisfaction. The figure indicates that Technology Adoption has positive direct effects on HR Service Quality and Job Satisfaction. HR Service Quality also has positive effects on Job Satisfaction. The model further shows the indicator loadings for each construct and the R^2 values for the endogenous variables, indicating the amount of variance explained by the predictors.

4.1.1 Internal Consistency Reliability and Convergent Validity

After confirming indicator reliability, the refined measurement model was assessed for internal consistency reliability and convergent validity. Internal consistency reliability determines whether the indicators assigned to each construct consistently measure the same

underlying concept. Convergent validity assesses whether the indicators of a construct share an adequate level of common variance. As shown in Table 1, Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.733 to 0.843, while composite reliability values ranged from 0.849 to 0.882. Since all values exceeded the recommended threshold of 0.70, the results indicate satisfactory internal consistency reliability for all constructs. In terms of convergent validity, the AVE values ranged from 0.517 to 0.652, exceeding the minimum threshold of 0.50. This confirms that the retained indicators explain a sufficient proportion of variance in their respective constructs.

Table 1. Reliability and convergent validity

Construct	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE	Decision
Technology Adoption (TA)	7	0.843	0.882	0.517	Accepted
HR Service Quality (HR-SQ)	5	0.797	0.861	0.553	Accepted
Job Satisfaction (JS)	3	0.733	0.849	0.652	Accepted

Overall, the results in Table 1 show that all four constructs meet the required standards for reliability and convergent validity. Therefore, the retained indicators are internally consistent and adequately converge in measuring their respective latent constructs.

4.1.2 Discriminant Validity Assessment Using the Fornell–Larcker Criterion

Following the assessment of reliability and convergent validity, discriminant validity was examined using the Fornell–Larcker criterion. This assessment determines whether each construct is empirically distinct from the other constructs in the model. The results are presented in Table 2. The diagonal values represent the square root of AVE, while the off-diagonal values represent correlations between constructs. As shown in Table 2, the square root of AVE for Technology Adoption was 0.719, which was higher than its correlations with HR Service Quality, and Job Satisfaction. Similarly, HR Service Quality recorded a square root of AVE of 0.744, exceeding its correlations with the other constructs. The same pattern was observed for Job Satisfaction, with square root of AVE value of 0.731, respectively. In each case, the diagonal value was greater than the corresponding off-diagonal correlations.

Table 2. Fornell–Larcker criterion

Construct	TA	HR-SQ	JS
Technology Adoption (TA)	**0.719**	0.456	0.396
HR Service Quality (HR-SQ)	0.456	**0.744**	0.447
Job Satisfaction (JS)	0.396	0.447	**0.808**

Note. Diagonal values in bold represent the square root of AVE.

Based on Table 2, the refined measurement model satisfies the Fornell–Larcker requirement for discriminant validity. This suggests that Technology Adoption, HR Service Quality, and Job Satisfaction represent related but distinct dimensions of employees' perceptions in Sharjah's public-sector HR digital environment.

4.1.3 Discriminant Validity Assessment Using the HTMT Ratio

To further establish discriminant validity, the Heterotrait–Monotrait ratio (HTMT) was assessed. The HTMT criterion is considered a more stringent approach for evaluating discriminant validity because it measures the degree of empirical overlap between latent constructs. According to Hair et al. (2019), HTMT values below 0.85 indicate that constructs are empirically distinct and that discriminant validity has been achieved.

Table 3. Heterotrait–Monotrait ratio (HTMT)

Construct	TA	HR-SQ	JS
Technology Adoption (TA)	—	0.554	0.504
HR Service Quality (HR-SQ)	0.554	—	0.585
Job Satisfaction (JS)	0.504	0.585	—

The HTMT results are presented in Table 3. All HTMT values were below the recommended threshold value of 0.85, ranging between 0.504 and 0.585. Specifically, the HTMT value between Technology Adoption (TA) and HR Service Quality (HR-SQ) was 0.554, while the values between Technology Adoption (TA) and Job Satisfaction (JS), and between HR Service Quality (HR-SQ) and Job Satisfaction (JS), were 0.504 and 0.585 respectively. These results indicate that the constructs are sufficiently distinct from one another and do not exhibit problematic overlap.

Therefore, the HTMT assessment provides additional support for the discriminant validity of the measurement model. Consistent with the Fornell–Larcker criterion, the findings confirm that the refined measurement model demonstrates acceptable discriminant validity.

4.2 Structural Model Assessment

After establishing the adequacy of the refined measurement model, the structural model as Figure 3 was assessed to examine the hypothesised relationships among the latent constructs. The assessment focused on collinearity, explanatory power, effect size, and the significance of direct and indirect path coefficients. This step was necessary to determine whether Technology Adoption influences Job Satisfaction directly and indirectly through HR Service Quality.

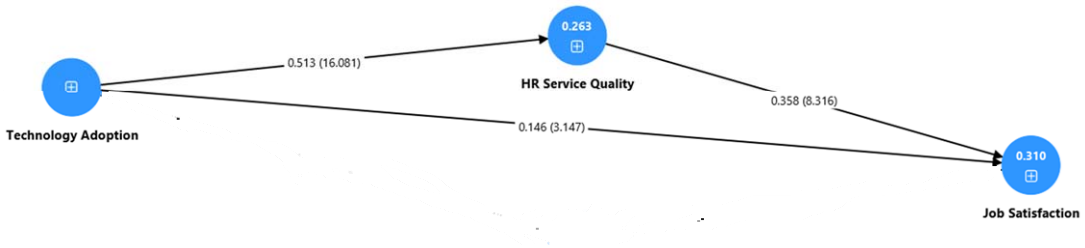

Figure 3. The structural component of the model

4.2.1 Collinearity Assessment of the Structural Model

Before evaluating the structural relationships and path coefficients, collinearity among the predictor constructs was assessed using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF). Assessing collinearity is important to ensure that predictor constructs do not exhibit excessive correlations that could distort the estimation of the structural model. According to Hair et al. (2019), VIF values below 3.3, or at minimum below 5.0, indicate that multicollinearity is not a serious concern in PLS-SEM analysis.

Table 4. Inner VIF values for the structural model

Endogenous Construct	Predictor	VIF
Job Satisfaction (JS)	Technology Adoption (TA)	1.410
Job Satisfaction (JS)	HR Service Quality (HR-SQ)	1.263

As presented in Table 4, the inner VIF values for the predictors of Job Satisfaction (JS) ranged from 1.263 to 1.410. Specifically, the VIF value for Technology Adoption (TA) was 1.410, while the VIF value for HR Service Quality (HR-SQ) was 1.263. All values were substantially below the recommended threshold levels. These findings indicate that collinearity among the predictor constructs is not problematic and that the structural model does not suffer from multicollinearity issues. Therefore, the predictor constructs can be retained for further structural model assessment and hypothesis testing.

4.2.2 Coefficient of Determination (R^2)

The explanatory power of the structural model was assessed using the coefficient of determination (R^2).

Table 5. Coefficient of determination (R^2) for endogenous constructs

Endogenous Construct	R^2	Interpretation
HR Service Quality (HR-SQ)	0.208	Modest explanatory power
Job Satisfaction (JS)	0.291	Moderate explanatory power

As shown in Table 5, the R^2 value for HR Service Quality (HR-SQ) was 0.208, indicating that Technology Adoption (TA) explains 20.8% of the variance in HR Service Quality. This suggests a modest level of explanatory power for HR Service Quality within the structural model. Meanwhile, the R^2 value for Job Satisfaction (JS) was 0.291, indicating that Technology Adoption (TA) and HR Service Quality (HR-SQ) jointly explain 29.1% of the variance in Job Satisfaction. This demonstrates a moderate level of explanatory power and suggests that the predictor constructs contribute meaningfully to explaining employee job satisfaction within the context of digital transformation in the Sharjah Government.

Overall, the R^2 results indicate that the structural model possesses acceptable explanatory capability and provides meaningful insights into the relationships among Technology Adoption, HR Service Quality, and Job Satisfaction..

4.2.3 Effect Size (f^2)

To complement the assessment of the structural model's explanatory power, effect sizes (f^2) were examined to determine the relative contribution of each predictor construct to its corresponding endogenous construct. The f^2 statistic evaluates the extent to which an exogenous construct contributes to the R^2 value of an endogenous construct when included in the model. According to Hair et al. (2019), f^2 values of 0.02, 0.15, and 0.35 represent small, medium, and large effect sizes respectively.

Table 6. Effect size (f^2) of structural paths

Path	f^2	Interpretation
TA → HR-SQ	0.262	Medium
TA → JS	0.026	Small
HR-SQ → JS	0.122	Small to medium

As presented in Table 6, Technology Adoption (TA) demonstrated a medium effect on HR Service Quality (HR-SQ) with an f^2 value of 0.262. This indicates that Technology Adoption contributes meaningfully to explaining variations in HR Service Quality within the context of digital transformation. In contrast, Technology Adoption (TA) showed a small effect on Job Satisfaction (JS), with an f^2 value of 0.026. This finding suggests that although Technology Adoption contributes directly to Job Satisfaction, its practical effect is relatively limited when considered independently.

Meanwhile, HR Service Quality (HR-SQ) demonstrated a small to medium effect on Job Satisfaction (JS), with an f^2 value of 0.122. This indicates that HR Service Quality plays a more substantial role in influencing employee job satisfaction compared to the direct effect of Technology Adoption alone. Overall, the effect size results suggest that HR Service Quality contributes meaningfully to the relationship between Technology Adoption and Job Satisfaction, thereby providing additional support for its mediating role within the structural model.

4.2.4 Direct and Indirect Path Coefficients

The direct and indirect effects of the structural model were assessed using the refined composite scores derived from the retained indicators in the measurement model. Bootstrapping procedures were applied to evaluate the significance of the hypothesized relationships. Table 7 presents the standardized path coefficients (β), t-values, p-values, and hypothesis testing results for both direct and indirect effects.

Table 7. Direct and indirect path coefficients and hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Path	Type	β	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1	TA → JS	Direct	0.145	3.147	< 0.001	Supported
H2	TA → HR-SQ	Direct	0.517	16.081	< 0.001	Supported
H3	HR-SQ → JS	Direct	0.358	8.316	< 0.001	Supported
H4	TA → HR-SQ → JS	Indirect	0.184	7.450	< 0.001	Supported

As shown in Table 7, Technology Adoption (TA) had a significant positive direct effect on Job Satisfaction (JS) ($\beta = 0.145$, $t = 3.147$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H1. This finding indicates that higher levels of technology adoption contribute positively to employee job satisfaction within the context of digital transformation in the Sharjah Government. Technology Adoption (TA) also demonstrated a significant positive effect on HR Service Quality (HR-SQ) ($\beta = 0.517$, $t = 16.081$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H2. The relatively high path coefficient suggests that technology adoption substantially improves employees' perceptions of HR service quality, particularly in terms of service accessibility, responsiveness, and operational efficiency.

In addition, HR Service Quality (HR-SQ) had a significant positive effect on Job Satisfaction (JS) ($\beta = 0.358$, $t = 8.316$, $p < 0.001$), supporting H3. This result indicates that employees are more likely to experience higher job satisfaction when HR services are perceived as reliable, responsive, and supportive. Overall, the findings demonstrate that HR Service Quality plays an important mediating role in explaining how technology adoption influences employee job satisfaction during digital transformation initiatives in the Sharjah Government..

5. Discussion of the Results

This section critically discusses the findings in relation to the proposed conceptual framework and the existing literature on digital transformation, HR service quality, and job satisfaction. Overall, the results indicate that although Technology Adoption positively influences Job Satisfaction, its effect is limited when examined independently. Instead, the findings suggest that the effectiveness of digital transformation depends largely on whether technology adoption improves the quality of HR services experienced by employees.

The measurement model confirmed acceptable reliability and validity for all constructs. Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and AVE values exceeded recommended thresholds,

while the Fornell–Larcker criterion and HTMT assessment confirmed discriminant validity. These findings support the adequacy of the measurement model and indicate that the constructs were empirically distinct. However, statistical validity alone does not fully capture the complexity of employee experiences during digital transformation, particularly in public-sector organisations where organisational culture, leadership, and administrative structures may also influence employee perceptions.

The structural model results showed that Technology Adoption had a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction, supporting H1. This finding is consistent with previous studies suggesting that digitalisation can improve work efficiency, flexibility, and access to organisational resources, thereby enhancing employee satisfaction (Bolli & Pusterla, 2022; Fleischer & Wanckel, 2023). Similarly, Waladali and Rabaiah (2022) found that e-government maturity positively influences public servants' job satisfaction.

However, despite its statistical significance, the direct effect of Technology Adoption on Job Satisfaction was relatively weak. This finding challenges the assumption that digital transformation alone is sufficient to improve employee satisfaction. In many public-sector organisations, technology adoption is frequently emphasized as a symbol of modernization and efficiency without adequately considering employees' workplace experiences. The findings therefore suggest that introducing digital HR systems may improve operational processes, but such improvements do not necessarily translate into meaningful improvements in employee satisfaction.

This interpretation supports arguments by Stone et al. (2015) and Budhwar et al. (2023), who emphasized that the effectiveness of HR technologies depends on how systems are implemented, supported, and integrated into organisational practices. It also reflects concerns that poorly managed digital transformation may create technological stress, uncertainty, and employee resistance rather than positive organisational outcomes (Lane et al., 2023; Ren & Chowdhury, 2025).

The strongest direct relationship identified in the model was between Technology Adoption and HR Service Quality, supporting H2. This finding indicates that HR digital systems significantly influence employees' perceptions of HR service effectiveness, particularly in terms of responsiveness, accessibility, reliability, and service efficiency. Within the Sharjah Government context, employees appear to evaluate HR services more positively when digital systems simplify administrative procedures, improve communication, reduce delays, and increase access to HR-related information.

This result aligns with Shahreki et al. (2024), who argued that e-HRM systems improve HR service effectiveness when designed around employee needs and service quality principles. Similarly, Parasuraman et al. (1988) and Parasuraman et al. (2005) emphasized that service quality depends heavily on responsiveness, reliability, accessibility, and user-centered interaction. The findings therefore suggest that the value of technology adoption lies less in the technology itself and more in its ability to improve internal service experiences.

The results further showed that HR Service Quality had a significant positive effect on Job

Satisfaction, supporting H3. Compared to the direct effect of Technology Adoption, HR Service Quality demonstrated a stronger influence on employee satisfaction. This finding indicates that employees are more concerned with the quality of organisational support they receive than with the mere existence of digital systems. Employees appear to value technology when it improves service responsiveness, communication quality, accessibility, and workplace support mechanisms.

This finding is consistent with Abdullah et al. (2021), who found that internal service quality positively influences employee satisfaction, commitment, and performance. It also supports broader service-quality literature suggesting that high-quality internal services contribute to positive employee attitudes and organisational outcomes (Hogreve et al., 2021). From a critical perspective, the findings imply that digital transformation initiatives may fail to improve employee satisfaction if HR services remain bureaucratic, inaccessible, or unresponsive despite technological implementation.

One of the most important findings concerns the mediating role of HR Service Quality. The mediation analysis confirmed that HR Service Quality significantly mediates the relationship between Technology Adoption and Job Satisfaction, supporting H4. This suggests that Technology Adoption contributes to employee satisfaction primarily because it improves the quality of HR services experienced by employees. Employees therefore become more satisfied not simply because digital technologies are introduced, but because those technologies improve service quality, simplify work processes, and strengthen organisational support.

These finding challenges technology-centered perspectives of digital transformation that focus primarily on system adoption and operational efficiency. Instead, the findings support a service-oriented interpretation of digital transformation, where technology becomes meaningful only when it improves employee experiences and organisational support mechanisms. The result is consistent with El Saeed et al. (2025), who emphasized the mediating role of HRM-service quality in explaining the relationship between e-HRM systems and organisational outcomes.

Although the model explained 29.1% of the variance in Job Satisfaction, this level of explanatory power is only moderate. This indicates that Technology Adoption and HR Service Quality are important, but incomplete, predictors of employee satisfaction. A substantial proportion of Job Satisfaction remains influenced by broader organisational and psychological factors such as leadership, organisational culture, fairness, recognition, workload, and employee engagement (Al Kurdi et al., 2021; Elrehail et al., 2020; Jo & Shin, 2025; AlMarzooqi et al., 2025). Consequently, relying excessively on technological solutions to improve employee satisfaction may oversimplify the complexity of workplace experiences within public-sector organisations.

The findings also have important practical implications for the Sharjah Government. First, digital transformation initiatives should focus not only on technological implementation, but also on improving HR service quality and employee support. Second, employees require continuous training, communication, and technical support to reduce uncertainty and

resistance associated with digital transformation. Third, HR departments should continuously evaluate digital HR systems from the employee perspective rather than relying solely on operational efficiency indicators.

6. Conclusion

This study examined the relationship between Technology Adoption and Job Satisfaction within the context of digital transformation in the Sharjah Government, with HR Service Quality investigated as a mediating variable. The findings confirmed that Technology Adoption has a positive and significant effect on Job Satisfaction. However, the relatively small direct effect suggests that technology adoption alone is insufficient to substantially improve employee satisfaction.

The study further revealed that Technology Adoption significantly improves HR Service Quality, which in turn has a stronger positive effect on Job Satisfaction. This indicates that employees value digital HR systems not merely because of technological advancement, but because such systems improve the quality, responsiveness, accessibility, and reliability of HR services. The mediation analysis also confirmed that HR Service Quality significantly mediates the relationship between Technology Adoption and Job Satisfaction, highlighting that service quality is the primary mechanism through which digital transformation contributes to positive employee outcomes.

Although all hypotheses were supported, the model explained only a moderate proportion of the variance in Job Satisfaction. This suggests that employee satisfaction is influenced not only by technology and HR service quality, but also by broader organisational factors such as leadership, organisational culture, fairness, communication, and employee engagement.

The findings contribute to the e-HRM and public-sector digital transformation literature by demonstrating that the effectiveness of digital transformation should not be evaluated solely through technology adoption or operational efficiency. Instead, organisations must consider whether digital systems genuinely improve employee experiences and internal service quality.

Practically, the study suggests that the Sharjah Government should adopt a more employee-centered approach toward HR digital transformation. HR leaders should focus on improving service quality, providing continuous employee support and training, and ensuring that digital systems remain responsive to employee needs. Ultimately, digital transformation should be viewed not only as a technological initiative, but also as a strategic effort to strengthen employee satisfaction and organisational effectiveness.

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