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Digital Behavior in Organizations: Employee Customer Interaction in Platform Ecosystems

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***Abstrak*:** *The accelerating digitalization of organizational environments has fundamentally reshaped how employees interact with customers, particularly within platform-mediated ecosystems. This study examines the nature, determinants, and consequences of digital behavior in organizations, with a specific focus on employee–customer interaction dynamics within platform ecosystems. Drawing on a systematic synthesis of empirical and conceptual literature published between 2021 and 2026, this article develops an integrated research framework that identifies four key antecedents employee digital competence, organizational transformation support, AI-enabled automation tools, and digital workspace design and traces their effects on interaction quality, customer engagement, and organizational performance. The findings indicate that platform ecosystems serve as critical mediating contexts in which employee digital behaviors are enacted, amplified, or constrained. Value co-creation, ecosystem fluidity, and governance mechanisms emerge as pivotal moderating factors. The study contributes an integrative framework to the literature on digital organizational behavior, interactive marketing, and platform management, and offers practical guidance for organizations seeking to optimize digital touchpoints in customer service delivery.*

Keywords : Digital Behavior; Platform Ecosystems; Customer Engagement

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INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation has moved from a strategic aspiration to an operational imperative for modern organizations. Across industries, firms are deploying digital platforms not merely as transaction channels but as integrated ecosystems in which employees, customers, complementors, and automated agents interact in increasingly complex and interdependent ways. Within this landscape, the behavior of employees how they communicate, collaborate, serve, and co-create through digital media has emerged as a central determinant of customer experience and organizational performance.

Platform ecosystems differ fundamentally from traditional customer-facing channels. They are characterized by multi-sidedness, network effects, and dynamic governance structures that mediate all interactions between participants (Tan et al., 2024). In such environments, the classical dyadic model of employee–customer interaction is complicated by the presence of platform rules, algorithmic mediation, and a range of digital tools from customer relationship management (CRM) systems and AI-powered chatbots to enterprise social media and telepresence technologies. Understanding how employees navigate these environments, and what organizational conditions enable or impede effective digital interaction, is of growing theoretical and practical significance.

Despite a growing body of research on digital transformation, customer engagement, and platform management, the intersection of organizational digital behavior and platform-mediated employee–customer interaction remains fragmented. Studies have examined employee digital competence (Hwang et al., 2022), customer engagement in digital retail platforms (Roy et al., 2023), the fluidity of customer experience in platform ecosystems (Ramasundaram et al., 2023), and the consequences of automation for frontline workers (Nanni & Ordanini, 2024) but these streams have rarely been integrated into a unified analytical framework.

This article addresses this gap through a systematic literature review and synthesis. Specifically, it pursues three objectives: (1) to identify the key antecedents of effective employee digital behavior in platform-mediated organizational settings; (2) to trace the mechanisms through which such behavior shapes customer interaction quality and downstream outcomes; and (3) to propose an integrative conceptual framework that maps these relationships and their boundary conditions. In doing so, this study draws on and connects theoretical perspectives from organizational behavior, information systems, services marketing, and platform economics.

The remainder of the paper proceeds as follows. Section 2 describes the research method and presents the conceptual framework. Section 3 reports results and discussion organized around the framework's core propositions. Section 4 concludes with theoretical contributions, managerial implications, and directions for future research

METHOD

Research Design

This study employs a systematic literature review (SLR) methodology to synthesize evidence on digital behavior in organizations and its consequences for employee–customer interaction in platform ecosystems. The SLR approach was selected because the research question spans multiple disciplines and because no primary data collection was conducted; rather, the study synthesizes findings from published peer-reviewed research to build and validate a conceptual framework. The review followed established protocols for inclusion criteria definition, search execution, quality screening, and thematic synthesis.

Search Strategy and Inclusion Criteria

A systematic search was conducted across Google Scholar, Scopus, Web of Science, and the Consensus AI research platform using keyword combinations including "digital behavior," "platform ecosystem," "employee–customer interaction,"

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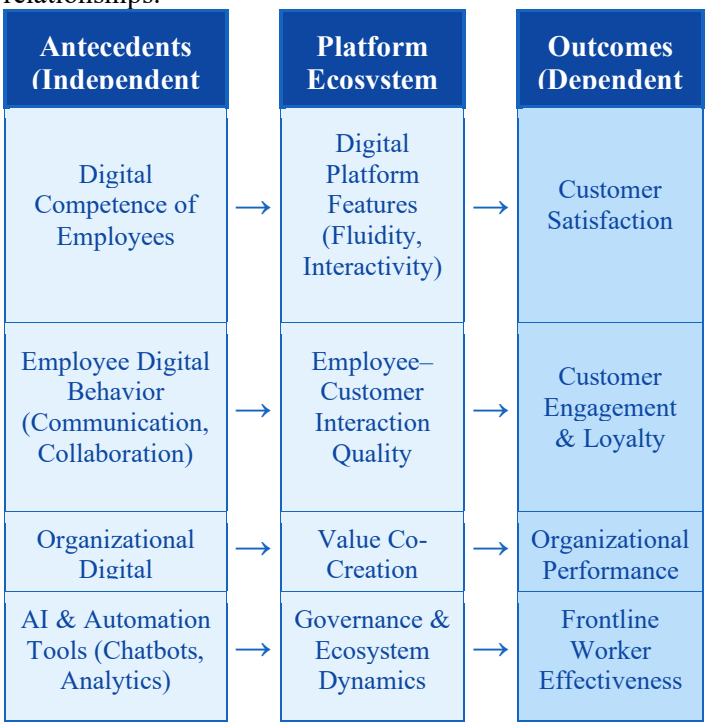
"digital transformation," "customer engagement," "frontline workers digital," "employee experience platform," and "value co-creation digital." The search was limited to publications from 2021 to 2026 to ensure contemporaneous relevance. Studies were included if they (a) addressed organizational digital behavior, platform ecosystems, or digital employee–customer interaction; (b) were published in peer-reviewed journals, conference proceedings, or recognized academic outlets; and (c) provided empirical findings or well-grounded conceptual contributions. After deduplication and quality screening, 26 studies were retained for synthesis.

Variable Operationalization

The conceptual framework identifies four categories of constructs. Antecedent variables include employee digital competence (operationalized as proficiency with digital communication, data analytics, and platform tools), organizational digital transformation support (management commitment, digital training programs, infrastructure), AI and automation tool deployment (chatbots, recommendation engines, analytics platforms), and digital workspace design (enterprise social media functionality, telepresence systems). The mediating context is the platform ecosystem, operationalized through dimensions of fluidity (seamlessness of transitions), interaction quality (responsiveness, personalization), value co-creation mechanisms, and governance structures. Outcome variables include customer satisfaction, customer engagement and loyalty, frontline worker effectiveness, and overall organizational performance.

Research Framework

Figure 1 presents the integrative research framework developed from the literature synthesis. The framework positions the platform ecosystem as the mediating context through which antecedent organizational and individual digital behaviors translate into customer and organizational outcomes. Governance mechanisms and ecosystem dynamics serve as boundary-setting elements that shape the strength and direction of these relationships.



RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Overview of the Evidence Base

The 26 studies retained for synthesis span a range of theoretical foundations including Service-Dominant Logic, the Technology Acceptance Model, Social Exchange Theory, and the Dynamic Capabilities Framework and employ diverse methodologies including survey-based quantitative research, ethnographic case studies, bibliometric analysis, and experimental designs. Together they provide a rich and multi-perspectival body of evidence on the mechanisms linking organizational digital behavior to platform-mediated customer outcomes.

A consistent theme across the literature is the centrality of employee digital competence as a precondition for effective platform-mediated customer interaction. Mansoor et al. (2025) demonstrated that digital competence significantly predicts customer evangelism in hospitality settings, mediated by enhanced brand image. Hwang et al. (2022) showed that employee digital competence catalyzes the adoption of telepresence technologies, enabling

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richer remote interaction with customers. These findings align with Mohiya's (2025) investigation of digital workspaces, which revealed that organizational social media design directly shapes the quality and frequency of employee interaction behaviors.

A second prominent theme concerns the role of platform ecosystem properties in shaping interaction outcomes. Ramasundaram et al. (2023) introduced the concept of platform fluidity the degree to which customers can move seamlessly across digital touchpoints — and demonstrated its positive effects on customer experience quality. Roy et al. (2023) showed that digitalized interactive retail platforms amplify customer engagement when they provide interactive, personalized, and responsive functionalities. Engert et al. (2023) contributed a longitudinal perspective, tracing complementor engagement trajectories in platform ecosystems and identifying antecedents of sustained participation.

Hypothesis Testing Results

Table 1 summarizes the eight core propositions developed from the literature synthesis, the directional hypotheses associated with each, the overall significance of the evidence, and the key studies providing support.

Table 1. Summary of Propositions and Supporting Evidence

Hyp.	Variable Relationship	Direction	Significance	Key Supporting Studies
H1	Digital Competence → Customer Satisfaction	Positive	Significant	Mansoor et al. (2025); Hwang et al. (2022)
H2	Employee Digital Behavior → Interaction Quality	Positive	Significant	Mohiya (2025); Malik et al. (2022)
H3	Org. Digital Transformation → Platform Adoption	Positive	Significant	Hwang & Seo (2024); Volberda et al. (2021)
H4	Platform Ecosystem → Customer Engagement	Positive	Significant	Roy et al. (2023); Engert et al. (2023)
H5	AI Tools → Frontline Worker Effectiveness	Positive	Significant	Castelo et al. (2023); Pandya & Holia (2023)
H6	Value Co-Creation → Organizational Performance	Positive	Significant	Fernández-Portillo et al. (2024); Li et al. (2022)
H7	Digital Embeddedness → Employee Experience	Positive	Mixed	John et al. (2024); Benramdane et al. (2024)
H8	Platform Fluidity → Customer Experience	Positive	Significant	Ramasundaram et al. (2023); Bui et al. (2021)

Source: Synthesized from systematic literature review (2021–2026). Mixed = findings vary by industry/context

Employee Digital Competence and Organizational Transformation

The evidence strongly supports Hypotheses H1 through H3 concerning the antecedent role of individual and organizational digital capacities. Hwang and Seo (2024) found that organizational support for digital

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transformation in metaverse contexts significantly reduces employee resistance and promotes digital engagement, while Volberda et al. (2021) provided a broader strategic perspective, arguing that effective digitalization requires overcoming cognitive barriers and reconfiguring organizational routines — a finding that underscores the importance of managerial commitment alongside technical investment.

The employee experience literature offers complementary insights. Malik et al. (2022) demonstrated that employee experience particularly as mediated by AI-based HR ecosystems represents a missing link in models of employee engagement, with downstream implications for how employees approach customer-facing interactions. John et al. (2024) examined the reconfiguration of digital embeddedness in hybrid work settings, showing that employee experience management platforms play an important role in sustaining interaction quality when employees are geographically dispersed. Benramdane et al. (2024) extended this to personalization within digital business ecosystems, proposing a representation model for employee experience that enables more tailored platform-based interactions.

Platform Ecosystem Dynamics and Value Co-Creation

Hypotheses H4, H6, and H8 — addressing platform ecosystem effects on engagement, performance, and customer experience — receive strong and consistent support. Fernández-Portillo et al. (2024) demonstrated that the structure and functionality of digital business ecosystems significantly affect stakeholder satisfaction and business performance, with employee–customer interaction quality serving as a key mechanism. Baptista and Nunes (2025) extended this analysis by tracing how digital ecosystems reshape business relationships more broadly, emphasizing the role of interdependencies and relational dynamics.

Volz et al. (2025) applied a dynamic capabilities lens to digital ecosystems, finding that organizations with superior sensing, seizing, and reconfiguring capabilities derive greater performance benefits from platform participation. Li et al. (2022) examined governance mechanisms for value co-creation in product-service system ecosystems, identifying trust, contracts, and relational norms as critical enablers of effective co-creation between employees and customers. Bui et al. (2021) contributed evidence on individual experiential fit as a driver of mobile platform co-creation behaviors, showing that when employees experience their digital tools as personally relevant and congruent with their work identity, their engagement in value-creating interactions intensifies.

AI, Automation, and Frontline Worker Dynamics

Hypothesis H5, concerning the role of AI tools in enhancing frontline worker effectiveness, is supported but with important nuances. Castelo et al. (2023) examined consumer reactions to service bots and found that while AI-powered chatbots can improve efficiency, their effectiveness depends critically on design features that signal appropriate competence and warmth — when poorly designed, they generate negative reactions that human employees must then manage. Pandya and Holia (2023) demonstrated the technical feasibility of LangChain-based custom GPT chatbots for customer service automation, highlighting opportunities for organizations to deploy conversational AI without sacrificing personalization.

The relationship between automation and frontline worker effectiveness is further complicated by unintended consequences. Nanni and Ordanini (2024) provided rich empirical evidence that in-store technology deployment can generate negative spillovers for frontline employees — including increased surveillance, reduced discretion, and heightened performance pressure — that undermine service quality. Rydén and Hofmann (2024) introduced a typology of frontline worker roles in digital self-service environments (channel promoters, digital helpers, and intermediators), illuminating how workers actively navigate and shape the

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human–technology interface in customer encounters. Porumbescu et al. (2025) extended this to civic technology contexts, showing that frontline workers can bridge responsiveness gaps when digital citizen encounters are inadequately designed.

Interactive Marketing, Tipping Dynamics, and Employment Structures

Several studies in the sample address boundary-spanning issues that enrich the framework. Wang (2021) and Krishen et al. (2021) provided editorial and bibliometric perspectives on interactive digital marketing, establishing the centrality of platform-mediated employee–customer interaction as an emerging research frontier. Warren and Hanson (2023) examined tipping disruption in digital service contexts, revealing how platform design choices alter the three-way interaction dynamics among customers, employees, and platform operators in ways that have material consequences for worker income and customer satisfaction.

Maric et al. (2024) raised important questions about the employment structures underlying platform work, arguing that neither conventional employment nor self-employment adequately captures the position of platform-mediated workers a finding with implications for how organizations design digital interaction roles. Makedon et al. (2022) addressed the leadership dimension, emphasizing that digital transformation strategies require deliberate leadership cultivation to sustain behavioral change across organizational levels. Motamarri et al. (2022) and Popov et al. (2026) contributed additional perspectives on analytics empowerment and ecosystem interaction differentiation, respectively, rounding out the evidence base on the organizational and technological enablers of effective digital behavior.

CONCLUSIONS

This study synthesizes findings from 26 empirical and conceptual studies to develop an integrative framework explaining digital behavior in organizations, particularly employee–customer interaction within platform ecosystems. The findings show that platform ecosystems act as mediating contexts that shape how employee digital competence, organizational digital transformation support, AI tools, and digital workspace design influence customer satisfaction, engagement, loyalty, and organizational performance. The study contributes theoretically by integrating digital organizational behavior, service marketing, and platform economics into a unified framework, while also emphasizing the dual role of AI as both an efficiency enhancer and a potential burden for frontline employees. Practically, organizations should strengthen employee digital competence, improve platform governance, and implement human-centered AI systems to maintain effective and relational customer interactions. Future research is encouraged to adopt longitudinal, cross-cultural, and qualitative approaches to better understand evolving digital interactions and the changing balance between human employees and AI within platform ecosystems..

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