

Organizational Support and Employees' Adaptation to Digital Transformation in Public Administration Agencies in Ho Chi Minh City: Descriptive Evidence from a Cross-Sectional Survey

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ABSTRACT: *This study examines organizational support and employees' adaptation to digital transformation in public administration agencies and public service units in Ho Chi Minh City. It uses descriptive analysis of a convenience survey of 102 employees conducted in 2026, supplemented by content analysis of open-ended survey responses used to contextualize the descriptive results. Respondents commonly reported greater responsibility, faster response requirements, and larger workloads. In five of six skill domains, mean self-assessed capability was below the perceived job requirement, with the largest gaps in specialized software and digital procedures, data handling, and office applications. Mean organizational-support scores were lower among respondents in public service units and among employees in non-managerial positions. These are descriptive differences within a heterogeneous sample; they do not establish effects of organization type or job position. Open responses emphasized position-specific training, reliable infrastructure and software, process simplification and interoperability, and accessible technical support. The findings indicate that digital transformation should be assessed through everyday work arrangements as well as platform uptake. Because the study uses a cross-sectional non-probability sample, its results are limited to the respondents surveyed.*

KEYWORDS: *adaptation, digital transformation, organizational support, public administration, Vietnam.*

I. Introduction

Digital transformation in public administration changes more than the channel through which services are delivered. It can alter task allocation, records management, coordination, and the relation between employees and service users. Research on local government automation shows that digitalization is configured through technology, organizational roles, work practices, and power relations rather than added to an unchanged workplace [1]. Research on frontline public services likewise shows that implementation does not automatically produce sustained use or positive outcomes; public employees adopt different strategies when they encounter digital systems in daily work [2].

This perspective is relevant to Ho Chi Minh City, where digital-government implementation is pursued alongside public-service reform. The city's 2024 plan for an effective public service identifies workforce motivation, capacity, and working conditions as central concerns [3]. On the provincial digital-transformation index, Ho Chi Minh City ranked third in 2021 and second in both 2022 and 2023 [4]. By the end of 2023, however, only 740 of 1,837 administrative procedures were available as online public services – 464 fully online and 276 partially online – and staff in some units continued to process paper and electronic records in parallel [4]. These

local figures show that platform coverage and administrative rankings do not fully capture how employees experience the reorganization of work. This article therefore examines three questions within a survey sample: What changes do employees report in their work? Where do they identify gaps between digital-skill requirements and their own capability? How do organizational-support scores and stated support needs vary across the sample?

The contribution is deliberately modest. The study does not estimate the effect of digital transformation on employee performance, nor does it represent all public-sector employees in the city. It provides a descriptive account of a defined group of respondents and uses their open-ended answers to clarify the support conditions they regarded as necessary.

II. Analytical Framework

The analysis first approaches digital transformation at the level of tasks. Autor (2015) argues that technology does not necessarily replace an entire job; it can instead change the mix of tasks within that job [5]. This task-based view is complemented by a socio-technical orientation: technologies are treated as part of work arrangements that include rules, routines, roles, knowledge, and organizational resources, and their meaning and effects are shaped within the social and organizational settings where they are adopted, adjusted, and used, rather than determined by technical properties alone [6]. It also fits evidence from public-service automation: new systems can redistribute responsibility and create new mediation tasks for public employees [1].

The framework organizes the descriptive analysis around three linked dimensions. First, digital transformation may change task demands, including workload, speed, coordination, and responsibility. Second, employees must meet the digital-skill requirements attached to those tasks. Third, organizational conditions such as training, infrastructure, technical help, coordination, and managerial support can enable or constrain adaptation. This is an organizing framework, not a tested causal model. Studies of public-sector automation similarly caution that efficiency claims require attention to measurement, work processes, and the continuing role of human judgment [7].

III. Methods

3.1. Data and scope

The study draws on a convenience survey of 102 people working in city-level administrative agencies, grassroots administrative agencies, and selected public service units in Ho Chi Minh City in 2026. The sample included 48 men and 54 women. Respondents were 25 to 58 years old (mean = 39.1, standard deviation = 7.4). The survey did not use probability sampling, and no record of the recruitment channel or the number of people invited to participate was kept. A response rate could therefore not be calculated. The survey instrument documents the screening criteria applied to respondents and their consent to participate, but it does not record how respondents were approached. Its findings are therefore not estimates for the city's public sector.

3.2. Measures and analysis

The questionnaire asked respondents whether selected aspects of work had increased in the context of digital transformation. It also asked them to rate job requirements and their own capability in six digital-skill domains on five-point scales anchored as 1 = very low, 2 = low, 3 = moderate, 4 = high, and 5 = very high. Organizational support was assessed with 12 questionnaire items. The article does not present this measure as a standardized scale. Internal consistency was high (Cronbach's alpha = 0.957) among the 88 respondents who had complete data on all 12 items. The organizational-support score reported in this article was calculated as the mean of all available responses to the 12 items. No minimum number of completed items was specified, and missing items were not imputed. This score is available for 98 respondents. Codes 6 and 99, as well as other out-of-range values, were treated as missing; no assumption was made about why a value was missing, for example that it reflected a data-entry error or a refusal to answer. Valid *n* is reported separately for each table. The present article reports subgroup means descriptively; it does not apply significance tests because the sample is non-probabilistic, heterogeneous, and includes small subgroups.

Open-ended answers were analyzed as survey text, not as interview data. Seventy-nine respondents provided substantive answers to the question on support needs. A response could receive more than one thematic code. The reported theme counts thus show the recurrence of issues in the survey text and should not be interpreted as population percentages.

IV. Results

4.1. Reported changes in work

Table 1 summarizes reported work changes. Responsibility for work progress and results, faster response requirements, work productivity, and workload were the most frequently reported increases. By contrast, only 26 of 99 valid respondents reported increased income from their main job. These items describe different aspects of work and should not be read as a single scale or as evidence of an individual-level trade-off.

Table 1. Reported increases in selected aspects of work

Domain	Aspect	n/N	%
Work demands	Responsibility for progress and results	91/100	91.0
	Work intensity and rapid-response requirements	89/102	87.3
	Work productivity	88/102	86.3
	Workload to be completed	83/102	81.4
	Occupational pressure or stress	73/102	71.6
Work-related returns	Learning and professional-development opportunities	73/100	73.0
	Job satisfaction	58/101	57.4
	Recognition, important assignments, or promotion	52/100	52.0
	Stability and security of job position	48/101	47.5
	Income from the main job	26/99	26.3

These patterns are compatible with studies that describe digitalization as a reconfiguration of public-administration work rather than a simple replacement of existing tasks [1]. They do not demonstrate that digital systems caused the reported changes.

4.2. Digital-skill requirements and self-assessed capability

Table 2 compares perceived requirements with self-assessed capability. Mean capability was below the perceived requirement in five of the six domains. The largest differences concerned specialized software and digital procedures (−0.21), electronic data handling (−0.20), and office applications and collaborative tools (−0.20). Communication and coordination through digital channels was the only domain in which the mean capability rating slightly exceeded the requirement rating.

Table 2. Digital-skill requirements and self-assessed capability

Skill domain	Requirement	Capability	Difference	Valid n
Specialized software and digital procedures	3.94	3.73	−0.21	96
Electronic data collection, checking, and processing	3.93	3.73	−0.20	95
Information security, personal data, and digital safety	4.07	3.90	−0.17	90
Office applications and collaborative tools	4.08	3.88	−0.20	100

Skill domain	Requirement	Capability	Difference	Valid n
Digital communication and coordination	3.59	3.67	+0.08	93
Self-learning, troubleshooting, and adapting to new technology	3.89	3.81	-0.08	94

Eighty-eight of 102 respondents had attended digital-skills training during the preceding 24 months. The presence of training should not be equated with its adequacy. The skill-gap pattern suggests that relevance to particular work processes may matter as much as training coverage.

4.3. Organizational support and stated priorities

Table 3 presents descriptive differences in organizational-support scores. The lowest mean appeared among respondents in public service units (3.37) and among employees in non-managerial positions (3.30). The city-level and grassroots administrative groups had similar means. These contrasts cannot be attributed to unit type or position alone because functions, working conditions, and job composition differed across participating organizations.

Table 3. Mean organizational-support scores by selected characteristics

Characteristic	Group	Valid n	Mean
Organization type	City-level administrative agency	17	4.00
	Grassroots administrative agency	33	3.98
	Public service unit	48	3.37
Job position	Employee	34	3.30
	Specialist	54	3.88
	Managerial position	10	3.94

Open-ended responses identify the support priorities behind these scores. Position-specific training was mentioned in 45 substantive answers. Infrastructure or software was mentioned in 29; process simplification or data interoperability in 20; and technical support in 20. These themes support an interpretation of adaptation as a workplace issue involving task design and organizational resources, not solely an individual skill deficit.

V. Discussion

The findings place employees' work experience at the center of public-sector digital transformation. The frequent reports of greater responsibility, faster response requirements, and higher workload are consistent with research showing that digitization can produce new relations between employees, automated systems, and service users [1]. They are also consistent with evidence that frontline officials' responses to digital systems vary and that implementation requires attention to how systems are embedded in routine work [2].

The reported increase in workload and work intensity sits alongside a much smaller reported increase in income from the main job (26 of 99 respondents). This contrast is a notable observation rather than evidence of a specific imbalance between effort and reward: the survey did not use a validated effort-reward instrument and did not measure health outcomes, so the comparison is descriptive: a larger proportion of respondents reported increased workload and work intensity than reported increased income from their main job. It does not establish an individual-level mismatch between requirements and returns.

The observed differences range from 0.08 to 0.21 points on a five-point scale and appear in several domains. Specialized procedures, data handling, security, and office applications are connected to concrete work processes. Training designed around job tasks, actual software, and common problem situations is therefore more responsive to this evidence than a general training requirement. The open-ended responses also indicate that training alone is insufficient when software is unreliable, systems do not interoperate, or users cannot obtain timely technical help.

The organizational-support results require restrained interpretation. Lower average scores among respondents in public service units and non-managerial positions may reflect differences in functions, resources, job roles, or other unobserved conditions. A larger probability sample and qualitative inquiry across organizations would be needed to identify the mechanisms behind those differences. The current results nevertheless identify groups and issues that merit closer examination.

For practice, the findings point to four connected actions: map duplicate paper–digital steps; align training with job-specific software and procedures; strengthen reliability, interoperability, and technical support; and establish channels through which users can report recurring operational problems. Comparative research on German digitalization projects similarly warns against simply layering digital tools on older processes and emphasizes redesigned processes, while noting the importance of local acceptance [8]. The present survey cannot test that argument in Ho Chi Minh City, but its respondents' priorities make it a useful question for further research.

VI. Conclusion

This article provides descriptive evidence on work experience, digital-skill requirements, and organizational support among 102 public-sector employees in Ho Chi Minh City. The results suggest that digital transformation is experienced through changing task demands and through organizational conditions that shape employees' ability to respond. The study's main limitation is its convenience, cross-sectional design and its reliance on self-reports. Its results should therefore be read as evidence from the respondents surveyed, not as citywide estimates or causal effects. Future research should combine a broader sampling strategy with interviews and organizational records to examine how specific work processes, technologies, and support arrangements interact over time.

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