

Beyond the Algorithm Understanding How Hr Professionals in Guwahati Preserve Human Values in an Era of Digital Transformation

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Abstract

Background: As HR departments rapidly adopt digital technologies, professionals face a growing dilemma: how to maintain their people-first approach while meeting demands for technological efficiency. This study examines how HR practitioners in Guwahati handle this challenge without losing sight of what makes their work fundamentally human-centered.

Methods: We surveyed 240 HR practitioners from different industries in Guwahati between January and August 2024. Our approach combined questionnaires, detailed interviews, and case studies from various organizations. We analyzed the data using SPSS 28.0 to identify patterns and relationships.

Results: Nearly 78.3% of HR practitioners feel caught between digital efficiency demands and preserving human values ($M = 3.67$, $SD = 1.23$). We found a strong connection between valuing human-centered approaches and job satisfaction ($r = .624$, $p < 0.001$). When HR professionals prioritize empathy in their work, employee engagement significantly improves ($\beta = 0.487$, $p < 0.001$), even when controlling for how much they use digital tools.

Originality: This research breaks new ground by examining how HR professionals actually navigate the tension between digital tools and human connection something that hasn't been studied systematically before, especially in Northeast India's unique cultural setting. We developed two new measurement scales specifically for this challenge and discovered that the most effective approach isn't choosing between technology or human values, but skilfully combining both. The concept we call "synergistic integration" emerged directly from what we observed in practice. Our finding that maintaining human values actually protects HR professionals from digital transformation stress while improving organizational outcomes offers a fresh perspective on how workplace technology should be implemented.

Conclusions: HR practitioners in Guwahati show remarkable skill in maintaining human values while embracing new technologies. Rather than viewing technology and human values as opposing forces, these professionals demonstrate that the two can work together effectively. Our findings suggest a "synergistic integration" approach where technology actually strengthens rather than weakens human-centered practices.

Practical Implications: HR professionals can use our findings to reframe their role as bridges between technology and people rather than feeling forced to choose sides. Organizations should evaluate new HR technologies not just for efficiency, but for how well they support human connection and cultural sensitivity. Training programs need to teach digital skills alongside empathy and relationship-building as complementary abilities. Companies operating across different cultures should adapt their HR systems locally rather than using one-size-fits-all approaches. HR education programs can redesign curricula to show students how technology and human values work together. These changes could help create workplaces that are both efficient and genuinely supportive of employees.

Keywords: Human Resource Management, Digital Transformation, Human Values, Employee Engagement, Organizational Behaviour and Northeast India

1. Introduction

The way we manage people at work is changing dramatically, and digital technology sits at the center of this transformation. Today's HR departments increasingly rely on artificial intelligence for hiring decisions, algorithms for performance reviews, and automated systems for employee engagement. This shift puts HR professionals in a difficult position: they must embrace these technological tools while preserving what has always been most important about their work the human connection. This challenge feels predominantly complex in emerging economies like India, where cutting-edge technology meets deep-rooted cultural values that emphasize personal relationships and human connection. Guwahati offers an especially interesting setting for this study. As the main city in Northeast India and a growing center for both traditional industries and modern service companies, it represents a unique crossroads where global corporations implement standardized digital systems alongside local businesses that still rely heavily on personal relationships. We already know quite a bit about the benefits of digitizing HR functions. Research shows these systems improve efficiency, enable better decision-making through data, and give employees more self-service options. But scholars have also raised important concerns about whether we're losing the human touch that makes HR effective the empathy, understanding, and relationship-building that employees really need We call this the "algorithmic paradox": using digital tools to improve human outcomes while keeping the human element alive in HR work. Our theoretical approach draws from Socio-Technical Systems Theory which argues that organizations work best when they balance both technical and social needs. We also incorporate Values-Based Leadership Theory to understand how HR professionals maintain their ethical and empathetic focus during technological change. This research started with questions that many HR professionals face every day. How often do they feel torn between delivering quick, efficient digital solutions and providing the personal attention employees need? How do they maintain genuine human connections in increasingly automated workplaces? Does their commitment to human values actually lead to better outcomes for job satisfaction and employee engagement? Most importantly, how can we help HR leaders use technology effectively without losing the humanity that defines their profession [1-4].

2. Literature Review

2.1. The Evolution of Digital HR

HR technology has come a long way from simple payroll systems. Today's digital HR landscape includes sophisticated applicant tracking systems, AI-powered recruiting tools, chatbots for employee questions, and machine learning algorithms that predict performance. These tools offer impressive capabilities for streamlining processes and generating insights from data, but they also challenge our traditional understanding of HR as a fundamentally people-focused profession. Parry and Battista (2019) suggest that successful HR digitalization requires finding the right balance using technology to enhance rather than replace human judgment. However, we still don't fully understand

how to achieve this balance, especially in cultures where personal relationships are highly valued [5,6].

2.2. What Human Values Mean in HR

When we talk about human values in HR, we mean empathy, ethical decision-making, building relationships, and cultural sensitivity. These aren't just nice ideals they have real business impact. Studies consistently show that when employees see their HR department as empathetic and values-driven, they're more engaged, less likely to quit, and more committed to their organization. The problem arises when digital systems, designed for efficiency and consistency, clash with the flexibility and nuanced judgment that characterizes good HR practice. This tension becomes especially apparent in performance management, where algorithmic assessments might miss important individual circumstances or cultural factors. HR in the Indian Context the Indian business environment brings unique considerations to HR practice. Organizations tend to be more hierarchical, personal relationships matter enormously, and traditional values blend with modern business practices found that Indian employees particularly appreciate HR interactions that show cultural understanding and personalized attention. In Northeast India specifically, HR practitioners must navigate additional complexities including linguistic diversity, indigenous cultural considerations, and the integration of local traditions with broader business practices. This suggests that HR professionals in Guwahati face particular challenges in maintaining cultural sensitivity while implementing standardized digital tools. Our Theoretical Foundation We base this study on Socio-Technical Systems Theory, which argues that establishments perform best when they optimize both their technical and social systems simultaneously For HR digitalization, this means paying attention to both technological capabilities and human factors. We also draw from Self-Determination Model to understand in what manner HR practitioners' natural desire to help people might conflict with external pressure to adopt efficiency-focused digital tools. This helps us understand the psychological stress that HR professionals experience during digital transformation [7-11].

2.3. Research Hypotheses

Based on our literature review and theoretical framework, we propose two main hypotheses:

H1: HR practitioners who maintain a strong focus on human values will report higher job satisfaction and lower turnover intentions, even when they experience tension from digital transformation pressures.

H2: Organizations where HR practitioners successfully blend human values with digital technologies will show better employee engagement compared to those that focus exclusively on either technology or traditional approaches.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Approach

We used a convergent mixed-methods strategy combination of survey data with in-depth discussions to get a complete picture of what's happening. The quantitative data helped

us identify patterns and relationships, while the qualitative interviews gave us deeper insights into why these patterns exist [2].

3.2. Participants and Sampling

The study population consisted of HR practitioners employed in organizations throughout Guwahati. A stratified random sampling approach ensured representation across industry sectors, organizational sizes, and experience levels. The final sample comprised 240 HR practitioners with the following characteristics:

- Industry Distribution: Information Technology/Software (28.3%), Manufacturing (22.1%), Banking/Financial Services (19.6%), Healthcare (12.5%), Education (10.0%), Other sectors (7.5%)
- Experience Categories: Early career 0-5 years (31.7%), Mid-career 6-10 years (28.3%), Senior-level 11-15 years (23.3%), Executive-level 16+ years (16.7%)
- Organizational Scale: Small enterprises 1-50 employees (22.5%), Medium enterprises 51-500 employees (44.2%), Large corporations 500+ employees (33.3%)
- Gender Distribution: Female practitioners (58.3%), Male practitioners (41.7%)
- Educational Attainment: Bachelor's degree (35.0%), Master's degree (52.5%), Professional certification (12.5%)

3.3. Data Collection Instruments

Human Values in HR Scale (HVHR): A 24-item instrument was developed to assess HR practitioners' orientation toward human values in professional practice. The scale incorporated four dimensions: Empathy (6 items), Ethical Decision-Making (6 items), Relationship Building (6 items), and Cultural Sensitivity (6 items). Items utilized a 5-point Likert scale (1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree). Cronbach's alpha for the overall scale was 0.89. **Digital Transformation Tension Scale (DTTS):** An 18-item instrument measured the extent to which participants experienced tension between digital efficiency demands and human values preservation. Sample items included "I experience pressure to prioritize system efficiency over individual employee needs" and "Digital tools occasionally prevent me from providing personalized support to employees." Cronbach's alpha was 0.85. **Job Satisfaction Assessment:** The Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire Short Form measured job satisfaction across 20 items. This validated instrument has demonstrated reliability across diverse cultural contexts ($\alpha = 0.87$ in the current study). **Organizational Outcomes**

Measures: Employee engagement was evaluated by means of the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale adapted for HR evaluation of organizational climate. Additional measures included turnover intention, organizational commitment, and perceived HR effectiveness [13,14].

3.4. Data Collection Procedure

Data collection occurred from January through August 2024. Participants were recruited through professional HR associations, LinkedIn professional networks, and organizational partnerships. Online surveys were distributed via SurveyMonkey platform, with weekly reminder communications sent over a four-week period. The survey completion rate achieved 73.2%. Semi-structured discussions were conducted with a purposive subsample of 32 participants representing diverse organizational contexts and experience levels. Interviews ranged from 15 to 30 minutes and explored themes including digital tool adoption experiences, strategies for maintaining human values, and perceived impacts on employee relationships.

3.5. Data Analysis

Quantitative data were analysed using SPSS 28.0 software. Analytical procedures included descriptive statistics, correlation analyses, and multiple regression modelling to test hypotheses and explore variable relationships. Qualitative data undertook thematic analysis following six-phase methodology. NVivo 12 software supported coding and theme development processes [15].

3.6. Ethical Considerations

All participants provided well-versed consent, and data were anonymized to ensure confidentiality protection. Contributors were informed of their right to withdraw participation without penalty.

4. Results

4.1. Descriptive Statistics

Table 1 presents descriptive statistics for primary study variables. The mean score for Human Values Orientation was 4.12 (SD = 0.68), indicating that HR practitioners in Guwahati generally maintain elevated orientation toward human values despite digital transformation pressures. Digital Transformation Tension demonstrated a mean of 3.67 (SD = 1.23), suggesting moderate levels of experienced tension.

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Minimum	Maximum	Skewness	Kurtosis
Human Values Orientation	240	4.12	0.68	2.33	5.00	-0.78	0.42
Digital Transformation Tension	240	3.67	1.23	1.00	5.00	-0.23	-0.89
Job Satisfaction	240	3.89	0.74	2.10	5.00	-0.56	-0.12
Employee Engagement (Organizational)	240	3.72	0.91	1.50	5.00	-0.34	-0.67
Turnover Intention	240	2.78	1.14	1.00	5.00	0.45	-0.78
Digital Tool Adoption	240	3.94	0.83	2.00	5.00	-0.67	0.23

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics for Primary Study Variables

4.2. Correlation Analysis

Pearson correlation analysis revealed several noteworthy relationships between study variables (Table 2). Most notably, Human Values Orientation demonstrated a substantial positive correlation with Job Satisfaction ($r = 0.624$, $p <$

0.001) and a substantial negative correlation with Turnover Intention ($r = -0.487$, $p < 0.001$). Digital Transformation Tension showed a moderate negative correlation with Job Satisfaction ($r = -0.398$, $p < 0.001$).

	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Human Values Orientation	—	-0.312**	0.624**	0.521**	-0.487**	0.289**
2. Digital Transformation Tension		—	-0.398**	-0.356**	0.445**	-0.198**
3. Job Satisfaction			—	0.567**	-0.678**	0.234**
4. Employee Engagement				—	-0.434**	0.367**
5. Turnover Intention					—	-0.189**
6. Digital Tool Adoption						—

Table 2: Intercorrelation Matrix for Study Variables

4.3. Testing Hypothesis

To evaluate H1, multiple regression analysis was conducted with Human Values Orientation as the forecaster variable and Job Satisfaction and Turnover Intention as outcome variables, controlling for demographic factors and Digital Transformation Tension. Model 1: Job Satisfaction Prediction The regression model achieved statistical significance

($F(5,234) = 47.82$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.505$). Human Values Orientation significantly forecast Job Satisfaction ($\beta = 0.487$, $t = 8.34$, $p < 0.001$), maintaining significance after controlling for age, experience, organizational size, and Digital Transformation Tension. This finding supports the initial component of H1.

Predictor Variable	B	SE B	β	t	p
(Constant)	1.234	0.287	—	4.30	< 0.001
Human Values Orientation	0.531	0.064	0.487	8.34	< 0.001
Digital Transformation Tension	-0.156	0.038	-0.256	-4.11	< 0.001
Age	0.012	0.008	0.089	1.50	0.135
Experience (years)	-0.003	0.009	-0.023	-0.33	0.743
Organizational Size	0.089	0.045	0.112	1.98	0.049

Table 3: Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Job Satisfaction

Model 2:

Turnover Intention Prediction - The regression model achieved statistical significance ($F(5,234) = 32.15$, $p <$

0.001 , $R^2 = 0.407$). Human Values Orientation significantly predicted reduced Turnover Intention ($\beta = -0.356$, $t = -5.89$, $p < 0.001$), supporting the second component of H1.

Predictor Variable	B	SE B	β	t	p
(Constant)	4.567	0.378	—	12.08	< 0.001
Human Values Orientation	-0.598	0.101	-0.356	-5.89	< 0.001
Digital Transformation Tension	0.287	0.059	0.315	4.86	< 0.001
Age	-0.019	0.012	-0.098	-1.58	0.115
Experience (years)	-0.008	0.014	-0.041	-0.57	0.572
Organizational Size	-0.134	0.071	-0.119	-1.89	0.060

Table 4: Multiple Regression Analysis Predicting Turnover Intention

Conclusion for H1: Hypothesis 1 receives complete empirical support. HR practitioners with elevated human values orientation demonstrate significantly higher job satisfaction and significantly reduced turnover intention.

4.4. Testing Hypothesis

To evaluate H2, three distinct groups were created based on HR approach: Technology-Focused (elevated digital adoption, reduced human values), Traditional (reduced digital adoption, elevated human values), and Synergistic (elevated digital adoption, elevated human values). Utilizing

cluster analysis, 67 Technology-Focused, 89 Traditional, and 84 Synergistic practitioners were identified. One-way

analysis of variance was conducted to compare employee engagement scores across the three groups:

Group Category	N	Mean	SD	95% Confidence Interval
Technology-Focused	67	3.24	0.87	[3.03, 3.45]
Traditional	89	3.58	0.78	[3.42, 3.74]
Synergistic	84	4.21	0.73	[4.05, 4.37]

Table 5: Employee Engagement by HR Approach Category

The ANOVA achieved statistical significance: $F(2, 237) = 28.64, p < 0.001, \eta^2 = 0.195$.

Post-hoc Tukey HSD analyses revealed:

- Synergistic > Technology-Focused: Mean Difference = 0.97, $p < 0.001$
- Synergistic > Traditional: Mean Difference = 0.63, $p < 0.001$
- Traditional > Technology-Focused: Mean Difference = 0.34, $p < 0.01$

Conclusion for H2: Hypothesis 2 receives complete empirical support. Organizations with synergistic approaches (combining elevated digital adoption with elevated human values) demonstrate significantly superior employee engagement compared to either exclusively technology-focused or traditional approaches.

4.5. Supplementary Statistical Analyses

Moderation Analysis: To explore whether experience moderates' relationships between human values orientation and outcomes, moderated regression analysis was conducted. The interaction term (Human Values \times Experience) achieved significance for job satisfaction ($\beta = 0.156, p < 0.05$), indicating that the positive relationship between human values and job satisfaction strengthens among more experienced HR practitioners. Industry Sector Differences: One-way ANOVA revealed significant differences in Digital Transformation Tension across industry sectors ($F(5,234) = 12.47, p < 0.001$). Information Technology/Software practitioners reported the highest tension levels ($M = 4.23, SD = 1.12$), while Education sector practitioners reported the lowest tension levels ($M = 2.89, SD = 0.98$). Gender-Based Differences: Independent samples t-tests revealed substantial gender differences in Human Values Orientation, with female HR practitioners demonstrating higher scores than male practitioners (M female = 4.24, SD female = 0.63; M male = 3.96, SD male = 0.71; $t(238) = 3.12, p < 0.01, d = 0.42$).

Qualitative Findings Thematic analysis of interview data revealed four primary themes:

4.6. Theme 1: Adaptive Strategies for Value Preservation

Participants described various strategies for maintaining human values while utilizing digital tools. These included "humanizing digital interfaces" by incorporating personal elements into automated communications and "strategic override" by selectively choosing when to supersede system recommendations based on human judgment. "I consistently

add personal notes to system-generated communications. Employees need to recognize there's a human presence behind the technology." - Participant 15, Manufacturing sector

4.7. Theme 2: Technology as Human Capability Amplifier

Many participants conceptualized technology as amplifying their ability to deliver human-centered services rather than replacing human elements. Digital tools liberated time for meaningful conversations and enabled more personalized interventions. "Our chatbot manages routine inquiries, allowing me to invest meaningful time with employees requiring emotional support or complex guidance." - Participant 7, Information Technology

4.8. Theme 3: Cultural Integration Challenges

Participants highlighted difficulties in adapting global digital HR systems to local cultural contexts, particularly regarding communication styles, hierarchical expectations, and cultural observances. "The performance management system doesn't accommodate our cultural celebrations or the manner in which we provide feedback here. I must constantly work around system limitations." - Participant 23, Banking sector

4.9. Theme 4: Professional Identity Evolution

HR practitioners described an evolution in their professional identity, perceiving themselves as "human-technology interpreters" who bridge digital efficiency with human understanding.

"My role has evolved toward making technology more human and helping humans become more comfortable with technology." - Participant 12, Healthcare sector

5. Discussion

5.1. Principal Findings

This investigation provides compelling evidence that HR practitioners in Guwahati successfully navigate the tension between digital transformation and human values preservation. The confirmation of both hypotheses demonstrates that human values orientation remains not merely relevant but essential for HR effectiveness in the digital era.

The finding that human values orientation significantly predicts job satisfaction and reduces turnover intention (H1) suggests that maintaining empathetic, relationship-focused

approaches serves as a protective factor against potential negative effects of digital transformation. This aligns with Self-Determination Theory principles, indicating that HR practitioners derive intrinsic satisfaction from assisting others and maintaining human connections. Perhaps more significantly, the support for H2 demonstrates that the optimal approach involves integrating rather than choosing between technology and human values. The synergistic approach, characterized by elevated digital adoption combined with strong human values orientation, produced superior employee engagement outcomes. This finding challenge binary conceptualizations of technology versus humanity in HR practice.

5.2. Theoretical Implications

5.2.1. These Findings Contribute to Several Theoretical Domains

Socio-Technical Systems Theory: The results provide empirical support for the joint optimization principle, demonstrating that optimal HR outcomes require attention to both technological and social elements. The synergistic approach exemplifies successful socio-technical integration. **Values-Based Leadership Theory:** The investigation extends this theory into the HR domain, demonstrating that values-based approaches remain effective and necessary even in highly digitized environments. Values serve as both motivational drivers for HR practitioners and mechanisms for achieving superior organizational outcomes. **Technology Acceptance Models:** The findings suggest that existing technology acceptance models may be incomplete for understanding HR technology adoption. Integration of human values orientation as a moderating factor could enhance these models' predictive capacity.

- Practical Implications
- Practical Implications

Our findings point to several concrete steps that different stakeholders can take to navigate the tension between digital efficiency and human values in HR practice.

5.3. Recommendations For HR Practitioners

5.3.1. Think Integration, Not Competition

Instead of seeing technology as a threat to human-centered values, successful HR practitioners look for ways these two elements can work together. Our interviews revealed that the most effective professionals use digital tools to free up time for meaningful human interactions rather than replacing those interactions entirely.

5.3.2. Become A Bridge Between Systems and People

The qualitative data shows that successful HR practitioners essentially become interpreters they help translate what digital systems are saying into language that makes sense for employees, while also ensuring that human insights inform technological decisions. This skill appears to be crucial for maintaining trust and effectiveness.

5.3.3. Be Selective About Technology

Not every new digital tool deserves a place in your HR toolkit. The practitioners in our study who maintained the

strongest human values were those who carefully evaluated whether new technologies would genuinely enhance human connection or simply create barriers to it. They ask tough questions: Does this tool help me understand employees better? Does it give me more time for meaningful conversations? Will it make employees feel more supported or more processed?

5.4. Recommendations for Organizations

5.4.1. Choose Technology That Supports Your Values

Organizations need to be more thoughtful about selecting HR technologies that align with their stated values and cultural context. Our research suggests that the most successful companies prioritize tools that enhance rather than replace human judgment and cultural understanding.

5.4.2. Invest in Training That Bridges Both Worlds

Simply rolling out new technology isn't enough. Organizations should develop comprehensive training programs that help HR practitioners learn to integrate technological capabilities with their natural human values orientation. This dual focus appears to improve both employee satisfaction and business outcomes.

5.4.3. Allow for Cultural Adaptation

This finding was particularly strong in our Guwahati context. Global organizations operating in culturally diverse regions need to permit and even encourage local adaptation of digital HR systems. One-size-fits-all approaches often fail because they ignore important cultural nuances that affect how employees relate to technology and authority.

5.5. Recommendations for HR Education

5.5.1. Integrate Technology and Values from Day One

HR education programs should stop treating technology training and values-based practice as separate subjects. Our research suggests that the most effective practitioners learn to see these as interconnected elements of good HR work. Students need to understand both how to use digital tools and how to ensure those tools serve human needs [16-20].

5.5.2. Emphasize Cultural Intelligence

Given how strongly cultural context influenced our findings, HR education programs should place greater emphasis on helping future practitioners adapt digital tools to different cultural settings. This means understanding not just how technology works, but how different groups of people relate to and interact with that technology [21].

5.5.3. Cultural Context Considerations

The investigation's setting in Guwahati provides important insights into how cultural factors influence the technology-human values dynamic. The particularly strong emphasis on relationship building and cultural sensitivity found among participants reflects broader Northeast Indian cultural values. This suggests that the importance of maintaining human values in HR practice may be even more pronounced in cultures prioritizing collective and relationship-oriented work approaches. The finding that traditional approaches

outperformed purely technology-focused approaches (though not synergistic approaches) may be particularly relevant in cultural contexts where personal relationships and cultural understanding are highly valued by employees.

Study Limitations

- **Cross-Sectional Design:** The study's cross-sectional in nature that limits causal inferences. Longitudinal research would better establish causal relationships between variables.
- **Geographic Specificity:** The emphasis on Guwahati limits generalizability to other cultural and economic contexts.
- **Self-Report Methodology:** Reliance on self-report measures may inflate relationships due to common method variance.
- **Industry Representation:** While diverse, the sample may not fully represent all industry sectors in the region.
- **Technology Evolution:** Rapid changes in HR technology may quickly date specific findings, though underlying principles likely remain stable.
- **Future Research Directions**
- **Longitudinal Studies:** Extended tracking of HR practitioners as they adapt to digital transformation could reveal developmental patterns and critical transition points.
- **Cross-Cultural Replication:** Comparing findings across different cultural contexts could illuminate universal versus culture-specific aspects of the technology-human values relationship.
- **Employee Perspective Research:** Future investigations should examine how employees perceive and respond to different HR approaches, providing a more complete effectiveness picture.
- **Technology-Specific Studies:** Detailed examination of specific HR technologies could provide more nuanced guidance.
- **Intervention Research:** Experimental or quasi-experimental designs testing interventions to improve technology-human values integration could provide practical guidance.
- **Economic Analysis:** Cost-benefit analyses of different HR approaches could provide compelling business cases for synergistic approaches.

6. Conclusion

Our study reveals something encouraging: HR practitioners in Guwahati aren't simply accepting digital transformation as it's handed to them. Instead, they're actively shaping how technology fits with their commitment to human values. The evidence clearly supports what we call a synergistic integration approach using digital tools to strengthen rather than replace the human elements that make HR work meaningful. One of our most important findings is that maintaining a human values orientation actually serves a dual purpose. It protects HR practitioners from the stress and burnout that can come with rapid technological change, while simultaneously driving better outcomes for their organizations. This challenges the common assumption that artificial intelligence and automation will make human skills less important. In fact, our research suggests the opposite: as workplaces become more digital, human values become even more critical as differentiating factors. The organizations in our study that performed best were

those that supported their HR teams in maintaining strong human values while thoughtfully adopting new technologies. This points to an important insight about the future of HR: success won't come from choosing sides between human and artificial intelligence, but from finding thoughtful ways to integrate both technological capability and human wisdom. Our research also underscores how much cultural context matters in this integration process. The particular strengths we saw in traditional approaches within the Guwahati context suggest that global companies can't simply roll out standardized digital HR systems everywhere and expect them to work effectively. They need to account for local values and practices. As HR continues to evolve in our increasingly digital world, the practitioners who will thrive are those who can serve as bridges—translating between what technology can do and what people actually need. They'll ensure that in the pursuit of algorithmic efficiency, organizations don't lose sight of the fundamentally human nature of work itself. Our evidence from Guwahati suggests that this kind of integration isn't just possible; it's essential for creating workplaces that are both efficient and genuinely humane.

Author Contributions

All co-authors contributed equally to developing the study concept, designing the methodology, collecting data, conducting statistical analyses, and preparing the manuscript. Each author has reviewed and approved the final version.

Conflict of Interest Declaration

The authors have no known financial conflicts or personal relationships that could have influenced the findings presented in this study.

Data Availability Statement

To protect participant privacy, the dataset supporting these findings is not publicly available.

Ethics Statement

This research followed ethical guidelines established by the Declaration of Helsinki. All participants gave informed consent after receiving complete information about the study's objectives and procedures.

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