

Redesigning Work in Digital Age: A Review of Job Enlargement and Enrichment in Nepal

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Article Info.	Abstract
Corresponding Author Dipesh Kumar Karn Email dipeshkarn86@gmail.com Article History Received: May 13, 2026 Accepted: July 10, 2026 Cite Karn, D. K., Mishra, S., & Dahal, S. (2026). Redesigning work in digital age: A review of job enlargement and enrichment in Nepal. : (1), 73–81. https://doi.org/10.62078/grks.2026.v05i01.006	Digital transformation is changing job design worldwide, yet its influence on job enlargement and job enrichment in Nepal remains underexplored. This review study aims to examine how digital transformation reshapes job enlargement, job enrichment, employee motivation, and organizational performance in the Nepalese context while integrating established work design and digital transformation theories. The study adopts a qualitative methodology with a descriptive and analytical narrative review design. Secondary data published between 2010 and 2026 were systematically collected from Google Scholar, Scopus, ResearchGate, ScienceDirect, SAGE, NepJOL, and other credible sources. The findings indicate that digital technologies are gradually expanding job responsibilities and improving employee autonomy in Nepal; however, limited digital literacy, high internet costs, weak data security, and low AI adoption continue to restrict effective job redesign. The study recommends sector-specific empirical research to validate the proposed conceptual framework across Nepalese organizations. The novelty of this review lies in integrating classical job design theories with digital transformation and AI to develop a Nepal-specific conceptual model for digitally enabled job enlargement and job enrichment. Keywords: job enlargement and enrichment, digital transformation, human resource management, job design theories, Nepal

Introduction

Herzberg, Mausner, and Snyderman (1959) explained that two separate sets of factors shape job satisfaction. Hygiene factors, such as pay, supervision, and working conditions, only prevent dissatisfaction but do not generate genuine motivation. Motivators, such as achievement, recognition, and responsibility, are what truly drive satisfaction and improve performance. This distinction supports the present study's argument

that job redesign in Nepal's digital era must go beyond addressing basic workplace conditions and instead build meaningful, motivating elements into the job itself. Hackman and Oldham (1976) tested their model with 658 employees across 62 jobs in seven organizations, and the results supported its validity, confirming that jobs with greater skill variety, autonomy, and feedback foster the psychological states needed for genuine internal motivation, depending on individual differences in employees' responsiveness to complex work

(Hackman & Oldham, 1976). According to the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory, if job demands increase, the resources available to employees must also increase, only then can employees perform well. The Socio-Technical Systems (STS) Theory adds that technology alone, such as AI, is not enough; both technology and employees must develop together for real improvement to happen. Finally, Job Crafting Theory suggests that employees themselves can also make changes to their own work, making it better, easier, and more meaningful. Together, these theories show that improving work in the digital age needs balanced support from resources, technology, and employees' own efforts. Maslow's need hierarchy shapes employee motivation within Nepal's socio-cultural context, reinforcing that job enrichment strategies must address both basic security needs and higher-order esteem and self-actualization needs (Karn et al., 2025).

This study aims to explain how digital transformation shapes job enlargement and job enrichment in Nepal, an area still under-researched despite its growing importance for organizational performance. The study is important because Nepalese organizations are entering the digital age, yet job design practices remain largely traditional. A qualitative, secondary-data research design is used, reviewing peer-reviewed literature published between 2010 and 2026 from databases such as Google Scholar, Scopus, and NepJOL. The proposed conceptual framework links Digital Transformation, Job Enlargement/Enrichment, Motivation, and Organizational Performance, grounded in Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, the Job Characteristics Model, and the TOE Framework. Findings show that digital adoption in Nepal remains at an early stage, internet costs and weak digital literacy limit progress, and artificial intelligence is mostly used for information retrieval rather than strategic support. Data security and examination management also show weak digital practices in universities. Future research should explore sector-specific case studies and empirically test this conceptual model across Nepalese organizations.

Literature Review

Parker et al. (2026) present a multilevel framework explaining the reciprocal relationship between work characteristics and job crafting: work characteristics constrain or enable crafting behavior (top-down), while crafting behavior subsequently reshapes work characteristics (bottom-up). This reinforces the present study's premise that digital-era job redesign in Nepal is jointly driven by managerial interventions and employee agency. Digital transformation enhances employees' thriving at work, partly through job crafting, with positive emotions strengthening this effect Zhou et al. (2026). Job crafting works through different behavior combinations, not all dimensions equally, and adding digital transformation and digital leadership creates more pathways to high employee performance, showing that digital support boosts job crafting's positive effect (Zhang et al., 2026). Nepal's geography, labor challenges, and socio-political factors limit full application of scientific management, so its principles need adaptation to local realities to improve efficiency in Nepalese business practice (Karn et al., 2026). Digital technologies reshape sustainable employability through four perspectives - organizational, leadership, employee-employer, and employee's self-view - supporting a human-centered approach to changing work perceptions (Shah & Mola, 2026). Digital leadership and digital training programs most strongly boost employee performance, while self-efficacy mediates the effect of digital culture and technology adoption, showing that employees' confidence in digital skills strengthens digital transformation's benefits (Bhusal, 2026). Psychological Capital significantly enhances employee motivation and adaptability in Nepal's resource-constrained work environments, and stronger HR reforms and a supportive workplace culture are needed to fully develop it (Karn, 2026a). Mishra's book covers four sections - Artificial Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence, Employee Engagement, and E-HRM - offering a balanced, practitioner-focused view of AI's role in HRM beyond the usual hype or overly technical treatments (Mishra, 2025). This chapter

draws on Kahn's (1990) foundational definition of employee engagement as the harnessing of employees' full selves - physically, cognitively, and emotionally - into their work roles, and applies it within a technology-influenced HR context to examine how engagement is built and sustained (Mishra et al., 2025; Mishra & Aithal, 2021). High-performance work practices show a significant positive relationship with employee innovative work behavior, with workplace support and job embeddedness serving as partial, complementary serial mediators in the IT-based service industry (Gautam & Gautam, 2024). This study found that even financially stable, well-educated private-sector employees in Birgunj face heightened stress when emotional intelligence is overlooked, and integrating Buddhist philosophical principles alongside EI helps improve stress management and workplace relationships (Karn, 2024). Parker (2014) argues that job design goes beyond motivation alone - well-designed work also supports employee learning and development, protects physical and mental health, and enables organizations to balance stability with flexibility, or ambidexterity (Parker, 2014). Nepalese enterprises are increasingly adopting cloud-based HR software (e.g., BambooHR, Darwinbox, Zoho People) across recruitment, training, performance appraisal, and compensation, reducing manual paperwork, though several implementation challenges still remain for HR managers (Pradhan, 2024). Trist and Bamforth (1951) showed that mechanizing coal mining through the longwall method disrupted small, self-regulating work groups, replacing them with fragmented, individualized tasks that lowered morale and productivity-laying the foundation for sociotechnical systems theory and the argument that job redesign must balance technical efficiency with social and psychological needs (Trist & Bamforth, 1951).

Together, these studies show that digital-era job enlargement and enrichment succeed only when technology, leadership, employee agency, and psychological resources align-reinforcing this article's core argument that redesigning work in digital Nepal demands both structural and human-centered strategies.

Recent literature demonstrates that digital transformation is fundamentally reshaping work design through job crafting, digital leadership, artificial intelligence (AI), and sustainable employability (Parker et al., 2026; Zhang et al., 2026; Shah & Mola, 2026). Studies have shown that digital technologies enhance employee performance by promoting job crafting, positive work behaviors, and digital capabilities (Zhou et al., 2026; Zhang et al., 2026; Bhusal, 2026). Similarly, research in Nepal has examined digital HRM adoption, psychological capital, emotional intelligence, and scientific management, highlighting the growing importance of digitalization and employee development in organizational performance (Pradhan, 2024; Karn, 2024, 2026a; Karn et al., 2026). However, these studies largely investigate these constructs independently and provide limited understanding of how digital transformation simultaneously influences job enlargement and job enrichment within Nepalese organizations. Moreover, most existing evidence originates from developed economies, where organizational structures, technological readiness, and HRM practices differ considerably from Nepal's socio-economic and institutional context (Parker et al., 2026; Shah & Mola, 2026). To date, no comprehensive review has integrated classical job design theories with emerging AI-driven workplace practices to explain how digital technologies reshape job enlargement and job enrichment in Nepal. This review addresses this gap by synthesizing global and Nepal-specific literature to develop a contextual understanding of digital-era job redesign and to identify future research directions for Nepalese organizations.

Object of the Study

The object of the study is to review the job enlargement and enrichment in Nepal for redesigning work in digital age.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative, secondary-data-based research methodology suited for a review article on job enlargement and enrichment in Nepal's digital era. Relevant literature published

between 2010 and 2026 was systematically identified and reviewed from multiple academic databases, including Google Scholar, ResearchGate, Scopus, SAGE, Elsevier (ScienceDirect), NepJOL, and other credible sources. Keywords such as “job enlargement,” “job enrichment,” “digital transformation,” “job crafting,” “work design,” and “job redesign in Nepal” guided the search process. Only peer-reviewed journal articles, books, and credible institutional reports were included to ensure academic rigor and reliability. All data used in this study are secondary in nature, drawn entirely from previously published theoretical and empirical works, without primary data collection from human subjects.

Research Design

This study follows a descriptive and analytical research design based on a narrative literature review approach. Rather than testing hypotheses through primary data, the study synthesizes, organizes, and critically analyzes existing secondary literature to build a conceptual understanding of job enlargement and enrichment within Nepal’s digital transformation context. The design involves three stages: first, identifying and screening relevant literature from the selected databases (2010–2026); second, thematically organizing findings under key theoretical frameworks (Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory, Hackman and Oldham’s Job

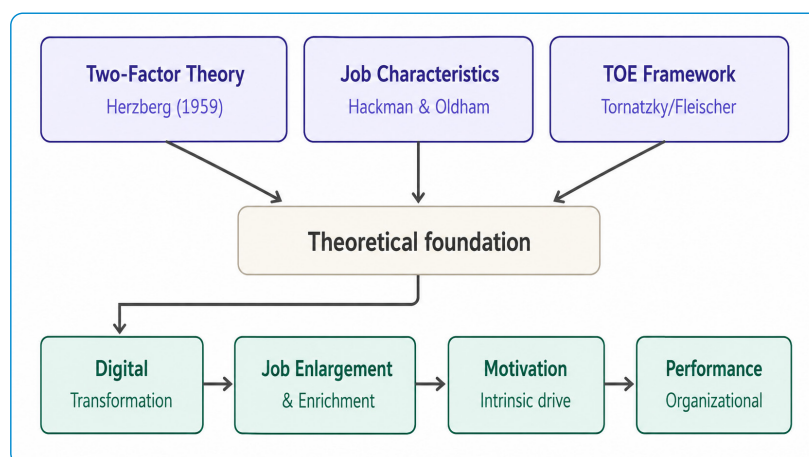
Characteristics Model, and the TOE Framework); and third, synthesizing these themes into a coherent conceptual model linking digital transformation, job redesign, motivation, and organizational performance. This design allows the study to draw meaningful, evidence-based conclusions while remaining grounded in established theory and prior empirical research.

Theoretical Framework

Three complementary theories serve as the foundation for this investigation. The foundation for job enrichment is Herzberg’s Two-Factor Theory (1959), which separates hygiene elements from motivators. According to Hackman and Oldham’s Job Characteristics Model (1976), enlargement and enrichment tactics are guided by the basic elements of skill variety, autonomy, and feedback that enable internal motivation. Digital adoption in job redesign is influenced by organizational, technological, and environmental aspects, as explained by the Technology-Organization-Environment (TOE) Framework (Tornatzky & Fleischer, 1990). The suggested conceptual paradigm is supported by these theories taken together: Digital Transformation → Job Enlargement/Enrichment → Motivation → Organizational Performance, outlining how Nepalese companies can effectively rethink their operations in the digital era.

Figure 1

Proposed Conceptual Framework



The framework rests on three theories. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959) explains motivation through hygiene and motivator factors. Hackman and Oldham's Job Characteristics Model (1976) identifies skill variety, autonomy, and feedback as the mechanisms linking job design to motivation. The TOE Framework (Tornatzky & Fleischer, 1990) explains how organizational, technological, and environmental factors shape digital adoption. Together, these theories form the basis of the proposed model: Digital Transformation → Job Enlargement/Enrichment → Motivation → Organizational Performance. Digital tools first reshape work processes (Zhou et al., 2026), which leads organizations to enlarge or enrich jobs (Parker et al., 2026). This strengthens employee motivation (Bhusal, 2026), ultimately improving organizational performance (Bhattarai & Basnet, 2026).

Result and Discussion

According to the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory, if job demands increase, the resources available to employees must also increase, only then can employees perform well (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). The Socio-Technical Systems (STS) Theory adds that technology alone, such as AI, is not enough; both technology and employees must develop together for real improvement to happen (Trist & Bamforth, 1951). Finally, Job Crafting Theory suggests that employees themselves can also make changes to their own work, making it better, easier, and more meaningful. Together, these theories show that improving work in the digital age needs balanced support from resources, technology, and employees' own efforts (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001).

Nepal is rich in natural resources and development potential, yet its difficult terrain and landlocked status limit direct access to the sea, making the country heavily dependent on land routes for international trade. The economy remains largely import-driven, with a limited presence of multinational corporations and relatively few large-scale industries compared to

developed nations. HRM practices in Nepal are also less developed than in Western countries, and employees often receive compensation lower than international standards despite their qualifications, resulting in only an average standard of living for many. Effective HRM practices strengthen employee engagement and retention in a global context, supporting this study's view that digitally enabled job redesign in Nepal must align with sound engagement-focused HR practices (S. Mishra, 2024; A. K. Mishra, 2024).

Job enlargement refers to expanding an employee's range of tasks within the same position, without increasing decision-making authority. For example, a bank employee who once handled only cash deposits and cheque payments may later also manage cheque clearing and ATM services-workload increases, but authority remains unchanged. Job enrichment, in contrast, increases an employee's autonomy, responsibility, and decision-making authority; task numbers may or may not grow, but employees gain greater control over how work is performed. Nepal's socio-economic realities further shape work design outcomes. As a major part of the Terai-Madhesh region directly borders India, and Madhesh plays a significant role in Nepal's trade and industry, this study finds significant and strong digital transformation in human resource management within the Terai-Madhesh region of Nepal. Sociocultural burdens on Madheshi women, including dual work-family responsibilities, further complicate equitable job enlargement and enrichment outcomes across Terai-Madhesh organizations (Karn, 2026).

Open border dynamics influence agriculture, business, and society in Madhesh region, indirectly affecting job structures (Karn, 2025). Practitioner-based management education also strengthens organizational practice in Madhesh Province (Karn, 2026b). Similarly, human-AI collaboration supports digital transformation and Green HRM in Bagmati Province colleges, showing how AI-driven institutional quality supports job enrichment across sectors (Gautam et al., 2025).

Both concepts can be explained through Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, which separates hygiene factors from motivating factors. Hygiene factors-salary, working conditions, policies, and job security-prevent dissatisfaction when adequately provided. Motivating factors-recognition, achievement, responsibility, and participation in decisions-drive genuine satisfaction and closely relate to job enrichment by strengthening intrinsic motivation and performance. This study integrates job enlargement and enrichment, both central to Organizational Behavior and HRM, with the growing role of digitalization and AI in Nepal's work context.

Although Nepal has not reached the digital advancement of many developed countries, it would be inaccurate to say the country has ignored digitalization. Over the past decade, Nepalese organizations have made meaningful progress in adopting digital systems, though AI adoption remains at an early stage-tools like ChatGPT and cloud computing are still mostly seen as information-retrieval systems rather than strategic management tools. In reality, AI holds strong potential to support HRM and organizational behavior, particularly through automating routine tasks and freeing managers to focus on strategic planning and decision-making.

Digital transformation in Nepalese organizations has mainly focused on software systems, Management Information Systems (MIS), and digitizing accounting and database administration. From a job enlargement perspective, digitalization has broadened employees' responsibilities by combining manual tasks with new digital ones-bank employees, for instance, now handle online transactions and QR payments alongside traditional duties, expanding scope without added authority. From a job enrichment perspective, managers now rely less on routine work since dashboards and software provide timely information, allowing them to focus on higher-level analysis and strategic decisions-expanding autonomy and effectiveness rather than simply increasing workload.

Traditionally, employees performed a single type of task. With AI and digital tools, employees increasingly take on multi-functional roles-an HR employee, for example, may now handle recruitment, payroll, analytics, chatbot management, content creation, and social media, reflecting a horizontal expansion of work central to job enlargement. AI also automates repetitive tasks, freeing employees for strategic and creative work. In advanced economies such as the U.S., Japan, and Singapore, organizations grant employees greater decision-making authority alongside expanded responsibilities-managing remote teams, using AI-powered task systems, and contributing creatively-reflecting job enrichment through enhanced autonomy and ownership.

In Nepal, digital transformation remains developing but shows notable sector-wise progress. Banking leads this shift through mobile banking, e-KYC, QR payments, digital CRM, fraud detection, and faster remittances-reflecting job enlargement. IT companies have similarly adopted digital tools to improve service delivery. Higher education institutions, though still evolving, now conduct online classes and manage examinations through digital portals, reflecting growing digital adoption in academia. The healthcare sector has embraced Electronic Medical Records and online reporting, while government offices have promoted e-governance through digital record-keeping and biometric systems-made more important by past experiences of record damage during political instability. Finally, SMEs increasingly use digital tools for sales, marketing, and inventory management. Though AI adoption remains limited, these developments show digital transformation is gradually reshaping work processes across Nepalese sectors, creating growing opportunities for both job enlargement and job enrichment.

Theory forms the base of this study, but in the context of Nepal, several other factors also play a vital role in job enlargement and enrichment. Digital transformation in Nepal is still in its beginning phase. However, in the twenty-first century, job enlargement and enrichment cannot be

managed effectively without the adoption of digital tools and artificial intelligence. The study finds that internet service providers need to reduce internet charges, and digital literacy should be made mandatory across Nepal. Artificial intelligence should not be used only as a search tool; instead, it should be used to perform routine organizational tasks, so that managers are freed to focus on strategic development. Creativity and innovation are still not accepted or valued adequately in Nepalese organizations, particularly in small and medium enterprises. Data management and data security practices also remain weak in most Nepalese organizations. In universities, academic, administrative, and especially examination-related activities still show weak use of digital tools and artificial intelligence. This weakness forces human resources to continue following traditional practices of job enlargement and enrichment in Nepal.

Conclusion

This study shows that job enlargement and enrichment in Nepal are increasingly shaped by digital transformation, though adoption remains at an early stage. Digitalization broadens task scope and strengthens managerial autonomy, but weak internet access, low digital literacy, and limited AI use restrict its full impact. Theory alone cannot explain this shift; local infrastructure, culture, and institutional readiness equally determine how effectively digital-era job redesign succeeds in Nepal.

Recommendations

- o Reduce internet charges and expand affordable connectivity, especially in Terai-Madhesh and rural regions.
- o Make digital literacy training mandatory for employees across sectors.
- o Use AI for strategic and analytical HRM functions, not only as a search tool.
- o Strengthen data management and cyber security practices in organizations.
- o Digitize university examination and administrative systems more effectively.
- o Encourage creativity and innovation acceptance, particularly within SMEs.
- o Conduct future empirical, sector-specific studies to test the proposed conceptual model.

Conclusion

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