



UNIVERSITATEA
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Doctoral School of Social Sciences

PhD field: Management

DOCTORAL THESIS

THE IMPACT OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION ON BUSINESS MANAGEMENT

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SUMMARY

The business landscape in recent years is constantly evolving, and one of the most important drivers of change is digital transformation. The emergence of digital technologies has revolutionized the way organizations operate, interact with customers, and manage their resources. As we move into the 21st century, the impact of digital transformation on business management has become a focus of academic research and practical interest.

The essence of digital transformation is the adoption and integration of digital technologies into all aspects of an organization's operations and business models. From leveraging data analytics for informed decision making to leveraging cloud computing for increased scalability, businesses across sectors are embracing digital transformation to remain competitive in today's dynamic marketplace.

This thesis aims to explore the impact of digital transformation on business management, with a particular focus on small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in the Romanian manufacturing industry. SMEs, often limited in terms of financial, human, and technological resources, face unique challenges and opportunities in navigating the digital landscape. By examining the experiences of SMEs in the manufacturing sector, this research aims to highlight the transformative potential of digital technologies and the strategies needed to harness them effectively.

The structure of the PhD thesis is organized in three main parts, each addressing key aspects of digital transformation in the context of business management. Part I, entitled "*Digital Transformation from a Business Management Perspective*", explores the concept of digital transformation, and examines how it influences management strategies and practices. Part II, "*Manufacturing challenges in the context of digital transformation*" focuses on the specific challenges and opportunities that the manufacturing sector faces in the process of digitization. Finally, Part III, "*Quantitative and qualitative research on the impact of digital transformation on business management*", presents the methodology and results of a detailed research, including both quantitative and qualitative analyses, to assess the impact of digital transformation on business management in Romania.

Through a detailed literature review, Chapter 1 examines the conceptual underpinnings of digital transformation, exploring the definitions, drivers, effects, and challenges of digital transformation, highlighting the opportunities it offers to businesses seeking to thrive in the digital age. As one of the most important recent factors, the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is analyzed and presented in detail.

Chapter 2 examines the strategic imperatives, opportunities, and milestones of digital transformation. For a better understanding of the concept of digital transformation and its impact on companies, a comparison between traditional and digital businesses is presented.

Chapters 3 and 4 focus on the manufacturing industry, examining the management characteristics of SMEs operating in this sector, and analyses the phenomenon of digital transformation in the context of this sector. Through an exploration of SME management characteristics and digital transformation strategies, these chapters provide valuable insights into the specific dynamics of digital transformation within manufacturing SMEs and offer practical examples and recommendations for navigating the digital landscape.

Chapter 5 presents quantitative research with the aim of empirically identifying the impact of digital transformation on business management. By formulating research objectives and questions, using rigorous research methodologies, and analyzing quantitative data, this chapter aims to provide evidence-based insights into the effects of digital transformation on operational and financial efficiency, organizational culture, employee training and customer relations.

Chapter 6 complements the quantitative findings with qualitative case study research, providing a deeper understanding of digital transformation in manufacturing SMEs. Exploring real-life examples of SME digital transformation, this chapter provides a rich perspective on the challenges, opportunities, and outcomes of digitization efforts in the manufacturing sector.

Finally, the findings from the previous chapters are summarized and final conclusions and personal reflections are offered in relation to the research objectives. By integrating insights from quantitative and qualitative research, the final conclusions summarize the main findings, implications and recommendations for businesses, policy makers and researchers interested in harnessing digital transformation to improve business management.

By examining the impact of digital transformation on business management, with a specific focus on SMEs in the manufacturing sector in Romania, the aim was to create a contribution to the growing body of knowledge on the phenomenon of digital transformation. Through a multidisciplinary approach that combines literature review, bibliometric analysis, quantitative research and qualitative case studies, this research seeks to provide valuable insights and practical recommendations to both business management and public authorities in order to facilitate the navigation of the complexities of digital transformation.