Dynamics of Digital Transformation: What does this mean for management?

The Acceleration of Digital Transformation[1] - amid the COVID-19 pandemic crisis - has had profound effects on the way we work and manage organisations at the time of unprecedented disruption. Digital devices and applications are increasingly permeating all areas of life and society, from our private lives, through the economy, to the government sector and the civil society.

On the personal level, we use smart devices and applications to check our health, to read books and to stay in contact with family and friends. Businesses do not only digitalise their processes but also invent new products with enhanced digital features or create new digital business models altogether. Increasingly, government agencies, including public administration, aim to digitalise their processes, for example through the introduction of online services for their citizens and businesses in order to improve their services, as well as improve the competitiveness of the country. Finally, digital platforms provide new opportunities for the civil society and their associations to engage with each other.

While some hail the new possibilities for different actors in business and society by means of ongoing digital transformation, others point to the risks involved in job losses by further digitisation (Frey and Osborne, 2017) and, as the process continues, by the utilisation of artificial intelligence (Chang 2020), internet of things, augmented reality just to name a few. Yet, digital transformation is a process, profoundly a continuous one, with 'no end status' and transformative in terms of the products and culture it produces within an organisation (Mergel et al 2018). Some even claim that digital transformation is inevitable, irreversible, incredibly fast and uncertain (Krcmar 2018).

Given these developments, the aim of this symposium entitled **"Dynamics of Digital Transformation: What does this mean for management?"** is to understand the effects of socio-economic, policy and technological forces shaping the process of digital transformation and the role these forces have on management. Drawing on both conceptual and empirical dimensions, this symposium to be **held in London on 4 May 2023**, will focus on the impact digital transformation has had on how we work and manage organisations in the time of unprecedented disruptions as adoption of digital technologies have accelerated against the backdrop of crisis. Lastly, by drawing on the conceptual and empirical underpinnings, this symposium will provide an opportunity to debate our existing understanding of, and possible trajectories of, digitalisation.

The range of disciplines are underpinned by the process of digital transformation and, hence, open up a number of questions at the conceptual, empirical and methodological levels. Digital transformation is driven by external factors, most notably by technological advancement, yet success of the process 'it is not all about technology' (Kane et al 2015). The fast-changing socio-economic and policy developments against the backdrop of the COVID-19 health crisis have disrupted 'the world as we knew it', accelerating behavioural change while enhancing the acceptability and application of an ever-growing number of technology-enabled tools at our disposal. This acceleration has had a profound impact on the manner in which we think of the theory of digital transformation and its application. As the High Income Countries are faced with a host of opportunities and challenges concerning the

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[1] Based on a review of about 282 works Vial (2019) defines the Digital Transformation as *"a process that aims to improve an entity by triggering significant changes to its properties through combinations of information, computing, communication, and connectivity technologies"* (Vial, 2019:121).

'digital', Middle and Low Income Countries are also affected, exhibiting a wide range of practices that require a renewed focus on strategy, skills, and building an entirely new culture that enable and govern digital transformation that is equitable and inclusive for the benefit of all. Keeping strategy and the aforementioned concept and themes in mind, this symposium seeks to address a number of key questions, including but not limited to:

* How socio-economic and policy dynamics trigger change in management today?

* Is digital transformation the main driver of change?

* How Strategy and Management Theory helps us to conceptualise and contextualise processes of digital transformation?

* How to best measure disruption of digital transformation and its socio-economic consequences in the post-Covid world?

* How Innovation drives new sustainable, circular-economy business models?

* How disruption of existing business culture shapes Industry 4.0 and what direction it is likely to be heading?

* What are the latest developments in key industries? How has fintech been evolving and how to ensure development of sustainable financial services? What are the prospects for digital transformation of the energy industry?

We would like to ask scholars, as well as, other interested groups, including practitioners, from both management as well as non-management disciplines to present their research results or conceptual work in regards to the future developments of the digital transformation and how different actors such as businesses, researchers, government agencies and citizens could shape the direction of travel within different application areas in the future. Papers are welcome from early-career researchers, including doctoral students. Dissemination of the research will take the form of paper (track 1) and poster (track 2) presentations. Submissions of abstracts of up to 200 words are welcome and should be submitted by **31 January 2023** using the Microsoft's Conference Management Toolkit (CMT) at https://cmt3.research.microsoft.com (upon registering/signing up with the CMT please search the Conference List by 'DT2023' - the symposium appears as 'Digital Transformation: What does this mean for business and management?'). Alternatively, abstracts can also be submitted by the deadline by email at s.raszewski@uel.ac.uk provided that 'Digital Transformation' appears in the email title**.** Full drafts / posters need to be submitted by **31 March 2023** to be included at the Symposium. The Symposium's Steering Committee will make a decision and recommend selected contributions to publish at the event's proceeding either as an edited volume or special edition.

The symposium will be held using a hybrid mode on **4 May 2023**. Presenters will be able to attend remotely or in-person on UEL campus depending on personal circumstances.

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