

**ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN STRUCTURING THE DIGITAL
TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY IN AN ORGANISATION**

Submitted to the Research Committee at the Swiss School of Business and Management

Submitted by Ritu Dhawan

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DEDICATION

Dedicated to all the amazing individuals who supported me while I tried to improve as a leader while bringing about Digital Transformation in various segments of different organisations. I am incredibly grateful to all my teammates, friends, and leaders who have taught me everything that is there to know about their Digital Leadership journey and how it has been a foundation for their constant growth. I sincerely appreciate the support of my husband, Sanjay who has always encouraged me to pursue my degree. Appreciate the love of my children, Krish and Yashica who are my inspiration to keep going in spite of numerous roadblocks.

This study aims to offer some ideas to implement Digital Transformation in the organisation and the role leaders play to bring about this change. Without the support of Leaders, rather Digital Leaders, this Thesis would not have been possible.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

As I begin yet another important chapter of my life, I am filled with gratitude and humility for how my Doctorate goals are coming to pass. I credit this accomplishment to the Divine, whose continuous backing made it possible, rather than to my own merit and instead to His limitless grace. I would like to express my sincere thanks to my respected mentor, Dr. Luka, for his steadfast support, insightful advice, priceless guidance, and constant encouragement that have helped me along the way as I developed this dissertation. The accomplishment of this research would not have been possible without your unwavering support.

I want to express my sincere gratitude to all the authors, specialists, and executives whose study helped me with this research. Your insightful comments, considerate survey answers, helpful critiques, and insightful recommendations have pointed my efforts in the proper path. It is a privilege to be eternally grateful for your help and inspiration.

ABSTRACT

ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN STRUCTURING THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY IN AN ORGANISATION

Industries are changing and adapting new technology at an amazing rate thanks to digital change. It includes a lot of different changes caused by technology, going back and forth between digitization, digitalization, and true digital transformation. There are gaps which need to be fully understood about how much things have changed because of technology, it's important to know the difference between these terms. It is not digitising, digitalizing, or digital transformation when you scan or print data or turn anything into soft data. Making data machine-readable, scanning documents, and changing paper records into digital ones are all steps that can be taken to start the digitalisation process. Businesses are investing millions of dollars on digital transformation projects, but a large number of them fail. The objective of this study is to learn more about digital transformation, challenges faced in the industry and understand why the failure rate of digital transformation is high, despite the rapid change and lots of investment in the digital transformation projects in many industries. This article consolidates the current state of the literature about business-level digital transformation to understand its roots and origins, assisting managers in the formulation and implementation of their firms' digital transformation initiatives. The goal is to summarise research on the leadership strategy, content, and context of digital business transformation, add fresh perspectives on how to position digital change and reveal the features that set it apart from earlier

technology-enabled revolutions. The research was done through exploring journals, blogs, and conference papers. Then online survey and subsequently questionnaire round with likert scale analysis led to the results that Leaders play a crucial role in bringing success to digital transformation initiatives of the organisation. In addition to aligning technology investments with business goals, they should also take into account insider knowledge more than outside advice, allay insiders' fears of losing their jobs, fully comprehend how changes will affect the customer experience, and use tech-inspired process techniques (prototyping, experimentation, etc.) to facilitate change. The initial steps they have to take would be to understand old outdated systems, analyse and verify their needs and then plan with aligning goals and targets of their teams to turn them into different online apps. Next step would be to evaluate the ways how different apps would be integrated, cloud computing would be used, and the latest ERP to be implemented for various functions of the organisation. The digital transformation journey could start with CRM for Sales and Marketing, Account Payable and Account Receivable for Finance, Payroll and Employee management softwares for HR, Supply chain management software for Production and Logistics etc. Then with this advancement the organisations can start looking forward to AI and machine learning, blockchain, IoT, sensors, beacons etc.

Therefore the research was able to identify the type of vision and planning Leaders need to formulate for the digital transformation journey, however, it still needs to be understood that the real Digital Transformation of a company is much more than these

things. The role of leaders in transforming their organisation digitally is humongous, it can be achieved through the ways and means formulated in this study but there still remains a lot to be explored on what could be the right kind of vision and strategy based on the specific industry. The role of leaders in structuring digital transformation journeys specific to an industry needs to be understood and explored further.

Keywords: Innovation, Theory, Change Management, Transformation, Digital Leaders, E-Leadership, Organization roles, Leadership, Industry specific etc.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction:

Over the past ten years, "Digital Transformation" has been increasingly fashionable. Organisations use terms such as Digitization, Digitalization and Digital transformation interchangeably or sometimes together as well. Some people would consider themselves to be doing digital transformation even if their only action is to scan and save images of paper documents on computer systems. Therefore, first and foremost it becomes even more important to understand the difference between the three i.e. Digitization, Digitalization and Digital Transformation.

The word Digitization can be referred to as digital enablement, and also digitization is the act of converting analog information into digital form. An example would be converting a paper invoice into a PDF file by scanning it.

The term Digitalization can be referred to as the process where business transformation is possible through this model to generate new revenue streams and value-adding opportunities by using the digital technologies. It's about leveraging digital tools to change processes and make them more productive.

Another example of a digital workflow implementation is the processing of bills through software that automatically extracts data from PDFs and processes it, eliminating the need for human data entry.

After understanding the above two it becomes easier to understand what is Digital transformation. It is the strategic and wider implementation of digital technology. The main aim of digitally transforming an organisation's operations and customer value delivery is another aspect of it. It entails reconsidering corporate strategies, enhancing client interactions, and frequently generating whole new sources of income. As an illustration, consider a manufacturing company that incorporates Internet of Things (IoT) devices into its machinery to track performance in real-time, forecast maintenance requirements, and optimise workflows for increased output and efficiency.

With the onset of new business streams, lots of innovations, technology tends to effect various sectors:

Workplaces: A lot of businesses are implementing digital platforms for project management, internal communications, and teamwork. Employee interaction and task management are changing as a result of tools like Slack, Microsoft Teams, and Asana, which are enabling more effective workflows and remote work.

Factories and Warehouses: The utilisation of robotics, advanced data analytics, and IoT is bringing about a major digital change in the industrial sector. Smart factories monitor production lines, manage maintenance schedules, and boost overall productivity with the use of sensors and networked devices. Drones, warehouse management systems (WMS),

and automated guided vehicles (AGVs) are used in warehouses to expedite inventory control and order fulfilment procedures.

Sales and Marketing: Using big data, AI-driven analytics, and CRM systems to better understand consumer behaviours and preferences is the digital transformation of sales and marketing. This results in enhanced customer engagement, more individualised marketing strategies, and more sales.

Accounting and Supply Chain: The operations of accounting and supply chains are being revolutionised by automation and advanced analytics. Accounting software such as QuickBooks, FreshBooks, ERP, Financial Hub and Xero automate bookkeeping duties; technologies with artificial intelligence (AI) support financial forecasting and fraud prevention. Predictive analytics improves inventory levels and logistics, while blockchain technology assures transparency and traceability in supply chain management.

With this widespread need for digital transformation, we see lots of advantages as well as disadvantages coming our way.

Advantages as seen would be like:

Enhanced Efficiency - time and effort needed to complete various activities are decreased by automating repetitive tasks and streamlining workflows.

Better Decision-Making is seen having access to up-to-date information and sophisticated analytics facilitates faster, more informed decision-making.

Improved Customer Experience is surely seen through Digital tools which make it possible to communicate with customers in a more responsive and personalised way.

Innovation and Agility is brought about in businesses that embrace digital transformation and are able to innovate more quickly and adjust to changes in the market more quickly.

Problems coming up due to overload of technology:

Change management: Making the switch to digital platforms necessitates substantial adjustments to mindsets and procedures, which may encounter opposition.

Security Risks: Businesses that depend more on digital systems may be vulnerable to cyberattacks.

Cost: The initial outlay for digital technology can be substantial, and they need constant upkeep and upgrades.

Skills Gaps: The workforce may need to be trained and developed in order to fill in any gaps in their knowledge and abilities.

Hence, we can say that digital transformation shows a fundamental higher curve in the way businesses progress, and it adds to their value, and it is not just a technology acceptance. It affects every industry, fostering innovation, efficiency, and improved customer experiences while also presenting obstacles that require careful management.

As per the source PRNewswire from 2021 to 2026, the digital transformation market is projected to expand at a CAGR of 16.1%, reaching US \$3.6 billion. COVID has had a significant impact on businesses, which has caused them to reevaluate their digital strategy. The worldwide pandemic, according to 96% of leaders, will accelerate digital transformation by an average of 5.3 years. Furthermore, IDC estimates that the economic value of digital transformation is more than \$20 trillion, or more than 20% of the world's gross domestic product.

The term "digital transformation" refers to the application of technology to change enterprises by switching from paper records to electronic ones. Stated differently, it implies that manual or non-digital procedures can also adopt the form of digital processes. One element in the organisation's digital transformation path can also be thought of as replacing outdated digital technology with more modern alternatives.

The research looks forward to understanding the problems faced while embarking on the Digital journey in organisations. The study focuses on companies based in India, who may also service the global market. The research is aimed to provide a framework on an effective Digital Leadership Skill set Model. Through this model the expectation is to remove hurdles being faced by business organisations while on the Digital Transformation journey, enhance customer experience, make the employee-employer relationships better, and take the organisations towards overall growth.

Bringing about Digital Transformation is the movement from manual process of working or manual record keeping on paper to moving the data on servers placed in Data centres situated globally through digital platforms. Replacing the obsolete digital technology with newer digital technology will lead to growth, new revenue, and value-producing opportunities.

This study attempts to explain why digital transformation has become essential currently, while also comprehending the difficulties of the journey towards digital transformation in companies since the use of technology to alter the business has become crucial in the wake of the pandemic.

1.2 Research Problem

Since the acceptance of technology to transform the business has become very important post pandemic hence this review aims to explain why Digital Transformation has become critical now simultaneously understanding the challenges of Digital Transformation journey in organisations and what role can the leadership play to make this journey successful.

More often DT strategy of an organisation fails, the problem is seen inside the organisation, stating DT as a strategized shock from technology on the properly working

system and not just an upgrade of software of improvement in a supply chain plan (Andriole, 2017).

Companies are pouring millions into digital transformation initiatives — but a high percentage of those fail to pay off. That's because companies put the cart before the horse, focusing on a specific technology for example a company decides to have a machine-learning strategy in its goal setting rather than doing the hard work of first fitting the change into its overall business strategy (Tabrizi et al., 2019).

Not only should they align tech investments with business goals — they should also lean more on insider knowledge than outside consultants, acknowledge fears about job loss that those insiders may have, develop deep knowledge of how changes will affect customer experience and use process techniques borrowed from the tech world like experimentation, prototyping, to facilitate change (Harvard Business Review, March 2019).

More often when the digital transformation strategy of an organisation fails, the problem is seen inside the organisation, its culture, the adaptation struggle from employees due to job loss fear and the not interested policy or level of competency of their Leaders.

The reasons behind the failure of digital transformation strategies are typically multifaceted and can be broadly classified as problems with people, processes, technology, and organisational culture. The following are some typical causes of failure:

ABSENCE OF A WELL-DEFINED PLAN AND VISION which can be further divided into **Undefined Goals**: Efforts may become dispersed and lack concentration in the absence of defined goals and outcomes.

Misalignment with Business Objectives: It's possible that the transformation initiatives are at odds with the overarching business plan and objectives.

INSUFFICIENT GUIDANCE AND SUPPORT is another reason which can be seen at micro level as: **Absence of Executive Support**: Strong leadership and ongoing assistance from senior executives are necessary for successful digital transformations.

Ineffective Change Management: Resistance and failure can result from an organisation's incapacity to successfully manage and steer through change.

CULTURAL OPPOSITION, which is very common in any organisation is further broken down:

Opposition to Change: Workers may be resistant to changes because they are at ease with the status quo, fear the unknown, or feel insecure in their jobs.

Absence of a digital mindset: Transformation initiatives may be hampered by a corporate culture that does not respect creativity, adaptability, and ongoing learning.

INADEQUATE KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE which is another way of explaining the following:

Deficits in Skills: Employees who lack the requisite digital skills and knowledge may find it difficult to advance.

Insufficient Training and Development: Staff members may find it difficult to adjust to new procedures and technology in the absence of continuous training.

TECHNOLOGY DIFFICULTIES which are one of the most critical issues:

Legacy Systems: It might be challenging to merge new technologies with antiquated systems that are already in place.

Over-reliance on Technology: The belief that, without taking people and procedures into account, technology can solve any problem.

CONCEPT AND IMPLEMENTATION THAT LACK PLANNING:

Unrealistic Budgets and timeframes: Excessively ambitious plans that lack reasonable budgets and timeframes may result in hurried implementations and excessive spending.

Ineffective Project Management: Scope creep, missed deadlines, and budget overruns can be caused by improper project management techniques.

DATA PROBLEMS WHICH EXIST DUE TO OLD MISMANAGED DATA

Data Silos: Inaccessible or disjointed data might obstruct thorough examination and judgement.

Poor Data Quality: The efficacy of digital projects can be undermined by inaccurate, incomplete, or outdated data.

ABSENCE OF ONGOING IMPROVEMENT

Static Approaches: Long-term success may be hampered by viewing digital transformation as a one-time project as opposed to an ongoing endeavour.

Failure to Adapt: Non acceptance can result from a failure to modify and improve in response to criticism and evolving conditions.

UNSATISFACTORY CUSTOMER FOCUS

Ignoring client wants: Solutions that do not satisfy market expectations may arise from a failure to prioritise and attend to client wants and experiences.

Poor User Adoption: Adoption rates of digital solutions may be low if they are not easily navigable or do not offer a clear advantage.

DISJOINTED ATTEMPTS ARE ALSO ISSUES

Siloed Initiatives: When departments operate independently, it might result in dispersed efforts and lost opportunities for collaboration.

Absence of Integration: Digital projects may have a lessened overall impact if they are not integrated throughout the organisation.

A complete and integrated strategy that combines strong leadership, a distinct vision, efficient change management, ongoing learning, and an emphasis on providing value to the company and its clients is needed to address these issues.

Therefore, we need leaders who understand the issues and are prepared to bring about these changes through better planning, good managerial skills, continuous learning and improvising, taking initiatives to bring upcoming technology in the organisation. It would not be wrong to say that we not only need such leaders, but we need such digital leaders. From various online blogs and articles, it is clear that lots of money is being invested (\$1.3 trillion annually as per Harvard Business Review) in digital transformation initiatives to boost productivity because companies with digital leaders beat their competitors in almost all sectors. Nonetheless, technological advancements meant to boost productivity such as ERP, CRM, analytics and other systems fail up to 90%. Their failure negatively affects a company's operations and desire to innovate. Even digital changes inside the same company frequently fall short of identical outcomes.

The significance of vision, management, and culture is even though highlighted as crucial success determinants there are five factors as major determinants of digital transformation success: a) Innovation Attributes, b) Opinion Leaders, c) Diffusion Approach, d) Timing, and e) Duration (Ramesh, 2019). These are based on the diffusion of innovation theory and data from three digital transformation programs within a firm that produced wildly divergent results. Additionally, there is also a demonstrated

advantage of machine learning (ML) over regression in determining feature importance by using ML techniques like leave-one-out-cross-validation (LOOCV) (Ramesh, 2019).

According to the World Economic Forum, digital transformation efforts will save 1,000 lives as worker safety increases, generate more than \$320 billion in value for the mining and cement sectors, and reduce CO2 emissions by 610 million tons. However, the reality that the majority of digital transformation projects fail before they are completed is rarely discussed (Mielli and Bulanda, 2019).

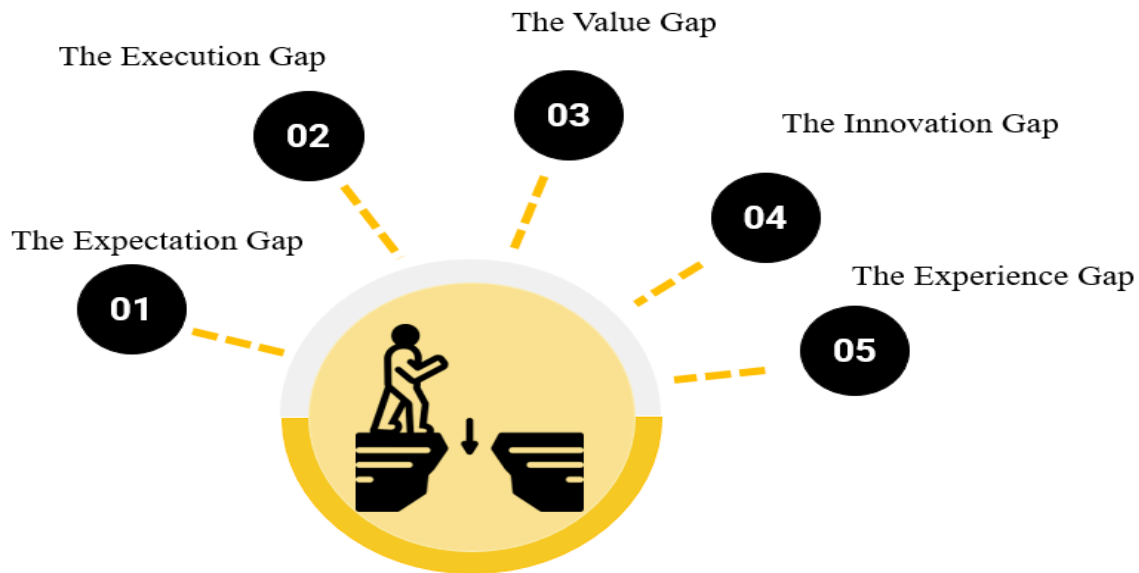
1.3 Purpose of Research

This research is aimed to provide solutions to organisations working on their road map of digital transformation journey in India or elsewhere but who also service the global market. Through this the expectation is to smoothen the Digital Transformation journey of business organisations, improve employee-employer relationship, enhance customer experience, and achieve overall organisation growth.

A successful leadership strategy is needed when an organisation wants to move from a non-digital process to a comprehensive digital platform. This strategy can be influential and effective in furthering this kind of change over the long term. A lot of leaders lack the technical ability or knowledge to manage this kind of development (Sow and Aborbie, 2018).

However, their opinions are crucial and necessitate the capacity for flexibility. Additionally, they must learn new skills and tasks. This modification or the lack of expertise could result in major cost overruns and subpar execution. (Matt, Hess, & Benlian, 2015).

Digital transformation is becoming more than just a watchword globally, after Covid companies have learnt through hard way that no matter what happens the business can sustain if we have our digital tools in place and we can be relevant and competitive. Organisations undergoing digital transformation are dealing with a dynamic gap because of the rapid advancement of technology. This gap (FasterCapital, n.d.) highlighted in Figure 1 describes the disparity between the outcomes that businesses attain and the expectations they have for their digital transformation initiatives. Businesses must comprehend this dynamic divide to adapt and thrive in the digital era. This gap needs to be evaluated before onsetting as well as while moving on a digital transformation journey. The lesser the gap, smoother is the journey of digital transformation.



Understanding the Enterprising Gap in Digital Transformation

Figure 1 Enterprising Gap amongst Employees in Digital Transformation (FasterCapital, n.d.)

The Expectation Gap: When businesses have inflated expectations for the results of their digital transformation efforts, a gap in expectations develops. Many companies think that integrating the newest technology will inevitably boost sales, boost customer happiness, and simplify operations. Organisations must comprehend this divide in order to adapt and thrive in the digital era.

The Execution Gap: Organisations that find it difficult to successfully carry out their digital transformation projects experience an execution gap. This may occur as a result of a lack of digital knowledge and experience, insufficient funding, or organisational reluctance to change.

The Value Gap: The discrepancy between the perceived and actual values that digital transformation activities yield is known as the value gap. This might occur when businesses just think about implementing technology without taking their desired business objectives into account.

The Innovation Gap: When businesses are unable to innovate and adapt to the ever-changing digital landscape, an innovation gap results. This can occur when companies stop exploring new technology solutions and grow accustomed to their current ones.

The Experience Gap: When businesses are unable to provide a consistent and tailored customer experience throughout all touchpoints, a phenomenon known as the experience gap arises. This can occur when companies ignore the human aspect of digital transformation and instead concentrate only on technology solutions. Organisations must base their digital transformation activities around the consumer in order to close the experience gap. In order to create solutions that live up to the expectations of their clients, they must comprehend their wants and needs.

The success of any digital transformation initiative heavily relies on the leadership within an organisation as they are the ones who are expected to fill all the gaps and bring about change management. Leaders are crucial in guiding change, and this is especially true for

digital transformation. It is essential for leaders to take charge and guide their organisations towards digital transformation, or they risk falling behind in the current fast-paced business environment (Sow and Aborbie, 2018).

1.4 Significance of the Study

Digital Transformation is imperative, the widespread adoption and willingness to embrace new technology in the workplace is what accelerates digital transformation. Enterprise social media, mobile, cloud, big data, artificial intelligence, and interconnected gadgets are some of these technology capabilities.

The entry of big digital players like Amazon, Alibaba in India has affected the conservative industries heavily due to their manual or semi digital business processes. They brought about Ecommerce revolution affecting heavy retail giants like Toys ‘R’ Us to the extent of bankruptcy. The hugely successful shipping company Maersk was severely affected by the technological problems that a tech giant caused in their business, is another case study to look at. There are many more like Spotify revolutionising the music industry, Airbnb changing the perspective of the hotel industry (Verhoef et al., 2021).

Keeping in mind the technology mayhem erupting for certain traditional industries and the obvious reason being digital transformation resulting in totally fresh business models there has been academic research on the Digital Transformation but not a lot has been

comprehended on the ways of progression of these models. If research in marketing has focused on digital advertising, social media effects on one hand, focus of research in information systems has been on technical developments and its acceptance leading to return on investment.

The digital transformation has been a significant discussion since scientists predicted the birth of the digital era. Transformation affects many things, especially in the leadership concept (Hendrasto et al., 2019).

The research aims to lay down the means and methods to deploy digital technologies effectively thereby bringing value to the organisation leading to a whole new way of looking at the development of digital business models. The focus on Leadership and its role in structuring the Digital Transformation journey is not worked upon much extensively to understand the gaps and how they can be filled.

Business model innovations are primarily reflected in using digital technologies to enable the deployment of a wider range of business models than previously available to a firm Li, 2020.

As per blogs and articles in Sourcefuse and PRNewswire, the way in which technology has evolved, and in particular, the rapid advancement in cloud computing capabilities, means businesses are more empowered than ever to deliberately and strategically transform. It is also very imperative how digital transformation brings with it the

opportunity to enhance competitive advantage and improve user experience by leveraging technology to make radical improvements.

It's not enough to just use digital technology to change things, the real digital revolution is using it to solve and/or predict problems and get smart insights that help you make better decisions. And organisations have access to a huge range of cutting-edge tools that can help them truly go digital. The digital transformation market is growing around the world thanks to things like IoT, big data and analytics, cloud, mobile, and social media.

Digital Transformation is required to be a major goal of every organisation, though they will have a different starting point and therefore a unique journey to accomplish digital transformation. There would be unique hurdles for each organisation, such as upfront investment, lack of technical expertise, or data security and compliance concerns which could act as roadblocks.

However, digital transformation shouldn't intimidate anyone. The COVID pandemic certainly made us realise how rapidly businesses need to evolve, and to survive and thrive in today's modern business environment, we need to embrace digital transformation and if we don't want to be left behind, we need to modernise for the future (Li, 2021).

1.5 Research Purpose and Questions

The question now arises that if it is imperative to transform digitally then why is it not happening as rapidly as it should be happening?

Is it due to the process hindrance or is its organisational structuring?

If it is the process or the organisation structure, then what role can Leadership play to bring about a smooth transformation?

What skill set and competencies can be built up in Leaders to make them Digital Leaders?

How can this Digital Leadership role help in re-engineering of organisation processes thereby improving customer experience and help organisation overall growth?

This research paper not only aims to answer the above questions, but the purpose of writing this research is also to provide effective methods and solutions to the organisation to modernise and make their functioning digital in this cutthroat competition world.

Bringing about Digital Transformation is the movement from manual process of working or manual record keeping on paper to moving the data on servers placed in Data centres situated globally through digital platforms. Replacing the obsolete digital technology with newer digital technology will lead to growth, new revenue, and value-producing opportunities.

The aim of research is to provide solutions with the help of surveys, questionnaires with relevant work forces on how to plan and execute your digital transformation journey so that it is successful and beneficial. Organisations gain a great deal from digital transformation because it increases productivity, encourages innovation, and enhances consumer experiences. Businesses can enhance productivity, save expenses, and streamline operations by incorporating cutting-edge technologies into every facet of their operations. Better data management and analysis are made possible by this transition, which facilitates more thoughtful strategic planning and decision-making. Furthermore, digital tools help the company collaborate and communicate better, which results in a workforce that is more responsive and agile. The capacity to provide individualised services and quicker, more dependable assistance leads to improved client experiences. All things considered, digital transformation assures long-term sustainability and growth by positioning businesses to stay competitive in a market that is changing quickly.

How well a company has integrated digital technologies into its processes and plan is shown by its digital transformation maturity level. People often use steps to measure this level of maturity, starting with basic knowledge and experimentation and going on to active application and optimization and finally reaching a fully integrated digital world. Higher-maturity organisations have smooth digital processes, make decisions based on data, and have a mindset of always coming up with new ideas. Checking how far along an organisation is in its digital change helps find places where it can improve and guides strategic planning to make digital skills stronger.

Thus, this study attempts to explain why digital transformation has become essential currently, while also comprehending the difficulties of the journey towards digital transformation in companies since the use of technology to alter the business has become crucial in the wake of the pandemic. Finally research aims to project the kind of gaps existing in the organisation and how an effective leader brings about the change through right attitude, strategy, vision thereby creating opportunities for the teams to outperform themselves ultimately leading to overall success of the organisation.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The entry of big digital players like Amazon, Alibaba in India has affected the conservative industries heavily due to their manual or semi digital business processes. They brought about the Ecommerce revolution affecting heavy retail giants like Toys 'R' Us to the extent of bankruptcy (Verhoef et al., 2019). Then there are examples of worldwide popular shipping company Maersk affected drastically by the technological disruptions in business brought about by a technology giant. There are many more like Spotify revolutionising the music industry, Airbnb changing the perspective of the hotel industry (Verhoef et al., 2019).

Keeping in mind the technology mayhem erupting for certain traditional industries and the obvious reason being DT resulting in totally fresh business models there has not been much academic research on the ways of progression of these models (Verhoef et al., 2019). If research in marketing has focused on digital advertising, social media effects on one hand, focus of research in information systems has been on technical developments and its acceptance leading to return on investment.

Digitization is characterised as a process that affects nearly all companies, all leaders must be aware of its ramifications for their company and its people. Thus, new skills and

competences, new leadership styles, and new organisational capacities are required (Kohnke, 2017).

The more contemporary theories arose in the 1990s and 2000s, fueled by an evolving and increasingly multinational environment in which organisations evolved at a faster rate than it has ever been (Benmira and Agboola, 2021). However, digital technological advancements have increased dramatically over the last decade, ushering in a new era of change and digital transformation (Henderikx and Stoffers, 2022).

2.2 Theory of Reasoned Action

The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) mentions that a person's behaviour is based on their goal to do something, and that intention is based on how they feel about the behaviour and their own personal standards (Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). Leaders can very well apply this theory on the need for goal based strategy for their teams to bring success in the Digital Transformation journey of the organisation.

Figure 2 clearly indicates, there are external variables which lead you to a certain initiative either due to its usefulness(U) or due to the ease of use(E). This initiative changes your attitude towards using the object(A) showing certain behavioural intentions (B) Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975).

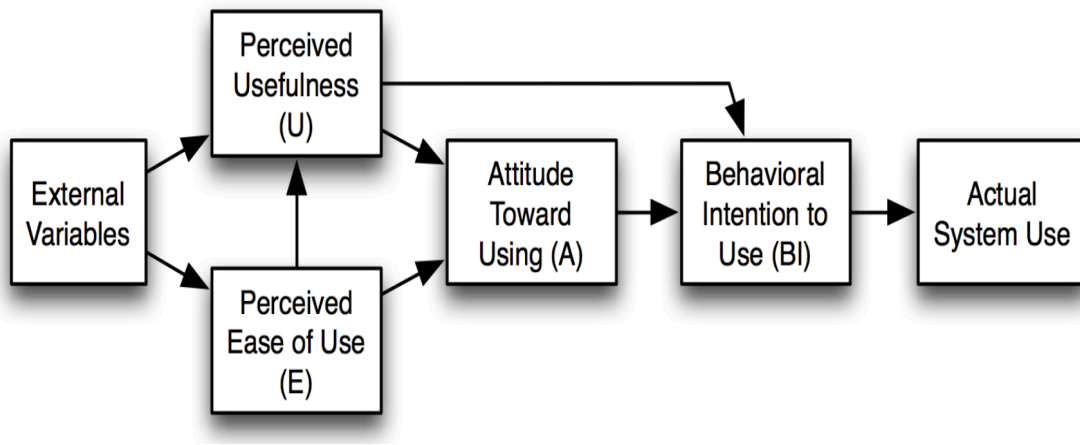


Figure 2 Reasoned Action Theory (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975)

Upon applying the theory of Reasoned Action on this research it indicates that the Role of a leader in structuring the Digital Transformation journey is clearly impacted by the external variables like demography, personality traits, attitude, available information, experience of the people in the organisation. Thus the DT journey found to be useful shall be adopted. Secondly if it has an ease in use then again it will succeed in user acceptance. However, this change in attitude will require motivation, evaluation of outcomes, acceptance of technology overpowering the user. Thus, the use and usefulness would bring an attitude and intention in behaviour to its use by the user.

As seen in the context of digital transformation, leaders play a crucial role in shaping the intentions and behaviours of their team members. Leaders are pivotal in moulding the intentions and behaviours of their team members. Their attitudes, actions, and

communication set the tone for the entire team. When leaders demonstrate a positive outlook towards new initiatives, such as digital transformation, and actively participate in the process, they inspire their team to adopt similar attitudes and behaviours. By fostering an environment that supports innovation and by clearly communicating the benefits and importance of new strategies, leaders can effectively guide their team towards embracing change and working collectively towards common goals. The employees look up to their leaders as role models and however difficult it may be to adapt to new technology; they try to do their best.

For example, if a leader exhibits a positive attitude toward adopting new digital tools and openly communicates the benefits, their enthusiasm can influence the team's attitudes and intentions. Additionally, if the leader emphasises that the entire industry is moving towards digitalization, creating a norm within the organisation, team members are more likely to follow suit. By setting a positive example and fostering a supportive environment, leaders can significantly drive digital transformation within their organisation.

Below in Figure 3 we see the organisations where digital transformation journeys have already started, or digital solutions have been implemented. These are major initiatives of leaders adopting digital tools themselves or have technology experience themselves.

PURPOSE: THE PURPOSE IS TO HAVE THE VIEW OF MORE THAN 50% OF LEADERS IN THE SAMPLE DATA TO ENSURE THAT THE LEADERS CAN MAKE THIS INITIATIVE SUCCESSFUL.

Q1. Can you start by giving us a background about yourself, the company you represent, and your current role?

62 responses

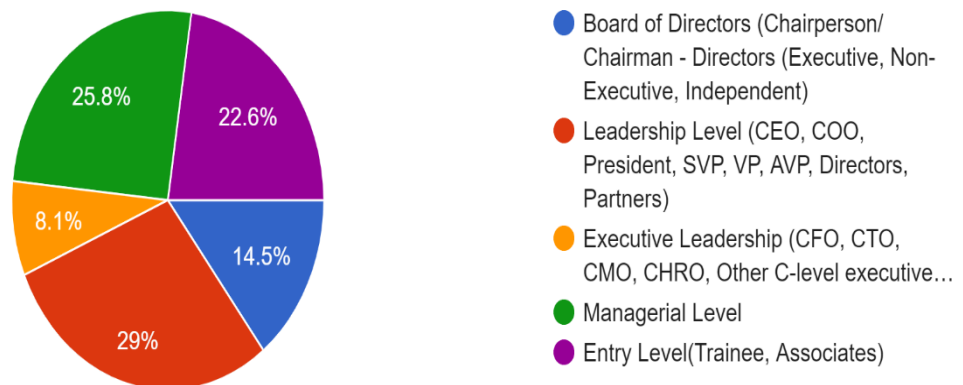


Figure 3 Depicting the Leader driven initiative has positive results.

The Theory of Reasoned Action (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975) highlights belief, attitude, and intention as most critical. Beliefs are typically used to express the likelihood that an

action will result in a particular outcome; attitudes are concerned with whether an outcome is perceived as good or unpleasant; and intention is the intended behaviour in response to beliefs and attitudes. It is considered that intention, which usually precedes behaviour, can be impacted by attitude, subjective norms, and perceived behaviour control. These depend on behavioural, normative, and control beliefs that are influenced by external factors including personality and demography. Therefore, it is imperative that the leaders who have the right attitude and intention to bring about change management shall possibly bring positive results.

Figure 4 depicts people have a higher desire (motivation) and are more likely to carry out the advised activity if they view it as favourable (attitude) and believe that others want them to do so (subjective norm). The Attitude and Subjected Norms are keys to the Behavioural Intention and subsequent Behaviour. So, it would not be wrong to say that if the human gets the right dose of motivation to accept an organisational initiative and is made aware of its benefits, it is quite likely that they would have a favourable attitude towards it. Most likely the acceptance to adapt it would be seen in them.

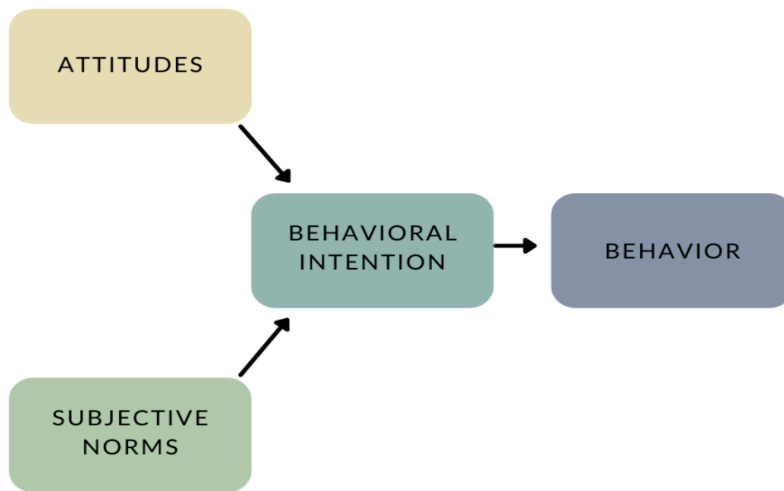


Figure 4 Reasoned Action Theory (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975)

2.3 Human Society Theory

While digitalisation introduces new business prospects and changes its service offering as well as how a company interacts with its clients, it also affects how employees operate. For example, in terms of time, place, content, structure, and work process, the rising digitalised economy offers more possibilities and agility in the workplace. The rapid growth of digital technologies has permitted known trends in current working life, such as employment that is more cognitively challenging, collaborative, dependent on social skills and technological capabilities, time-pressured, and portable (Lee, 2016).

A digital transformation journey needs a considerable shift in an organisation's processes and procedures, as well as employees' understanding of how this transformation may impact their accountabilities (Vey et al., 2017). Even if technical expertise is not easily

available, it is critical for an organisation's core leadership to encourage this transition and to have the foresight necessary to achieve relevant aims and outcomes. It is critical for leaders to achieve the following in this capacity: "Managing such a profound shift necessitates a great deal of creativity. Imagine that a company's leaders are completely aware of the current situation and can even envision a strategy to deal with it." (Vey et al., 2017).

Considerable organisational changes and a shift in strategy are required for digital transformation, which may be difficult to achieve without a significant shift in organisational cultural context. This viewpoint backed up the necessity of leaders who have had a substantial impact on organisational outcome by their creativity, progressive concepts, and who favour tech disruption in ways that will benefit the organisation's skills and capabilities in the long run (Demirkan et al., 2016).

As more organisations undergo digital transformations, it becomes clear that leadership issues affect all levels of management (Petry, 2018), and that directing, influencing, and regulating these digital-technology-fueled transitions need new leadership knowledge and understanding (KaivoOja, Roth and Westerlund, 2017).

The DT has been a significant discussion since scientists predicted the birth of the digital era. Transformation affects many things, especially in the leadership concept (Hendrasto et al., 2019). Previous research aims to lay down the means and methods to deploy digital

technologies effectively thereby bringing value to the organisation leading to a whole new way of looking at the development of the digital business model (Coombes and Nicholson, 2013). The focus on leadership and its role in the DT journey is not worked upon. As of now many companies are beginning to start their digital journey hence there is lack of understanding on the role of leader in this journey (KLEIN, 2020).

Business model innovations are primarily reflected in using digital technologies to enable the deployment of a wider range of business models than previously available to a firm (Li, 2020).

Leadership team with an inclination towards Digital Transformation has the means and can impact the entire organisation towards Digital Transformation (Gudergan et al., 2021). Digital Masters, or firms that succeed in embracing digital advances, have a clear vision of their digitalization goals and the actions required to achieve them. Furthermore, they take advantage of possibilities to improve their organisations in ways that go beyond simply digitising old operations (Westerman et al., 2014). A successful DT journey is the outcome of initiatives and efforts from Leadership and management of the organisation (Vial, 2019). Engaging employees and directional efforts from employees can be initiated from top to bottom only. This leads to an effective digital journey (Westerman et al., 2014).

When an organisation wants to move from a manual process to a digital platform, it needs an effective leadership approach that can be influential and powerful in driving long-term change. Many leaders lack the necessary technical skills, expertise or ability to manage a shift of this magnitude. Their input, on the other hand, is crucial. It also necessitates the ability to be adaptable. They must also learn new skills and take on new responsibilities (Sow and Aborbie, 2018). During this shift their lack of expertise in the process might result in major cost overruns and improper management of processes (Matt, Hess, and Benlian, 2015). The way in which technology has evolved, and in particular the rapid advancement in cloud computing capabilities, means businesses are more empowered than ever to deliberately and strategically transform. It should not be assumed that traditional management tools can be used to overcome digital age challenges (Sikora, 2017).

It is also very imperative how digital transformation brings with it, the opportunity to enhance competitive advantage and improve user experience by leveraging technology to make radical improvements, thus there is a need to align the leadership strategy with the roadmap of DT (Hendrasto et al, 2019).

It has been discovered that firms with a far more open and customer-focused strategy proceed more quickly in their digital transformations (Larjovuori et al., 2017).

Large-scale migration to data-driven technology-based systems, the acquisition of value for key stakeholders and customers, and a design that can effectively streamline

processes, improve efficiency, and support sustainable activities to achieve growth and sustainability are all examples of digital transformation practices that require an organisation to prepare for significant disruptions to their routine activities and processes, typically for a period of months to years (Dahlstrom et al., 2017). Thus, large organisations have seen delayed results from their Digital Transformation journey, but if these companies-built trust, they will face less resistance from employees in their digitization journey (Dirks and Ferrin, 2002).

In this context, a digital transformation necessitates the following elements: determining the business's future direction; identifying leaders to lead the transformation; persuading key stakeholders that the transformation is a good idea; determining how the organisation can compete in the digital era; determining how decisions should be made during the transformation; obtaining funding to complete the transformation's goals (Mwita, Mawazo Magesa and Joanthan, 2019). A digital transformation necessitates considerable human, financial, and technological resources, all of which must be coordinated to ensure effective outcomes. It also necessitates the hiring of individuals capable of leading this transition and influencing the process with their knowledge and experience (Dahlstrom et al., 2017).

2.4 Summary

Organisations moving on the journey of digital transformation must have the necessary gadgets to achieve this mammoth task, as well as the technical understanding necessary to ensure its success. Organisational leaders must display a vital grasp of this process and be willing to accept change, as well as recognize that when their leadership traits are in coordination with the change management approach, it is more likely to be successful. To ensure that the change can be implemented, several leadership attributes are required, which may or may not correspond with a specific leadership style. At the same time, leaders must establish an adequate level of trust in their employees and other managers with specific knowledge of this type of transformation for creativity and innovation to flourish (Sow and Aborbie, 2018). Preparing for a digital transformation inside a company necessitates the required technical expertise as well as the ability to tolerate disruptions during the process (Kiron et al., 2016). Conventional decision-making processes based on hierarchies and occurring in organisational boundaries are no longer appropriate; a key task for leaders is to reform and steer decision-making process and corporate structures (including the role and nature of leadership as a whole) toward more innovative and efficient models (Bonnet and Nandan, 2011).

The COVID pandemic certainly made us realise how rapidly businesses need to evolve, and to survive and thrive in today's modern business environment, we need to embrace

the DT and if we do not want to be left behind, we need to modernise for the future (Hai, Van and Thi, 2021).

Thus, we must evaluate and follow some or the other types of frameworks as per today's business need and bring about an accelerated Digital Transformation journey. The McKinsey 7S framework is one such framework which provides a holistic approach to organisational alignment, emphasising seven key elements: Strategy, Structure, Systems, Shared Values, Skills, Style, and Staff. In the context of digital transformation, this framework helps leaders assess the readiness of their organisations for change and identify areas that require alignment to effectively leverage digital technologies.

The shared values, as depicted in Figure 6, are at the centre of the model and are essential to the growth of other crucial components (Demir and Kocaoglu, 2019).

Every aspect of the model is intricately intertwined. Every alteration made to one element has an impact on the others. Thus, all processes pertaining to the development and administration of aspects ought to be handled by knowledgeable and experienced managers who have the abilities and information required to comprehend the range and characteristics of the elements. Examined in this context have been the enterprises' digital changes. The company's structure, operating system, employee competency, vision, and mission should all be taken into consideration when implementing the digital transformation process. Companies have been utilising digital technologies extensively since the introduction of new ones (Reis et al., 2018). Important corporate operations are

often transformed in this kind of transition. Companies need to alter their management strategies in addition to changing their products and processes to handle these complicated changes (Matt, Hess and Benlian, 2015b).

As a result of digital technologies' widespread adoption across all markets and their rapid development, businesses are experiencing a completely rapid and drastic transformation (Ebert and Duarte, 2016). In addition to the rise in consumer demand, businesses are also having to contend with fiercer competition because of globalisation (Westerman et al., 2011). As a result, they are being forced to digitise to remain in business and gain a competitive edge (Bharadwaj, 2000).

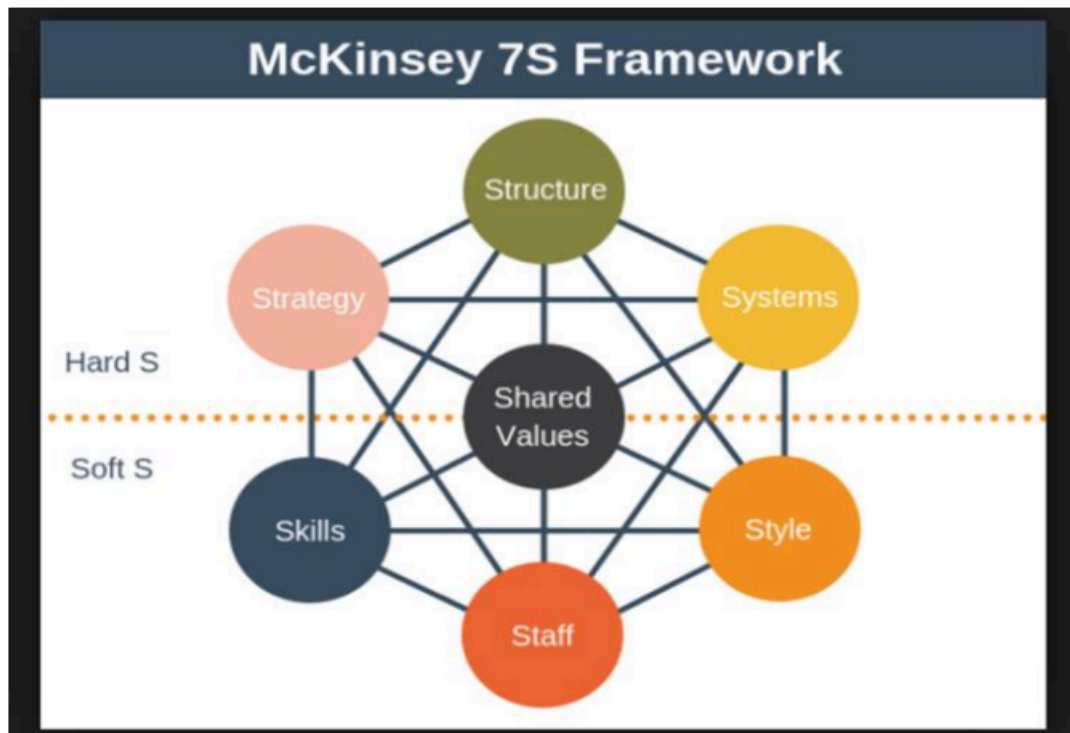


Figure 5 McKinsey's 7S: Hard and Soft Strategies (Ravanfar, Analysing Organisational Structure Based on 7s Model of, 2015)

In the (Ravanfar, 2015) descriptive-survey study was to examine and assess Qeshm Free Zone's organisational structure using McKinsey's 7 S (Figure 5). The Qeshm Free Zone managers and experts comprised the research population. The research population was chosen using simple random sampling, and the number of populations was determined using the 84-person Cochran method. Questionnaires were used in the research process. The validity and reliability of the questions were assessed using experts and experienced professors, respectively. It was advised that managers of the Qeshm free zone give special attention to the internal environment of the organisation and measures to improve it considering the research findings.

The McKinsey 7s framework states that for an organisation to achieve high performance, it is essential that these seven aspects - structure, strategy, system, shared values, skill, style, and staff to be harmoniously aligned and mutually reinforcing. The model may be utilised to identify areas that require realignment for the purpose of enhancing performance or to ensure alignment and performance are maintained during various sorts of change. The model can be applied to any type of change, such as restructuring, implementation of new processes like digital transformation, organisational mergers, adoption of new systems, or change in leadership. It helps in comprehending the interconnections between different elements of the organisation, ensuring that the broader consequences of changes made in one area are duly acknowledged.

Hence with the understanding that Digital Transformation is imperative now and the research indicates the need of Digital Leaders, who must display a vital grasp of this technology disruption. They need to show willingness to accept change, and with their coordination with the change management approach, it is more likely to be successful. We take on our study further to identify the gaps leading to slow progress in this journey.

Digital leaders are essential in helping their staff members adjust to new technology by providing guidance and support. They oversee making sure that staff members are aware of the significance and implications of these changes by clearly articulating the digital transformation's advantages. Leadership strengthens their IT and innovative skills, as well as their capacity to formulate effective dynamic policies that assure workplace transformation, if they are to improve an organisation's dynamic ability (Chatterjee et al., 2023).

Digital leaders assist their teams in gaining the skills required to adjust to new technologies and procedures by giving them the required training and resources. They create a culture of open communication where workers are at ease sharing their issues and offering input. Digital leaders also show their dedication to the change by embracing new technology themselves and leading by example. Additionally, they encourage and motivate ongoing progress by praising and rewarding staff members for their successes and efforts in implementing digital advances.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Overview of the Research Problem

A recent survey (Tabrizi et al., 2019) of directors, CEOs, and senior executives found that digital transformation (DT) risk is their initial concern in 2019. A Forbes study shows that 70% of all DT initiatives (Zobell, 2018) do not reach their goals. Of the \$1.3 trillion that was spent on DT last year, it was estimated that \$900 billion went to waste. Why do some DT efforts succeed, and others fail? (Sun, M., 2018). The success of the transformation depends primarily on employees collaborating to meet the objectives of the program. To generate accomplishment, the entire organisation—not just a select few on the same team—must come together. Regretfully, most organisations are compartmentalised, making it difficult for business units and functional areas to coordinate, communicate, and work together on transformation projects.

Things worsen further as workplace disarray is made worse by the various tools, stores of data, and procedures used by various departments, creating an ecosystem of mostly analog and isolated labour. As a result, a knowledge worker devotes only a small percentage of their time to their principal job responsibilities. The workday is too heavily consumed by meetings, emails, and administrative duties. Much time is wasted on the tiresome "shadow work."

Therefore, there's a clear cut gap between what is to be done and what actually is happening in the digital transformation journey of an organisation and this research studies that gap and proposes the role of leadership in structuring the digital transformation journey.

As per (Serrat and Serrat, 2021) the role of leadership has been depicted in Figure 6 (Mintzberg, 1989) and can be categorised as follows:

1. Informational

According to (Mintzberg, 1989) the three interpersonal duties of a leader are to monitor, disseminate information and act as a spokesperson. The manager is in a strategic position to gather and disseminate information because of carrying out these responsibilities.

2. Interpersonal

The manager has three interpersonal duties: Figurehead, Leader, and Liaison. The manager is frequently required to act as a spokesperson at first and then also do activities which are more theatrical and decorative than functional.

3. Decisional

Under this heading, (Mintzberg, 1989) identifies four decision-making roles: negotiator, resource allocator, disturbance handler, and entrepreneur. They are almost always concerned with making choices. The manager's first responsibility is to take the initiative to make changes as an entrepreneur would. In his second position, addressing disruptions, other people or organisations start the process rather than him. As part of his responsibilities as a disruption handler, the manager deals with issues which include

energy shortages, copyright violations, and strikes. The manager decides how to distribute resources and who should collaborate effectively with the task in their third decision-making role as a resource allocator. The negotiator is the fourth person. In this capacity, the manager negotiates contracts with organisations or third parties on the company's behalf.

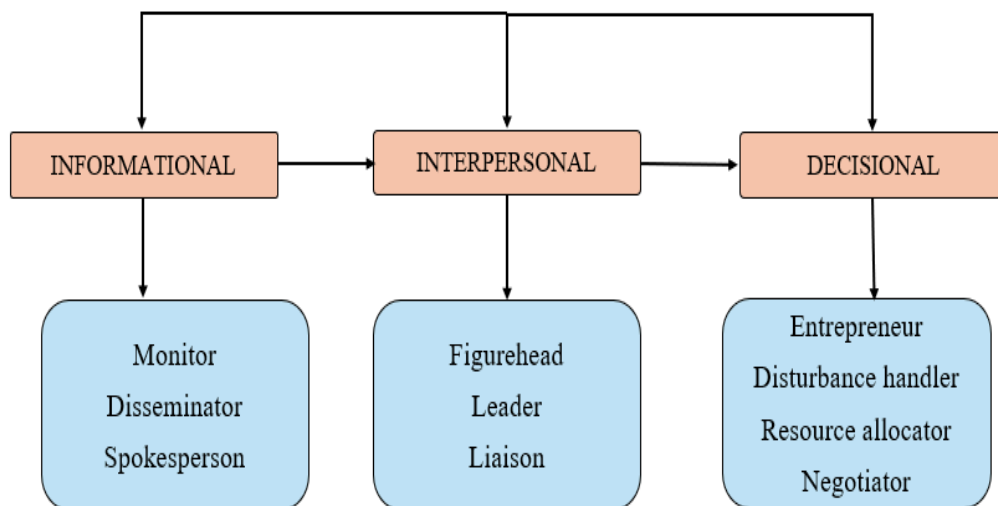


Figure 6 Role of Leadership (Mintzberg, 1989)

Looking at the above Figure 6 depicting Role of Leadership it is clear that a Leader should spearhead in his organisation through these three types of duties- Informational, Interpersonal and Decisional. In Informational duties, he should monitor, propagate and speak out wherever required to take forward his duties. Along with this he needs to

maintain Interpersonal duties through being the role model, lead by example and communicate well enough to leave a mark. His Decisional role makes him an entrepreneur, handling disruptions easily, resource optimizer and negotiator for his organisation.

3.2 Operationalization of Theoretical Concepts

Operationalizing theoretical concepts in the role of leaders for structuring digital transformation involves translating abstract concepts related to leadership into actionable strategies and practices. For digital change to happen, it's important to turn academic ideas about leadership into real-world plans and actions. Leaders need to turn their vague ideas about how to lead in the digital age into actions and plans. In this way, they can lead their companies through the digital change process and make sure that the theoretical benefits are realised in the real world.

Here's how referring to Figure 7, leaders can effectively guide their organisations through digital transformation:

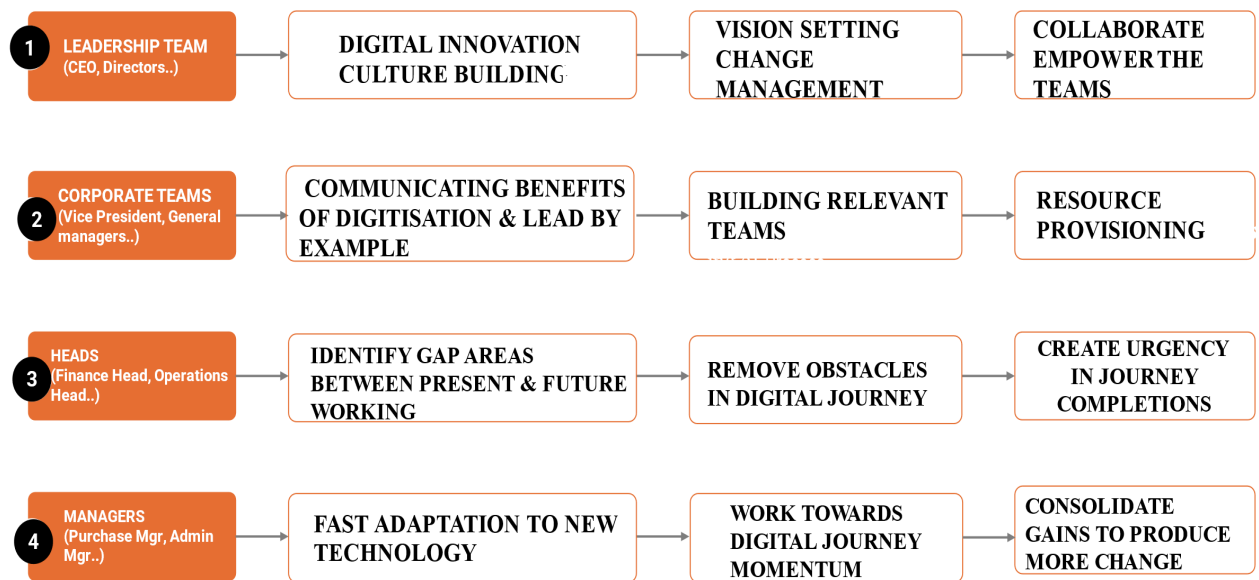


Figure 7 Traits of Leaders at different levels

Figure 7 Clearly depicts the traits of a leader at different levels as below:

1. Leadership to be Visionary

Theoretical Concept: Leaders need to be self-sustained with a clear, compelling vision for digital transformation which is in tandem with the organisation's vision.

Operationalization of the Vision has to be done by the Leaders.

- Clearly define the Vision: Communicate a clear digital transformation vision that aligns with the company's strategic objectives.
- Set Milestones: Establish short-term and long-term goals to achieve the vision.

- Communicate Effectively: Use various channels to consistently share the vision and progress, ensuring all employees understand and buy into the transformation.

2. Strategic Planning

Theoretical Concept: Strategic planning is essential for laying out the roadmap for digital transformation.

Operationalization the planning through proper strategy has to be a focus of Leader.

- Develop a Digital Strategy: Create a comprehensive digital strategy that outlines the technologies to be adopted, the processes to be transformed, and the expected outcomes.
- Resource Allocation: Ensure appropriate resources (financial, human, technological) are allocated to support the strategy.
- Risk Management: Identify potential risks associated with digital transformation and develop mitigation strategies.

3. Change Management

Theoretical Concept: Managing change effectively is crucial for overcoming resistance and ensuring smooth transitions.

Operationalization of the change which will be initiated with digital journey coming in place.

- Change Agents: Identify and empower change agents within the organisation to drive and advocate for digital transformation.

- Training and Development: Provide training programs to equip employees with the necessary skills for new digital tools and processes.
- Communication Plan: Develop a communication plan to address concerns, highlight benefits, and keep everyone informed about the transformation process.

4. Organisational Culture

Theoretical Concept: Cultivating a culture that supports innovation and agility is vital for digital transformation.

Operationalization of the culture to innovate and be flexible to bring in digital journey.

- Inculcate Innovation: Encourage a culture of innovation by supporting new ideas, experimenting with new technologies, and accepting failures as part of the learning process.
- Agile Practices: Implement agile methodologies to enable quick responses to changing market conditions and technological advancements.
- Recognition and Rewards: Recognize and reward employees who contribute significantly to digital transformation efforts.

5. Collaboration and Empowerment

Theoretical Concept: Leaders should promote collaboration and empower teams to take initiative.

Operationalization of working together as a team and empowering the teams to achieve their goals successfully.

- Cross-Functional Teams: Create cross-functional teams to bring diverse perspectives and expertise to digital transformation projects.
- Empower Decision-Making: Delegate decision-making authority to teams working on digital initiatives to foster ownership and accountability.
- Collaborative Tools: Implement collaborative digital tools (e.g., Slack, Microsoft Teams, Trello) to enhance teamwork and communication.

6. Decision Making based on Data processed

Theoretical Concept: The leadership must be well versed with data analytics as it is critical for informed decision-making.

Operationalization by utilising the data processed, creating strategy based on analysis.

- Data Strategy: Develop a data strategy that outlines how data will be collected, managed, and analysed to support digital transformation.
- Analytics Tools: Invest in advanced analytics tools to derive insights from data and inform strategic decisions.
- Performance Metrics: Establish key performance indicators (KPIs) to measure the impact of digital transformation initiatives and make data-driven adjustments.

7. Technological Adaptation

Theoretical Concept: Adopting and integrating the right technologies is essential for digital transformation.

Operationalization by choosing the right technology and integrating the programs for the same.

- Technology Assessment: Conduct a thorough assessment of current technologies and identify gaps that need to be filled to achieve digital transformation goals.
- Pilot Programs: Run pilot programs to test new technologies on a small scale before full-scale implementation.
- Integration Plan: Develop a plan for integrating new technologies with existing systems to ensure seamless operation and minimal disruption.

8. Continuous Improvement

Theoretical Concept: Digital transformation is an ongoing process that requires continuous improvement.

Operationalization by Leaders have to be through continuous evaluation of the digital journey and keep taking necessary steps to ensure smooth progress.

- Feedback Loops: Establish feedback loops to gather insights from employees and customers on digital initiatives and make necessary adjustments.
- Iterative Processes: Implement iterative processes for ongoing evaluation and improvement of digital strategies and technologies.
- Benchmarking: Regularly benchmark against industry standards and best practices to ensure the organisation remains competitive and innovative.

By operationalizing these theoretical concepts, leaders can effectively guide their organisations through the complexities of digital transformation, ensuring sustained growth and competitiveness in the digital age.

3.3 Research Purpose and Questions

Millions of dollars are being invested by businesses in digital transformation projects, but many of them end in failure. They should not only match tech investments with business objectives; but also rely more on insider knowledge than on outside consultants, address insiders' potential concerns about losing their jobs, gain a thorough understanding of how changes will impact the customer experience, and employ tech-inspired process techniques (prototyping, experimentation, etc.) to help bring about change.

When an organisation's digital transformation plan fails, the issue is typically with the organisation's culture, employees' difficulty adjusting because they fear losing their jobs, the organisation's lack of interest policies, or the leaders' lack of competence.

The question now arises that if it is imperative to transform digitally then why is it not happening as rapidly as it should be happening?

Is it due to the process hindrance or is its organisational structuring?

If it is the process or the organisation structure, then what role can Leadership play to bring about a smooth transformation?

What skill set and competencies can be built up in Leaders to make them Digital Leaders?

How can this Digital Leadership role help in re-engineering of organisation processes thereby improving customer experience and help organisation overall growth?

This research paper not only aims to answer the above questions, but the purpose of this research is also to provide effective methods and solutions to the organisation to modernise and make their functioning digital in this cutthroat competitive world. The role of leadership in structuring the digital transformation journey shall hold utmost importance.

The Internet of Things (IoT), artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning (ML), and big data analytics (BDA) are some of the most innovative technologies that have changed the way businesses work, how employees interact with each other, how they do their jobs, and the way the government is set up (Bertello, Bogers and Bernardi, 2022). This kind of progress in technology has led to a change in the way social systems and technical activities need to work together to make mass tailoring of goods or services possible (Bednar and Welch, 2020). Because of this, studies have shown that companies will have to change the way they work to keep up with the new international trend (Chatterjee, 2019). The progress of technology in industry depends on its ability to adapt swiftly (Skare and Soriano, 2021). Putting artificial intelligence (AI) into customer relationship management (CRM) tools has changed the way businesses look at their huge amounts of customer data (Chatterjee et al., 2021). The findings of the study by (Dehghanpouri,

Soltani and Rostamzadeh, 2020) suggests that customer satisfaction is substantially impacted by the perceived level of service quality. But the level of customer happiness is greatly influenced by the level of trust.

According to the study (Dess and Picken, 2000) organisational leaders must rely less on conventional structures and controls, and concentrate their efforts on five main areas to position their firms to compete and win in the competitive climate of the twenty-first century:

- Developing and disseminating internal knowledge; building a culture of innovation.
- Challenging the status quo and fostering creativity.
- Gathering and integrating external information.
- Empowering personnel at all levels.
- Using strategic vision to encourage and inspire.

The application of strategic vision determines its power. A clear, compelling, effectively conveyed strategic vision inspires and stimulates a widely held sense of company purpose and direction.

Creating an organization that can learn from and adapt to a complex, interrelated, and fast-changing world requires having a vision like this. Digital transformation is more about people than it is about technology, despite common opinion. The process of transformation is driven by people. Technology just makes it possible for employees to operate in diverse ways to better serve the organization's clients.

Thus, the role of Leaders in driving the digital transformation journey can be very well described in three steps as below in Figure 8. With this the leaders can embrace the new change and lead the organisation to the path of innovation and growth. The employees looking up to their leaders understand the change helps to stay ahead of the competition around. It brings about improved efficiency and productivity. This ultimately leads to enhanced customer experience and increased revenues.

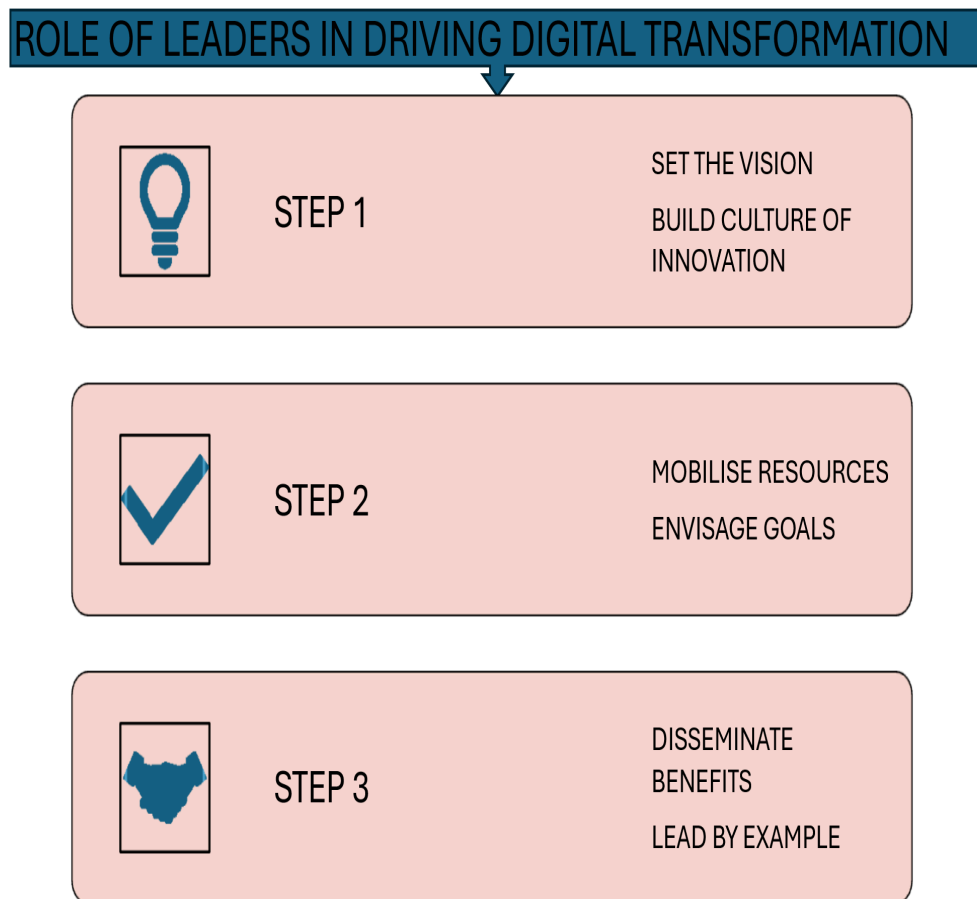


Figure 8 Digital Transformation driven by Leaders (FasterCapital, n.d.)

3.4 Research Design and Strategy

The researcher used a qualitative research design to address the study questions outlined in the preceding section. Open-ended, in-depth questions were asked during the semi-structured survey/interview process by the researcher. In doing so, the researcher made several observations during the survey. The researcher codified the information gathered from these questions and utilised it to create themes. The most likely scenario or explanation for the phenomenon was developed using these observations.

The type of investigation that was done for this project is descriptive in nature. By developing a theoretical framework, the study tried to investigate and offer further insights into this research.

The research strategy is a technique used to examine the characteristics of data in order to get outcomes consistent with the goals of the study. Research using mathematical, statistical, and fact-based methodologies lend themselves well to the use of quantitative techniques, whereas research involving participants' actual experiences lend themselves to the application of qualitative tactics.

Through interviews and an analysis of the individuals' experiences and opinions, this study employed a qualitative methodology. In particular, the inquiries aimed to explore the path taken by the company's executives.

3.5 Population and Sample

Even though sampling is crucial to the application of qualitative techniques, data collection and analysis have gotten more attention than sampling. In qualitative interview-based research, (Robinson, 2014) presented a four-point sampling strategy that combines theory and procedure for the following.

- Specifying inclusion and exclusion criteria for possible participants in order to define a sample universe.
- Balancing practical and epistemological considerations when determining sample size
- Choosing a sample technique, such as snowball sampling, stratified sampling, quota sampling, random sampling, convenience sampling, cell sampling, or a single-case selection strategy.
- Sample sourcing, encompassing advertisement, enticement, and participant location.

The degree to which the aforementioned guidelines are followed in the research determine its coherence, transparency, and ultimately its acceptability and credibility.

Ziebland et al. claim that the main goal of the sample technique in qualitative research is to reflect a broad range of viewpoints and experiences, not to replicate how frequently they occur in the broader community (Ziebland and McPherson, 2006). Despite the tiny sample size, the researcher can still get valuable information from the respondents and draw insightful conclusions from their perspectives (Creswell et al., 2003).

Furthermore, the interview method excels because of the small sample size because it only needs a small number of participants to get rich and detailed data (Condie, 2012).

The researcher has to establish the criteria before they may approach a sample. This criterion, according to (Merriam, 1998) generates a list of crucial characteristics that the sample needs to have depending on the goal of the study and its theoretical framework.

Hence this qualitative research is carried through snowball sampling and convenience sampling.

3.6 Participant Selection

Selecting participants for a survey on the role of digital leaders in structuring the digital evolution of an organisation involves identifying individuals who have relevant experiences and insights. Here's a structured approach to ensure a representative and meaningful sample:

1. Define the Objectives

Clarify the goals of your survey. Determine what specific aspects of digital leadership you want to explore, such as:

- Leadership skills and responsibilities necessary for digital transformation.
- Impact of digital leadership on organisational culture and performance.
- Challenges faced by digital leaders during digital transformation.

2. Identify the Target Population

Determine the types of individuals whose experiences and opinions will be most valuable. Consider including:

- Digital Leaders: CIOs, CTOs, Chief Digital Officers, and other executives responsible for digital strategy.
- Senior Management: CEOs, COOs, and other top executives who have a strategic overview of the organisation's digital initiatives.
- Middle Management: Department heads and project managers involved in implementing digital transformation projects.
- IT and Digital Transformation Teams: Professionals directly working on digital initiatives and technology integration.
- Employees: Workforce at various levels who are affected by digital transformation.

3. Criteria for their selection

- Experience in Digital Projects: Include participants who have been involved in digital transformation projects.
- Role in Organization: Ensure a mix of roles to get a holistic view (executives, managers, IT staff, etc.).
- Industry: Consider industry-specific insights if your survey spans multiple industries.

- Geographic Location: If relevant, ensure geographic diversity to capture different regional perspectives.

3.7 Instrumentation

Creating a structured set of questions and tools to collect relevant data. Here's a detailed guide on developing effective instrumentation:

1. Survey Objectives

Clearly define the objectives of the survey to guide the development of the questions. For example:

- Assessing the skills and qualities of effective digital leaders.
- Understanding the impact of digital leadership on organisational culture and performance.
- Identifying the challenges digital leaders face during digital transformation.

2. Survey Format

Decide on the format of your survey, typically a mix of qualitative and quantitative questions to gather comprehensive insights.

3. Question Types

Include a variety of question types to capture different dimensions of the topic:

- Demographic Questions: To categorise respondents by role, industry, experience, etc.
 - Example: What is your current role in the organisation? (Multiple Choice: CIO, CTO, CEO, Manager, etc.)
- Scale Questions: To measure attitudes and perceptions on a scale (e.g., 1-5, strongly disagree to strongly agree).
 - Example: Rate your agreement with the following statement: "Our digital leader effectively communicates the vision for digital transformation." (1-Strongly Disagree, 5-Strongly Agree)
- Multiple Choice Questions: To gather specific information.
 - Example: What digital tools are primarily used in your organisation's transformation initiatives? (Multiple Choice: Cloud Computing, AI, IoT, etc.)
 - In which department were the biggest digital challenges your business faced while growing?
Multiple Choice:
 - Challenges were faced in Sales & Marketing processes.
 - Challenges were faced in Business Administration processes.
 - Challenges were faced in the Production & Supply chain.
 - Challenges were faced in HR & Recruitment
 - Challenges were faced in Finance Management
 - Challenges were faced in Purchase Management

- Ranking Questions: To prioritise factors or attributes.
 - Example: Rank the following skills in terms of importance for a digital leader: Strategic Thinking, Communication, Technical Knowledge, etc.
- Open-Ended Questions: To collect detailed, qualitative insights.
 - Example: In your opinion, what are the biggest challenges faced by digital leaders in your organisation?

4. Draft Survey Questions

Develop a comprehensive list of questions aligned with your objectives. Here's a sample structure:

Section 1: Demographics

1. What is your current role in the organisation?
2. How many years of experience do you have in your current role?
3. What industry does your organisation operate in?
4. What is the size of your organisation? (Small, Medium, Large)

Section 2: Leadership Skills and Qualities

5. How important are the following skills for a digital leader? (Rate on a scale of 1-5)
 - Strategic Thinking
 - Technical Knowledge
 - Communication

- Innovation
- Risk Management

6. In your experience, which of the above skills is most critical for successful digital transformation?

Section 3: Impact of Digital Leadership

7. How effective is your digital leader in driving the following areas? (Rate on a scale of 1-5)

- Implementing new technologies
- Enhancing organisational culture
- Improving operational efficiency
- Driving innovation

8. Can you provide an example of a successful digital initiative led by your digital leader?

Section 4: Challenges and Barriers

9. What are the biggest challenges your digital leader faces? (Select all that apply)

- Resistance to change
- Lack of skills and expertise
- Budget constraints
- Cybersecurity concerns
- Integration with existing systems

10. How does your digital leader address these challenges?

Section 5: Outcomes and Recommendations

11. How has digital leadership impacted your organisation's performance? (Rate on a scale of 1-5)

- Revenue growth
- Customer satisfaction
- Employee productivity
- Market competitiveness

12. What recommendations would you give to improve digital leadership in your organisation?

5. Pilot Testing

Before full deployment, conduct a pilot test with a small group of respondents to identify any issues with the survey questions or format. Gather feedback on:

- Clarity of questions
- Relevance of the content
- Time required to complete the survey
- Technical issues with the survey tool

6. Deployment

Choose an appropriate survey tool (e.g., SurveyMonkey, Qualtrics, Google Forms) and deploy the survey to your selected participants. Ensure the survey is accessible and easy to complete.

7. Data Collection and Analysis

Collect the responses and analyse the data using statistical software or tools provided by the survey platform. Look for patterns and insights that align with your survey objectives.

8. Reporting

Prepare a report summarising the findings:

- Executive Summary: Key insights and recommendations.
- Detailed Analysis: Breakdown of responses with charts and graphs.
- Qualitative Insights: Summary of open-ended responses.

3.8 Data Collection Procedures

The way in which technology has evolved, and in particular the rapid advancement in cloud computing capabilities, it means businesses are more empowered than ever to deliberately and strategically transform. Hence, we also assume that with such a widespread prevalence of Covid, businesses have become aware of the sudden office shut down impacts and more than ever eager to adopt technology to help them run the business in such scenarios. It is also very imperative how digital transformation brings with it, the opportunity to enhance competitive advantage and improve user experience by leveraging technology to make radical improvements.

Therefore, it becomes imperative that to collect the data for this research, focus cannot be on just one type of source. There had to be multiple sources, evaluating research papers,

journals, blogs etc. Along the way came to help the rich industry experience of more than two decades of research.

Primary and secondary sources were the sources of data used in this study. Primary data is described as the initial instance of a piece of work. Primary data for this study is gathered from google survey form, then sending structured subject questionnaires to leaders and employees of organisations where the digital transformation journey is underway to authenticate the results of this study. The researcher transcribes questionnaires for all future references.

The researcher has read numerous articles, journals, papers, and books to get as much material as possible that is pertinent to this inquiry. The literature review is where secondary data is gathered.

Thus, to understand the perspective of people and come to an understanding on this survey was conducted through sharing Google Survey Form on various mediums. Primary data was collected from books, journals, conference material and online material available which was the basis of this survey.

Post this, questionnaire was shared with convenience sampling to derive the resultant of the role of leaders in structuring the digital transformation in their organisation.

As is stated in his study by (Mason, 2010) there were 560 studies found that met the conditions for qualitative research on Theses.com. It was used to get a sample of PhD studies that used qualitative methods and conversations as the main way to collect data. The sample numbers of these studies were then analysed. It was found that the average sample size was 31, but the samples were not spread out randomly. A statistically significant number of studies had sample sizes that were multiples of ten only. Thus what matters more is the kind of questions asked and to the right kind of people rather than the sample size.

3.9 Data Analysis

People who have firsthand experience with the topic of the research are sent questionnaires as part of the data gathering process for qualitative studies. Since the researcher selects the pertinent questions on subject, it is assumed that the researcher has pertinent subject-matter knowledge as well. In order to properly educate themselves on the subject under investigation, the researcher did a literature review in addition to drawing on their own life experience to acquire knowledge. In addition, life experience analysis is laborious, complicated, and subject to the researcher's interpretation. Therefore, the researcher invested time in creating a system that will allow them to evaluate, categorise, and interpret the information they have gathered.

According to Taylor-Powell et. al in 2003, this involves the following major steps .

- "Get to know your data": A thorough understanding of the data gathered is necessary for accurate analysis. The data to be analysed in qualitative analyses should be examined multiple times so that the researcher fully understands both the data and the context. The researcher also needs to weed out data that is possibly biased and less informative.
- "Focus the analysis" - The investigator must first go over the objectives and points of interest of the study. One way to achieve this is to concentrate on the subject or question. In this instance, the respondents' responses to the open-ended questions asked during the online survey or interview questionnaire are the focus of the researcher. To make it easier to see the similarities and differences in the respondents' responses, the data is arranged according to question.
- "Categorise information" - Information can be used in research by assigning number codes to variables in quantitative analysis. This strategy is ineffective when used in quantitative analysis. The information is instead arranged according to themes, patterns, and logical groupings. This is the most labour-intensive step, but it's also the most crucial one for qualitative analysis. Since qualitative data can be difficult to interpret and interpret in a clear manner, it is important to organise it well. In this way, the researcher's effort can be spared, and data retrieval made simpler.

Hence it is impertinent to follow the above rules in categorization of the data. To accomplish this, the researcher read each question several times to get familiar with the data being worked with. It is also necessary to read each response more than once to

ensure that the researcher did not miss any context or misunderstand it. This allowed to underline important sections and details that might have been missed on the first reading.

3.10 Research Design Limitations

There are certain restrictions on this study that could limit how far the results can be applied. It is possible that the experiences of the people answering questions do not accurately represent the experiences of all businesses or industries because this study used online surveys and questionnaires with a limited sample size. The sample was chosen by convenience and snowballing sampling as well as a screener survey. Having said that, it is crucial to emphasise that the calibre of the data being produced and examined as a result of the survey matters more than the sample size. Additionally, even though the respondents to the survey and questionnaire had plenty of time to respond, it's likely that they did not remember the episodes as they actually occurred and may have overlooked information that could have an impact on the study's conclusion. Furthermore their relevant experience and status as subject matter experts at the time of answering questions constitutes a basic premise of this study. Finally, even though the respondents were told and guaranteed that their responses would remain private, it's quite possible that their responses did not fairly represent what they had experienced.

3.11 Conclusion

Companies need to know what they're good at, what their core skills are, and how they can improve upon them in order to do well in the digital change process. It is not a surprise that digital change decisions usually come from the top, and chief digital officers are often seen as the ones who make it all happen. Every day, as orchestrators, they have to negotiate with the present business units and deal with changes in the company. As enablers, the people should be aware of the risks that digital change poses to the current business units. They also need to find solutions that are good for everyone. Working together across organisations at a structured level is needed for digital tactics to work (Schneider and Kokshagina, 2021).

When doing research, primary sources of data are the first pieces of proof or information that the researcher got. Some of these sources are like trials, interviews, quizzes, surveys, and polls. They give first-hand reports and raw facts that are necessary for correct findings and analysis. Primary sources are very helpful because they give real, unfiltered information about a topic. This lets experts look into things in more depth and come up with ideas or results that are well-supported.

Thus, the researcher has investigated research design using both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. When the phenomenon under study is connected to the participants' own experiences, a qualitative research design might be used. The study

employed two primary research instruments: a screener survey for the purpose of vetting possible subjects, and a semi-structured questionnaire consisting of few open-ended, insightful questions.

The primary source of data for this study was the questions answered, with some of the answers being contextualised by the screener survey results. The sections above presented and covered the many methods for data collecting, coding, and analysis employed in this investigation.

In study, secondary sources of data are pieces of information that have already been gathered, analysed, and displayed by other people. Books, papers, studies, and reviews are some of these sources. Researchers can get useful context and background information from secondary sources that summarise, explain, and analyse main data. They are very important for finding out what is already known about a subject, finding study gaps, and building on other people's work to come up with new ideas and insights. Thus, researchers have to make sure that extra data is reliable and correct by following these steps.

While gathering the secondary data, it was ensured the journals, reviews, and books were picked with relevant content. The sources' trustworthiness by looking at the credentials of the author and the name of the publication were checked to whatever extent possible. The information was compared from different sources to make sure it is correct. It was

ensured the data's date is up-to-date and useful. The methods were evaluated which were used by authors to gather the data, to see how reliable it is. Also, it looked at the situation in which the data was gathered to see if there are any flaws or limits. There is data available for digital transformations taking place all over the world, but the success rate seems to be still very low. Hence it becomes imperative that the studies refer not only about the digital platforms, their need, effective use but also the right kind of attitude, behaviour and strategy by leaders to get the digital transformation journey moving in the organisation.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

4.1 Research questions and objectives:

In the survey (Tabrizi et al., 2019) conducted amongst the directors, and C-level executives, digital transformation was found to be the number one area of concern. As well as a study (Zobell, 2018) shows that 70% of the Digital Transformations hardly achieve their objectives. \$900 billion went wasted out of \$1.3 trillion spent on Digital Transformation last year itself. DT efforts often do not give expected results which shakes the trust of the Leaders (Sun, M., 2018).

Thus, the objective was to research on the above areas of concern, and to provide effective methods and solutions to the organisation to modernise and make their functioning digital in this cutthroat competitive world.

A. To do a survey among diversified roles and industry, to help get an unbiased response.

B. To get the answers to the following questions.

1. State of Technical Skill set is appropriate?
2. Budget & Resource Availability is present.
3. Leadership is agile, and a roadmap is planned.

If the answer is yes to all the above questions, identify which hindrance is leading to slow pace of Digital Transformation, Else if answer is no to any one of the above questions, then it could be one of the reasons along with other hindrances of slow pace of DT.

4.2 Results of Research Survey conducted through sharing Survey Form on various mediums:

1. PURPOSE: DATA COLLECTION FROM DIVERSIFIED PROFILES TO HAVE AN UNBIASED STUDY- The results in below Figure 9 show that people at different roles participated in the survey.

Q3. Which of the following best describe your role in the organization?
116 responses

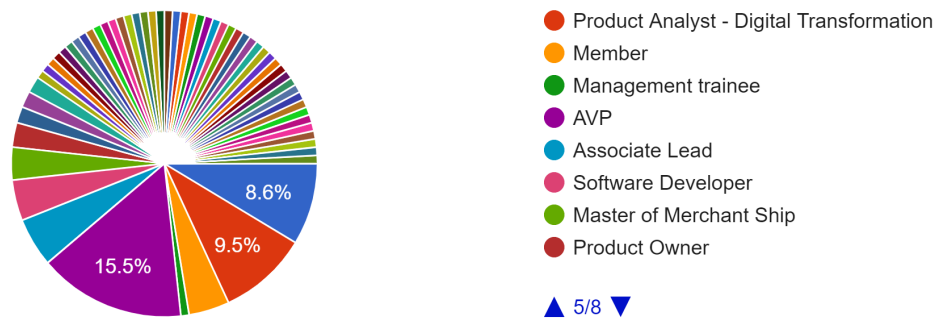


Figure 9 Showing the different profiles of people

2. PURPOSE: DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION MATURITY LEVEL ON A

SCALE OF 1-10 - The results in below Figure 10 shows the maturity level is good for

DT

Q4. Digital Transformation provides much needed competitive edge to the organization. On the scale of 1-10, rate your organizations Digital Transformation maturity level?

116 responses

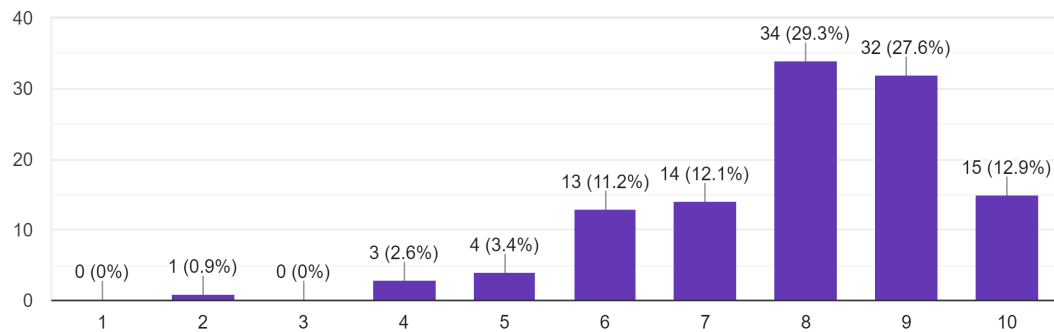


Figure 10 Total number of organisations having DT maturity

Checking how far along an organisation is in its digital transformation helps show what needs to be fixed and guides strategy planning to improve digital skills. This test helps businesses figure out where their digital infrastructure is weak and where it has room to grow. It helps people come up with focused plans to improve digital processes, which makes sure that technology knowledge keeps growing.

3. PURPOSE: LEADERSHIP ROLE PREPAREDNESS - It is clear from below Figure 11 that 44% of employees strongly agree that their Leadership is ready for the DT journey

Q5. Leaders in your organization are preparing for the journey of Digitalization, Digitization and Digital Transformation. Do you agree with it?

116 responses

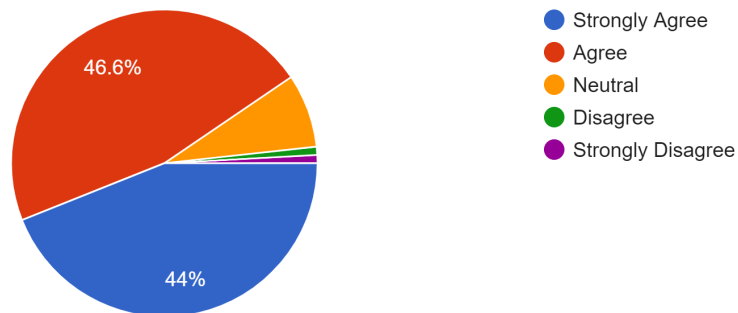


Figure 11 Leadership figures in percentage which is ready to take up Digital Transformation journey

When employees think that their leaders are geared up for the digital transformation journey, it helps in a number of important ways. It makes people believe that the leaders can handle the complicated aspects of digital change. The workforce feels confident that the company is well-equipped and has a clear plan, which can boost mood and get people more involved in their work. It also encourages everyone in the company to work together to reach the goals of digital change, which boosts collaboration and dedication. In the end, this alignment between workers and managers makes it more likely that the digital transformation will go well.

4. PURPOSE : TECHNICAL SKILLSET STATUS OF LEADERS – The results in Figure 12 shows that 51 out of 116 respondents say their Leaders posses the required Technical skillsets for Digital Transformation journey

Q6. To embark on the journey of Digital Transformation, specific skillsets are required. How do you rate the Digital skillsets of Leaders in the organization?

116 responses

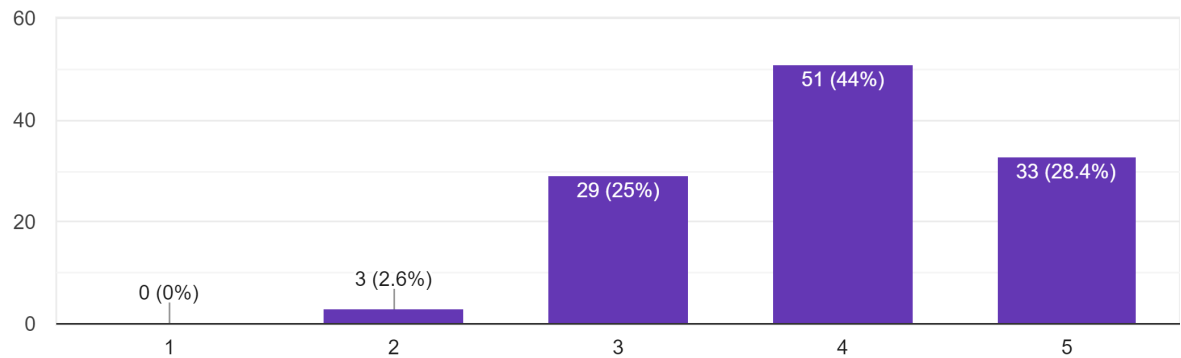


Figure 12 Total number of Leaders in the Organisation who possess the Technical skill sets to embark on DT journey

The technical skill sets of the Leaders hold importance as they will lead by example, ensuring the productivity of others is not lost due to lack of technical know-how of the teams. The success achieved is a teamwork when Leaders share their technical knowledge with their teams and empower them through different means to take the digital transformation journey ahead.

5. PURPOSE: BUDGET & RESOURCE ALLOCATION - The results in below Figure 13 shows that the 59% agree budget allocation is sufficient for the DT journey in their organisation. 28% say it is quite sufficient.

Q7. Is there a sufficient budget allocated in your organization for innovation in products and services through Digital Transformation?
116 responses

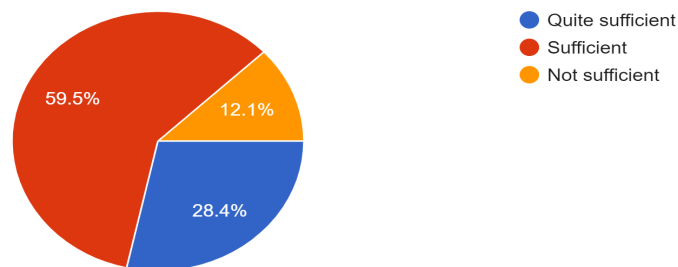


Figure 13 The sufficiency of the budget in percentage in the organisation

6. PURPOSE: LEADERSHIP AGILITY IN ADOPTION OF DT – The results in Figure 14 show that 65% employees agree that Leaders are taking active initiatives to implement collaborative and agile culture in making the organisation ready for DT challenges

Q8. Are the Leaders taking active initiatives to implement collaborative and agile culture in making the organization ready to take digital transformation challenges and risks?

116 responses

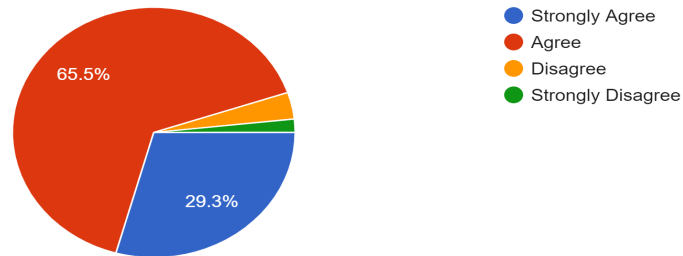


Fig.14 Percentage of employees showing the active initiatives of Leaders for DT journey.

7. PURPOSE: TO UNDERSTAND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION ROADMAP

PLANNING IS DONE WELL – Figure 15 indicates that 53% agree that roadmap is well planned, and organisations have the path ready.

A well-defined digital transformation roadmap is a strategic blueprint that outlines the essential steps an organisation must take to effectively integrate digital technologies across its operations. It serves as a navigational guide through the intricate process of digital transformation, ensuring that all aspects of the business are aligned with the new digital initiatives.

Q10a. Has the organization built a well- defined digital transformation path for future?
116 responses

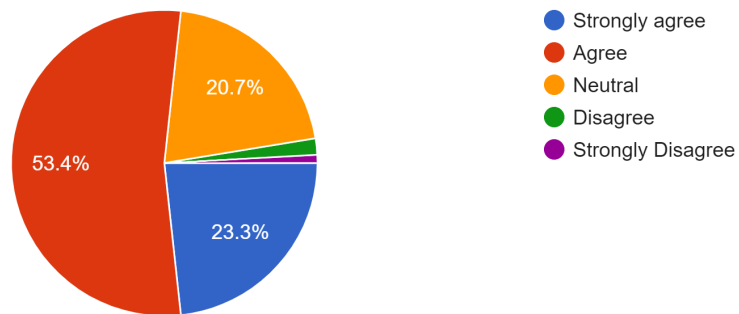


Figure 15 The Pie chart highlights employee agreement to roadmap planning in DT journey.

Following the structured approach, organisations can develop a comprehensive and actionable digital transformation roadmap, guiding them through the complexities of digital change and positioning them for long-term success.

8. PURPOSE: HINDRANCES LEADING TO SLOW GROWTH OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION- From Figure 16 it is clearly visible at the end of the survey that despite having all the adequate requirements for DT journey, the pace of DT is slow majorly because of resistance to change from employees. This comes from fear of new learnings leading to failures and ultimately job loss fear. Thus, there needs to be now an opportunity for a long-drawn strategy of Digital Leaders to eradicate this fear and make the journey smooth.

Q12. What according to you is the biggest hindrance for your organization in adopting Digital Transformation?

116 responses

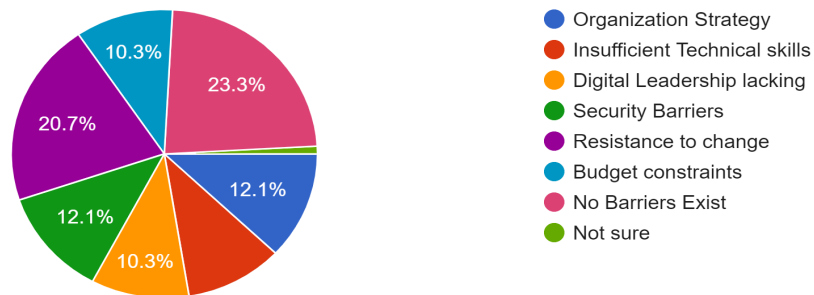


Figure 16 Depicts the hindrances faced by Organizations during their Digital Transformation journey

4.3 Summary of Findings & Conclusion

Keeping in mind the technology mayhem erupting for certain traditional industries and the obvious reason being digital transformation resulting in totally fresh business models there has not been much academic research on the ways of progression of these models. If Research in marketing has focused on digital advertising, social media effects on one hand, focus of research in information systems has been on technical developments and its acceptance leading to return on investment.

As rightly mentioned, the action of CIO does not affect the functions of IT in the organisation, but it impacts the entire organisation (Bongiorno, Rizzo and Vaia, 2018). Previous studies believe lack of skill set, budget constraint or roadmap not defined

(ZoBell, 2018) as the challenges faced in DT journey. Digital Transformation is a challenging strategic issue and cannot be treated similar to any other organisational strategy (Hess et al., 2016). Hence the survey conducted with answers to this leads to understanding the most common challenges faced by organisations in their digital transformation journey. Digital transformation was found to be the number one area of concern (Tabrizi et al., 2019) and leaders are ensuring technical know-how to overcome this challenge as the majority of participants of the survey conducted say their leaders possess the required technical skillsets for DT journey (Figure 4.), the budget allocation is also sufficient (Figure 5.) eliminating the earlier finding of lack of technical know-how of leaders for this transformation (Hai, Van and Thi Tuyet, 2021). Despite having all the adequate requirements for digital transformation journey, the pace of DT is slow majorly because of resistance to change from employees (Figure 8.) whereas earlier studies mentioned lack of skill set, budget constraint, roadmap not defined etc (ZoBell, 2018) to be main areas of concern. This resistance to change could be from fear of new learnings leading to failures and ultimately job loss fear. Thus, there needs to be now an opportunity for a long-drawn strategy of digital leaders to eradicate this fear and make the journey faster. This major obstacle in the way of digital transformation initiatives -resistance to change, employee resistance to new procedures or technology may be from a fear of losing their jobs, a lack of control, or a lack of experience with digital tools.

The impact of organisational culture is crucial in determining how people feel about change. Digital transformation initiatives may encounter resistance from cultures that are excessively bureaucratic or reluctant to change. In order to effectively overcome

opposition, leadership strategies need to promote an environment that values creativity, openness, and ongoing education. To ensure seamless transitions, they should explain the goals of digital projects, include staff in the process of change, and offer sufficient support and training.

The employees agree that their leaders are taking steps to ready their organisations to take up the digital transformation journey (Figure 6). They also have a roadmap planned for the digital transformation journey of their organisation (Figure 7.). Hence once the hindrances are identified and handled by the digital leader this can be used to reduce digital transformation journey timelines, help in modernising the organisation, employee satisfaction through effective leadership, better customer experience and overall growth of the organisation.

Business model innovations are primarily reflected in using digital technologies to enable the deployment of a wider range of business models than previously available to a firm (Li, 2020).

When the businesses need to strive in this digitalized world, they would need to change lots of their working and come together from their silos to aim for similar goals (Weill and Woerner, 2018).

However, digital transformation shouldn't intimidate anyone. The COVID pandemic certainly made us realise how rapidly businesses need to evolve, and in order to survive

and thrive in today's modern business environment, we need to embrace digital transformation and if we don't want to be left behind, we need to modernise for the future.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

5.1 Discussion of Results

Leaders can effectively reduce employee resistance to digital technology by taking several strategic steps. First, they should clearly communicate the vision and benefits of adopting digital tools, ensuring that employees understand how these changes align with organisational goals and improve their work experience. Involving employees early in the decision-making process and seeking their input fosters a sense of ownership and reduces apprehension. Providing comprehensive training and continuous support helps employees gain confidence in using new technologies. Leaders should also create an environment where employees feel safe to express their concerns and address these openly, offering reassurances about job security and workload. By adopting the technology themselves and demonstrating visible commitment, leaders set a positive example. Additionally, promoting a culture of innovation, encouraging experimentation, and recognizing those who embrace digital tools can reinforce positive attitudes. Setting realistic expectations and celebrating milestones maintain morale, while sharing success stories and implementing pilot projects can showcase the tangible benefits of digital transformation. Finally, fostering collaboration and teamwork through cross-functional initiatives helps build a sense of community and shared purpose in navigating the digital transition.

PURPOSE: THE PURPOSE IS TO UNDERSTAND THE DEPARTMENT WHERE THE BIGGEST DIGITAL CHALLENGES WERE BEING FACED - The results in below Figure 19 shows the major challenges are in Sales & Marketing processes, on which an organizations major revenue stream depends

Q2. In which department were the biggest digital challenges your business faced while growing ?
62 responses

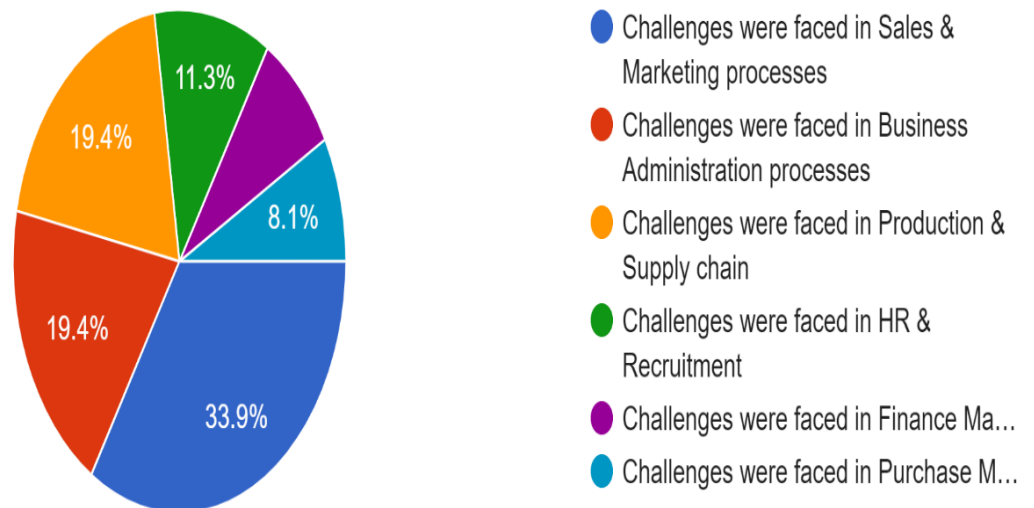


Figure 19 shows the major challenges are in Sales & Marketing processes

Challenges seen were almost 34% in sales and marketing, which is the heart of any organisation. If they face any challenge, organisational growth is hampered. For any organisation to evolve and grow it is very important that they communicate the pain areas with their leaders and find solutions to overcome them, what can be better than

technology tools like different CRM, Hubspot, Salesforce or SAP etc. Digital tools such as these are if effectively implemented and successfully used, the organisation can improve customer satisfaction due to timely service to clients, teams can flag off any gaps or discrepancies and immediate action can be triggered.

Digital technology has big effects on the environment, mostly because it uses a lot of resources and leaves a big carbon footprint. To lessen these effects, people need to practise digital sobriety. Hence the organisations need to carefully evaluate which department comes in the priority list.

The organisations can start their Digital journey by digitalizing their Lead generation processes first and then start bringing other digital solutions in the organisation. Once the journey starts, the focus should be to have enhanced customer experience which can be done by taking small steps by training the workforce, accepting feedback on change management and implementing the best processes.

When a company wants to change a part of its business by digitising a product or service that was previously provided in a different way, this is called a business model shift. This process shines a light on new ideas and pushes people to think outside the box in order to improve business results generally. When leaders of a company see a chance to change how customers buy or use a product or service, they usually start a business model

makeover. It could also be caused by the strategy moves of competitors in the market, which make the company want to follow the same trends.

Therefore, businesses can grow and be successful if they buy the right tools and teach their sales staff how to use them properly. This will help sales teams do their jobs better and help their companies grow. Digital change can happen in many ways, using a wide range of tools and platforms. Standard tools include CRMs, cloud solutions, data analytics tools, and process automation software. However, AI and machine learning are what really make advanced forecasting, customer service, and decision-making possible. For that matter in today's world, AI and machine learning are necessary for digital marketers to be able to make better predictions, help customers, and make decisions. These technologies use big sets of data to guess what trends will happen, make relationships with customers more personal, and give information that helps businesses make decisions. In digital marketing, it's important for companies to use AI and ML to make the customer experience better. Machine learning algorithms can find trends in huge amounts of customer data that allow experiences to be highly customised based on each person's tastes.

PURPOSE:TO UNDERSTAND THE SKILLS OF LEADERS INVOLVED IN DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY OF THE ORGANISATION - The results in below Figure 20 shows the Domain knowledge with 25.8% and Rich Technology Experience with 24%, combined together are clearly the game changers.

If there's another active person involved from your founding team in this digital initiative, could you describe any impact that can be attributed to their experience, industry knowledge, skills and working expertise on digitalization projects?

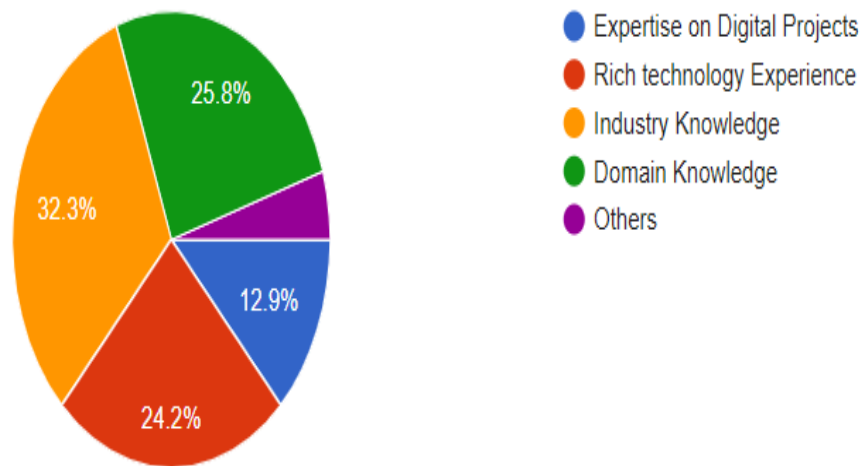


Figure 20 Leadership skill sets as an enabler of digital initiatives

Rich technology enablers along with Domain knowledge are the traits of Digital Leaders which will help them achieve their digital journey goal efficiently.

PURPOSE: TO UNDERSTAND UPTO WHAT EXTENT WERE THE LEADERS ABLE TO DO GOAL SETTING FOR THEIR TEAMS WORKING ON THE DIGITALISATION GOAL ACHIEVEMENTS WITH THEM.

1. Setting goals for a project achievement amongst the involved internal as well as external teams (if existing). Respondents confirmed most of the time having been able to set the goals for their teams

<i>Q4. Marking on a scale of 1-5 with 1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Most of the time, 5 = Always, please answer upto what extent were you able to make the following true for the teams in your organization, working on the digitalisation goal achievements with you. [Setting goals for a project achievement amongst the involved internal as well as external teams(if existing).]</i>	COUNTA of Q4.
	0
Always	10
Most of the time	35
Never	4
Rarely	4
Sometimes	9
Grand Total	62

Table 1 Showing the goal setting achievement count

Almost 90% agreed to have set goals for project achievement combined with Always, most of the time and sometimes. Thereby proving that they followed the right strategy to set goals and visions to achieve their digital initiatives.

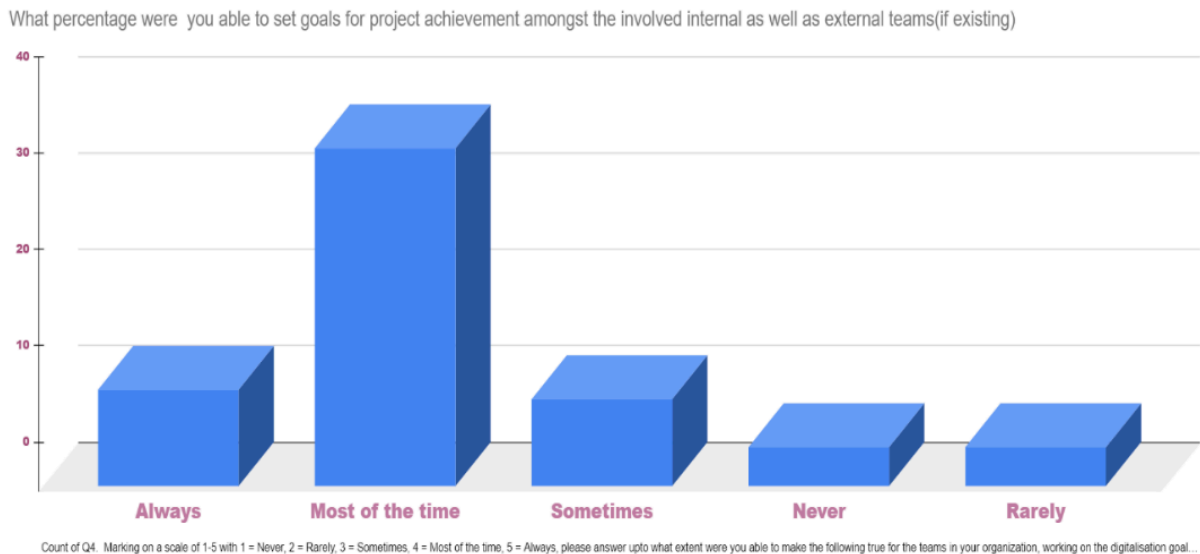


Figure 21 Scale of Goal setting for internal and external teams

Setting goals is important for workers during the digital transformation journey because it helps them stay focused and on track. When you set clear goals, your employees know what you expect of them and how their work fits into the bigger picture of the change. This clarity makes team members more motivated and engaged because they can see how their work is making a difference. Goals are also used to track growth, which lets you make changes quickly and keep getting better. Setting goals that are both attainable and important can also help workers deal with stress and resistance to change by giving them

more confidence and making them better prepared to use new technologies and methods. Overall, having goals is important for making sure that everyone's efforts are in line with the organisation's goals and that the digital change journey goes smoothly. Hence if the goal setting is done with digital maturity, it is sure to reap benefits for the organisation.

PURPOSE: TO UNDERSTAND HOW FAR IT HELPED DURING THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY IF THE LEADERS WERE ABLE TO INVOLVE THEIR TEAMS IN ACTION PLANNING TO MEET THE OBJECTIVES

2. Actively involving all project team members in action planning to achieve project goals. Respondents agreed to have benefitted by involving the team members in planning

<i>Q4. Marking on a scale of 1-5 with 1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Most of the time, 5 = Always, please answer upto what extent were you able to make the following true for the teams in your organization, working on the digitalisation goal achievements with you. [Actively involving all project team members in action planning to achieve project goals.]</i>	COUNTA of Q4.
	0
Always	9
Most of the time	31
Never	2
Rarely	5
Sometimes	15
Grand Total	62

Table 2 Percentage of leaders agreeing to actively involve team members in their action planning to achieve project goals. Involvement of team members is a sure short achiever.

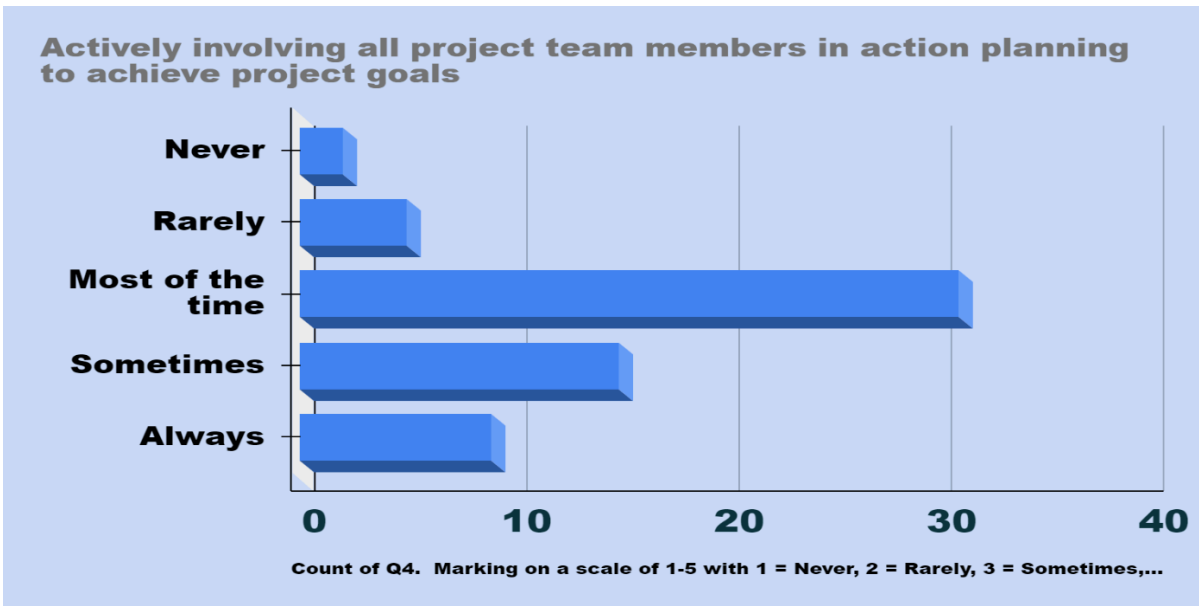


Table 3 Scale showing the agreement in involvement of teams in project action planning.

The Digital Leaders are aware that having the team help plan the project makes it much more likely to succeed by giving everyone a sense of ownership and focus. When workers are involved in planning, they bring a wide range of thoughts and points of view, which can help come up with better and more creative solutions. This joint method makes sure that problems are found early and dealt with before they happen. Planning as a team also boosts morale and participation because everyone owns their responsibility and knows their work is respected and important to the project's success. Everyone is on the same page about the goals, timelines, and roles, which makes communication and teamwork better. Ultimately, getting the team involved in planning the project leads to

better decisions, more responsibility, and a stronger, more unified effort to reach the project goals.

PURPOSE IS TO IDENTIFY WHETHER LEADERS PROVIDED TIMELY FEEDBACK TO TEAMS WHILE THEY PERFORMED THEIR GOALS IN THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY

Upto what percent were you able to provide the project team timely feedback on performance in relation to goals of the project.

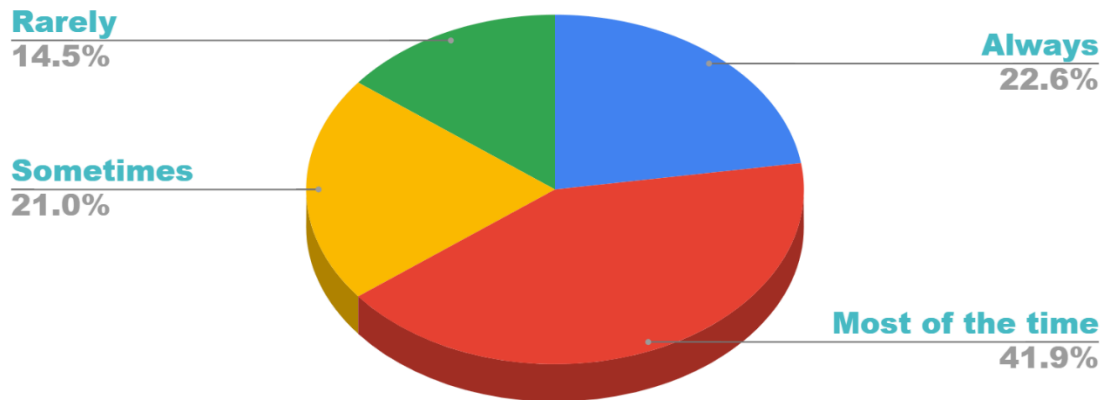


Figure 22 Providing the project team timely feedback on performance in relation to goals of the project.

More than 60% leaders provided timely feedback to their teams while they were working on their goals during the organisation’s digital transformation journey.

PURPOSE IS TO ENCOURAGE TEAM MEMBERS THROUGH MOTIVATION AND OTHER MEASURES TO INTERACT AND SHARE INFORMATION WITH EACH OTHER TO BRING ABOUT RIGHT PROGRESS IN THE DT JOURNEY

Encouraging all team members to interact and share information with each other during the project

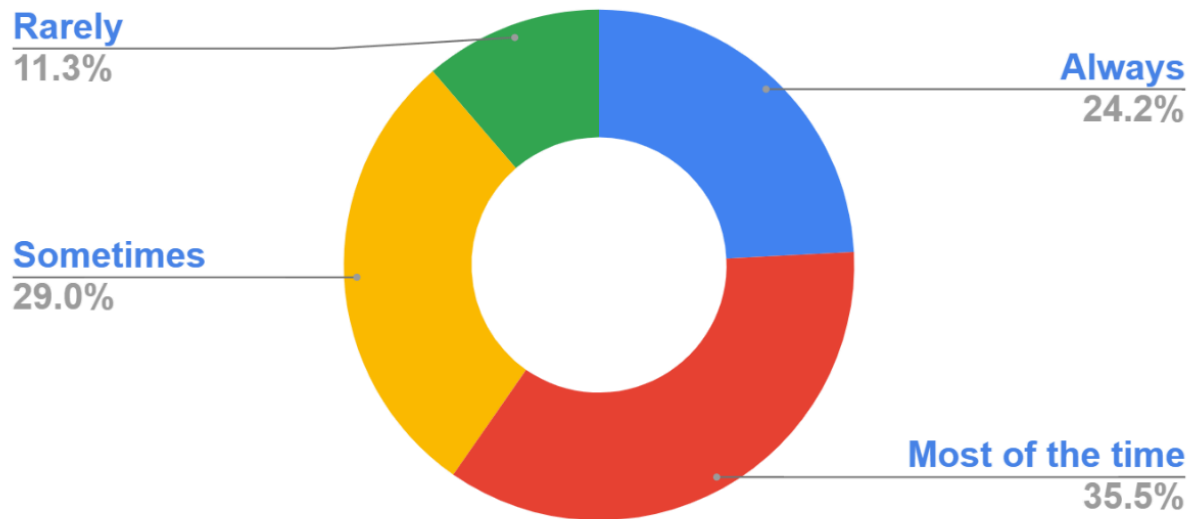


Figure 23 Encouraging all team members to interact and share information with each other during the project.

It is seen here that it helps to interact with each other and work together towards common goals. It clearly indicates organisational goals take priority on professional goals leading to overall success.

PURPOSE : TO CHECK IF THE LEADERS WERE ABLE TO RESOLVE THE CONFLICTS BETWEEN THEIR TEAMS CLEARLY SO AS TO GET THE HURDLES SORTED

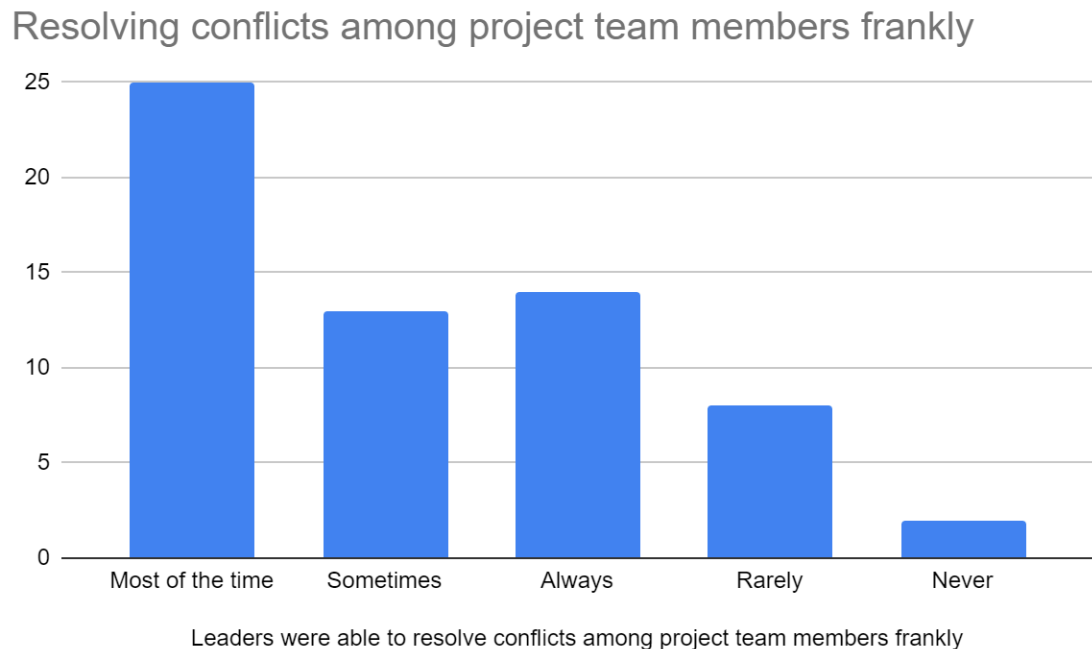


Table 4 Showing the data of success in resolving conflicts among project team members by the leaders

The conflict and competition are good as long as they are healthy. The moment they become ugly, they have to be sorted and managed well before time to ensure they don't create any hindrances in the organisation's working towards achieving digital journey growth.

PURPOSE IS TO ANALYSE THE NEED OF TRAININGS FOR TEAM TO MAKE THEM EFFICIENT DIGITAL PROJECT AND ACCORDINGLY CONDUCT THE SAME IN THE ORGANISATION AND EMPOWER TEAMS TO HANDLE PROGRESS OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY

Analysing the need and accordingly conducting training programs on communication skills, development skills etc for the internal project team
Percentage of affirmations

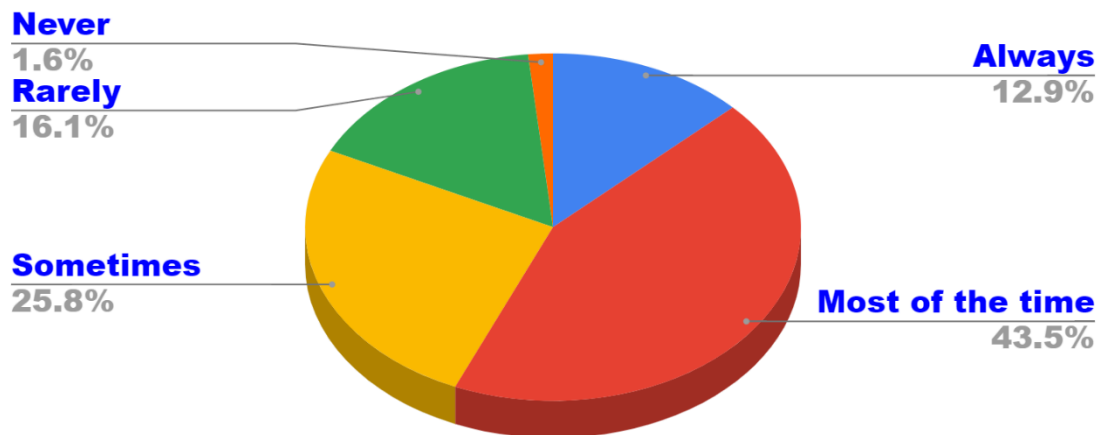


Figure 24 Analysing the need for Training programs for internal team

Analysing the need and accordingly conducting training programs on communication skills, development skills etc for the internal project team. The data highlights there was a need to conduct the training which the leaders agreed to have provided for the successful execution of their DT journey in the organisation.

**PURPOSE WAS TO HARMONISE THE TEAM AND MAKE THEM
WORK TOGETHER TO ACCOMPLISH TARGETS**

**Creating opportunities for sharing of feelings among the
project team**

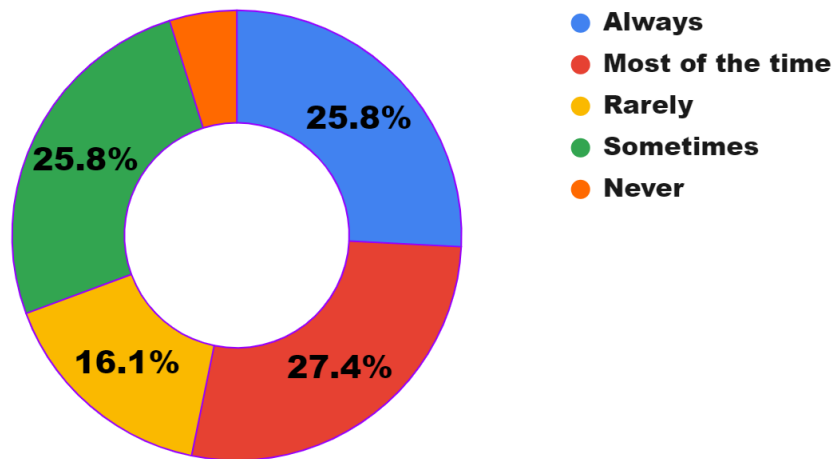


Figure 25 Creating opportunities for sharing of feelings among the project team.

More than 50% agreed to have been able to accomplish their targets through harmonised working of their teams. The teams were provided opportunities to share their feelings and work together to gain success.

PURPOSE IS TO CHECK IF LEADERS CLARIFIED THE SHARED RESPONSIBILITY AMONGST EACH OTHER TO THEIR TEAM MEMBERS

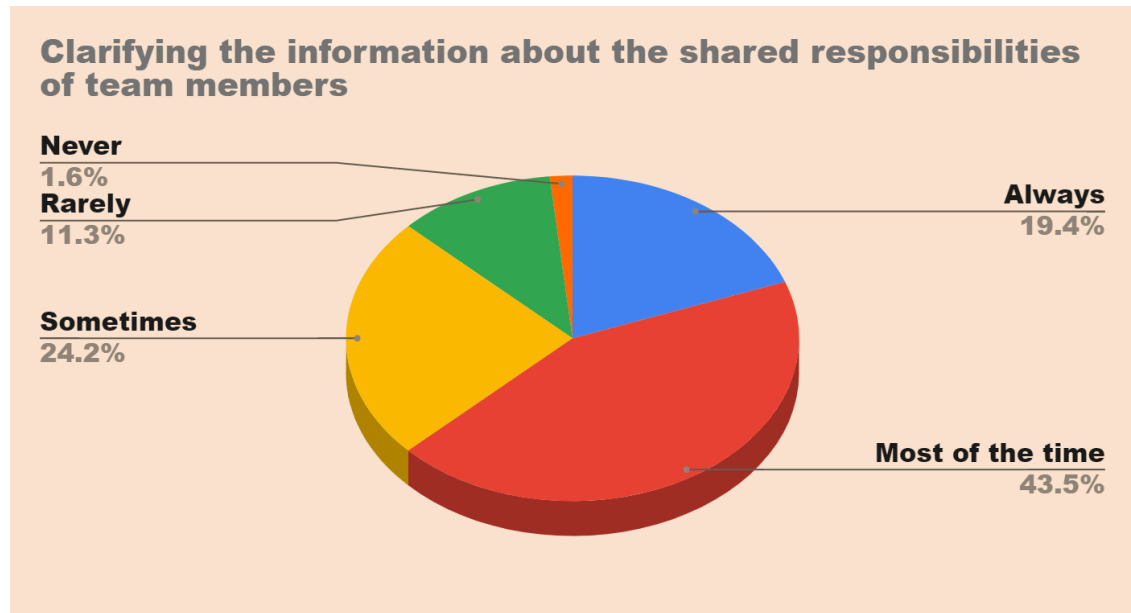


Figure 26 Clarifying the information about the shared responsibilities of team members

It is clear that leaders informed the teams of their shared responsibilities. When the teams are informed of responsibility it brings harmony in teams (Kalra et al., 2024).

PURPOSE IS TO INVOLVE THE TEAMS IN IDENTIFYING IF THERE WERE ANY TASK RELATED ISSUES. ULTIMATE GOAL WAS TO ACHIEVE SUCCESS TOGETHER



Figure 27 Involving the project team in identifying task-related problems.

The Figure 27 clearly shows the leaders encouraged the teams to identify task related problems. Once the problems are identified the leaders can easily take action thereby removing hindrances and moving forward the DT journey.

PURPOSE IS TO ENGAGE THE TEAMS TO SOLVE THE PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED. HENCE BRINGING ABOUT OWNERSHIP IN THE TEAM TOWARDS THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY

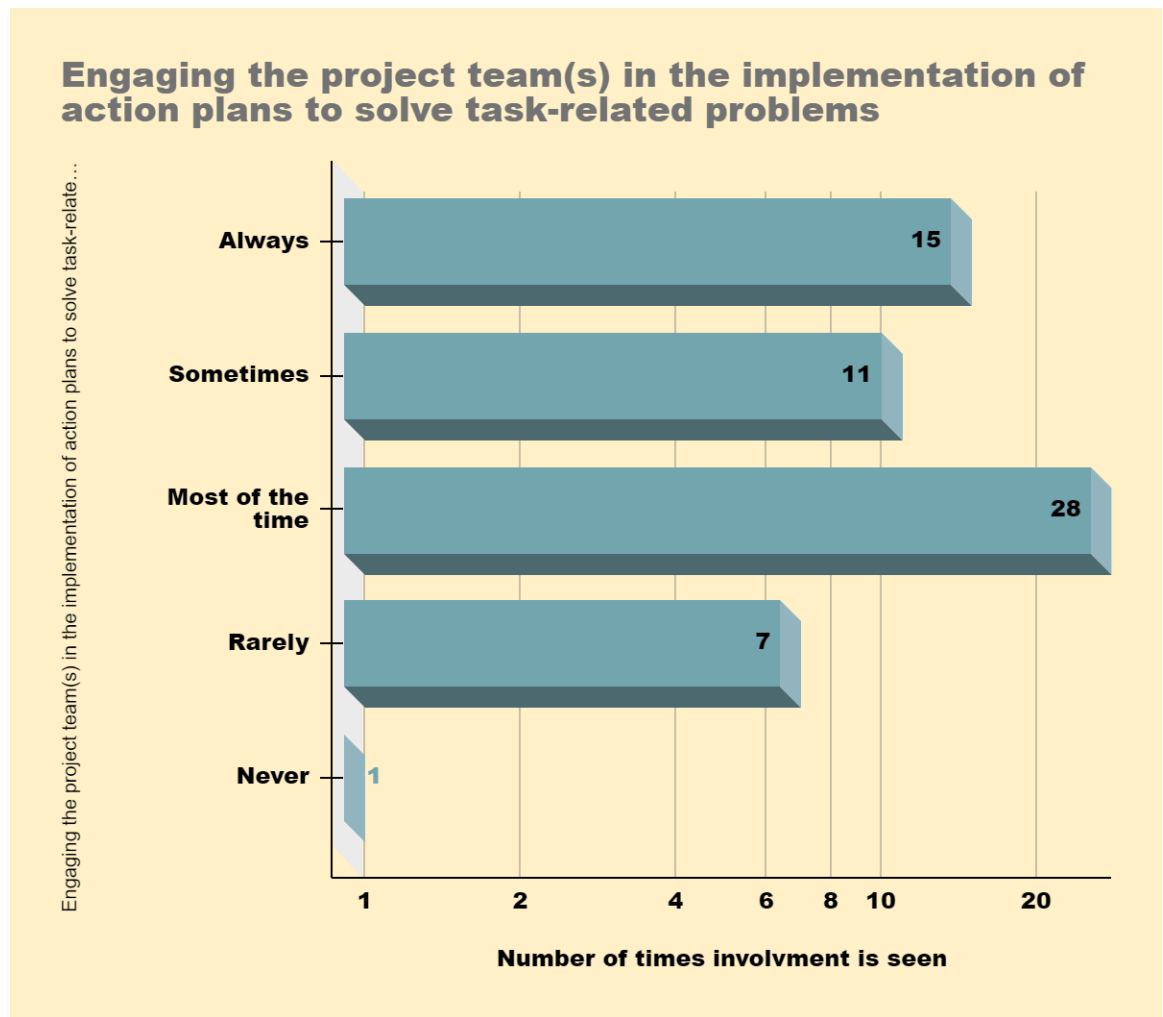


Table 5 Engaging the project team(s) in the implementation of action plans to solve task-related problems.

PURPOSE WAS TO KNOW ABOUT THE WAY TEAMS WORKED UNDER THEIR LEADERS WHILE PERFORMING THE TASK FOR DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY.

Leaders while working towards a digital growth journey not only lead by example, they ensure teamwork, harmony and positive attitude. Hence it is imperative to have their feedback on team performance and attitude as well. Therefore they were asked to answer upto what extent the following is true for the teams in their organisation, while implementing the digital project goals, and results showed affirmation of Leaders were leading by example

- In my organisation, related teams participate in learning activities (e.g., training, workshops) to personally develop.

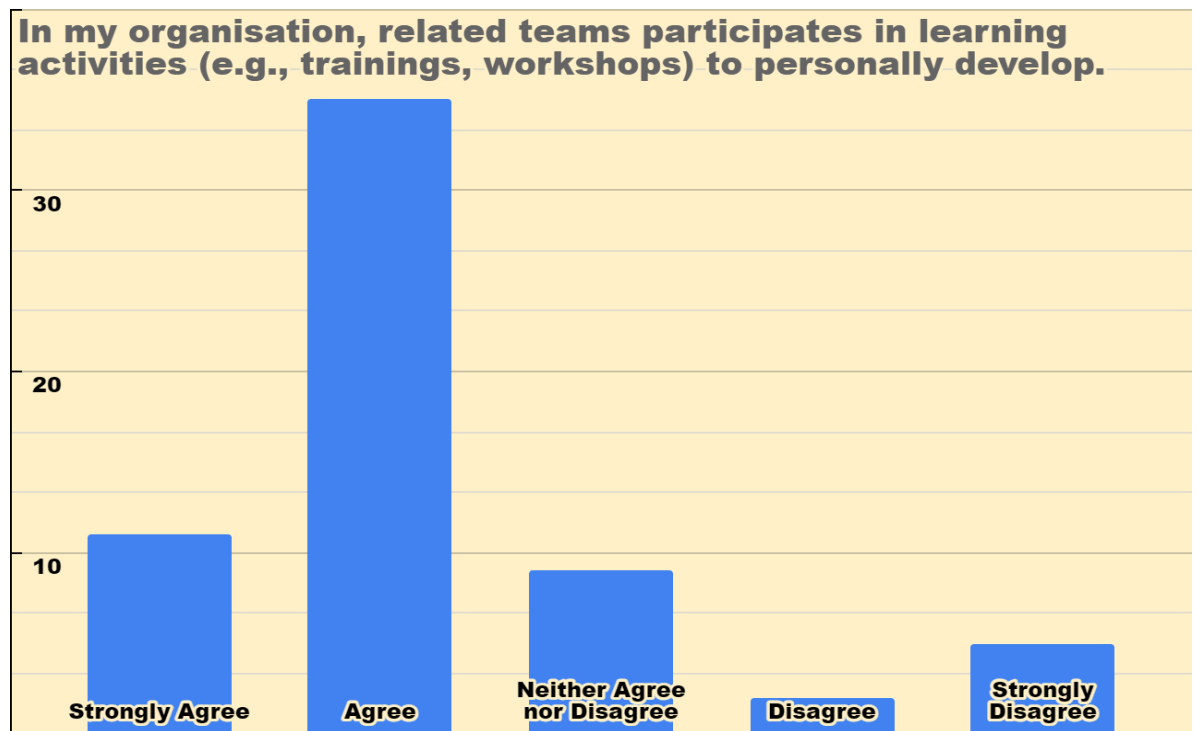


Table 6 Showing the agreement of leaders of participation in learning activities

- In my organisation, my team carefully evaluates the feedback he/she receives from others to learn from it.

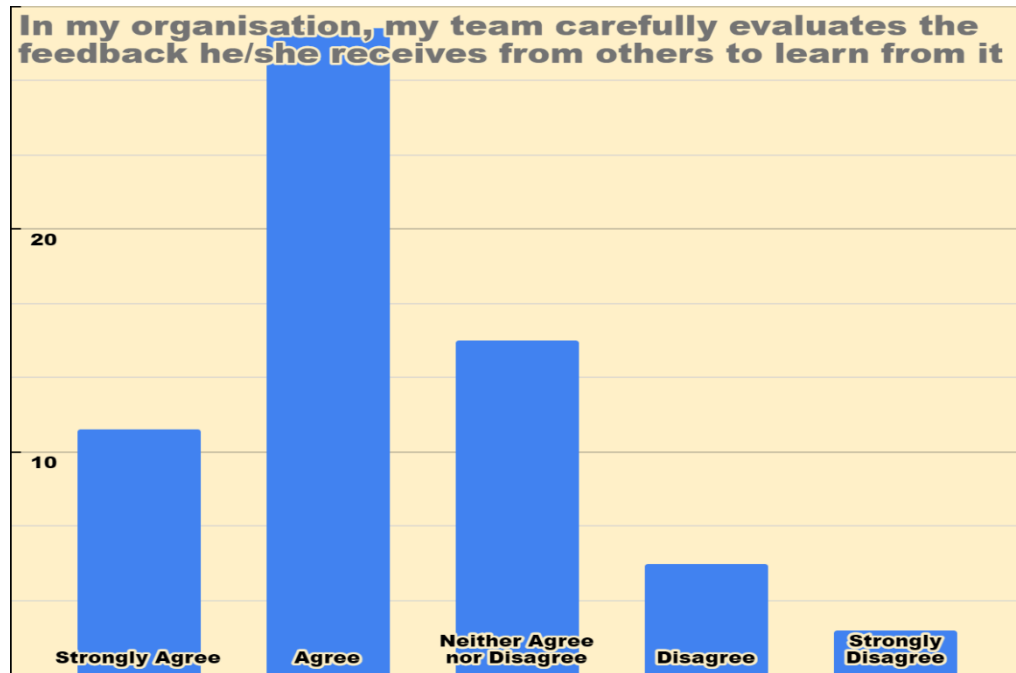


Table 7 Showing the team carefully evaluates the feedback he/she receives from others to learn from it

- The team takes part in developmental activities to improve task- and relational skills at work to ensure the project goals are achieved on time.

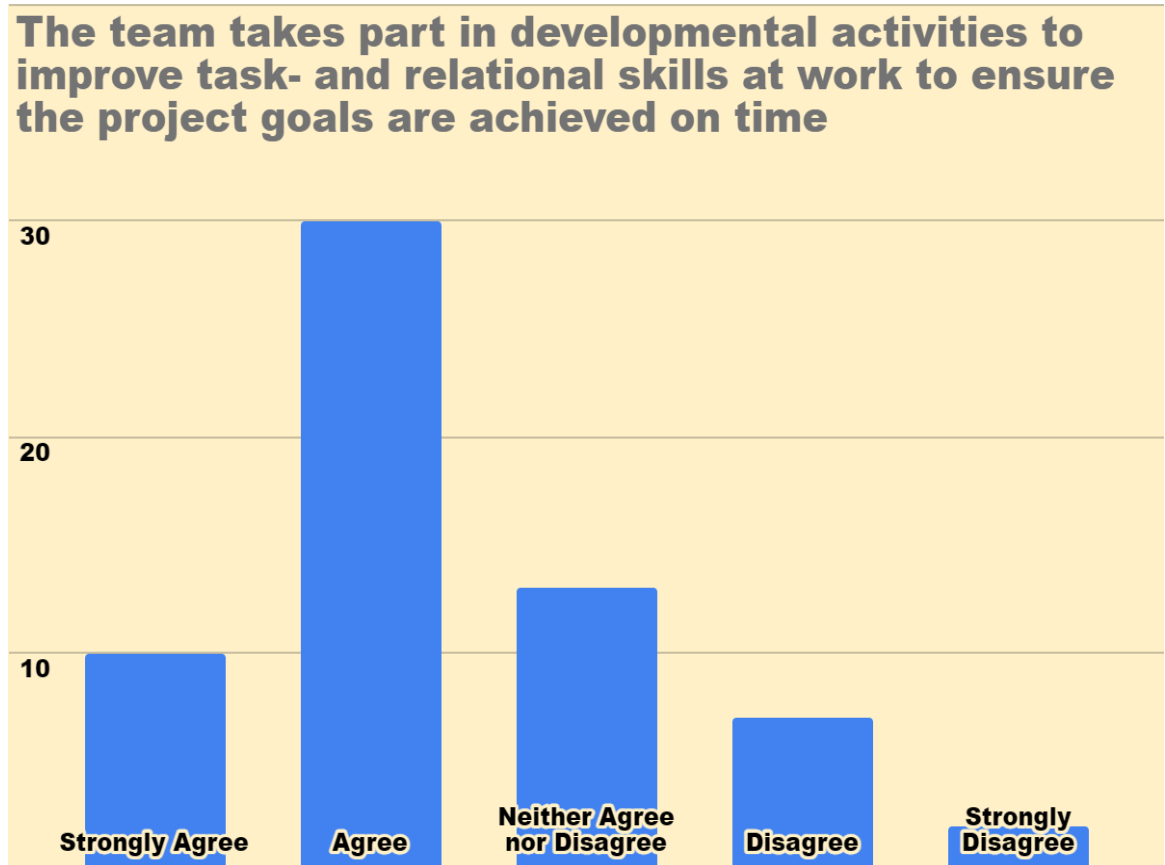


Table 8 Showing the team takes part in developmental activities to improve task- and relational skills at work to ensure the project goals are achieved on time.

- The team focuses on how to effectively work towards our team goals at work.

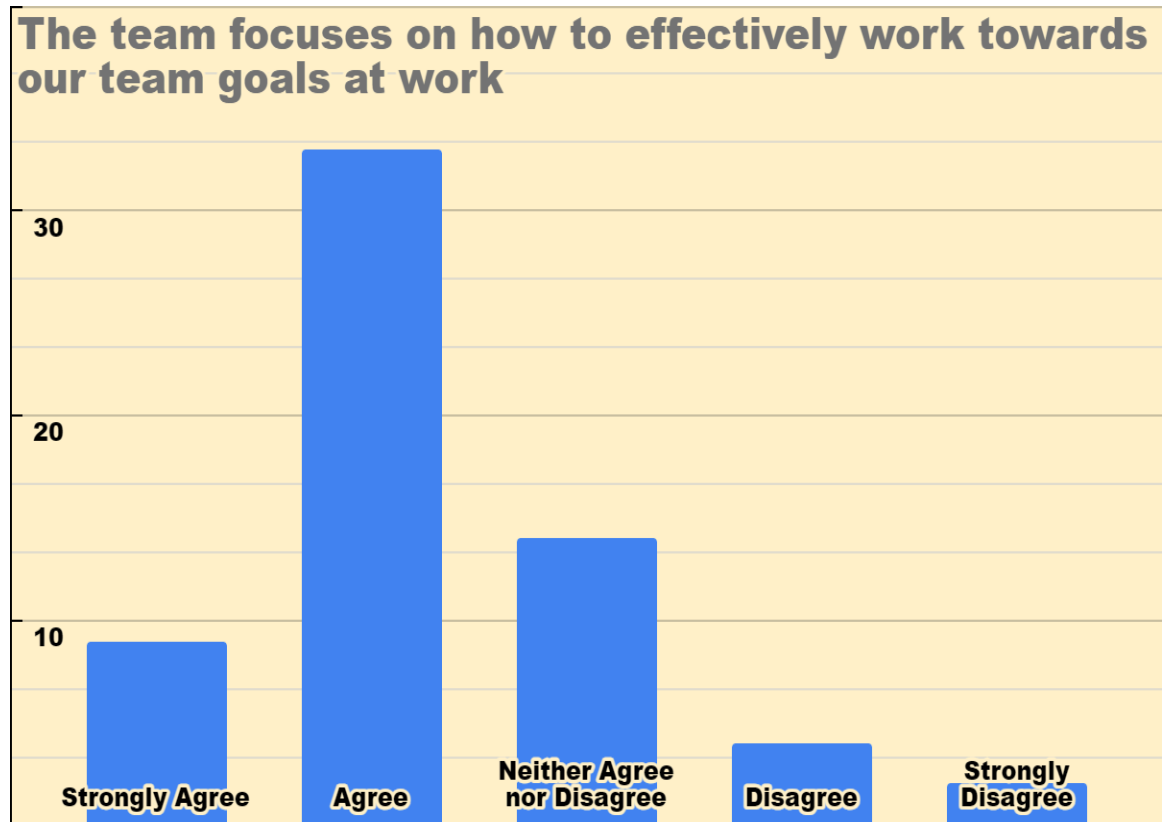


Table 9 Showing the team focuses on how to effectively work towards their team goals at work.

- In my organisation the commercial software or systems are modified by own employees.

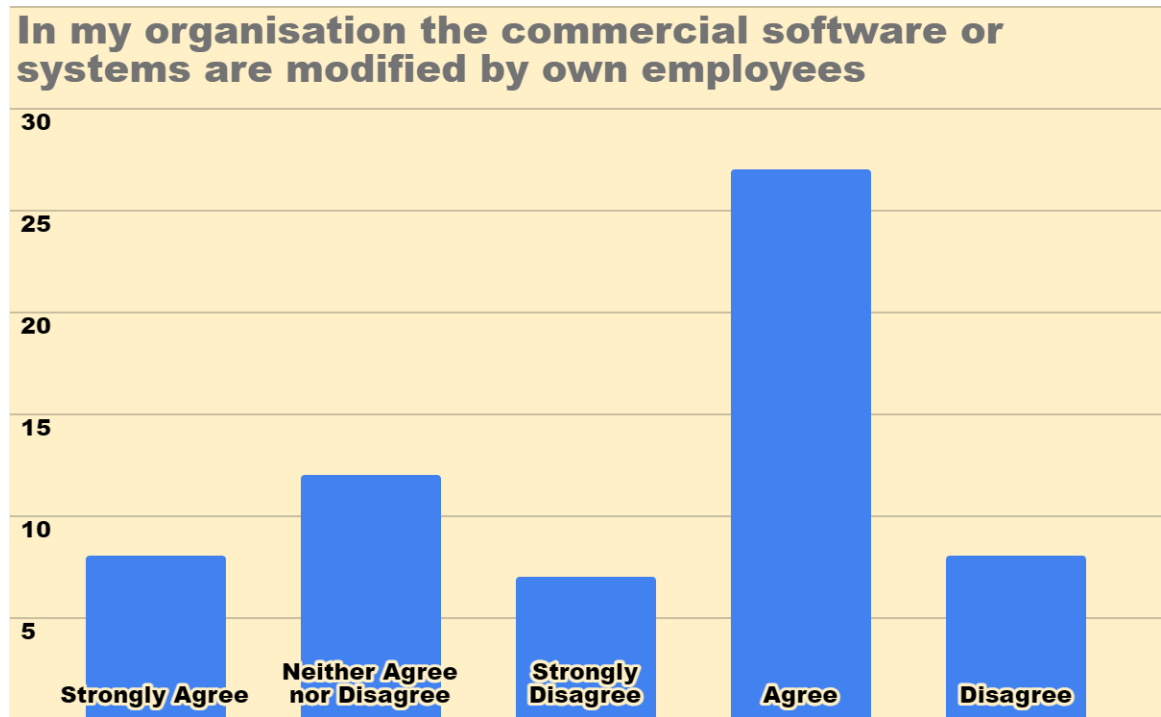


Table 10 Shows leaders encouraged team capability to get in house software development

While answering the above questions leaders agreed that in the organisation, related teams participated in learning activities (e.g., training, workshops) to personally develop. The teams carefully evaluated the feedback he/she receives from others to learn from it. The team took part in developmental activities to improve task- and relational skills at

work to ensure the project goals are achieved on time. The team focused on how to effectively work towards our team goals at work. This helped the leaders to formulate plans to effectively implement the digital transformation in the organisation and also take it one step up by doing in-house modification and development of digital platforms. While evaluating the answers to Digital transformation initiatives taken in their organisations in Table 11, it became clear that Organisations are not only looking for standard digital initiatives for Finance or Marketing but also in areas like Analytics, Customer Service, Cloud migrations, Multiple platform integration etc.

.No.	Digital Initiatives implemented in the organisation
1	Power BI implemented
2	Sales Cloud implementation
3	RPA AI implementation in Shipping
4	Migration of ERP from on-premises to cloud
5	One of the most successful digital initiatives in many organisations is the implementation of AI-driven chatbots for customer service.
6	All Employees have weekly check in meetings to assess the workload
7	Taking all the Admin Formats on the digital platform
8	The most successful digital initiative we implemented was the development of an AI-driven customer service platform. This platform uses natural language processing to understand and respond to customer queries in real time, significantly reducing response times and improving customer satisfaction. Additionally, it collects and analyses customer feedback to identify trends and areas for improvement, enabling us to proactively address potential issues and continuously enhance our service offerings.
9	One place all solution platform and chatbot integration to solve queries of clients and employees

10	Using digital tools for project Management
11	Implementation of ERP
12	Instead of hiring a sales team, we are trying to do strategic partnership with other sales and marketing companies.
13	Upgradation of current system's technologies and designing it completely from scratch into a new system with the latest relevant technology available in the field.
14	We moved to a cloud-based Logistics organiser to streamline our processes
15	Zoho
16	Integration of different business department
17	Taken Trademark, Writing Tech Solutions along with News to generate leads while doing company branding.
18	E commerce platforms, data analytics
19	ETL automation git
20	An airport application for customers to Manage their life cycle from ticketing to pre booking, flight information, etc.
21	social media, data analytics, supervised learning, email marketing
22	Digital Transformative measures
23	Social media
24	Using Accounting software Tally for Accounting and Invoicing
25	development of a customer-facing mobile app that streamlined the ordering and delivery process. By
26	Sales Cloud implementation
27	Asset Inspection and tracing
28	Created in house support/ ticketing portal for clients and internal team
29	Supporting to companies' strategic moves
30	HR onboard documentation

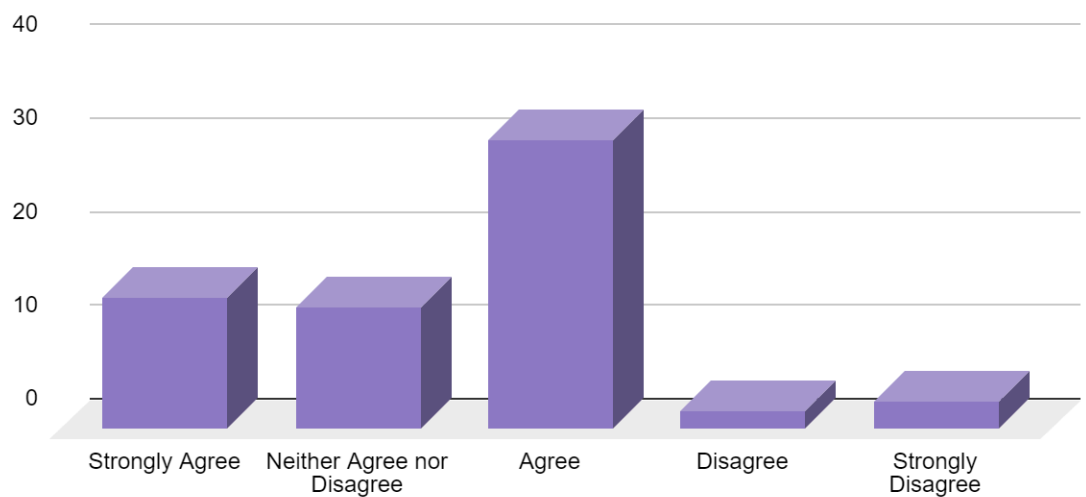
32	One of our most successful digital initiatives was implementing a Customer Relationship Management (CRM) system integrated with marketing automation tools. This initiative addressed challenges in lead management, customer engagement, and sales tracking. By automating repetitive tasks, we improved efficiency and provided personalised marketing campaigns, leading to a 30% increase in lead conversion rates and a 25% boost in overall sales within six months.
33	Implementing ServiceNow HRSD to streamline the flow of recruiting. From the 1st interview to final onboarding/offboarding of the candidate, everything was digitalized.
34	Cloud computing, Big data
35	Setting up a website for the organisation.
36	SAP
37	Implementation of MTeams and SharePoint to enable 50k people WFH during covid
38	Incorporating Project Management Process using different digital platforms available like Jira, Slack, GitHub etc.
39	We started a new digital initiative called Business Technology Protocol (BTP) which act as a supporting tool to connect SAP system with real time procurement processes
40	The implementation of a comprehensive data analytics platform. By leveraging advanced analytics tools and techniques, organisations can gain deeper insights into customer behaviour, market trends, and operational performance.
41	Engineering calculation software
42	Better solution design approach which was aimed at business transformation.
43	ERP System purchased
44	Online interview
45	Smart contracts
46	Real time update and meeting of deadlines
47	Introduction of new database system and automation of KPIs

48	JUST SENDONG COMPLAINTS FORM FOR POOR PRODUCT QUALITY IN THE PRODUCTION AND PACKAGING ERROR
49	To implement the digital software to manage the accounting, tax filing and compliances associated with it.
50	Qr code in products we sell, with link to relevant page in our website where clients can find relevant detailed information about products
51	No code platform built
52	The business model for our company relies on using distribution versus going direct to the market with our products. This makes it especially difficult for us to advertise and push any specific products with pricing listed. So to over-simplify the very long process we engaged in, we created a distributor portal where distributors could place orders directly with their special pricing already baked into their login. In an effort to familiarise our distributors with the functionality and features available to them in the portal, we began running portal-only specials on a monthly basis for products that we wanted to move. This in turn took some of the burden off of our customer service team in processing the orders with the correct pricing and also began to drive our distributors to a central point where they could access stock quantities and the latest arrivals.
53	Using QR codes on our products
54	Customer relationship management systems, iot, blockchain
55	ERP implementation
56	Made use of Project Management Tools that follows ITIL Framework for tracking of work assigned to Developers
57	Ariba and RPA Implementation, mainly due to lack of standard processes
58	Outsourced good team to handle all sales and marketing related requirements area specific wise
59	Use of ML and AI
60	Digital platforms, AI and machine learning
61	Automation and AI adoption

Table 11 Showing the digital initiative taken by people in their organisation

PURPOSE FOR THE TABLE 12 TO 17 WAS TO UNDERSTAND WHETHER IT IS ONLY THE HIRED PROFESSIONALS INITIATIVE WHICH COUNTS IN THE SUCCESSFUL DIGITAL JOURNEY OR DOES THE FOUNDER/OWNER ALSO HAS SIMILAR MINDSET AND ATTITUDE. A

The founding team understands and involves themselves in the digital needs of the organisation



[The founding team understands and involves themselves in the digital needs of the organisation]

Table 12 Evaluating the founding team's involvement in the digital needs of the organisation.

In my organisation, the founding team participates in learning activities (e.g., trainings, workshops) to personally develop.

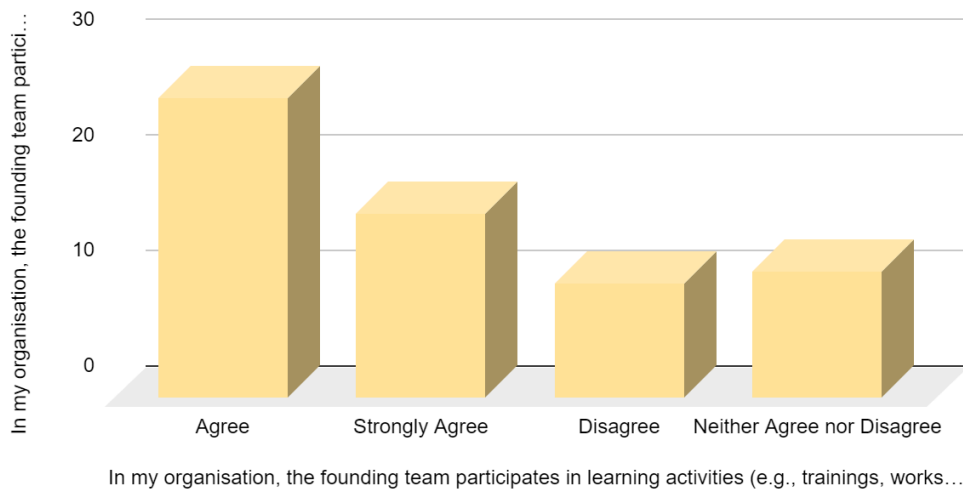


Table 13 Participation graph of Founding team in learning activities (e.g., training, workshops) to personally develop.

In my organisation, the founding team actively involves and carefully evaluates the digital solution earmarked and its ben...

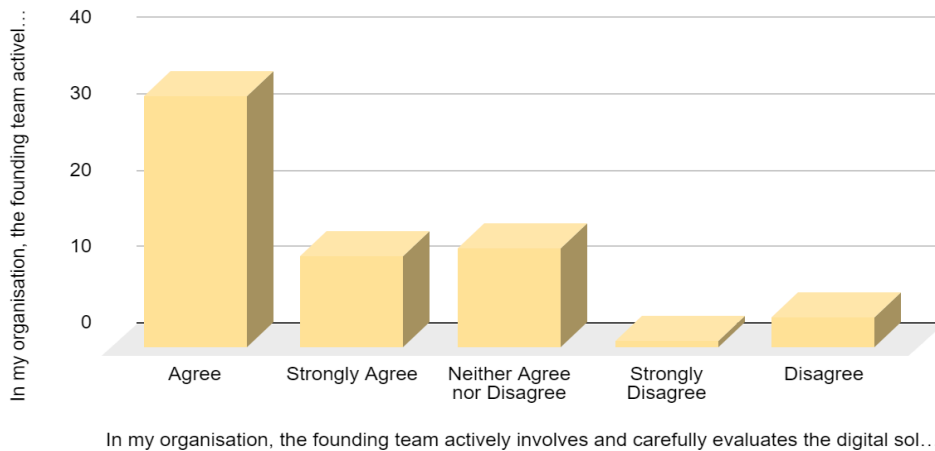


Table 14 Involvement and evaluation of the founding team in the digital solution earmarked for its benefits to the organisation.

The founding team takes initiative in developmental activities to improve task- and relational skills at work for all employee.

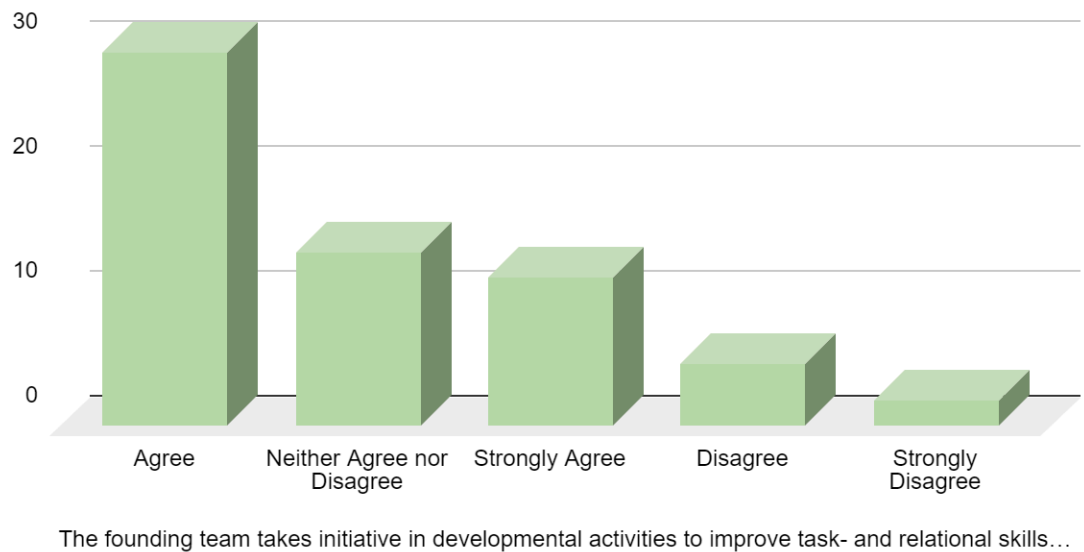
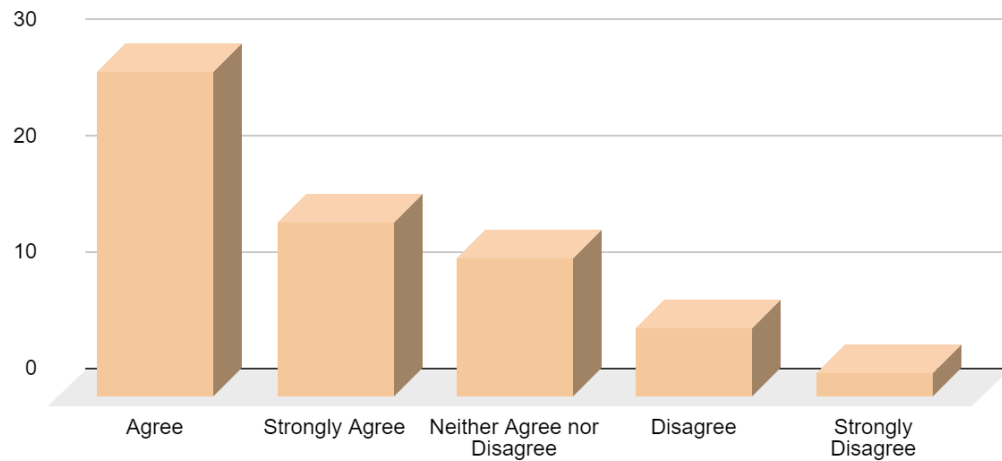


Table 15 Showing the agreement by team for Founding team's initiative

Founding members or owners of businesses play a key role in motivating and aligning the team towards digital goals, ensuring that digital initiatives are integrated smoothly into the overall business strategy. Their leadership and commitment to digital transformation can significantly influence the organisation's ability to adapt and thrive in a rapidly evolving digital landscape.

The founding team focuses on how to effectively involve employees to work towards achieving our organizational goals.



The founding team focuses on how to effectively involve employees to work towards achieving our...

Table 16 Shows the founding team focuses on how to effectively involve employees to work towards achieving our organisational goals.

The owners and founders of business can bring about the change in the organisation by working together with their employees through handling critical issues, being positive of

successful outcomes and motivate teams to make organisational goals as their own goals and aim higher and higher in their professional growth.

Q7. If there's another active person involved from your founding team in this digital initiative, could you describe any...

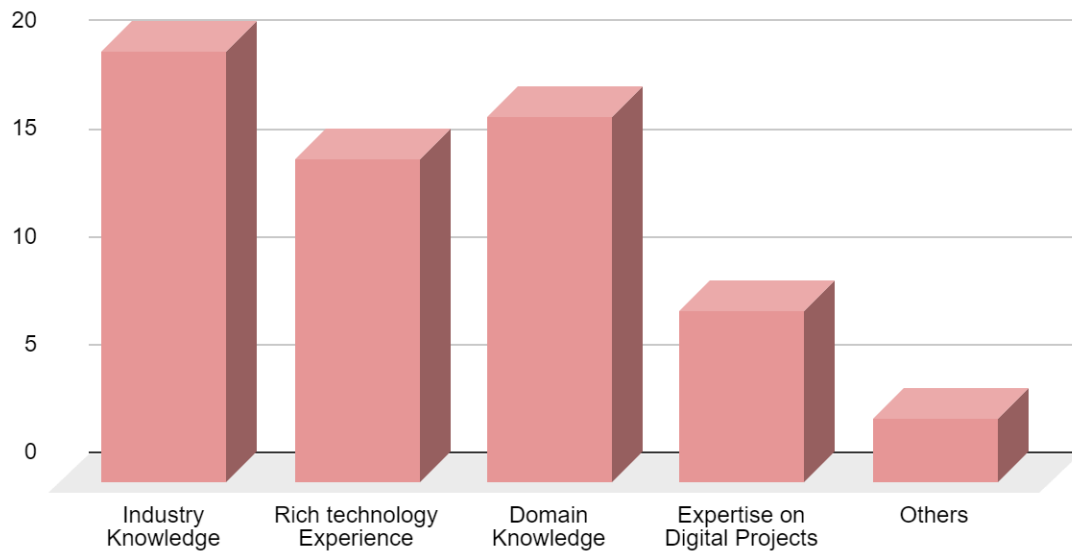


Table 17 Showing the qualities of Founding team members involved in the Digital Journey of the organisation

Founders are very important to the digital efforts of a business. They set the goal and attitude for digital transformation and are often the ones who push for adding new technologies. Founders have a say in strategy choices, make sure that resources are available, and encourage a culture of openness and new ideas. They are very important for getting the team to work together and make sure that their efforts are in line with digital goals. They also make sure that these projects fit into the overall business plan. The company can adapt and achieve in a digital world that is always changing because of their leadership and commitment to digital progress. Thus, it is very true to say that

Industry knowledge and Domain knowledge is a must to take forward the organisation but today’s CEOs or Owners are not behind in their expertise on Digital Projects as well.

PURPOSE WAS TO IDENTIFY WHICH ALL FACTORS ARE OF CRITICAL IMPORTANCE AND NEED TO BE TAKEN INTO CONSIDERATION WHILE RAISING FUNDS OR COLLATING RESOURCES TO CARRY OUT THE DIGITAL INITIATIVES

Q8. If you've raised funds or obtained other resources for these digital initiatives, how was your experience with relation to the criticality of certain fa...f 1- Not so Critical, 2 - Critical & 3 - Very Critical).

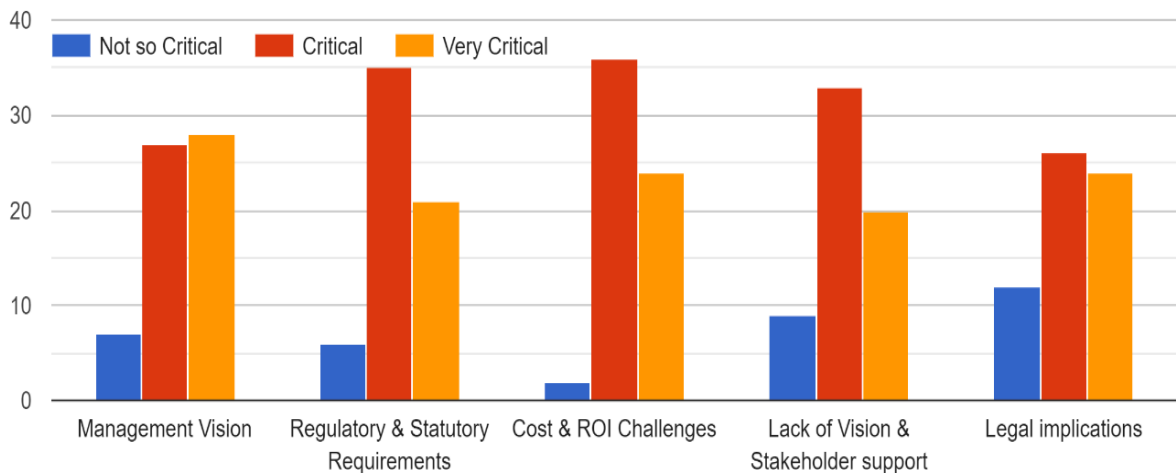


Table 18 Showing the Important strategies of the organisation which are critical to carry forward the DT journey

It is clear that to take forward any initiatives, clear Management Vision towards the same is very critical. Alongside it is important to take care of the Regulatory and Statutory requirements in the area. The Cost and ROI also play a very critical role along with the

Legal implications if any, for the organisation’s domain. Lastly if the stakeholder team lacks vision and does not support, the Digital journey can prove difficult. Hence if the leaders take care of the above factors along with all the other areas discussed earlier in the research, then they are sure to achieve the goal of successful digital transformation journey.

PURPOSE WAS TO UNDERSTAND THAT BESIDES THE LEADER’S CAPABILITY WHAT OTHER INITIATIVES WERE TAKEN TO MAKE THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY OF THE ORGANISATION SUCCESSFUL

Q9. Can you describe how you made this digital initiative successful in means of adaptability, success in achieving your organizational goals?

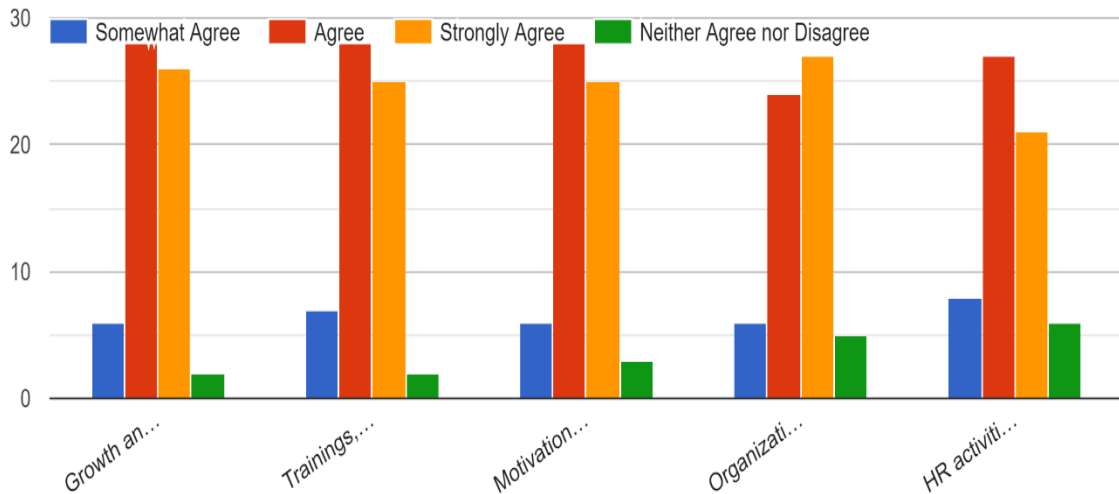


Table 19 Showing the factors responsible for successful adaptation of Digital initiative in the organisation

It is seen that a capable leader takes active initiatives for the organisation's growth in every segment. Thus Table 19 shows the strong agreement that following initiatives helped to make the adaptability of Digital Transformation work for the organisation:

- a. Growth and recognition provided to employees who actively engage in digital upskilling efforts.
- b. Training, workshop, and development skill classes to overcome any inhibitions for adaptations of organisation digital initiatives.
- c. Motivation through rewards and recognition led to employees to adapt well with digital skills and able to perform satisfactorily.
- d. Organisation goals are integrated into individual performance evaluations and goal-setting processes.
- e. HR activities to promote team bonding and sharing of technology adoption experiences.

PURPOSE WAS TO UNDERSTAND WHY IS IT IMPERATIVE TO BRING ABOUT DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION, TO UNDERSTANDING THE GAINS, DOES IT BRING SUSTAINABILITY WHEN SO MUCH IS AT STAKE.?

Q10. Marking on a scale of 1-5 with 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree, please answer how has this digital initiative helped in building a sustainable business?

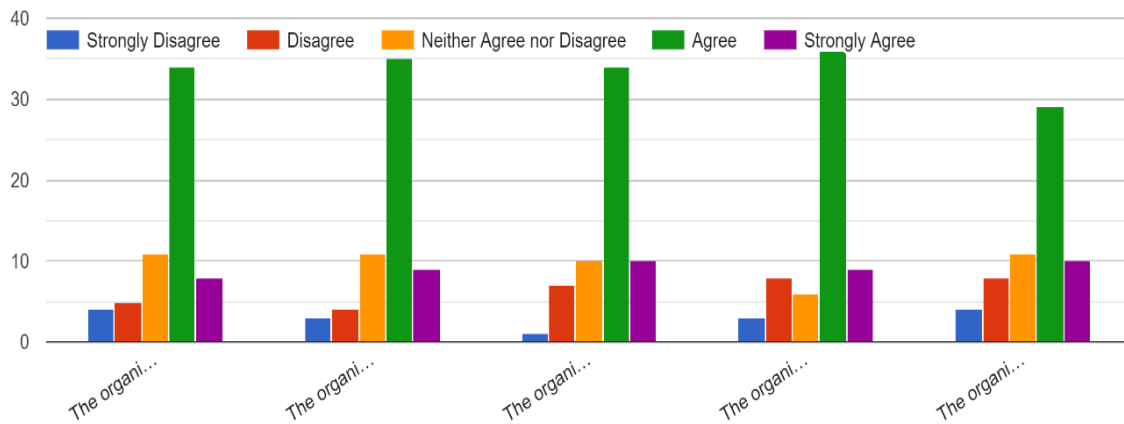


Table 20 Showing the agreement on sustainability in business through digital initiatives

Most of the participants agree to below points which helps to understand that successful Digital Transformation in an organisation through impactful Leadership brings about growth and sustainability:

1. The organisation is driving impactful Digitalisation and Sustainability initiatives.
2. The organisation has achieved good customer growth after the digitalisation initiatives.

3. The organisation has achieved its financial targets better than earlier.
4. The organisation is able to effectively manage its existing resources and cost control is more effective after these initiatives.
5. The organisation is now able to engage and retain employees better after increased digital initiatives.

PURPOSE WAS TO UNDERSTAND THE EFFECTIVE GAINS OVER COMPETITORS THROUGH THIS DIGITAL JOURNEY

Q11. Has this initiative led to maintaining a competitive advantage over others in your business? If yes, explain in Question 12?

62 responses

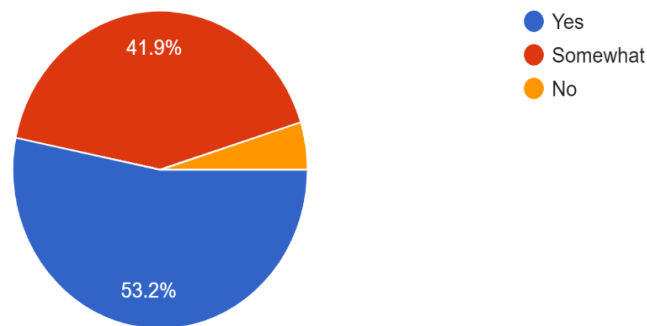


Figure 28 Showing the agreement of getting competitive edge over others upon successful digital transformation journey

Figure 28 clearly implies agreement of most of the participants of getting competitive edge in their business after successful Digital Transformation in their organisation.

There is not just one way to take the Digital Transformation journey ahead. There are multiple frameworks which can be adopted by the organisation leaders to start their digital transformation journey ahead. The frameworks could be McKinsey's 7S or Kotter's 8 step Change Model for Digital Transformation, it will only be brought about by the people, through the people and for the people. The journey might be digital but the planning, execution, and brain behind this would be human. So it concludes down to how effectively the leadership can work on the transformation, how well they can identify the gaps and how soon can they give plans to reform the manual to digital.

The Figure 17 delves into the traits of leaders in driving digital transformation journeys and offers insights from various perspectives.



Figure 17 Traits of leaders in driving digital transformation.

1. Establishing the Vision and Strategy Clarity

Leaders who have a clear vision for digital transformation within their organisation, require a profound understanding of the business landscape and emerging technology trends. By articulating a clear vision, leaders can ensure alignment throughout the organisation, with everyone working towards a common objective. For instance, a leader might envision transforming the organisation into a fully digital entity, with all processes automated and data stored in the cloud.

2. Fostering a Culture of Innovation

A successful digital transformation necessitates a culture of innovation, where employees are encouraged to experiment and take risks. Leaders who can cultivate this culture by establishing a safe environment where failure is accepted, and learning is promoted. For example, a leader might organise a "hackathon" event, allowing employees to work on innovative projects and present their ideas to management.

3. Allocating Resources as per aligned Goals

Digital transformation demands significant resources, both technological and human. Leaders must ensure that the organisation has the necessary resources to implement its digital transformation strategy. This might involve investing in new technologies, recruiting new talent, or upskilling existing employees. For example, a leader might invest in a new CRM system to enhance customer engagement or hire data scientists to analyse customer data.

4. Allow rejuvenation through communication of the Benefits

Leaders must effectively communicate the benefits of digital transformation to all stakeholders, including employees, customers, and shareholders. This requires a clear understanding of the value proposition of digital transformation and the ability to articulate it compellingly. For instance, a leader might highlight the benefits of a new mobile app to customers, emphasising how it will improve their experience and simplify doing business with the organisation.

5. Leading by Example

Leaders must lead by example. They need to embrace new technologies and methods of working, demonstrating a willingness to learn and adapt. This involves a mindset shift, where leaders challenge the status quo and take risks. For example, a leader might use social media to engage with customers and stakeholders, showcasing a commitment to digital communication channels.

6. Establish Team Spirit

Creating an environment where team members are motivated, aligned, and collaborative in their efforts to drive digital change. It's about building a strong, supportive, and innovative team culture that enables the successful implementation of digital initiatives.

In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, fostering a culture of innovation and agility is crucial. Companies that embrace change and swiftly adapt to new technologies

and market trends are the ones that flourish. Innovation goes beyond creating new products or services; it involves discovering new approaches and enhancing existing processes. Agility, meanwhile, is the capacity to promptly respond to shifting circumstances.

A vital element in cultivating a culture of innovation and agility is establishing an environment that promotes experimentation and risk-taking. Companies that are open to taking risks and learning from their failures tend to achieve greater long-term success. In conclusion, the role of leadership in driving digital transformation is paramount. Leaders should establish a clear vision, foster a culture of innovation, allocate resources, communicate the benefits, and lead by example. By doing so, they can ensure their organisations are well-positioned to succeed in today's digital era.

Thus, effective leadership is crucial for navigating the complexities of digital transformation and driving successful outcomes. The next big thing is how should the leaders with the above traits strategize and execute their plans for achieving success in digital transformation, for this Kotter's provides a very insightful eight step process as a framework which can be integrated with all above recommendations and research studies presented by the researcher.

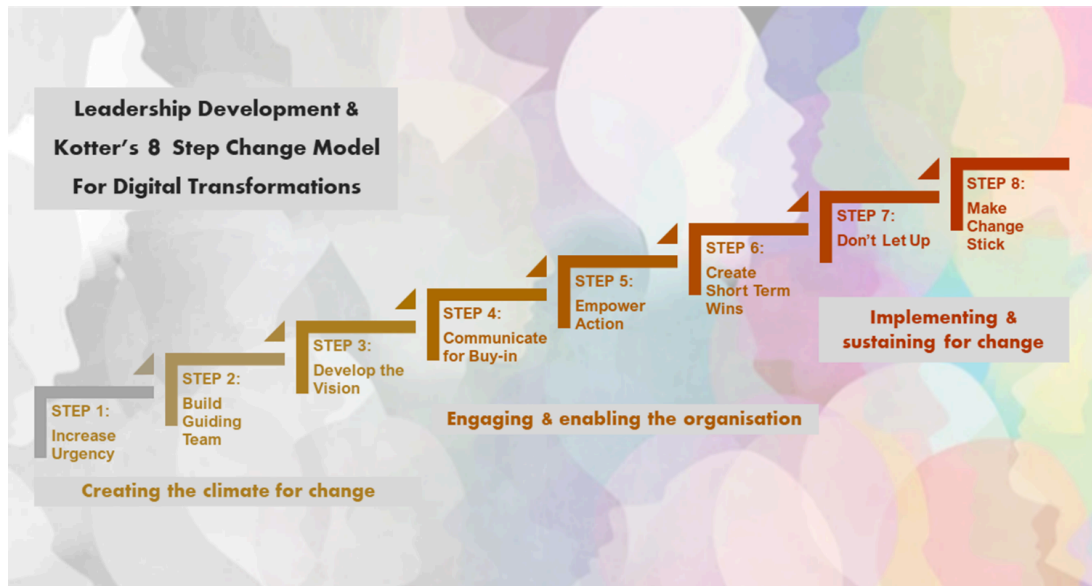


Figure 18 Kotter's 8 step Change Model for Digital Transformation

1. Creating the climate for change through

a. Increasing Urgency

b. Build a guiding team

b. Vision Setting

- **Strategy:** Leaders should articulate not only a compelling vision for digital transformation that aligns with the organisation's strategic objectives but should create an urgency to achieve it. Along with-it Leaders should build guiding teams for its execution. This vision should outline the desired future state, the benefits of digital adoption, and the role of each stakeholder in achieving transformational goals.
- **Execution:** Leaders must communicate the vision clearly and consistently across the organisation, using multiple channels to engage employees, customers, and other

stakeholders. They should inspire enthusiasm and commitment by highlighting the opportunities that digital transformation presents and addressing any concerns or uncertainties.

2. Engaging and enabling the organisation through Creating a Culture of Innovation and Agility:

a. Communicating for buy-in

b. Empower action

c. Create short term win

- **Strategy:** Leaders should foster a culture of innovation, experimentation, and agility that empowers employees to embrace change and drive continuous improvement. They should encourage risk-taking, reward initiative, and celebrate successes and learning opportunities.

- **Execution:** Leaders must lead by example, demonstrating openness to new ideas, encouraging constructive feedback, and removing barriers to innovation. They should create cross-functional teams and innovation hubs to facilitate collaboration and idea generation and provide resources and support for innovative projects.

3. Implementing & sustaining for change

a. Don't Letup

b. Make change stick

- **Strategy:** Leaders should assemble cross-functional teams with diverse expertise and perspectives to drive digital transformation initiatives. Don't let any hindrance stop it.

These teams should include representatives from various departments, including IT, marketing, operations, finance, and human resources.

- **Execution:** Leaders must foster collaboration and alignment among team members, breaking down silos and encouraging knowledge sharing and collaboration. They should empower teams to make decisions autonomously, provide resources and support, and hold team members accountable for results. Don't let the innovation stop. Implement and sustain it.

Combined with the above eight steps following leadership traits also take the digital initiative a long way.

4. Investing in Digital Literacy and Upskilling:

- **Strategy:** Leaders should prioritise investment in digital literacy and upskilling programs to ensure that employees have the necessary skills and capabilities to succeed in a digital environment. This may include training in areas such as data analytics, digital marketing, cybersecurity, and agile methodologies.

- **Execution:** Leaders must assess the organisation's current skill gaps and training needs, develop tailored training programs, and provide resources and support for employee development. They should create a culture of lifelong learning, where employees are encouraged to acquire new skills and stay abreast of technological advancements.

5. Collaborating with External Partners and Ecosystems:

•**Strategy:** Leaders should recognize that successful digital transformation often requires collaboration with external partners, including technology vendors, startups, academic institutions, and industry associations. They should seek out strategic partnerships and alliances that complement the organisation's strengths and capabilities.

•**Execution:** Leaders must identify potential partners, establish mutually beneficial relationships, and collaborate on joint initiatives such as co-innovation projects, research partnerships, and ecosystem development. They should leverage external expertise and resources to accelerate digital transformation and enhance competitive advantage.

6. Measuring and Adapting Strategies Based on Feedback:

•**Strategy:** Leaders should establish key performance indicators (KPIs) and metrics to track the progress and impact of digital transformation initiatives. They should collect feedback from stakeholders, including employees, customers, and partners, and use this feedback to inform decision-making and course corrections.

•**Execution:** Leaders must regularly review performance data, analyse trends and insights, and identify areas for improvement. They should be open to feedback and willing to adapt strategies and tactics based on changing circumstances and emerging opportunities. Continuous monitoring and adjustment are essential for ensuring that digital transformation efforts remain aligned with strategic objectives and deliver tangible value to the organisation.

By implementing these leadership strategies like the above, organisations can effectively navigate the challenges of digital transformation, foster innovation and agility, and position themselves for long-term success in a rapidly evolving digital landscape. Leadership plays a critical role in shaping organisational culture, driving change, and inspiring teams to embrace digital opportunities and drive sustainable growth. Models like Kotter's Eight Step are successful development tools which connect individuals, groups and organisations together. Thus, enabling the leaders to combine the synergies of these three to bring about change management and implement digital transformation.

5.2 Discussion of Research Questions through the outcomes from the questionnaire

The main goal of research is to investigate and comprehend the function of leadership in promoting digital transformation in businesses. The study's specific goal was to pinpoint the essential traits and behaviours of effective leadership that support digital transformation.

Many managers and leaders are aware of both the threat and the chance that digital advances pose, but they don't always have a common language or a strong framework to look at and deal with these problems. It's hard for them to imagine their digital business model, which makes it harder for them to come up with and implement good reaction strategies.

It further analysed how leadership affects workers' adoption of and tolerance for digital technologies. And how well various leadership techniques work to overcome opposition to digital change. It examined the relationship between the success of digital transformation projects as a whole and the involvement of leaders. The various traits of leadership made us understand how the leadership can strategize to convey a clear picture of what the future shall look like with digital initiatives. Along with this, the urgency to get this digital initiative moving has to be clearly communicated. Once the vision is set and goals communicated, there should be proper investment done in the employees training and development. This not only empowers the teams but from the learning teams they can slowly turn to guiding teams in future and make the digital initiatives successful. The success leads to recognize more opportunities and build the capability of leading the change further. It becomes a chain reaction in the long term. Analyse what worked and what could have been done better. Develop new digital goals to maintain and continue on the path of change growth in the organisation. The discussion starts with the kind of digital challenges the business was facing while growing.

Companies are eagerly looking for digital change options that make them more efficient, encourage new ideas, and make the customer experience better. They want more advanced analytics and data management tools so they can find new possibilities and make better choices. Many people want cloud computer options because they can be scaled up or down easily and are cost-effective. Robotic process automation (RPA) and

other types of automation technologies are in high demand to make repetitive jobs easier and boost business efficiency. Companies are also spending money on protection steps to keep their digital assets safe and make sure they follow the rules set by regulators. Another important thing is customer relationship management (CRM) systems, which let you connect with customers in a more human way and make them happier. In a digital world that is changing quickly, businesses are focused on solutions that not only make current processes more efficient but also open the door for growth and new ideas in the future.

Looking at revolutionary examples of digital transformation different business models through innovative ways in past we can see the example of Netflix, Amazon, McDonalds

Example of Changing a Business Model: Netflix

At the start of the 2000s, standard cable TV and DVDs were the mainstays of the entertainment business. Netflix was part of that business at the time as a DVD rental service by mail. But as streaming technology became more popular, the company saw a chance to change how people watch material. Netflix started its streaming service in 2007, which let users watch shows whenever they wanted. This gave them a lot of freedom. Also, they made their service available to people in over 190 countries, crossing lines and making Netflix a worldwide entertainment powerhouse. In addition, they used data analytics to figure out what users liked and then gave them custom content suggestions. They also catered to the binge-watching trend by launching whole seasons at once, so users could watch content whenever it suited them.

Amazon as an example of business domain transformation. The story of the online shopping giant Amazon is a powerful example of how domains can change. Amazon used to make money by selling songs and movies before 2002. When they launched Amazon Web Services (AWS), they moved into a new market. Amazon's ability to use digital skills in storage, computers, and databases to support its main selling business made it easier for it to move into this area. Because of this and already having a network of ties with many new businesses that needed computer services, things were set up for success in the end. AWS is now the best service for infrastructure and cloud computing, and it makes Amazon almost 60% of its yearly earnings.

McDonald's as an Example of Business Process Transformation.

While McDonald's has always been known for its quick-service restaurants, the company realised that they needed to accept digitalization to improve the customer experience and undertook a major process transformation in the 2010s. After planning and building it for a few years, McDonald's released its mobile app in 2015. It lets customers look at the menu, make changes to their orders, and pay with their phones. The buying method was made easier, and there was also a new level of customization. Self-service booths were also put in McDonald's restaurants, which work the same way as the mobile app. Customers could now place orders with more options, which cut down on wait times and made sure orders were correct. Around the same time, McDonald's improved the drive-thru experience by adding digital menu signs. These boards changed based on

things like the time of day and the most-ordered items, which encouraged customers to buy more.

Changes in the cloud – University of Bristol. Officials at the University of Bristol also tried to use digital tools in order to make education more available to people outside of regular classrooms. To reach more people than the 28,000 students who take classes in person every year, the goal was to offer online lessons. That's why university leaders picked a cloud-based technology option, which set the stage for more online education. The goal of this choice was to make the business more appealing and give students the freedom to attend classes from anywhere.

Online lessons were made available, which not only made education available to people all over the world but also made it easier for groups from around the world to work together. This made the university better at study and made its relationships with other groups stronger.

Concluding it, we find that if a company makes software to automate processes and then chooses to sell that software to other companies as a way to make extra money, that's an example of a domain change. On the other hand, rivals' threats or new technologies that make it hard to stick to the current business plan are also common reasons. The goal of business process change is to improve and streamline internal operations by cutting down on costs, time, and mistakes. Usually, this means investing in new tools and research and development to automate tasks that used to be done by hand. Different companies choose

different ways to move to the cloud. Some use the public cloud, which is a third-party data centre run by a cloud service; others build their own cloud computing infrastructure, which is called a private cloud. There is a third way as well; many companies use a mix of the first two, creating a "hybrid cloud" for their technology.

Therefore, whether it is digital transformation of business model transformation, business domain transformation, business process transformation or a cloud transformation, all are equally critical and digital leaders can take these digital initiatives through their skills and maturity. They can take the teams together, empower them and make their digital initiatives successful.

CHAPTER VI: SUMMARY, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Summary

According to Mergel et al. (2019), the process of digital transformation typically requires complex and significant alterations. Capable of inspiring and motivating team members to accept these changes by thorough explanation of the benefits and the transformation's long-term goals is a necessary component of effective leadership. According to Schulz-Knappe et al. (2019), the utilisation of efficient communication tactics might aid in the reduction of opposition and misunderstanding that might arise during times of transition. Additionally, in order to support the process of digital transformation, executives must assemble a strong and diverse workforce. Ensuring the active participation and contribution of all team members in the transformation process is crucial, and the organisation must be able to identify and recruit personnel with relevant digital competencies. In order to successfully achieve the goals of digital transformation, leadership should be crucial in encouraging cooperation, fostering shared learning, and guaranteeing the availability of sufficient resources.

Additionally, it is crucial for leaders to focus on different aspects of transformational leadership. According to (Steinmann et al. (2018)), transformational leadership entails a leader's capacity to uplift, encourage, and foster a creative organisational culture. The persons in question ought to have the ability to build credibility, provide direction, and handle any potential roadblocks that may arise during the digital transformation project

(Abbu et al., 2022). Organisations will embrace and adopt technology more quickly if their leaders can effectively demonstrate how to use new technologies and create a climate that encourages creativity (Kozioł-Nadolna, 2020). Moreover, to adequately address the challenges posed by digital transformation, leaders must develop new leadership competencies (Gilli et al., 2023).

Experts in this domain need to have a thorough understanding of new developments and modern digital technology. To stay ahead of the curve in the field of digital innovation, leaders must continue to learn and grow as individuals. This will enable them to adjust to new developments in technology and manage their organisations more skilfully. It is impossible to overestimate the importance and prevalence of leadership in the management of digital transformation inside organisations (Kurniawan and Soediantono, 2022). People who can drive change, having a clear vision, being skilled communicators, building strong team relationships, giving priority to transformational leadership components, and developing new leadership competencies are requirements for leadership. When these responsibilities are implemented, leaders have the capacity to direct organisations toward the critical transformations to gain an advantage over competitors in the digital age.

Growth and sustainability are brought about through impactful leadership. The company is capable of spearheading successful sustainability and digitalization projects. The organisation's customer base grows well because of the digitization initiatives. The

company meets its financial goals more successfully than before. As a result of these efforts, the business is better equipped to manage its current resources and control costs.

After stepping up its digital initiatives, the company is better able to engage and retain staff members.

6.2 Implications

The right technological know-how and the capacity to tolerate setbacks are essential for an organisation to be ready for a digital transition (Kiron et al., 2016, pp. 2-3). It's well known that an increased appetite for risk, quick experimentation, significant talent investment, and the recruitment and development of leaders who excel at soft skills are the main characteristics of digital cultures. Technologists are not necessary to run a digital company (Kiron et al., 2016, pp. 2-3). Nonetheless, in order to foster a culture of trust that encourages people to thrive and apply their expertise to achieve positive results, leaders must be prepared to relinquish some of their control and let others take the lead in technical areas (Kiron et al., 2016). In this situation, leaders need to make the most use of their strengths while letting others take the lead in areas where they are weakest in order to make sure the company is ready to execute the digital transformation in a way that benefits the culture, workers, and important stakeholders.

There may be leaders in some organisations who are wary about making significant changes. They function inside a framework that is primarily bureaucratic and traditional.

The possibility of a successful implementation of digital transformation and related activities may be limited by the high level of cynicism surrounding these changes (Kolbjornsrud, Amico, & Thomas 2017). Consequently, leaders need to be trained and educated on the advantages of these techniques in order for businesses to move forward, overcome their constraints, and adopt a new approach that is probably going to have long-term effects.

This qualitative research study, which was phenomenological in character, assessed the leaders engaged in digital transformations using survey and questionnaire of selective population technique to determine the relevance and influence of leadership style on this procedure. This was the suggested strategy of action because it was necessary to articulate leaders' opinions about this phenomenon in order to understand how they interpret or participate in digital transformations. Leaders also ascertain whether these strategies have an impact on digital transformation practices or not. It is very clear from the participant responses that a successful digital transformation journey not only brings revenue for the organization, but it also brings employee growth. The competitor edge with the latest technology to support in all spheres of work brings about a harmonized environment and organic growth for everyone involved.

The digital transformation process changes the culture of a company in a big way. Digital technology affects communication, teamwork, and employee involvement by using interesting case studies. This research explains that as companies move into digital innovation, they will need to understand and actively develop their corporate culture in

order to fully utilise the benefits of digital transformation. With the right approach, organisations can use digital technology to promote diversity and inclusion, boost creativity, and make it easier for them to deal with and adjust to change. This will not only make money for the company, but it will also make the workplace more enjoyable for the employees (Deep, 2023). Going digital can make our business environments much better. Because the world is always changing, business cultures need to be able to change too. As new tools come out and change, businesses need to change and adapt their values to keep up. To do this, you need to be open to new ideas, willing to work with others, able to accept different points of view, and committed to ongoing learning and personal growth.

This research will help the organisations understand the factors that make it easier to get past obstacles and make changes in a company. The analysis principles presented here represent a big step forward in changing organisations. The goal is to incorporate the best parts of the new normal model into company culture in order to increase creativity and profits. As a result of realising how hard it is to be as efficient as possible while managing the many facets of corporate culture, people have come to realise that cultural understanding is a must for success in a networked company. To stay successful in the digital age, organisations need to focus on and promote diversity and inclusion. Companies are becoming more and more aware that mixing different people's ideas and views leads to more creativity and new ways of thinking. Of course, for this to really work, organisations need to do more than just work on diversity. They also need to

actively work on inclusion by creating an atmosphere where everyone feels accepted, respected, and valued. This method not only helps people come up with a lot of new and creative ideas, but it also boosts mood, which leads to a more dedicated staff that works toward the organisation's goals.

The rise of virtual teams and working from home has also caused a change in the way organisations work. As the number of employees who work from home or other places grows, it is important to give everyone in the company a strong sense of link and shared identity. Digital technology can help a lot with this process by making virtual team-building events possible, using online contact tools, and letting people work from home.

6.3 Recommendations for Future Research

This phenomenological qualitative research study assessed leaders engaged in digital transformations and assessed the relevance and influence of leadership style on this process using a survey and Google questionnaire round approach. This approach was chosen because it allowed leaders to share their opinions about the phenomena and helped to understand how they see or participate in digital transformations. Furthermore, the degree of this phenomenon's influence was required when technical expertise is restricted in the leadership domain, as it may lead to poor strategic decision-making or false beliefs about the digital transformation's broad effects. Because it offered clear

insight into the role of the leader in digital transformation and how leaders from different companies viewed their personal contributions, this study approach was chosen.

However, the research presents the study results objectively. It summarises the external forces like competition and internal forces like legacy non digital systems, which lead to evolving business processes, their reengineering to modernise the industry. Making the switch to digital has many benefits, but it also has some problems. The large amount of money and time that is needed is a big problem. Using new technologies usually costs a lot of money, takes a lot of time, and needs skilled workers. There is also the chance of messing up current workflows, which could briefly lower output. At times when this dip is seen in output it leads to the curve of learning going negative. A slight deviation of goal and the whole journey starts to get disrupted and the chances of failure start increasing. Another problem is that employees may not want to change and may be slow to adopt new systems and ways of doing things. Concerns about data security and privacy are also very important, since going digital can make businesses more open to online dangers. Also, it can be hard to combine new technologies with old systems that are already in place.

The research advocates for the importance of digital transformation to generate a better customer experience from a business model that includes holistic amalgamation of emerging technologies like Digital Leadership, Artificial Intelligence, IOT, Block chain, Big Data with human emotions.

For new technologies like Digital Leadership, AI, IoT, Blockchain, and Big Data to work well with people's feelings, businesses need to take a number of different approaches. This means creating a community that values understanding and emotional intelligence while also being open to new ideas. Leaders should be able to use technology well and understand people's feelings, and they should help their teams make the changes between technologies with care. AI and IoT can be made to make people's lives better by being smart and sensitive to their feelings. Blockchain and Big Data should be used to increase trust and openness and make sure that data is used in a safe and fair way. Companies can create a healthy and welcoming environment that encourages both creativity and employee well-being by combining cutting-edge technology with a deep understanding of how people feel.

A multidimensional strategy is needed for companies to fully combine new technologies with people's emotions, such as Digital Leadership, AI, IoT, Blockchain, and Big Data. This means creating a community that is open to new ideas and values, understanding and emotional intelligence. Leaders should know how to use digital technologies well and also understand how people feel, so they can help their teams make smart decisions as technologies change. AI and IoT systems should be made to make the experiences of users better by being smart and aware of their feelings. Blockchain and Big Data can be used to build trust and openness, making sure that data is used in an honest and safe way. By combining new technology with a deep understanding of how people feel, businesses

can create a healthy and welcoming environment that encourages new ideas and improves the health and happiness of their employees.

Through the assumption of these roles and adherence to the guidelines offered, leaders can augment their capacity to proficiently propel digital transformation within organisations and achieve success amidst the rapid transformations ushered in by the digital era.

6.4 Conclusion with Research limitations

It concludes that looking at the various advantages, the organisations are ready for the Digital Transformation journey. The budget allocation is sufficient along with technical skill sets but still the failure rate is high due to certain reasons. On conducting the survey, it was concluded there's resistance to change. It could be due to lack of confidence in adapting the new technology or fear of job loss due to it, restricting the adaptation, and slowing the Digital Transformation journey.

However, with effective leadership roles the digital transformation journey becomes smooth. The following recommendations for leaders managing digital transformation in organisations marks the impact:

a) Never stop learning and growing as a person: Leaders must stay up to date on the latest developments in digital technology due to the rapid progress of technology. To effectively navigate the challenges posed by the digital revolution, leaders must pursue continuous learning and obtain relevant training.

b) Engage the entire organisation: It is crucial for leaders to aggressively involve and incorporate all departments and team members in the digital transformation process.

Providing people with the opportunity to actively engage and share their knowledge will improve the effectiveness of technology adoption and the achievement of successful organisational transformation.

c) Establish an environment that is innovative: It is crucial for leaders to create a culture that values creativity and a willingness to take chances. Fostering an innovative corporate culture that encourages experimentation with new ideas, creative thinking, and the capacity to learn from failures will act as a stimulant for technical growth and innovation inside the company.

d) Form strategic alliances: To gain new insights and access to cutting-edge technologies, executives should aggressively seek out connections with outside organisations, such as technology partners and research centres. These cooperative partnerships could speed up the digital transformation process and improve an organisation's capacity to stay competitive.

It is also seen that a capable leader takes active initiatives for the organisation's growth in every segment. As results show the strong agreement of participant in google questionnaire that following initiatives helped to make the adaptability of Digital Transformation work for the organisation:

- Growth and recognition provided to employees who actively engage in digital upskilling efforts.

- Training, workshop, and development skill classes to overcome any inhibitions for adaptations of organisation digital initiatives.
- Motivation through rewards and recognition led to employees to adopt well with digital skills and be able to perform satisfactorily.
- Organisation goals are integrated into individual performance evaluations and goal-setting processes.
- HR activities to promote team bonding and sharing of technology adoption experiences.

Hence, the study successfully determined the specific vision and strategic planning that leaders must develop for the digital transformation process. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that the true digital transformation of a firm encompasses far more than these aspects. The importance of leaders in digitally changing their organisation is immense. This may be accomplished through the methods and strategies outlined in this research. However, there is still much to be discovered regarding the appropriate vision and strategy for each individual industry. Further exploration is needed to understand the unique role of leaders in creating digital transformation journeys tailored to the demands of a particular sector. Then there also remains a scope to do further research on what could prove to be the most effective way of motivating the teams into making the digital transformation journey smooth and effective. This will thus ensure the business remains impactful in the dynamic and competitive scenario.

APPENDIX A
SURVEY COVER LETTER

Dear Respondent,

Researcher Name: Ritu Dhawan,

Research details: Doctoral Research at Swiss school of Business & Management, Geneva

Researcher Contact details: ritu@ssbm.ch, ritudhawan2020@gmail.com

Introduction: You are invited to participate in a research study being conducted by **Ritu Dhawan** for fulfilment of her DBA (Doctorate in Business Administration) program requirements.

Please feel free to reach out to her on ritu@ssbm.ch, ritudhawan2020@gmail.com for any questions or feedback.

Description of Project: This research aims to understand the role of leadership and various other factors which are significant while bringing about changes in the organisation during the transitioning from a legacy old working system to a technology rich system of working.

Time Required: 10 Minutes

Risk associated & Confidentiality: This study will have **no risk associated** with any of the participants. It simply asks participants to reflect on their observations without holding any liability on them. The result of this participation will be confidential and used only for the specific

purpose of supporting the research. This is an online interview form (Google form) and all personal details will be treated confidentially & de-identified post the conclusion of research.

Acknowledgement & Gratitude: Participation in this study will contribute significantly to the Research aiming to improve the ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN STRUCTURING THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY IN AN ORGANISATION. We eagerly anticipate your insights and express sincere thanks to you in advance for contributing your valuable time and inputs.

Thanking in anticipation

APPENDIX B
INFORMED CONSENT

Hello Friends,

I hope this message finds you well. I am conducting research on the "Role of Leadership in Structuring the Digital Transformation Journey in an Organization," and I would greatly appreciate your participation.

Please take 5-10 minutes to complete this questionnaire. Your insights will be invaluable in understanding the crucial role of leadership and other significant factors in guiding an organisation through the transition from traditional systems to advanced, technology-driven environments.

Your time and input are greatly appreciated.

Thank you!

Best Regards,

Ritu Dhawan

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE GUIDE

The identified participants will be contacted by email/questionnaire form to explore their interest in taking part in the study on **THE ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN STRUCTURING AN ORGANIZATION'S DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY**. In the initial discussion, I will go over the goals, steps, and confidentiality concerns. I will go over with each participant why they were chosen, their roles in the study, and what is expected of them in terms of time commitment and responses. They will be given instructions on how to complete the survey after getting a confirmation of their participation. Participants will receive the structured survey questions. I will get in touch with them for more information if there are any answers that are unclear. The estimated time of response to primary questions is expected to be around 15-20 minutes. The response to surveys by participants would be appreciated and they would be thanked for their time and participation.

APPENDIX D
SURVEY QUESTIONS - PRE

Q1. What is your Name? (optional)

Short answer text

Q2. Organisation's Name

Short answer text

Q3. Which of the following best describes your role in the organisation?

President

Director/VP

C Level Executive Role

Business Head

Senior Manager

Other...

Q4. Digital Transformation provides a much needed competitive edge to the organisation.

On the scale of 1-10, rate your organization's Digital Transformation maturity level?

1-10

Q5. Leaders in your organisation are preparing for the journey of Digitalization, Digitization and Digital Transformation. Do you agree with it?

Yes/No/Maybe

Q6. To embark on the journey of Digital Transformation, specific skill sets are required. How do you rate the Digital skill sets of Leaders in the organisation?

Not Satisfactory 1 – 5 Excellent

Q7. Is there a sufficient budget allocated in your organisation for innovation in products and services through Digital Transformation?

Quite Sufficient

Sufficient

Not Sufficient

Q8. Are the Leaders taking active initiatives to implement collaborative and agile culture in making the organisation ready to take digital transformation challenges and risks?

Yes/No/Maybe

Q9. Where are the critical applications of your organisation deployed?

Private Cloud

Public Cloud

Hybrid

Data Centre

Other...

Q10a. Has the organisation built a well- defined digital transformation path for the future?

Yes/No/Maybe

Q10b. What number of employees in the organisation have the technical skillset to adopt new technology without much hindrance?

0-50

51-100

101-500

501-above

Q11. Does your organisation provide necessary resources and adequate opportunities for development of employees digital skills?

Yes/No/Maybe

Q12. What according to you is the biggest hindrance for your organisation in adopting Digital Transformation?

Organization Strategy

Inefficient Technical Skills

Digital Leadership lacking

Security Barriers

Resistance to change

Budget Constraints

No Barrier Exists

Other...

APPENDIX E

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EMPLOYEES OF COMPANY WHICH HAVE ALREADY TAKEN DIGITAL INITIATIVE

ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN STRUCTURING THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY IN AN ORGANISATION

Please answer all the questions with utmost honesty.

* Indicates required question

Email*

Dear Respondent,

Researcher Name: Ritu Dhawan,

Research details: Doctoral Research at Swiss school of Business & Management,
Geneva

Researcher Contact details: ritu@ssbm.ch, ritudhawan2020@gmail.com

Introduction: You are invited to participate in a research study being conducted by **Ritu Dhawan** for fulfilment of her DBA (Doctorate in Business Administration) program requirements.

Please feel free to reach out to her on ritu@ssbm.ch, ritudhawan2020@gmail.com for any questions or feedback.

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Time Required: 10 Minutes

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Acknowledgement & Gratitude: Participation in this study will contribute significantly to the Research aiming to improve the ROLE OF LEADERSHIP IN STRUCTURING THE DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION JOURNEY IN AN ORGANISATION. We eagerly anticipate your insights and express sincere thanks to you in advance for contributing your valuable time and input.

Thanking in anticipation

Q1. Can you start by giving us a background about yourself, the company you represent, and your current role? *

Board of Directors (Chairperson/Chairman - Directors (Executive, Non-Executive, Independent)

Leadership Level (CEO, COO, President, SVP, VP, AVP, Directors, Partners)

Executive Leadership (CFO, CTO, CMO, CHRO, Other C-level executives e.g. CIO, CCO)

Managerial Level

Entry Level (Trainee, Associates)

Q2. In which department were the biggest digital challenges your business faced while growing? *

Challenges were faced in Sales & Marketing processes.

Challenges were faced in Business Administration processes.

Challenges were faced in Production & Supply chain

Challenges were faced in HR & Recruitment

Challenges were faced in Finance Management

Challenges were faced in Purchase Management

Q3. Kindly explain the most successful digital initiative taken by you or your teams in your organisation to address the challenges you mentioned in the above answer. *

Your answer

Q4. Marking on a scale of 1-5 with 1 = Never, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Sometimes, 4 = Most of the time, 5 = Always, please answer up to what extent were you able to make the following true for the teams in your organisation, working on the digitalization goal achievements with you. *

Never

Rarely

Sometimes

Most of the time

Always

1. Setting goals for a project achievement amongst the involved internal as well as external teams (if existing).
2. Actively involving all project team members in action planning to achieve project goals.
3. Providing the project team timely feedback on performance in relation to goals of the project.
4. Encouraging all team members to interact and share information with each other during the project.
5. Resolving conflicts among project team members frankly.
6. Analysing the need and accordingly conducting training programs on communication skills, development skills etc for the internal project team.
7. Creating opportunities for sharing feelings among the project team.

8. Clarifying the information about the shared responsibilities of team members
9. Involving the project team in identifying task-related problems.
10. Engaging the project team(s) in the implementation of action plans to solve task-related problems.

Q5. Marking on a scale of 1-5 with 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree, please answer upto what extent the following is true for the teams in your organisation, while implementing the digital project goals*

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Neither Agree nor Disagree

Agree

Strongly Agree

- In my organisation, related teams participate in learning activities (e.g., trainings, workshops) to personally develop.
- In my organisation, my team carefully evaluates the feedback he/she receives from others to learn from it.,

- The team takes part in developmental activities to improve task- and relational skills at work to ensure the project goals are achieved on time.
- The team focuses on how to effectively work towards our team goals at work.
- In my organisation the commercial software or systems are modified by own employees

Q6. Can you tell me a little bit about your founding team and what the team dynamics are like - their roles and responsibilities? *

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Neither Agree nor Disagree

Agree

Strongly Agree

- a. The founding team understands and involves themselves in the digital needs of the organisation.
- b. In my organisation, the founding team participates in learning activities (e.g., training, workshops) to personally develop.
- c. In my organisation, the founding team actively involves and carefully evaluates the digital solution earmarked and its benefits to the organisation.
- d. The founding team takes initiative in developmental activities to improve task- and relational skills at work for all employees.

- e. The founding team focuses on how to effectively involve employees to work towards achieving our organisational goals.

Q7. If there's another active person involved from your founding team in this digital initiative, could you describe any impact that can be attributed to their experience, industry knowledge, skills and working expertise on digitalization projects? *

- a. Expertise on Digital Projects
- b. Rich technology Experience
- c. Industry Knowledge
- d. Domain Knowledge
- e. Others

Q8. If you've raised funds or obtained other resources for these digital initiatives, how was your experience with relation to the criticality of certain factors? (*Rate each option on Scale of 1- Not so Critical, 2 - Critical & 3 - Very Critical*). *

Not so Critical

Critical

Very Critical

- a. Management Vision
- b. Regulatory & Statutory Requirements
- c. Cost & ROI Challenges
- d. Lack of Vision & Stakeholder support

e. Legal implications

Q9. Can you describe how you made this digital initiative successful in means of adaptability, success in achieving your organisational goals? *

Somewhat Agree

Agree

Strongly Agree

Neither Agree nor Disagree

- Growth and recognition are provided to employees who actively engage in digital upskilling efforts.
- Trainings, workshop, and development skill classes to overcome any inhibitions for adaptations of organisation digital initiatives.
- Motivation through rewards and recognition led to employees to adopt well with digital skills and be able to perform satisfactorily.
- Organisation goals are integrated into individual performance evaluations and goal-setting processes.
- HR activities to promote team bonding and sharing of technology adoption experiences.

Q10. Marking on a scale of 1-5 with 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neither Agree nor Disagree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree, please answer how has this digital initiative helped in building a sustainable business? *

Strongly Disagree

Disagree

Neither Agree nor Disagree

Agree

Strongly Agree

1. The organisation is driving impactful Digitalisation and Sustainability initiatives.
2. The organisation has achieved good customer growth after the digitalization initiatives.
3. The organisation has achieved its financial targets better than earlier.
4. The organisation is able to effectively manage its existing resources and cost control is more effective after these initiatives.
5. The organisation is now able to engage and retain employees better after increased digital initiatives.

Q11. Has this initiative led to maintaining a competitive advantage over others in your business? If yes, explain in Question 12? *

Yes/No/Other

Q12. Explain in few words, how the above initiative has given you a competitive edge in your industry.

Your answer

Submit

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