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THE TRANSFORMATION OF MANAGERIAL PRACTICES IN CONTEMPORARY ENTERPRISES IN THE DIGITAL ERA

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Abstract: Currently, in the period of accelerated digital changes, standardized managerial activities are undergoing a profound process of reconfiguration. This research analyzes how digitalization influences leadership styles and management tools used in contemporary enterprises, with a focus on the private sector. Emerging trends such as transformational leadership, agile management and virtual team coordination are analyzed, highlighting the need to develop digital competencies of leaders. The study focuses on applied research within enterprises in the Republic of Moldova and examines the impact of the use of digital technologies on internal communication, decision-making and managers' involvement in organizational transformation. The conclusions drawn indicate a direct dependence between the level of managerial digital literacy and the efficiency of adaptation to the new requirements of the digital environment.

Keywords: digital leadership, managerial transformation, technological integration, decision-making, organizational adaptability.

Abstract: Actualmente, în perioada schimbărilor digitale accelerate, activitățile manageriale standardizate sunt supuse unui proces profund de reconfigurare. Această cercetare analizează modul în care digitalizarea influențează stilurile de conducere și instrumentele de gestiune utilizate în întreprinderile contemporane, cu accent pe sectorul privat. Sunt analizate tendințele emergente precum leadership-ul transformațional, managementul agil și coordonarea echipelor virtuale, evidențiind necesitatea dezvoltării competențelor digitale ale liderilor. Studiul se axează pe o cercetare aplicată în cadrul întreprinderilor din Republica Moldova și examinează impactul utilizării tehnologiilor digitale asupra comunicării interne, procesului decizional și implicării managerilor în transformarea organizațională. Concluziile formulate indică o dependență directă dintre nivelul de alfabetizare digitală managerială și eficiența adaptării la noile cerințe ale mediului digital.

Keywords: digital leadership, managerial transformation, technological integration, decision-making, organizational adaptability.

INTRODUCTION

In the era of quickly changing information and communication technologies, companies are now faced with the issue of reevaluating the traditional leadership paradigm. A fundamental reassessment of managerial practices is necessary with the onset of the digital era. This entails adjusting not just the technologies employed but also leadership paradigms, decision-making procedures, and internal communication techniques.

Instead of being a distinct competitive advantage of new businesses, digitalization is now a necessary prerequisite for the long-term survival and financial success of every institutional unit, regardless of the sector of activity.

Managers are now being forced to redefine their roles within their organizations. They must integrate digital skills into their work, lead hybrid teams, embrace cutting-edge technology, and foster a culture within their organization that thrives on innovation and agility.

The digital transformation strategy of the Republic of Moldova for the years 2023–2030 serves as a key milestone in the modernization of organizational leadership, establishing digitalization as a national priority [1]. Research on the transformation of managerial practices in the digital age aligns with these strategic objectives by analyzing how enterprises integrate digital technologies, develop managerial competencies suited to the new reality, and contribute to

strengthening a competitive and adaptive organizational ecosystem. This alignment reflects the positive impact of public policies on managerial transformation processes within the entrepreneurial sector.

The relevance of this topic is further reinforced by the post-pandemic realities, during which the digitalization of processes has accelerated at an unprecedented pace. Within this new framework, leadership styles are becoming increasingly flexible, collaborative, and data-driven, necessitating a rethinking of how authority, control, and communication are exercised within organizations.

Therefore, analyzing the transformation of managerial practices in the context of digitalization proves to be highly relevant, as it facilitates understanding of how organizational leaders can respond to contemporary challenges and effectively leverage the opportunities brought by technology. Such an investigation offers valuable contributions both to the consolidation of the theoretical framework in the specialized literature and to the formulation of pragmatic action strategies tailored to the demands and dynamics of the digitalized organizational environment.

MATERIAL AND METHODS

The study is based on applied quantitative research conducted in the private sector of the Republic of Moldova, with the main objective of assessing the degree of digital technology integration in managerial activities and identifying the level of digital competencies among organizational leaders. The research method employed was a survey, implemented through a structured questionnaire specifically designed for this investigation.

The research instrument consisted of three thematic sections: (1) the use of digital technologies in managerial activity, (2) personal digital competencies, and (3) digital security, ethics, and culture. The questionnaire was administered electronically and included questions with answers rated on a Likert scale from 1 to 5, where 1 indicated a very low frequency or competency (not at all/never), and 5 signalled a very high level (always/to a very great extent).

The standard deviation measures how much the responses vary from their mean (average score) and can be calculated using the following formula:

$$s = \sqrt{\frac{\sum_{i=1}^{N}(x_i - \bar{x})^2}{N}} \quad (1)$$

where:

s - standard deviation;

x_i - individual response value;

$\bar{x}$ - mean (average) of all responses;

N - number of responses.

The collected data were statistically processed through the calculation of the mean score, standard deviation, and the frequency distribution of responses for each evaluated item. This type of scaling enabled the quantification of managerial perceptions and behaviors in relation to the use of digital technologies, providing a comparable framework for interpreting the results.

The research sample consisted of leaders (directors, department managers, team coordinators) active in 42 private enterprises, selected from sectors such as services, commerce, IT, manufacturing, and logistics. This sectoral diversity allowed for a balanced perspective on how digitalization influences managerial practices across different organizational contexts.

The interpretation of the results was carried out in correlation with the research objectives and in relation to the specialized literature, providing a solid foundation for the conclusions formulated within the study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The rapid advancement of digital technologies has led to profound transformations in organizational structure, culture, and processes, directly impacting the leadership styles adopted

by managers. In an environment characterized by continuous change, global connectivity, and instant access to information, organizational leadership can no longer function effectively based on traditional, centralized, and hierarchical paradigms.

The authoritarian leadership style, defined by centralized decision-making, rigid control over processes, and top-down communication, was long considered effective in traditional organizational settings - especially in industries with strict hierarchical structures and environments where compliance and discipline were top priorities. However, with the transition to the digital era, this leadership model has started to lose its effectiveness and applicability, facing a series of fundamental limitations.

Firstly, the nature of the workforce has changed significantly. New generations of employees - particularly Millennials and Generation Z - are deeply influenced by digital culture, which promotes open access to information, interactivity, and autonomy. These generations place greater value on freedom of expression, collaboration, recognition of individual contributions, and opportunities for professional development. In this context, authoritarian styles are perceived as rigid, restrictive, and demotivating, as they limit active engagement and personal initiative.

Secondly, technology demands a restructuring of power relations within organizations. Digital tools - such as collaborative work platforms, artificial intelligence, data analytics, and performance management applications - enable a more equitable distribution of information and responsibilities. As a result, decision-making power can no longer remain exclusively concentrated at the top of the hierarchy but tends to be distributed among teams and individuals who work directly with data and technologies. This requires a decentralized leadership style based on trust, coaching, and facilitation.

Organizations in the digital era must respond swiftly to market changes, technological innovation, and customer expectations. By its very nature, the authoritarian style slows down decision-making processes, discourages experimentation, and reduces organizational agility - significant disadvantages in a dynamic and competitive environment. Furthermore, this style can negatively affect organizational culture by promoting conformity at the expense of creativity and generating a climate of fear and lack of initiative.

In contrast, modern leadership models such as participative, democratic, and transformational styles are becoming increasingly relevant. Participative leadership encourages the active involvement of team members in the decision-making process, recognizing the value of individual contributions and promoting accountability. According to Yukl [2], this style contributes to increased employee engagement and satisfaction - both essential in a dynamic and interconnected professional environment.

Democratic leadership involves openness to dialogue, bidirectional feedback, and the decentralization of authority, fostering the co-creation of strategies and rapid adaptation to market changes. The transformational style, described by Bass and Riggio [3], is distinguished by the leader's ability to inspire and motivate employees beyond personal interests, generating a shared vision and supporting continuous development. This model is increasingly relevant in the digital context, as it is rooted in change, learning, and innovation.

Across all these models, the focus shifts from imposed authority to positive influence, from conformity to creativity, and from hierarchical control to facilitation and guidance. Modern managers must demonstrate competencies such as emotional intelligence, strategic thinking, agile decision-making, and a continuous openness to personal and professional development.

Contemporary leadership transcends the traditional administrative role and becomes a catalytic force for change, cohesion, and collective performance. Leaders create the conditions for active employee participation in achieving organizational goals within a framework grounded in trust, autonomy, and the appreciation of human potential. This reconstruction of the leader–team relationship reflects the demands of an ever-evolving organizational world.

A complementary model is agile leadership, which reflects the need for adaptability and rapid decision-making. Agile leaders adopt an iterative approach based on experimentation, continuous feedback, and fast learning. According to Joiner and Josephs [4], agile leadership

involves adjusting managerial behavior according to context and engaging the team in problem-solving, making it especially effective in innovative industries.

Remote leadership experienced accelerated development during the COVID-19 pandemic, when remote work became a global norm. This model involves coordinating teams in virtual, often geographically dispersed environments, where direct supervision is not possible. In such a setting, leaders must build relationships based on trust, autonomy, and clear communication. According to Cascio and Shurygailo [5], trust becomes a critical resource for performance and team cohesion.

Effective virtual communication is essential in remote leadership. The absence of informal interactions requires deliberate communication structures, combining synchronous channels (video conferencing) and asynchronous ones (emails), tailored to the team's context [6]. Maintaining engagement and motivation in this environment involves recognizing individual achievements, fostering a sense of belonging, and supporting professional development.

In dispersed organizations, cultural sensitivity and intercultural flexibility are essential competencies. Leaders must be aware of differences in communication styles, perceptions of authority, and decision-making approaches to ensure an inclusive and equitable environment. Remote leadership is not a temporary solution but a sustainable component of modern leadership, grounded in empathy, autonomy, and relational efficiency in virtual environments.

For these modern leadership models to be successfully implemented, leaders must possess a solid set of digital competencies. The continuous development of these skills is no longer optional - it is a fundamental requirement for managerial effectiveness in a digitalized environment. Leaders must be capable of understanding, utilizing, and leveraging digital technologies for strategic purposes, managing online collaboration platforms, interpreting real-time data and indicators, and integrating digital solutions into decision-making processes.

Moreover, digital literacy must be complemented by a high capacity for adaptability, critical thinking, and innovation. In this regard, leaders should continuously develop their digital competencies through specialized training, participation in courses, workshops, and upskilling initiatives. Adapting to new requirements entails not only integrating technology into managerial activities but also deeply understanding how it shapes team dynamics, organizational culture, and decision-making processes. A lack of these skills may lead to challenges in coordinating virtual teams, communicating effectively, or leveraging digital data for strategic decision-making.

Authentic leadership is gaining ground amid the uncertainty and unpredictability of digital environments. It is based on honesty, transparency, integrity, and consistency between personal values and managerial behavior, providing stability within virtual teams. Authenticity becomes a valuable asset in maintaining cohesion in the absence of direct interaction.

At the same time, distributed leadership reflects the sharing of responsibilities and promotes employee participation in decision-making. According to Bolden [7], this model is effective in organizational networks, virtual teams, and flat structures, fostering collective innovation, autonomy, and efficiency.

These leadership models are complementary and are often combined based on the specific characteristics of the organization and the team. Digital leaders may exhibit transformational traits, adopt agile methods, and promote authentic values. Thus, modern leadership becomes a distributed, contextualized process in which technological and human competencies mutually reinforce one another. These new models not only reflect the digital transformation but also act as drivers of organizational sustainability and competitiveness [8, 9].

The deep digitalization of organizational processes has triggered a paradigmatic shift in how managerial functions are exercised. Digital tools are no longer merely technological supports - they have become essential components of the modern organizational architecture, directly influencing leadership styles, communication, strategic planning, and decision-making processes.

Digital collaboration platforms such as Microsoft Teams, Slack, or Zoom facilitate internal communication regardless of the physical location of team members [10]. These tools enable the rapid exchange of information, organization of virtual meetings, real-time coordination of tasks, and continuous connectivity between leaders and collaborators. In this context, leaders must

manage not only direct interactions but also the dynamics of hybrid teams, distributing tasks and maintaining cohesion in virtual environments.

Project management applications like Asana, Trello, or ClickUp have revolutionized activity monitoring by providing increased transparency over project progress, efficient resource allocation, and traceability of responsibilities. This leads to the decentralization of the decision-making process, as team members have direct access to objectives, deadlines, and tasks, allowing them to actively contribute to improving workflow efficiency [11, 12].

In addition, ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) and CRM (Customer Relationship Management) systems integrate various organizational functions (human resources, finance, sales, logistics, etc.) into a unified platform, enabling leaders to make informed decisions based on real-time data. Additionally, big data analytics and the use of artificial intelligence provide a new dimension to the decision-making process, allowing for trend forecasting, strategy personalization, and performance optimization.

These transformations, however, require a redefinition of the competency profile needed for contemporary leaders. Among the most relevant competencies are:

✓ *digital literacy* - the ability to understand and effectively use digital technologies in planning, coordination, and communication processes. This goes beyond basic operation of platforms, encompassing critical discernment of their impact on the team and the organization;

✓ *critical and analytical thinking* - necessary for correctly interpreting data generated by digital tools, avoiding decision-making errors, and formulating strategic solutions based on objective information;

✓ *decisional agility* - in a digital environment, leaders must make quick decisions tailored to constantly changing contexts, capitalizing on emerging opportunities and minimizing risks. Agility is closely linked to the ability to reassess priorities in real time and act promptly and clearly;

✓ *emotional intelligence* - essential for managing interpersonal relationships in virtual spaces, maintaining team motivation and cohesion, recognizing individual needs, and building a positive organizational climate, even in the absence of face-to-face interaction.

Digital tools not only enhance managerial efficiency but also redefine the leadership function itself. They demand the continuous adaptation of competencies and a genuine openness to learning and innovation [13, 14]. Leaders who understand and harness the potential of technology not only enhance their personal effectiveness but also become agents of sustainable organizational transformation.

At the same time, the challenges brought by over-digitalization must also be acknowledged: the risk of information overload, the decline of human cohesion in the absence of direct contact, dependence on digital platforms, and the danger of fragmented communication. Thus, managerial success in the digital age lies not only in the integration of technology but also in maintaining a sustainable balance between the digital dimension and the human component of leadership [15, 16].

To assess the level of digital readiness among managers in the context of leadership process digitalization, a structured questionnaire was developed, organized into three main sections. These include: (1) the use of digital technologies in managerial activities; (2) personal digital competencies; and (3) aspects related to digital security, ethics, and culture. The questionnaire's structure was designed to allow for a comprehensive and balanced evaluation of managers' ability to effectively integrate digital tools into the organization's decision-making and operational processes.

The analysis of respondents' socio-professional data revealed that most of the participants hold middle and senior management positions - general directors, department managers, or team coordinators - and possess professional experience in the field of management ranging from 3 to 20 years. This lends significant relevance to the data collected, as the perspectives of these leaders are grounded in practical experience accumulated over time.

The distribution of enterprises by field of activity was as follows: 14 enterprises (33.3%) operate in the services sector, 10 enterprises (23.8%) in trade and distribution, 8 enterprises (19%)

in the information technology sector, 6 enterprises (14.3%) in industrial production, and 4 enterprises (9.6%) belong to other fields such as logistics and consulting. This sectoral diversity ensures a comprehensive and balanced perspective on the degree of managerial digitalization, reflecting the realities of various industries within the private sector.

The degree of digital technology use in managerial activities is an important criterion for evaluating leaders' capacity to adapt to the new requirements of the contemporary organizational environment. The consistent and efficient use of digital collaboration platforms, planning applications, and data analysis tools reflects not only the level of digital literacy but also the managers' willingness to integrate innovation into decision-making processes, team coordination, and performance optimization. This indicator becomes essential in the context of accelerated digital transformations, where flexibility, responsiveness, and the strategic use of technology determine managerial success and organizational competitiveness.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents' answers regarding the level of digital technology use in managerial activities

Questions	Average score	Minimum score	Maximum score	Standard deviation
I regularly use digital platforms for internal communication	4.6	3	5	0.7
I use planning and activity monitoring applications	4.2	2	5	0.9
I efficiently coordinate teams working remotely or in a hybrid format	4.0	2	5	1.0
I make managerial decisions based on data analysis and digital indicators	3.9	2	5	0.8
I am involved in digitalization processes within my organization	4.3	3	5	0.6

Source: elaborated by the author based on respondents´ answers

The analysis of the data presented in Table 1 highlights the level of integration of digital technologies into the managerial activities of respondents from the private sector, reflecting the degree of adaptation to the new realities brought by digitalization.

The highest average score was recorded for the item regarding the use of digital platforms for internal communication, with a mean score of 4.6, indicating widespread adoption of these tools (e.g., Microsoft Teams, Slack) among managers. The relatively low standard deviation (0.7) shows little variation in responses, confirming a well-established practice at the organizational level. The minimum and maximum values (3 and 5) suggest that while most managers are digitally active, there are still a few who do not use these tools to their fullest extent.

A slightly lower average score of 4.3 was obtained for the item concerning managers' involvement in organizational digitalization processes, which suggests a high level of awareness and responsibility toward digital transformation. The standard deviation of 0.6 - the lowest among all analyzed dimensions - reflects strong convergence in responses, indicating a relatively homogeneous and proactive attitude. Values ranged between 3 and 5, pointing to predominantly active, though not universal, engagement.

Regarding the use of planning and activity monitoring applications (e.g., Trello, Asana, Monday.com), the average score of 4.2 confirms fairly frequent integration of these technologies into day-to-day management activities. However, the standard deviation of 0.9 and the minimum score of 2 reveal notable differences in usage levels, which may be attributed to factors such as access to digital resources, organizational culture, or the degree of digital maturity within the enterprise. The maximum score remains at 5, indicating that for some respondents, these applications already represent an essential component of activity management.

For the item related to coordinating teams in remote or hybrid work settings, the average score was 4.0, denoting frequent use but with greater variability among respondents. The standard

deviation of 1.0 - the highest among all analyzed items - indicates significant differences between managers in terms of adaptation to remote work. Scores ranged from 2 to 5, suggesting that while a substantial portion of respondents coordinate hybrid teams effectively, there are also cases where this practice is less present or not yet fully optimized.

Finally, managerial decision-making based on data analysis and digital indicators scored an average of 3.9, with a standard deviation of 0.8 and values ranging from 2 to 5. These results indicate that, although a considerable number of managers use dashboards and other digital sources in decision-making, there remains significant room for development in this area. The average score being close to the upper threshold and the moderate dispersion suggest an upward trend, as well as the need to strengthen analytical and data interpretation skills for strategic decision-making.

Overall, the results confirm that managers in the private sector of the Republic of Moldova display a high level of openness toward integrating digital technologies into their managerial activities. At the same time, there is a clear need for targeted interventions to strengthen advanced digital competencies and to balance usage levels across various dimensions of digitalization, in order to build an adaptive, efficient, and forward-looking managerial model.

Given the growing importance of technology in today's managerial environment, not only the use of digital tools is relevant, but also the individual level of preparedness of leaders in this field. Thus, an analysis of personal digital competencies becomes essential to understanding managers' ability to operate effectively in a digitalized environment. Figure 1 presents the results obtained regarding respondents' self-assessment of their basic and advanced digital skills.

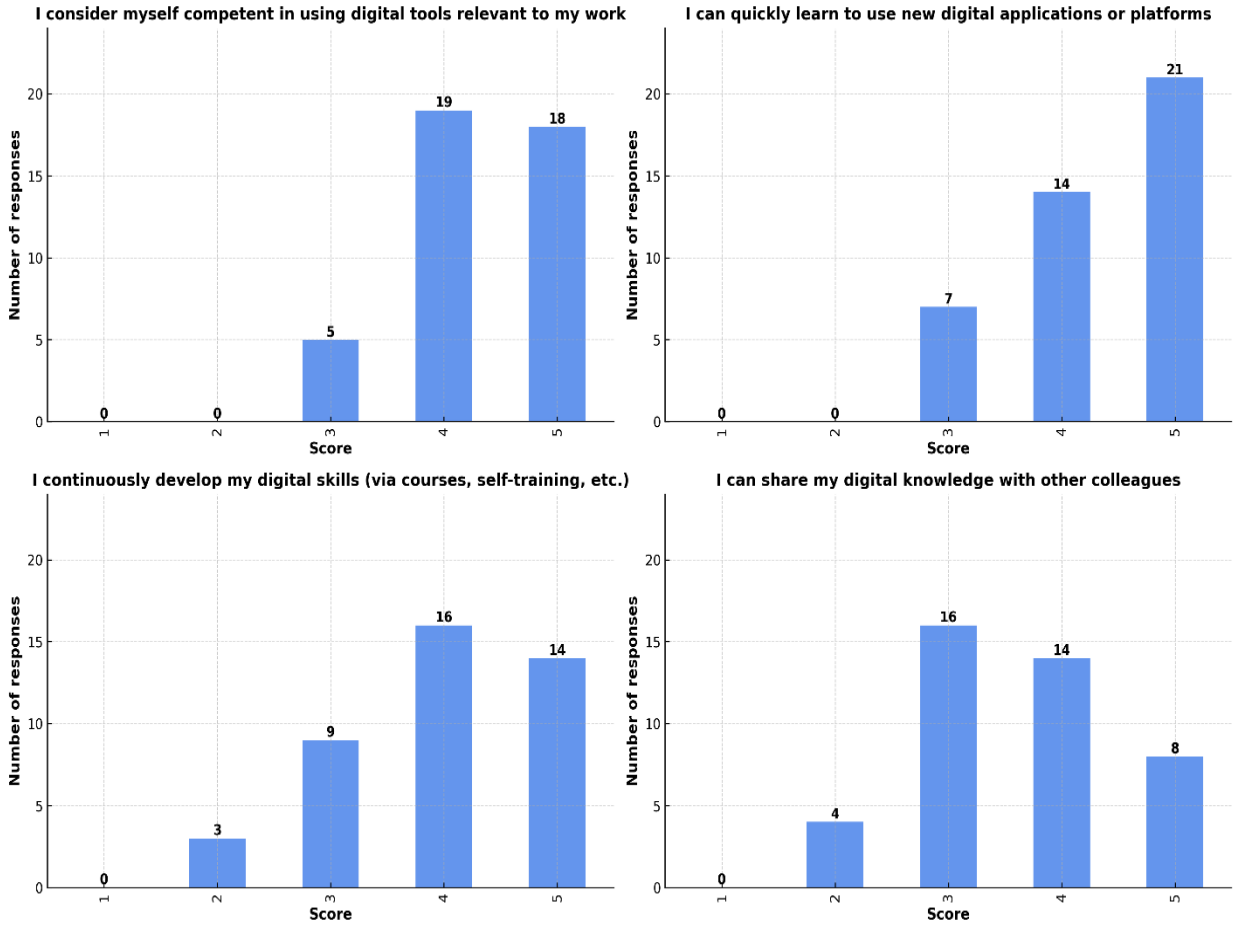


Figure 1. Distribution of responses regarding the self-assessed level of personal digital competencies among managers

Source: elaborated by the author based on respondents´ answers

The analysis of the data presented in Figure 1 highlights the level of self-assessed personal digital competencies among managers, reflecting their ability to operate efficiently in digitalized

environments and to respond to the specific challenges of digital transformation. The questionnaire items targeted four key dimensions of digital competence: the use of relevant digital tools, the ability to engage in digital learning, ongoing self-training, and the willingness to share acquired knowledge with colleagues.

The highest frequency was recorded for the question regarding the ability to quickly learn how to use new applications or digital platforms, where 21 respondents gave the maximum score (5), and another 14 selected level 4. The average score for this dimension was 4.33, reflecting a high degree of digital adaptability and strong confidence in the ability to integrate emerging technologies. The low variation in responses indicates homogeneity and a favorable digital culture within the analyzed organizations.

A comparable score was recorded for the item concerning self-assessed competence in using digital tools relevant to professional activity, where 18 respondents chose level 5 and 19 selected level 4, meaning that 88% of participants consider themselves well-prepared digitally. The average score for this question was 4.31, reflecting a high level of familiarity with current digital work tools - an essential requirement for effective leadership in a digital organizational environment.

Regarding the continuous development of digital competencies through self-training or participation in courses, the calculated average score was 3.98. Responses indicate an active attitude among the majority of respondents, though with a slight decline compared to the previous items. Specifically, 16 respondents selected level 4, and 14 chose level 5, while 9 positioned themselves at level 3 and only 3 at level 2. These findings suggest that although there is a consistent interest in updating knowledge, in some cases there may be a lack of resources, motivation, or institutional opportunities for continuous professional development.

A lower level is observed in relation to the dissemination of digital knowledge to colleagues, where only 8 respondents gave the maximum score, 14 selected level 4, and another 16 chose level 3. The average score obtained for this dimension was 3.62, indicating a positive trend, but also revealing potential for improvement in terms of active involvement in the transfer of digital competencies within the organization. This distribution may suggest that although managers possess digital knowledge, not all are systematically engaged in digital mentoring processes or in the collective development of their teams.

Overall, the analyzed data show that managers in the private sector demonstrate a high level of individual digital competence, especially with regard to the use and rapid learning of digital technologies. However, the average scores also point to the need to strengthen the dimensions related to continuous learning and knowledge sharing - essential aspects for developing a sustainable organizational digital culture and fostering a collaborative, adaptive leadership approach.

After assessing the managers' personal digital competencies, another essential dimension of digital transformation in organizations concerns aspects related to security, ethics, and the promotion of a healthy digital culture. These components reflect not only the level of compliance with internal policies and external regulations but also the responsibility of leaders in shaping a safe, ethical, and innovation-oriented organizational climate. The results obtained in this section are presented below.

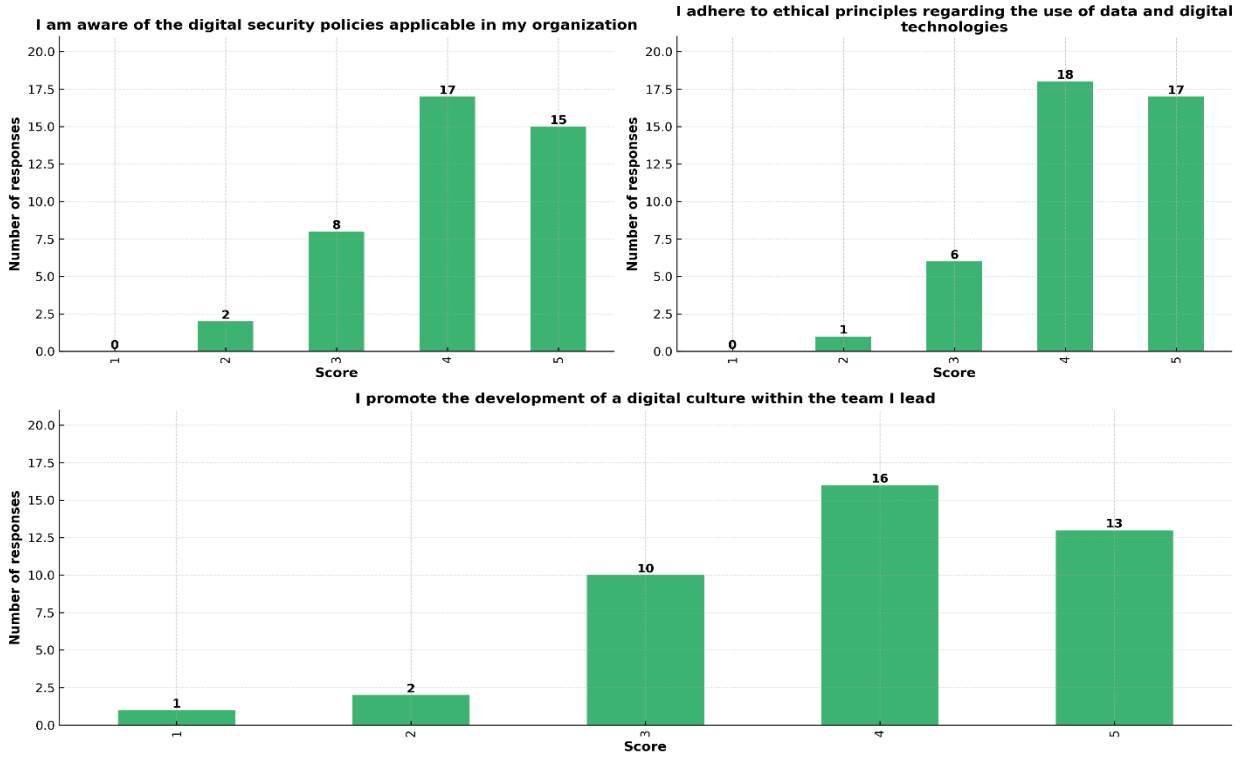


Figure 2. Distribution of responses regarding the level of digital security, ethics, and culture in managerial activities

Source: elaborated by the author based on respondents´ answers

The analysis of the results regarding digital security, ethics, and culture in managerial activity provides a detailed perspective on how managers perceive and integrate dimensions related to information security, digital ethics, and the promotion of a digital organizational culture. The findings reflect the level of awareness, commitment, and engagement in these essential areas for effective governance in a digitalized environment.

Regarding knowledge of digital security policies applicable within the organization, the estimated average score is 4.02, indicating a relatively high level of awareness. Most respondents positioned themselves at levels 4 and 5 (17 and 15 individuals, respectively), suggesting that aspects of information security are well understood and communicated within companies. However, the presence of lower scores (2 and 3) signals that, in some cases, better dissemination of internal procedures and policies may be needed, especially in organizations with expanding digital infrastructure.

In terms of adherence to ethical principles in the use of data and digital technologies, the average score is 4.21, indicating a strong awareness of the importance of ethics in managerial activity. Nearly 84% of respondents selected levels 4 and 5, which points to the presence of a solid ethical climate within organizations. This trend is particularly important given current regulations on data protection and confidentiality, as well as the need to ensure responsible conduct in the digital environment.

In contrast, the promotion of a digital culture within teams received a more modest average score of 3.74, reflecting an existing practice but with uneven implementation. While 16 respondents gave a score of 4 and 13 selected level 5, a significant number of managers (10) positioned themselves at level 3, and 3 respondents chose lower scores (1 and 2). This distribution reveals that, although a substantial segment of leaders actively encourages a digital mindset, there is room to improve engagement in shaping shared digital practices and enhancing the digital cohesion of teams.

Overall, the results show that dimensions related to digital security and professional ethics are well established in managerial awareness, whereas the promotion of digital culture requires additional interventions in the form of clear organizational policies, continuous training, and

digital mentoring initiatives. Strengthening these aspects is essential for enhancing strategic adaptability and ensuring the sustainability of digital transformations within enterprises in the Republic of Moldova.

In addition to the structured sections of the questionnaire, respondents were given the opportunity to provide open-ended comments regarding the challenges encountered in the digitalization process and the solutions they consider relevant for developing digital competencies within their organizations. These qualitative responses offer a complementary perspective on the dynamics of digital transformation, highlighting practical aspects, subjective perceptions, and strategic recommendations drawn directly from managerial experience.

Table 2. Qualitative observations on the challenges and solutions identified in the managerial digitalization process

What challenges do you encounter in using digital technologies in managerial activities?		**What solutions or initiatives do you consider necessary for developing digital competencies within your company?**	
Respondents´ answers	***Number of respondents***	***Respondents´ answers***	***Number of respondents***
Lack of specialized training	19	Organization of internal digital training courses	24
Resistance to change	13	Development of an internal digital policy	15
Poor technical infrastructure	11	Implementation of digital mentoring programs	10
Overload of digital tools	9	Investments in IT infrastructure and security	13
Uncertainty regarding data security	8	Incentives for self-training	8

Source: elaborated by the author based on respondents´ answers

The answers provided by the interviewed managers in the open-ended section offer valuable contextual insight into how the process of digitalization is perceived in day-to-day managerial activities. The reported challenges focus primarily on structural, psychological, and infrastructural barriers that hinder a smooth digital transition.

The most frequently mentioned challenge is the *lack of specialized training*, noted by 19 respondents. This issue highlights a gap between the complexity of the digital technologies in use and the current level of practical preparedness among leadership staff. The need for an institutional framework for continuous training is evident, especially as digitalization becomes a fundamental component of modern management.

Resistance to change appears as the second most frequent challenge (13 respondents), and is characteristic of organizations whose internal culture still relies on traditional methods of operation. This indicates difficulties in mobilizing teams collectively to adopt new technological solutions, which can slow down the implementation of digital reforms.

Technical issues -such as poor infrastructure (11 mentions) and *fragmentation of digital platforms* (9 mentions) - reflect an operational reality in which the implementation of technology is often constrained by a lack of resources or misaligned technology choices. These difficulties contribute to digital fatigue and reduce managerial efficiency. Additionally, *uncertainties regarding data security* (8 mentions) suggest partial awareness of cybersecurity risks and the need for clear information protection policies.

On the other hand, the *solutions proposed by respondents* provide concrete directions for intervention. The *organization of internal training courses* is the most frequently mentioned solution (24 respondents), confirming the acute need for practical instruction, with a focus on the use of collaborative digital platforms and analytical tools. The *development of an internal digital policy* (15 mentions) reflects a desire for standardization and clarity in the use of digital resources.

Moreover, *digital mentoring programs* (10 mentions) are seen as an effective way to facilitate the informal transfer of competencies among colleagues, while *investments in IT infrastructure and security* (13 mentions) underline the recognition of technology as a key pillar

of organizational efficiency. *Incentives for self-training* (8 respondents) indicate interest in flexible solutions tailored to the individual pace and needs of managers.

In conclusion, the analysis of qualitative observations reveals that, while private organizations in the Republic of Moldova are in the process of adapting to digital realities, there are both systemic obstacles and significant internal resources that can be strategically leveraged. Implementing the proposed solutions would contribute to strengthening resilient digital leadership, capable of effectively managing organizational transformation processes in the context of an evolving digital economy.

CONCLUSIONS

The conducted research highlights the profound transformations taking place in the managerial sphere in the context of accelerated digitalization. The study's findings confirm that managers in the private sector of the Republic of Moldova display significant openness toward integrating digital technologies into their daily activities, frequently using collaborative platforms, planning applications, and data analysis tools. This trend reflects an adaptation to the new realities of organizational leadership, where decision-making speed, transparency, and digital communication have become essential.

At the same time, the analysis of personal digital competencies revealed a high level of digital literacy among leaders, particularly regarding the ability to quickly learn new tools and familiarity with basic applications. However, dimensions related to continuous learning and knowledge dissemination among colleagues still require strengthening, suggesting the need to develop stronger organizational cultures around digital learning and collaboration.

With regard to ethics and digital security, respondents demonstrate a high level of awareness and responsibility. Nevertheless, promoting an active digital culture at the team level remains a partially achieved objective.

The qualitative observations provided by respondents reinforce the quantitative conclusions, identifying key challenges to digitalization - such as the lack of specialized training, inadequate technical infrastructure, and resistance to change - as well as concrete solution proposals, including the organization of internal training courses, the development of coherent digital policies, and the implementation of mentoring programs.

Based on these findings, the following proposals can be formulated to support the digital transformation process in organizational management:

✓ *Development of institutional digitalization strategies* that include clear objectives regarding the use of technologies in decision-making and operational processes;

✓ *Implementation of continuous digital training and development programs* for leadership personnel, through specialized courses, interactive workshops, and online learning platforms;

✓ *Creation of internal digital mentoring frameworks*, where managers with advanced competencies support the training of colleagues less familiar with modern technologies;

✓ *Investments in IT infrastructure and cybersecurity* to ensure a solid and secure technological foundation for digital activities;

✓ *Promotion of a digital organizational culture* that encourages collaboration, digital autonomy, adherence to ethical principles, and the value of continuous learning;

✓ *Integration of digital competency assessment* into human resources policies, including in the selection, promotion, and training of leaders.

In conclusion, the success of digital transformation in management depends on organizations' ability to create an ecosystem conducive to change - built on visionary leadership, consolidated digital competencies, and a culture of innovation. Thus, digitalization is not merely a technological challenge but a profound process of reconfiguring the managerial mindset to align with the evolving demands of a dynamic and interconnected economy.

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