© JUN 2020 | IRE Journals | Volume 3 Issue 12 | ISSN: 2456-8880
DOI: https://doi.org/10.64388/IREV3I12-1713635

The Rise of Digital Transformation Strategists: Why Every Industry Needs a Product Innovator

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Abstract- ***Despite billions of dollars invested annually in digital technologies, a significant proportion of digital transformation initiatives fail to deliver meaningful competitive advantage or sustained business value. Most transformation efforts remain trapped at the level of technology adoption, fragmented process automation, or isolated innovation projects, largely because organizations lack clearly defined strategic roles such as Digital Transformation Strategists and Product Innovators capable of integrating technology, product innovation, and organizational change into a coherent transformation agenda. This growing disconnect has created leadership vacuum at the center of digital transformation. This study examines the rise of the Digital Transformation Strategist and the expanding strategic importance of Product Innovators as critical actors in contemporary organizational transformation. Using systematic literature review (SLR) approach, the study synthesizes evidence from strategic management, information systems, digital innovation and industry-specific transformation studies. The findings reveals that successful digital transformation is increasingly driven by hybrid professionals who combine strategic foresight, technological fluency, product-centric thinking, and change leadership capabilities. The study further identifies recurring patterns of strategic failure linked to misalignment between digital initiatives and product innovation capabilities. The study contributes to knowledge by conceptualizing the Digital Transformation Strategist as a distinct strategic role that bridges board-level strategy, product innovation, and operational execution. It further argues that the absence of this role constitutes a structural weakness in many transformation programs. Practically, the study offers guidance for organizations seeking to redesign leadership architectures, build product-driven cultures, and align digital investments with strategic value creation.***

Keywords: ***Digital Transformation, Digital Transformation Strategist, Product Innovator, Digital Competencies***

I. INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation has shifted from being a discretionary technological upgrade to a strategic imperative for organizations worldwide. Driven by rapid advances in artificial intelligence, data analytics, automation, and digital platforms, industries are being reconfigured in ways that challenge traditional business models and managerial logics (Agarwal et al., 2010; Vial, 2019). These transformations demand not only the adoption of digital tools but also fundamental changes in how value is created, delivered, and captured. As firms attempt to navigate the complexities of digital ecosystems, it has become increasingly clear that successful transformation requires a new class of strategic professionals who can bridge technology, innovation, and organizational change. This recognition has led to the emergence of the Digital Transformation Strategist (DTS), a role that remains insufficiently defined yet essential in the digital economy.

Despite massive investments in digital initiatives, empirical evidence shows that a majority of digital transformation efforts fail, largely due to strategic misalignment, inadequate leadership capabilities, and fragmented organizational vision (Chanias et al., 2019; Andriole, 2017). Many organizations continue to rely on traditional managerial roles that were designed for stable environments, linear production

systems, and predictable market dynamics. Such roles are ill-equipped for dealing with the volatility, uncertainty, and interdependencies inherent in digital transformation (Eisenhardt & Graebner, 2007; Skog et al., 2018). Technologists often understand digital systems but lack strategic oversight, while business executives possess strategic insight but lack technological fluency. The result is a widening capability gap between transformation intent and actual execution.

At the industry level, research consistently shows significant cross-sector variation in the scope, speed, and drivers of digital change. The automotive industry, for example, is undergoing structural shifts due to artificial intelligence, autonomous systems, and new consumption models (Alexander, 2018). Retail is being reshaped by personalization, digital customer journeys, and data-driven logistics (Krymov et al., 2019). Tourism now relies heavily on digital platforms, travel applications, and user-generated content (Bozhuk et al., 2020). Healthcare is witnessing the rise of platform intermediaries, cloud-based data management, remote care solutions, and intelligent analytics (Hermes et al., 2020). Mobility services, including taxis and ride-hailing, have experienced significant disruption through digital platforms, algorithmic coordination, and regulatory conflict (Lanamäki et al., 2020; Cramer & Krueger, 2016). Across these sectors, researchers agree that transformation is not merely technological but deeply strategic, institutional, and organizational (Hinings et al., 2018; Pelzer et al., 2019).

At the same time, competencies required in digitally transforming environments are evolving. Studies show that product managers in digital industries develop hybrid capabilities combining technological fluency, business strategy, design thinking, customer development, and rapid prototyping (Lapteva & Shaytan, 2018). These competencies mirror the needs of organizations undergoing systemic transformation, especially those seeking agile leadership, strategic experimentation, and cross-functional coordination. Product Innovators (PIs), with their ability to manage innovation under uncertainty, therefore emerge as natural candidates for expanded strategic roles within digitally transforming firms (Svahn et al., 2017; Arvidsson & Holmström, 2018).

Institutional research adds another layer of complexity, demonstrating that digital technologies often disrupt regulatory systems, stakeholder expectations, and industry governance structures. The experiences of digital platforms such as Uber illustrate how firms must navigate legal resistance, institutional ambiguity, and political contestation during digital transformation (Collier et al., 2018; Thelen, 2018). Consequently, strategic leaders must possess not only technical and managerial competencies, but also institutional awareness and the ability to build legitimacy across stakeholder groups. Altogether, these strands of research suggest that digital transformation is a deeply sociotechnical process shaped by technology, human capabilities, organizational culture, and institutional forces (Leonardi, 2012; Sarker et al., 2019). Managing this complexity requires professionals who can operate at the intersection of strategy, innovation, technology, and organizational change. Yet, the literature offers no widely accepted conceptualization of who these professionals are or what competencies they require.

Although digital transformation (DT) has been widely examined across multiple disciplines, ranging from information systems and strategic management to innovation and organizational change, the existing literature reveals several important gaps that justify the present study. First, while numerous scholars have explored how digitalization reshapes organizational processes, business models, and industry structures (Alexander, 2018; Łobejko, 2020; Krymov et al., 2019), far less attention has been given to the emerging human roles required to lead these transformations. Studies have primarily focused on technologies, platforms, and business model shifts, leaving a conceptual gap in understanding the evolving strategic roles and competencies demanded by digital transformation. Consequently, although organizations increasingly recognize the importance of digital leadership, there remains limited clarity on who leads digital transformation and what strategic capabilities are essential for navigating digital disruption.

Second, existing studies on strategic leadership under digitalization is fragmented. For example, studies on digital transformation roadmaps (Zaoui & Souissi, 2020; Saleh & Awny, 2020) provides process-oriented guidance but lacks direct examination of the roles and

professional competencies required to execute these roadmaps. As a result, the literature offers frameworks for transformation but does not adequately articulate the strategic actors behind them, indicating a gap in role-specific, capability-focused studies. Third, while sector-specific studies demonstrate how digital technologies transform industries such as automotive (Alexander, 2018), healthcare (Hermes et al., 2020), tourism (Bozhuk et al., 2020), retail (Krymov et al., 2019), and mobility services (Lanamäki et al., 2020), these studies remain largely descriptive. They explain what is changing in each industry but do not identify who inside organizations is orchestrating and managing these transformations. The absence of cross-industry theorization regarding the strategic professionals responsible for digital transformation represents a major conceptual gap.

Therefore, the product management literature contributes important insights into competencies needed to navigate digital innovation (Lapteva & Shaytan, 2018), identifying technologically-oriented and business-oriented profiles. However, these studies predominantly address product managers in innovation or software development settings and do not explicitly connect these competencies to the broader domain of digital transformation strategy. Although product managers exhibit capabilities such as design thinking, customer-centricity, agile decision-making, and cross-functional coordination, skills highly relevant to transformation, no known study has examined how product innovators evolve into or contribute to digital transformation strategist roles across industries.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital transformation has become one of the most defining forces shaping modern organizations, driving profound changes in business models, operational processes, competitive landscapes, and customer expectations. Early conceptualizations framed digital transformation primarily as the adoption of digital technologies to enhance efficiency or automate processes. However, contemporary scholarship emphasizes that digital transformation is far more systemic, involving deep strategic and organizational reconfiguration that alters how firms create, deliver, and capture value. Vial (2019) characterizes digital transformation as a holistic organizational shift enabled by digital technologies, requiring changes in structures, culture, capabilities, and leadership logic. This shift has triggered the emergence of new hybrid professional roles, particularly Digital Transformation Strategists (DTS) and Product Innovators (PIs), who serve as integrators of strategy, technology, and innovation. The following review synthesizes insights from empirical and conceptual studies that illuminate why these roles have become indispensable across industries.

A growing body of research highlights the strategic implications of digital transformation for corporate governance and leadership. Åberg, Kazemargi and Bankewitz (2017) reconceptualize board strategizing in the digital age by revisiting McNulty and Pettigrew's (1999) foundational work. Their findings show that increasing digitalization requires boards to move beyond traditional monitoring toward dynamic strategizing practices grounded in sensing, seizing, and reconfiguring capabilities. Boards that cultivate dynamic capabilities are better positioned to evaluate digital risks, interpret technological trends, and steer strategic priorities in turbulent environments. This evolving governance context reinforces the need for organizational actors who can translate technological possibilities into actionable strategy, a core function of the emerging DTS role.

Research on product development and innovation competencies further explains why firms increasingly rely on Product Innovators to drive transformation. Lapteva and Shaytan (2018) identify two archetypes of digital-era product managers, technologically oriented and business oriented, and reveal a set of universal competencies essential for managing digital product innovation. These include customer insight generation, design thinking, Lean Startup methodologies, rapid digital prototyping, and cross-functional coordination. Their findings demonstrate substantial overlap between the competencies of product managers and innovation entrepreneurs, suggesting that product innovation roles are evolving into strategic transformation roles. Project-based learning and experiential methods were shown to significantly strengthen these competencies, highlighting the need for organizational structures that deliberately nurture innovative talent.

Sector-specific studies provide additional evidence of how digital transformation restructures industries and creates demand for hybrid strategic-technical roles. In the automotive industry, Alexander (2018) shows that artificial intelligence, big data analytics, and IoT-driven mobility systems have dramatically altered competition, bringing automobile manufacturers into direct rivalry with technology companies. Despite globalization, national markets maintain unique structures, and major technological transformations, especially those driven by AI, are expected to reshape consumer demand. These findings illustrate the complexity and unpredictability of digital shifts and underscore the need for strategic professionals capable of interpreting technological trajectories and redesigning industry value chains.

Similarly, Lozić (2019) traces the evolution of digital transformation across production and service industries, emphasizing that companies producing physical goods face deeper structural disruptions than service-based firms. The study highlights that true digital transformation requires a paradigm shift in management logic, not merely digital optimization. This distinction is crucial: organizations that treat digital transformation as incremental improvement often fail to achieve meaningful competitive advantage. Such insights underscore the necessity for strategic leaders who can distinguish between optimization and transformation and guide organizations accordingly.

Retail sector research reinforces the theme of customer-centric redesign. Krymov et al. (2019) observe that digital technologies have shifted retail strategy from network management to creating seamless, personalized, omnichannel customer experiences. Important organizational principles have emerged, including personalization, frictionless payments, fast delivery, and integrated digital–physical distribution models. Customers now select channels based on convenience and loyalty is increasingly tied to user experience quality. These findings highlight the strategic importance of roles capable of orchestrating customer-focused digital ecosystems.

Product lifecycle management research also contributes to this growing corpus. Hofbauer, Sangl and Engelhardt (2019) demonstrate how digital twin technologies can improve product management processes across all stages, from ideation to after-sales service, by reducing waste, cutting time-to-market, and improving product reliability. Their conceptual analysis shows that digital transformation enhances product-focused innovation capabilities, further linking product management to strategic transformation outcomes.

Beyond industry-level analyses, sociotechnical research provides deeper insights into the micro-level dynamics of digital transformation. Lanamäki et al. (2020) conceptualize relational digital transformation as evolving practice–arrangement bundles rather than technologically driven disruptions. Through a longitudinal investigation of taxi dispatch systems, they show that transformation results from changes in relationships among actors, tools, institutions, and practices, not from the actions of any single disruptor. This aligns with sociomaterial theories, particularly those of Leonardi (2012, 2013), which argue that technologies shape organizational behavior by creating new affordances and constraints. These perspectives reinforce that digital transformation requires practitioners skilled in orchestrating complex, evolving sociotechnical systems.

A parallel stream of literature focuses on process-oriented digital transformation frameworks. Zaoui and Souissi (2020) review and synthesize digital transformation roadmaps to identify necessary phases and steps for organizations undertaking digital change. Their work emphasizes the need for structured processes, organizational readiness, and shared understanding of digital transformation goals. Similarly, Bican and Brem (2020) define critical digital-related concepts, Digital Technology, Digital Innovation, Digital Business Models, and propose a conceptual framework linking digital readiness and digital business models to innovation outcomes, moderated by digital transformation processes. These frameworks highlight that successful transformation is not random or ad hoc but systematically structured around positioning, capability development, and business model redesign.

At the innovation level, Łobejko (2020) finds that digital transformation does not guarantee

innovativeness, but its absence significantly hinders it. Digital transformation enables firms to become more entrepreneurial and fosters dynamic capability development, creating conditions conducive to sustained innovation. Saleh and Awny (2020) similarly propose a holistic framework for digital transformation strategy comprising positioning, business model innovation, dynamic capabilities, and transformation roadmapping. These models confirm that digital transformation is both a strategic and organizational capability-building endeavour requiring hybrid expertise.

Studies focusing on consumer-centric industries further demonstrate the transformative impact of digital technologies. Bozhuk et al. (2020) show that digital platforms and mobile applications significantly influence tourists' decision-making processes, indicating a shift toward digital touchpoints and real-time consumer engagement. Hermes et al. (2020) analyze 1,830 digital healthcare firms and identify eight emerging roles in digital health ecosystems, ranging from market intermediaries to blockchain health record providers, demonstrating how digital transformation reshapes industry value systems, roles, and capabilities. Similarly, Demaj, Hysa and Sadaj (2020) examine the pharmacy sector and find that traditional product-centric models are no longer sufficient; consumers increasingly expect value-added digital services that enhance convenience and personalization.

Across these diverse studies, a consistent theme emerges: digital transformation is a multi-layered phenomenon that demands new organizational capabilities, new forms of leadership, and new hybrid roles capable of bridging technological expertise with strategic insight. The rise of the Digital Transformation Strategist and the Product Innovator reflects this shift. These roles integrate customer-centered design, agile methodologies, technological fluency, value chain reconfiguration, and strategic foresight, competencies increasingly essential for navigating digital complexity. As industries continue to evolve under the pressures of platformization, artificial intelligence, shifting consumer expectations, and continuous innovation cycles, organizations that fail to cultivate such hybrid talent risk falling behind. The literature therefore converges on the conclusion that product innovators and digital transformation strategists are no longer optional roles but strategic imperatives for organizational resilience and competitiveness in the digital economy.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study employed a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) as its primary research design to generate a comprehensive, integrative understanding of how digital transformation has reshaped organizational roles and the growing necessity of Digital Transformation Strategists (DTS) and Product Innovators (PI). The SLR approach was selected because it offers a rigorous, transparent, and replicable method for synthesizing existing scientific knowledge. Unlike traditional narrative reviews, the SLR follows a structured protocol that minimizes bias and ensures that the literature is examined through a consistent and methodological lens. The review process was guided by well-established protocols described by Tranfield, Denyer and Smart as well as Kitchenham and Charters, and it was operationalized using PRISMA reporting principles to ensure clarity, depth, and methodological integrity.

The review was centered on the overarching research question: How does existing scholarship conceptualize digital transformation, and what roles, competencies, and strategic practices explain the growing prominence of Digital Transformation Strategists and Product Innovators across industries? To address this question systematically, the study also considered sub-questions examining the strategic and organizational drivers of digital transformation, the competencies required to lead transformation initiatives, the emergence of hybrid digital roles, and the gaps that remain in current literature.

A comprehensive search strategy was executed across major academic databases including Scopus, Web of Science, ScienceDirect, SpringerLink, IEEE Xplore, and Google Scholar. The search covered publications between 2010 and 2020, capturing the period during which digital transformation matured into a dominant theme within management, innovation, and information systems literature. Search terms included combinations of "digital transformation," "digital strategy," "product innovation," "product manager," "digital competencies," "platform economy,"

"innovation capabilities," and "digital leadership," connected using Boolean operators to ensure wide yet relevant coverage. This process generated an initial pool of 2,146 records.

Following PRISMA guidelines, the screening and selection process unfolded in several stages. Duplicate records were removed first, leaving 1,320 unique studies. Titles and abstracts were screened to determine relevance to the research questions, resulting in the retention of 214 studies for full-text assessment. During the eligibility stage, 146 papers were excluded for lacking conceptual relevance, methodological rigor, or alignment with the focus on digital roles, transformation processes, and innovation capabilities. This produced a final set of 68 high-quality empirical and conceptual studies, including the full collection of sector-specific and thematic papers previously summarized in the review of related literature. These studies spanned a wide range of industries, including automotive, retail, tourism, healthcare, pharmaceuticals, and transportation, providing a rich empirical basis for cross-industry synthesis.

A structured data extraction process was then developed to ensure consistency across studies. For each article, key elements such as the research context, methodological orientation, theoretical lenses, industry focus, digital competencies discussed, transformation frameworks proposed, and implications for strategic roles were documented. The coding process combined inductive and deductive approaches. Initially, deductive codes were derived from the research questions and relevant digital transformation concepts, such as strategic leadership, innovation capability, product management, platformization, and sociotechnical change. Inductive codes then emerged from patterns and insights encountered during the reading of the studies. Through iterative comparison, the literature was organized into five broad thematic clusters: (1) strategic and board-level leadership in digital transformation, (2) competencies and evolving roles of product managers and innovators, (3) sector-specific manifestations of digital transformation, (4) frameworks and models for digital transformation processes, and (5) sociotechnical and practice-based perspectives on digital change.

To ensure the reliability and credibility of the review, each included study underwent a quality assessment based on methodological rigor, conceptual contribution, and relevance to the research questions. Only studies that demonstrated high-quality empirical evidence or strong theoretical grounding were retained in the final synthesis. The heterogeneity of methodologies and theoretical perspectives across the studies made a quantitative meta-analysis inappropriate. Instead, a narrative synthesis approach was adopted. This enabled the integration of diverse insights into a coherent understanding of the digital transformation phenomenon and allowed the study to map conceptual relationships between technological drivers, strategic imperatives, capability development, and the emerging roles of DTS and PIs.

The synthesis process ultimately produced a theoretical foundation illustrating how digital transformation disrupts traditional organizational structures, redefines competencies, and creates demand for hybrid strategic-technical roles. This methodological approach provides a robust evidence base for explaining why industries increasingly require Digital Transformation Strategists and Product Innovators to navigate technological complexity, accelerate innovation, and sustain competitive advantage in a digital economy.

IV. DISCUSSION

The results of this review highlight the increasingly strategic role of boards and senior leadership in shaping digital transformation trajectories. Rather than functioning as passive oversight bodies, boards are shown to act as active strategic actors that cultivate digital awareness, allocate resources, and build organizational capabilities for transformation (Åberg et al., 2017). The evidence suggests that effective digital transformation is strongly associated with the ability of boards to deploy dynamic capabilities, including sensing technological opportunities, seizing innovation pathways, and reconfiguring organizational assets. This finding underscores a shift in governance logic, where strategic leadership competence in digital contexts becomes a critical determinant of transformation success. However, the reviewed studies also reveal variability in board preparedness, indicating that while expectations for

digital leadership have increased, formal structures for developing these competencies remain underdeveloped in many organizations.

The findings consistently emphasize the growing importance of product managers and innovation-oriented roles as central actors in digital transformation processes. The evidence shows that these actors increasingly operate at the intersection of technology, business strategy, and user experience, requiring hybrid competence profiles (Lapteva & Shaytan, 2018; Hofbauer, Sangl & Engelhardt, 2019). The distinction between "technologically oriented" and "business-oriented" product managers reflects the dual demands of digital environments, where technical literacy and market understanding must coexist. Furthermore, the integration of design thinking, lean startup methodologies, and rapid prototyping into product management practices is found to significantly enhance innovation outcomes. This suggests that product innovators function not only as executors of strategy but as institutional entrepreneurs who actively reshape organizational routines and learning processes. Nevertheless, the results also indicate a lack of standardized competency frameworks across industries, which constrains the scalability of these roles.

The review reveals that digital transformation follows distinct trajectories across industries, shaped by sectoral characteristics, regulatory constraints, and technological intensity. In automotive and manufacturing sectors, transformation is largely driven by artificial intelligence, the Internet of Things, and data-intensive processes, producing structural shifts in cost structures and competitive boundaries (Alexander, 2018). In contrast, service-oriented sectors such as healthcare, tourism, and retail demonstrate stronger emphasis on platformization, personalization, and customer-centric digital services (Krymov et al., 2019; Hermes et al., 2020; Bozhuk et al., 2020). The results suggest that industries with direct consumer interfaces tend to adopt more radical transformation models, while asset-heavy and highly regulated industries pursue more cautious, incremental pathways. These patterns reflect the interaction between technological opportunity structures and institutional constraints, highlighting the need for context-sensitive digital strategies.

The results demonstrate the growing sophistication of digital transformation frameworks and organizational models within the literature. Multiple studies propose structured roadmaps and phased models that guide firms through strategic alignment, capability development, and operational execution (Zaoui & Souissi, 2020; Saleh & Awny, 2020). The reviewed frameworks consistently emphasize the importance of aligning business models with digital technologies, supported by dynamic capabilities and formal transformation roadmaps. Conceptual contributions also integrate digital readiness, digital business models, and innovation as interdependent components of successful transformation (Bican & Brem, 2020; Łobejko, 2020). However, the findings also reveal that while these frameworks are conceptually robust, they often lack empirical validation and longitudinal testing. As a result, the practical applicability of these models remains uneven across organizational contexts.

A further significant finding is the recognition of digital transformation as a sociotechnical process embedded in everyday organizational practices. Rather than viewing technology as an autonomous driver of change, the reviewed studies emphasize the co-evolution of digital tools, human actors, and institutional arrangements (Lanamäki et al., 2020). The concept of relational digital transformation highlights how change emerges from shifting interactions among technologies, users, and organizational routines, rather than from isolated technological interventions. This perspective challenges technology-centric narratives and foregrounds the importance of practice-level dynamics, including sensemaking, resistance, and adaptation. Nevertheless, the findings show that such sociotechnical approaches remain underrepresented in empirical research, with most studies favoring managerial or strategic lenses. This gap limits understanding of how transformation unfolds in day-to-day work practices and how micro-level dynamics accumulate into large-scale organizational change.

V. INDUSTRY IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study carry significant implications for organizations across industries confronting accelerating digital disruption. First, firms

must institutionalize the role of Digital Transformation Strategists (DTS) and Product Innovators (PI) as core strategic functions rather than treating them as project-based or temporary roles. Second, industries should embed multidisciplinary innovation units and create structured career pathways that allow product managers, engineers, and strategists to evolve into transformation leadership roles. Finally, industries must proactively engage with policymakers, industry associations, and civil society to shape adaptive regulatory environments.

VI. NOVEL CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

This study makes several original contributions to the literature on digital transformation, strategic management, and product innovation. First, it advances conceptual understanding by explicitly theorizing the Digital Transformation Strategist (DTS) as a distinct strategic role that bridges technology, innovation, and corporate strategy. Second, it introduces a product-innovation-centric view of digital transformation strategy, demonstrates that product innovators and product managers function as the primary operational carriers of transformation logic and establishes product innovation as the structural backbone of digital transformation. Third, it demonstrates that successful transformation does not emerge solely from top-down strategic intent or bottom-up technological adoption, but from the continuous alignment of everyday practices, digital tools, and organizational narratives by strategically embedded actors. Finally, the study offers practical novelty by proposing a competency-based architecture for developing future DTS and product innovators, grounded in empirical evidence from diverse industries.

VII. CONCLUSION

This study set out to examine the rise of Digital Transformation Strategists and the growing necessity of Product Innovators as core actors in contemporary organizational transformation. Through the synthesis of multidisciplinary literature, the study demonstrates that digital transformation is no longer a peripheral technological initiative but a strategic, structural, and cultural shift that requires new hybrid leadership roles. The findings highlight that organizations across industries increasingly depend on individuals who can integrate technological possibilities, strategic intent, and customer-centered innovation into coherent transformation pathways. By conceptualizing the Digital Transformation Strategist as a distinct strategic role and positioning product innovation at the center of digital strategy execution, this study advances understanding of how organizations can navigate complexity, uncertainty, and accelerated technological change.

VIII. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

Despite its contributions, this study has several limitations that should be acknowledged. First, the study is based on secondary data derived from published studies, which may reflect publication bias and limit access to unpublished transformation initiatives. Second, the analysis relied largely on qualitative and conceptual studies, with fewer large-scale quantitative or longitudinal empirical investigations, which limits causal inference regarding the effectiveness of specific strategic roles or transformation practices. Finally, the rapid evolution of digital technologies means that some insights may be time-bound, as emerging technologies such as generative artificial intelligence, autonomous systems, and decentralized platforms continue to reshape organizational realities. Future research should build on these limitations by pursuing several promising avenues. Longitudinal, mixed-method studies are needed to empirically examine how Digital Transformation Strategists and Product Innovators influence organizational performance over time, particularly across different stages of the transformation lifecycle. Additionally, future research should investigate the implications of emerging technologies such as generative AI, quantum computing, and decentralized autonomous organizations for the evolution of transformation leadership.

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