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# Women and digital transformation in the organization: an analysis of inclusion strategies based on women's life stories

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## Abstract

Considered today as a fourth industrial revolution (Brynjolfsson & McAfee, 2015; UNIDO, 2021), the digital transformation (DT) would lead to changes in terms of forms of work and modification of professional practices and behaviors (Benedetto-Meyer & Boboc, 2019; Bobillier-Chaumont, 2017; Brasseur & Biaz, 2018; Eden, Jones, Casey & Draheim, 2019; Morgan and Page 2008; Schwarzmüller et al. 2018). These changes and these modifications of practices would also be likely to create dynamic within the roles, statuses and positions of the actors of the organization. In a global training and professional context particularly marked by the under-representation of women in scientific subjects and digital professions (Cockburn, 1983; Zandoni et al, 2010), the transformations induced by DT give rise to initiatives and mobilizations that call for to an inclusive DT (UNIDO, 2021). However, these calls for an inclusive DT strongly relayed by international institutions and hammered at the leaders of organizations, would tend to put forward a conception of inclusion as a feeling brought to the actors by the organization through the inclusive dimension of its culture, and by employees through their inclusive behaviors (Kuknor & Bhattacharya 2020; Lévy-Leboyer, 2011; Roberson, 2006; Shore et al., 2011; Thomas, 1990). Inclusion would thus be defined as a state of mind that would result from all the inclusive mechanisms of the organization, which would force or lead its members to exercise its inclusive rules, independently of the non-homogeneous aspirations of the women themselves. Such an approach of the inclusion would thus conceal one of its essential components consisting of the inclusive initiatives and strategies that would be developed by the women themselves in search of their inclusion. In this article, inspired by a chapter from our ongoing thesis entitled 'Digital Transformation and Women's Inclusion in Business: What Impact?' we are interested in the strategies that women deploy in their professional journey to conquer inclusion within the organization, in the context of DT. We ask ourselves the following question: how do women negotiate their inclusion in the organization, in the context of DT? From an interpretativist perspective, we outline a dynamic and intersubjective approach of inclusion. This approach is suggested to us by the analysis of life stories delivered by women actors in organizations. These stories would report that women would selectively use the constituents or tools of DT to think and deploy, in interaction with the organization and its actors, strategies that would be favorable to their development and their balance both in organizational context than in the family context. They would adapt the uses of these tools and the exploitation of these constituents to their own family and professional aspirations, thus defining inclusion from the point of view of a double feeling of professional and family fulfillment and balance, inclusion finally being defined as a state of mind whose quest depends on the aspirations of each woman.

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