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## **Leadership in the digital age: its dimensions and actual state in Swiss companies**

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**Abstract:** The first aim of this study was to reveal the dimensions of an adequate understanding of leadership for the digital age. The second aim was to measure the state of this particular leadership understanding in small and medium enterprises (SMEs) in Switzerland. To develop the digital leadership dimensions, we drew on the rather scarce existing literature in the field. Based on the literature review, we conducted a Delphi study which involved interviewing 33 experts to develop the digital leadership dimensions. To check the validity of the ten developed dimensions, a factor analysis was applied. Finally, a survey was established and sent to approximately 2,700 companies in Switzerland of which 318 participated. The findings contribute to the second aim by revealing the state of digital leadership among the surveyed SMEs. Moreover, the study contributes by establishing two propositions based on the empirical findings. They may be examined in future research.

**Keywords:** digital leadership; digital literacy; agility; company size; Delphi; survey; moderation; digitisation; small and medium enterprise; SME; digital governance; error culture; autonomy.

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**Biographical notes:** Urs Jäckli studied Business Administration at the University of Applied Sciences Zurich (HWZ) and he obtained his Doctorate at University of Southern Queensland (USQ) on the subject of Stakeholder Integration and Stakeholder Trust in Alpine Tourism in Switzerland.

Claude Meier obtained his Doctorate in Political Science and Business Administration at the University of Zurich. He is the Head of the Specialist Unit for Scientific Methodology at HWZ since 2015. He is also the Associate Head of the Institute for Strategic Management. In his application-oriented research projects at the institute, he works with different scientific methods. He is the author of various publications as well as of the course book *Basic Science Methodology in Business Administration* (in German).

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