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THE ROLE OF DIGITALIZATION IN THE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY OF UNIVERSITIES

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INTRODUCTION. In the modern world, digital transformation has a significant impact on all aspects of life, including education. Universities, as key educational institutions, cannot avoid the influence of digital technologies. Therefore, there is a need to study the role of digitalization in the social responsibility of universities.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS: Digital technologies can contribute to enhancing the social responsibility of universities by improving access to education, promoting environmental sustainability, and supporting social-economic development.

THE AIM of this article is to explore the role of digitalization in the social responsibility of universities, identify the opportunities and challenges it brings, and develop recommendations for university institutions on effective use of digital technologies to achieve social goals.

METHODS. This article utilizes literature analysis, statistical data, and empirical research to assess the impact of digitalization on the social responsibility of universities.

FINDINGS. The analysis revealed that digital technologies enable universities to provide wide access to education, reduce environmental impact, and foster social-economic development. However, their effective utilization requires addressing technological, financial, and cultural barriers.

CONCLUSION. Digital technologies have great potential to enhance the social responsibility of universities, but their implementation should be carried out considering the specific needs and context of each university institution.

KEYWORDS: digitalization; social responsibility; universities; education; environmental sustainability; social-economic development.

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ВПЛИВ ЦИФРОВІЗАЦІЇ НА СОЦІАЛЬНУ ВІДПОВІДАЛЬНІСТЬ УНІВЕРСИТЕТІВ

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ВСТУП. В сучасному світі цифрова трансформація має значний вплив на всі сфери життя, включаючи освіту. Університети, як основні освітні інституції, також не можуть уникнути впливу цифрових технологій. У зв'язку з цим, виникає необхідність вивчення ролі цифровізації в соціальній відповідальності університетів.

ГІПОТЕЗА ДОСЛІДЖЕННЯ. Цифрові технології можуть сприяти покращенню соціальної відповідальності університетів шляхом поліпшення доступу до освіти, сприяння екологічній сталості та підтримки соціально-економічного розвитку.

МЕТОЮ даної статті є вивчення ролі цифровізації в соціальній відповідальності університетів, виявлення можливостей та викликів, які вона приносить, і розробка рекомендацій для університетських установ щодо ефективного використання цифрових технологій для досягнення соціальних цілей.

МЕТОДИ. У даній статті використовується аналіз наукової

літератури, статистичні дані та емпіричні дослідження для оцінки впливу цифровізації на соціальну відповідальність університетів.

РЕЗУЛЬТАТИ. В результаті аналізу було встановлено, що цифрові технології дозволяють університетам забезпечити широкий доступ до освіти, зменшити екологічний вплив та сприяти соціально-економічному розвитку. Однак, їх ефективне використання потребує усунення технологічних, фінансових та культурних бар'єрів.

ВИСНОВКИ. Цифрові технології мають великий потенціал для поліпшення соціальної відповідальності університетів, проте їх впровадження повинно бути здійснене з урахуванням конкретних потреб і контексту кожної університетської установи.

КЛЮЧОВІ СЛОВА: цифровізація; соціальна відповідальність; університети; освіта; екологічна сталість; соціально-економічний розвиток.

Problem statement. In today's rapidly evolving world, digital transformation is revolutionizing various aspects of society, including the realm of education. Universities, as prominent educational institutions, are not exempt from the profound impact of digital technologies. Consequently, there is an urgent need to examine the role of digitalization in shaping the social responsibility of universities. The advent of digital technologies has ushered in a new era of possibilities for educational institutions, prompting universities to embrace digitalization to stay relevant and responsive to the needs of their stakeholders. Beyond the realms of academia, universities are increasingly expected to fulfill their social responsibility by actively contributing to the betterment of society. The question arises: How does digitalization impact the ability of universities to fulfill their social responsibility? This study seeks to shed light on this complex issue, examining the multifaceted role of digitalization in fostering social responsibility within university settings.

The problem at hand revolves around the intricate interplay between digitalization and the social responsibility of universities. While digital technologies offer immense potential to enhance educational practices and facilitate engagement with diverse communities, their impact on social responsibility aspects remains relatively unexplored. How can universities harness the power of digitalization to address pressing societal challenges, promote inclusivity, and ensure sustainable development? Furthermore, what barriers and limitations might impede the effective integration of digital technologies into the social responsibility initiatives of universities? These questions warrant thorough investigation to optimize the utilization of digital tools for the betterment of society.

Understanding the role of digitalization in the social responsibility of universities is crucial for several reasons. Firstly, universities play a vital role in shaping future generations and have the capacity to foster social change. Exploring how digitalization influences their social responsibility efforts can yield insights into optimizing their impact. Secondly, as the world becomes increasingly interconnected and reliant on digital technologies, it is imperative to examine the potential risks and ethical considerations associated with digitalization in the context of social responsibility. Finally, this study can provide valuable guidance for university administrators, policymakers, and stakeholders, facilitating informed decision-making and the formulation of strategies to harness digital technologies effectively.

Methodology: To comprehensively address the research problem, this study will employ a mixed-methods approach. The initial phase involves an extensive review of scholarly literature, encompassing academic articles, reports, and case studies on the intersection of digitalization and the social responsibility of universities. This literature review will provide a theoretical

foundation and help identify key themes and trends in the field. Subsequently, empirical data will be collected through surveys, interviews, and focus groups involving university administrators, faculty members, students, and relevant stakeholders. The qualitative and quantitative data collected will be analyzed using appropriate statistical and thematic analysis techniques, enabling a comprehensive understanding of the research problem.

Analysis of recent studies and the unresolved part of the problem.

R. Agarwal and S. Arora (2020) examine the relationship between digitalization and corporate social responsibility (CSR) in the context of global telecommunication companies. They compare and analyze the CSR practices of several companies to understand how digitalization influences their approach to social responsibility. The authors highlight that digitalization provides opportunities for companies to integrate CSR initiatives into their operations, enhance transparency, and engage stakeholders. They suggest that companies can leverage digital technologies to promote sustainable practices, empower communities, and contribute to social development (Agarwal and Arora, 2020). E. Babbie (2019) provides a comprehensive guide to conducting social research. While not specific to the topic of digitalization and social responsibility in universities, it offers valuable insights into research methodologies and data collection techniques. It covers topics such as literature review, survey design, interviews, and data analysis. Researchers can draw upon this resource to gain a better understanding of the practical aspects of conducting research in the field of digitalization and social responsibility (Babbie, 2019). H. Chesbrough and M.M. Appleyard discuss the concept of open innovation, which emphasizes collaboration and knowledge-sharing between organizations. While not directly focused on universities, this concept can be applied to the study of digitalization and social responsibility. The authors argue that universities can adopt open innovation approaches by leveraging digital technologies to collaborate with external stakeholders, including businesses and communities. This collaborative approach can lead to the co-creation of solutions to societal challenges and foster social responsibility (Chesbrough and Appleyard, 2019). J.B. Cullen, K.P. Parboteeah and B. Victor (2003) explore the influence of ethical climates on organizational commitment. While not specific to digitalization or universities, the findings have implications for understanding the role of ethics and social responsibility within organizations, including universities. The authors highlight that fostering an ethical climate can enhance employees' commitment to the organization's social responsibility efforts. This suggests that universities need to create an ethical climate that aligns with their digitalization initiatives to ensure responsible and socially accountable practices (Cullen et al., 2003). A. Dabirian, W.K.W. Ismail and N.A. Ismail (2020) conduct a systematic review to identify factors that influence the adoption of digital technologies in

higher education institutions. Although the focus is not specifically on social responsibility, their findings provide insights into the challenges and facilitators of digitalization in universities. Understanding these factors can inform strategies to integrate digital technologies effectively to support social responsibility initiatives. The authors discuss issues such as infrastructure, faculty training, organizational culture, and student acceptance, which are critical for successful digitalization efforts in universities (Dabirian et al., 2020). R. Hahn, S. Gold, S. Mena, J. Pinkse (2015) emphasize the importance of partnerships in advancing sustainable supply chain management. While not directly focused on universities, the concepts discussed can be applied to the context of digitalization and social responsibility. The authors highlight the need for collaboration between different stakeholders, including businesses, academia, and NGOs, to address social and environmental challenges. They argue that partnerships can facilitate knowledge sharing, innovation, and collective action, ultimately contributing to the overall social responsibility efforts (Hahn et al., 2015). A. Molla and P.S. Licker (2018) conduct an empirical study focusing on the perceptions of information quality, usefulness, and ease of use of internet-based e-learning systems in Malaysia. While specific to e-learning systems, the findings offer insights into user perspectives on digital technologies in educational settings. Understanding perceived usefulness and ease of use can inform the design and implementation of digital platforms that support social responsibility initiatives in universities. The study highlights the significance of user perceptions in ensuring the effective adoption and utilization of digital tools for educational purposes (Molla and Licker (2018)). J.C. Roca and M. Gagné (2008) explore the factors that influence individuals' intention to continue using e-learning platforms in the workplace. Although focused on the workplace, their study offers insights into user motivation and engagement with digital learning environments. Understanding the factors that drive continued usage can help universities design and implement digital initiatives that effectively promote social responsibility. The study highlights the importance of factors such as perceived competence, autonomy, and relatedness in fostering users' intention to continue using digital learning platforms (Roca and Gagné, 2008). S. Sarkar, S. Ravichandran and R. Echambadi (2015) discuss the shift from a traditional value chain perspective to a value constellation approach in designing interactive strategies. While not directly focused on universities, the concept of value constellations can be relevant to the integration of digital technologies for social responsibility. The authors propose that organizations need to collaborate with a broader network of stakeholders to create shared value and address societal challenges. By designing interactive strategies and leveraging digital technologies, universities can foster collaboration and align their social responsibility initiatives with the needs and expectations of diverse

stakeholders (Sarkar et al., 2015). M. Zorzini and M. Weber (2021) investigate the relationship between digitalization and corporate social responsibility (CSR). Their study explores the potential impact of digital technologies on CSR practices, focusing on topics such as stakeholder engagement, transparency, and social impact measurement. While not specific to universities, the findings provide insights into the opportunities and challenges that digitalization presents for advancing social responsibility initiatives. The authors emphasize the importance of leveraging digital technologies ethically and responsibly to create value for society (Zorzini and Weber, 2021). Analyzing these sources, we observe that authors highlight the significance of partnerships, perceived usefulness, ease of use, motivation, value constellations, and responsible digitalization in the context of social responsibility. The sources emphasize the need for collaboration, user-centered design, and ethical considerations when integrating digital technologies for social responsibility purposes in various settings, including universities. These insights contribute to the understanding of how digitalization can enhance social responsibility efforts and guide the development of effective strategies and practices.

This article aims to delve into this subject matter, exploring the opportunities and challenges presented by digitalization and providing valuable insights for university institutions to effectively leverage digital technologies in fulfilling their social obligations.

Presentation of the main material. *Open Online Courses:* Many universities have offered open online courses, making high-quality educational resources accessible to a global audience. For example, Harvard University launched HarvardX, providing free online courses on various subjects. This initiative promotes social responsibility by democratizing education and increasing access to knowledge.

Virtual Learning Environments: Universities have adopted virtual learning environments (VLEs) to enhance the learning experience. For instance, the University of Edinburgh implemented the Learn platform, which facilitates online collaboration, discussion forums, and resource sharing. VLEs enable flexible and inclusive education, accommodating diverse learning styles and promoting equal opportunities for students.

Digital Libraries and Open Access: Universities have digitized their library resources and embraced open access initiatives. The University of California initiated the eScholarship program, which offers free access to scholarly publications and research materials. Digital libraries and open access contribute to the dissemination of knowledge and support global research communities.

Sustainable Campus Operations: Universities have employed digital technologies to improve sustainability practices on their campuses. For instance, the University of Nottingham implemented an energy management system that

monitors and optimizes energy consumption across campus buildings. Such initiatives reduce environmental impact, promote energy efficiency, and serve as models for sustainable practices.

Social Media Engagement: Universities have actively utilized social media platforms to engage with their communities and promote social responsibility. The University of Manchester effectively utilizes platforms like Twitter and Facebook to share research findings, community initiatives, and raise awareness about social issues. Social media engagement fosters transparency, inclusivity, and encourages active participation from students, staff, and the wider public.

Online Community Engagement: Universities have developed online platforms to engage with local communities and address societal challenges. The University of British Columbia launched the Living Lab initiative, providing a digital space for collaborative problem-solving and community-driven projects. Online community engagement facilitates co-creation and allows universities to contribute directly to social development.

These examples highlight how universities have utilized digitalization to enhance their activities and demonstrate social responsibility. By leveraging digital technologies, universities have expanded access to education, improved sustainability practices, facilitated knowledge sharing, and engaged with diverse stakeholders. These initiatives align with the principles of social responsibility, promoting inclusivity, sustainability, and community engagement.

The experience gained from the aforementioned examples can be valuable for Ukrainian universities in leveraging digitalization for social responsibility. Here's how this experience can be applied:

Implementing Open Online Courses: Ukrainian universities can explore the development of open online courses to expand access to education. By collaborating with other institutions or creating their own platforms, Ukrainian universities can offer free or low-cost online courses, enabling learners from diverse backgrounds to access high-quality educational resources.

Adopting Virtual Learning Environments: Ukrainian universities can embrace virtual learning environments to enhance the learning experience and accommodate different learning styles. Implementing user-friendly platforms that facilitate online collaboration, interactive discussions, and resource sharing can promote inclusive education and enable flexible learning options.

Promoting Open Access and Digital Libraries: Ukrainian universities can prioritize open access initiatives and digitize their library resources. By making research publications, educational materials, and resources freely accessible online, universities can contribute to the dissemination of knowledge, support academic collaboration, and foster a culture of information sharing.

Fostering Sustainable Campus Operations: Ukrainian universities can leverage digital technologies to improve sustainability practices on their

campuses. Implementing energy management systems, smart building technologies, and digital monitoring tools can help optimize energy consumption, reduce waste, and promote eco-friendly practices within the university community.

Engaging through Social Media: Ukrainian universities can utilize social media platforms as channels for community engagement, knowledge dissemination, and awareness-raising. By actively sharing research findings, community initiatives, and promoting social issues, universities can foster transparency, connect with a wider audience, and encourage public participation in social responsibility efforts.

Facilitating Online Community Engagement: Ukrainian universities can establish online platforms or digital spaces to engage with local communities and address societal challenges. By creating virtual living labs or digital collaboration spaces, universities can facilitate community-driven projects, collaborative problem-solving, and co-creation with various stakeholders, contributing directly to social development.

By adapting and implementing these practices, Ukrainian universities can harness the potential of digitalization to enhance their social responsibility initiatives. Embracing digital technologies can help overcome geographical barriers, promote inclusivity, drive sustainability, and strengthen the relationship between universities and their communities in Ukraine.

Conclusions and suggestions for further research.

Research and practices related to the role of digitalization in the social responsibility of universities highlight the significant potential that can be harnessed from digital technologies to strengthen the social responsibility of universities. Examples of applying digital tools in education and university operations emphasize their ability to improve access to education, support sustainable development, and actively engage with stakeholders. Digitalization has the power to democratize education by providing access to high-quality resources and courses to a wider audience, including underprivileged groups. It enables universities to optimize their energy consumption, reduce environmental impact, and promote sustainable practices. Digital platforms and social media engagement foster transparency, inclusivity, and collaboration with communities, empowering stakeholders to actively participate in social responsibility initiatives.

Directions for Further Research:

While progress has been made in understanding the role of digitalization in the social responsibility of universities, further research is needed to explore specific areas and address emerging challenges. Some potential directions for future research include:

Impact assessment: Conduct comprehensive studies to assess the impact of digitalization on various dimensions of social responsibility, such as educational access, environmental sustainability, community engagement, and social equity.

Ethical considerations: Investigate the ethical implications of digitalization in university practices, ensuring responsible data handling, privacy protection, and addressing potential digital divides to ensure equitable access and benefits.

Stakeholder engagement: Explore effective strategies for engaging diverse stakeholders, including students, faculty, staff, local communities, and businesses, in co-creating social responsibility initiatives through digital platforms and tools.

Innovative practices: Investigate emerging digital technologies and innovative practices that can enhance the social responsibility of universities, such as blockchain for transparency and accountability, artificial intelligence for personalized education, and virtual reality for immersive learning experiences.

Policy and governance: Examine policy frameworks and governance structures that can promote the effective integration of digitalization in universities' social responsibility strategies, including guidelines for responsible use of digital technologies, data protection, and ensuring digital inclusion.

By addressing these research directions, universities can advance their understanding of the role of digitalization in social responsibility and develop effective strategies to leverage digital technologies for sustainable, inclusive, and socially responsible practices.

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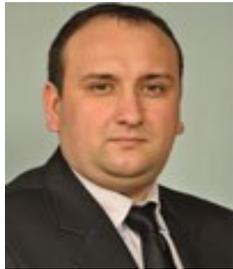
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