SUMMARY

The thesis proposes a Tiered Digitalization Model emphasizing value-based digitalization priorities tailored to enterprise size (SME vs. large) and strategic intent (conservative, growth-focused, innovative) as an alternative to the usual approach of maximizing the extent of digital technology usage within enterprises.

The research uses Delphi and Analytic Network Process (ANP) methodologies in model development to assess digital maturity priorities, with original developments including the introduction of "buffer dimensions" (Data, Analytics, Automation, Quality) as proxies for clear, industry-generalizable maturity levels, addressing vagueness in prior models and establishing Sustainability as an additional major Digital Maturity Dimension.

ANP analysis reveals significant value differences across different company profiles: smaller firms derive maximum value from basic technologies, driven by also by strategy rather than simple size-related resource constraints as previously assumed in some available literature. For conservative companies it is found that Structure & Organization is most important for high value digitalization while innovative firms prioritize Technology and Growth-focused firms, especially SMEs should pay greater attention to Strategy which confirms that current Digital Maturity Models aiming for overall digital usage maximization are unsuitable for smaller companies or those with a lower risk tolerance in their development. A case study on the practical application of the model also demonstrates its utility for deductive assessments, identifying specific lags in digitalization in a simplified format despite the model complexity.

Main conclusions highlight inadequacies in existing DMMs for SMEs, advocating holistic integration of enterprise size and strategic approach as key variables in effective digitalization. The research also establishes that higher digitalization is not inherently superior, proposing a tailored approach based on company profiles as a solution for more widespread improvements in digitalisation of companies. The model mitigates criticisms like low rigor via ANP but notes complexity driven design simplifications and limited external validation as weaknesses.