



# THE ACCOUNTANCY PROFESSION IN THE AGE OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Tahmina Khanom

Assistant Professor,

Department of Business Administration,  
Leading University, Sylhet, Bangladesh

**Abstract:** In the twenty-first century technology is shaping the entire world. It is affecting almost all aspects of modern life from individuals to societies, from economies to culture. Technological developments, globalization, and increasing competition are forcing professions to change constantly. Accounting is not an exception to that. Accounting, being the language of business, has been serving every trade ever since its beginning. The ever-evolving digital technologies are making accountancy profession the mostly affected sector in ways that have not yet been imagined, which induces the author to explore the major challenges and exciting opportunities for the accountancy profession of the present world. Although digital transformation of accounting is becoming inevitable day-by-day, many business owners and professionals are still not sure about whether it is a challenge or opportunity for them, what its benefits are or how it will shape the accounting profession in the coming years. This paper has been made in an attempt to provide a theoretical basis for them who are somehow connected or will be attached to the world of accounting in future. In this paper the information has been collected, gathered and presented based on the most recent studies, survey reports, and researches conducted by different professional bodies, accounting experts and some other renowned corporate worldwide. It revealed from the study that the accounting professionals must have to cope with the rapid technological advancements in order to remain consistent and relevant in the accounting industry by facing the challenges in a tactical way, staying up-to-date with modern technologies, optimizing and adapting current accounting softwares, being open to accept, and making the most of the opportunities being presented to them.

**Index Terms** - Technology, Digital transformation, Accountancy Profession, Challenges, Opportunities.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Accounting is an industry that is undergoing so much change, largely sparked by vast advances in technology. Heading into twenty-first century, the advanced technology resources are reshaping myriad aspects of business from the way we finance, resource and develop new and existing enterprises, to the way we create, purchase and sell products and services. Nothing in the future is certain, and the unforeseen interactions among these technologies promise to be both interesting and challenging. Now-a-days the technology trends are converging to change the ways in which we consume information technology resources, share knowledge and experiences, and access products and services [1]. This is changing the ways in which the accounting and finance professionals communicate and collaborate with different persons and shaping new working patterns. For this digital transformation, the accounting professionals are provided with the opportunities to automate and de-skill time-consuming and repetitive work and focus on higher value work, resulting in consolidating their role as advisors on finance and business. This paper will help the readers to get idea about the exciting opportunities offered and major challenges needed to be handled in order to be remain relevant in the world of digital transformation.

## II. METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

This paper is prepared based on secondary data mainly and hence, it is qualitative in nature. These data have been collected from different published materials such as publications of ACCA, INTUIT, FORBES, IFAC, TECHTARGET, ICAEW, FORBES, AAEW, and relevant writings from different scholars as well as several different websites, research findings worldwide also have been used for the completion of the paper.

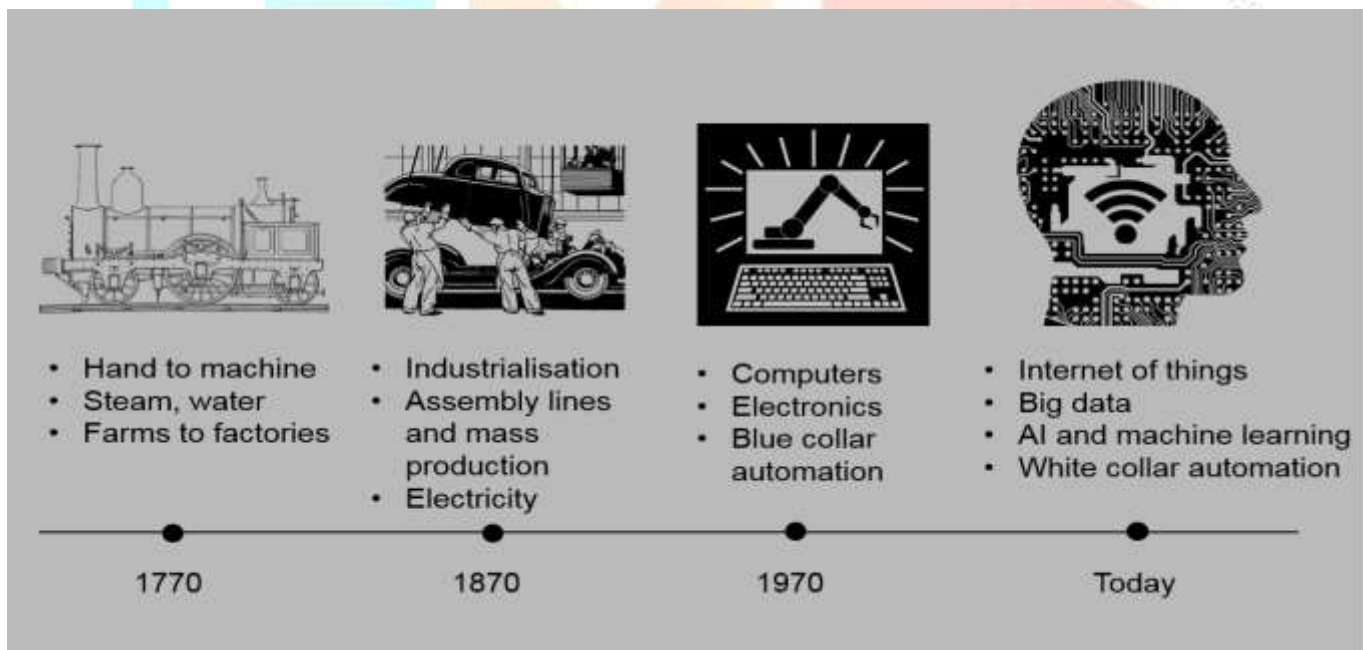
## III. PURPOSES OF THE STUDY

The accountancy profession is changing and developing as a result of digital transformation and technological advancements, as it is in other professions [source 2]. It is estimated that some professions will disappear completely, some will develop more, and the branches of professions that we have never known today will emerge. The purposes of the present study are as follows:

- To understand the concept of digital transformation,
- To find out the new opportunities created in accountancy profession by digitalization,
- To understand major emerging and converging technologies that may influence the accountancy profession in future
- To identify the challenges of technology revolution that would have to be handled by the accounting industry in the coming years, and
- To provide some recommendations so as to being responsive and relevant in the accounting industry in the present world of digitization.

## IV. CONCEPT OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

The digital revolution and dematerialization of the world economy are under way [2]. In the present world, technological developments are affecting society and economy in such a way that, it would change the pattern of conducting business as well as human lives. This digital revolution has paved the way for a new era of information, sparking a fourth industrial revolution, or "Industry 4.0" as it is also known (Schwab, 2017). It is mainly characterized by the processing of very large volumes of data thanks to the development of algorithms and mathematical models to support innovative technological solutions. This transformation is beginning to integrate business practices via the so-called platform economy and the emergence of global digital giants such as Google, Amazon, Facebook and Apple, as well as Uber, Airbnb, Alibaba and many others. But the accounting treatment of the transactions generated by these new players is stymied by the existing accounting frameworks.



Digital transformation: The fourth industrial revolution [source- Bernard Marr's webinar]

According to Joe Woodard-“Massive shifts in technology like data automation, block chain and artificial intelligence are ushering in what some are calling the ‘Fourth Industrial Revolution’ and others (perhaps more accurately) are calling ‘the Transformation Economy’” [3].

According to Deloitte, 90% of all data have been created over the past two years [4]. This data revolution has led to the emergence of innovative new technologies in a number of fields, including robotics, artificial intelligence, block chain, nanotechnology, quantum computing, biotechnology, the internet of things, 3D printing and driverless vehicles. As technologies continue to develop and disrupt, this fast-paced environment has come to be defined as the fourth industrial revolution.

## V. ACCOUNTING TASKS THAT COULD BE ELIMIMATED BY MACHINES

Due to digital transformation, machines will free up humans to take on other tasks, and automating accounting processes will help improve operations and reduce costs. Following are the accounting tasks that can be done by machines at if it is automated [5]:

- **Accounts payable/receivable processing:** There is already AI-powered invoice management systems available that can make invoice processing much more streamlined due to digital workflows that are implemented. They can learn the accounting codes that are appropriate for each invoice.
- **Supplier on boarding:** Machines can vet new suppliers by checking their credit scores or tax information and set them up in the system without human involvement and even query portals to get all the necessary information.
- **Procurement:** The procurement and purchasing processes for most organizations are filled with paperwork and use different systems and files that are not compatible with one another. As machines through APIs are able to be integrated and the unstructured data is processed, the procurement system will eventually become paperless. Robots are ideally suited to tracking price changes among a number of suppliers.
- **Audits:** Digitalization of the audit process will help increase its security by allowing a digital trail of when and by whom each file was accessed. Instead of searching file cabinets for the documentation that is required during an audit, auditors will be able to leverage the digital files. A more digital audit improves the efficiency and accuracy of audits and makes an audit of 100% of a company's financial transactions possible instead of just a sample.
- **Monthly/quarterly close process:** The faster one can get the numbers, the more time the organization has to think strategically about what to do with the numbers. Machines can post data from a number of sources, consolidate and reconcile it. Not only will the monthly/quarterly close process be speedier, it will also be more accurate due to the support of machines in the process.
- **Expense management:** Reviewing and approving expenses to ensure they are compliant with the organization's policies is time-consuming for the accounting team. Machines can read receipts, audit expenses and alert humans when a possible infraction has occurred.
- **AI chatbots:** Chatbots are used to efficiently solve common questions or queries from customers including the latest account balances, when certain bills are due, the status on accounts and more.

## VI. IMPACT OF DIGITALIZATION ON PRODUCTIVITY

Technology advancements have enhanced the accountant's ability to interpret and report data faster, more efficiently and more effectively than ever before. The greatest benefits of the digital age to productivity can be organized into four main categories [6]. They are as follows:

- **E-Business:** Electronic business processes allow team members to coordinate activities for internal management and combine the client's information with a financial professional's data via the use of digital networks. Enterprise applications can be shared via internal and external networks called Intranets and Extranets. The use of these technologies distributes information through a single point of access such as a Web interface using the highest level of encryption security standards available.
- **Cloud Computing:** Software-as-a-service (SaaS) provides the core platform of the cloud computing experience. More and more companies are creating custom platforms to facilitate the access of data via all kinds of mobile devices. The ability to access information at anytime from anywhere is now imperative.
- **Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) Systems:** ERP systems are software programs that bring different departments in an organization into the same collaborative environment. They make information available from diverse groups and support activities from multiple locations. Data is accessed through a central database and shared from different functions such as accounting, finance, marketing, human resources and manufacturing. ERP improves business performance by allowing management to get a full three-hundred-sixty-degree view of how a business is performing in real-time. This is a huge advantage in the ability to make major business decisions with increased accuracy, reliability and speed.
- **Digital Technology Advancements:** The nature of digital accounting systems are characterized by easily accessible and retrievable data through the utilization of integrated systems, real-time reporting and ongoing development. New technologies in digital accounting are designed to fulfill an overwhelming pressure for "data on demand." Smart phones, Apps and Social Media are the primary conduits for this process. Constant advancements allow financial professionals to spend more time advising clients and assisting them in developing strategies than simply generating financial reports.



## VII. DISRUPTIVE IMPACT OF DIGITALIZATION ON ACCOUNTING

As automation displaces a traditional accountant's work, it is important for those affected to have a positive and an optimistic attitude and consider the newly-created upside potential for them to perform fulfilling work and higher cognitive tasks. Despite science fiction movies that present an apocalyptic view of robots, the future should not be feared. Because robotic software can only handle low-cognitive tasks now and does not have a sense of self-preservation like humans. Regardless, we need to clearly identify where they will impact work the most [7]. Following are the accounting functions that believed to be highly impacted:

**1. Transactional Accounting Processes:** Clerical accountants are the most vulnerable to digitalization and automation because their roles involve routine tasks like bookkeeping and data entry. Primary examples are customer order processing, invoicing, credit, accounts receivable, payment collection, vendor purchase order processing and accounts payable, payroll processing, and travel and expense processing.

**2. Fiscal Period-end Accounting Closes:** The risk of digitalization for accountants is due to the increasing application of affordable commercial software that automates the workflow processes of the monthly, quarterly and fiscal year-end accounting close. Small businesses, similar to individual households, can now use commercial tax preparation software instead of hiring tax professionals from a third-party service.

**3. Auditing:** The purpose of an audit is to obtain reasonable assurance about whether financial statements are free of material misstatements and irregularities due to error or fraud. Digitalization improves the quality of an audit in many different ways. For example, using an AI-expert system capable of scanning through 100% of the data and applying advanced analytics and anomaly detection in the audit can lead to better-informed risk assessments. It leads to a far more focused and relevant (higher quality based on risk) sample which increases the speed of engagements and decreases liability.

**4. Business Process Outsourcing (BPO) of Accounting Tasks:** The general term for third parties who perform outsourced accounting tasks is business process outsourcing (BPO). The BPO business model is typically based on fee-for-service pricing. With centralization and economies of scale from having multiple customers, a BPO provider can often perform both front and back office accounting tasks more efficiently.

**5. Regulatory filings:** Automation and technology have already begun to revolutionize regulatory compliance reporting. The implications are that rather than accountants requiring only mathematical acumen, mastery of tax laws or bookkeeping proficiency, accountants can devote more time with increased skill to interpreting and analyzing financial information. For example, they can use XBRL, a format that can now digitally transmit its financial statement filings to government regulatory agencies.

## VIII. HOW TO MITIGATE THE DISRUPTIVE IMPACT ON ACCOUNTING

There are different reactions to any change by different people. Some people may deny the change, while others may embrace it. There are several ways that accountants can mitigate the impact on themselves [7]:

**1. Increasing skills with education and training:** As output of automation increases, accountants can convert their feared risks into opportunities. They can do this by acquiring new skills and capabilities such as with planning, strategizing and analysis which contribute higher value to the organization than simply reporting data. This can be accomplished via education and training. For example, The Institute of Management Accountants reports that members who pass its Certified Management Accountant (CMA) exam earn on average a 35% higher salary relative to accountants without the CMA degree.

**2. Augmenting digital automation:** In certain cases, accountants will find that robotic and analytic software does not fully replace a job function. Instead, it will automate the repetitive tasks of a workflow process, and the accountant can then augment the automation with value-adding work. For example, as automation reduces errors and generates information more quickly, the accountant can shift from producing reports to investigating discrepancies. In effect, the accountant becomes the machine's supervisor. As automation occurs many jobs will be redefined rather than eliminated.

**3. New business models from digital disruption:** Entrepreneurial accountants will recognize the opportunities that digitalization, automation and AI can bring for expanding existing business models such as business process outsourcing and tax processing services. Additional opportunities are to pursue new business models, such as financial software implementation services, including providing the analysis generated from the information produced from the software.

## VIII. IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGICAL TRENDS ON ACCOUNTANCY PROFESSION

According to ACCA (Association of Chartered Certified Accountants)-following are the major emerging and converging technologies [1] that may influence the accountancy profession in the coming years:

**8.1 Mobility:** Accountants are exploiting mobile technologies to deliver productivity and efficiency gains, bring businesses closer to their clients, and stay connected to them whether they are in the office or travelling. Numerous mobile devices are being combined with cloud services to provide anywhere anytime access to specialist software and the associated business and finance data. Businesses and practices are developing their own mobile device applications to attract publicity and new clients and to better service existing customers. As those entering the profession, or in early stages in their careers, become more integrated into the workforce, mobility is also providing businesses with a tool to attract customers and talent across traditional geographical boundaries.

**8.2 Cloud System:** Accountants and the organizations they work with and for, are exploiting the cloud - in business, practice and the third sector. Accounting systems were among the first software to become available online where they (and their associated data) have been joined by a growing range of business 'software as a service' (SaaS), from budgeting to spreadsheets. Using cloud-based infrastructure such as computers and data storage can provide access to unlimited resources without the need for up-front investment, maintenance or IT expertise.

**8.3 Social Collaboration:** The professional lives of accountants are being reshaped by social collaboration and the new possibilities it creates. Crowd sourcing is being used to accelerate and improve the development of products and services, and crowd funding is bringing start-ups and projects together with sources of finance. The US Securities and Exchange Commission recently announced that social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter can be used to make disclosures to investors as long as they have previously been advised that this is a possibility. Social tools are being integrated into systems such as customer relationship management and enterprise resource planning

**8.4 Digital Service Delivery:** Accountants are using digital services to provide resources and to access resources. Accountancy practices are offering self-service features, such as online data vaults that clients can use to access statutory and management reports and other material the firm has worked on. Banking, shopping, booking flights and more is being made more efficient for customers and more cost-effective for providers. Regulatory services are increasingly delivered digitally and the extensible Business Reporting Language (XBRL) is being exploited to streamline and automate processes by regulators ranging from the Australian Federal Government to the European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority.

**8.5 Big Data:** Amazon, IBM and Google are among the organizations using big data to business advantage by targeting sales efforts and personalizing products, driving efficiency and quality, and producing higher levels of customer satisfaction and experience. Researchers are exploiting big data in aerospace, broadcast, genetics, manufacturing, retail and transport. Vendors of software for business intelligence, enterprise resource planning, sales management and more are adding the capability to analyze vast amounts of data 'in-memory', and cloud-based platforms are emerging to provide on-demand access to the tools that organizations and individuals need to tap into the 'internet of things' and unlock the power of big data.

**8.6 Payment Systems:** E-commerce features are increasingly being built into software and e-banking is following, even entry-level accounting systems now automate links with bank accounts. Consumers and businesses are exploiting pre-paid smart cards and mobile phones as 'electronic wallets' using services such as Barclays (Pingit) and the start-up Square. Affordable access to mobile phones has enabled new players to introduce m-banking services in developing economies. Alternative online payment platforms are using virtual currencies such as Bitcoin and the Linden Dollar, and to peer-to-peer (P2P) lending sites such as Funding Circle and Zopa are increasing routes to finance. Not all emerging 'financial services' are regulated: governments have been slow to act.

**8.7 Cyber Security:** As internet use has increased, the tools to manage cyber security and to protect against deliberate attacks and accidental loss of data have become widely available – and affordable. Those at risk have boosted spending on cyber security and introduced policies and procedures, but these must be regularly reviewed to ensure their effectiveness against new threats. A recent ACCA and IMA member survey found that, 60% of respondents taking some measures against cyber attacks, large organizations such as the Big Financials and the Big Four were more likely to take steps to mitigate cyber-crime risks, and initiatives appear to be prompted by a feeling that risks are becoming more plentiful, threatening and costly.

**8.8 Robotics:** A robot is a system that contains sensors, control systems, manipulators, power supplies and software, which all work together to perform a task or series of tasks. Science fiction has equipped us with expectations of a physical body too, and many robots do have one, but the emergence of software agents known as 'bots' has created some room for debate about what constitutes a robot. Being humanoid in appearance or behavior is not necessarily helpful to the vast majority of robots, which are being designed and used to do work that is too boring, dangerous, or demanding for humans, and work that requires levels of precision and consistency of standards that are beyond most people. As they have become more cost-effective the use of robots has become commonplace in industries ranging from medicine and manufacturing to structural engineering and space exploration. Online 'bots' are being used to offer advice on finance, pensions, and insurance.

**8.9 Augmented and Virtual Reality (AR and VR):** Augmented reality (AR) can enhance our perceptions of the real environment by overlaying images of it with sensory input such as sound, graphical overlays, video and various other types of data. Nanotechnology is being used to make tiny objects (100 millionth of a millimeter or less) that can augment reality: such as contact lenses with overlays and a Braille keyboard with refreshable soft cells that will improve interaction with computers. Apple is among those developing technology to make our mobile use of AR more interactive. VR has become essential in industries such as automotive, oil and gas, to the visualization of complex processes. Accountants are using the virtual world Second Life to recruit trainees, attract clients and develop new lines of business, and holding meetings in online role-playing games such as World of Warcraft.

**8.10 Artificial intelligence (AI):** Artificial intelligence (AI) describes a machine or software that can demonstrate behavior indistinguishable from that of the human brain. Accountants increasingly rely on the expert knowledge built into software in a range of scenarios. Auditors use smart software to automate parts of the auditing process, and there are other specialist applications to help with compliance in areas ranging from financial reporting to international tax. E-commerce businesses are using AI chat bots to gain attention, engage users, and to act as sales people, as well as FAQs and support agents: the bots use sophisticated algorithms to interpret natural language questions and then deliver answers using online chat or computer-generated voice – they even integrate back into accounting, CRM, and inventory systems.

## IX. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

### 9.1 Findings

Following are the major findings of the study:

- a. The next decade will be a period of rapid change and continuous churn for the accounting profession. The industry will exist in a state of permanent whitewater, requiring new levels of business agility and flexibility. Competition will intensify as new industry entrants, outsourcing and automation displace accounting, audit and tax professionals, especially for routine and lower-value services. Banks, other financial services companies, software and Internet firms will offer an increasing array of accounting and tax-related products and services. Financial outsourcing to lower-cost countries will continue to grow [8].
- b. Consulting and business advisory firms, as well as other non-accountants, will take advantage of new software and analytical tools to provide new accounting-related services. These tools will also make bookkeeping and tax preparation cheaper and easier, reducing demand for lower-value accounting services [8].
- c. Globalization will require accounting professionals to master new skills, knowledge and standards as a growing number of clients operate across borders. Consequently, practitioners will be required to gain expertise in both the Generally Accepted Accounting Principles (GAAP) and IFRS reporting standards. In addition to the changes brought by IFRS, other regulatory and legal requirements will continue to expand as governments at all levels increasingly require accounting professionals to help with compliance. Even accounting professionals serving small businesses will need knowledge of standards and regulations of other countries as their clients expand their customer base internationally [8].
- d. The shift to a growing contingent workforce – freelancers, contractors, part-timers and temps who are moving away from traditional employment - will change the way small businesses are run. This creates new business opportunities for accounting professionals who understand this market niche. Similarly, contractors and freelancers will create alternative ways for accounting firms to access talent, improving their agility and ability to serve customers [8].
- e. The growing numbers of small businesses providing specialized services, especially the personal or one-person shops, will expand the market for accounting firms. Over the next decade, the total number of small and personal businesses will increase and they'll need more than accounting professionals' traditional compliance services. Many of these businesses will be Web- or mobile-based, with a global reach. As a result, they'll require a broader range of services, such as assistance with foreign tax codes [8].
- f. Many services currently provided by accounting professionals – especially low value-added or easily automated services, such as data entry, bookkeeping and simple tax returns – will become less profitable and even disappear due to competition, automation and outsourcing [8].
- g. Growing business complexity, knowledge requirements, regulatory and legal change and client expectations will favor accounting specialists over generalists [8].
- h. Specialization will lead to increased collaboration and partnering among accounting firms and other financial professionals, both domestically and internationally [8].
- i. Successful accounting professionals will take on new roles as consultants and advisors, providing performance management, decision support and similar services, with less emphasis on nuts-and-bolts functions such as computation and tax preparation [8].
- j. Globalization, the health care industry, aging baby boomers and an increased emphasis on sustainability and sustainable business practices will create new opportunities for specialization.
- k. The Digital Generation – also known as Gen Y or the Millennial – will grow up, with the oldest turning 40 in 2020. This group, born between 1980 and 2000, are quick adopters of new technology. Gen Yers are career- and family-oriented, and they're looking for careers that provide work/life flexibility. Women will hold more leadership roles in the workplace, politics and education. Due to higher levels of education and the shift to a knowledge economy, the gender gap in earnings will narrow over the decade and approach parity by 2020 [8].



- l. Aging baby boomers will look for guidance in the areas of financial planning, retirement and estate planning, health and elder care. They'll turn to accounting professionals advisors as they start and run full- and part-time businesses [8].
- m. Tech-oriented Gen Y clients will expect to interact with their accounting professionals digitally, using online and self-serve customer support in addition to traditional methods [8].
- n. Accounting firms will need to offer flexible work options and increased work/ life balance to attract and retain talent. Those that cannot provide this flexibility will be at a competitive disadvantage [8].
- o. The Internet and high bandwidth wireless networks will continue to expand and grow. Cloud computing platforms and applications will combine with advanced analytical tools, ever-larger data sets and social and mobile computing to reshape the profession [8].
- p. Smartphones, tablets, notebooks and other mobile computing devices will become the main tools for managing the accounting professional's complex choreography of work and life. These technologies will reinvent work and the workplace, allowing greater flexibility around when, where and how work is done. Being onsite will become much less important, and these tools will enable, and often require, anytime, anyplace work [8].
- q. Increasingly advanced technologies are also driving the creation of new and more powerful analytical tools and software. These tools, coupled with automated data capture, will shift the focus of accounting from computation to consulting, as clients increasingly rely on their accounting professionals to analyze business information, support decisions and provide strategic advice [8].
- r. The amount of time and effort required for data collection and validation will be substantially reduced and automating and improving client service through the use of the Internet and CRM systems will be required to meet growing client support expectations [8].
- s. By 2020 it is estimated that there will be a global surplus of 90 million low-skilled workers, and a shortfall of 85 million high skilled workers. More than 500 million new jobs will need to be created by 2020 to absorb those currently unemployed and provide opportunities for the newly entered workforce [9].
- t. Online social networks will become a key source of client referrals and new clients and social media will increasingly be used to establish firm reputation and brand [9].

## 9.2 Major Opportunities

Following are some of the specific opportunities for accounting professionals created by digitalization:

- a. There is opportunity in the ability to carry out audits in a more effective and efficient manner, for instance, conducting multiple audits simultaneously. When auditing more sophisticated financial products, it is virtually impossible to carry out the audit without technology.
- b. It represents an opportunity because improvements in technology usually enhance the efficiency of processes.
- c. Emerging technologies enable small- and medium-sized accountancy firms to enter into new and different markets, and to learn more about clients, both current and potential.
- d. It will change what services accountants offer and how deliver them. Apps and smart phones will be the new delivery mechanism for financial reports.
- e. Emerging technologies represent an opportunity if the mindset can be changed and thoroughly evaluate all options in order to be ready to adapt to new technologies, and to do it successfully across all generations of staff.
- f. Data analysis tools and software will greatly increase the opportunities to provide clients with analysis, performance management and decision-support services.
- g. Technology consulting opportunities for accounting professionals will increase. Data management, security and privacy consulting opportunities will be particularly strong.
- h. Mobile and any time/any place technologies will allow tax and accounting professionals flexible work options and client interactions while maintaining superior client service standards.
- i. Accounting firms will need to develop or source online marketing expertise and use their web presence to highlight their skills, areas of specialization and scope.

### 9.3 Recommendations:

Based on the present study following are the major recommendations that can be considered in order to be relevant in the accounting industry:

- a. Accountants need to think strategically. This includes being aware of the changes, be forward looking, be capable of spotting problems and finding the right solutions. They need to work like business partners and advisors to other functions in their organizations. Moreover, the accounting professionals need to learn and understand digital technologies to be able to add value to their business.
- b. An understanding of new accounting software and other business and financial models will be necessary if practicing accountants are to effectively conduct audits and discharge their responsibilities. Continuing professional development and education in this area will be necessary for auditors.
- c. The firms that will withstand disruption must be in synch with changes in technology, and elevate themselves to be connected advisors rather than after-the fact-reporters of financial or tax information [8].
- d. The profession is at a point in its business evolution where firms should be evaluating every digital tool used and every service offered. And firms must be strategic and deliberate about it or otherwise run the risk of being negatively disrupted [9].
- e. Accountants in practice will need to improve their understanding of and practical ability to use and leverage technology. For example, integrated Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) with virtual access using mobile devices, communication through social media, and customizable user-friendly websites with up-to-date content will be fundamental aspects of practice.
- f. They will certainly need to stay up-to-date with any new technology trends that are relevant to their business environment and be open to adopting rapidly changing technologies.
- g. As the most trusted business advisors, the accounting professionals will be the first point of contact regarding digital queries, and they must develop their own skills regarding the digital options available to clients so that they can point them in the right direction.
- h. They need to be more open-minded about emerging technologies as their work will likely become even more computer-based. Ultimately what will differentiate one accountant from another is not their ability to manage IT but rather their ability to better communicate with clients, to use the time saved by technology to develop client relationships and become a successful trusted business advisor.

## X. CONCLUSION

There is no denying fact that accounting is the core of all the commercial activities held in a company. It is the accounting professionals who find out and determine the company's performance in tangible forms. The digital transformation is driving consumers and businesses to turn to accounting and tax professionals for competitive strategies to navigate the global marketplace, not just to prepare financial reports and tax returns. Globalization will be the norm, as businesses use web access, real-time manufacturing, and mobile marketing to reach across borders for customers and suppliers. Accounting professionals who are knowledgeable in international standards, regulations, and processes will thrive. Accounting firms will increasingly rely on each other's capabilities and collaborate to compete more effectively in the international marketplace [9]

Despite of the fact that digital transformation will have the significant role to play in the near future around the world, substantial research paper have not been published on this topic that may present an overview of the phenomenon. In this paper, the author has an intention to serve something in this regard that can help to understand whether to take the advantage of technological advancement or not, as information has been collected from most recent studies and expert opinions. Furthermore, it will provide a brief overview of the digital transformation which may be helpful for the potential researchers in this field. However, there may be some shortcomings of the paper due to the unavailability of sufficient literature.

As one begins to more fully understand the impact of software automation and the speed at which it will affect accounting jobs, accountants have two broad choices on how to react. The first is fearfully, wondering if they chose the wrong profession and should pursue a different career. The second is to seize the opportunity for change and embrace the positive and imminent impacts from automation. This includes preparing themselves for less tedious and more fulfilling work that will bring increasing value to their organizations and their clients – as well as themselves [6]. To conclude it can be said that-“Digitalization of accounting became a necessity rather than a choice.”



## REFERENCES

- [1] <https://www.accaglobal.com/my/en/technical-activities/technicalresourcessearch /technology-trends.html>, accessed on July10, 2019.
- [2] <https://www.intechopen.com/books/accounting-and-corporate-reporting-today-and-tomorrow/the-future-of-accounting-profession-in-an-era-of-start-ups>, accessed on September 7, 2019.
- <https://www.ifac.org/knowledge-gateway/preparing-future-readyprofessionals/discussion/profession-digital-age-accounting> accessed on May 3, 2019.
- [3] <https://www.accountingtoday.com/news/the-accounting-professions-biggest-challenges>, accessed on March 3, 2019.
- [4] <https://www.icaew.com/technical/technology/finance-in-a-digital-world/digital-ransformation/digi>, accessed on May 10, 2019.
- [5] <https://www.forbes.com/sites/bernardmarr/2018/06/01/the-digital-transformation-of-accounting-and-finance-artificial-intelligence-robots-and-chatbots/> accessed on March 3, 2019.
- [6] <https://www.pcg-services.com/evolution-digital-accounting/>, accessed on October 14, 2019.
- [7] <https://icrunchdata.com/blog/594/the-disruptive-impact-of-the-digital-revolution-on-accounting/>, accessed on November 12, 2019.
- [8] <http://tax.thomsonreuters.com/blog/business/technology/accountingtrends-what-will-new-accounting-clients-want-from-your-firm>, accessed on September 16, 2019.
- [9] [http://httpdownload.intuit.com/http.intuit/CMO/intuit/futureofsmallbusiness/intuit\\_corp\\_vision20200111v5.pdf](http://httpdownload.intuit.com/http.intuit/CMO/intuit/futureofsmallbusiness/intuit_corp_vision20200111v5.pdf), accessed on September 6, 2019.

