

Digital Literacy and Employability Skills in Hospitality and Tourism Education

Abstract

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This article investigates the fundamental digital literacy and employability competencies that students and educators need while offering an international perspective on hospitality and tourism education amid the evolution of a burgeoning digital economy. The Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) framework was used to source the published literature from 2019 to 2023 that concentrated on incorporating technology within hospitality and tourism education. The results reveal a significant disparity between the industry's anticipations regarding graduates' digital competencies and the actual digital proficiencies these graduates possess. The disparity is due to the digital technologies used, such as artificial intelligence (AI), robotics, cloud computing, and the Internet of Things (IoT). In this analysis, the necessity for enhancing hospitality and tourism education curricula emerged, emphasising digital technologies. Collaboration with industry and the execution of work-integrated learning are essential for developing digital competencies to address the current competency gap. This research provides valuable perspectives on the fundamental digital and employability skills graduates must acquire, which are crucial in hospitality and tourism education within a transforming digital economy. The study indicates that the curriculum should be innovative, equipping future hospitality and tourism professionals with digital skills and knowledge in line with emerging technologies.

Keywords Digital economy; digital literacy skills; employability skills; hospitality and tourism education; tourism and hospitality industry

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Introduction

The hospitality and tourism sector is a vital and rapidly evolving industry worldwide, supporting global economies. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (2022), South Africa's GDP will thrive over the next decade and could contribute more than R554.6 billion and create more than 800,000 jobs by 2032. Due to the advancements taking place in technology, the hospitality and tourism sector has experienced significant growth (Dang & Nguyen, 2023). The businesses within this sector have also experienced developments and improvements in their operational processes and customer engagement, and they are also able to make more informed decisions because of the emergence of the digital economy (Gutiérrez et al., 2023). Due to the digital landscape's transformation, businesses must prioritise professional development to stay updated with the latest knowledge and skills, especially in the hospitality and tourism industry (Balula et al., 2019). Higher education institutions offering hospitality and tourism programmes experienced challenges with technological developments and a shortage of staff equipped with digital literacy knowledge and skills (Nikolskaya et al., 2021). This issue must be addressed to allow graduates to enter the industry with the necessary training in digital technology. However, because so many businesses use digital technology, the hospitality and tourism sector has also faced fierce rivalry (Gutiérrez et al., 2023). For businesses to survive the competition in the industry, they must collaborate with higher education institutions to compile a framework that promotes digital competencies. This collaboration is necessary to identify the industry's digital literacy needs, considering the challenges and opportunities artificial intelligence presents. Digital literacy skills and employability competencies are important in hospitality and tourism education, even though challenges are experienced in education and the implementation of knowledge and skills in the industry. This inquiry highlights specific digital technologies, yet it is clear that complete frameworks for their integration into educational curricula are lacking. Additionally, there is a notable deficiency in available information regarding the digital competencies that graduates should possess. While studies frequently highlight the rapid integration of technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), Internet of Things (IoT), and robotics, they often neglect to address how educational institutions can effectively impart these skills to students (Cinar, 2020). Consequently, the research objectives of this study are to ascertain the critical digital literacy and employability skills requisite for students and educators in hospitality and tourism education and to investigate the optimal practices for incorporating essential digital technologies into hospitality and tourism curricula at higher education institutions.

Literature review

The digital economy and its influence on hospitality and tourism

The term "digital economy" encompasses the financial gains derived from the extensive daily digital interactions and transactions between businesses, commodities, services, data, and operational processes (Peters, 2023). This concept encompasses virtual retail, social channels, massive data, and the network of interconnected devices (Sorescu & Schreier, 2021). The digital marketplace has presented numerous opportunities for the hospitality and tourism industry, enabling more

effective communication with customers, process improvement, and data-driven decision-making (Dang & Nguyen, 2023). However, this industry has also encountered challenges, as personnel must possess specialised knowledge and skills to utilise emerging technologies effectively (Li, 2022). The proliferation of the digital economy has facilitated the transformation of operations and enhanced customer engagement within the hospitality and tourism industry (Mambetova et al., 2021). The marketing and distribution departments have also been significantly impacted by using digital platforms such as social media and mobile applications to engage with the public. Furthermore, the employment of online travel agencies facilitates improved client engagement and increases online reservations (Jebasheela & Pandian, 2023). Additionally, other forms of technology, such as data analysis and the use of intelligent gadgets and cloud infrastructure, have further allowed for processes to be enhanced, resulting in improved productivity levels of products and services that are better customised according to client's needs (Berisha et al., 2022). Even though the industry has accepted technological advancement, challenges have been experienced with identifying particular digital tools. Previously, the hospitality and tourism industry used to make use of computer reservation systems (CRS) and global distribution systems (GDS), which first came about in the 1970s and 1980s and were initially used in the airline sector before being adopted in the other sectors of the industry (Arango-Morales et al., 2019; Avgeli et al., 2020). On the other hand, there has been improved communication with the Internet, resulting in strategic initiatives being undertaken and growth experienced in the industry (Avgeli et al., 2020). The arrival and development of disruptive technologies such as AI, robotics, artificial intelligence, and virtual reality (VR) have brought about complications in the hospitality and tourism industry (Buhalis et al., 2019). These technologies can potentially make current systems outdated and require staff to have ongoing training to keep their knowledge updated, resulting in easy adaptation (Cai et al., 2021). Furthermore, Zeng et al. (2023) state that disruptive innovations are innovative products that cater to new performance attributes that support different client segments. In the current economy, it can be noted that the usage of Airbnb and Uber has greatly impacted the traditional hotel and taxi industries due to these services being more accessible, reliable, and economical. This means managers must pay more attention to their strategic frameworks by incorporating these new technologies and differentiating themselves from their competitors (Adeyinka-Ojo et al., 2020).

Digital literacy in hospitality and tourism education

To thrive in the digital economy, it is imperative that students and educators are exposed to digital literacy in hospitality and tourism education. As the hospitality and tourism industry has experienced increased digital development, higher education institutions must incorporate digital literacy skills into their academic programmes. These academic programmes are categorised as either formal or informal, whereby the formal programmes encompass degree and certificate programmes that include a combination of lectures and practical training, whilst the informal programmes are organised by industry (Adeyinka-Ojo et al., 2020). It is becoming increasingly evident that the inclusion of technology through the utilisation of online learning platforms is crucial and is being implemented by providing students with video lectures and administering online examinations. In some instances, educators are also enhancing their modules with interactive elements, and these technological advancements not only provide students with flexibility but also enhance their educational experience (Balula et al., 2019). Consequently, students and educators require digital literacy skills to effectively utilise digital tools to enhance the virtual learning and teaching experience (Balula et al., 2019). Mobile technologies and social media platforms are widely employed in the industry; therefore, the modern workforce must possess digital skills and knowledge (Adeyinka-Ojo et al., 2020; Mhango et al., 2025). Furthermore, with the rapid development in technology, particularly in robotics and artificial intelligence, there is potential for a negative impact on human employment. According to Deri and Ragavan (2023), graduates entering the hospitality and tourism sector must adapt to digital developments by continuously improving their knowledge and skills in the digital sphere.

Emerging employability skills for the hospitality and tourism industry

Graduates should possess foundational digital literacy knowledge and an overall knowledge of evolving technologies like robotics, AI, cloud computing, and IoT (Adeyinka-Ojo et al., 2020). Knowledge of Industry 4.0 would develop various skills, including problem-solving, critical thinking, and leadership competencies (Bilotta et al., 2021; Lewis Cameron et al., 2020). Lewis-Cameron et al. (2020) further posit that graduates can develop their interpersonal skills through work-integrated learning and community engagement projects. Moreover, it is noteworthy that when students have knowledge of mobile learning platforms, it provides them with the flexibility to further develop their digital and employability skills, as they can engage with the curriculum according to their learning preferences (Alisher, 2020). Research has also indicated that graduates are adaptable, customer-focused, and resilient when they possess a positive attitude, which are critical employability traits for entering the industry. More so, since the COVID-19 pandemic, these skills have become increasingly significant, as the industry requires personnel who are not only capable of providing exceptional service to their clients and customers but also meet the expectation that staff can manage problems as they arise (Dziatul et al., 2023).

Best practices for integrating digital technologies in hospitality and tourism curricula

To succeed in a digital economy, digital technologies are important in hospitality and tourism education. Therefore, the curriculum that is developed needs to ensure that there is inclusion and integration of enhanced technology, and the curriculum developers should ensure that emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, IoT, and cloud computing are included in the pedagogical methods (Avgeli et al., 2020; Bezvesilnaya et al., 2020). Moreover, including social media and digital technologies pertinent to the hospitality and tourism industry is important so that students are thoroughly prepared for the industry. Another best practice is the collaboration of higher education institutions with industry partners to arrange work-

integrated learning opportunities for the students, allowing students to gain practical experience and put their knowledge and skills to practice in the industry. This work-integrated learning will also expose students to the technologies used in the industry and help them be better prepared when seeking employment (Balula et al., 2019). These collaborations would also allow for opportunities to be created for arranging guest lectures and understanding the expectations of students from the industry (Bilsland et al., 2020). Lastly, it has been mentioned that having an interactive and engaging learning experience would enhance student learning; therefore, educators should consider using simulations, gamification techniques, and the flipped classroom method in their teaching practices (Gerneshiy, 2023).

Methodology

The methodology employed in this study comprised a systematic review of peer-reviewed journal articles utilising the PRISMA framework. This framework was selected as it provided an accurate systematic inquiry to be performed in reviewing the literature for this study (Page et al., 2021). As illustrated in Figure 1, the phases of the review process have been outlined. Journals that are reputable in the fields of hospitality, tourism, information technology, and leisure were utilised for this study. The literature from the identified journals was reviewed, and studies from business hospitality and tourism education were included.

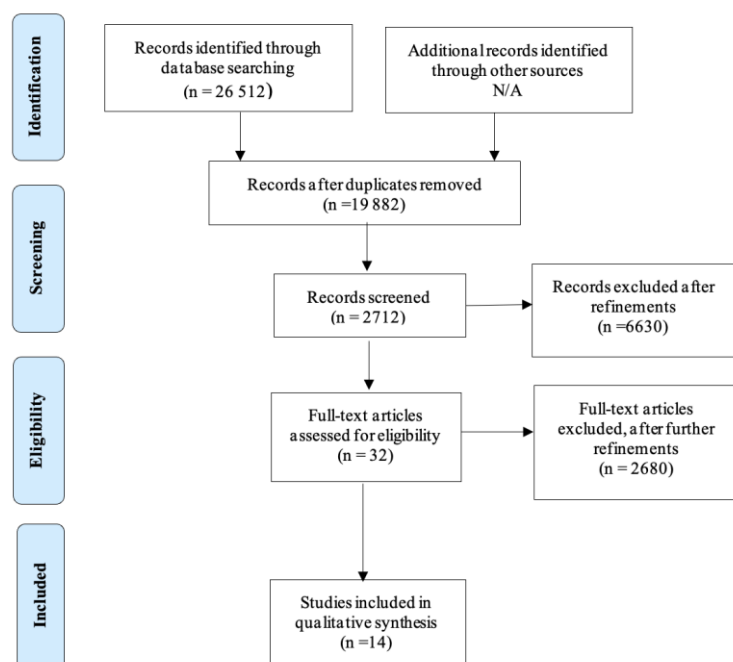


Figure 1: PRISMA flow diagram of review literature

A comprehensive literature review was undertaken using journal articles from various databases that met the specified criteria. The selection criteria stipulated that the journal articles should be international, provide open access, and be published in academic peer-reviewed journals. The investigation encompassed databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, EBSCOhost, and Google Scholar. These databases are recognised as essential sources for relevant publications. The search parameters focused on key themes, including "Hospitality and Tourism Education," "digital economy," "digital technology," "digital skills," and "employability skills." Boolean operators, specifically "OR," "AND," and "NOT," were employed to structure the search queries systematically. Following the PRISMA guidelines, the review process systematically refined the resultant data. Initially, 2712 records from articles published between 2019 and 2023 were collected. The EndNote reference management software was utilised to systematically organise and eliminate duplicate entries, ensuring that only unique articles were considered. The eligibility screening process excluded 2680 articles based on criteria such as relevance, recency, and findings, culminating in 32 records designated for further examination. Ultimately, 14 articles were selected for comprehensive analysis based on qualitative synthesis, as delineated in Table 1. The emphasis of the inclusion criteria pertained to studies investigating the digital literacy and employability competencies that are imperative for both students and scholars within the hospitality and tourism education domain. The systematic retrieval methodology employed an amalgamation of search terms, integrating the principal search terms of Hospitality and Tourism Education, digital economy, digital technology, digital skills, and employability skills. A comprehensive three-stage screening and selection criteria framework was instituted to identify the articles to be incorporated, as delineated in the PRISMA protocols. The searches were executed during the period extending from January 2019 to December 2023. Articles published before January 2019 and not composed in English were excluded from this investigation. Apart from the foreign language texts, other sources, including editorials, book chapters, and monographs, were also excluded from the study. The author selected just journal articles regarded as scientific publications, ensuring the data's quality and reliability. The sections that were viewed were the abstract, introduction, and findings. All duplications were also analysed to ensure compliance with the research objectives. A systematic and logical approach was employed in the research

process to ensure a comprehensive exploration of the topic. Themes and keywords on digital literacy and employability within the hospitality and tourism education sector were identified and selected to frame the study. These themes were instrumental in guiding the research focus and ensuring relevance to the sector's evolving needs. Furthermore, well-established theories and foundational concepts concerning digital literacy, technological integration, and their implications for the hospitality and tourism industry were thoroughly examined and incorporated into the analysis. This approach provided a strong theoretical underpinning for the study, facilitating an in-depth understanding of the interplay between digital competencies and employability requirements in the tourism and hospitality sector (Fife & Gossner, 2024).

Table 1: Summary of the papers consulted for the analysis

Author (year)	Publication journal	Methodology
1. Avgeli et al. (2020)	<i>Journal on Tourism & Sustainability</i>	Conceptual Discussion
2. Arango-Morales et al. (2019)	<i>European Journal of Investigation in Health, Psychology and Education</i>	Quantitative Approach
3. Pranicevic et al. (2019)	<i>International Research Journal</i>	Qualitative Approach
4. Bezvesilnaya et al. (2020)	<i>EurAsian Journal of BioSciences</i>	Qualitative Approach
5. Balula et al. (2019)	<i>ToSEE – Tourism in Southern and Eastern Europe</i>	Literature Review Methodology
6. Adeyinka-Ojo et al. (2020)	<i>Emerald Insight</i>	Content Analysis
7. Qiu et al. (2021)	<i>Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education</i>	Qualitative Approach
8. Bilotta et al. (2021)	<i>Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education</i>	Qualitative Constructivist Approach
9. Lewis-Cameron et al. (2020)	<i>Journal of Eastern Caribbean Studies</i>	Quantitative Approach
10. Cai et al. (2021)	<i>Journal of Travel Research</i>	Qualitative Approach
11. Nikolskaya et al. (2021)	<i>Geintec</i>	Quantitative Approach
12. Cinar (2020)	<i>Journal of Tourism and Gastronomy Studies</i>	Systematic Review
13. Alisher (2020)	<i>International Journal on Integrated Education</i>	Critical Review
14. Gemeshiy (2023)	<i>Transformation of Higher Education Models</i>	Content Analysis

Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) is a statistical method employed in topic modelling to identify primary themes (Jelodar et al., 2019). The main themes for this study were selected from the 14 articles using this methodology. It is evident from Figure 2 that the study focuses on themes like "Digital Tourism Education," "Digital Tourism Technologies," and "Digital Tourism in Teaching and Learning." The analysis provides insights into the primary keywords used and their implications for hospitality and tourism education within the digital economy. Using the PRISMA technique, along with data coding and topic modelling, has allowed for fair and comprehensive identification of the relevant trends and gaps in the literature concerning digital skills and the integration of technology in hospitality and tourism education.

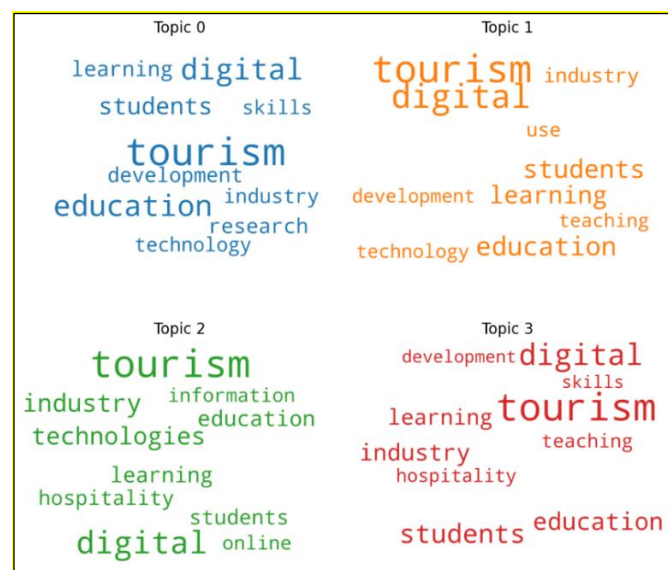


Figure 2: Word cloud showing the main keywords in each topic

Findings and discussion

Adopting digital technology in the hospitality and tourism industry

The hospitality and tourism industry is characterised by information sharing; consequently, digital technology plays a crucial role in its operations and activities to maintain efficiency and competitiveness. Digital innovations enable businesses to enhance their operations and communication whilst improving their services' performance (Cinar, 2020). The author further elucidated that digital technologies facilitate the promotion of innovation and strategic planning; therefore, to remain viable in this dynamic and evolving industry, the utilisation of cutting-edge digital technologies is imperative (Cinar, 2020). Certain technologies have gained prominence within this sector, such as GDS, which facilitate reservations for travel bookings, accommodation, and car rentals, as well as securing event tickets (Nikolskaya et al., 2021). Management Information Systems are also widely implemented, demonstrating improved organisational efficiency levels and enabling proper supervision in accommodation and travel businesses. Similarly, using Integrated Communication Networks facilitates enhanced communication and improved



stakeholder collaboration (Nikolskaya et al., 2021). The strategic advantages of adopting digital technologies include enabling informed decision-making, increasing market responsiveness, and enhancing productivity levels (Cinar, 2020).

Key digital literacy skills for the hospitality and tourism industry

Nikolskaya et al. (2021) and Carvalho and Carvalho (2020) emphasise the critical importance of equipping employees and graduates with a comprehensive understanding of digital systems, particularly those extensively utilised in the hospitality and tourism sector, such as GDS. These systems facilitate efficient reservation management and optimise product sales, offering a seamless experience for service providers and customers. The proficiency to effectively navigate and leverage such systems has become a fundamental competency for professionals in the field. Furthermore, the authors highlight the transformative role of online platforms in the industry. These platforms are essential for managing reservations, enhancing customer engagement, and expanding market reach. Beyond these operational benefits, online platforms provide a crucial channel for electronic marketing, enabling tourism businesses to effectively promote their services and establish a competitive advantage in a digitally driven marketplace. Moreover, Carvalho & Carvalho (2020) and Nikolskaya et al. (2021) emphasise the growing necessity for employees and graduates to develop solid decision-making and problem-solving skills. These capabilities are integral to adapting to the rapid technological advancements within the industry. By fostering these skills, individuals can effectively integrate new technologies, drive innovation, and ensure their practices align with contemporary industry standards. The ability to anticipate and respond to technological trends is considered critical in promoting sustainable growth and enhancing the overall competitiveness of the hospitality and tourism sector.

Key employability skills for success in the hospitality and tourism industry

Mhango et al. (2025) and Nikolskaya et al. (2021) highlight the importance of digital literacy and technical competency for the purpose of employability in the hospitality and tourism sector. These skills empower employees to use automated technology, thereby enhancing operational procedures. While geospatial and multimedia skills remain vital for planning and supporting geographical data analysis, communication and teamwork abilities may streamline all operational procedures and organisational objectives. Marketing knowledge remains vital for effective product and service sales, allowing for a wider audience reach and customer engagement (Cai et al., 2021; Nikolskaya et al., 2021). By combining these skills, employability and competitiveness may increase, guaranteeing industry operational excellence (Nikolskaya et al., 2021).

Curriculum development and innovation in hospitality and tourism education at higher education institutions

Higher education institutions must adapt their teaching methods to prepare students for societal and environmental issues. This ideally includes the integration of technological innovations while promoting environmental stewardship (Alisher et al., 2020; Lewis-Cameron et al., 2020). As mentioned by Alisher et al. (2020), information and communication technologies are important for enhancing technical expertise and believe that students should be exposed to areas including artificial intelligence and cloud computing, as these offer streamlined operations, more efficient service delivery, innovation, and improved customer service (Alisher et al., 2020). According to Lewis-Cameron et al. (2020), educational programmes should be contemporary and include digital technology-based modules. Consideration must be afforded to the learning preferences of millennials in the hospitality and tourism sector, which must include collaborative and work-integrated learning rather than mere reliance on traditional classroom-based lectures. Community engagement remains a necessity in the curriculum as it prepares students to develop teamwork, critical thinking, problem-solving, and the ability to adapt to the technological advancements occurring in the hospitality and tourism industry (Lewis-Cameron et al., 2020). It is evident that the COVID-19 pandemic has forced higher education institutions to adopt hybrid and online learning to ensure continuous learning. Educational institutions were compelled to implement digital learning methodologies and adapt their curriculum for online learning. The digital technologies used include Zoom and Microsoft Teams, allowing for interactive learning (Cinar, 2020). Following the experience of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is necessary to have a forward-thinking mindset as this would allow students to be well prepared to contribute sustainably and in a socially accepted manner by having the required attitudes and abilities (Lewis-Cameron et al., 2020).

A proposed framework for bridging the research gap in hospitality and tourism education

Considering the ongoing advancements in digital technology and the hospitality and tourism industry's expectations regarding graduates' employability and digital skills, Figure 3 presents a framework to address the identified gaps between graduate competencies and industry expectations. This proposed framework emphasises the necessity of integrating technological advancements into the curricula for hospitality and tourism, as well as strengthening collaboration with industry partners.

Innovative curricula incorporating digital competencies

Universities and educational institutions should embed modules that deal with digital instruments vital to the hospitality and tourism industry, encompassing property management systems (PMS), GDS, big data analytics, and cloud computing technologies (Adeyinka-Ojo et al., 2020). Students need to understand Industry 4.0 technologies, including AI, IoT, and data analytics, as integral components of the educational framework. This objective can be achieved by forging partnerships with information technology firms to facilitate authentic, hands-on experience with these advanced tools (Bilotta et al., 2021). Furthermore, it is crucial to prioritise the development of key interpersonal skills like effective communication, strong

leadership, collaborative teamwork, innovative problem-solving, and analytical critical thinking by leveraging case studies, online tools, and hands-on learning approaches (Balula et al., 2019).

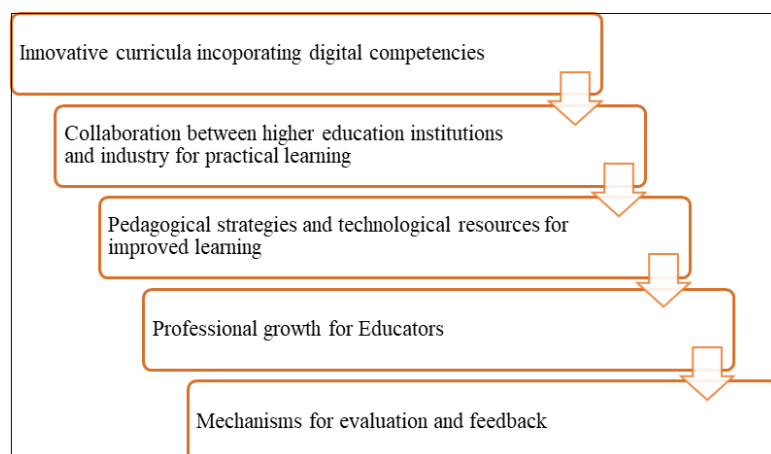


Figure 3: Proposed framework for integrating digital literacy and employability skills into hospitality and tourism education

Collaboration between higher education institutions and industry for practical learning

It is imperative to prioritise digital competencies and cultivate industrial partnerships to bridge the divide between theoretical academic knowledge and its practical applications. To facilitate work-integrated learning experiences for students, it is essential to establish formal collaborations with industry stakeholders. Through these partnerships, students will be exposed to digital tools and technologies within authentic operational contexts, such as AI and VR (Janchai et al., 2019). Higher education institutions should consider inviting industry professionals to deliver guest lectures on current technological advancements and the anticipated evolution in the hospitality and tourism industries. This initiative will enhance students' comprehension of the industry's dynamic characteristics and familiarise them with the latest innovations (Adeyinka-Ojo et al., 2020). Collaborating with technology organisations to develop tailored digital literacy training for the hospitality and tourism sectors is advisable, particularly concerning technologies that impact customer experiences, operational efficiency, and marketing strategies (Cai et al., 2021).

Pedagogical strategies and technological resources for improved learning

This framework posits integrating modern digital educational resources and methodologies to enhance the pedagogical process and equip learners with essential digital competencies. It champions the integration of mixed learning formats, which merge Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), online learning, and face-to-face teaching enriched with video materials. This approach will facilitate adaptability in the learning experience while fostering digital literacy and promoting autonomous learning (Avgeli et al., 2020). VR can be invaluable in instructing students for roles in customer service and operational procedures (Chi & Idris, 2021). Through engagement with digital tools and technologies in a gamified context, students can cultivate problem-solving skills and critical thinking abilities via gamified educational experiences (Gerneshiy, 2023).

Professional growth for educators

It is beneficial for higher education institutions to allocate their resources towards the continual professional enhancement of educators by focusing on digital technologies, teaching approaches, and digital assessment methodologies. Such initiatives will guarantee that educators remain informed about the latest trends and instructional methodologies in the digital economy (Balula et al., 2019). Promoting teamwork between educators and industry specialists is essential for exchanging effective strategies and tools. Efforts directed at faculty empowerment, like virtual workshops and educational series, may substantially aid in fulfilling this purpose (Cai et al., 2020).

Mechanisms for evaluation and feedback

The framework advocates establishing assessment systems to ensure students acquire essential employability and digital competencies. This emphasises the necessity of developing evaluations that check students' talents in crucial digital skills, including data evaluation, social media channels, project organisation systems (POS), and worldwide distribution frameworks (WDF). Emphasising practical applications, these assessments may take formative and summative forms (Cinar, 2020). Furthermore, students must be inspired to engage in capstone projects that employ cutting-edge digital innovations to resolve current difficulties in the hospitality and tourism domains. These initiatives must be scrutinised by both academic faculty and industry stakeholders to guarantee that the outcomes align with industry standards and expectations (Gerneshiy, 2023).

Practical implications

This study has significant practical implications for education in the hospitality and tourism sector. It emphasises the importance of higher education institutions collaborating with industry partners, examining the development of educational frameworks



and integrating new technologies into curricula. When academic programmes are being newly developed or re-curriculated, the curricula should incorporate digital literacy and focus on emerging technologies such as cloud computing, AI, IoT, and data analysis (Avgeli et al., 2020). Furthermore, Adeyinka-Ojo et al. (2020) assert that when students are exposed to these technologies, they acquire the necessary digital skills upon entering the industry, increasing their employability. Moreover, other digital technologies, such as gamification and mobile applications, should also be included in the curricula, as these platforms will enable students to gain important practical learning experiences and skills (Alisher, 2020). According to Obianuju and Emem (2020), higher education institutions should establish partnerships with industry, as this would facilitate the placement of students for their work-integrated learning, where students can apply their acquired knowledge and skills in practice. By completing the work-integrated learning, students could further develop their digital technology knowledge and gain exposure to the digital tools being utilised in the industry through hands-on experience. Furthermore, as highlighted by Cai et al. (2021), higher education institutions should organise guest speakers from the industry to address their students on the digital trends and technologies being employed in the sector. This will enable students to gain knowledge of current industry practices, allowing them to prepare themselves before entering the workforce. Another consideration for higher education institutions is to include a certification pathway focusing on digital literacy, which could assist students in acquiring the necessary digital skills when entering the industry (Cinar, 2020).

Conclusion

This research contributes significantly to the ongoing discourse regarding the hospitality and tourism education reformation. It highlights the necessity of adapting curricula to meet industry requirements and the expectations of both students and educators. Two critical aspects are emphasised: integrating digital technology into educational programmes and developing industry-relevant practical digital skills. These elements are increasingly perceived as essential for preparing current and future professionals to excel in hospitality and tourism. The study's findings also have broader implications for higher education, particularly in light of the growing trend towards remote work, virtual teaching methodologies, and digitally enabled research. The advancement of technology has substantially expanded the range of pedagogical approaches, facilitating more individualised and adaptable learning experiences. Digital platforms such as Edmodo, Google Classroom, Moodle, and Canvas enhance teaching efficacy and broaden hospitality and tourism education access. This increased accessibility caters to diverse learners, including working professionals, distance learners, and individuals from underrepresented areas. Consequently, it addresses educational inequalities and broadens the sector's knowledge base. Despite these positive developments, the research also identifies a persistent obstacle: the reluctance of some educators to embrace technology-driven teaching methodologies. This resistance often stems from concerns about increased workload and the steep learning curve of integrating new technologies into established teaching practices. Nonetheless, the study emphasises the transformative potential of blended learning approaches, which combine traditional face-to-face instruction with online elements. These methods enhance student engagement and learning outcomes and equip graduates to navigate the increasingly digital landscape of the hospitality and tourism industries. In conclusion, the study advocates for a progressive approach to hospitality and tourism education that embraces technological innovation while addressing the diverse needs of both students and educators. This vision aims to cultivate a more adaptable, inclusive, and future-ready workforce capable of addressing the complex challenges of an evolving global industry.

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