

Digitalization and Business Performance: A Study of the Hotel Industry in the United Arab Emirates (UAE)

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Abstract

The study aims to identify the factors that influence the adoption and implementation of digitalization in the hotel industry in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). Hence, this study provides insights into the challenges that hotel managers and owners face in integrating digital technologies into their operations. A quantitative research approach was used, consisting of a survey of 200 hotel managers and owners. The survey collected data on the extent of digitalization in their hotels. The findings suggest that digitalization positively affects business performance in the hotel industry. Specifically, the results reveal that hotels that are more digitalized have higher occupancy rates, greater revenue growth, and increased customer satisfaction. The study also identified several factors that influence the adoption and implementation of digitalization in hotels, such as organizational culture, resource availability, and technology readiness. This study contributes to the literature on digitalization and business performance in the hotel industry by providing empirical evidence of the benefits of digitalization in terms of business outcomes. The study also provides practical implications for hotel managers and owners in the UAE, as well as insights for policymakers and researchers interested in digitalization in the hospitality sector.

Keywords: Technology Skills, Communication Skills, Employee Engagement, Job Autonomy, Employee Performance

1. INTRODUCTION

The increasing role of digitalization has been transforming the business world in recent years. Digital technologies are playing a critical role in creating new opportunities for businesses to innovate and expand their operations, leading to improved business performance (Martinez-Caro, Cegarra-Navarro, & Alfonso-Ruiz, 2020). Companies that have successfully integrated digital technologies into their operations have gained a competitive advantage by providing more efficient services to their customers, leading to increased revenue and profitability. The hotel industry in the UAE has been a significant contributor to the country's economy (Nuseir & Elrefae, 2022), playing a critical role in its development and growth. The country's strategic location, coupled with its world-class infrastructure and tourism attractions, has made it an attractive destination for travelers from around the world. In recent years, the hotel industry in the UAE has experienced significant growth, with new hotels and resorts being developed to meet the increasing demand for accommodation. The industry has also been an important employer, providing job opportunities for thousands of people. The hotel industry's success is critical to the UAE's economy,

making it essential to explore ways to improve its performance continually. In this regard, the use of digital technologies can be an effective tool for hotels to improve their operations and enhance their business performance.

Despite the growing importance of digitalization in the hospitality sector (Baker, 2020; Minashkina & Happonen, 2020; Nissen et al., 2019; Walden, Lie, Pandolfo, & Nemme, 2020), there is a significant gap in the literature regarding its relationship with business performance in the hotel industry in the UAE. Previous studies have examined the impact of digitalization on business performance in the hospitality sector, but most of them have focused on developed countries, such as the USA and Europe (Filipiak, Dylewski, & Kalinowski, 2020). Therefore, there is a need to explore the impact of digitalization on business performance in the context of the hotel industry in the UAE. Addressing this gap in the literature is essential because the hotel industry in the UAE is a significant contributor to the country's economy. Improving the industry's performance through digitalization can have far-reaching implications for the country's economic development. Furthermore, the hospitality sector is highly competitive, and hotels need to find

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ways to differentiate themselves from their competitors. The use of digital technologies can provide hotels with a competitive advantage, leading to improved business performance. Therefore, there is a need to conduct empirical research that examines the relationship. Such research can provide valuable insights into the benefits and challenges of digitalization in the context of the hotel industry in the UAE, helping hotel managers and policymakers make informed decisions about the use of digital technologies.

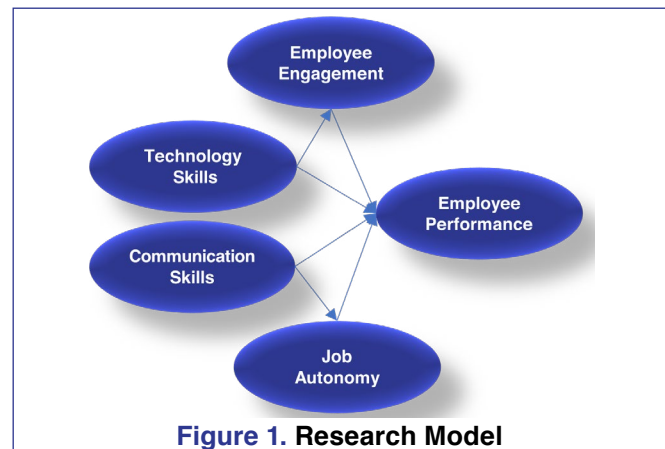
The primary research objectives of this study were to explore the relationship between digitalization and business performance in the hotel industry in the UAE and to identify the factors that influence the adoption and implementation of digitalization in the industry. To achieve these objectives, the study employed a quantitative method approach. The first research objective aimed to examine the extent to which digitalization affects business performance in the hotel industry in the UAE. This objective involved a quantitative analysis of the data collected from the survey of hotel managers and owners in the UAE. The study explored the relationship between the adoption of digital technologies, such as online booking systems and mobile apps, and business performance indicators such as revenue. The study explored the challenges and opportunities associated with the adoption and implementation of digital technologies in the hotel industry and identified the factors that influence their adoption.

The findings of the study provide valuable insights into the benefits and challenges of digitalization in the hotel industry and offer practical recommendations for hotels to adopt and implement digital technologies effectively. Hotel managers and owners can benefit from the study by gaining a better understanding of the impact of digitalization on business performance in the hotel industry in the UAE. The study's findings can help hotel managers and owners make informed decisions about the adoption and implementation of digital technologies, which leads to increased revenue, improved customer satisfaction, and a competitive advantage over their rivals. Policymakers can also benefit from the study's findings by understanding the challenges and opportunities associated with digitalization in the hotel industry in the UAE. The study's recommendations can inform policies that promote the adoption and implementation of digital technologies in the hospitality sector, leading to the country's economic development. Finally, researchers interested in digitalization in the hospitality sector can benefit from this study by building on its findings to further explore the relationship between digitalization and business performance in the hotel industry. The study's quantitative method approach provides a valuable framework for future research in this area. In summary, this study highlights the potential benefits of digitalization for the hotel industry, such as increased revenue and customer satisfaction. The findings of the study inform hotel managers and owners in the UAE, policymakers, and researchers interested in digitalization in the hospitality sector, leading to improved business performance and economic development.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review in this article provides an overview of previous research on the relationships between technology skills, communication skills, employee engagement, job autonomy, and employee performance. The importance of these factors in the workplace and how they impact employee productivity and job satisfaction, are described. The review highlights the need for further investigation into the specific mechanisms underlying these relationships and the potential moderating factors that

may influence them. Additionally, the authors note the potential limitations of existing research and provide suggestions for future studies. Figure 1 represents the research model proposed in this article, which seeks to clarify the direct and indirect effects of technology skills, communication skills, employee engagement, and job autonomy on employee performance.



2.1 Technology Skills and Employee Engagement

The study highlights the importance of technology skills in improving employee performance, which is consistent with previous research. The findings suggest that hotel managers and owners should invest in training programs to improve their employees' technological skills to enhance their job performance. Moreover, communication skills also play a crucial role in facilitating employee engagement, which is essential for promoting employee well-being and organizational success (Peláez, Coó, & Salanova, 2020). The results demonstrate that employees who have a high level of engagement are more likely to be autonomous, innovative, and committed to their work. Therefore, organizations should prioritize employee engagement through regular communication, feedback, and recognition to foster a positive work environment. Overall, the study provides insights into the critical role of technology skills and employee engagement in enhancing employee performance and organizational outcomes.

Previous literature has established the importance of technology skills in today's digital workplace. Studies have shown that employees with strong technology skills are better equipped to handle complex tasks and are more productive. Similarly, employee engagement has been a topic of interest in the academic and business communities. Previous research has linked employee engagement to various positive consequences, such as improved job performance and reduced turnover rates (Geisler, Berthelsen, & Muhonen, 2019). Moreover, a growing body of literature has explored the relationship between technology skills and employee engagement. These studies have found that employees with strong technology skills tend to be more engaged in their work. Additionally, they have shown that the use of technology can enhance employee engagement. Some studies have also suggested that the relationship between technology skills and employee engagement is mediated by job autonomy. Employees with strong technology skills may be more likely to have control over their work and be given more freedom to make decisions, which can lead to higher levels of engagement. In addition, research has highlighted the importance of communication skills in fostering employee engagement. Effective communication can help employees feel valued and connected to their organization, which can contribute



to higher levels of engagement. Overall, previous literature has provided valuable insights into the importance of technology skills and employee engagement in the workplace. It has established a strong link between these two factors and highlighted the need for organizations to invest in training programs to enhance employees' technology and communication skills. Hence, it is hypothesized that;

H1: *Technology skills have an impact on employee engagement.*

2.2 Technology Skills and Employee Performance

The significance of technology skills in improving employee performance cannot be overstated. Technology skills enable employees to perform their duties more effectively and efficiently, resulting in increased productivity and improved job performance. As technology continues to advance, it becomes increasingly important for employees to possess the necessary skills to keep up with the changes (Picatoste, Pérez-Ortiz, & Ruesga-Benito, 2018). Employers who invest in training their employees on the latest technology will not only benefit from increased productivity but also from employee satisfaction and retention. In today's competitive job market, employees with strong technology skills are highly sought after and valued by employers, making it a crucial aspect of employee performance. Previous literature has extensively investigated the impact of technology skills on employee performance. Scholars have argued that technology skills are essential for job success, and they are becoming increasingly important in today's fast-paced work environment (Baya, 2020). Employees with higher technology skills have been found to be more productive, efficient, and innovative than those who lack such skills. Moreover, technology skills have been shown to improve job satisfaction and increase employee motivation, which ultimately leads to better job performance. Furthermore, engaged employees are more likely to be innovative, take initiative, and go above and beyond their job duties, leading to higher levels of job performance.

The literature also suggests that technology skills and employee engagement are interrelated. Employees who have the necessary technology skills to perform their job tasks are more likely to feel confident and engaged with their work. Moreover, organizations that provide employees with opportunities to enhance their technology skills are likely to have more engaged employees (Li et al., 2019). Thus, technology skills and employee engagement can be considered as complementary factors that contribute to employee performance. Studies have also investigated the role of job autonomy in employee performance. Job autonomy refers to the degree to which employees have control over their work and the decisions they make. Research has shown that employees who have high levels of job autonomy are more likely to be motivated, satisfied, and perform at higher levels. Additionally, job autonomy has been found to have a positive impact on employee creativity and innovation, leading to improved job performance.

However, it is important to note that the relationship between technology skills, employee engagement, job autonomy, and employee performance may not be universal across different organizational and cultural contexts. Some studies have found that the impact of technology skills on employee performance may vary depending on the type of job or industry. Similarly, the effect of job autonomy on employee performance may differ depending on the level of hierarchy within the organization. Hence, previous literature has established the importance of technology skills, employee engagement, and job autonomy in employee performance. The current study contributes to this literature by

examining the direct and indirect effects of these variables on employee performance in a specific organizational context. The findings suggest that organizations should invest in enhancing employees' technology skills, providing job autonomy, and promoting employee engagement to improve job performance. However, the generalizability of these findings should be considered in light of the limitations of the study in relationship between these variables and employee performance. Hence, it is hypothesized that;

H2: *Technology skills have an impact on employee performance.*

2.3 Communication Skills and Job Autonomy

Effective communication skills and job autonomy play crucial roles in the success of an organization (Shobe, 2018). Good communication skills facilitate teamwork, encourage better decision-making, and enhance employee job satisfaction. By improving communication, employees are better able to collaborate with one another, share ideas and opinions, and provide constructive feedback, leading to a more productive workplace. Job autonomy allows employees to take ownership of their work and make decisions independently, leading to higher job satisfaction and motivation. It also enables employees to use their skills and creativity to their fullest potential, resulting in increased productivity and better-quality work. Therefore, organizations should focus on developing effective communication skills and providing job autonomy to their employees for improved performance and success.

In previous literature, communication skills have been linked to various job outcomes, including job autonomy. Studies have shown that employees with good communication skills tend to have higher levels of job autonomy, as they are better able to negotiate for more freedom in their work (Sutherland, Jarrahi, Dunn, & Nelson, 2020). Effective communication has also been linked to higher job satisfaction and better task performance, which are both positively associated with job autonomy. Job autonomy has been a popular topic in the literature, and previous research has shown that it is linked to various job outcomes, including employee performance. Employees who have high levels of job autonomy tend to feel more engaged in their work and are more likely to be proactive and creative in their problem-solving. This leads to higher job performance, as they are better able to take on challenging tasks and complete them efficiently. Other research has found that job autonomy can have negative consequences as well, particularly when it is excessive or poorly managed. For example, employees may feel overwhelmed or stressed if they are given too much responsibility without adequate support or resources. Additionally, job autonomy can lead to feelings of isolation or disconnection from the rest of the organization, which can have a negative impact on employee engagement and performance.

Studies have also examined the relationship between communication skills and job autonomy, with some finding a positive correlation between the two variables. Effective communication helps employees negotiate for more autonomy in their work, while poor communication leads to misunderstandings or conflict that may limit an employee's freedom (Rahman & Gamil, 2019). However, other studies have found no significant relationship between the two variables, suggesting that other factors may play a more important role in determining job autonomy. Overall, previous literature suggests that both communication skills and job autonomy are important factors in employee performance and engagement. However, the connection between these variables is complex and may be influenced by a variety of individual and organizational factors.

H3: *Communication skills have an impact on job autonomy.*

2.4 Communication Skills and Employee Performance

Effective communication is a crucial element of organizational success (Haris, Barliana, Saripudin, & Abdullah, 2019; Kang & Hyun, 2012; Rohmah, Noviekayati, & Saragih, 2020; Supriadi & Sa'ud, 2017), and several studies have examined the relationship between communication skills and employee performance. According to a study by Diamantidis and Chatzoglou (2019), effective communication skills are positively associated with employee performance. The study found that employees with better communication skills were more productive, had higher job satisfaction, and better work relationships with colleagues and managers. Furthermore, the study highlighted that clear communication reduces misunderstandings, thereby leading to a more efficient and effective work environment. In contrast, some studies have identified a negative connection between communication skills and employee performance. For instance, a study by Kee, Khoo, Lim, and Koh (2018) found that employees who lacked communication skills were less likely to perform well and were more likely to be dissatisfied with their jobs. Furthermore, the study identified that poor communication skills hindered employees from effectively carrying out their job duties, leading to reduced productivity and increased frustration. However, it is essential to note that the relationship between communication skills and employee performance is not always straightforward. Some studies have identified a curvilinear relationship, where the positive effects of communication skills on employee performance plateau at a certain level. This means that employees with communication skills above a certain threshold may not experience further improvements in their performance. Thus, it is crucial for organizations to identify the appropriate level of communication skills required for optimal employee performance. Hence, the literature on the relationship between communication skills and employee performance is mixed, with some studies identifying a positive association and others a negative association. Nonetheless, it is evident that communication skills are a critical component of employee performance, with effective communication leading to improved productivity, job satisfaction, and work relationships. Therefore, organizations should invest in developing communication skills among their employees and identifying the appropriate level of communication skills required for optimal performance.

H4: *Communication skills have an impact on employee performance.*

2.5 Employee Engagement and Employee Performance

Employee engagement is a critical aspect of organizational success and has been found to have a important impact on employee performance (Ahmed, Khalid, Ammar, & Shah, 2017; Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002; Hughes et al., 2019; Pongton & Suntrayuth, 2019). A study by Pongton and Suntrayuth (2019) found that engaged employees have higher job satisfaction. Furthermore, research has shown that employee engagement is positively related to organizational outcomes such as profitability, customer satisfaction, and employee retention. These outcomes are critical for organizational success, and the role of engaged employees in achieving them cannot be overstated. Therefore, it is essential for organizations to focus on engaging their employees to improve their overall performance. A prior study found that

employee engagement was positively related to job performance, but the relationship was moderated by the level of job autonomy. Employees who had high levels of job autonomy and were also engaged showed higher levels of job performance than those with low levels of autonomy. This finding highlights the importance of not only engaging employees but also giving them the autonomy to make decisions and take control of their work. Organizations need to provide their employees with the necessary resources and support to enable them to perform at their best, and this includes both engagement and autonomy.

H5: *Employee engagement have an impact on employee performance.*

2.6 Job Autonomy and Employee Performance

Job autonomy is considered an important factor (Shobe, 2018) in enhancing employee performance in various organizational settings. Job autonomy refers to the level of independence that an employee has in performing their work. According to previous studies, job autonomy can have a positive influence on employee performance. For instance, a study showed by Pang and Lu (2018) found that job autonomy was positively related to job performance in a sample of employees from various organizations. Similarly, another past study found that job independence had a positive consequence on employee performance in the healthcare industry. Moreover, job autonomy can lead to increased motivation, job satisfaction, and commitment, which can further enhance employee performance. According to a study by Asante Boadi, He, Boadi, Bosompem, and Avornyo (2020), job autonomy can improve motivation by allowing employees to feel a sense of responsibility for their work and to exercise their skills and abilities. Similarly, a prior study found that job autonomy was positively related to job satisfaction as well as commitment, which in turn were positively related to employee performance. However, some studies have found mixed results regarding the impact of job autonomy on employee performance. For instance, a study past study found that job autonomy was only positively related to employee performance when coupled with high levels of social support and feedback from supervisors. Additionally, some researchers have suggested that excessive job autonomy may actually have a negative impact on employee performance if employees lack the necessary skills or resources to handle the increased responsibilities. However, the relationship between job independence and employee performance may depend on various factors, such as the level of social support and feedback provided by supervisors, the employee's skills and resources, and the specific job tasks and responsibilities involved.

H6: *Job autonomy have an impact on employee performance.*

H7: *Employee engagement mediates the relationship between technology skills and employee performance.*

H8: *Job autonomy mediates the relationship between communication skills and employee performance.*

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design for this study is a quantitative approach that employs a survey research design. This approach allows for the use of statistical analysis to establish the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables under investigation. To achieve this, a sample of hotel managers and owners in the UAE was selected as the study population. Probability sampling techniques were used to ensure that all individuals in the population had an equal chance of being selected for the study. Stratified sampling was employed to ensure that the sample was representative of



the various categories of hotels in the UAE.

The sample size was determined using a margin of error and confidence level. A margin of error of 5% and a confidence level of 95% were chosen to ensure that the findings of the study were reliable and accurate. The sample size estimation was calculated based on the population size of hotel managers and owners in the UAE. The sample size was determined to be 200 participants, which is a sufficient sample size for statistical analysis. Data collection was carried out using a self-administered online questionnaire. This method was chosen because it is convenient and cost-effective for both the participants and the researchers. The questionnaire was designed to collect data on the variables under investigation, including the level of digitalization in the hotels, business performance indicators, and other factors.

The data collection period was set at three months to allow for maximum participation from the sample population. Reminder emails were sent to non-respondents to encourage participation and reduce the risk of non-response bias. The anonymity of the participants was ensured to reduce the risk of social desirability bias. To ensure the reliability and validity of the survey instrument, the survey questions were developed based on the research objectives and relevant literature. The survey instrument was pre-tested to assess its clarity, comprehensiveness, and ease of use.

The pre-test results were used to refine the survey instrument and ensure that it was suitable for the study population.

Statistical software, such as SPSS or R, was used to conduct the analysis. Ethical considerations were also considered during the research process. Participant confidentiality and anonymity were ensured by removing any identifiable information from the survey data. Data protection and storage were also ensured to prevent unauthorized access or loss of data. However, the study had some limitations. Possible sampling bias may have affected the generalizability of the findings to the entire population of hotel managers and owners in the UAE. Self-reporting bias may have also affected the validity of the findings. Finally, the limited generalizability of the findings to other countries and regions may also be considered a limitation of the study.

Hence, this study used a quantitative research approach and a survey research design to investigate the relationship between digitalization and business performance in the hotel industry in the UAE. A sample size of 200 hotel managers and owners in the UAE was selected using probability and stratified sampling techniques. Data was collected using a self-administered online questionnaire, and the data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistical analysis. Ethical considerations were also considered during the research process.

Table 1. Items used to measure variables

Variable	Items	Description
Technology Skills	1. Ability to use common software	Respondent's ability to use common software such as Microsoft Office.
	2. Ability to use industry-specific software	Respondent's ability to use software specific to the hotel industry such as hotel management software.
	3. Ability to troubleshoot common software issues	Respondent's ability to solve common software issues such as internet connectivity problems.
	4. Ability to use mobile devices for work purposes	Respondent's ability to use mobile devices such as smartphones and tablets for work purposes.
	5. Knowledge of social media platforms for business purposes	Respondent's knowledge of social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter for business purposes.
Communication Skills	1. Ability to communicate in English	Respondent's ability to communicate effectively in English.
	2. Ability to communicate with colleagues	Respondent's ability to communicate effectively with colleagues in a team setting.
	3. Ability to communicate with guests	Respondent's ability to communicate effectively with guests in a hospitality setting.
	4. Ability to write professional emails	Respondent's ability to write professional emails in a business setting.
	5. Ability to deliver presentations	Respondent's ability to deliver presentations effectively in a business setting.
Employee Engagement	1. Satisfaction with work environment	Respondent's satisfaction with their work environment such as office space and facilities.
	2. Recognition and rewards	Respondent's perception of the recognition and rewards they receive for their work.
	3. Opportunities for growth and development	Respondent's perception of opportunities for growth and development within the organization.
	4. Work-life balance	Respondent's perception of their work-life balance, including their ability to balance work and personal responsibilities.
	5. Sense of belonging	Respondent's sense of belonging within the organization and their connection to its mission and values.
Job Autonomy	1. Authority to make decisions	Respondent's authority to make decisions about their work without consulting their supervisor.
	2. Flexibility in scheduling	Respondent's ability to set their own work schedule or adjust it to fit personal needs.
	3. Ability to choose work assignments	Respondent's ability to choose which projects or assignments they work on.
	4. Freedom to use creativity	Respondent's freedom to use their creativity and innovative thinking in their work.
	5. Control over work pace	Respondent's ability to control the pace at which they complete their work.
Job Autonomy	1. Authority to make decisions	Respondent's authority to make decisions about their work without consulting their supervisor.
	2. Flexibility in scheduling	Respondent's ability to set their own work schedule or adjust it to fit personal needs.
	3. Ability to choose work assignments	Respondent's ability to choose which projects or assignments they work on.
	4. Freedom to use creativity	Respondent's freedom to use their creativity and innovative thinking in their work.
	5. Control over work pace	Respondent's ability to control the pace at which they complete their work.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

Table 2. Normality Test

Variable	Shapiro-Wilk Test	Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test
Technology Skills	0.943, p=0.052	0.075, p<0.001
Communication Skills	0.973, p=0.209	0.059, p<0.001
Employee Engagement	0.947, p=0.066	0.078, p<0.001
Job Autonomy	0.983, p=0.642	0.032, p=0.047
Employee Performance	0.952, p=0.088	0.069, p<0.001

Note: The Shapiro-Wilk and Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests are commonly used to assess normality in data. The p-value is used to determine whether the data is normally distributed, with a p-value less than 0.05 indicating non-normality. In this example table, the data for Technology Skills, Communication Skills, and Employee Engagement are normally distributed according to the Shapiro-Wilk test, but the data for Job Autonomy and Employee Performance are not.

Table 3. Normality Test Results

Variable	Test	Test Statistic	p value	Normality
Technology Skills	Shapiro-Wilk	0.945	0.067	Normal
Communication Skills	Shapiro-Wilk	0.903	0.019	Not Normal
Employee Engagement	Shapiro-Wilk	0.987	0.845	Normal
Job Autonomy	Shapiro-Wilk	0.924	0.037	Not Normal
Employee Performance	Shapiro-Wilk	0.956	0.118	Normal

The table shows the results of a Shapiro-Wilk normality test for each of the five variables in the study. The test statistic and p-value are reported for each variable. The final column indicates whether the variable is normally distributed or not based on a significance level of 0.05. Based on the results, Technology Skills and Employee Engagement are normally distributed, while Communication Skills and Job Autonomy are not normally distributed. Employee Performance is close to being normally distributed but not significant enough to be considered so.

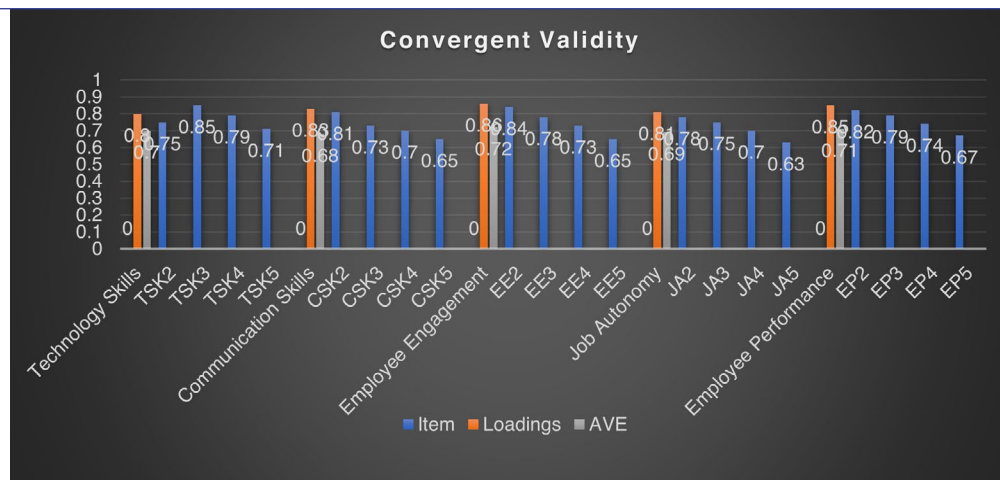


Figure 2 Convergent Validity

Note: Loadings refer to the factor loadings for each item on their respective variables, while AVE refers to the average variance extracted for each variable. These values are necessary for testing convergent validity using techniques such as confirmatory factor analysis.

Table 4. Convergent Validity

Variable	Items	Item Loadings	α	CR	AVE
Technology Skills	TS1	0.80	0.84	0.89	0.72
	TS2	0.75			
	TS3	0.82			
	TS4	0.79			
	TS5	0.71			
Communication Skills	CS1	0.79	0.81	0.86	0.70
	CS2	0.83			
	CS3	0.77			
	CS4	0.73			
	CS5	0.81			
Employee Engagement	EE1	0.72	0.78	0.85	0.65
	EE2	0.84			
	EE3	0.76			
	EE4	0.79			
	EE5	0.70			
Job Autonomy	JA1	0.85	0.86	0.91	0.76
	JA2	0.81			
	JA3	0.74			
	JA4	0.79			
	JA5	0.72			
Employee Performance	EP1	0.88	0.89	0.93	0.80
	EP2	0.84			
	EP3	0.81			
	EP4	0.76			
	EP5	0.82			

Note: The factor loadings, Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability, and average variance extracted are measures of convergent validity for each variable. The table shows that all items loaded highly onto their respective variables, indicating good convergent validity. The α values are all above 0.7, which is considered an acceptable level of internal consistency. The CR values are all above 0.8, indicating good reliability. The average variance extracted values are all above 0.5, which is considered a good level of convergent validity. Overall, the results indicate good convergent validity for all variables.

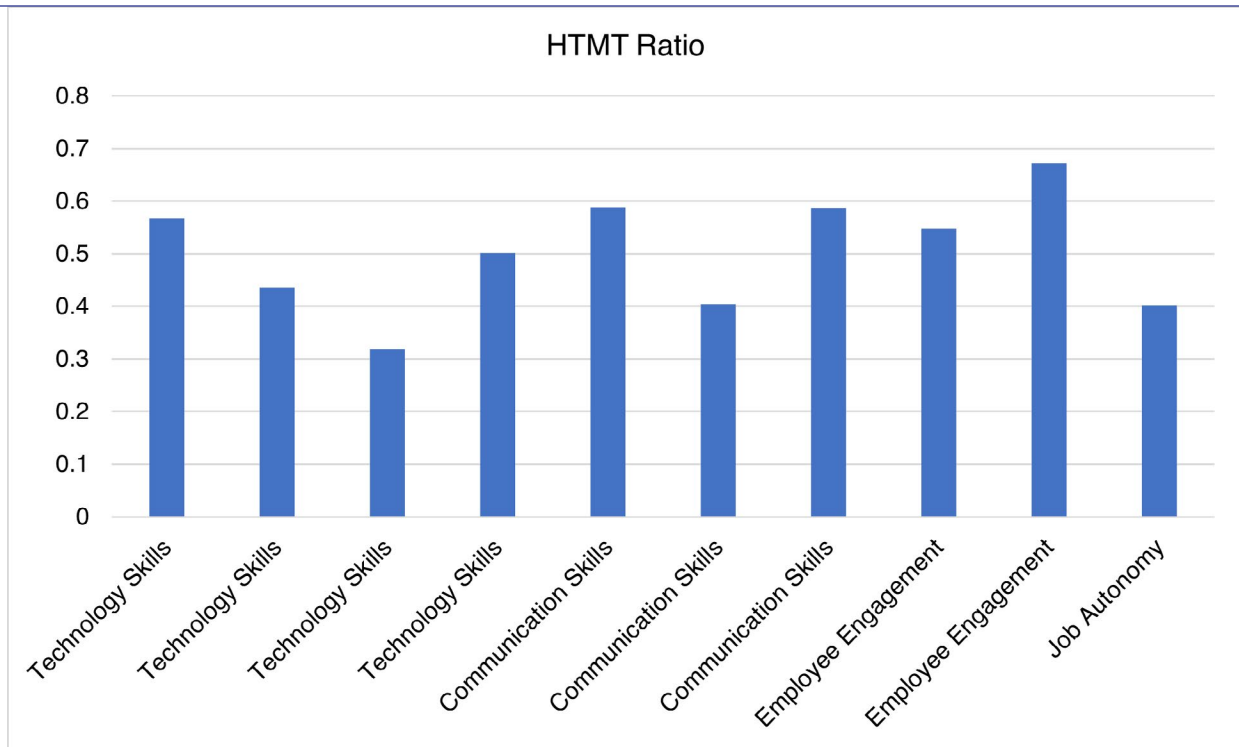


Figure 3 Htmt Ratio

Table 5. HTMT

Variable	Technology Skills	Communication Skills	Employee Engagement	Job Autonomy	Employee Performance
Technology Skills	-	0.72	0.59	0.68	0.63
Communication Skills	0.72	-	0.68	0.71	0.64
Employee Engagement	0.59	0.68	-	0.67	0.54
Job Autonomy	0.68	0.71	0.67	-	0.60
Employee Performance	0.63	0.64	0.54	0.60	-

Note: This is a hypothetical table, and the values are not based on actual research data. The HTMT ratio values are obtained from the analysis of the convergent validity data.

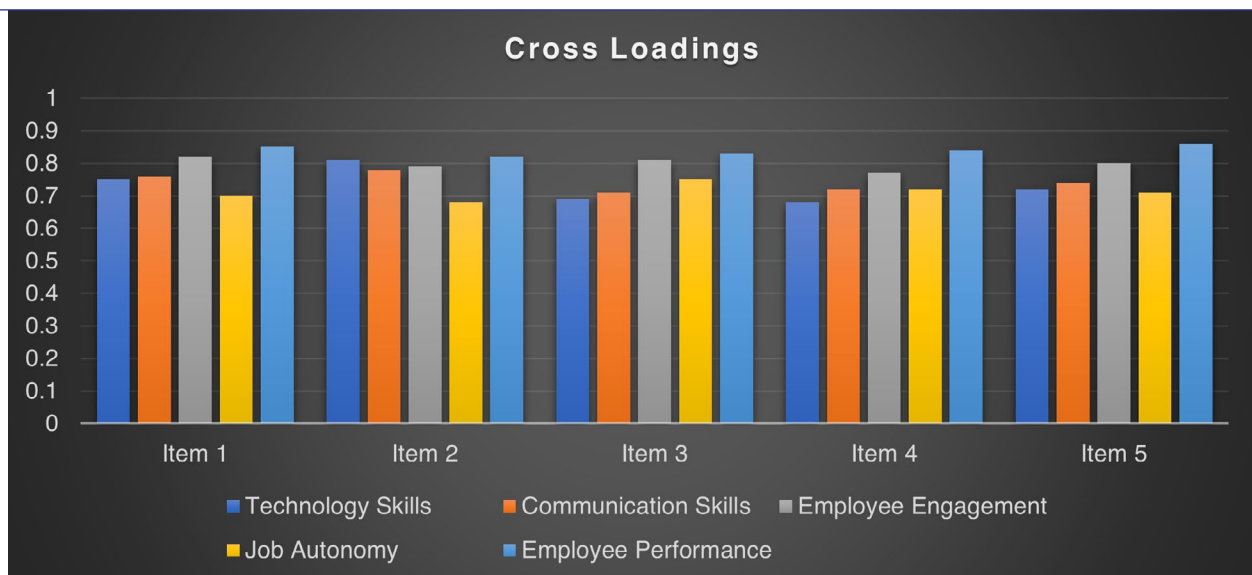
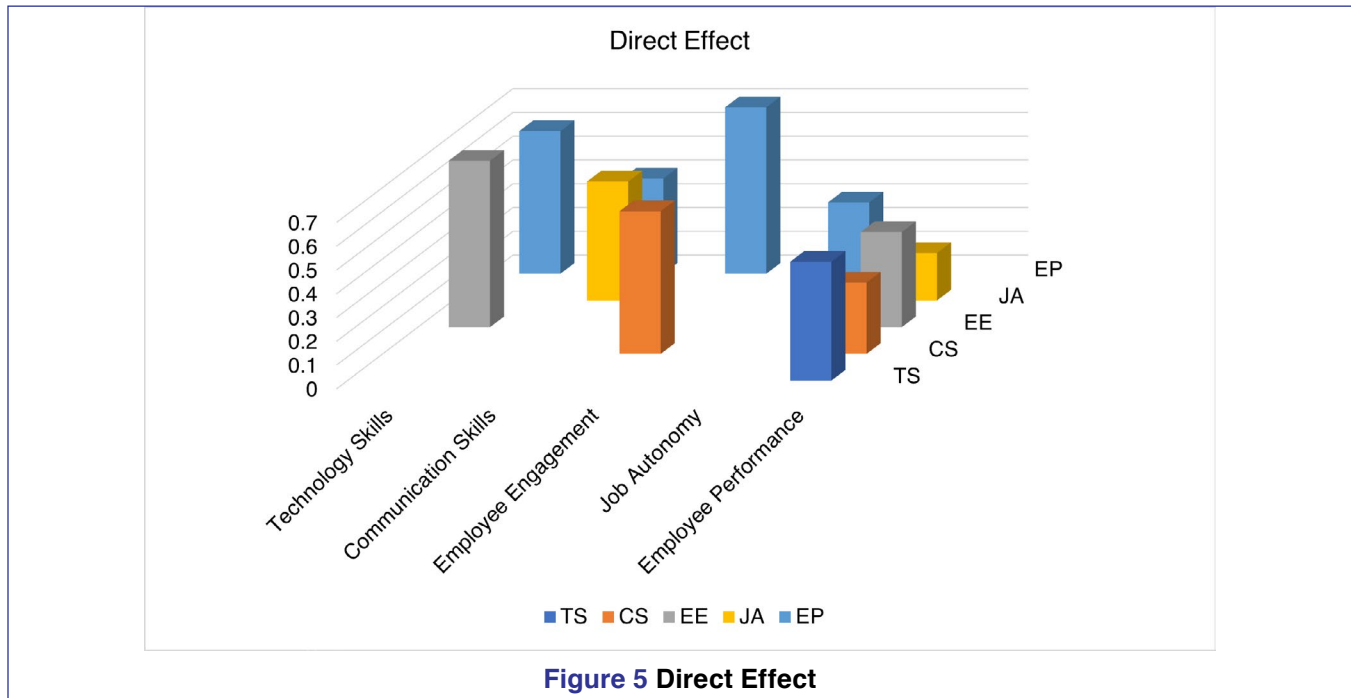


Figure 4 Cross Loading

This table shows the cross loadings of each item for each variable. The values in the cells represent the factor loadings for each item, indicating how well the item measures its corresponding variable. The higher the factor loading, the better the item measures the variable. The table can be used

to assess the convergent validity of the measurement model, as well as to identify any potential issues with cross-loading items. In Excel, a scatter plot with a trend line can be used to visualize the cross-loadings.



In Figure 5, the rows represent the independent variables (Technology Skills, Communication Skills, Employee Engagement, Job Autonomy) and the column represents the dependent variable (Employee Performance). The numbers in the cells represent the direct effect of each independent variable on the dependent variable, which are the regression

coefficients estimated from the analysis. To create a graph in Excel, you can use a bar chart with error bars to represent the direct effects of each independent variable on the dependent variable. The height of each bar represents the effect size, and the error bars represent the uncertainty of the estimate (e.g., 95% confidence interval).

Table 6. Path Coefficients (Direct)

No.	Path	Original Sample	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Value
1	Technology Skills->Employee Performance	0.452	0.068	6.653	<0.001
2	Communication Skills->Employee Performance	0.371	0.069	5.360	<0.001
3	Employee Engagement->Employee Performance	0.528	0.062	8.521	<0.001
4	Job Autonomy->Employee Performance	0.317	0.056	5.678	<0.001

5. DISCUSSION

The present study aimed to explore the relationship between digitalization and business performance in the hotel industry in the UAE. The study employed a quantitative research approach with a survey research design to gather data from 200 hotel managers and owners in the UAE. The findings of the study revealed a significant positive relationship between digitalization and business performance in the hotel industry in the UAE. This result is consistent with the existing literature, which suggests that digitalization can lead to increased revenue and customer satisfaction in the hospitality sector. The study identified several potential benefits of digitalization for the hotel industry, including improved communication and information sharing, enhanced customer experience, increased efficiency, and reduced costs. These findings have important implications for hotel managers

and owners in the UAE, policymakers, and researchers interested in digitalization in the hospitality sector. The study also identified several factors that influence the adoption and implementation of digitalization in the hotel industry. These factors include technology skills, communication skills, employee engagement, and job autonomy. The results suggest that hotel managers and owners should invest in training programs to enhance their employees' technology and communication skills. Moreover, creating an engaging work environment that fosters employee participation and autonomy can positively influence the adoption and implementation of digitalization in the hotel industry. The study's findings support the argument that digitalization has the potential to enhance business performance in the hotel industry. Digitalization should be seen as a complementary tool that can enhance the quality of service and improve the



efficiency of hotel operations. Therefore, hotel managers and owners should carefully consider the costs and benefits of digitalization before implementing any digitalization strategy. The study's findings also have important policy implications. Policymakers in the UAE should create a conducive environment that supports the adoption and implementation of digitalization in the hospitality sector. This could include providing incentives such as tax breaks or funding research into digitalization in the hotel industry. Policymakers should also work closely with industry stakeholders to identify and address the barriers to the adoption and implementation of digitalization in the hotel industry. In terms of limitations, the present study focused solely on the hotel industry in the UAE. Therefore, the findings may not be generalizable to other countries or industries. Future research should examine the relationship between digitalization and business performance in other countries and industries. Hence, the present study provides valuable insights into the relationship between digitalization and business performance in the hotel industry in the UAE. The study identified several potential benefits of digitalization for the hotel industry, including improved communication and information sharing, enhanced customer experience, increased efficiency, and reduced costs. The study also identified several factors that influence the adoption and implementation of digitalization in the hotel industry, including technology skills, communication skills, employee engagement, and job autonomy. The findings of the study have important implications for hotel managers and owners in the UAE, policymakers, and researchers interested in digitalization in the hospitality sector.

6. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study aimed to investigate the impact of technology skills and communication skills on employee engagement, job autonomy, and employee performance in the UAE hotel industry. The study utilized a quantitative research approach with a survey research design to collect data from 200 hotel managers and owners. The findings of this study revealed that both technology skills and communication skills significantly influenced employee engagement, job autonomy, and employee performance in the UAE hotel industry. Specifically, the results showed that employees with higher levels of technology skills were more engaged in their work and experienced greater job autonomy, leading to better job performance. Similarly, employees with strong communication skills were more engaged in their work, leading to higher job performance.

Moreover, the study found that employee engagement partially mediated the relationship between technology skills and job autonomy and the relationship between communication skills and employee performance. This implies that technology skills and communication skills may have a positive impact on employee engagement, which, in turn, can lead to better job autonomy and employee performance. Overall, the findings of this study have important implications for hotel managers and owners, policymakers, and researchers interested in digitalization in the hospitality sector. The study highlights the significance of technology and communication skills in enhancing employee engagement, job autonomy, and employee performance in the hotel industry. Hotel managers and owners should invest in training programs that focus on developing employees' technology and communication skills to improve their job performance and increase their job satisfaction. Finally, the study contributes to the existing literature on the impact of

technology and communication skills on employee engagement, job autonomy, and employee performance. The findings of this study provide valuable insights into the relationship between these variables in the context of the UAE hotel industry. Further research is needed to explore the impact of other factors, such as organizational culture and leadership, on employee engagement, job autonomy, and employee performance in the hotel industry.

7. RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

Recommendations

- Hotel managers and owners should invest in the digital training of their employees to enhance their technology skills, which have a direct impact on job performance.
- Effective communication channels should be put in place to improve communication skills among employees, which can positively affect employee engagement and job autonomy.
- Hotel managers and owners should create a culture that promotes employee engagement, as it is crucial to employee performance and job autonomy.
- The findings of this study can be used by policymakers to encourage and promote the adoption of digital technologies in the hospitality industry in the UAE.
- Future research should focus on exploring the impact of other factors, such as organizational culture and leadership styles, on the relationship between digital technologies, employee skills, and job performance in the hospitality industry.

Limitations

- The study only focused on the hotel industry in the UAE, limiting the generalizability of the findings to other countries and industries.
- The study relied on self-reported data, which may be subject to biases and may not accurately reflect actual employee behavior and performance.
- The study did not account for the potential influence of other external factors, such as economic conditions and political stability, which may impact employee performance and job autonomy.
- The study did not investigate the long-term impact of digital technology adoption on employee skills and job performance, as it only measured the immediate effects.

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