

University of Wales Trinity Saint David

To assess the impact of global pandemic over accelerating digital transformation in the workplace in the hospitality industry:

A study on Hilton

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ABSTRACT

Digital transformation is widely accepted concept in the business environment, almost every business unit knows the value and importance of digital transformation and ways in which organization implement change to existing IT infrastructure. Additionally, after industrial revolution businesses were aware about technologies and its utilization to reduce human efforts. However, after COVID-19 global pandemic impact, things changed for every business (Papagiannidis, Harris and Morton, 2020). This pandemic had significant influence on way in which human lifestyle is changed due to digital technologies. This study has explored the impact of global pandemic (COVID-19) on accelerating digital transformation within hospitality industry.

This study aims to examine why global pandemic has become a major reason for digital transformation and researcher focused on hospitality industry which is one of the most sensitive industry in the economy that is influenced with major and minor external factors. Moreover, this study evaluated experience of people who believe that global pandemic was major reason for digital transformation, the change occurred after such pandemic was visible. Researcher conducted qualitative research type to collect data in the form of non-numerical format, this means selection of experience. Overall, thematic analysis is performed to extract the information from qualitative data and present clear understanding regarding the topic.

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Topic: To assess the impact of global pandemic over accelerating digital transformation in the workplace in the hospitality industry: A study on Hilton.

CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

Digital transformation was emerging concept after 4.0 industrial revolution, businesses were slowly seeking update of their existing IT infrastructure and operational management with emerging technologies. However, situation changed after COVID-19 global pandemic, rapid adoption of digital technologies took place, businesses have considered new emerging technologies to meet the expectations of customers that changed during lockdown period (Mandviwalla and Flanagan, 2021). With access to internet, change in consumer buying process indicated heavy utilization of technologies to process daily operations. Businesses experienced rapid acceleration of digital transformation within workplace after global pandemic. Hospitality firms adopted emerging digital concepts to achieve all level of digital business excellence.

Background of the study

Hilton is one of the leading hospitality company in the UK, and have rapid growth in the United Kingdom. This American based company manage and franchise a wide portfolio of hotels, resorts and other hospitality services. Hilton was founded in the year 1919 by Conrad Hilton and led by Christopher J. Nassetta (*Hilton*, 2023). This brand is headquartered in Virginia, United States and considered as one of the most successful hospitality company in the world.

Aim

The aim is to analyse the impact of global pandemic on fostering the digital transformation at workplace in Hilton.

Objectives

- To understand the concept of digital transformation.
- To evaluate the impact of global pandemic on digital transformation in hospitality sector.
- To assess the factors impacting the digital transformation during the pandemic.
- To recommend strategies pertaining to effective digital transformation in hospitality industry.

Research questions

1. Q.1 What is digital transformation?
2. Q.2 What is the impact of global pandemic on digital transformation?
3. Q.3 What are different factors that impact the digital transformation during the time of pandemic?

Rationale of the study

The reason behind conducting this study is to explore the impact of global pandemic on hospitality industry and to explore ways in which this COVID-19 global pandemic have accelerated the growth of digital transformation of each hospitality workplace (Hai, Van and Thi Tuyet, 2021). Another reason for conducting this study lies in exploring impact of global pandemic on digital transformation, in depth analysis has been considered to present logical argument. Additionally, researcher also have focused on understanding different factors that impact the digital transformation during the time of pandemic. Another reason for conducting this study lies in exploring strategies considered by the brand to overcome the challenges.

Problem statement:

Pandemic is the main issue that researcher explore through current research because of specific reasons. As scholar attempt to highlight how and at what extend COVID- 19 put impact over procedure of digital transformation within Hilton hotel that operates and run business at hospitality sector. It is important for scholar to study and understand the issue because of developing and sharing information related to similar area of concern that outcome in form of achieving study aim and addressing key objectives. Pandemic in the world of business put adverse impact upon everything that researcher effort to explore and collect information in the similar context.

CHAPTER 2 – LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature review is process of examining different literatures and extracting information that remain important to build conceptual understanding regarding the topic or research area. Literature reviewing allow researcher to consider examination of different books, journals and articles published from the year 2018-2023 (Snyder, 2019). Researcher has not considered any older books, journals and articles that was published even before COVID-19 pandemic to maintain high level of quality within the presentation of reviewed literatures. For the completion of this study, different themes were being designed and developed to achieve the desired outcome in the process. These are,

Theme 1: the concept of digital transformation.

According to Vial (2021), the concept of digital transformation is quite simple as well as complex, businesses need to consider different types of strategies and practices to manage the transformation of the workplace while considering digital technologies. Digital transformation is way in which organization change traditional operational process with digital systems and software. The benefit of digital transformation lies in improved productivity, reduction of human efforts, achievement of efficiency and gaining competitive advantage in the market. Moreover, digital transformation is expensive process which require firm to have sufficient budget, purchasing latest and fastest technologies might remain expensive.

Kraus and et.al., (2021) argued that, digital transformation is necessarily important to the business. However, it is more important for organization to focus on survival in the market. This simple means, if an organization is considering digital transformation of the workplace, then firm have to bring major change in their existing working style which is critical as well as risky. However, still it is important to adopt the concept of digital transformation of the workplace within business, without the transformation, businesses cannot become competitive and cannot perform several important task with digital advancement of their system and software.

As per the viewpoint of Ebert and Duarte (2018), transformation of the workplace is required, each business adopt transformation of the workplace in digital manner, this means utilizing different types of digital technologies and systems to achieve the potential outcome. Digitalization is process in which companies not only adopt digital technologies, but consider update of entire IT infrastructure of the business. Moreover, it is significantly important for

businesses to achieve potential transformational outcome with digital advancement of the systems, without acceptance of new emerging technologies, surviving in such digitally advancement business environment may become impossible for the businesses.

Saarikko, Westergren and Blomquist, (2020) interpreted that each business need to perform functions and either they can be done manually by workers or with the help of digital technologies or tools. When business functions are performed by digital technologies then it is known as digital transformation within businesses. It changes the way; employers operate as well as deliver value to customers. For digital transformation and implementing digital technologies, companies need to make changes in their culture, they need to challenge the status quo, experiments and get comfortable with failure. It is the big transformation that require expertise and experience otherwise, businesses have to face problems in the future. If businesses are transformed digitally in a successful manner, then businesses are more likely to become successful.

Theme 2: the impact of pandemic on digital transformation in hospitality industry.

According to Papagiannidis, Harris and Morton (2020), COVID-19 pandemic accelerated the growth of digital technologies, not only individual person but businesses also have considered digital technologies to process digital operation that remain more beneficial. Pandemic had direct impact on performance of the firms, the workplace stability was impacted due to global pandemic. However, this also accelerated the growth of digitalization, this means businesses now have considered digital technologies to manage the operations and meet the expectations of the customer. The impact is visible, there was rapid change in business performance, hospitality firms were able to digitally connect with customer.

Hai, Van and Thi Tuyet (2021) argued that, COVID-19 pandemic had become reason for building connectivity between business and customer, the transformation of workplace with digital technologies too rapid growth after pandemic because of several valid reasons. For example, the concept of lockdown accepted in the global pandemic promoted digital usage of each user, this created a habit of using digital technologies and accessing each type of product and service through digital platform. Such type of change was noted by business that pressured them to adopt digital transformation as soon as possible or else they will lose digital audience.

As per the viewpoint of Mandviwalla and Flanagan (2021), the acceptance of digital technologies is not the case of digital transformation, because digital transformation is completely different aspect and have different outcome. However, global pandemic played important role in highlighting the difference between digital technologies and digital transformation of the workplace. For example, hospitality brands were already using websites for accepting digital reservation of a room. However, pandemic completely changed the way tourist or hospitality customer would utilize digital technologies. Moreover, each business has their own approach to handle the digital need of customer.

According to the Hasanat and et.al., (2020) covid-19 is the main reason as most of the businesses have transformed their businesses digitally. So, it can be said that digital transformation is being done because of fighting with uncertainties like covid-19 as well as continuing business functions without getting affected. Covid-19 was infectious disease and people were not allowed to come in direct contact with each other's but it was not possible for businesses to stop their functions and sit at home. So, they think about ways by which they can continue their business functions without direct contact with people and digital transformation was the outcome. Online or cashless payment, online delivery of products are great examples of digital transformation within businesses. Shahzad and et.al., (2021) supported above view and stated that covid-19 has affected companies' performance in a negative manner but it has developed an idea of digitalisation, work from home and ways by which businesses can be operated digitally. Businesses used to work from remote areas but covid-19 has made it acceptable for companies and people.

Theme 3: the factors impacting the digital transformation.

According to Feliciano-Cestero and et.al., (2023), digital transformation of the workplace was one of the most challenging task during pandemic, businesses were unable to achieve desire transformation of the workplace due to intense restriction with pandemic. For example, due to social distancing, firm unable to provide training and development to employee over the use of new emerging technologies in the business. It is important to provide training to each employee over new digital technologies in the form of systems and software. Moreover, both social distancing and training to employee remained important factor that impacted digital transformation during pandemic.

Trenerry and et.al., (2021) argued that, there are several factors that become barrier in acceptance of digital transformation of the workplace, businesses consider different ways to overcome these barriers or factors. For example, there was lack of strategic planning during pandemic for considering digital technologies, business leaders and manager were focusing on managing work as well as employee working from home. The acceptance of digital transformation was clearly not possible during pandemic, in which lack of strategic planning become a leading factor impacting digital transformation of the workplace. Moreover, lack of communication was an emerging issue as well.

As per the viewpoint of Osmundsen, Iden and Bygstad (2018), people itself is one of the leading factor impacting the digital transformation of the workplace, people means human resources utilized by the workplace to achieve the intended outcome in the process. Employee and their behaviour during pandemic was an issue accepting and adopting digital transformation of the workplace, if there is change in behaviour then businesses might have difficult in implementing any sort of change. For example, the resistance of employee over acceptance of digital technologies during pandemic, employees were already suffering from mental, physical and emotional challenges during the global pandemic.

On the other hand, AlNuaimi and et.al., (2022) stated that unclear objective can become the key factor behind digital transformation, which is important for management to set in appropriate and comprehensive manner. As it creates challenge for employees to engage in overall process that outcome in form of obtaining varied benefits that influence positively upon organizational performance and operational effectiveness. Unclear objectives and aims decrease the performance and effectiveness of employees, who can support to run venture successfully in the competitive world, where market competition increase day by day because of new strategies and practices conduct by companies. It can be said that without having clear objectives individual person at workplace cannot be able to proceed further and toward success that influence both candidates and organizational growth. It is fact that aim and objective create a path that individual person can follow to success and grow, either at personal or professional level.

Zhang, Xu and Ma, (2022) believe that along with other factors, execution also impact digital transformation in the world of business within number of organizations, where it plays significant role. It is important for management to execute plan relate to digital transformation in systematic manner, because any form of mistake lead to increase varied challenges, which is

quite challenging for administration to handle in time and cost effective way. Execution is essential because of obtaining key advantages such as completion of any plan and process that stakeholder expect to complete appropriately, as it benefit them in form of profit and provide path to grow, from national to international level (*8 Factors of a Successful Digital Transformation Strategy*, 2023). It moves administration to implement, understand and adapt any new concept that help to reach set goals, which in return provide unpredictable benefit that help in succeed and development of ventures.

CHAPTER 3 – RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research methodology define ways in which researcher has collected data and information, different methods is being utilized by the researcher to gather relevant information for the study and achieve the desired result accordingly (Gupta and Gupta, 2022). Research methodology is one of the most important chapter in the study, not only describing different types of methods, techniques and approaches considered by the researcher but highlighting whole process of collecting data in appropriate manner while considering ethical practices. There are several types of research methods utilized by the researcher within this study. These are,

Research type

Research type highlight way in which study is been conducted, this may include either quantitative or qualitative research type. Wherein, qualitative research is kind of study in which only non-numeric and non-statistical data is collected, this researcher focus on theoretical presentation of the information. However, on the other hand, quantitative study is contradicting to qualitative study, this kind of study consider numeric and statistical data and present statistically analysed information (Davidavičienė, 2018). Statistical knowledge and appropriate software such as IBM SPSS is required, that is why researcher rejected quantitative research type. In this current study, researcher has selected qualitative study, that allow them to collect non numeric information directly from observation of data source. Qualitative data remain new and include latest information which become one of the biggest advantage of considering a qualitative research type.

Research approach

Research approach define ways in which data source can be reached, researcher has choice to either select inductive or deductive research approach. In which, inductive research approach focus on developing brand new theory to support theoretical presentation of the qualitative data and information, subjective argument is provided within inductive approach (Patel and Patel, 2019). However, on the other hand, deductive research approach focus on considering existing theory to explain the existing phenomena, researcher present logical argument within deductive approach. However, deductive approach is complex approach that is why researcher selected inductive. The completion of this present study, researcher require to select inductive research approach. The advantage of considering inductive approach lies in gaining theoretical standpoint over a complex research topic, this allow researcher to avoid any sort of mistake and errors.

Research philosophy

Research philosophy focus on accepting a belief before collecting the data and information, researcher either select positivism or interpretivism research philosophy. Wherein, interpretivism research philosophy focus on subjective reality, researcher understand different perception and viewpoint and present data accordingly (Pandey and Pandey, 2021). However, on the other hand, positivism research philosophy reject subjective reality and accept objectivity of the data and information. Nevertheless, this philosophy is quite complex, that is why rejected by researcher. For the completion of this study, researcher has considered interpretivism research philosophy which allow them to focus on understanding perception of the people and remain suitable to qualitative research type. The advantage of interpretivism research philosophy lies in becoming a interpretivist and understanding the societal pattern to better gain an understanding over the research topic.

Data collection

Data collection define a process in which researcher either select primary data collection method that allow them to collect primary data and information or they select secondary data collection method that help in gathering secondary data and information. Wherein, primary process allow researcher to evaluate primary methods including direct interview, survey, one on one interactions and conversation (Mohajan, 2018). These methods provide first hand data and

information, which was not be used before. However, secondary data collection method focusses on evaluating different published data source including books, journals and articles to gather secondary data. For this study, both primary and secondary were utilized because researcher has conducted survey that require primary data collection process to gain primary data with the help of questionnaire and in order to support primary data, secondary data were collected and utilized according to the requirement of study.

Sampling

Sampling is process in which research select different participants from large pool of population, it is a process in which researcher need to select participant for the survey and evaluation of the primary data and information for the study. In which, probability or random sampling allow researcher to accept the principles of randomization or collecting data randomly from large population (Nayak and Singh, 2021). On the other hand, non-random or non-probability sampling is process in which researcher select a criteria and set different parameters. For this study, random or probability sampling was selected, with 30 employees from Hilton. These respondents carry experience related to the research topic allowing researcher to better understand the topic and gain a real data and information related to the topic this become one of the leading advantage of this research methodology.

Data analysis

Data analysis is process in which extraction of data and information takes place, this means researcher extract data and information with two define methods, either thematic analysis or statistical analysis process. In which, thematic analysis is process in which different themes are designed and developed according to the research area, thematic analysis extract qualitative data and information. However, on the other hand, statistical analysis is process in which researcher utilize IBM SPSS software to extract information (Mishra and Alok, 2022). For the completion of this study, researcher has considered thematic analysis for evaluation of qualitative data. The benefit of considering thematic data analysis lies in utilization of theoretical understand by developing different themes and covering important area of the research objectives. Moreover, this analysis is performed with development of different themes and presented in appropriate manner.

Reliability and validity

Reliability and validity are two most important aspect of every research, this not only allow researcher to define the legitimacy of the data and information but allow researcher to present highly accurate result and outcome of the study (Mukherjee, 2019). In this study, validity is maintained by selecting books, journals and articles that were published from 2019-2023, this means all data and information is collected from recently published data source including trending and emerging topics and factors. Moreover, in terms of reliability, researcher has considered thematic analysis that present highly accurate result and maintain reliability. Both reliability and validity is significantly important in this research because researcher is focusing on one of the most important topic in the business environment. However, research made appropriate changes if the reliability and validity does not match the requirement.

Research limitations

Research limitations define ways in which researcher has explored barriers and challenges during researching and completion of the study in defined manner. During the completion of this study, researcher has explored with three major aspects that indicating different types of challenges, including time, money and unavailability of the sources. In which, the limited time was an issue, researcher unable to conduct quantitative study as this was time consuming and analysis with IBM SPSS is time consuming as well as expensive (Bairagi and Munot, 2019). On the other, lack of money create resource scarcity during the process, as researcher was unable to purchase several important resources for this study including subscription to IBM SPSS software allowing researcher to analyse data and information. Moreover, time was lacking throughout the research which created several other issues but mitigated by the researcher.

Ethical consideration

Ethical consideration indicated ethics or morale considered by the researcher during the study, ethics are basic understanding between right and wrong. For the completion of this study, researcher has considered several ethical points (Knottnerus and Tugwell, 2018). These are,

- Informed consent is provided to each participant to inform and aware them about the researching and collection of their experience in the form of viewpoint. Permission was collected before conducting the survey to keep the study out of any ethical issue.

- Pseudonym is provided to each participant which means freedom to select stage name to protect own privacy and personal information. Stage name was chosen according to the criteria of professionalism; no personal feelings were harmed.
- Credit is provided to data source and information sites; researcher has considered accurate referencing.
- All other ethical points were considered during this study allowing researcher to explore the research topic in detailed manner.

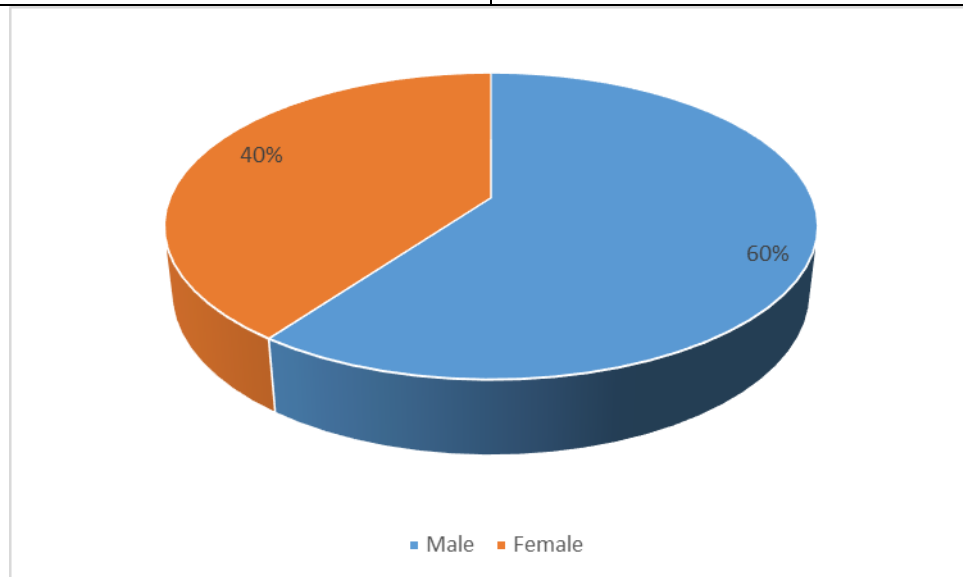
CHAPTER 4 – DATA ANALYSIS & FINDINGS

Data analysis is process in which researcher extract data and information from the selected data source and achieve the potential research outcome. Analysis of the data require researcher to adopt different approaches and strategies, utilization of different techniques that allow researcher to gain information relevant to the study (Belotto, 2018). After analysis, it is significantly important for researcher to present the findings, in the form of interpretation presenting the key outcomes of the analysed data and information. For the completion of this study, researcher has considered thematic analysis method allowing them to develop different themes and present extract with the help of graph, pie chart and other elements.

Thematic analysis:

Theme 1: Majority of respondents were male.

What is your gender?	Respondents
Male	18
Female	12
Total	30



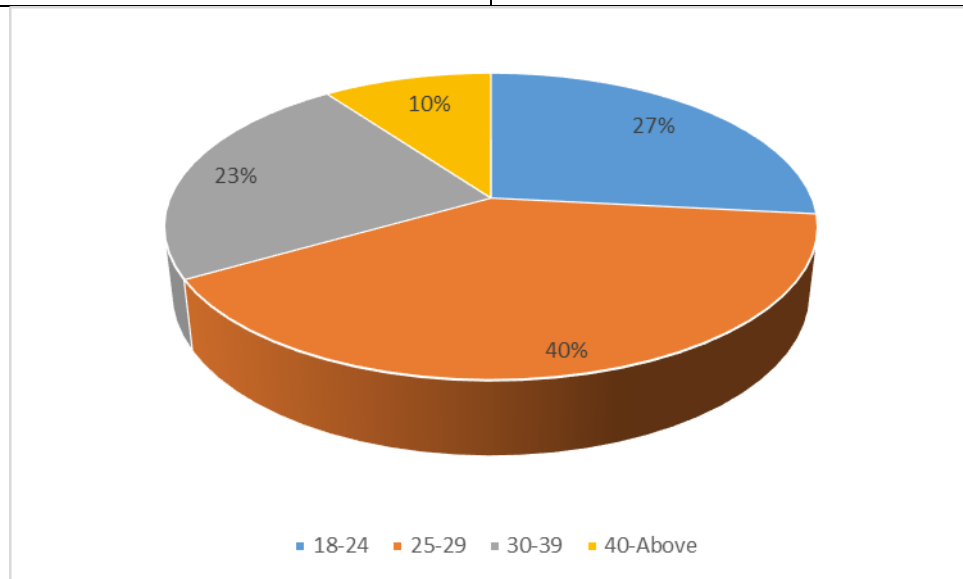
Interpretation:

From the above pie chart, it is analysed that majority of respondents belongs to particular gender which is male. On the other hand, female gender also took active participation in the survey process and provided their viewpoint (Elliott, 2018). Moreover, 60% of the respondent

fall under male gender category and 40% fall under female gender category selected for the survey.

Theme 2: Majority of people belonging to age group of 25-29.

What is your age?	Respondents
18-24	8
25-29	12
30-39	7
40-Above	3
Total	30

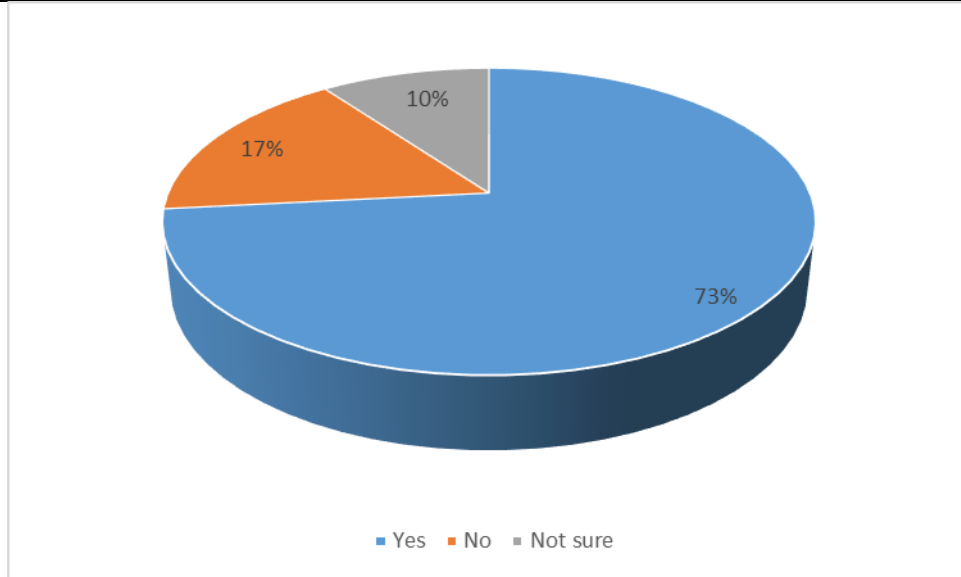


Interpretation:

The above pie chart represents a clear view regarding age group of respondents that took participation in the survey. In which, 40% of the respondents belongs to age group of 25-29, indicating active participation of particular group in the process. On the other hand, 27% of the respondents were belonging to age group of 18-24, as they are employees of the firm carrying related experience. Nevertheless, 23% of the respondents were belonging to 30-39 of age group, respondents of these gender were senior in the firm. Remaining 10% of the respondents were fall in the category of 40 and above, as this gender maintain seniority level within the organization.

Theme 3: Majority of respondents were aware about digital transformation.

Are you aware about the concept of digital transformation?	Respondents
Yes	22
No	5
Not sure	3
Total	30



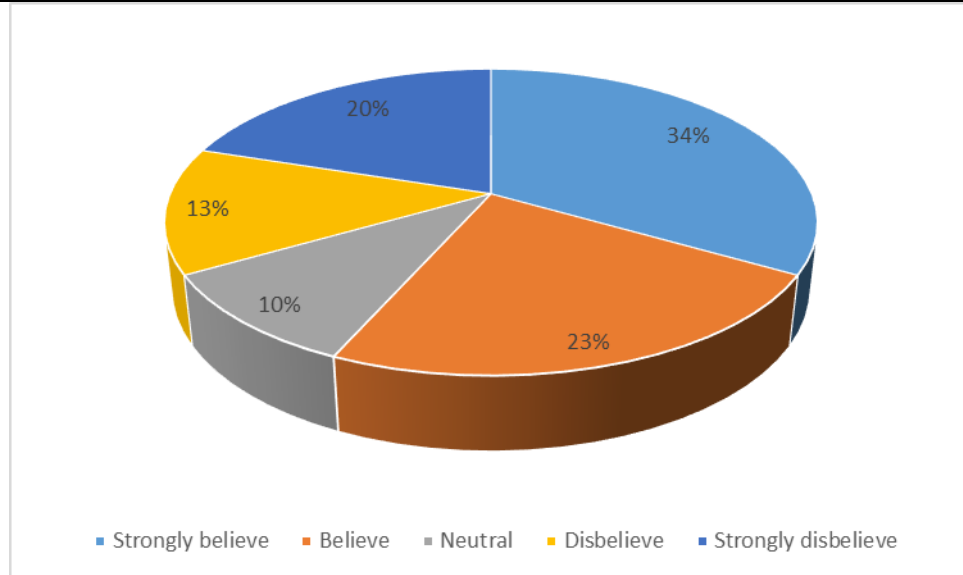
Interpretation:

From the above pie chart, it is analysed that, majority of the respondents were aware about the concept of digital transformation. In which, 73% of these respondents were fully aware about the concept of digital transformation within workplace (Terrell, 2022). These respondents have experience of working during such type of changes considered by the firm. On the other hand, 17% of the respondents were not aware about the concept of digital transformation and were not aware about the same during their working experience. Remaining, 10% of the respondents were not sure about the concept of digital transformation considered by the firm after COVID-19 global pandemic impact in the process.

Theme 4: There is strong believe that pandemic impacted hospitality businesses.

Do you believe that global pandemic had significant impact on hospitality businesses?	Respondents
Strongly believe	10

Believe	7
Neutral	3
Disbelieve	4
Strongly disbelieve	6
Total	30



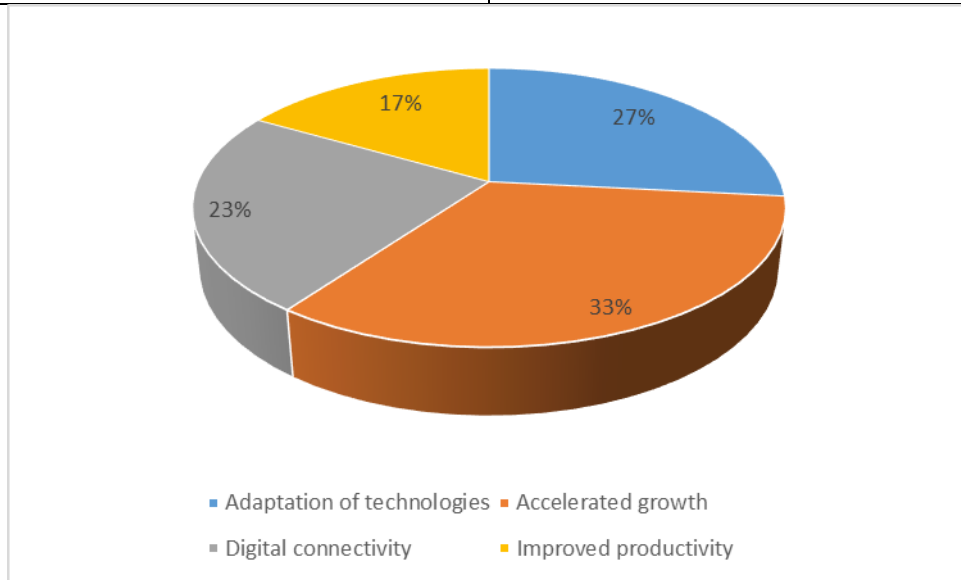
Interpretation:

The presentation of above pie chart indicating that majority of respondents that were 34% of the participants strongly believe that global pandemic had significant impact on the hospitality businesses. Supported with 23% of the respondents, who believed that global pandemic become leading factor in digital transformation. However, on the other hand, 20% of the respondents strongly disbelieved that global pandemic does not have significant impact on the hospitality businesses. Additionally, 13% of the respondents disbelieved that global pandemic was not the major reason for digital transformation and due to the impact of global pandemic. Remaining 10% of the respondents remained neutral, this means neither they believed nor they disbelieved that global pandemic was major reason for digital transformation.

Theme 5: There is positive impact of pandemic on digital transformation of workplace.

What are the impacts of global pandemic on digital transformation of the workplace?	Respondents
Adaptation of technologies	8

Accelerated growth	10
Digital connectivity	7
Improved productivity	5
Total	30



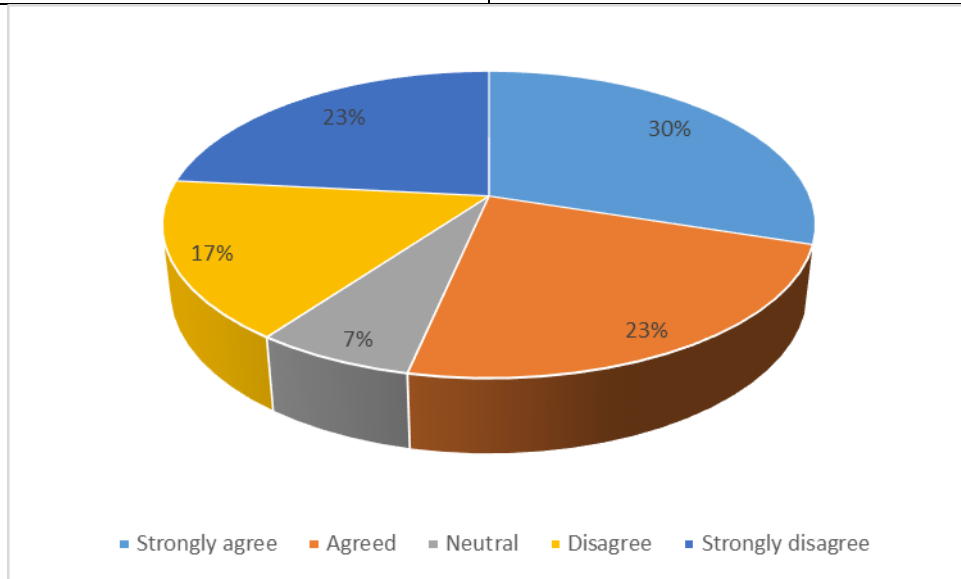
Interpretation:

From the above pie chart, it is analysed that 33% of the respondents stated that global pandemic accelerated growth of company and impact the process of digital transformation of the workplace. This indicated that, growth of the firm is accelerated with the help of digital transformation that took place after the global pandemic impact. However, on the other hand, 27% of the respondents stated that adaptation of technologies become possible, this was visible impact of digital transformation in the workplace (Mihas, 2019). Furthermore, 23% of the respondents stated that digital connectivity is possible with the help of transformation considered by the firm after pandemic impact. Remaining, 17% of the respondents stated that firm experienced improved productivity with the help of digital transformation considered after impact from global pandemic.

Theme 6: Respondent agree that growth is accelerated with digitalized workplace.

Do you agree that, global pandemic accelerated the growth of digitalized workplace within hospitality businesses?	Respondents
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Strongly agree	9
Agreed	7
Neutral	2
Disagree	5
Strongly disagree	7
Total	30



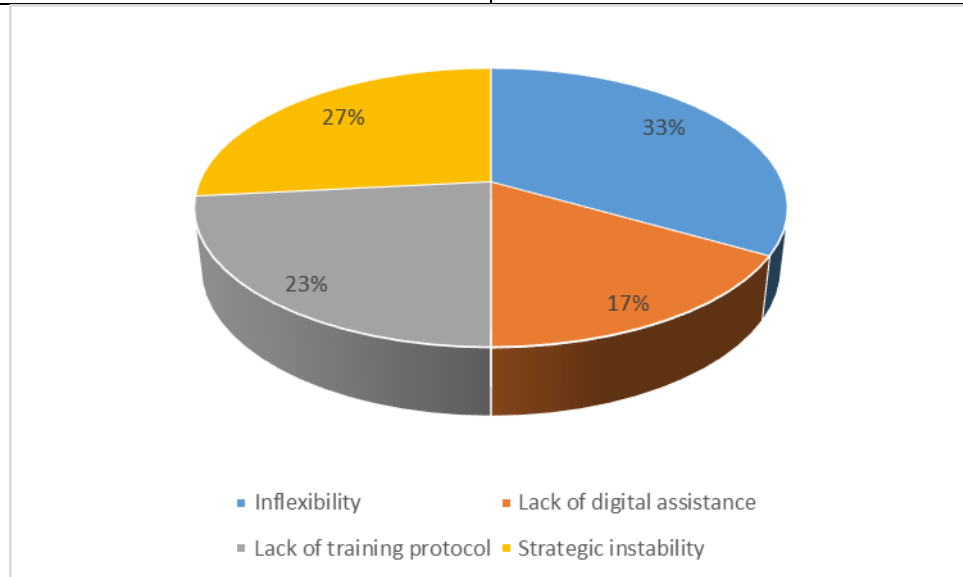
Interpretation:

The presentation of the above pie chart indicating that 30% of the respondents strongly agreed global pandemic had accelerated the growth of digitalized workplace within hospitality businesses. Supported with 23% of the respondents who agreed that global pandemic become a reason for making workplace digitally active and consider the improvement accordingly. On the other hand, 23% of the respondents strongly disagreed that global pandemic accelerated the growth of digitalized workplace within hospitality businesses. Additionally, 17% of the respondents disagreed that global pandemic accelerate the growth of digitalized workplace within hospitality businesses. Remaining, 7% of the respondents provided neutral statement as they neither agree nor they disagree.

Theme 7: Respondents highlighted types of factors impacting transformation.

According to you, what types of factors impacting the digital transformation during	Respondents
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the pandemic?	
Inflexibility	10
Lack of digital assistance	5
Lack of training protocol	7
Strategic instability	8
Total	30



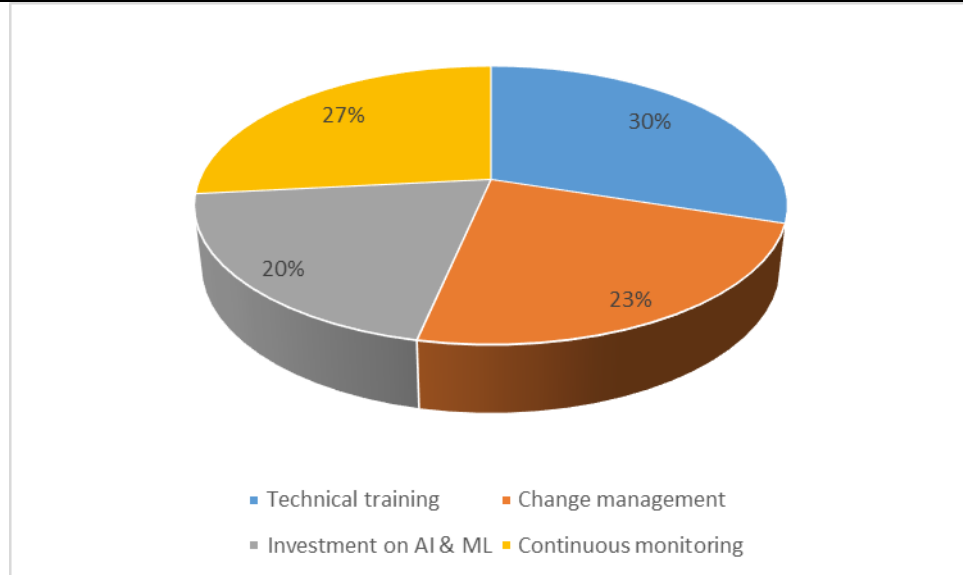
Interpretation:

From the above pie chart, it is analysed that 33% of the respondents stated that there are several factors impacting the digital transformation process during pandemic. In which, inflexibility was an issue where management unable to handle the workload due to inflexibility that arrived due to COVID-19 restriction (Lowe and et.al., 2018). On the other hand, 27% of the respondents stated that strategic instability was a factor where employees were not stable enough to achieve the desired digital transformation in the workplace. moreover, 23% of the respondents stated that there was lack of training protocol as this become an emerging factor impacting the digital transformation process. remaining, 17% of the respondents stated that there was lack of digital assistance which become a factor impacting the process.

Theme 8: Respondents highlight types of strategies considered by the organization.

What types of strategies considered by Hilton during digital transformation?	Respondents
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Technical training	9
Change management	7
Investment on AI & ML	6
Continuous monitoring	8
Total	30



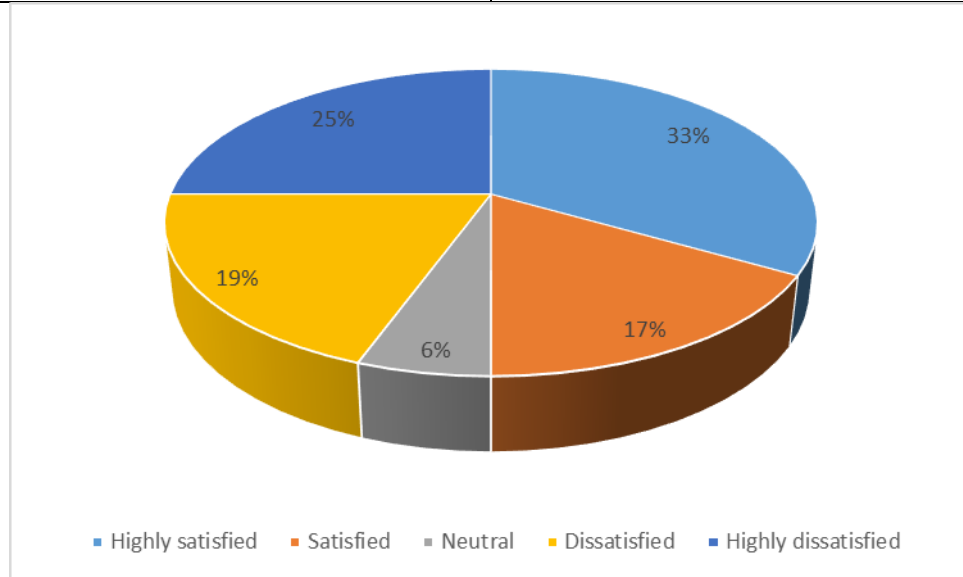
Interpretation:

The presentation of above pie chart indicates, 30% of the respondents stated that technical training or training provided by the management for technical knowledge become one of the leading strategy that allowed organization to achieve desired outcome for digital transformation of the workplace. on the other hand, 27% of the respondents stated that continuous monitoring was an effective strategy to manage the digital transformation, this monitoring help in identifying the gap. Moreover, 23% of the respondents stated that change management was a strategy considered by the Hilton to manage digital transformation of the workplace. remaining 20% of the respondents stated that investment on AI and ML technologies was an effective strategy considered by the company.

Theme 9: Majority of respondents were satisfied with digital transformation of organization.

Are you satisfied with the strategies considered by Hilton to manage digital transformation?	Respondents
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Highly satisfied	12
Satisfied	6
Neutral	2
Dissatisfied	7
Highly dissatisfied	9
Total	30



Interpretation:

From the above pie chart, it is analysed that majority of the respondents which were 33% are highly satisfied with the strategies considered by the Hilton to manage digital transformation after COVID-19 global pandemic impact. Supported with 17% of the respondents who were satisfied that Hilton was successful in managing the pandemic impact as well as the digital transformation and related challenges (Richards and Hemphill, 2018). However, on the other hand, 25% of the respondents were highly dissatisfied with the strategies considered by the company. Additionally, 19% of the respondents were dissatisfied and stated that Hilton would have performed well in managing the digital transformation during the global pandemic and would have considered better strategies. Remaining 6% of the respondents provided neutral reaction as they neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the strategies considered by the Hilton.

Discussion:

From the above analysis, it found that digital transformation has become significantly important for every business unit. Global pandemic, COVID-19 had become one of the major reason for such transformation widely accepted by almost every business unit. The impact of global pandemic was visible on every industry where businesses have experienced drastic fall and survival issues (Kane and et.al., 2021). However, this pandemic unlocked several types of business opportunities as well. For example, the implementation of digital transformation to meet with changed consumer buying preferences. The above analysis of data indicate majority of people believe that global pandemic and duration of the lockdown completely changed the consumer behaviour. This is due to excessive usage of digital technologies at home during lockdown, people or consumer are now considering completion of work with the help of digital technologies. Moreover, evaluation of experience from the above analysis also indicate that hospitality industry have experienced rapid growth during post pandemic period.

This is due to travel preference considered by the consumer or guest, with utilization of digital technologies, travellers or guest were able to secure their stay in complete COVID-19 safety measures. However, the above analysis also indicate that whole hospitality industry have to consider digital transformation in order to manage pandemic impact, this means hospitality firms widely accepted different digital technologies. Furthermore, the analysis of above data and information indicate that hospitality businesses such as Hilton need to adopt several types of practices and strategies (Foley and Cooper, 2021). For example, considering change management practices and strategies, this allow change manager to focus on providing training and development. On the other hand, Hilton experience several types of challenges during the digital transformation process. For instance, utilization of latest and fastest technology to achieve the goal of digital transformation, such as AI (Artificial Intelligence), ML (Machine Learning), and Auto ML to manage the operations.

CHAPTER 5 – CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

This report has discussed and analysed the impact of global pandemic acceleration of digital transformation on hospitality businesses. This research has provided clear introduction to the topic, with formation of aim and objectives that allow researcher to cover importance area of the research. Additionally, clear research questions are formed to address the issues identified and achieved the desired outcome. Moreover, the research rationale was being presented indicating reason behind conducting this study and ways in which researcher has considered the researching practices. Later this research has discussed and presented literature review, indicating ways in which researcher has conducted review of different literature including books, journals and articles. Additionally, researcher has considered literature published from 2018-2023, indicating the reliability and validity of the study. Reviewing of literature took place when researcher was able to design and develop different themes covering important area of the research and satisfying the research objectives.

Later this research has discussed and presented research methodology including different methods, techniques and strategies and approaches considered by the researcher to collect data and information. Additionally, this study was based on qualitative research type which means methodologies or methods was considered according to the research requirement and selection of 30 respondents were considered in order to conduct survey with appropriate sample size. Later this research has discussed and presented data analysis allowing researcher to present analysed data and information to the study. Additionally, thematic analysis is conducted and presented with appropriate format including graph, pie chart and tables. Additionally, discussion is provided presenting critical analysis of the analysed data and information. At last, this research has discussed and presented recommendations including key recommendation to the researcher as well as to the company. Additionally, reflection is provided to highlight key learning to the researcher's learning outcome.

Recommendations

Alternative methods: It is highly recommended for researcher to consider alternative methods to gain better result and outcome. This current study has utilized qualitative research type with evaluation of thematic analysis (Clark and Vealé, 2018). However, it is recommended to utilize quantitative research type with the use of statistical analysis method including IBM SPSS

software that allow individual researcher to analyse the data and information in descriptive manner, presenting highly accurate result and outcome in the study. On the other hand, researcher need to focus on different types of resources in order to utilize this method and achieve the desired quantitative research outcome in process.

Latest technology: It is highly recommended for Hilton to consider latest and fastest technology while considering digital transformation of the workplace. latest and fastest technology may include AI, ML and Auto ML to achieve the technical advancement in the process (Pereira and et.al., 2023). moreover, it is recommended to the organization to consider experts in the workplace who have knowledge and experience in managing the work and utilizing the technology to achieve the desired outcome in the process. On the other hand, it is recommended for employees to actively participate in the digital transformation process and to achieve the development on desired individual level.

Reflection:

From the above research, I have learnt and develop several types of skills and improved my understanding regarding research as well as business management. At initial level of this research, I was quite nervous as I was unable to select the topic (Cushion, 2018). However, with the help of my tutor I was able to select an appropriate topic and developed aims, objectives and formulated research questions accordingly. Later during literature review I was able to improve my researching skills while researching for literature. Later during research methodology my communication skills was improved and at last during data analysis process, I learned and improved my analytical skills.

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Appendix:

Questionnaire

Q1. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

Q2. What is your age?

- 18-24
- 25-29
- 30-39
- 40-Above

Q3. Are you aware about the concept of digital transformation?

- Yes
- No
- Not sure

Q4. Do you believe that global pandemic had significant impact on hospitality businesses?

- Strongly believe
- Believe
- Neutral
- Disbelieve
- Strongly disbelieve

Q5. What are the impacts of global pandemic on digital transformation of the workplace?

- Adaptation of technologies

- Accelerated growth
- Digital connectivity
- Improved productivity

Q6. Do you agree that, global pandemic accelerated the growth of digitalized workplace within hospitality businesses?

- Strongly agree
- Agreed
- Neutral
- Disagree
- Strongly disagree

Q7. According to you, what types of factors impacting the digital transformation during the pandemic?

- Inflexibility
- Lack of digital assistance
- Lack of training protocol
- Strategic instability

Q8. What types of strategies considered by Hilton during digital transformation?

- Technical training
- Change management
- Investment on AI & ML
- Continuous monitoring

Q9. Are you satisfied with the strategies considered by Hilton to manage digital transformation?

- Highly satisfied
- Satisfied
- Neutral
- Dissatisfied

- Highly dissatisfied