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1. Introduction

Virtual Organizations (VOs) are those organisations that do not have a common on-site establishment where most employees can be found, instead, they use technological tools to facilitate the organization of their dispersed workforce and resources (Mendes *et al.*, 2022). Currently, a knowledge focus on virtual management is obligatory as it provides information about cooperation, organization, and financial specificity in a contemporary globalised business sphere. One of the best modern examples of virtual management is Buffer – the social media scheduling application that operates with a completely remote team and practices progressive strategies (Buffer, 2024). The general objectives of this evaluation will include the following: To analyse the strengths and weaknesses of Buffer’s virtual management model by evaluating its effectiveness concerning the planning, design and leadership of the company in the context of a complex and competitive business environment.

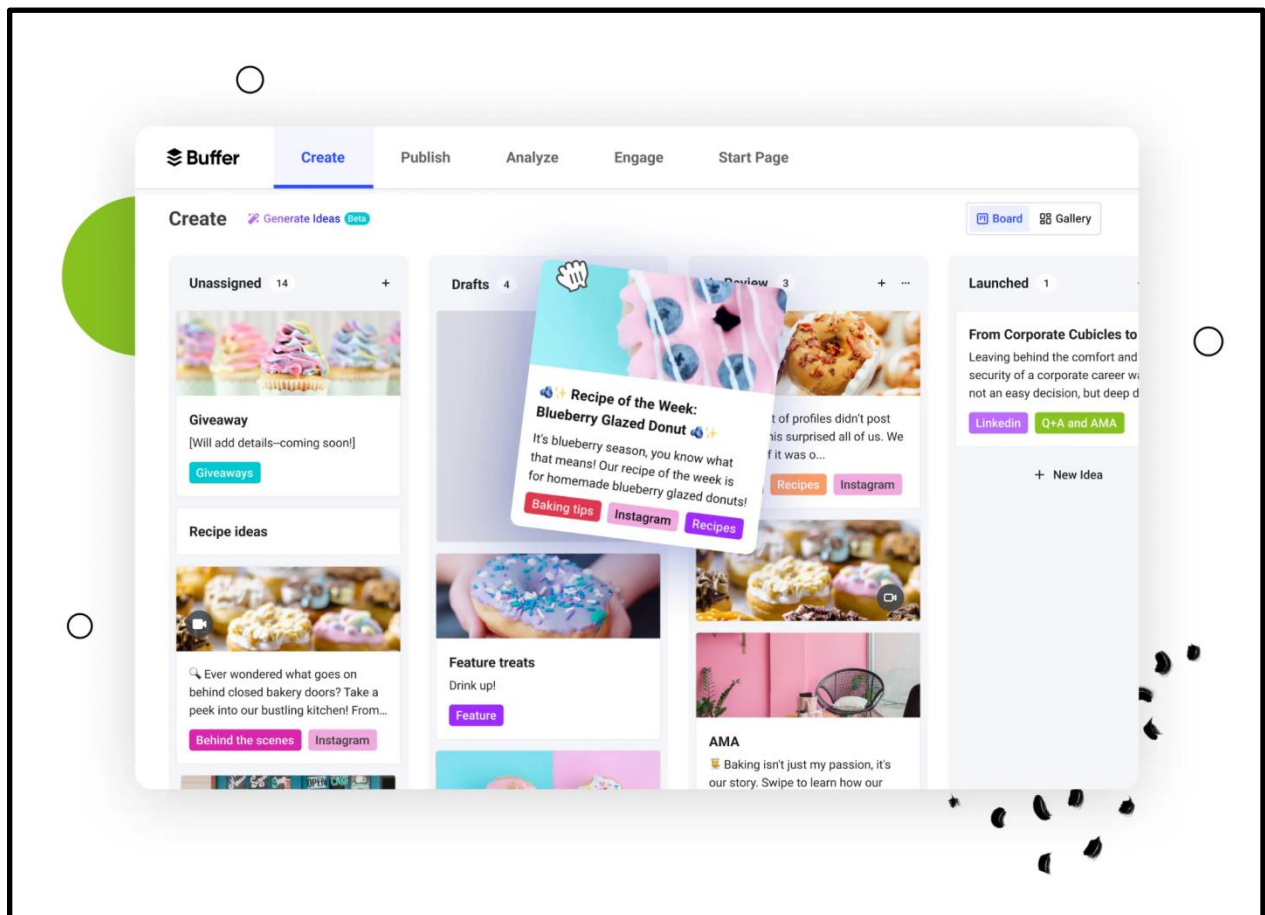


Figure 1: Buffer Website

(Buffer, 2024)

2. Overview of the Virtual Organization: Buffer

Buffer is a London-based social media management tool launched in February 2010 by Joel Gascoigne and Leo Widrich. Originally, Buffer was created as an application that enables users to schedule posts within Twitter, but now it offers a range of services and features for companies and individuals, including managing their profiles on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn, as well as posting pins on Pinterest. Currently, Buffer assists over 75, 000 companies globally; therefore, it has influenced the social media business extensively (Buffer, 2024).

One key element of Buffer's operations is the fact that they are what is known as a 'remote-first company.' The company is a virtual team with about 90 people all over the world with the team members located in over 30 countries. Some aspects of Buffer's remote management are the absence of communication hierarchy, the workplace's reliance on group-communication instruments such as Slack and Zoom, and an open-data policy which implies the sharing with employees of internal docs and decision-making. This fosters the policy of flexible workplaces and acts as an assistance in dealing with divergent time schedules (Tanner and Naidoo, 2021).



Figure 2: Buffer Family

(Source: Buffer, 2024)

Due to its virtual management approaches, Buffer provides an excellent example of how the management of a virtual organization should be done. Here, the author presents evidence of the

satisfactory levels of productivity and motivation of the company's geographically dispersed employees, and the corresponding experience of the company stresses at its best and in practice how virtual management can be effective. Further, its focus on transparency and culture offers an example of how virtual organizations can promote effective cooperation and build trust across cultural boundaries.

The way Buffer implements remote work is evidence of how viable it is to conduct management remotely together with demonstrating the potential issues with managing a fully remote team and how they can be addressed.

3. Challenges of Virtual Management at Buffer

3. 1. Communication and Collaboration

The preservation of organizational form in Buffer poses unique problems for communication and teamwork. Remote work by nature creates challenges to timely interactions, and the members of the group cannot communicate or collaborate beyond working on assignments and tasks on the given project (Meluso *et al.*, 2020). One of the biggest problems that can emerge due to the usage of Slack, Zoom, and Asana, is that there is often too much of everything: too many messages, too many notifications, and too many tools to improve workplace communication.

Diverting through managing different time zones is yet another complexity. That is why Buffer has a team located in different parts of the world, and it is rather difficult to organize synchronous meetings or get an immediate reply. The company manages this by using communication technology that gives flexibility to the workers where they can contribute or respond at their convenience (Angelici and Profeta, 2024). Nevertheless, such an approach can lead to decision-making delays and a lack of synchronicities in real-time work, which may harm project schedules and performance.

3. 2. Leadership and Team Dynamics

Challenges are found in effectively engaging and motivating the employees when leading a remote team. Employees might not be able to easily speak to their leaders about how they feel regarding certain situations or the progress of work because of the lack of physical contact. One-on-one

check-ins and general team meetings are central to Buffer, but the attitude and attention should be enduring to cover this gap (Angelici and Profeta, 2024).

The virtual also has an impact on the team about culture and cohesiveness. Through the frequent sharing of updates and reporting of information, employees are thus able to trust Buffer's management (Pearce, 2021). However, while working remotely it is easy for a person to experience social isolation. Buffer solves this through virtual team-building exercises and always providing constructive feedback.

3. 3. Security and Data Privacy

Indeed, data security and privacy are real issues that Buffer has to address being a fully remote company. With employees accessing the company systems from different places while using gadgets, the protection of such information should be tight (Bolton *et al.*, 2021). Buffer has worked on higher-tier security processes and third-party security assessments as a way of mitigating the risks of cyber-attacks and data loss.

Another distinctive difficulty is compliance with data protection rules, namely the GDPR. To optimise remote work, Buffer has the responsibility to ensure that all its practices are legal, from data protection of people's data to strict access control measures (Romansky and Noninska, 2020). This compliance demands the constant training of the employees and updates of the security measures making the handling of workers outside the office a challenge additional to the previous ones.

3. 4. Performance Management and Accountability

Control activities also become a challenge in remote environments regarding performance monitoring and accountability. Functions that managers perform in assessing their subordinates' performance in a physical working environment may not work when the environment is virtual, and thus be a challenge to Buffer. Performance feedback, goal setting, and especially accountability coupled with quantitative measures ensure that the company sources are optimally utilized (Nikolić *et al.*, 2020).

Some of the approaches that Buffer employs are: establishing clear expectations, using project management tools to track work progress, and self-managing. Performance appraisals and meetings also assist in making sure that the workers are on par with their targets and that they adhere to high standards of efficiency and performance (O'Kane *et al.*, 2023).

In sum, Buffer has provided an excellent example of all possible problems of virtual management – from communication and cooperation to leadership, security, and performance. Some of the best practices suggested by the company for workflow enable the effective functioning of the fully remote organization.

4. Opportunities for Virtual Management

4. 1. GTP and flexibility

Among the benefits emerging from Buffer's virtual management model, the easiest to identify would be the ability to source the best talent out of the worldwide pool. This means that, unlike most companies that are restricted by geographical locations, Buffer can only select the most competent employees even if few of them, thus a competent staff. This flexibility is approved because it creates a pool of fine talent from different places and different fields, which is a plus to the creativity and innovative nature of Buffer (Meneses *et al.*, 2020).

4. 2. Cost Efficiency

Running Buffer as a fully remote organization helps the company save on significant costs. Since Buffer does not have a central physical office, there are no expenses like rent, utilities for the office, maintenance of the building and the like. Here are the implications of these savings which can be channelled elsewhere in the organization's design for instance to improve on technology or employees.

4. 3. Agility and Innovation

Organizational virtuality within Buffer increases organizational flexibility in that the company is in a position to respond to the changes in the market and new trends (Goncalves *et al.*, 2020). The then remote working removes any physical boundary regarding the size of an office space and

hence the possibility to expand operations faster than prevents Buffer from seizing other opportunities or responses to threats.

4. 4. Environmental Sustainability

One of how Buffer's approach to work and employment benefits the environment is through remote work. Here, the absence of daily commuting to work along with cutting all the energy costs of an office building places Buffer in a league's better position when it comes to environmental responsibility (Allam *et al.*, 2022). This integration with the objective of corporate social responsibility is also connected with environmental sensitivity and allows the company to expand on its sustainability plans.

Altogether, Buffer's virtual management model takes advantage of such opportunities as talent search worldwide, cost reduction, increased flexibility, and environmental considerations placing the company in a favourable place in the modern context.

5. Critical Evaluation of the Impact of Virtual Management

This report discusses that Buffer's virtual management model is a mix of strengths and weaknesses that affect the functioning of the organization to a great extent. On the one hand, the company has such major challenges as communication, leadership, security, and performance management because of the remote settings.

On the other hand, organisations such as Buffer can take advantage of factors like accessing a talent pool from all over the world, cutting costs, increasing the organisation's flexibility, and implementing sustainability in the environment. Employment from distant and various areas enhances the variety of the company's staff while cost control and flexibility affect the financial aspect with possible more efficient and creative solutions (Davidescu *et al.*, 2020).

Buffer does the best in this aspect in that it applies strong and secure digital tools, maintains an open and diverse organizational culture, and keeps on improving virtual management. That balance lets Buffer use most opportunities that come with the remote model while mitigating the negative aspects. The consequences of employing this long-term strategy for increasing Buffer's competitiveness are the following: enhancement of its position on the market because of the

constant focus on innovations and adaptation; optimization of operational effectiveness along with preserving the environment.

6. Recommendations

When it comes to the challenges facing the company several recommendations that can be made as follows: In this vector, Buffer should keep on adopting better and the latest collaboration tools in its lineup while lowering the overall reliance on too many tools. Applying strict guidelines to the communication process as well as daily or weekly meetings will improve collaboration and eliminate the problem of working with people from different time zones.

For leadership and team dynamics, further improvement is possible by developing leadership training programs for the necessity to manage the remote team, as well as specifics of team motivation. The recommendation is to pay more attention to the virtual team-building activities and to provide as many opportunities for informal interaction as possible to enhance the team culture.

Security and data privacy are other areas that Buffer has to invest in, for example, by revisiting the existing security measures and training employees on best practices in the handling and storing of data as they progress in their employment with the company. Pre-scheduled security reviews and compliance assessments can help to conduct stringent tests that would confirm if all the arrangements for remote work are legal and approved by the relevant authorities.

For the use of opportunities, Buffer should keep recruiting and employing different people by offering flex working, and the company should come out openly about its cost saving, and reducing its negative impact on the environment strategies. Considerations for the future are the extension of the technologies for remote work and further development of the virtual management model according to the business requirements and the expectations of employees.

7. Conclusion

The analysis of Buffer's virtual management model reveals certain useful pros and unique concerns. Some of the main issues and opportunities affecting Buffer relate to communication and information sharing, leadership, security and performance, while on the other hand, the company

stands to reap access to talent from all over the world, low cost of doing business, flexibility and environmental factors. Therefore, the following are Buffer's strategies in addressing the above challenges and exploiting opportunities to adapt well to remote working: It is important for Buffer and like-minded organizations because virtual management can contribute to increased organizational flexibility and corporation innovation necessary for the company to succeed in global competition and come into compliance with the modern tendencies of work organization and sustainability objectives.

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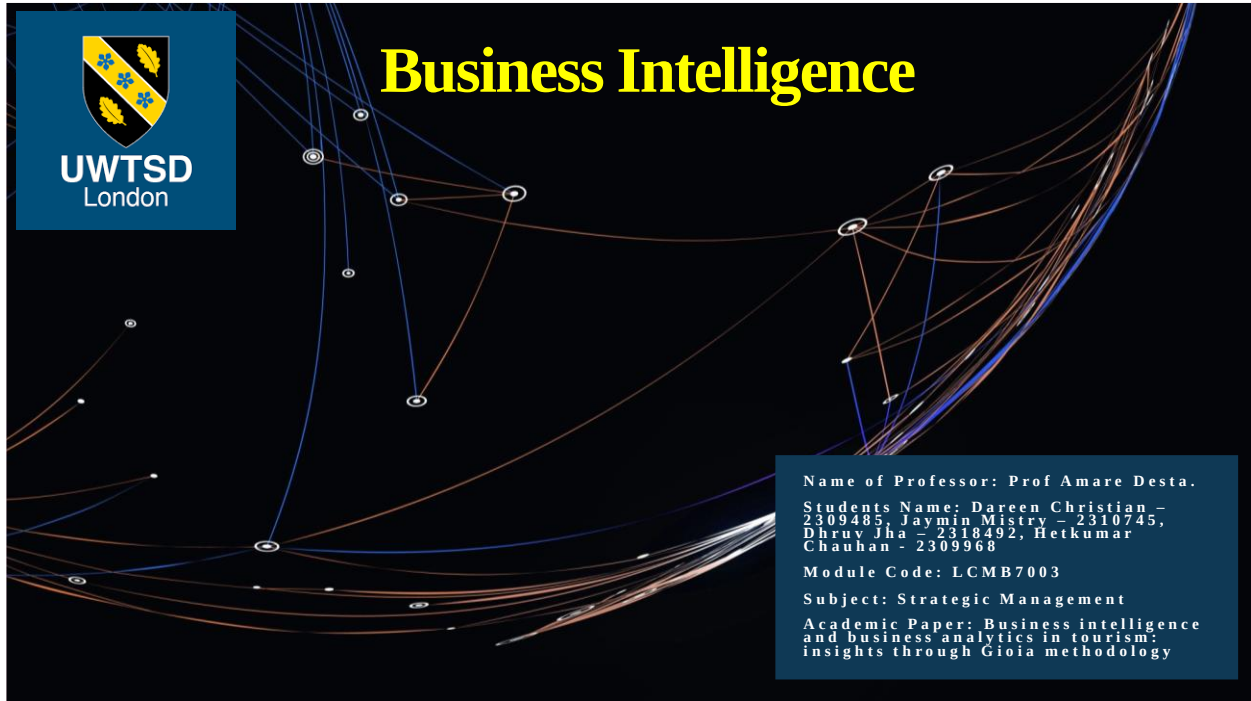
Goncalves, D., Bergquist, M., Bunk, R. and Alänge, S., 2020. Cultural aspects of organizational agility affecting digital innovation. *Journal of Entrepreneurship, Management and Innovation*, 16(4), pp.13-46.

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9. Appendix

Appendix 1: Presentation



The slide features a dark background with a complex network diagram of interconnected nodes and lines in blue and orange. In the top left corner is the UWTSD London logo, which consists of a yellow shield with a black diagonal band and the text 'UWTSD London' below it. The title 'Business Intelligence' is written in large, bold, yellow letters in the upper center. In the bottom right corner, there is a dark blue rectangular box containing white text with the following details:

Name of Professor: Prof Amare Desta.
Students Name: Dareen Christian - 2309485, Jaymin Mistry - 2310745, Dhruv Jha - 2318492, Hetkumar Chauhan - 2309968
Module Code: LCMB7003
Subject: Strategic Management
Academic Paper: Business intelligence and business analytics in tourism: insights through Gioia methodology

Introduction

- Technological advancement have become an integral part of tourism sector.
- The use of technology is in areas of Business Intelligence (BI) and Business analytics (BA).
- These tools helps data to be transformed into a strategic assets that helps in decision making.
- Tourism companies use these tools for superior performance in differentiating markets.



Continue



- The use of BI and BA become important channels to make things happen.
- The focus of BI is to ensure detailing their differentiation to implement data-focussed analysis.
- The focus of BA is to make a predictive analysis about and improve customer interaction.
- While BI focus on technological integration, BA emphasizes strategic innovation.

Theoretical framework

- BI comes with a component named OLAP that explores different dimensions of tourist demand.
- Business Analytics focuses on Data mining to discover unknown trends.

The Adoption of BI and BA

- The impact of BI and BA focus on data-driven decision-making.
- BI analyze the historical data and BA focuses on forward-looking to forecast data.





The dual methodology approach

- There are qualitative analyses through scientific publications present the challenges.
- This mixed methodology helps to gain a comprehensive understanding phenomenon.
- The qualitative and quantitative method helps BRICS economies to advance analysis.



The quantitative-qualitative approach.



- This helps to talk about how the SciMAT software maps the trends and understands evolution.



- The SciMAT also focus on performing science mapping that helps to detect and visualize conceptual subdomains.



- This helps BI and BA to implement cross-process knowledge extraction that helps new travel agencies make data-driven decisions.



- For example, the tourist flow during the time of COVID-19 is assessed with this model.

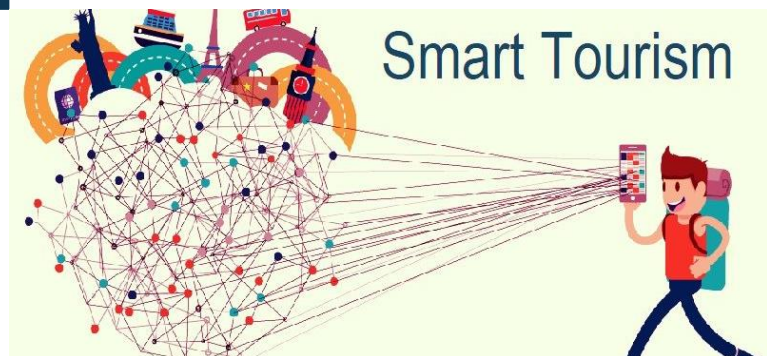
Pure Qualitative approach: Insights from the Gioia methodology

- Gioia methodology helps to advance secondary data analysis by scientific articles.
- The use of data collection, and data analytics helps to focus on published studies.
- Data Analytics with the help of BA and BI helps to underline patterns.

Article Selection and analysis process

The Adoption of BI and BA

- The core collection database talks about the primary database through journals and books.
- There is a focus on journals, relevance, and currency with high-impact journals.
- The tourism of BA and BI influences the analysis of future trends to a broad spectrum.





Result

- The data analytics and presentation focus on results through exhaustive examination.
- The application of BI helps to make knowledge management and aids tourism capacity. Tools like TDPC and OLAP are used by different nations to improve competitiveness.
- The prescriptive analysis of BA acts as a catalyst for personalized engagement.

Reference

Montserrat Jiménez-Partearroyo, Medina-López, A. and Rana, S. (2024). Business intelligence and business analytics in tourism: insights through Gioia methodology. *International entrepreneurship and management journal*.

doi:<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11365-024-00973-7> [Accessed on: 15.07.24]

Appendix 2: Precis

This precis is done to assess the ways the implementation of business intelligence and business analytics influence the tourism industry. The journal focuses on exploring the ways both tools help to improve the tourism sector with the help of a data-focused approach.

The adoption of Business Intelligence and Business Analytics is done to deal with the operational challenge and improve customer engagement. The use of the BI and BA is influential to ensure that the future use of the resource is done to improve the data collection to assess the tourism trend. The main difference between BI and BA is that BI have an emphasis on descriptive analysis, and BA have a specific emphasis on prescriptive analysis. BI is stated to have a diverse definition and a consensual definition that has not been established. The use of BI is done with the integration of different tools, technologies, and software that are designed to automate data analysis and gain knowledge. The BI system helps to have a data-driven decision support system that favours gaining business advantage by making data-driven decisions rather than decisions taken out of intuition. Some of the major components of BI consist of OLAP (Online analytical processing) which helps in advanced analytics, and focuses on corporate performance with the help of Real-time BI and Data Warehouse (Jiménez-Partearroyo *et al.*, 2024). The use of a data warehouse and different business methods are essential to yield tangible insight into tourism destinations. The use of BI is also essential to develop computational intelligence and neuroscience that helps to explore the tourism demand. The use of *tourism destination competitive productivity (TDPC)* is also done by nations like Thailand to advance tourism competitiveness. The integrative approach is also essential to contribute to the knowledge management that aids tourism capacity towards comprehensive growth.

Some of the major components of the BA system are *Data Mining*, *Text Mining*, *Forecasting*, *Predictive Analytics*, *Optimization*, and *Visualization*. Data mining is used to create models that help to explore unknown trends. The use of text mining is used to extract useful patterns and relationships. The use of forecasting is also done to make analysis and predict time-based processes. The use of predictive analysis is used for developing a predicting scoring process. The use of optimization is also done to simulate methods to identify the challenge. There is also a need to visualize the data exploration that ensures interactive statistics to employ statistical methods.

The main benefit of these facilities is that they help to adopt a more personalized approach to customer engagement. The use of BA is the influential catalyst to act as a personalized engagement to improve decision-making. Enhanced engagement and informed decision-making are influential in driving innovation in the tourism sector.

While considering the analysis of the methods, there is use of the dual methodology approach to analyze the qualitative analysis. The use of qualitative and quantitative methods is done to collect information about the trend analysis. The complex structure of the tourism industry is a key reason as it involves the restaurant, food and transport sectors.

Reference

Jiménez-Partearroyo, M., Medina-López, A. and Rana, S., 2024. Business intelligence and business analytics in tourism: insights through Gioia methodology. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, pp.1-35.

Appendix 3: Summary

a) Relevant source of information and restate the author

While considering the source of information, it is stated that the author has presented the positive and negative impact of technological advancement on the tourism sector. The author has stated that the use of Business Intelligence (BI) and Business Analytics (BA) works as a strategy asset for tourism companies. In a complex situation regarding the tourism sector, there is a need for proper data analysis and data visualization to advance the data-driven decision-making process. Some of the major tools that are considered to enhance the analysis are the BI and BA, which facilitate a set of new opportunities with shifting customer demand. Different tools like the SciMAT technology help to intersect themes that help to conceptualize the fundamentals related

to individuals. While considering the application of the BI and BA, there is that both technologies are used in a decision-making process. On the other hand, the main difference between the two tools is that there is a focus on the Decision Support System (DSS) to gain an advantage with robust BI tools. While BI focus on the decision-making framework and BA focuses on the statistical tools and technologies focused on pattern identification.

Some of the major factors focus on Business Intelligence (BI), and some of the major factors include OLAP (On-Line Analytical Processing) and Advanced Analysis to advance benefits. While considering the OLAP, there is a benefit in terms of analyzing the data with the use of advanced tools and facilitating the dimensions. The use of the OLAP is done to address different dimensions like the hierarchies that help to ensure real-time distribution of the information (Jiménez-Partearroyo *et al.*, 2024). The process of Advanced Analytics is also done to focus on data mining and forecasting to enhance the statistical analysis methods. There is also a focus on the certainty measure of the facts to advance the benefit in different places. Some of the other important factors regarding the BI that are considered for the analysis include Data Warehousing, Data Marts and Real-time BI. While the real-time BI focus on real-time metrics through emails and messaging systems with the help of emails. Some of the major factors regarding the data warehouse include *integration, cleansing, and query tasks* to ensure trend analysis. The analysis of the *data source* is also done to consider the historical data to decide the trends. Some of the other important components that are considered for the work are historical data and external data. On the other side, while considering business analytics (BA), the use of *Data Mining and Text Mining* is done to create more models and extract meaningful relationships. While the focus of the BI is on the historical data to assess trends, the BA emphasize the predictive analysis to assess future possible trends. Considering the complexities of the work, the use of the BI and BA is essential to reduce the challenge regarding the work. The shift of the focus from the BI to BA emphasizes the ever-evolving business landscape to ensure strong growth. However, while considering the analysis, the systematic merging of the customer is influential to create a challenge. Along with this, there is also a focus on the issues regarding the overreliance on technology that leads to a cyber-security issue. The use of tailoring marketing strategies is also essential to optimize the data analysis in different places. Considering the use of two different tools, the BA focuses on the personalization of the customer experience, while BI focus on the optimization of the systems that influence customer service. While focusing on sustainable tourism, the main focus is on the

innovation process that deals with different weather phenomena. Using software like the SciMAT software maps is done to understand the trends and also gain an understanding of the customer evolutions. The use of science mapping tools is essential to detect and visualize the conceptual subdomains to make data-driven decisions. As a result of this tool, there is greater efficiency in extracting knowledge that helps to travel the nature of the people based on different cultures and different times of the year. The main focus of the strategic application is on tourism applications to ensure continuous service improvement. On the other hand, it is also stated by the author that there is a need for skilled labour effective implementation of the overall business performance through streamlining of technology. In such a situation, the main focus is also needed to be on collecting authentic data about the tourism destination to identify customer preference. The cultural influence on the use of such technology is essential to reduce the loss in the challenging time of the Covid19. Nations like Thailand have used the OLAP and TDPC (Tourism Destination Competitive Productivity) is something which is stated clearly within different frameworks. Along with this, the use of the Tourism Management Perspective also combines the architecture of database management to draw knowledge about the data of the visitors. The outcome of this analysis is that there is a presence of physically valid data to deal with the proposed business intelligence framework. Some of the major factors include dealing with the challenging situation and ensuring a sufficient amount of destination management. There is also cross-process knowledge extraction of the students which is essential to improve the tourism destination. The case study has stated that nations like Sweden have made use of tools like BI to ensure that there is a sufficient amount of advantage. With the advancement of the competitiveness along with the local study is also important to advance the benefit in different places. The analysis is also essential to identify the benefit of Business Intelligence in modern tourism and ensure a sufficient amount of competitive advantage in the workplace.

Reference

Jiménez-Partearroyo, M., Medina-López, A. and Rana, S., 2024. Business intelligence and business analytics in tourism: insights through Gioia methodology. *International Entrepreneurship and Management Journal*, pp.1-35.