

## The Influence of Digitization on Staff Training for Tourism and Hospitality Industry

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### Abstract

*This article estimates the influence of digitization on staff training for tourism and hospitality industry. It is established that every entity of higher education, irrespective of selected strategy, should perform digital transformation, which stipulates for implementation of more flexible processes, modification of corporate culture, optimization of processes upon staff training for tourism and hospitality industry. It has been proved that digitization of educational environment leads to improvement of staff competitiveness, creation of value added and attraction of students. It has been detected that the issues of digitization of tourism and hotel education should include training and advanced training of teaching staff in the field of digital technologies for their application in educational process, implementation of digital technologies in education, provision of opportunity of shared use of digital resources and free access to them in cloud services.*

**Key-words:** Staff, Tourism and Hospitality Industry, Education, Digitization, Technology, Competence, Thinking, Process.

### 1. Introduction

Modern tourism and hospitality industry is a challenging sphere of activity for most countries of the world, which is integrated with other spheres. That is why comprehensive analysis of this sphere is an urgent issue. All this creates new tasks for the tourism and hospitality industry and

generates new requirements to professional training of experts in tourism and hotel business, which should be aimed at formation of worldview, innovative, scientific thinking.

At the same time, the modern state of professional training of experts in tourism and hotel business in universities of the Russian Federation requires for various approaches to organizational, structural, technological, technical, informational, and methodological content of the educational process. This is stipulated by diversity of the tourism and hospitality industry, versatile requirements to experts of tourism and hotel business.

The issues of staff training for tourism and hospitality industry were discussed in the works by T.I. Anzina (2017), I.Yu. Vaganova et al. (2017), M.V. Voitenko (2016), A.P. Mirzoyan (2017), P.S. Probin (2019), M.S. Romanov (2019), etc. Nevertheless, analysis of the studies has demonstrated that professional training of staff for tourism and hospitality industry in universities was not considered as an integral research subject.

Necessity to study and to solve the considered issue is stipulated by the existing contradictions between development of the system of continuous learning, stipulating for phasing of professional development of an expert, and inconsistency of content of the training at bachelor and master levels of higher education; major tasks of national strategy of development of higher education, which declare attraction of employers to cooperation with universities.

## **2. Methods**

The methodological basis of the study included the following general scientific methods: analysis and synthesis regarding existing theoretical and methodological approaches and provisions, scientific development on the issues of staff training for tourism and hospitality industry; structural and logic method for systematization of factors affecting the state of higher education; factorial analysis of the influence of factors on the level of learning digitization.

The informational base of the study was comprised of legal regulations, materials of governmental and local authorities, scientific works of Russian and foreign scientists on the issues of staff training for tourism and hospitality industry (Agamirova et al., 2017; Levchenko et al., 2018; Nikolskaya et al., 2018).

It was planned to develop approaches to analysis of staff training for tourism and hospitality industry, to substantiate strategies of behavior of participants in learning process. In addition, it was

required to substantiate approaches to estimation of education quality system, to define and to formulate the main trends of development of higher education under the conditions of digitization.

### **3. Results**

The practice has demonstrated that during staff training for tourism and hospitality industry it is necessary to implement block-based storage, since, while using blockchain, it is possible to avoid manipulation with certificates, diplomas, scientific publications. For researchers and even ordinary students specializing in Tourism and Hotel Business, this is an excellent opportunity to save and to distribute safely authors' works, to learn about current advances even in narrow specialization.

Using the blockchain technology, it is possible to update, to simplify searching and storing of any documents about specialization (diploma, certificate, scientific publication). It should be mentioned that blockchain can be applied not only as database. Only due to unique opportunities and transparency it is possible at present to reorganize the usual system of tourism and hotel education. Online learning will be the same as conventional internal and external forms of learning.

Blockchain is capable to modify the hierarchy of pseudoscientific works intolerable for high-quality training for tourism and hospitality industry. Using decentralized storage and common accessibility of information, it would be possible to trace any diploma and to check its authenticity. Students will independently choose a qualified teacher, thus decreasing significantly the level of scientific incompetence. Teachers will also benefit, receiving extra payment for performed lectures and seminars irrespective of fixed university salary.

After implementation of the blockchain technology, the system of staff training for tourism and hospitality industry will be able to obtain the following advantages.

1. All documents will be stored in one block database. It means that a company of tourism and hospitality industry will be able to learn about potential candidate, for instance, to check the diploma regarding definite knowledge and skills.

2. Search will be significantly simplified. Since it is impossible to bypass the system, the choice of candidate will meet expectations.

3. It would be possible to trace the demand for certain material, courses. On the basis of requirements to potential employee, the student will know the field of necessary knowledge to be competitive in tourism market.

In addition, complexity and multifunctionality of tourism and hospitality industry as a sphere of professional activity make special demands to professional training. Therefore, the professional competence of an expert for tourism and hospitality industry could be considered as an ability to efficiently perform organizational, managerial, servicing, research work in tourism and hospitality on the basis of integrated system of knowledge, skills and habits integrated into such key competences as social, organizational and managerial, information and design, researching.

Taking into consideration that the professional competence of a specialist, according to the provisions of higher school, is a result of actualization of readiness for professional activity under conditions of real work, the readiness of a future specialist in tourism and hotel business is considered as the system of integrative personal properties, including knowledge, skills and habits regarding technology of tourism activity, activation of motivation to perform professional tasks, ability to apply the acquired knowledge in organizational, managerial, servicing, research work.

In the structure of readiness of a student specializing in tourism and hotel business, it is possible to highlight the interrelated components reflecting integration of psychologic, theoretical, intelligent, processual spheres of readiness and characterizing its formation:

- motivation: the desire for solid lifelong mastering in the system of knowledge, skills, habits, learning, personal and professional improvement; interest in profession, experienced work; desire to apply innovation and information technologies during performance of professional tasks; steady demand in improvement of awareness in tourism and hotel business, assistance in their development and integration, attempt to disclose personal creative potential, achievement of success;
- cognitive: mastering the system of knowledge in legal basics of tourism and hotel business, technology of tourism product, hotel and restaurant business, management, marketing, design foundations of tourism and hotel product, innovation and information technologies;
- information and technological: mastering skills to apply modern technologies of acquisition, processing, interpretation of the obtained data during solution of experimental, professional tasks, innovations and information technologies upon development of tourism and hotel product, software for online communications with customers;

- activity-driven and operational: mastering skills, habits, methods regarding integrated analysis and prediction of tourism development, efficient managerial, organizational, marketing, servicing, researching work in tourism industry and hotel business; implementation of tourism and hotel services with provision of consulting and documentary support; development of offers (concepts, programs, plans, designs) for development strategy of tourism and hospitality;
- personal and creative: integrative properties of professional, researching, creative thinking, clear understanding of professional tasks of tourism, methods of their solution on the basis of innovative concepts, national consciousness, social intellect.

The research results have demonstrated that the existing state professional staff training for tourism and hotel business requires for significant improvement in accordance with the requirements of world tourism and labor market, which is a consequence of insufficient interaction among educational, tourism and hotel establishments, isolation of education, training, advanced and further training (Fig. 1).

Figure 1 - Formation of staff training system for tourism and hospitality industry



At the same time, on the basis of analysis of international declarations on the issues of education, we have defined the requirements to higher education regarding tourism and hotel education, namely: updating of education programs in accordance with social demands; development of international standards; research and development activity, implementation of projects in

development of tourism and hospitality; accumulation of academic results; provision of stepwise and continuous education; activation of teachers' innovativeness.

In addition, continuous development and improvement of tourism and hotel education are provided by the program of World Tourism Organization for certification of universities training staff for tourism and hospitality industry. It is established that at present, the International standard classification of education is the reference serving for organization and ordering of educational programs and respective qualifications regarding levels and fields of education.

However, it is not applied in the education system of the Russian Federation, though, we consider its implementation as a strategic innovation, which will allow to organize more clearly educational activity and will serve as the base for integration into the world academic environment.

Herewith, the world reference in the sphere of tourism and hospitality management is the Swiss education combining tens of schools of hotel and tourism management, which is characterized by such properties as motivation and development of interchangeable skills and habits, adapted to professional labor; formation of openness, vigorousness, diplomacy, flexibility, multiculturalism, ability to appreciate traditions, culture, arts of various folks; obligatory bilingual teaching of professional and specialized disciplines; equilibrium between academic knowledge and practice due to foreign internship integrated into learning process; implementation of professional learning module.

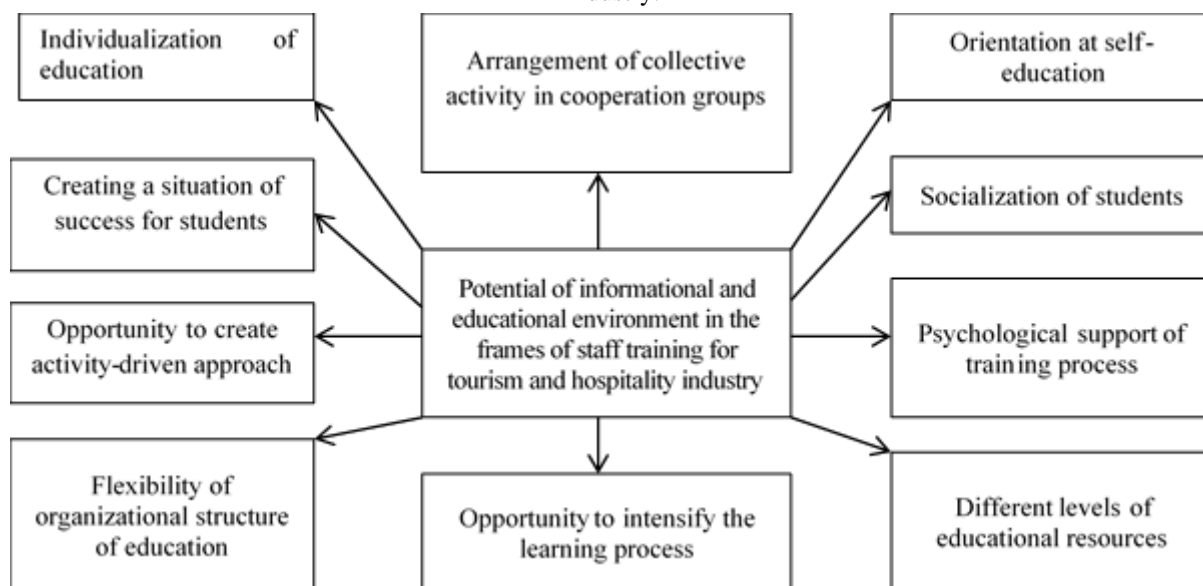
Therefore, aiming at efficient implementation of measures, we have developed educational and informational environment providing integration of communication technologies into learning process. As a constituent of professional training system related with ambient surrounding, this environment includes information, methodological and content, material and technical, and communicative support, being aimed at each student personally.

During staff training for tourism and hospitality industry the digitization is aimed at provision of continuous education, that is, lifelong learning, as well as its individualization on the basis of advanced learning. This notion involves the use of significant data on the learning process of individual students in certain disciplines and automatic adaptation of learning process on their basis, virtualization, augmented reality and cloud computing, and other digital technologies.

At the same time, the digitization during staff training for tourism and hospitality industry depends also on the level of teachers' knowledge of digital technologies aiming at their efficient use

in teaching. At present, it is necessary to form potential of informational and educational environment to train staff for tourism and hospitality industry (Fig. 2).

Figure 2 - Potential of informational and educational environment in the frames of staff training for tourism and hospitality industry.



Therefore, the information format is based on digital presentation of information. Contrary to the electronic format, the digital format more precisely presents information, providing its free circulation, allocation, processing, using in computer networks. In addition, the system of digital education includes information resources, telecommunications and control system. Digital technologies upon staff training for tourism and hospitality industry are not just a tool but also environment providing new opportunities: learning at any convenient time, continuous education, opportunity to design individual educational routes.

#### 4. Discussion

Reliability of the presented approaches is confirmed by the fact that digitization of tourism and hospitality education assumes application of mobile and online technologies by students, thus expanding scope of their cognition and making it infinite (Demkina et al., 2019; Dzhandzhugazova et al., 2018; Shaidullina et al., 20108). Therefore, efficient application of digital technologies,

involvement of students into independent search, selection of information, participation in design activity lead to formation of advanced competences.

Nowadays the process of creation and use of open-source online resources is actively implemented, starting from single tasks, tests and up to full-scale courses for formation of required competences. At the same time, the dynamics of development of online learning are demonstrated by increasing availability of online courses, and additional application trends of digitization in tourism and hotel education are aimed at development of digital libraries and university campuses.

Development and provision of online course can be based on software solutions, allowing to compile a course from available information resources using specialized software environment, proprietary systems, CAD systems. Herewith, the education system in combination with new technological tools and infinite informational resources should be able to efficiently implement them into learning process.

The practice of online courses and mixed learning creates a field of infinite educational opportunities oriented at quality of education for each individuum irrespective of the place of residence, skills, but in accordance with his/her interests and capabilities. Such modifications require the teacher to be fluent in the digital learning environment. Therefore, promising tasks of tourism universities are comprised of improvement of teachers' qualification in digital literacy oriented not only at development of courses but also at application of digital environment in learning process. In this case, digital environment requires from teachers another mentality, worldview, more perfect methods and forms of work with students.

However, management of digitization upon staff training for tourism and hospitality industry should be performed using digital marketing aimed at organization of interaction with support staff, academic personnel, graduates, students, applicants based on the use of digital communication channels, monitoring of changes in formation of positive image of university, promotion of development of new digital communities and innovations, development of personified marketing materials for targeted audiences.

## **5. Conclusion**

It should be mentioned in conclusion that every entity of higher education, irrespective of selected strategy, should perform digital transformation, which stipulates for implementation of more



flexible processes, modification of corporate culture, optimization of processes upon staff training for tourism and hospitality industry. Therefore, digitization of educational environment leads to improvement of staff competitiveness, creation of value added and attraction of students.

The main issues of digitization of tourism and hotel education should include training and advanced training of teaching staff in the field of digital technologies for their application in educational process, implementation of digital technologies in education, provision of opportunity of shared use of digital resources and free access to them in cloud services, improvement of motivation level to professional use of digital technologies by teachers and students.

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