

Reconstructing Teaching Hotel Practices Through an Integrated Teaching Industry System (TIS-Hospitality Model) to Strengthen Hospitality Graduate Employability

Gugung Gumilar^{1*}, I Nyoman Sedeng², Firman Sinaga³, Siti Lathifah⁴, Andre Hernowo⁵

^{1,4} Politeknik Pariwisata Lombok, Indonesia

^{2,3} Institut Pariwisata dan Bisnis Internasional, Indonesia

⁵ Politeknik Pariwisata NHI Bandung, Indonesia

ABSTRACT: Hospitality vocational institutions increasingly face challenges in producing graduates who are not only technically competent but also adaptive and work-ready for complex hotel operations. Although teaching hotels are widely used as practical learning environments, their implementation often remains operationally active without fully synchronized educational architecture. This study aims to identify systemic deficiencies in the current teaching hotel practice and to develop an integrated Teaching Industry System (TIS-Hospitality Model) to enhance graduate employability. Using a qualitative Design-Based Research approach, data were collected through interviews, participatory observations, and document analysis involving 27 stakeholders at De Balen Sultana Hotel, Politeknik Pariwisata Lombok. The findings reveal five major issues: business-learning disconnection, student dual-role ambiguity, fragmented experiential learning, inconsistent supervision, and the absence of integrated competency monitoring. In response, this study proposes a synchronized learning-business framework that strengthens measurable hospitality graduate work readiness.

KEYWORDS: hospitality vocational education; teaching hotel; graduate employability; experiential learning; teaching industry system

I. INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry continues to experience a persistent mismatch between educational preparation and workplace expectations, particularly in the areas of graduate adaptability, soft skills, and service professionalism. Recent studies indicate that hospitality employers increasingly perceive vocational graduates as operationally exposed yet insufficiently work-ready for the complexity of contemporary service environments (Giousmpasoglou & Pantelidis, 2025; Wang et al., 2024). Although hospitality and tourism schools have significantly expanded practical curricula, graduates entering hotels, resorts, and food service organizations are still frequently criticized for lacking communication confidence, situational judgement, emotional regulation, and guest-centered responsiveness when confronted with real service pressure. This recurring concern suggests that the employability issue in hospitality is not simply a matter of technical exposure, but a broader challenge of converting educational experience into workplace maturity and sustainable professional behavior.

This concern becomes more critical as hospitality education institutions are increasingly pressured to produce graduates who are not only technically competent but also resilient, digitally adaptive, and capable of functioning within guest-centered operational uncertainty. Samala et al. (2020) emphasize that the digital transformation of hospitality operations has altered the competence profile expected from graduates, requiring technological responsiveness alongside interpersonal service quality. In contemporary hospitality organizations, service work is increasingly shaped by online reputation systems, smart technologies, guest personalization, labor flexibility, and immediate customer feedback, making adaptive decision-making an essential professional requirement. Consequently, hospitality employability is now understood less as routine skill possession and more as a combination of adaptive competence, service intelligence, and emotional endurance within fast-changing operational realities (Stylianou & Pericleous, 2025; Vo et al., 2026).

Despite these growing demands, many vocational hospitality institutions continue to struggle with a longstanding theory-practice disconnect. Practical laboratories, simulation rooms, and internship placements are commonly embedded in hospitality curricula as visible indicators of industrial relevance; however, their educational contribution often remains limited to procedural

Reconstructing Teaching Hotel Practices Through an Integrated Teaching Industry System (TIS-Hospitality Model) to Strengthen Hospitality Graduate Employability

repetition rather than deeper competency transformation. Students may repeatedly practice front office registration, room preparation, table arrangement, or banquet service, yet such repetition does not always generate independent judgement, integrated service understanding, or psychological readiness for workplace disruption. As argued by Kong et al. (2021), work-integrated learning can only strengthen employability when practical exposure is intentionally connected to competency progression rather than treated as isolated technical drills.

The persistence of this disconnect indicates that practical activity alone does not automatically guarantee meaningful experiential learning. McGrath et al. (2020) found that many hospitality students who complete practical immersion still report uncertainty when entering full industrial environments because they remain unfamiliar with service unpredictability, interdepartmental dependency, and emotional guest management. In other words, what remains problematic is not the absence of practice itself, but the weak synchronization between what students repeatedly do in practical settings and what institutions actually expect them to become as future hospitality professionals. This reveals a deeper educational inefficiency in which operational familiarity is achieved, but professional maturity is not always proportionally formed.

In response to this challenge, teaching hotels have increasingly emerged as one of the most strategic educational innovations in hospitality vocational education. One institutional example can be found in De Balen Sultana Hotel, a teaching hotel operated by Politeknik Pariwisata Lombok, Indonesia, where students are directly immersed in front office services, housekeeping operations, food and beverage production, event handling, and guest interaction within an actual commercial hospitality setting. The presence of this teaching hotel reflects a broader institutional attempt to bridge classroom instruction with real-time industrial realities through a live business environment. Unlike conventional simulation laboratories, a teaching hotel places students directly within a functioning business unit where actual guests, revenue targets, interdepartmental coordination, and operational unpredictability become inseparable from the learning process. Through this environment, students encounter not only technical routines but also complaint handling, peak occupancy pressure, teamwork under time constraints, and the social realities of service professionalism. Such authentic immersion is widely recognized as valuable because it exposes students to the emotional rhythm and business consequences of hospitality work before graduation (Christou & Chatzigeorgiou, 2019).

Furthermore, Lin et al. (2017) note that experiential learning environments become significantly more effective when students engage in real customer interaction rather than simulated procedural practice. Teaching hotels therefore represent an important shift from laboratory-based hospitality instruction toward live operational learning. Nevertheless, the mere existence of a teaching hotel should not be interpreted as an automatic educational solution. In many institutions, students indeed participate intensively in hotel service activities, but the pedagogical outcomes of that participation remain highly variable depending on occupancy conditions, supervisor availability, and operational urgency. Thus, authentic industrial immersion may be present, yet its educational traceability often remains weak.

Existing hospitality studies have largely celebrated teaching hotels, internships, and work-based placements as practical bridges to industry, however most of these studies still focus predominantly on student satisfaction, participation intensity, or technical familiarity outcomes. Comparatively limited scholarly attention has been directed toward a more fundamental issue, namely whether business operations inside a teaching hotel are systematically engineered into measurable educational architecture. Huertas-Valdivia et al. (2021) argue that authentic workplace experience becomes educationally inefficient when institutions fail to provide competency mapping, structured mentoring, and reflective closure. This suggests that teaching hotels may become operationally busy spaces without necessarily functioning as coherent employability systems capable of producing traceable graduate readiness.

From this perspective, the global hospitality education problem is no longer centered on the absence of practical facilities, but on the absence of integrated systems capable of translating authentic workplace participation into measurable employability development. Institutions may successfully provide industrial realism, yet still fail to cultivate adaptive professionalism because students are inserted into work routines without synchronized supervision, competency monitoring, and structured reflective learning. Tomlinson (2017) describes this as a graduate capital deficiency, where educational participation exists but transferable professional confidence remains weak. Such a gap becomes particularly significant in hospitality because service industries demand graduates who can combine technical accuracy with interpersonal sensitivity, emotional endurance, and customer-centered judgement under pressure.

The novelty of this study lies in its effort to move beyond the dominant hospitality education narrative that equates industrial exposure with employability readiness. Unlike prior research that primarily evaluates teaching hotels as sites of practical participation, this study reconstructs the teaching hotel as an integrated Teaching Industry System in which curriculum outcomes, operational task structures, supervisory mechanisms, reflective learning cycles, and competency monitoring are formally synchronized. In this sense, the present study does not merely assess whether students gain experience in a teaching hotel, but investigates how

Reconstructing Teaching Hotel Practices Through an Integrated Teaching Industry System (TIS-Hospitality Model) to Strengthen Hospitality Graduate Employability

such an environment can be redesigned into a measurable learning-business ecosystem. This systemic reconstruction offers a new conceptual contribution to hospitality vocational education by positioning teaching hotels not simply as practice venues, but as institutional architectures for employability formation.

Based on this scholarly gap, the present research is directed toward two main objectives. First, this study seeks to identify and analyze the systemic deficiencies embedded in the current implementation of teaching hotel practices, particularly those related to the disconnection between learning processes and business operations. Second, this study aims to develop a scalable TIS-Hospitality Model capable of synchronizing authentic hotel activities with competency-based educational outcomes in order to strengthen graduate work readiness. Through these objectives, the study intends to contribute both theoretically to the international discourse on hospitality experiential learning and practically to the redesign of hospitality vocational institutions seeking stronger graduate employability performance.

II. METHODS

This study employed a qualitative case-oriented Design-Based Research (DBR) approach to examine, diagnose, and reconstruct the implementation of teaching industry within a live hospitality learning environment. The use of DBR was considered appropriate because this research was not merely intended to describe an educational phenomenon, but to generate a practical and context-sensitive system design capable of addressing recurring institutional deficiencies identified in the field. Collins (2002) explains that DBR is particularly effective when a study simultaneously seeks to understand authentic educational problems and formulate applicable solutions grounded in empirical realities. In addition, a qualitative case-oriented inquiry was adopted because the issue under investigation involved complex interactions among students, lecturers, hotel employees, managers, and guests that could not be adequately reduced into numerical indicators. As noted by Yin (2018), case-oriented qualitative studies are highly relevant when institutional dynamics, stakeholder tensions, and contextual managerial practices become central to understanding how a system actually operates in practice.

The empirical investigation was conducted from September to December 2025 at De Balen Sultana Hotel, a teaching hotel operated by Politeknik Pariwisata Lombok, Indonesia, which was purposively selected because it simultaneously functions as a commercial hospitality business unit and a student practical learning laboratory. Data were collected through semi-structured interviews, participatory observations, and institutional document analysis involving 27 purposively selected informants, consisting of 4 hospitality lecturers, 3 hotel managers, 5 operational employees, 10 actively placed students, 3 external industry partners, and 2 hotel guests. Semi-structured interviews were used to capture perceptions regarding supervision patterns, student competency gaps, and operational learning experiences, at the same time, observations were undertaken during regular and peak service shifts to document actual student participation in front office, housekeeping, food and beverage, and event activities. Institutional records such as practical placement schedules, operational standard operating procedures, and internal evaluations were also reviewed to strengthen data triangulation. Following Miles, Huberman, and Saldaña (2019), all interview transcripts, field notes, and documentary evidence were analyzed thematically through iterative coding, categorization, pattern comparison, and interpretive synthesis in order to identify recurring systemic deficiencies that subsequently informed the reconstruction of the proposed TIS-Hospitality Model.

III. RESULTS

3.1 Structural Disconnection Between Learning and Revenue Operations

One of the most dominant findings of this study is the absence of a formal mechanism that systematically synchronizes educational objectives with hotel revenue-oriented operations at De Balen Sultana Hotel, Politeknik Pariwisata Lombok. Although the teaching hotel is institutionally designed to serve as both a hospitality business unit and a practical learning laboratory, field evidence consistently indicates that the operational flow is still largely dictated by guest occupancy, banquet schedules, restaurant demand, and service urgency rather than by pedagogically sequenced learning plans. In practice, the business rhythm determines where students are placed, what tasks they perform, and how long they remain in particular operational functions.

Students repeatedly described that their daily assignments were often adjusted according to “whatever the hotel most urgently needed on that day.” Several student participants explained that during high occupancy periods they were immediately deployed to assist guest check-in, room turnover preparation, breakfast replenishment, banquet setup, or guest request handling without first receiving any competency briefing regarding the educational purpose behind those assignments. One front office trainee noted that some shifts were spent almost entirely helping with luggage movement, reservation calls, and guest document preparation, however there was little opportunity to understand how these activities related to wider front office cycle manage-

Reconstructing Teaching Hotel Practices Through an Integrated Teaching Indus-try System (TIS-Hospitality Model) to Strengthen Hospitality Graduate Employ-ability

ment or customer relationship principles. Similar concerns were also voiced by housekeeping trainees who reported being repeatedly instructed to accelerate room cleaning and linen replacement whenever occupancy surged, with minimal explanation of quality standards beyond speed and neatness.

This perception was indirectly confirmed by hotel operational staff. One operational manager admitted that when guest volume increases, service continuity becomes the immediate priority because guest satisfaction cannot be compromised, meaning that students are naturally absorbed as supplementary support within the department. Several employees further acknowledged that although they understood the hotel's educational mission, the practical reality of hospitality operations leaves limited room for extended mentoring during busy service periods. As one food and beverage supervisor paraphrased, students are often expected to learn while moving because stopping to explain procedures in detail may slow down the service chain. Such statements indicate that the educational role of the teaching hotel is frequently subordinated to the commercial imperative of maintaining a smooth guest experience.

Lecturers emphasized a similar concern from the academic side. Although practical placement schedules and departmental rotations had been formally arranged, several lecturers admitted that the actual quality of student learning in the field remained highly dependent on occupancy conditions and operational workload. One lecturer explained that students might theoretically be assigned to observe guest communication, complaint recovery, or departmental coordination, but in reality they are often redirected toward whichever task is operationally urgent at that moment. Consequently, the planned competency trajectory becomes unstable because the hotel's business demands continuously reshape the student learning agenda.

These interview narratives were strongly reinforced by participatory field observations strongly reinforced these interview narrative. Across repeated observations during breakfast peak hours, weekend arrivals, banquet preparations, and room turnover periods, students were visibly mobilized in highly reactive patterns: escorting guests, refilling buffet stations, carrying amenities, preparing meeting equipment, responding to room requests, and assisting with front office congestion. However, almost all supervisory interactions observed during these intensive cycles took the form of short command instructions—where to move, what to prioritize, what to deliver—rather than developmental explanations or reflective micro-feedback.



Figure 1. Students' Reactive Deployment During Peak Service Hours at De Balen Soultan Hotel, students assisting buffet replenishment/banquet setup and guest check-in during crowded service periods.

As illustrated in Figure 1, students were not merely participating as observers or guided trainees, but were fully absorbed into the operational rhythm of maintaining uninterrupted guest service. The photographic evidence demonstrates how student labor becomes highly concentrated on practical continuity tasks such as buffet replenishment, equipment arrangement, and guest assistance, leaving little visible opportunity for competency explanation or reflective mentoring. This visual pattern strengthens the interview finding that the learning agenda becomes subordinate whenever business intensity rises.

During periods of high occupancy, therefore, students are effectively positioned as supplementary operational labor to maintain service continuity. In such situations, learning targets become secondary, and reflective instructional guidance is largely absent. Students participate intensively in service delivery; however, their involvement is predominantly measured by immediate task completion, responsiveness, and speed rather than by competency progression or conceptual understanding. Practical immersion undeniably occurs, but it occurs without a stable educational architecture capable of ensuring cumulative professional development.

Analytically, this finding suggests that the current teaching hotel implementation remains operationally rich but educationally under-engineered. The hotel successfully functions as a business unit, yet the transition from business participation into structured

Reconstructing Teaching Hotel Practices Through an Integrated Teaching Indus-try System (TIS-Hospitality Model) to Strengthen Hospitality Graduate Employ-ability

learning achievement remains weak because there is no formal synchronization mechanism linking revenue operations with monitored educational outcomes. As a consequence, students gain authentic workplace familiarity, but the depth and consistency of employability formation remain highly contingent on fluctuating business conditions.

3.2 Student Identity Ambiguity in Dual Functional Roles

The second critical issue emerging from the field data is the ambiguous positioning of students within the teaching hotel system at De Balen Sulttan Hotel. Although students are formally introduced as trainees participating in an educational hospitality environment, their day-to-day operational treatment frequently places them in a semi-worker role where departmental performance and guest satisfaction become the immediate expectations. Empirically, this means that students are simultaneously expected to function as learners who require guidance and as quasi-employees who must respond efficiently to real-time guest demands, service speed, and departmental targets.

This duality creates a recurring identity conflict that was repeatedly expressed by student informants. On one hand, students acknowledged that they entered the teaching hotel with the understanding that mistakes, questions, and procedural uncertainty should be part of the learning process. On the other hand, once they were inserted into crowded operational shifts, they felt compelled to behave like regular employees who could not slow down the workflow. Several students explicitly admitted that their primary concern during service was no longer “understanding the task deeply,” but “not making mistakes that could disturb hotel operations.” One food and beverage trainee explained that during breakfast rush she often focused entirely on carrying trays, resetting tables, and responding to guest requests as quickly as possible, while suppressing the urge to ask why certain service priorities were arranged in that sequence. Similar comments were also voiced by front office trainees who reported feeling anxious whenever guests directed complaints or urgent requests to them because they were expected to provide immediate assistance despite still perceiving themselves as learners.

Operational staff indirectly reinforced this condition. One departmental supervisor acknowledged that guests do not differentiate between student trainees and permanent staff once uniforms are worn and service encounters begin. From the guest perspective, every visible hotel personnel is expected to respond professionally. Consequently, students are pushed into a performance role where hesitation is interpreted as service weakness. Several employees further admitted that they often rely on students to handle basic but repetitive operational support because this helps maintain departmental flow. Although not intentionally exploitative, this practice gradually shifts the student’s institutional identity from guided learner to functional helper within the service chain.

Lecturers emphasized that this hidden identity shift has become one of the most difficult educational tensions to control. While academic supervisors still view students as participants who should be encouraged to ask questions, reflect, and understand service logic, the operational culture of the hotel rewards speed, discipline, and immediate execution. One lecturer noted that students often become more focused on “surviving the shift correctly” than on extracting conceptual lessons from the experience. As a result, many students complete practical rotations with increased procedural confidence but limited awareness of the managerial reasoning behind the tasks they repeatedly perform.

This identity ambiguity was strongly visible during participatory observations. Across front office, restaurant, and housekeeping shifts, students wore the same departmental uniforms, followed the same command lines, and responded to guest requests with very little visible distinction from regular employees. They were observed carrying guest luggage, escorting visitors, processing amenities, arranging service utensils, and assisting room preparation under direct time pressure. However, unlike permanent employees, students often displayed short moments of hesitation, silent confirmation-seeking, or dependence on nearby staff before finalizing decisions. These micro-behavioral patterns suggest that students are operationally inserted as workers, yet psychologically remain uncertain learners navigating real service consequences.



Figure 2. Students Performing Functional Employee Roles During Active Service Interaction: students in uniform serving guests at restaurant/front office/banquet with direct supervisor nearby.

Reconstructing Teaching Hotel Practices Through an Integrated Teaching Industry System (TIS-Hospitality Model) to Strengthen Hospitality Graduate Employability

As illustrated in Figure 2, students are not separated into a visibly protected training zone, but are fully embedded within the operational frontline where guests, staff, and departmental tempo treat them as service performers. The photographic evidence demonstrates how learner identity becomes institutionally blurred once students enter the live service arena. Their educational role remains administratively acknowledged, yet the practical service environment continuously pushes them toward functional labor compliance.

Interviews further revealed that many students gradually perceived themselves as temporary workers rather than active learners, particularly when assigned repetitive operational routines without explicit learning debriefing. This shifts the educational experience from developmental participation into labor substitution. Students may become technically accustomed to tasks through repetition, however they often remain conceptually unclear regarding why specific service procedures matter within wider hospitality coordination, customer relationship management, or departmental decision systems.

Analytically, this finding demonstrates that role clarity is not a minor managerial issue but a central educational variable influencing student motivation, confidence, and learning ownership. When students prioritize operational survival over exploratory learning, the hospitality workplace becomes a site of performance compliance rather than competency internalization. Consequently, the teaching hotel risks producing students who can execute tasks efficiently while still lacking deeper professional agency and reflective understanding.

3.3 Fragmented Experiential Learning Without Reflective Closure

The third significant finding concerns the fragmented nature of experiential learning within the teaching hotel environment. Empirically, De Balen Sultana Hotel provides students with abundant authentic operational exposure through continuous engagement in guest check-in assistance, room turnover preparation, restaurant service, banquet setup, complaint response, and inter-departmental coordination. Students are therefore not lacking in practical encounters; in fact, they experience hospitality work in its most immediate and realistic form. However, the field data consistently show that these rich operational encounters are rarely followed by structured reflective closure, competency debriefing, or systematic conceptual reinforcement. As a result, students accumulate many service experiences, but these experiences remain educationally disconnected from a coherent learning progression.

Student informants repeatedly explained that after demanding shifts, they were usually expected to move directly to the next operational assignment without formal discussion regarding what had been learned, what service problems had occurred, or what managerial principles could be extracted from the day's activities. One banquet trainee described handling an event setup that ran behind schedule and generated visible client dissatisfaction, yet once the event was stabilized, the team simply continued with post-service cleanup without any follow-up reflective session. Similar narratives came from front office students who encountered guest complaints or reservation confusion but received only immediate corrective instructions rather than broader explanations about service recovery logic or communication strategy. Several students admitted that many stressful or interesting incidents ended merely as something to survive, not as something to study.

Operational employees acknowledged that reflective discussion was difficult to prioritize because departmental work rarely pauses once one service issue has been completed. One food and beverage supervisor admitted that after breakfast rush or event service, the staff's attention immediately shifts toward preparation for the next guest cycle, making extended instructional dialogue uncommon. Housekeeping staff similarly noted that room turnover pressure leaves little time to revisit mistakes unless they directly affect guest complaints. This means that practical learning is continuously moving, but institutional pauses for meaning-making are minimal. Students learn by exposure, but not always by guided interpretation.

Lecturers expressed concern that this absence of reflective closure weakens the educational depth of the teaching hotel. Several lecturers noted that while students often return from operational shifts physically tired and operationally busy, they do not necessarily return with articulated conceptual understanding. One lecturer emphasized that students may be able to perform repetitive tasks increasingly faster, but speed alone does not indicate that they have understood service rationale, guest psychology, or departmental coordination principles. Without reflective unpacking, practical incidents risk becoming routine repetition rather than cumulative professional insight.

This condition was strongly visible during field observations. Across breakfast service, room cleaning turnover, front office congestion, and banquet preparation, students were observed moving rapidly from one operational responsibility to another with almost no scheduled debriefing moments. Once one guest issue was resolved, another immediate departmental need followed. Supervisory interactions mostly consisted of real-time corrections or urgent instructions, but there was no consistently observed end-shift competency conversation, reflective log review, or guided discussion linking the day's incidents to broader hospitality concepts. The institutional rhythm therefore emphasized continuity of service rather than continuity of learning interpretation.

Reconstructing Teaching Hotel Practices Through an Integrated Teaching Industry System (TIS-Hospitality Model) to Strengthen Hospitality Graduate Employability

Analytically, this finding confirms that authentic workplace immersion alone does not automatically generate meaningful experiential learning. Without reflective closure, competency documentation, and guided conceptual reinforcement, practical incidents remain episodic rather than developmental. Consequently, the teaching hotel produces a large quantity of experience, but not always a proportional depth of organized experiential knowledge. This fragmented learning cycle significantly limits the transformation of workplace participation into sustainable employability capital.

3.4 Informal and Situational Supervisory Practices

Another systemic issue identified from the field data is the inconsistency of supervision across departments and service shifts. Empirically, the teaching hotel still relies on a situational mentoring pattern in which the quality, intensity, and educational value of guidance are heavily dependent on which staff member, lecturer, or department happens to be on duty at a particular moment. This means that student learning support is not governed by one standardized institutional mentoring architecture, but fluctuates according to individual supervisory initiative, workload pressure, and departmental communication style.

Student interviews revealed a striking variation in how supervision was experienced. Some students reported receiving detailed explanations, immediate corrective feedback, and even motivational encouragement from certain supervisors who were willing to pause and explain the rationale behind hotel procedures. These students felt more confident because mistakes were interpreted as part of learning and were followed by practical clarification. However, many other students described a very different experience. Several participants admitted that in busy shifts they often received only short task instructions—such as where to stand, what to carry, what room to prepare, or which guest request to prioritize—without any accompanying explanation regarding service standards, performance indicators, or learning objectives. One housekeeping trainee explained that she sometimes completed an entire shift “just following commands,” yet remained unsure whether she had actually improved any specific competency beyond simply finishing the assigned tasks.

This inconsistency was also acknowledged by operational employees. A number of staff members admitted that mentoring students was generally performed spontaneously rather than through a formal supervisory guide. One front office employee paraphrased that when the department was relatively calm, there was enough room to explain reservation logic, guest communication etiquette, or complaint handling flow; however, during congested hours, supervisors naturally shifted to command-based instruction because service speed became more urgent than educational dialogue. Similar comments emerged from food and beverage personnel who recognized that some students were fortunate to be paired with communicative supervisors, while others were assigned to staff members who simply expected immediate adaptation. In effect, the educational depth of student placement became highly person-dependent.

Lecturers emphasized that this person-dependent supervision creates a serious continuity problem from the academic side. Although lecturers routinely monitor attendance, practical schedules, and broad departmental placement, several admitted that they do not receive systematic day-to-day competency records from operational staff. One lecturer noted that students are often reported as “active” or “helpful,” but such general descriptions do not provide measurable evidence regarding what service dimensions have actually improved. Another lecturer further explained that because there is no synchronized mentoring sheet shared between lecturers and hotel supervisors, academic evaluation tends to focus on completion of placement rather than on traceable developmental milestones. Consequently, the lecturer’s role remains largely administrative and reflective after the fact, while operational supervision remains immediate but undocumented.

Field observations strongly supported these interview narratives. Across multiple departments, supervisory interactions were frequently observed in fragmented micro-forms: a quick correction of tray handling, a brief reminder on guest greeting, an instruction to accelerate room cleaning, or a warning about service neatness. While such interventions were useful in solving immediate operational concerns, they rarely accumulated into a visible developmental coaching sequence. There were no consistently observed supervisory sessions in which operational staff and academic lecturers jointly reviewed student progress, discussed recurring weaknesses, or aligned practical incidents with competency expectations. Supervision therefore occurred in scattered moments, but not as one continuous educational monitoring process.

This fragmented pattern produces uneven competency development among students despite them being located within the same learning environment. Students assigned under communicative supervisors often gain more confidence, procedural understanding, and emotional support, while those under purely task-driven supervisors may finish the same placement period with far less conceptual clarity. The inconsistency is not caused by the absence of supervisors, but by the absence of a common supervisory framework that defines how operational mentoring and academic mentoring should intersect.

Reconstructing Teaching Hotel Practices Through an Integrated Teaching Industry System (TIS-Hospitality Model) to Strengthen Hospitality Graduate Employability

More importantly, there is no institutionalized dual-monitoring mechanism that simultaneously tracks operational performance and educational growth. Operational supervisors tend to focus on service accuracy, speed, discipline, and efficiency because these dimensions directly affect guest satisfaction and departmental smoothness. Lecturers, by contrast, tend to focus on attendance compliance, assignment completion, and broad reflective reporting because these are the only dimensions institutionally visible to them. Yet both supervisory dimensions rarely converge into a unified mentoring instrument capable of documenting how operational tasks contribute to measurable competency advancement.

As a consequence, students experience fragmented supervision: operationally controlled but pedagogically under-evaluated. They are corrected when mistakes interfere with service, but they are not consistently mentored regarding how those mistakes connect to wider hospitality professionalism, guest psychology, or adaptive service judgement. Analytically, this weakens the continuity of learning and significantly reduces the possibility of measurable competency accumulation over time. Without synchronized supervision, the teaching hotel provides many moments of correction, but too few moments of cumulative developmental coaching. Thus, supervision exists in abundance at the operational surface, yet remains educationally diffuse at the systemic level.

3.5 Emerging Need for an Integrated Teaching Industry System

The cumulative evidence generated from the four preceding findings points toward one overarching institutional conclusion: the current teaching hotel implementation at De Balen Sultana Hotel is operationally active, experientially rich, and educationally promising, yet it still lacks a fully integrated architecture capable of converting everyday hotel business activities into measurable graduate employability formation. In other words, the issue identified in this study is not the absence of practical opportunity, nor the absence of student participation, but the absence of a coherent system that binds those practical opportunities into a structured developmental sequence.

Empirically, all stakeholder groups expressed this institutional gap in different forms, yet their concerns converged around the same underlying deficiency. Students repeatedly voiced the need for clearer competency direction, more explicit explanation of why particular tasks mattered, and more consistent feedback regarding whether their practical performance was actually improving. Several students admitted that while they felt increasingly busy and operationally familiar, they were often uncertain about what specific professional competencies had truly been strengthened after weeks of placement. This indicates that practical immersion was being experienced as work participation, but not always as traceable competency growth.

Operational employees similarly acknowledged that the hotel had abundant real service situations that were potentially valuable for student learning, but there was no common mentoring instrument that helped staff translate those service situations into educational checkpoints. One operational manager paraphrased that students were constantly involved in “real hotel work,” yet staff members themselves did not have a standardized guide regarding what exactly should be observed, corrected, or reinforced from an educational standpoint. As a result, supervisors tended to focus on solving immediate service issues rather than documenting developmental progression. In practical terms, the hotel possessed authentic industrial exposure, but lacked a shared educational conversion mechanism.

Lecturers articulated an even stronger concern from the academic perspective. Several lecturers emphasized that despite formal practical placement schedules and departmental rotation plans, there was still no integrated competency monitoring sheet that could continuously connect curriculum outcomes, operational assignments, supervisor notes, reflective student records, and measurable employability indicators. One lecturer noted that after students completed practical placement, academic reflection often relied heavily on retrospective student narratives rather than on systematically accumulated field evidence. This made it difficult to evaluate whether students had genuinely developed adaptive communication, guest recovery confidence, interdepartmental coordination, or service judgement in measurable ways. In short, educational assessment remained fragmented because operational evidence and academic evidence were never fully synchronized.

These concerns were strongly supported by field observations. Across the observation period, the hotel clearly demonstrated all the core ingredients of an excellent experiential setting: active guest interaction, real departmental pressure, student mobility across service units, frequent problem-solving moments, and direct exposure to hospitality unpredictability. However, these ingredients functioned more as separate educational fragments than as one connected instructional ecosystem. Practical schedules existed, supervisors existed, students existed, and authentic business events existed, yet there was no visible institutional framework ensuring that these components interacted in one cumulative competency-building cycle.

This means that the teaching hotel currently operates as an activity-based practical placement rather than as a system-based teaching industry model. Students are given opportunities to participate, but participation is not yet continuously translated into mapped competencies, synchronized mentoring, reflective closure, and measurable employability documentation. Consequently,

Reconstructing Teaching Hotel Practices Through an Integrated Teaching Industry System (TIS-Hospitality Model) to Strengthen Hospitality Graduate Employability

the institution generates many valuable learning moments, but those moments remain dispersed and highly dependent on circumstance.

Analytically, the recurring deficiencies identified in Findings 4.1 through 4.4 collectively justify the emerging need for an Integrated Teaching Industry System. The empirical data indicate that strengthening hospitality graduate readiness requires more than simply increasing student exposure to hotel routines. What is needed is a deliberate educational architecture that formally synchronizes five interdependent dimensions: curriculum outcomes, structured operational task mapping, dual supervision between academic and hotel personnel, reflective experiential checkpoints, and competency monitoring supported by systematic documentation. Without such integration, the teaching hotel risks remaining a busy operational venue with only partial educational traceability.

Therefore, the present study proposes the Teaching Industry System (TIS-Hospitality Model) as a grounded institutional reconstruction derived directly from field deficiencies. The model is not introduced as an abstract theoretical ideal, but as an empirical response to the repeatedly observed mismatch between practical immersion and measurable work readiness formation. Through this model, the teaching hotel is repositioned from a site of incidental workplace participation into a synchronized learning-business ecosystem designed to ensure that every authentic service encounter contributes to cumulative employability development.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

The findings of this study provide a broader insight that the central challenge in hospitality vocational education is no longer simply the provision of practical exposure, but the institutional ability to convert that exposure into measurable employability development. Recent hospitality education studies increasingly report that vocational students may participate intensively in industrial practice and still graduate with unstable adaptive competence when workplace experiences are not pedagogically structured into coherent developmental systems (Giousmpasoglou & Pantelidis, 2025; Minor et al., 2025). At De Balen Sultana Hotel, students were continuously immersed in authentic hotel operations and repeatedly encountered real guest service pressure, departmental urgency, and workplace unpredictability. However, the empirical evidence demonstrates that such industrial realism did not automatically generate proportional professional readiness because the practical encounters were not consistently supported by competency mapping, synchronized mentoring, reflective closure, and integrated supervision. In practical terms, intensive exposure generated operational familiarity, but not always measurable employability maturity.

This pattern strongly resonates with recent scholarship questioning the assumption that work exposure alone is sufficient to bridge the theory–practice gap in hospitality education. Christou and Chatzigeorgiou (2019) initially highlighted this issue, but more recent studies by Huertas-Valdivia et al. (2021), Kong et al. (2021), and Garcia (2025) consistently show that experiential hospitality environments underperform when reflection, debriefing, competency reinforcement, and supervisor-guided interpretation are weak. Students may repeatedly perform service tasks, respond to guest needs, and participate in hotel workflows, yet repetitive participation does not automatically generate adaptive judgement, service confidence, or professional reasoning. The present study deepens this argument by showing that the inefficiency lies not only in fragmented student experience, but in the absence of an integrated institutional architecture capable of synchronizing educational logic with commercial hotel operations.

Another important implication concerns the hidden tension between learner identity and worker identity in live hospitality settings. Students at the teaching hotel were administratively positioned as trainees, yet operationally absorbed as quasi-functional labor expected to maintain guest service continuity. Recent studies on hospitality graduate confidence similarly report that student employability is strongly influenced by whether industrial placement environments support identity formation, self-efficacy, and developmental agency rather than merely task execution (Wang et al., 2024; Minor et al., 2025). In the present case, many students became primarily focused on avoiding mistakes, accelerating task completion, and surviving the shift without disrupting departmental performance. This indicates that the blurred learner-worker positioning constrained reflective learning ownership and weakened the maturation of professional confidence, even though students appeared operationally active throughout the placement period.

The study also demonstrates that fragmented supervision and the absence of reflective closure significantly weaken the cumulative educational value of teaching hotel participation. Students were corrected frequently, instructed repeatedly, and exposed continuously; yet these moments of correction were rarely transformed into traceable developmental coaching. Vo et al. (2026) found that hospitality employability strengthens most effectively when operational participation is accompanied by guided reflection, visible supervisor dialogue, and competency progression records. Comparable evidence from McGrath et al. (2020) and Wang et al. (2023) shows that students develop stronger service resilience and adaptive judgement when workplace feedback is cumulative rather than incidental. Without such integration, hospitality students may complete long practical rotations while still

Reconstructing Teaching Hotel Practices Through an Integrated Teaching Indus-try System (TIS-Hospitality Model) to Strengthen Hospitality Graduate Employ-ability

possessing uneven conceptual understanding, weak situational confidence, and unstable service professionalism. Operationally, this issue is increasingly relevant in the era of hospitality digitalization and smart service ecosystems. Samala et al. (2020) demonstrate that hospitality graduates are now expected to combine customer interaction, technological responsiveness, communication agility, and problem-solving adaptability within one fluid competence package. Stylianou and Pericleous (2025) further note that smart tourism environments require graduates who can process operational uncertainty with reflective intelligence rather than merely follow procedural routines. This means that incidental task repetition is no longer sufficient preparation. Students must be able to cognitively connect what they do, why they do it, how they improve, and where the competency evidence accumulates. The fragmented teaching hotel pattern observed in this study shows that authentic busyness, while valuable, remains educationally incomplete when students cannot clearly trace their own professional development. Taken together, these findings suggest that the teaching hotel should no longer be understood merely as a practical venue or business laboratory, but as a potential educational ecosystem whose effectiveness depends on system design rather than on exposure intensity alone. This shifts the hospitality education conversation from exposure-based experiential learning toward system-based experiential orchestration. Abelha et al. (2020) argue that graduate employability is significantly strengthened when institutions deliberately integrate technical, interpersonal, adaptive, and reflective competencies into one traceable developmental pathway. In this sense, what matters is not only whether students are present in real hotel work, but whether every operational encounter is intentionally connected to curriculum outcomes, mentoring checkpoints, reflective interpretation, and competency evidence. Based on this analytical reading, the proposed Teaching Industry System (TIS-Hospitality Model) serves as a grounded response to the institutional deficiencies identified in the field. The model reconstructs the teaching hotel into a synchronized learning-business framework by integrating five mutually reinforcing dimensions: curriculum-linked operational task mapping, dual supervision between lecturers and hotel personnel, structured reflective experiential cycles, continuous competency monitoring, and digital documentation of student progression. Through this architecture, incidental workplace participation can be transformed into measurable employability formation rather than remaining as fragmented practical busyness."

**Figure 1. Teaching Industry System (TIS-Hospitality Model):
An Integrated Framework for Hospitality Graduate Employability Formation**

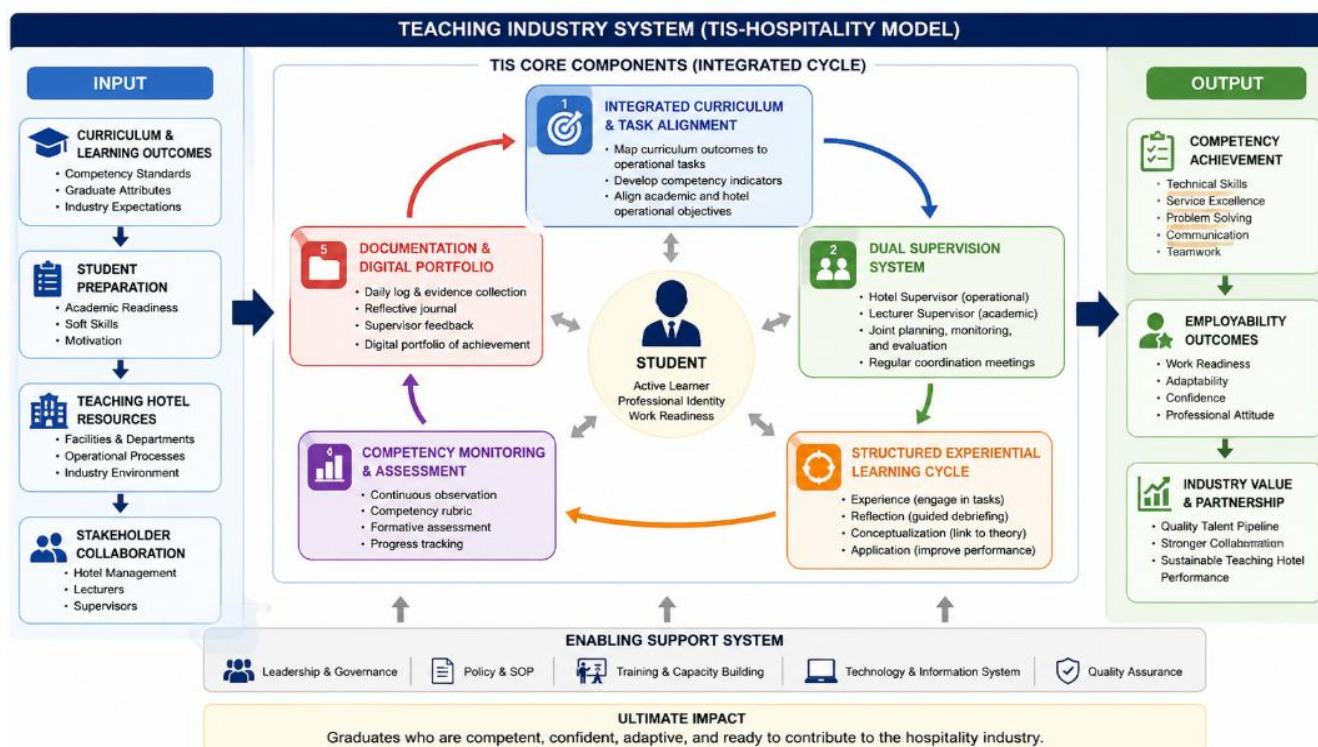


Figure 4. Proposed Teaching Industry System (TIS-Hospitality Model)

Source: Author's, 2026

The conceptual diagram presented in Figure 4 visualizes the central proposition of this study that hospitality graduate readiness cannot be effectively produced through fragmented practical exposure alone, but requires a synchronized institutional ecosystem that deliberately integrates business operations with pedagogical development. The model is therefore designed not as a linear

Reconstructing Teaching Hotel Practices Through an Integrated Teaching Industry System (TIS-Hospitality Model) to Strengthen Hospitality Graduate Employability

internship arrangement, but as an interconnected teaching industry architecture in which all learning and operational components continuously interact around the student as the primary developmental subject.

On the left side of the model, four foundational input dimensions are positioned as the preconditions of effective teaching industry implementation: curriculum and learning outcomes, student preparation, teaching hotel resources, and stakeholder collaboration. These inputs indicate that practical immersion should not begin merely with student placement in hotel departments. However, they must first be anchored in clearly defined competency standards, learner readiness, institutional facilities, and coordinated commitment among lecturers, hotel managers, and supervisors.

Recent hospitality employability studies stress that weak pre-operational alignment often causes industrial placement to become fragmented task participation rather than measurable skill progression (Abelha et al., 2020; Giousmpasoglou & Pantelidis, 2025).

At the center of the figure lies the integrated TIS cycle, which forms the core innovation of the proposed model. This cycle consists of five mutually reinforcing mechanisms. The first is integrated curriculum and task alignment, ensuring that every operational assignment corresponds to intended hospitality competencies. The second is a dual supervision system in which hotel operational supervisors and academic lecturers jointly monitor both service performance and educational development. The third is a structured experiential learning cycle that requires students not only to perform tasks, but also to reflect, conceptualize, and improve after each service encounter. The fourth mechanism is competency monitoring and assessment, which continuously tracks observable growth in technical, interpersonal, adaptive, and professional dimensions. The fifth is documentation and digital portfolio recording, ensuring that all developmental evidence is accumulated rather than lost as incidental practical memory. Collectively, these five mechanisms transform the teaching hotel from a busy service venue into a traceable competency-building loop.

Importantly, the student is intentionally placed at the center of this integrated cycle, signifying that the model does not prioritize hotel business efficiency alone, nor academic compliance alone, but student employability formation as the main institutional objective. This positioning reflects a growing contemporary consensus that hospitality education should move beyond exposure-based training toward learner-centered professional ecosystem design in which students can cognitively recognize how operational participation contributes to their long-term work readiness (Minor et al., 2025; Vo et al., 2026).

On the right side of the diagram, the model illustrates three sequential layers of expected outcomes. The first layer is competency achievement, including technical hospitality skills, communication effectiveness, service problem-solving, and teamwork capability. The second layer is employability outcomes, namely work readiness, adaptability, confidence, and professional attitude. The third layer extends beyond student impact into industry value creation, showing that institutions implementing a synchronized teaching industry system are also more likely to produce stronger hotel-campus partnerships, higher service consistency, and a more sustainable talent pipeline. In this sense, the TIS-Hospitality Model positions employability formation not only as an academic concern, but also as a strategic hospitality business investment.

Conceptually, Figure 4 confirms the principal argument emerging from Findings 4.1 to 4.5: the weakness of current teaching hotel practice does not lie in insufficient student activity, but in insufficient systemic orchestration. Students are already present in authentic hotel work, supervisors are already present, and service encounters are already abundant. What remains missing is the formal synchronization that converts these scattered elements into cumulative educational architecture. Therefore, the proposed TIS-Hospitality Model serves as a grounded institutional reconstruction derived directly from empirical field deficiencies and offers a transferable framework for hospitality vocational institutions facing similar graduate readiness gaps.

The findings imply that hospitality vocational institutions should no longer manage teaching hotels merely as business-support practical laboratories, but as intentionally engineered employability systems. Institutional leaders need to redesign student placement by ensuring that every operational task is linked to explicit competency indicators, jointly monitored by academic and hotel supervisors, and followed by structured reflective review. In addition, digital competency portfolios and synchronized supervision records should be introduced so that student growth can be documented cumulatively rather than assessed retrospectively. For hospitality policymakers, the proposed TIS-Hospitality Model offers a scalable reference for strengthening industry-based education reform in response to increasing demands for adaptive, resilient, and professionally confident graduates.

Despite offering a grounded institutional model, this study is limited to a single-case investigation within one teaching hotel context, namely De Balen Sultana Hotel, which means that organizational culture, supervisory patterns, and operational dynamics may differ across other hospitality vocational institutions. In addition, the present study focuses primarily on qualitative systemic diagnosis and conceptual reconstruction, without quantitatively measuring the long-term impact of the proposed TIS-Hospitality Model on graduate employability outcomes. Future studies are therefore encouraged to conduct multi-site comparative validation across different teaching hotel environments, incorporate longitudinal competency tracking, and examine how digital monitoring

Reconstructing Teaching Hotel Practices Through an Integrated Teaching Industry System (TIS-Hospitality Model) to Strengthen Hospitality Graduate Employability

systems, industry partnership intensity, and supervisory consistency influence the effectiveness of teaching industry implementation in broader hospitality education settings.

V. CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the effectiveness of a teaching hotel in hospitality vocational education is not determined solely by the availability of authentic industrial exposure, but by the institutional capacity to systematically transform such exposure into measurable employability development. The empirical evidence from De Balen Sultana Hotel demonstrates that although students are intensively engaged in real hotel operations, the absence of synchronized competency mapping, dual supervision, reflective closure, and integrated monitoring causes practical participation to remain educationally fragmented. In response to these recurring deficiencies, this study proposes the Teaching Industry System (TIS-Hospitality Model) as a grounded institutional reconstruction that repositions the teaching hotel from a conventional practical venue into a synchronized learning-business ecosystem. By integrating curriculum-linked operational tasks, collaborative supervision, structured experiential reflection, competency documentation, and continuous developmental assessment, the model offers both a theoretical contribution to contemporary hospitality education discourse and a practical framework for strengthening graduate work readiness in vocational hospitality institutions.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The authors would like to express their sincere gratitude to Politeknik Pariwisata Lombok for granting access to De Balen Sultana Hotel as the primary research setting and for facilitating the implementation of this study. Appreciation is also extended to the hotel management team, operational staff, students, industry partners, and hotel guests who voluntarily shared their time, experiences, and professional insights throughout the field investigation. The authors further acknowledge the academic collaboration and constructive scholarly contribution provided by Politeknik Pariwisata Makassar in the development and refinement of this research manuscript.

REFERENCES

- 1) Abelha, M., Fernandes, S., Mesquita, D., Seabra, F., & Ferreira-Oliveira, A. T. (2020). Graduate employability and competence development in higher education: A systematic literature review. *Education Sciences*, 10(9), 1–17. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci10010009>
- 2) Anderson, T., & Shattuck, J. (2012). Design-based research: A decade of progress in education research? *Educational Researcher*, 41(1), 16–25. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0013189X1142881>
- 3) Christou, E., & Chatzigeorgiou, C. (2019). Experiential learning in hospitality education: Bridging classroom and workplace realities. *Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism*, 19(3), 214–231. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15313220.2018.156053>
- 4) Collins, A. (2002). Design research: Theoretical and methodological issues. *Journal of the Learning Sciences*, 13(1), 15–42. https://doi.org/10.1207/S15327809JLS1301_2
- 5) Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2018). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.
- 6) Garcia, D. M. (2025). The importance of experiential learning in tourism and hospitality management. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Education*, 37(1), 33–47. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10963758.2024.2298741>
- 7) Giousmpasoglou, C., & Pantelidis, I. (2025). Contemporary challenges in hospitality management education: Bridging employability and industry complexity. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 121, 103822. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2024.103822>
- 8) Huertas-Valdivia, I., Gallego-Burín, A. R., & Lloréns-Montes, F. J. (2021). Effects of different experiential learning methods in hospitality education on student competence development. *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education*, 29, 100321. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhlste.2021.100321>
- 9) Kong, Y., Wang, Y., & Fu, X. (2021). Building employability through work-integrated learning in hospitality education. *Education + Training*, 63(5), 689–705. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ET-08-2020-0245>
- 10) McGrath, G., Cleary, M., O'Connor, A., & McCarthy, M. (2020). Hospitality students' readiness for industry engagement: A work-based learning perspective. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 32(9), 2885–2904. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-01-2020-0036>
- 11) Miles, M. B., Huberman, A. M., & Saldaña, J. (2019). *Qualitative data analysis: A methods sourcebook* (4th ed.). Sage Publications.

Reconstructing Teaching Hotel Practices Through an Integrated Teaching Indus-try System (TIS-Hospitality Model) to Strengthen Hospitality Graduate Employ-ability

- 12) Minor, K., Henderson, J., Patel, R., & Lee, S. (2025). Hospitality education and future employability competencies in uncertain service environments. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 54, 101068. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2025.101068>
- 13) Pitan, O. S., & Muller, C. (2019). Students' employability development through work-based learning. *Higher Education, Skills and Work-Based Learning*, 9(3), 336–352. <https://doi.org/10.1108/HESWBL-09-2018-009>
- 14) Samala, N., Katkam, B. S., Bellamkonda, R. S., & Rodriguez, R. V. (2020). Impact of AI and automation on hospitality education and employability readiness. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*, 11(4), 577–593. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JHTT-02-2020-0028>
- 15) Stylianou, C., & Pericleous, K. (2025). Digital readiness of hospitality graduates in smart tourism environments. *Tourism Review*, 80(2), 455–472. <https://doi.org/10.1108/TR-08-2024-0417>
- 16) Tang, J., Baum, T., & Jiang, Y. (2020). Hospitality graduates and career adaptability in dynamic service industries. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 87, 102504. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2020.102504>
- 17) Tussyadiah, I. (2020). A review of technology applications in hospitality education and training. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Technology*, 11(1), 1–13. <https://doi.org/10.1108/JHTT-10-2019-0124>
- 18) Vo, N. Q. T., Tran, P. K. T., & Nguyen, D. H. T. (2026). How experiential learning and AI readiness foster career adaptation in hospitality and tourism education. *Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism*. Advance online publication. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15313220.2026.2456789>
- 19) Wang, D., Cheung, C., & Zhai, X. (2024). Career adaptability and graduate confidence in hospitality industry transition. *Tourism Management Perspectives*, 49, 101160. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tmp.2024.101160>
- 20) Wang, X., Chen, Y., & Liu, H. (2023). Service resilience and graduate readiness in hotel education. *International Hospitality Review*, 37(2), 145–162. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IHR-07-2022-0034>
- 21) Yin, R. K. (2018). *Case study research and applications: Design and methods* (6th ed.). Sage Publications.



There is an Open Access article, distributed under the term of the Creative Commons Attribution – Non Commercial 4.0 International (CC BY-NC 4.0) (<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/>), which permits remixing, adapting and building upon the work for non-commercial use, provided the original work is properly cited.