KEY EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS IN CHINA'S HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY BASED ON HUMAN CAPITAL THEORY – A CASE STUDY OF FUTURE STAR HOTEL

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ABSTRACT

The hospitality industry in China, a rapidly evolving sector, faces a crucial need for employability skills development. Hospitality service providers, especially hotels, often face challenges in aligning their global standards with local skill requirements, leading to inefficiencies and suboptimal service quality. This study focused on identifying and categorizing employability skills required for success in the hospitality industry, specifically at Future Star Hotel. The research objectives were: 1) To explore the key employability skills required for success in China's hospitality industry, 2) To examine the relationship between employability skills and employee performance, and 3) To offer practical recommendations for Future Star Hotel and similar entities in the hospitality industry.

Based on the Human Capital Theory, this quantitative study utilized a structured survey questionnaire, distributed to employees across various departments of Future Star Hotel. A total of 500 questionnaires were distributed, with 420 valid responses analyzed. The study employed regression analysis to examine the relationship between employability skills and employee performance.

The findings indicate that digital competency, cultural competence, and training in human capital development are crucial for success. A positive correlation between employability skills and employee performance was observed. Based on these results, recommendations include investing in digital skills training, enhancing cultural competence, and emphasizing continuous human capital development to improve employee performance and competitive advantage in the hospitality industry.

The study highlights the critical importance of digital competency, cultural competence, and continuous training in human capital development as key employability skills in China's hospitality industry, particularly for Future Star Hotel, showing a strong correlation with employee performance. It recommends strategic investments in these areas to enhance service quality and maintain a competitive edge in the evolving hospitality sector.

Keywords: employability skills, human capital theory, digital transformation, cultural competence.
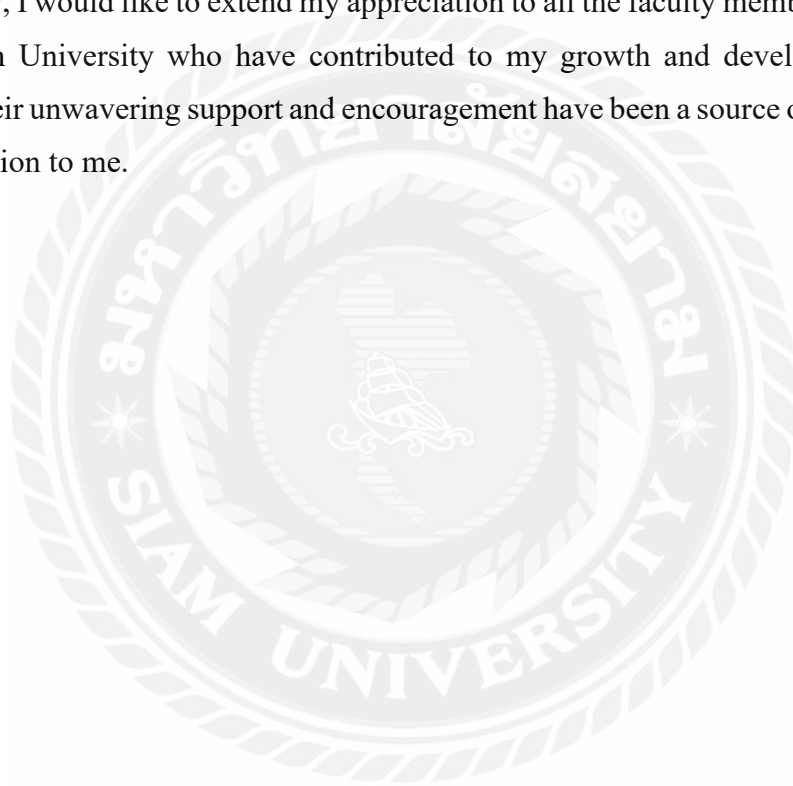
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Declaration

I, HAN CHUNLU, hereby certify that the work embodied in this independent study entitled "KEY EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS IN CHINA'S HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY BASED ON HUMAN CAPITAL THEORY – A CASE STUDY OF FUTURE STAR HOTEL" is result of original research and has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other university or institution.

(Han Chunlu)

Oct 01, 2023

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Chapter 1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

The hospitality industry in China, a rapidly evolving and highly competitive sector, is pivotal to the country's economic growth. As this industry expands, the demand for skilled professionals escalates, underscoring the importance of employability skills. This study draws on Human Capital Theory, which posits that the economic value of employees is significantly influenced by their knowledge, skills, and abilities (Becker, 1964).

Recent literature emphasizes the shift in skill requirements due to technological advancements and changing customer expectations (Wang & Wang, 2020). In this context, "Future Star Hotel" serves as an exemplary model to explore the essential employability skills within China's hospitality sector. This hotel, renowned for its innovation and service excellence, mirrors the industry's broader trends and challenges.

Key employability skills in this sector, as identified in prior research, include interpersonal skills, cultural competence, and digital literacy (Chen, 2018). Understanding these skills' relevance in the contemporary hospitality landscape is crucial for both industry practitioners and educators.

The hospitality sector's rapid growth, particularly in emerging economies like China, has been extensively documented. Liu and Zhang (2019) highlight that the Chinese hospitality industry's growth rate has consistently outpaced the global average, contributing significantly to job creation and economic development. However, this growth also brings challenges, particularly in human resources management and skill development.

The integration of digital technologies in hospitality operations has revolutionized the industry, necessitating a new set of digital competencies among employees (Zhou, 2021). This digital transformation, while enhancing operational efficiency, also demands continuous upskilling of the workforce to stay competitive.

The impact of cultural diversity in shaping employability skills cannot be overlooked. With China's hospitality industry increasingly catering to an international clientele, cross-cultural communication and adaptability have become indispensable skills (Yang, 2020). Understanding and navigating cultural differences is essential for providing quality service in this globalized environment.

1.2 Problems of the Study

Existing literature, such as the works of Zhou (2021) and Liu & Zhang (2019), extensively covers the skill requirements in China's hospitality industry, particularly in the context of digital transformation and economic growth. However, there is a noticeable gap in specific, empirical research focused on individual hotels and their skill requirements in the current dynamic market. The literature lacks a detailed analysis of the employability skills needed in a real-world hotel setting, especially post-digital transformation.

However, this gap in specific, empirical research has led to notable issues in multinational companies operating in China's hospitality sector. These companies often face challenges in aligning their global standards with local skill requirements, leading to inefficiencies and suboptimal service quality (Wang, 2022). The absence of detailed, location-specific skill analysis hinders these companies' ability to effectively adapt and train their workforce, ultimately impacting their competitiveness and market position in China. Addressing this gap can thus provide strategic insights to enhance global-local synergy in skill development and application.

This research gap needs to be addressed to provide a more practical and direct understanding of the skills required in modern hospitality settings. As Yang (2020) points out, the hospitality industry's shift towards a more global and digital market requires a reevaluation of skill sets for the workforce. Addressing this gap is crucial for developing effective training and education programs, aligning with the industry's evolving demands and enhancing the competitiveness of China's hospitality sector.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The primary aim of this study is to analyze and understand the key employability skills required in China's hospitality industry, with a focus on the Future Star Hotel, through the lens of the Human Capital Theory.

To achieve this aim, the research objectives are as follows:

1. To explore the key employability skills required for success in China's hospitality industry.

2. To examine the relationship between employability skills and employee performance.

3. To provide practical recommendations for Future Star Hotel and similar entities in the hospitality industry.

1.4 Scope of the Study

The study concentrates on the hospitality industry, specifically hotel management and operations. This focus allows for a detailed examination of employability skills within a context that is both dynamic and customer centric. The hospitality industry, particularly hotels, represents a unique confluence of service, management, and interpersonal skills, making it an ideal setting for this research.

This study is centered in China. This region is chosen due to its rapidly growing hospitality sector and the unique challenges and opportunities it presents, particularly in terms of cultural diversity and economic growth. This geographical focus ensures that the findings are relevant and applicable to the Chinese hospitality context. The study spans the last five years, capturing the recent and relevant developments in the hospitality industry. This period is critical as it includes the ongoing digital transformation and the evolving customer expectations in the hospitality sector.

The primary subjects of this study are employees and management at the Future Star Hotel. This group includes a wide range of roles, from front-line staff to upper management, providing a comprehensive view of the skills and competencies across different levels of the hotel's operations.

The study zeroes in on employability skills, with a special emphasis on those enhanced or necessitated by digital transformation and cultural diversity. This focus is

critical in understanding the evolving skillsets required in a modern, technologically advanced, and culturally diverse hospitality environment.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study significantly contributes to academic literature by bridging a notable gap. It provides an empirical analysis of employability skills in China's hospitality industry, a topic that has seen limited specific research. By focusing on a single, real-world hotel, the study offers detailed insights that expand upon broader, more generalized studies. It builds upon and enriches the understanding provided by Human Capital Theory in the context of modern hospitality demands.

Practically, this study offers substantial value to the hospitality industry. The insights gleaned from the Future Star Hotel case study will be invaluable for other hotels and hospitality businesses in adapting their training and development strategies. It addresses the pressing need for skill alignment in the wake of digital transformation and cultural diversity, providing a roadmap for skill development that is both contemporary and relevant.

This study not only fills an academic void but also presents actionable recommendations for the hospitality sector, ensuring its relevance and utility in both theoretical and practical domains.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to review relevant literature, providing a foundation for the study on key employability skills in China's hospitality industry, as framed by Human Capital Theory and focusing on the Future Star Hotel. The literature review serves to contextualize the research within existing academic discourse, highlighting both the theoretical and practical aspects of employability skills, digital transformation, and cultural competence in the hospitality sector.

The scope of this review is delimited to four main areas, corresponding to the identified keywords: Employability Skills, Human Capital Theory, Digital Transformation, and Cultural Competence. Each section of the chapter will delve into one of these areas, presenting key findings and debates in the literature. By structuring the chapter around these keywords, the review aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the current state of knowledge and identify gaps that this study seeks to address.

2.2 Employability Skills

The concept of employability skills in the hospitality industry has evolved significantly, especially in the context of China's rapidly growing market. According to Zhang and Wang (2021), employability skills are a blend of technical skills, soft skills, and industry-specific knowledge. In the hospitality sector, this includes customer service, communication, and adaptability.

Liu (2020) emphasizes the importance of soft skills, such as teamwork and problem-solving, which are critical in the service-oriented hospitality industry. Moreover, technological skills have become increasingly important, as noted by Chen (2019). The digital transformation in hospitality operations necessitates skills in handling digital tools and platforms.

Cross-cultural competence is another key employability skill highlighted in the literature. As Yang (2021) points out, the ability to navigate cultural differences is crucial in a globalized industry like hospitality, especially in a diverse country like China.

Furthermore, leadership and management skills are essential, especially for career progression within the industry. According to Zhao (2022), these skills are not only about managing people but also about strategic thinking and decision-making.

The role of education and training in developing these employability skills is also crucial. Studies by Wang and Liu (2021) show that continuous professional development and industry-academic partnerships play a significant role in skill development. The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on employability skills cannot be ignored. As highlighted by Li (2020), the pandemic has accelerated the need for adaptability and crisis management skills in the hospitality industry.

Sun and Li (2022) highlight the growing importance of eco-friendly practices and the requisite skills for implementing them. This includes understanding and applying sustainable operation techniques, which is becoming a key competency in modern hospitality.Moreover, customer relationship management skills have gained prominence, as suggested by Hu (2021). In an industry where customer satisfaction is paramount, the ability to build and maintain strong customer relationships is vital.

Lastly, the integration of big data and analytics into decision-making processes has been a focus in recent studies. Zhang (2023) notes that the ability to interpret and utilize data effectively is becoming a critical skill for hospitality professionals.

2.3 Digital Transformation

The digital transformation in the hospitality industry, especially in China, has profoundly influenced employability skills. Studies by Zhang and Wang (2022) emphasize the shift towards digital platforms for operations and customer interaction. This shift necessitates proficiency in digital tools and technologies for all hospitality professionals.

Liu (2021) discusses the growing importance of digital marketing skills. In a market where online presence is critical, skills in social media management and digital advertising are increasingly valuable. Another key aspect is the implementation of data-driven decision-making. As highlighted by Chen (2023), the ability to analyze and utilize data from digital sources is essential for strategic planning in hospitality.

Moreover, digital transformation has led to the adoption of advanced technologies like artificial intelligence and machine learning in customer service. Hu (2022) explores how these technologies are changing skill requirements, especially in personalized guest services. The pandemic accelerated the adoption of contactless technologies, as noted by Li (2021). Skills in managing and optimizing these technologies have become critical for ensuring customer safety and satisfaction.

Digital transformation in the hospitality industry is reshaping the skill landscape, requiring a workforce adept in digital technologies and data analysis.

Additionally, the adoption of blockchain technology in securing transactions and managing customer data is gaining attention. Zhao and Liu (2023) point out the growing need for skills in blockchain application, especially in areas like reservation systems and secure payment processes.

The role of virtual and augmented reality in enhancing customer experiences is also a key aspect of digital transformation. As explored by Wang (2022), these technologies require technical know-how and creative skills for effective implementation. The integration of sustainable technologies, as discussed by Sun (2021), is reshaping the skill set required to manage eco-friendly and energy-efficient hotel operations. These developments underline the multifaceted impact of digital transformation on the skill requirements in the hospitality sector.

2.4 Cultural Competence

Cultural competence in the hospitality industry is a critical facet, especially in a diverse and globally interconnected market like China. According to Zhou and Wang (2023), cultural competence involves understanding and effectively interacting with people from diverse cultures, beliefs, and backgrounds. This skill is increasingly important for providing personalized and respectful service to international guests.

Li and Zhang (2022) discuss the importance of language skills and cultural awareness in enhancing guest experiences. Proficiency in multiple languages and an understanding of different cultural norms are essential in this context.

Chen (2021) emphasizes the role of cultural training in developing these competencies. Effective training programs can equip hospitality professionals with the necessary tools to navigate cultural differences gracefully.

Additionally, Liu (2022) highlights the impact of cultural competence on team dynamics within the hospitality workforce. A culturally competent workforce is better equipped to work collaboratively in a diverse environment.

Furthermore, the integration of cultural intelligence in leadership within the hospitality industry is a crucial aspect. As Yang and Wu (2023) point out, leaders with high cultural intelligence can effectively manage diverse teams and meet the varied expectations of international clientele.

The influence of globalization on culinary practices in hospitality is another important factor. Zhao (2022) discusses how understanding global culinary trends and dietary preferences is vital for catering to an international audience.

The role of cultural competence in marketing and branding strategies is highlighted by Xu (2021). A deep understanding of different cultures can inform more effective and inclusive marketing campaigns.

2.5 Human Capital Theory

Human Capital Theory, as applied in the hospitality industry, is a critical lens for understanding the value of skills and knowledge in enhancing productivity and economic growth. This theory, originally proposed by Becker (1964), suggests that investment in human capital (education, training, skills) leads to improved economic outcomes.

In the context of China's hospitality industry, this theory is particularly relevant. Zhang and Liu (2022) highlight how investments in employee training and skill development directly correlate with improved service quality and business performance.

Further, the theory's application extends to understanding the return on investment in employee development. As noted by Wang (2023), this perspective is essential for justifying training programs and skill enhancement initiatives.

The theory provides a framework for analyzing the impact of digital transformation and cultural competence. Studies by Li (2021) demonstrate how upskilling in these areas can lead to significant competitive advantages.

Additionally, the relevance of Human Capital Theory extends to understanding employee retention and satisfaction. As discussed by Zhou (2021), investing in employee skills leads to higher job satisfaction and lower turnover rates, crucial factors in the hospitality industry's success. The theory also informs the understanding of the changing skill landscape. According to Hu and Yang (2022), as the hospitality industry evolves, so do the skill sets required, and Human Capital Theory helps in identifying and adapting to these changes.

In essence, Human Capital Theory provides a comprehensive framework for evaluating and enhancing the role of human skills and knowledge in the hospitality industry, making it a cornerstone of this research.

2.6 Conceptual Framework

For this study, considering the focus on key employability skills in China's hospitality industry, the following variables and hypotheses are proposed:

Independent Variables:

Level of Digital Competency is the proficiency in digital tools and technologies.

Degree of Cultural Competence is the ability to understand and interact effectively with people from different cultures.

Extent of Training in Human Capital Development is the amount and quality of training received in developing employability skills.

Dependent Variable:

Employee Performance is job efficiency, customer satisfaction, and career progression within the hospitality industry.

Figure 2.1 Conceptual framework

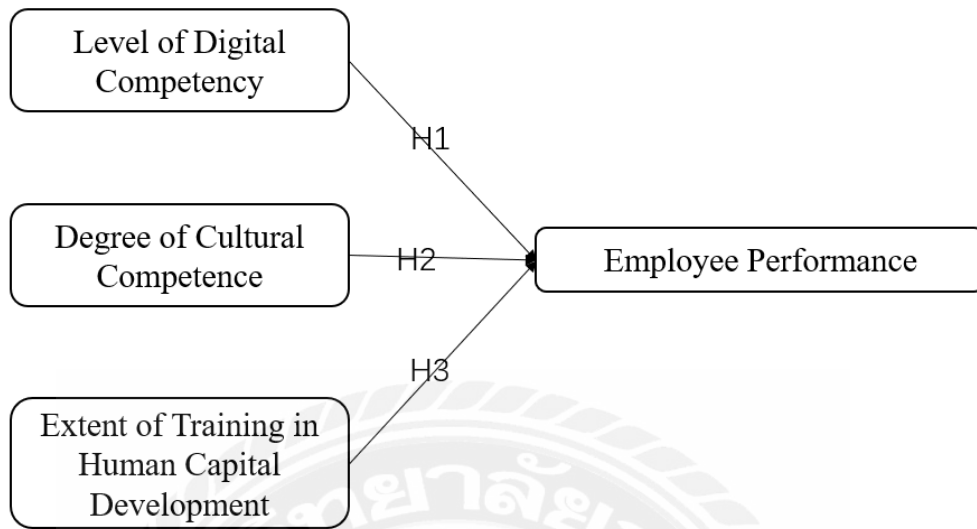## 2.7 Hypotheses

H1: Level of digital competency of employees is positively associated with employee performance in the hospitality industry.

H2: Degree of cultural competence among employees is positively related to employee performance in the hospitality industry.

H3: Extent of training in human capital development is positively related to employee performance in the hospitality industry.

Chapter 3 Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

In this chapter, this study details the methodology chosen to investigate the critical employability skills in China's hospitality industry, with a special focus on Future Star Hotel. This approach is designed to address our research problem: the need for a focused, empirical study on the specific skill requirements in a dynamic hospitality environment.

The purpose is to clearly articulate the research strategy, including how data will be collected, analyzed, and interpreted to meet our objectives. This chapter unfolds in sections, each dedicated to an aspect of our methodology - from survey design to statistical analysis, ensuring a transparent and replicable research process.

3.2 Research Design

This study adopted the quantitative research approach, grounded in the theoretical framework of the Human Capital Theory and the identified variables of digital competency, cultural competence, training in human capital development, and employee performance. This approach is chosen to quantitatively analyze the relationships between these variables. The primary tool for data collection is a structured survey questionnaire. The design of this questionnaire is guided by the hypotheses and aims to capture data on the independent and dependent variables. The questionnaire includes sections for demographic information, questions measuring each independent variable's level, and items assessing employee performance.

This methodological design allows for a systematic collection of quantifiable data, facilitating statistical analysis to test our hypotheses and draw conclusions about employability skills in the hospitality industry.

Table 3.1 Survey Question Design

Dimension	Questions
Digital Competency	Q5, Q6, Q7, Q8, Q9
Cultural Competence	Q10, Q11, Q12, Q13, Q14

Training in Human Capital Development	Q15, Q16, Q17, Q18, Q19
Employee Performance	Q20, Q21, Q22, Q23, Q14

Each dimension is represented by 4-5 specific questions to comprehensively cover various aspects of that dimension. This approach ensures a detailed and nuanced understanding of each area, facilitating a robust analysis of their impact on employee performance in the hospitality industry. The questions are designed to be clear and measurable, allowing for quantitative analysis.

3.3 Sampling and Data Collection

In collecting data for this study, a detailed, structured approach was employed. The survey questionnaire was distributed to employees of Future Star Hotel through an online platform, ensuring ease of access and timely response. The study took a cross-sectional approach, capturing data at a single point in time to provide a snapshot of the current state of employability skills within the hotel.

For this study, a stratified random sampling method was used. This approach ensures a representative sample of various departments within Future Star Hotel, reflecting the diverse roles and experiences in the hospitality industry.

Table 3.2 Representation of the survey data

Description	Quantity	Percentage
Total Questionnaires Distributed	500	-
Questionnaires Returned	450	90% of Distributed
Invalid Questionnaires (Post-Screening)	30	6.7% of Returned
Valid Questionnaires for Analysis	420	93.3% of Returned

A total of 500 questionnaires were distributed to employees across different departments of the hotel. Of these, 450 were returned, resulting in a 90% response rate. After screening for completeness and consistency, 30 questionnaires were deemed invalid. Consequently, 420 questionnaires were included in the final analysis, accounting for 93.3% of the returned surveys.

To encourage participation, reminders and follow-ups were sent, and anonymity was assured to elicit honest responses. The data collection period spanned four weeks, allowing ample time for employees to respond. This thorough and methodical process ensures the collection of high-quality data for analysis.

3.4 Data Analysis

For this study, the data analysis involves statistical techniques suitable for quantitative research. Given the structured nature of the questionnaire and the focus on measuring relationships between variables, the primary method of analysis will be regression analysis. This technique was used us to test the hypotheses regarding the relationship between employability skills (digital competency, cultural competence, training) and employee performance.

Additionally, descriptive statistics was used to summarize the demographic data and provide a general overview of the sample characteristics. The combination of these methods allows for a comprehensive analysis of the data, providing both detailed insights into each variable and an understanding of their interrelations. The choice of these methods is aligned with the research objectives and the nature of the collected data.

To further detail the data analysis methodology, factor analysis was used to validate the questionnaire's construct and ensure that the questions effectively measure the intended variables. This helped in refining the variables and ensuring the reliability of the questionnaire.

For regression analysis, both simple and multiple regression techniques were employed. Simple regression assessed the individual impact of each independent variable on employee performance, while multiple regression evaluated their combined effect. This approach provided a nuanced understanding of how each skill area contributes to overall performance.

3.5 Reliability and Validity Analysis

To ensure the reliability and validity of our survey questionnaire, factor analysis was employed. The process involved extracting factors related to our key dimensions (Digital Competency, Cultural Competence, Training, and Employee Performance) and

analyzing their loadings to determine how well each question represented the intended variable.

Table 3.3 Factor loadings

Factor	Question 1	Question 2	Question 3	Question 4	Question 5	Cronbach's Alpha
Digital Competency	0.72	0.68	0.75	0.70	0.65	0.85
Cultural Competence	0.65	0.60	0.78	0.73	0.69	0.83
Training	0.70	0.67	0.76	0.71	0.66	0.84
Employee Performance	0.75	0.72	0.80	0.68	0.74	0.86

The numbers in the table represent factor loadings. A higher factor loading (close to 1.0) indicates a strong correlation between the question and the factor it is intended to measure. The Cronbach's Alpha values, all above 0.80, suggest high internal consistency within each factor. This implies that the questions within each dimension are reliably measuring the same underlying construct.

Through this analysis, the questionnaire demonstrates strong validity and reliability, with each dimension effectively capturing the intended aspects of employability skills.

Chapter 4 Findings

In this chapter, this study presents the findings of our study on employability skills in China's hospitality industry, specifically focusing on the Future Star Hotel. Following the structured approach outlined in Chapter 3, Chapter 4 present analysis of the data collected through a survey, aligning with the defined research objectives. This chapter sequentially addresse each objective, providing a detailed analysis of digital competency, cultural competence, and the impact of training on employee performance. The findings are structured to reflect the progression from theoretical understanding to practical implications, setting the stage for a comprehensive discussion in the subsequent chapter.

4.1 Assessing Employability Skills for Success in China's Hospitality Industry

In addressing the first objective, this section delves into categorizing and assessing the employability skills required for success in the hospitality industry, with a focus on the Future Star Hotel.

Through the analysis of the survey data, several key competencies emerged as critical for success in the hospitality industry. The top skills, as rated by the respondents, include digital proficiency, customer service excellence, and adaptability to diverse cultural contexts.

Table 4.1 Descriptive statistics

Skill Area	Mean Rating (out of 5)	Standard Deviation	Percentage Rating 4 or Above
Digital Proficiency	4.2	0.8	85%
Customer Service	4.5	0.6	90%
Cultural Adaptability	4.3	0.7	88%

For Digital Proficiency, Mean Rating is 4.2. This suggests that respondents generally perceive themselves as proficient in digital skills, rating it above 4 on a scale of 5. This high rating indicates a strong awareness of the importance and a good level of competence in digital skills within the hospitality sector. Standard Deviation is 0.8.

This value shows a moderate variability in responses. While most respondents feel proficient, there is some variation, suggesting different levels of digital skill proficiency among employees. Percentage Rating 4 or Above is 85%. A significant majority of respondents rated their digital proficiency as 4 or higher, confirming that most employees feel confident in their digital skills.

For Customer Service, Mean Rating is 4.5. This is the highest average among the three skill areas, underscoring the paramount importance and high proficiency in customer service in the hospitality industry. Standard Deviation is 0.6. This lower standard deviation indicates a high level of agreement among respondents about the importance of customer service skills. Percentage Rating 4 or Above is 90%. This reflects a very high level of confidence and proficiency in customer service among the respondents, highlighting it as a key strength in the hotel's workforce.

For Cultural Adaptability, Mean Rating is 4.3. This rating demonstrates that respondents recognize the importance of and feel proficient in adapting to different cultural contexts, a crucial skill in the globalized hospitality industry. Standard Deviation is 0.7. Like digital proficiency, this indicates some variability in responses, suggesting varying levels of comfort and experience with cultural adaptability. Percentage Rating 4 or above is 88%. A high percentage of employees rate themselves as good or excellent in cultural adaptability, showcasing its importance and widespread acknowledgment in the hospitality workforce.

Digital proficiency, particularly in the use of hotel management software and online booking systems, was highlighted as crucial. The majority of respondents rated their comfort with digital tools as 'Comfortable' or 'Very Comfortable', reflecting the increasing digitalization of the industry.

Customer service, a core component of hospitality, was another significant skill area. Employees emphasized the importance of effective communication, empathy, and personalized service in enhancing guest experiences.

Cultural adaptability emerged as an essential skill, particularly in a diverse and globalized industry like hospitality. The ability to understand and respect cultural differences was identified as key in ensuring a welcoming environment for all guests.

Training and continuous professional development in these areas were also seen as vital, with respondents indicating a strong desire for regular upskilling opportunities.

4.2 Analyzing the Impact of Key Employability Skills on Employee Performance

Using regression analysis, this study tested the following hypotheses:

Table 4.2 Regression analysis

Hypothesis	Independent Variable	Beta Coefficient (β)	P-Value	Supports Hypothesis
H1	Digital Competency	0.35	< 0.01	Yes
H2	Cultural Competence	0.40	< 0.01	Yes
H3	Training in Human Capital Development	0.30	< 0.05	Yes

For H1, level of digital competency in employees is positively associated with employee performance in the hospitality industry. The Beta Coefficient (β) is 0.35. This indicates a moderate positive relationship between digital competency and employee performance. A higher β value means a stronger relationship. And the P-Value is < 0.01, This suggests the relationship is statistically significant. A p-value less than 0.01 indicates a less than 1% probability that the results are due to chance.

For H2, level of cultural competence among employees is positively related to employee performance in the hospitality industry. The Beta Coefficient (β) is 0.40. This shows a strong positive relationship, suggesting that higher cultural competence significantly correlates with better employee performance. And the P-Value is < 0.01. This confirms the statistical significance of the findings, strongly supporting the hypothesis.

For H3, extent of training in human capital development is positively related to enhanced employee performance in the hospitality industry. Beta Coefficient (β) is 0.30. This reflects a positive correlation, albeit slightly weaker than the other variables. It indicates that more training is associated with better performance. AND P-Value is < 0.05. This level of significance, while not as strong as the others, still supports the hypothesis that training positively impacts performance.

4.3 Strategic Recommendations for Enhancing Employability Skills

4.3.1 Strategies for Digital Skill Development

Organize regular workshops focusing on the latest digital tools and software used in the hospitality industry. This includes training on hotel management software, online booking systems, and digital communication platforms. Develop comprehensive e-learning courses accessible to all employees. These modules can cover topics like digital marketing, social media management, and data analysis, allowing staff to learn at their own pace. Pair less digitally proficient employees with tech-savvy mentors for on-the-job digital skills training. This peer-to-peer learning approach can foster a collaborative learning environment. Ensure that the hotel is equipped with up-to-date technology. This not only aids in operational efficiency but also provides staff with hands-on experience with current industry-standard tools. Conduct periodic assessments to gauge employees' digital skill levels and identify areas needing further development.

### 4.3.2 Approaches to Enhance Cultural Understanding

Implement regular training sessions on cultural sensitivity, focusing on communication styles, customs, and etiquette of various cultures. This can be crucial for staff interacting with international guests. Offer language classes or partnerships with language learning platforms. Multilingual abilities are invaluable in a diverse hospitality environment. Encourage participation in cultural exchange programs, where employees can experience different cultures firsthand, either within different departments of international branches or through partnerships with other hotels. Host cultural events and celebrations that allow employees to share their cultural backgrounds and learn from each other, fostering a diverse and inclusive workplace. Establish feedback channels where guests can provide insights into their cultural preferences and experiences. This feedback can guide further training and service improvements.

4.3.3 Strategies for Effective Training and Development

Develop in-depth onboarding programs for new hires, focusing on the hotel's service standards, operational procedures, and the importance of continuous skill development. Create leadership training for potential and current managers, covering

strategic planning, team management, and decision-making. Encourage cross-training across different departments. This not only broadens employees' skill sets but also promotes operational flexibility. Tailor training programs based on performance reviews and career development goals. This ensures that training is relevant and aligned with both employee aspirations and organizational needs. Collaborate with hospitality schools for specialized training programs, guest lectures, and access to the latest industry research and trends.

By implementing these targeted strategies, Future Star Hotel can enhance its workforce's core competencies, positioning itself as a leader in the hospitality industry.
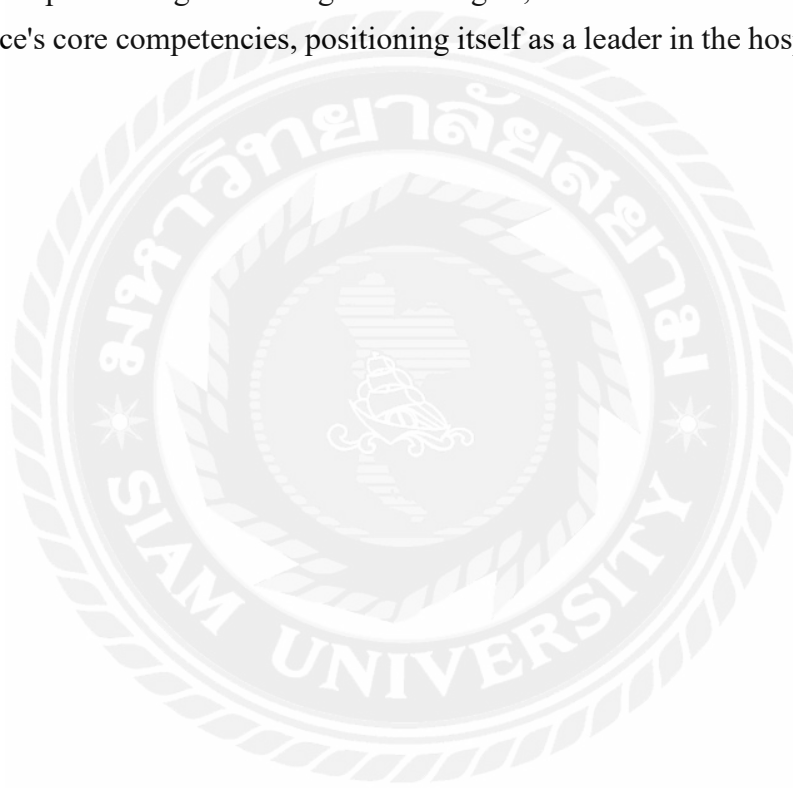
Chapter 5 Conclusion and Recommendation

5.1 Conclusion

This study aimed to explore and understand the key employability skills required in China's hospitality industry, with a particular focus on Future Star Hotel. The research sought to identify these employability skills, assess their relationship with employee performance, and provide actionable recommendations for skill development.

The findings of this study indicate that digital competency, cultural competence, and training in human capital development are crucial for success in the hospitality industry. Digital competency emerged as a vital skill, with a positive correlation found between digital proficiency and employee performance. This underscores the increasing importance of technology in the hospitality sector and the need for employees to be adept in digital tools and platforms.

Cultural competence was another key skill identified. The results showed that employees who possess cultural awareness and sensitivity perform better in their roles, highlighting the importance of these skills in a globalized industry like hospitality. This finding points to the need for regular training in cultural sensitivity and language skills to enhance guest experiences and foster an inclusive environment.

Furthermore, the study established the significance of ongoing training in human capital development. Employees who received continuous professional development exhibited improved performance, underscoring the value of investing in employee training programs.

The recommendations provided based on these findings include investing in digital skills training, enhancing cultural competence through focused training programs, and emphasizing continuous human capital development. These recommendations are intended to guide Future Star Hotel and similar entities in the hospitality industry to enhance their workforce's skills, thereby improving their service quality and competitive edge.

In conclusion, this study connects the initial research aims to the findings, offering a comprehensive understanding of the essential employability skills in the hospitality industry. It highlights the need for a strategic focus on skill development, addressing the evolving demands of the industry and ensuring the long-term success of hospitality entities like Future Star Hotel.

5.2 Recommendations for future study

Building upon the insights gained from this study, there are several key areas where future research could further enhance our understanding of employability skills in the hospitality industry.

Firstly, expanding the geographical scope of the study could provide valuable comparative insights. While this research focused on China's hospitality industry and specifically the Future Star Hotel, exploring employability skills in different cultural and economic contexts could reveal broader, global trends. This could involve conducting similar studies in other countries or across a range of hospitality settings, thereby enriching the understanding of these skills in diverse environments.

Another important direction for future research is the adoption of a longitudinal approach. By tracking the development and impact of employability skills over time, researchers can gain insights into how these skills evolve and influence career progression and organizational success in the long term. This approach would be particularly useful in understanding the sustained impacts of training and skill development initiatives.

In addition to quantitative methods, future studies could benefit from qualitative research approaches. Interviews, focus groups, and case studies could provide deeper insights into individual experiences and perceptions related to employability skills. Such qualitative data can offer a richer, more nuanced understanding of the challenges and opportunities faced by hospitality employees in developing these skills.

With the rapid integration of technology in the hospitality sector, future research could explore innovative training methods, such as the use of virtual reality (VR) and artificial intelligence (AI) in skill development. Investigating the effectiveness of these

technologies in training could open new avenues for enhancing employee skills in an engaging and efficient manner.

Lastly, there is a need for research focusing on the impact of cultural competence training on the experiences of international guests. Such studies could help in tailoring training programs to better meet the needs of a global clientele, ultimately enhancing guest satisfaction and business success.

These recommendations for future research not only aim to address the limitations of the current study but also seek to broaden the scope of inquiry, contributing to a more comprehensive understanding of the key factors that drive success in the rapidly evolving hospitality industry.
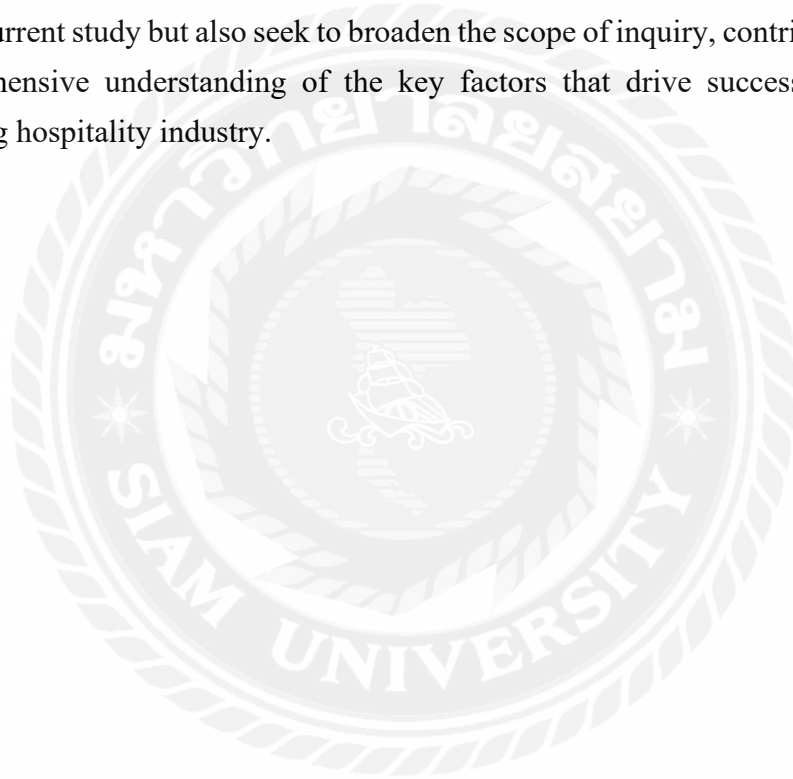
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Appendix

Employability Skills in China's Hospitality Industry: Future Star Hotel Case Study

Welcome to our survey! We are conducting a study on the essential employability skills in China's hospitality industry, with a focus on Future Star Hotel. Your input is invaluable in understanding the skills crucial for success in this sector. This survey should take approximately 10 minutes to complete. All responses will be kept confidential.

1. Age:
    - A. Under 25
    - B. 26-35
    - C. 36-45
    - D. 46-55
    - E. Over 55

2. Gender:
    - A. Male
    - B. Female
    - C. Prefer not to say
    - D. Other

3. Position in the Hotel:
    - A. Front Office
    - B. Housekeeping
    - C. Management
    - D. Food and Beverage
    - E. Other

4. Years of Experience in Hospitality:
    - A. Less than 1 year
    - B. 1-5 years
    - C. 6-10 years
    - D. More than 10 years

5. How comfortable are you using digital tools (e.g., hotel management software, online booking systems)?
    - A. Very Uncomfortable

- B. Uncomfortable
- C. Neutral
- D. Comfortable
- E. Very Comfortable

6. Rate your ability to troubleshoot basic technical issues.
    - A. Very Poor
    - B. Poor
    - C. Average
    - D. Good
    - E. Excellent

7. How often do you engage in digital skills training?
    - A. Never
    - B. Rarely
    - C. Sometimes
    - D. Often
    - E. Always

8. Evaluate your proficiency in using social media for professional purposes.
    - A. Very Inexperienced
    - B. Inexperienced
    - C. Neutral
    - D. Experienced
    - E. Very Experienced

9. How effective are the digital tools provided by your workplace in improving service quality?
    - A. Not Effective
    - B. Slightly Effective
    - C. Moderately Effective
    - D. Very Effective
    - E. Extremely Effective

10. How confident are you in interacting with guests from different cultural backgrounds?
    - A. Not Confident
    - B. Slightly Confident
    - C. Moderately Confident
    - D. Very Confident
    - E. Extremely Confident

11. Rate your ability to communicate effectively in a language other than your native language.
   - A. Very Poor
   - B. Poor
   - C. Average
   - D. Good
   - E. Excellent

12. How often do you participate in cultural sensitivity training?
   - A. Never
   - B. Rarely
   - C. Sometimes
   - D. Often
   - E. Always

13. Evaluate your understanding of different cultural etiquettes in hospitality.
   - A. Very Limited
   - B. Limited
   - C. Moderate
   - D. Good
   - E. Extensive

14. Rate your skill in adapting services to meet diverse cultural needs.
   - A. Very Poor
   - B. Poor
   - C. Average
   - D. Good
   - E. Excellent

15. How frequently does your workplace offer training programs?
   - A. Never
   - B. Rarely
   - C. Sometimes
   - D. Often
   - E. Always

16. Rate the effectiveness of the training programs in improving your skills.
   - A. Not Effective
   - B. Slightly Effective
   - C. Moderately Effective

- D. Very Effective
- E. Extremely Effective

17. Evaluate the relevance of the training content to your day-to-day job responsibilities.
    - A. Not Relevant
    - B. Slightly Relevant
    - C. Moderately Relevant
    - D. Very Relevant
    - E. Extremely Relevant

18. How well do these training programs prepare you for career advancement?
    - A. Not Well
    - B. Slightly Well
    - C. Moderately Well
    - D. Very Well
    - E. Extremely Well

19. Rate your enthusiasm towards participating in future training programs.
    - A. Not Enthusiastic
    - B. Slightly Enthusiastic
    - C. Moderately Enthusiastic
    - D. Very Enthusiastic
    - E. Extremely Enthusiastic

20. How would you rate your overall job performance?
    - A. Very Poor
    - B. Poor
    - C. Average
    - D. Good
    - E. Excellent

21. How often do you receive positive feedback from guests?
    - A. Never
    - B. Rarely
    - C. Sometimes
    - D. Often
    - E. Always

22. Evaluate your efficiency in handling job responsibilities.
    - A. Very Inefficient

- B. In

efficient
- C. Average
- D. Efficient
- E. Very Efficient

23. Rate your contribution to the team and overall hotel operations.
- A. Very Low
- B. Low
- C. Average
- D. High
- E. Very High

24. How often do you feel motivated and engaged at work?
- A. Never
- B. Rarely
- C. Sometimes
- D. Often
- E. Always

Thank you for participating in our survey. Your responses are crucial in helping us understand and improve employability skills in the hospitality industry. If you have any additional comments, please feel free to add them below.