

Modernization Initiatives in the Hospitality and Tourism Sector of Pasig City: An Exploratory Assessment

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Abstract - The hospitality and tourism sector of Pasig City significantly contributes to urban economic activity and employment. Technological advancements, sustainability expectations, and post-crisis challenges necessitate modernization. This study explores the relevance and extent of modernization initiatives, focusing on digital transformation, sustainable practices, service innovation, and resilience strategies. A descriptive-analytical design was employed using field observations, consultations with hospitality practitioners and interns, and secondary sources from literature, tourism plans, and policy documents. Findings indicate adoption of digital tools, including online reservations, QR-code menus, social media marketing, and cashless payments. Sustainability initiatives, such as waste reduction, energy conservation, and local sourcing, are emerging but unevenly implemented. Culinary and cultural innovations, exemplified by the Pasig on a Plate gastronomic tour, enhance destination identity and visitor engagement (Malaya Business Insight, 2025). Digital marketing and experiential strategies further engage younger audiences (Anthony, 2025). Gaps remain in advanced technology use, workforce preparedness, and coordinated governance. Policy support, targeted capacity-building, and collaboration between academia and industry are recommended to sustain modernization and strengthen sectoral resilience.

Keywords: hospitality modernization, tourism development, digital transformation, Pasig City, sustainable tourism

I. INTRODUCTION

Urban hospitality and tourism are transforming due to technology, sustainability, and changing consumer expectations (Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019; Hall & Gössling, 2016). Pasig City holds a strategic position within the Philippines due to its economic vitality, accessibility, and cultural assets, hosting hotels, restaurants, event venues, and leisure facilities.

Modernization challenges include the demand for contactless services, data-informed operations, environmentally responsible practices, and post-

crisis adaptability (Sigala, 2020). Modernization involves digital systems, service innovation, workforce development, and sustainable tourism aligned with SDG 11 and SDG 12 (UNWTO, 2021). Culinary tourism initiatives, such as the *Pasig on a Plate* tour, showcase the potential of local cuisine to strengthen destination identity (Malaya Business Insight, 2025), while experiential marketing strategies attract younger, digitally engaged visitors (Anthony, 2025).

II. METHODS

Research Design

A descriptive-analytical design was employed to examine modernization initiatives and their alignment with research priorities and industry frameworks (Creswell & Creswell, 2017).

Data Collection

Primary data included structured field observations of hotels, restaurants, and tourism enterprises, along with informal consultations with managers, staff, and interns. Secondary data were drawn from academic literature, tourism plans, policy documents, and institutional research on digitalization, sustainability, and service innovation (Law et al., 2014; Dela Cruz & Tolentino, 2020).

Scope and Participants

The study focused on selected hospitality establishments in Pasig City. Participants included managers, frontline staff, and interns, providing insights into operations, workforce readiness, and innovation practices.

Data Analysis

Thematic analysis organized findings into digital transformation, sustainability, cultural and service innovation, and post-crisis resilience. Patterns, gaps, and alignment with modernization objectives were interpreted descriptively.

III. RESULTS

Digital Transformation

Most establishments have adopted digital tools such as online reservations, QR-code menus, social media marketing, and cashless payments, improving

efficiency and customer convenience (Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019; Anthony, 2025). Advanced technologies, including AI-supported forecasting, integrated management systems, and data analytics, remain limited, especially in SMEs (Gretzel et al., 2015).

Table 1
Digital Technologies Adopted by Hospitality Establishments in Pasig City

Technology	Adoption Level	Observed Impact
Online reservations	High	Improved customer convenience
QR-code menus	Moderate	Contactless service
Social media marketing	High	Increased visibility
Cashless payments	Moderate	Faster transactions
AI-supported analytics	Low	Limited adoption

Sustainable Tourism Practices

Establishments implement sustainability initiatives such as waste segregation, reduced single-use plastics, energy conservation, and local sourcing. Adoption of formal certifications and climate-resilient infrastructure is uneven due to financial and technical constraints (Hall & Gössling, 2016; Sigala, 2018).

Cultural and Destination Innovations

Cultural and culinary initiatives, including the *Pasig on a Plate* tour, enhance destination appeal (Malaya Business Insight, 2025). Filipino cuisine and local dining concepts are promoted via digital platforms, though integration with digital destination management is limited (Richards, 2011).

Workforce Preparedness

Staff and interns show adaptability to basic digital tools but gaps exist in advanced digital skills, sustainability knowledge, and crisis management (Baum, 2015; Dela Cruz & Tolentino, 2020). Some establishments have introduced hybrid service models and long-stay arrangements, though these remain in early stages.

IV. DISCUSSION

Modernization in Pasig City is progressing in digital adoption, sustainability awareness, and service innovation, though implementation varies across establishments. Culinary initiatives, particularly *Pasig on a Plate*, highlight opportunities to strengthen tourism identity and digital engagement

(Malaya Business Insight, 2025; Anthony, 2025). Wider adoption of sustainability practices requires institutional support and incentives (UNWTO, 2021; DOT, 2019). Workforce preparedness is critical, underscoring the need for alignment between education, internships, and industry requirements (Baum, 2015; Sigala, 2020). Collaborative governance among government, industry, and academia is essential to ensure continuous modernization and post-crisis resilience.

V. CONCLUSION

Modernization is essential for sustainable tourism in Pasig City. While progress has been made in digital adoption, sustainability practices, and service innovation, challenges remain in advanced technology, workforce readiness, and coordinated governance. Policy support, capacity-building, and collaborative partnerships are recommended to sustain modernization and strengthen sectoral resilience.

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