“Influence of digital transformation and strategic learning on agility and performance of Thai hotels”

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INFLUENCE OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION AND STRATEGIC LEARNING ON AGILITY AND PERFORMANCE OF THAI HOTELS

Abstract

This study investigates the influence of digital transformation capability and strategic learning capability on strategic agility as well as competitive and innovative performance of Thai hotels. The sample consisted of 303 4–5-star hotels, selected through simple random sampling from a total population of 2,079 hotels nationwide. Data were collected through questionnaires and analyzed using structural equation modeling. The results revealed that digital transformation capability significantly influences strategic agility (β = 0.249, *t* = 5.182). Strategic learning capability, which encompasses strategic knowledge generation (β = 0.309, *t* = 5.759), strategic knowledge interpretation (β = 0.118, *t* = 2.325), strategic knowledge implementation (β = 0.266, *t* = 5.561), and strategic knowledge database (β = 0.106, *t* = 3.395), also has a positive impact on strategic agility. Furthermore, strategic agility positively affects competitive and innovative performance (β = 0.313, *t* = 4.984). It also serves as a mediator in the relationships between digital transformation capability (β = 0.078, *t* = 3.834), strategic knowledge generation (β = 0.097, *t* = 3.671), strategic knowledge interpretation (β = 0.037, *t* = 2.015), strategic knowledge implementation (β = 0.083, *t* = 3.704), and strategic knowledge database (β = 0.033, *t* = 2.651) on competitive and innovative performance. The findings offer hotel operators valuable insights into the importance of developing digital transformation capabilities and strategic learning capabilities to enhance strategic agility, which in turn leads to improved competitive and innovative performance, particularly within a volatile and uncertain business environment.

Keywords digital transformation, strategic learning, agility, competitiveness, innovation, performance

JEL Classification O33, L26, L16

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INTRODUCTION

The world today is facing rapid and significant changes in various dimensions, including ecological issues, global warming, and drought. Additionally, economic challenges, such as rising inflation to its highest levels in decades, have compelled countries to adopt stricter monetary policies; meanwhile, low-income countries are grappling with severe fiscal problems (International Monetary Fund, n.d.). The ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine has further heightened tensions worldwide. Although the COVID-19 pandemic has declined, it continues to influence economic activities in several countries (OECD, 2022). These changes are ongoing and deeply connected to the competitive dynamics of business organizations. Thailand is among the countries significantly affected by these global shifts. For example, the COVID-19 pandemic had a substantial impact on the Thai economy, resulting in a 6.1% contraction in 2020 compared to the previous year (National Economic and Social Development Board, 2021). This eco-

nomic downturn has prompted organizations in Thailand, especially in the business sector, to adapt their behaviors and acquire knowledge to respond more effectively to changes.

Additionally, the transition into the digital economy, characterized by the continuous advancement of information technology, has resulted in evolving consumer behaviors driven by modern technologies. Failure to adapt and respond to these global trends could harm businesses and their performance, both in the present and future. Consequently, business operators must adjust their business models by integrating technology to enhance the value of their products and services, utilizing online channels to communicate with consumers, and learning to acquire and generate new knowledge to develop organizational strategies (Teece & Linden, 2017). One of the business sectors in Thailand that has been severely impacted and is striving to adapt for survival in the hotel industry. It is a key component of the tourism and service sector, which plays a significant role in the country's economy. Tourism revenue accounted for 17.9% of Thailand's GDP in 2019 (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2020). However, amidst the ongoing crises, the hotel industry in Thailand has been heavily affected, resulting in a 71.87% decrease in 2020 compared to the previous year (Department of Business Development, 2021).

Against such a shifting dynamic of the globally competitive business environment mentioned above, the adoption of digital technologies and the development of strategic learning have emerged as essential capabilities for businesses to navigate uncertainty and sustain growth. Digital transformation capability enables organizations to leverage technology for operational efficiency and market adaptability, while strategic learning capability fosters continuous knowledge acquisition and strategic adaptation. This, in turn, will lead to more efficient and effective, as well as competitive and innovative, performance. Due to the aforementioned key issues, the study on the influence of digital transformation capability and strategic learning capability on organizational agility and performance in the context of the hotel business in Thailand is, therefore, essential. Such research can contribute to strengthening hotel management and supporting the tourism industry in maintaining its vital role in the country's economic development.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

In the rapidly changing business landscape, organizations are facing increasing challenges in maintaining their competitive edge. To navigate this volatile environment, businesses must develop dynamic capabilities that enable them to sense, seize, and reallocate resources in response to market and global shifts (Teece, 2016; Kaur, 2023). This study draws upon the dynamic capability theory to examine how digital transformation capability and strategic learning capability influence strategic agility and, subsequently, competitive and innovative performance in the Thai hotel industry.

Digital transformation has become a critical imperative for businesses across industries, driven by the widespread adoption of digital technologies, intensifying global competition, and evolving consumer behaviors (Verhoef et al., 2021; Beckers et al., 2018). Digital transformation capability refers to an organization's ability to align technology adoption with its objectives, manage human resources efficiently, and redesign business processes to facilitate continuous improvement and development (Warner & Wäger, 2019). Indeed, digital transformation capability has played a crucial role in creating, integrating, and reconfiguring resources to address highly volatile environments within the dynamic capability framework.

Strategic learning capability is another vital aspect of an organization's ability to adapt and thrive in dynamic contexts. It includes generating, interpreting, implementing, and storing processes of strategic knowledge to drive organizational learning and strategic adaptation (Al Ahdab, 2021; Moon et al., 2017; Awad et al., 2021). By fostering continuous learning and leveraging past experiences, strategic learning capability enables organizations to recognize and act upon specific knowl-

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edge, thereby enhancing their long-term adaptive capabilities. Various scholars have identified multiple dimensions of strategic learning capability, categorized differently depending on the context of the study.

Strategic knowledge generation refers to the process of learning from the internal and external environments of the organization by exploring new ideas, possibilities, and understanding of customer needs and gathering this as strategic information (Al Ahdab, 2021). Previous studies demonstrated that strategic knowledge generation has played a crucial role in enhancing organizational agility by providing a foundation for data-driven decision-making and adaptation (Chung et al., 2019). Furthermore, it is an essential capability for acquiring new knowledge, which significantly influences strategic agility, particularly the ability to learn from customers, competitors, and business partners, allowing organizations to anticipate trends and market demands and quickly adapt to changes (Mavengere, 2013).

Strategic knowledge interpretation is the process of creating meaning by analyzing and interpreting data through the exchange of diverse perspectives regarding potential opportunities, leading to strategic actions within the organization (Moon et al., 2017). Previous studies have proven that strategic knowledge interpretation allows organizations to develop a clearer understanding of market trends, customer preferences, and the competitive environment, enabling them to anticipate changes and proactively respond to emerging opportunities and threats. Additionally, strategic knowledge interpretation promotes employee involvement at all levels by encouraging the sharing of insights and expertise, which enhances decision-making and fosters a sense of ownership, further promoting agility (Santoro et al., 2018).

Strategic knowledge implementation involves applying all learning processes to create new strategic knowledge, such as designing organizational systems, structures, and activities to respond to unpredictable environmental changes (Moon et al., 2017). Al-jawazneh and Al-Awawdeh (2016) noticed that strategic knowledge implementation is associated with the use of formal procedures or systems that maximize the benefits of knowledge in organizational operations and improve its integration into business processes, thereby enhancing agility. Moreover, knowledge implementation is a key element of knowledge management, where the application of new knowledge improves workflows, develops products and services, and creates new business models, enabling organizations to respond to changes rapidly and creatively.

Strategic knowledge database refers to the creation of a learning cycle that leverages past experiences as a knowledge base for analyzing and evaluating situations to address new business challenges (Awad et al., 2021). Accordingly, the reuse of knowledge and experience enhances agility by driving processes that adapt organizational structures based on past learning. This promotes flexibility and efficiency in responding to dynamic market demands (Llamas et al., 2016).

Strategic agility has emerged as a critical factor that enables organizations to proactively sense and respond to environmental changes. It allows businesses to avoid disruptions, enhance operational flexibility, and swiftly adapt through systematic processes and structural adjustments (Doz, 2020). From the dynamic capability perspective, strategic agility is viewed as an internal capability that involves reconfiguring resources and activities to respond to unpredictable and ongoing environmental changes (Kongrode et al., 2023). Previous studies have emphasized that strategic agility improves innovative operational performance, product reliability, service quality, speed, and efficiency. Agile organizations have been shown to be able to react faster in order to take advantage of business environment opportunities. Organizations that are strategically agile have a higher potential to improve financial performance, increase market share, and enhance resource effectiveness and efficiency (Al-Tameemi & Abd-Alghafur, 2020). Most studies related to the relationship between strategic agility and organizational competitive and innovative performance across industries indicated that companies implementing strategic agility techniques anticipated a larger extent of organizational improvement in both overall performance and competitive advantage.

Competitive and innovative performance is a fundamental aspect of economic development for businesses operating in dynamic environments

(Salehzadeh et al., 2020). To evaluate competitive and innovative performance, this study adopts the balanced scorecard framework, which considers multiple perspectives, including financial, customer, internal business processes, and learning and growth (Kaplan & Norton, 1996). Innovation, as a key element, enhances competitive capability and ignites organizations to adapt sustainably and respond to market conditions (Garrido-Moreno et al., 2024; Dharmayanti et al., 2023).

Given digital technology development and widespread use in all markets, businesses are experiencing substantial changes. To capture customer attention, organizations are facing heightened competition driven by globalization (Westerman et al., 2011), compelling them to adopt digital transformation ahead of their competitors to ensure survival and achieve a competitive advantage. Digital transformation has evolved from a technological opportunity to a critical necessity for managing the increasing demands and expectations of consumers (Kraus et al., 2021), affecting both organizations and their business operations. This transformation leads to a reconfiguration of organizational processes and tasks, altering the organizational logic or the value-creation process and thereby influencing interactions with suppliers, customers, and competitors (Singh & Hess, 2020). Digital transformation integrates digital technologies into every facet of an organization's activities, resulting in structural modifications to the way the business functions and provides value to clients. Matt et al. (2015) found that increased sales, productivity, innovation in value creation, and new forms of customer interaction are key drivers of successful digital transformation. Moreover, Warner and Wäger (2019) discovered that digital transformation capability enhances organizational agility, which in turn leads to higher competitiveness. Digital capabilities enable organizations to quickly adapt their business models and respond more effectively to business disruptions, thereby creating a competitive advantage over their rivals.

Strategic learning capability is a long-term adaptive capability that allows organizations to deviate, learn, and improve from their previous strategies. Organizational learning appears in various forms and differs across organizations, as each must learn how to survive and adapt to continuously changing conditions. Organizational learning plays a crucial role in achieving improved business performance. Previous studies have noticed that failure to update learning systems to keep pace with business changes, along with entrepreneurs not absorbing or utilizing external knowledge to innovate new business models, creates significant obstacles to business success (Sungthong et al., 2023). Strategic knowledge generation, which involves learning from both internal and external environments to generate new knowledge that can be used to adjust organizational strategies to align with the environment, has been confirmed as essential to enhancing innovation efficiency within organizations (Iyer et al., 2017). Furthermore, organizational learning, including the ability to continuously generate new knowledge, improves organizational innovation performance by increasing strategic agility, which enhances an organization's ability to proactively sense and adapt to environmental changes. This leads to the rapid and efficient delivery of innovations that meet market demands.

Strategic knowledge interpretation leads to improved competitive and innovative performance by analyzing and interpreting data, as well as exchanging diverse perspectives on potential opportunities for strategic actions. Academic studies have confirmed that strategic knowledge interpretation through collaboration positively influences various perspectives of the balanced scorecard, showing a positive impact on customer performance, innovation, and learning efficiency, and internal process efficiency (Gonzalez-Padron et al., 2010). Empirical studies also confirm that strategic knowledge interpretation, as part of the strategic learning process, enhances competitive and innovative performance. Additionally, the ability to interpret and apply knowledge is a key component that increases organizational agility, facilitating rapid and creative responses to environmental changes, which in turn leads to the development of innovations that surpass competitors (Shamim et al., 2019).

Strategic knowledge implementation, through the process of leveraging all learning processes to create new strategic knowledge – such as building organizational systems, structures, and activities to respond to unpredictable environmental changes

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– results in improved competitive performance. It also enhances employee performance (Alam et al., 2023) and improves service quality and decision-making processes, which, in turn, impacts the overall operational efficiency of the organization. Therefore, strategic knowledge implementation, as part of the strategic learning process, contributes to enhanced competitive and innovative performance. Additionally, the application of knowledge plays a critical role in increasing organizational agility, enabling organizations to rapidly and creatively adapt whenever facing new challenges, leading to the development of new strategies and business models that create competitive advantages. The effective utilization of knowledge also allows organizations to be more flexible and responsive to changes, stimulating the development of new products and services that meet market demands, thereby leading to higher long-term competitiveness (Xu et al., 2021).

Strategic knowledge database, by establishing a learning cycle that uses past experiences as a knowledge base for analyzing and evaluating current situations to address new business challenges, enhances business performance through knowledge sharing and the reuse of prior experiences (Battisti et al., 2022). This results in improved competitive and innovative performance. Additionally, the storage and reuse of knowledge make it easier for employees to access and apply knowledge, leading to increased overall operational efficiency.

Previous research has highlighted the positive influence of digital transformation capability and strategic learning capability on strategic agility, as well as the impact of strategic agility on competitive and innovative performance (Troise et al., 2022; Chung et al., 2019; Doz, 2020; Abuanzeh et al., 2022; Al-Tameemi & Abd-Alghafur, 2020). However, there were limited studies on the mediating role of strategic agility in the relationships between digital transformation capability, strategic learning capability components, and competitive and innovative performance, particularly in the context of the Thai hotel industry. This study aims to address this gap by examining the direct and indirect effects of digital transformation capability and strategic learning capability on competitive and innovative performance through strategic agility, offering valuable insights for hotel businesses navigating the challenges of a volatile and uncertain business environment. In summary, the literature review indicates that both digital transformation capability and strategic learning capability – through the dimensions of strategic knowledge generation, strategic knowledge interpretation, strategic knowledge implementation, and strategic knowledge database – exert an influence on strategic agility and competitive and innovative performance. Accordingly, this study aims to investigate the relationships among digital transformation capability, strategic learning capability, and competitive and innovative performance within the context of 4–5-star hotels in Thailand. The goal is to generate insights that can inform policy-making in human capital management and strategic organizational management through technological advancement and knowledge management within standard-rated hotels, i.e., an essential component of Thailand's hospitality industry. Thus, based on prior research, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1: Digital transformation capability positively influences strategic agility.

H2: Strategic knowledge generation positively influences strategic agility.

H3: Strategic knowledge interpretation positively influences strategic agility.

H4: Strategic knowledge implementation positively influences strategic agility.

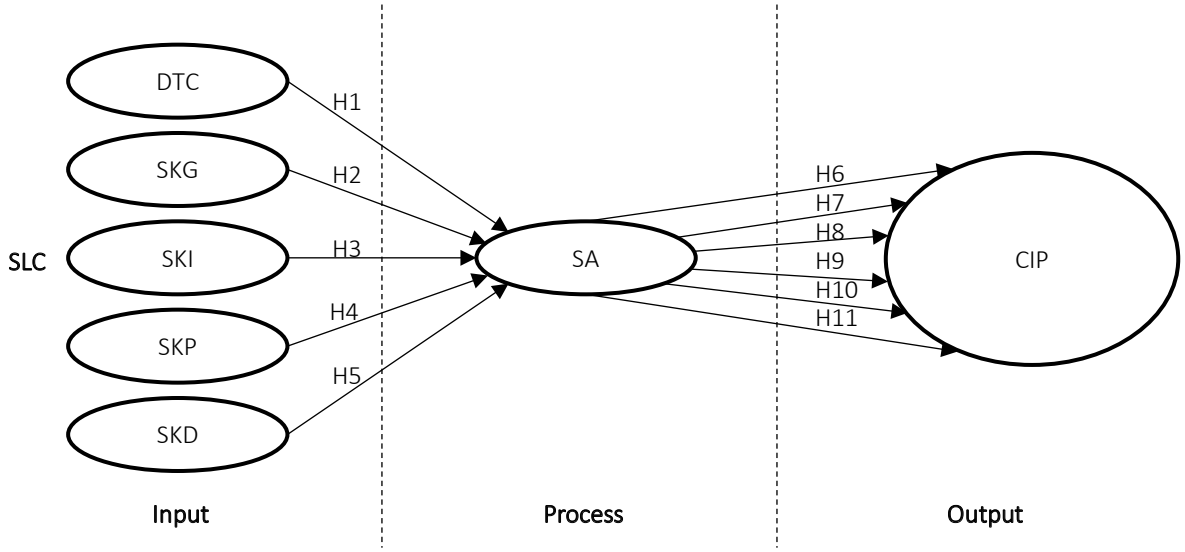
H5: Strategic knowledge database positively influences strategic agility.

H6: Strategic agility positively influences competitive and innovative performance.

H7: Digital transformation capability positively influences competitive and innovative performance through strategic agility.

H8: Strategic knowledge generation positively influences competitive and innovative performance through strategic agility.

H9: Strategic knowledge interpretation positively influences competitive and innovative performance through strategic agility.



Note: DTC = digital transformation capability; SA = strategic agility; CIP = competitive and innovative performance; SLC = strategic learning capability; SKG = strategic knowledge generation; SKP = strategic knowledge implementation; SKD = strategic knowledge database; SKI = strategic knowledge interpretation.

Figure 1. Conceptual framework

H10: Strategic knowledge implementation positively influences competitive and innovative performance through strategic agility.

H11: Strategic knowledge database positively influences competitive and innovative performance through strategic agility.

The research framework is illustrated in Figure 1.

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Population and sample

This study followed a causal research approach using a survey to collect data on strategic learning in the hotel business in Thailand by Sungthong et al. (2025). An appropriate sample size suitable for data analysis using structural equation modeling (SEM) employed the guidelines by Hair et al. (2019). More than three observed variables measured latent variables; the minimum sample size required was 150. The sample was selected using a simple random sampling method from a total population of 2,079 four- and five-star hotels in Thailand (Agoda, n.d.). Upon collecting the questionnaires, it was found that 303 valid responses were received, which was sufficient for structural equation modeling (SEM) analysis, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Population and sample size

Source: Agoda (n.d.).

Region	Population	Sample Size
Northern	347	48
Central	599	88
Northeastern	148	28
Eastern	320	31
Southern	665	108
Total	2,079	303

2.2. Data collection and analysis

The research instrument for this study was a questionnaire. It was developed following the literature review and consisted of eight sections (Appendix A). The questions included both organizational characteristics and variables, and responses were scored using a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Data were collected through questionnaires from hotel general managers during June–August 2024. General managers were respondents as they possess a comprehensive understanding of the management processes, organizational policies, and strategies. They also hold decision-making authority regarding various forms of organizational development policies. The respondent characteristics are summarized in Table 2.

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Table 2. Characteristics of the sample

Source: Sungthong et al. (2025).

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage
Type of Hotel		
Hotel	245	80.90
Resort	58	19.10
Star Rating		
4 Stars	196	64.70
5 Stars	107	35.30
Years in Operation		
Less than or equal to 5 years	70	23.10
6–10 years	113	37.30
11–15 years	74	24.40
More than 15 years	46	15.20
Hotel Location		
Northern	48	15.84
Northeastern	28	9.24
Eastern	31	10.23
Central	88	29.04
Southern	108	35.65

The questionnaire was formulated based on a comprehensive review of relevant literature to ensure content validity. The questions were carefully selected to cover the key constructs of the study, namely digital transformation capability, strategic learning capability, strategic agility, and competitive and innovative performance. The questionnaire items were adapted from established scales used in previous studies to enhance reliability. A pilot test was conducted with a small group of hotel managers to assess its clarity, comprehensiveness, and relevance. Based on their feedback, a minor revision was made to improve the questionnaire's readability and validity. The final version of the questionnaire is provided in Appendix A. The analysis used partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) to analyze data and confirm hypotheses statistically derived from related theories or theoretical contents in a causal form. This data analysis process involves two main steps: evaluating the measurement model and evaluating the structural model.

3. RESULTS

3.1. Measurement model assessment

The variables in this study comprised digital transformation capability, strategic learning capability, strategic agility, and competitive and innovative performance. The mean, standard deviation, and confirmatory factor loadings exceeded the value of 0.7, indicating that each construct was considerably acceptable (Hair et al., 2019). Additionally, the study assessed reliability and validity, specifically internal consistency reliability, which evaluated whether the observed variables of the same construct measured the same underlying concept. This assessment considered three criteria (Cronbach's alpha, rho_A, and composite reliability (CR)), with all three values expected to range between 0.700 and 0.900 (Hair et al., 2019). The finding revealed that Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.752 to 0.939, rho_A values ranged from 0.825 to 0.940, and composite reliability (CR) values ranged from 0.883 to 0.947. These values confirmed that the variables met the specified thresholds, suggesting that the indicators within each construct were consistent in measuring the same construct. The results are presented in Table 3. This study also assessed convergent validity, which referred to the extent to which indicators of the same construct shared a high degree of variance in explaining the same component. This was evaluated using the average variance extracted (AVE), which should be greater than 0.500. As shown in Table 3, results indicated that each variable fell within the acceptable range.

Table 3. Reliability and validity values

Variable	Mean	S.D.	Cronbach's	rho_A	CR	AVE
DTC	3.871	0.610	0.841	0.844	0.894	0.678
SKG	3.776	0.649	0.839	0.848	0.904	0.758
SKI	3.998	0.494	0.823	0.825	0.883	0.653
SKP	3.868	0.669	0.857	0.857	0.933	0.875
SKD	3.962	0.591	0.752	0.856	0.885	0.795
SA	4.043	0.509	0.906	0.907	0.928	0.681
CIP	4.043	0.509	0.939	0.940	0.947	0.601

Note: DTC = digital transformation capability; CIP = competitive and innovative performance; SKG = strategic knowledge generation; SKP = strategic knowledge implementation; SKD = strategic knowledge database; SKI = strategic knowledge interpretation; SA = strategic agility.

The assessment of discriminant validity was conducted to ensure that each construct measures distinct attributes. This was evaluated using the Fornell–Larcker criterion and the heterotrait-monotrait ratio (HTMT) analysis, both of which indicated acceptable levels of discriminant validity. The measurement results demonstrated reliability and validity, making them suitable for evaluating all hypotheses. The results of the statistical

analysis are presented in Tables 4 and 5. Thus, the measurement model for the variables is appropriate for testing the study's hypotheses.

Table 4. Fornell–Larcker criterion

Variable	CIP	DTC	SA	SKD	SKG	SKP	SKI
CIP	0.775	–	–	–	–	–	–
DTC	0.764	0.823	–	–	–	–	–
SA	0.716	0.753	0.825	–	–	–	–
SKD	0.430	0.346	0.469	0.891	–	–	–
SKG	0.742	0.734	0.776	0.326	0.871	–	–
SKP	0.710	0.614	0.748	0.481	0.614	0.935	–
SKI	0.746	0.647	0.744	0.403	0.721	0.747	0.808

Note: DTC = digital transformation capability; CIP = competitive and innovative performance; SKG = strategic knowledge generation; SKP = strategic knowledge implementation; SKD = strategic knowledge database; SKI = strategic knowledge interpretation; SA = strategic agility.

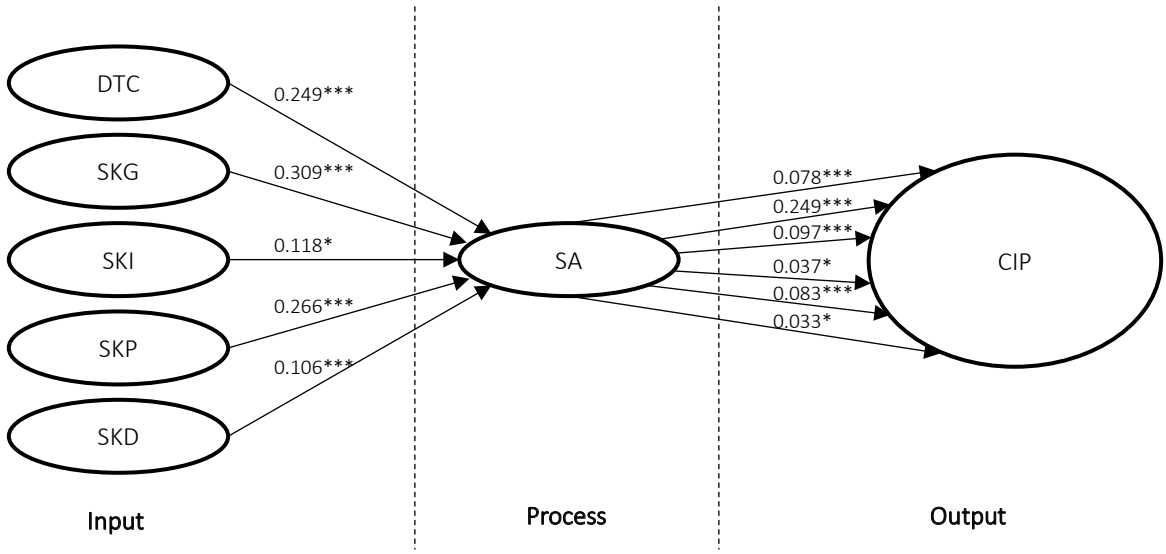
Table 5. Heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio

Variable	CIP	DTC	SA	SKD	SKG	SKP	SKI
CIP	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
DTC	0.857	–	–	–	–	–	–
SA	0.883	0.858	–	–	–	–	–
SKD	0.493	0.415	0.544	–	–	–	–
SKG	0.833	0.870	0.886	0.381	–	–	–
SKP	0.791	0.721	0.849	0.591	0.722	–	–
SKI	0.847	0.774	0.858	0.492	0.869	0.885	–

Note: DTC = digital transformation capability; CIP = competitive and innovative performance; SKG = strategic knowledge generation; SKP = strategic knowledge implementation; SKD = strategic knowledge database; SKI = strategic knowledge interpretation; SA = strategic agility.

3.2. Structural model assessment

The paper employed structural equation modeling (SEM) to analyze the relationships between latent variables by testing hypotheses involving multiple factors simultaneously. This method assessed the relationships and consistency of the research model based on the hypotheses and empirical data. The analytical results of direct effects are presented in Figure 2 and Table 6. The data analysis revealed that the independent variables – digital transformation capability, strategic knowledge generation, strategic knowledge interpretation, strategic knowledge implementation, and strategic knowledge database – positively influence the dependent variable, which is strategic agility. This study also analyzed the mediating effect of strategic agility on the relationships among digital transformation capability, strategic knowledge generation, strategic knowledge interpretation, strategic knowledge implementation, and strategic knowledge database, which together form strategic learning capability, on digital transformation capability. The results are presented in Table 7. The findings on the indirect effects of strategic agility, as a mediating variable, indicate that digital transformation capability, strategic knowledge generation, strategic knowledge interpretation, strategic knowledge implementation, and strategic knowledge database have indirect effects on



Note: * *p*-value < 0.05, ** *p*-value < 0.01, *** *p*-value < 0.001. DTC = digital transformation capability; CIP = competitive and innovative performance; SKG = strategic knowledge generation; SKD = strategic knowledge database; SKP = strategic knowledge implementation; SKI = strategic knowledge interpretation; SA = strategic agility.

Figure 2. Structural model

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Table 6. Direct effects analysis

Hypothesis	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Beta	t	p-values
H1	DTC	SA	0.249	5.182	0.000
H2	SKG	SA	0.309	5.759	0.000
H3	SKI	SA	0.118	2.325	0.020
H4	SKP	SA	0.266	5.561	0.000
H5	SKD	SA	0.106	3.395	0.001
H6	SA	CIP	0.313	4.984	0.000

Note: DTC = digital transformation capability; CIP = competitive and innovative performance; SKG = strategic knowledge generation; SKP = strategic knowledge implementation; SKD = strategic knowledge database; SKI = strategic knowledge interpretation; SA = strategic agility.

Table 7. Mediation effect analysis

Hypothesis	Independent variable	Dependent variable	Mediating variable	Beta	t	p-values
H7	DTC	CIP	SA	0.078	3.834	0.000
H8	SKG	CIP	SA	0.097	3.671	0.000
H9	SKI	CIP	SA	0.037	2.015	0.044
H10	SKP	CIP	SA	0.083	3.704	0.000
H11	SKD	CIP	SA	0.033	2.651	0.008

Note: DTC = digital transformation capability; CIP = competitive and innovative performance; SKG = strategic knowledge generation; SKP = strategic knowledge implementation; SKD = strategic knowledge database; SKI = strategic knowledge interpretation; SA = strategic agility.

digital transformation capability. The findings of this study indicated that the analysis of the structural equation model revealed the influence between the constructs, which aligned with the research hypotheses. Therefore, all hypotheses were supported.

4. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study reveal that digital transformation capability significantly influences strategic agility (β = 0.249, *t* = 5.182), consistent with the empirical evidence by Troise et al. (2022). This suggests that organizations with a strong ability to align technology adoption with their objectives, manage human resources efficiently, and redesign business processes through digital technologies tend to exhibit greater agility in adapting to external environmental changes. Furthermore, the findings show that digital transformation capability indirectly influences competitive and innovative performance by enhancing an organization's strategic agility (β = 0.078, *t* = 3.834). This finding furthers the previous study of Warner and Wäger (2019), who found that digital transformation capability enhances organizational agility, leading to higher competitiveness, by demonstrating the mediating role of strategic agility in this relationship. The key findings also highlight the crucial role of strategic learning capability in fostering strategic agility. All four dimensions of strategic learning capability, namely strategic knowledge generation (β = 0.309, *t* = 5.759), strategic knowledge interpretation (β = 0.118, *t* = 2.325), strategic knowledge implementation (β = 0.266, *t* = 5.561), and strategic knowledge database (β = 0.106, *t* = 3.395), positively influence strategic agility. These findings corroborate and extend the work of Chung et al. (2019), who confirmed that strategic knowledge generation enhances organizational agility, and Doz (2020), who emphasized the ability to perceive and understand environmental changes as a critical element of strategic agility. Therefore, this study demonstrates the importance of not only generating strategic knowledge but also interpreting, implementing, and storing it to enhance strategic agility.

Moreover, the results indicate that strategic knowledge generation (β = 0.097, *t* = 3.671), strategic knowledge interpretation (β = 0.037, *t* = 2.015), strategic knowledge implementation (β = 0.083, *t* = 3.704), and strategic knowledge database (β = 0.033, *t* = 2.651) indirectly influence competitive and innovative performance through the mediating role of strategic agility. These findings provide additional insight into the mechanisms through

which strategic learning capability components have contributed to improved competitive and innovative outcomes. While previous studies have explored the direct effects of strategic learning capability on various performance measures (e.g., Abuanzeh et al., 2022; U. Bamel & N. Bamel, 2018), the present study highlights the pivotal role of strategic agility in linking strategic learning capability to competitive and innovative performance. Notably, this study also reveals that a strategic knowledge database does not directly affect competitive and innovative performance but rather indirectly influences it by enhancing organizational agility. This finding partially diverges from the work of U. Bamel and N. Bamel (2018). They found that knowledge storage and reuse do not directly impact SME performance in India. However, both studies emphasize the indirect effect of knowledge management on performance through increased strategic flexibility or agility. This suggests that organizations with only knowledge repositories are unable to create a competitive advantage; organizations must also possess the ability to apply that knowledge in alignment with evolving contexts, with agility serving as a critical linking mechanism.

In summary, the present study contributes to the literature by providing a nuanced understanding of how digital transformation capability and the components of strategic learning capability influence strategic agility and, consequently, competitive and innovative performance in the context of Thailand's hotel industry. The findings underscore the importance of developing digital transformation and strategic learning capabilities to navigate the challenges posed by a volatile and uncertain business environment. By fostering strategic agility, these capabilities enable hotel businesses to proactively adapt to changes, seize opportunities, and achieve superior competitive and innovative performance.

CONCLUSION

The aim of this study is to explore the influence of digital transformation capability and strategic learning capability through the dimensions of strategic knowledge generation, strategic knowledge interpretation, strategic knowledge implementation, and strategic knowledge database on strategic agility and competitive and innovative performance in the context of 4–5-star hotels in Thailand. The findings of this study revealed that digital transformation capability and all dimensions of strategic learning capability positively influence strategic agility. Furthermore, strategic agility was found to have a positive impact on competitive and innovative performance. This study, therefore, confirms the mediating role of strategic agility in the relationships between digital transformation capability, strategic learning capability components, and competitive and innovative performance.

Hotels in Thailand should focus on systematically and continuously developing their capabilities in both digital transformation and strategic learning across all dimensions. By doing so, they will be able to enhance their strategic agility, adapt more effectively to environmental changes, and achieve superior long-term performance compared to competitors. This includes greater profitability, improved customer satisfaction, enhanced internal operational efficiency, and sustainable growth and innovation for the organization.

This study faces a significant limitation, namely, the difficulty of collecting data directly from hotel executives across Thailand to obtain accurate information about the strategic policies and digital transformation initiatives in place. As a result, data collection must rely on postal or online surveys, which may hinder the verification of respondent authenticity. To address this limitation, future research should extend to qualitative methods – such as in-depth interviews with executives from high-performing hotel businesses – to uncover best practices in digital transformation and strategic learning. Such insights would be valuable for fostering organizational learning and development within Thailand's hotel industry.

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Writing – review & editing: Kanokwan Meesook, Charoenchai Agmapisarn, Abror Abror, Somnuk Aujirapongpan.

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APPENDIX A

PART 1: General information

Instructions: Please mark the appropriate statement.

1. Gender:

☐ Male
☐ Female
☐ Prefer not to specify

2. Age:

☐ 18–30 years
☐ 41–45 years
☐ 31–35 years
☐ 46–50 years
☐ 36–40 years
☐ Over 50 years

3. Hotel Location:

☐ Northern Region
☐ Central Region
☐ Northeastern Region
☐ Southern Region
☐ Eastern Region

4. Duration of Business Operation:

☐ 5 years or less
☐ 6–10 years
☐ 11–15 years
☐ More than 15 years

5. Type of Accommodation:

☐ Hotel
☐ Resort
☐ Other

6. Star Rating:

☐ 4 Stars
☐ 5 Stars

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PART 2: Assessment of organizational digital transformation capability

Instructions: Please rate the statements appropriately.

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Moderately Agree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.

Digital Transformation Capability	1	2	3	4	5
1. The organization prioritizes exploring, investigating, and utilizing new technologies					
2. The organization seeks ways to create value for products and services influenced by new technologies					
3. The organization adapts its structure, processes, and skills to support the implementation of new technologies					
4. The organization secures funding to support investments in various technologies					
5. The organization has digital leadership positions to oversee and facilitate technology implementation					
6. The organization has strategic initiatives to create scalable, flexible, and cost-effective operations.					
7. The organization has external partnership networks that promote technology use for value and revenue generation					
8. The organization can effectively use technology for communication with customers or business partners					
9. The organization maintains a flexible and attractive workplace environment for digital-era employees					

PART 3: Assessment of organizational strategic learning capability

Instructions: Please rate the statements appropriately.

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Moderately Agree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.

Strategic Learning Capability	1	2	3	4	5
1. The organization gathers market data before determining strategic needs					
2. The organization aims to acquire knowledge to lead the organization into new learning areas (e.g., new markets, new technologies)					
3. The organization collects information and new ideas beyond current markets and existing technological experiences					
4. The goal of gathering new information is for the organization to learn during product or service development					
5. Strategic information is shared between departments within the organization					
6. When one department obtains strategically important information, it is passed on to other departments					
7. Strategic information is easily accessible to those who need it					
8. Representatives from different departments regularly meet to discuss new strategic issues					
9. When faced with new strategic information, the organization considers how it will impact operations					
10. In meetings, the organization strives to understand everyone's perspectives on new strategic information					
11. The organization is willing to reconsider decisions when presented with new strategic information					
12. When encountering new strategic information, the organization collectively reflects on potential assumptions related to the organization					
13. Strategic knowledge gained from internal working groups is used to improve products, services, and processes					
14. Implementation of new strategic knowledge leads to visible changes in organizational systems and procedures					
15. Strategic knowledge gained from personnel at various levels influences organizational strategy					
16. The organization uses past data and experiences as guidelines for creating new knowledge					
17. The organization maintains a database system to store experiences of past problems and solutions					
18. The organization provides opportunities for knowledge transfer between generations of personnel					

PART 4: Assessment of organizational strategic agility

Instructions: Please rate the statements appropriately.

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Moderately Agree, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree.

Strategic Agility	1	2	3	4	5
1. The organization anticipates future customer needs					
2. The organization reviews past operational evolution and future directions					
3. The organization recognizes the necessity of experimenting with new business models					
4. Leaders engage in open dialogue and welcome diverse opinions					
5. Leaders work as an integrated team, interdependently creating shared value					
6. Leaders emphasize shared interest in overcoming challenges, inspiring vision, and sharing values and emotions with employees					
7. Leaders can make quick decisions when facing unexpected situations					
8. Organizational departments and business lines are interconnected and flexible					
9. Basic business systems and processes are modular and easily modifiable					
10. Resources are easily accessible across organizational boundaries					
11. The organization employs diverse business models for different market segments or products and services					

PART 5: Assessment of organizational competitive performance

Instructions: Please rate the statements appropriately.

1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Moderately Agree, 4 = Agree,5 = Strongly Agree.

Competitive and Innovative Performance	1	2	3	4	5
1. The organization experiences increased sales or reduced overall costs when implementing technology for new business process/model transformation					
2. The organization prioritizes strategic learning to increase sales or reduce overall costs					
3. The organization achieves increased sales or reduced overall costs due to rapid response and adaptation to business changes					
4. The organization gains new customers, retains repeat customers, or receives good reviews (4 stars or higher) when implementing technology for business process/model transformation					
5. The organization emphasizes strategic learning to gain new customers, retain repeat customers, or receive good reviews (4 stars or higher)					
6. The organization gains new customers, retains repeat customers, or receives good reviews (4 stars or higher) due to rapid response and adaptation to business changes					
7. The organization achieves improved operational mechanisms and reduced service and operational time when implementing technology for business process/model transformation					
8. The organization emphasizes strategic learning to improve operational mechanisms and reduce service and operational time					
9. The organization achieves improved operational mechanisms and reduced service and operational time due to rapid response and adaptation to business changes					
10. Employees demonstrate improved skills, knowledge, creativity, innovation, and better utilization of information technology systems when implementing technology for business process transformation					
11. The organization emphasizes strategic learning to improve employee skills, knowledge, creativity, innovation, and information technology system utilization					
12. Employees demonstrate improved skills, knowledge, creativity, and better utilization of information technology systems due to rapid response and adaptation to business changes					

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