

Perceived Relevance of Digital Marketing and Students' Adaptation to Technological Trends: The Mediating Role of Digital Competency in Work Immersion

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Abstract

Driven by rapid global industry shifts and digital transformation, this study explores the significance of digital marketing education in preparing graduates to meet modern business demands. Specifically, it examines the impact of the perceived relevance of digital marketing on the adaptation to technological trends among 152 fourth-year Bachelor of Science in Entrepreneurship students at the Makati Science Technological Institute of the Philippines during their work immersion. Using a quantitative descriptive-correlational research design combined with Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM), the research evaluates how digital competency, as operationalized by the DigComp 2.2 framework, mediates this relationship.

The empirical findings reveal that the respondents generally value digital marketing within their E-commerce curriculum, yielding a high perceived relevance mean of 4.16, and express substantial confidence in their digital competency attainment with a mean score of 4.08. Students likewise demonstrated successful baseline adaptation to technological trends during work immersion with a mean score of 3.72, showing strong initiative in integrating digital tools into business tasks. Crucially, structural model evaluation demonstrates that the direct effect of Perceived Relevance of Digital Marketing (PDRM) on Adaptation to Technological Trends in Work Immersion (ATTW) is statistically non-significant ($\beta = 0.318$, $p = 0.070$). Instead, Perceived Digital Competency Attainment (PDCA) fully mediates this relationship ($\beta = 0.334$, $p = 0.002$). This outcome highlights that merely acknowledging the value or importance of a digital curriculum is insufficient to translate into successful on-the-job adaptation. Curriculum relevance must first drive students to build concrete, hard digital competencies in the classroom, which then serve as the absolute foundational bridge for seamless technological flexibility and troubleshooting agility within an active workforce setting.

Keywords: Digital Marketing, E-Commerce, Digital Competency, Work Immersion, Experiential Learning Theory, Entrepreneurship Education, PLS-SEM.