AFRICAN JOURNAL OF HOSPITALITY, TOURISM AND LEISURE
2026, Vol. 15, No. 3, pp. 863-874
https://doi.org/10.46222/ajhtl.19770720.790

AJHTL
OPEN ACCESS

Research article

Digitalisation opportunities and emerging trends shaping the events industry in Ghana: A systematic literature review

Felix Mumuni Mahama*[1] and Akanganngang J. Asitik[1]

[1] Department of Marketing and Entrepreneurship, School of Business, University for Development Studies, Tamale, Ghana

ABSTRACT

Digitalisation is reshaping industries globally by improving efficiency, expanding reach and creating more personalised experiences. Yet Ghana's events industry has not fully embraced these changes. This study uses a systematic literature review to examine opportunities and emerging digital trends in the sector. The PRISMA protocol and the Joanna Briggs Institute methodology were used to analyse studies published between 2014 and 2025 from databases including Google Scholar, Crossref, OpenAlex, and PubMed. The results indicate that digitalisation enhances marketing, operational efficiency, and innovation through Artificial Intelligence (AI) and hybrid event formats. Digitalisation also supports sustainability efforts and the empowerment of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). At the same time, the industry faces challenges related to trust, ethical concerns, and the influence of social media on stakeholder relationships. This study synthesises dispersed literature on digitalisation in Ghana's events industry, thereby filling a notable gap in the literature and shedding light on the socio-technical factors that influence digital transformation in emerging event markets across Africa. Overall, the review advocates a strategic and inclusive approach to digitalisation that maximises its potential to drive innovation and enhance resilience within the events industry.

KEYWORDS

Digitalisation;
events industry;
digital transformation;
event innovation;
emerging trends

Introduction

Digitalisation is widely recognised as the strategic integration of digital technologies to transform business operations, value creation, and engagement. Parida et al. (2019) define digitalisation as the application of digital technologies to redefine value propositions, organisational processes and engagement strategies. Similarly, Brennen & Kreiss (2016) conceptualise digitalisation as a transformative journey that integrates digital tools into workflows, communication channels, and operational systems, thereby reshaping how businesses function and create value. Digitalisation has therefore become a core driver of innovation, efficiency, and competitiveness across industries, significantly contributing to economic growth and development (Medhioub & Boujelbene, 2024). Nadkarni & Prügl (2021) further contend that digital transformation encompasses more than merely adopting technologies; it also involves extensive organisational, strategic, and value-creation modifications that redefine the operational and competitive landscape of industries. Digitalisation has emerged as a force shaping the global economy and society. It not only boosts efficiency and fosters innovation, but also enhances connectivity across sectors, propelling economic growth and improving quality of life (World Bank Group, 2016). Through digital transformation, businesses can optimise operations, tap into new markets, and deliver cutting-edge products and services (Paul et al., 2024). According to Billi & Bernardo (2025), digitalisation promotes transparency and accountability in governance, improves educational opportunities, and encourages sustainable development by better utilising resources and minimising environmental impact. Arguably, economies are expected to be characterised by the extensive and efficient integration of digital technologies, which will fundamentally alter conventional business models and redefine the paths of socioeconomic development (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development [OECD], 2024). Nyakanini et al. (2020) noted that governments

CORRESPONDING AUTHOR'S CONTACT: Felix Mumuni Mahama felixmumuni@gmail.com
HOW TO CITE: Mahama, F.M. & Asitik, A.J. (2026). Digitalisation opportunities and emerging trends shaping the events industry in Ghana: A systematic literature review. African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 15(3), 628-639 https://doi.org/10.46222/ajhtl.19770720.768

ISSN: 2223-814X (Online) | © 2026 AJHTL

This work is published by African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure and is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License.

Open Rubric

across Africa are beginning to recognise the transformative potential of digital technologies for their countries. For instance, the emergence of mobile money (M-PESA) in Kenya in 2007 has increased per capita consumption and helped alleviate poverty for approximately 194,000 households, representing 2% of the population (Suri & Jack, 2016). Rwanda has also adopted digital technologies to enhance its healthcare system, using drones to deliver medical supplies to remote locations and implementing electronic health records, thereby improving the delivery and accessibility of healthcare services (Uwambajimana et al., 2024). These advancements have been crucial in ensuring that individuals receive prompt medical attention and that health data is efficiently managed (Baker, 2021). In contrast, the event industry in Ghana has not yet fully digitalised, as traditional practices still dominate, and the adoption of advanced technologies remains fragmented and slow. This situation limits the sector's ability to promote inclusivity, empower small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), and make a significant contribution to national development priorities (Yawson & Mahmoud, 2024).

In the events sector, digitalisation is crucial for fostering innovation, improving operational efficiency, and enhancing attendees' experiences (Chen & Yu, 2024). Rising expectations for smooth operations, tailored engagement, and sustainable practices have heightened the importance of digital technologies, especially in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic, where hybrid and virtual event formats have gained prominence (Romanova, 2024). Digitalisation enables event planners to streamline administrative tasks, leverage data-driven insights, and implement cutting-edge technologies such as artificial intelligence, virtual reality, and blockchain (Chen & Yu, 2024). Similarly, a systematic review of tourism on digital marketing by Chamboko-Mpotaringa & Tichaawa (2021) noted that digital technologies are significantly reshaping stakeholder engagement, customer communication, and promotional strategies across tourism-related industries. Marketing innovations and emerging technologies were identified as key drivers of future industry competitiveness. These advancements are transforming event planning, marketing strategies, and audience interactions, ultimately reshaping how events are conceived and executed (Choi & Kim, 2025). Although digitalisation and digital transformation have become central topics in management studies, the literature remains conceptually diverse and fragmented, underscoring the need for clearer, context-specific understanding and stronger empirical evidence (Hanelt et al., 2020). Nadkarni & Prügl (2021) note that research on digital transformation remains dispersed across disciplines, necessitating both a synthesis tailored to specific contexts and a more precise conceptual understanding. Poulose et al. (2025) contend that digital transformation is influenced by a variety of organisational, technological, and environmental factors, including leadership support, digital capabilities, organisational readiness, infrastructure availability, and employee skills. Their review emphasises that effective digitalisation depends not only on adopting technology but also on the capacity of organisations and stakeholders to adapt to evolving digital landscapes. Within the events sector, research expanded rapidly during the COVID-19 period, focusing on digitisation as a crisis response and on the shift toward virtual and hybrid formats, rather than on evaluating sustained organisational transformation and measurable outcomes (Piccioni et al., 2023). Additionally, although some emerging studies examine hybrid-event practices in African contexts, the empirical base remains limited and is often embedded within broader tourism discussions rather than within event management as a distinct industry setting (Adeniran et al., 2022; Nyakanini et al., 2020). This systematic literature review synthesises empirical evidence on the opportunities presented by digitalisation and the emerging trends in Ghana's events industry. The analysis is guided by the central research question: To what extent does digitalisation offer strategic opportunities within Ghana's events industry? To address the research question, the literature review critically examines the methodological approaches used, the study environment, and the key findings of studies relevant to the theme. This review proceeds by detailing the materials and methods, presenting the results, acknowledging limitations, discussing implications, and concluding with future directions.

Materials and methods

Research approach

This review was guided by the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses (PRISMA) and the Joanna Briggs Institute (JBI) framework for systematic review, synthesis, and reporting (JBI, 2020; Moher et al., 2015). The PRISMA guidelines provide a structured approach to identifying, screening, and selecting relevant studies, ensuring transparency and reproducibility throughout the review process (Page et al., 2021). This involves systematically documenting each stage of the review, including study identification, eligibility assessment, and final inclusion, thereby minimising selection bias and enhancing the credibility of the findings. Complementing this, the JBI framework offers detailed methodological guidance for critical appraisal, data extraction, and evidence synthesis (Aromataris & Munn, 2020). Its emphasis on evidence-based practice and its flexibility in accommodating both qualitative and

quantitative studies make it particularly suitable for this research. The integration of PRISMA and JBI ensures that the review is conducted systematically, rigorously, and transparently, thereby enhancing the reliability, validity, and overall quality of the study's outcomes (Page et al., 2021). A systematic review and synthesis approach is rigorous and scientific, providing a structured basis for identifying, comparing, and interpreting patterns, similarities, and differences among findings from included studies based on clearly defined selection criteria (Petticrew & Roberts, 2019; Popay et al., 2022). The systematic review approach also enables comprehensive integration of evidence on the digitalisation of the events industry, thereby strengthening the reliability and transparency of the research process (Kuuyelleh et al., 2025; Buza & Taha, 2025). A mixed-methods approach was used to enhance understanding of the research question, given the varied nature of existing empirical studies in the field. The use of a textual approach to narrative synthesis was informed by the heterogeneity of the included studies, which reported diverse qualitative and quantitative findings on digitalisation practices, opportunities, and outcomes in the events industry. Synthesising both qualitative and quantitative empirical evidence is warranted, given the growing emphasis on aggregating diverse evidence to inform policy and practice (Hong et al., 2017). In addition, mixed-methods studies are particularly amenable to narrative synthesis, especially in systematic reviews where variations in study design, methods, and outcomes make meta-analysis unsuitable (Popay et al., 2022). Narrative synthesis, therefore, enables the integration of evidence from methodologically diverse studies, providing a comprehensive understanding of the opportunities presented by digitalisation in Ghana's events industry (Popay et al., 2006; Buza & Taha, 2025). The scope of this review was shaped by the Population, Intervention, Comparison, Outcome and Study design (PICOS) framework, which has been adapted to address complex social research questions (Booth et al., 2021). It includes event industry stakeholders and event organisers involved in planning and delivering events globally; the application and use of digital technologies and tools within event management processes; comparisons between digitalised and traditional event planning and delivery practices, and the reported outcomes of digitalisation in the events industry, including operational efficiency, attendee experience, innovation, sustainability, and overall event performance. The review was conducted in accordance with the inclusion and exclusion criteria to ensure the selection of studies that were methodologically sound, contextually appropriate, and consistent with the study's objective (Table 1).

Table 1: PICOS framework

PICO Component	Inclusion Criteria	Exclusion Criteria
Population (P)	Studies focusing on the events industry in Ghana or Africa, with contextual relevance to Ghana, including concerts, festivals, conferences, exhibitions, and weddings.	Studies unrelated to the events industry or conducted in contexts that are not relevant to Ghana or Africa
Intervention (I)	Application or use of digitalisation in the events industry, including digital tools, platforms, systems, or innovation trends (e.g., event management software, digital marketing, virtual or hybrid event technologies).	Studies that do not address digital technologies, digital tools, or opportunities related to digitalisation
Comparison (C)	Traditional or non-digital event management practices, or implicit comparisons between digital and non-digital approaches, where applicable.	Studies with no reference (explicit or implicit) to alternative or pre-digital practices.
Outcome (O)	Reported outcomes related to opportunities, benefits, or impacts of digitalisation, such as improved operational efficiency, enhanced attendee experience, innovation, sustainability, or organisational performance in the events industry.	Studies that do not report outcomes relevant to digitalisation or its implications for event planning and delivery
Study Design / Publication Characteristics	Peer-reviewed journal articles and theses published in English from 2014 onwards, employing qualitative, quantitative, or mixed-methods with clearly described methodologies and full-text accessibility.	Opinion pieces, editorials, blog posts, news articles, non-English publications without translation, studies published before 2014, inaccessible full texts, or studies with unclear methodology.

Search criteria

A comprehensive search for peer-reviewed journal articles was conducted using Publish or Perish 8 (PoP 8) software to extract raw citations from Google Scholar, Crossref, PubMed, and OpenAlex for the period 2014-2025, which were then analysed and presented as bibliometric metrics (Harzing, 2006). The review period from 2014 to 2025 was chosen to demonstrate the progression of digitalisation in Ghana's events sector, from its initial adoption to its latest advancements. The search strategy included a carefully curated set of keywords: "digitalisation," "digitalization," "digital transformation," "events industry," "event management," "digital technology," "digital tools," "online platforms," "events sector," "event planning," "digital adoption," "technology adoption," "event organisers," "event professionals," "digital marketing," "virtual events," and "event business." The JBI Critical Appraisal Checklist guided the evaluation and quality assessment of the retrieved articles for Systematic Reviews and Research Syntheses (JBI, 2020). The quality of the included studies was independently assessed by two researchers, and any discrepancies were resolved through consensus. The search yielded 11 studies that met the selection criteria out of 538 studies identified.

Characteristics of included studies

The descriptive features of the selected studies were recorded, including the author(s), year of publication, article title, methodology, significant findings and research gaps. The 2014–2025 review period was selected to illustrate the trajectory of digitalisation in Ghana's events industry from its early adoption phase through

to the most recent innovations. Around 2014, Africa experienced rapid growth in mobile internet penetration and smartphone adoption, creating an ecosystem for digitalisation across industries (Asongu & Roux, 2017). In Ghana, government ICT strategies such as the Information and Communication Technologies for Accelerated Development (ICT4AD) policy gained traction in the mid-2010s, supporting digital transformation across sectors, including education and services (Adarkwah & Huang, 2023). The period also includes the COVID-19 pandemic (2020–2022), which catalysed global digital adoption, and forced event organisers to pivot to virtual and hybrid models (Gulliksen et al., 2022). Extending the review to 2025 ensures the study captures cutting-edge innovations, including AI-driven event platforms, mobile ticketing, and data-driven personalisation, keeping the findings relevant to current policy and practice (Yawised et al., 2022). The preliminary literature search, conducted using PoP8 software, yielded 538 articles (see Figure 1). PoP8 was designed to extract up to 200 entries per query from Google Scholar, Crossref, OpenAlex, and PubMed.

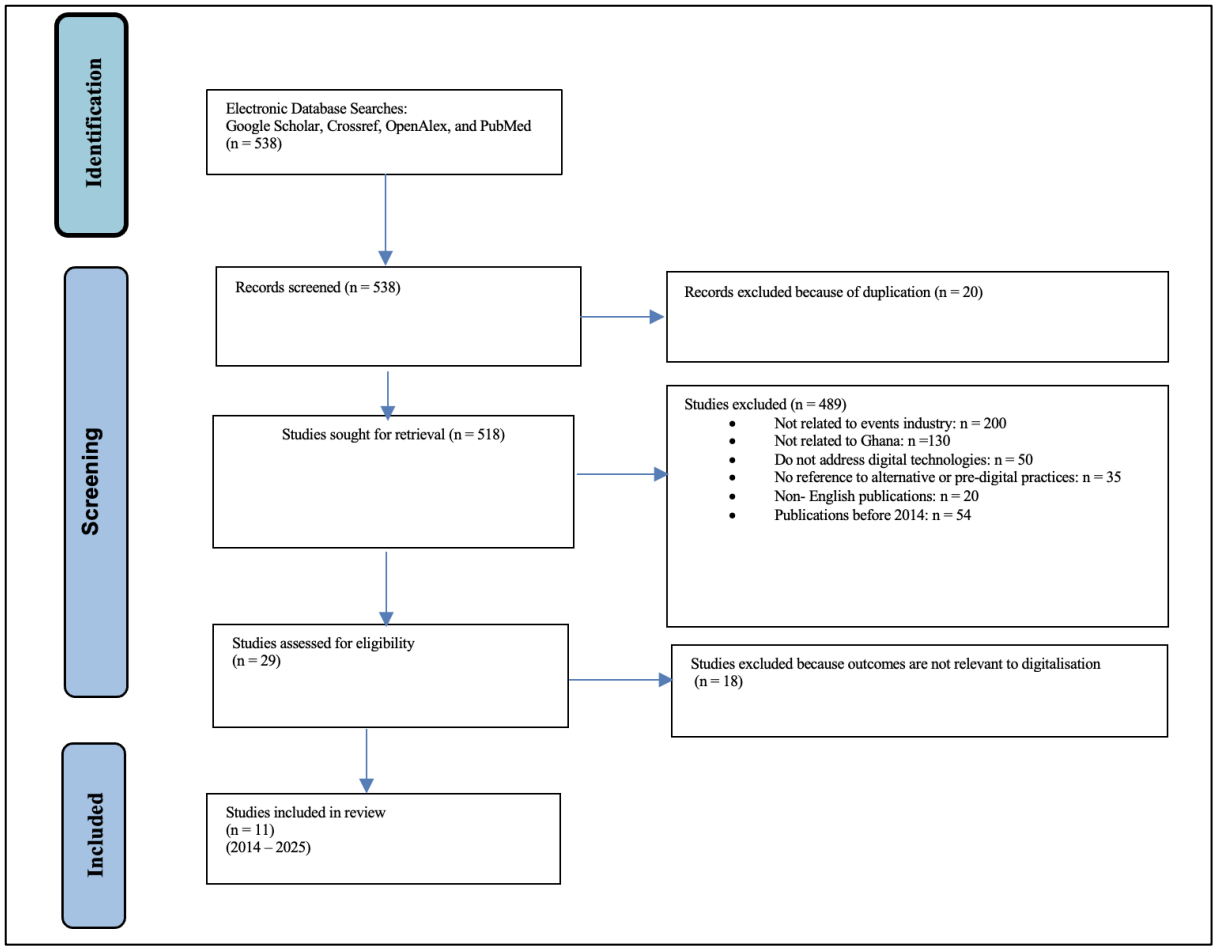

Figure 1: Flow chart of articles selection process based on PRISMA 2020

The unprocessed dataset was exported to a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet and screened in accordance with PRISMA guidelines. Duplicates and articles not closely related to the research theme were removed, resulting in a refined pool of 29 studies. A further relevance assessment was conducted by examining abstracts for alignment with this study's objective. This process excluded 18 studies, leaving a final selection of 11 studies considered most relevant to the subject matter (see Table 2). These 11 studies were subsequently included in a quantitative and qualitative synthesis and analysis. The resulting dataset served as the basis for projecting the potential trajectory of digitalisation in Ghana's events industry from 2014 to 2025. In line with the eligibility criteria, only English-language peer-reviewed articles were included.

Table 2 Summaries of selected studies

Author, Year & Title	Methodology	Key Findings	Research Gap
Mensah, E.A. & Boakye, K. A. (2021) Conceptualizing post-COVID 19 Tourism Recovery: A Three-Step Framework	Qualitative research approach, Conceptual research design to analyse existing literature, policy documents, and industry reports.	The pandemic exposed significant weaknesses in Ghana's tourism industry; the absence of a centralized data system, lack of insurance coverage, and insufficient financial reserves, rendering the sector particularly susceptible to crises. The study also emphasized the critical role of digital technologies and social media in revitalizing the tourism sector; digital platforms	This research underscores the structural vulnerabilities in Ghana's tourism industry; however, it fails to examine how the lack of centralized data systems, insurance provisions, and financial reserves constrains the advancement of domestic tourism strategies in the post-COVID period.

		can enhance marketing efforts and operational efficiency. The paper advocates for a renewed focus on domestic tourism to stimulate the local economy and sustain the tourism industry during and after the pandemic given the restrictions on international travels	
Ankapong, E. (2023). Impacts of Internet accessibility and cost on SMEs in Ghana.	Quantitative research approach Case study The study employed online questionnaires distributed to SME owners and managers. The collected data were analyzed electronically to assess the impact of internet accessibility and cost on SME operations.	Internet accessibility positively influences the operations of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs) in Ghana, facilitating advertising and communication with customers. The study highlights the shared responsibility of government and service providers in improving internet infrastructure to support SME growth.	Although the article acknowledges the significance of internet access for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), it fails to provide an in-depth examination of long-term policy measures to sustainably enhance internet infrastructure and affordability.
Shahadu, M., Halidu, N. A., Amissah, A., & Agbenyeke, L. (2022). The influence of virtual meeting platforms (200m) during coronavirus period on the MICE industry in Koforidua, Ghana. *ADRRI Journal of Agriculture and Food Sciences*, *6*(1), 5–31. Africa Development and Resources Research Institute	A quantitative research approach was employed Data was collected through questionnaires administered to 240 managers and staff within the MICE industry, selected via purposive sampling. Data analysis was conducted using SPSS version 23.	The COVID-19 pandemic significantly impacted the MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) industry in Koforidua, Ghana, leading to a substantial shift from traditional in-person events to virtual meeting platforms. This transition resulted in notable job losses, lower annual income among industry stakeholders, and reduced patronage of in-person events. However, there was an increase in the use of virtual platforms, which were perceived as effective alternatives during the pandemic. Despite the challenges, the study suggests potential for the industry's recovery through the integration of virtual platforms and adherence to safety protocols.	The authors discuss the role of virtual platforms during crisis periods, but they do not address how these platforms can be integrated sustainably into the MICE industry beyond emergencies.
Demong, N. A. R., Maon, S. N., Zamzuri, N. H., Khir, M. M., Sabar, S., & Abdul Halim, A. H. (2024). Bibliometrics analysis of event management in the digital era: Challenges and opportunities for event planners.	A bibliometric analysis approach was used, in which 125 publications from the Scopus database, including conference papers, journal articles, book chapters, and reviews were examined. VOSviewer software was employed for science mapping and network analysis, focusing on citation and co-citation networks, as well as keyword co-occurrence.	The bibliometric analysis revealed that "information management" and "network security" are among the most frequently occurring keywords in the context of digital event management. The United States, United Kingdom, and Germany were identified as leading contributors to research in this field. The study underscores the growing importance of digital technologies, such as virtual and augmented reality, artificial intelligence, and the Internet of Things, in transforming event management practices.	Their bibliometric review of digital event management does not sufficiently incorporate an African or regional perspective, nor does it examine the implications of emerging technologies such as AI and IoT.
Fatima, E. A. (2025). The Role of Technology in Enhancing Event Management Efficiency.	A qualitative research Approach incorporating case studies. Interviews with event professionals, and a review of existing literature on event technology. Key tools and platforms, such as event management software, customer relationship management (CRM) systems, and AI-powered chatbots, were also examined for their role in optimizing efficiency	Technology adoption brings about automation of administrative tasks, improves communication and collaboration, enhances attendee experience, improves decision-making and expands the reach and accessibility of events through hybrid event solutions Technology adoption faces challenges, such as cost and the need for training	The research addresses technology adoption in event management; however, it fails to thoroughly investigate obstacles such as financial constraints and insufficient training that hinder adoption.
Singh, A., & Deri, M. N. (2024). Exploring the use of virtual and hybrid events for MICE sector	Mixed Method Approach The study gathers insights from 19 purposively selected MICE tourism stakeholders, focusing on their experiences and perspectives regarding virtual and hybrid events. Data was collected from 500 MICE event attendees, providing statistical analysis on the effectiveness and challenges of virtual and hybrid events.	Virtual and hybrid events have enhanced the resilience of MICE events during crises like COVID-19, ensuring business continuity and information sharing. Challenges such as internet connectivity and significant capital investments are noted	This research highlights the difficulties associated with virtual and hybrid MICE events; however, it fails to adequately investigate methods to address obstacles related to internet access and financial investment.
Quarshie, J. M., & Amenumey, E. K. (2016). Utilisation of information and communication technologies in hotel operations in the central region of Ghana.	A quantitative research approach. Primary data collected using structured questionnaires administered to 200 respondents from various hotels in the Central Region of Ghana.	Majority of hotels utilize basic ICT tools such as telephones, computers, internet services, printers, and fax machines. Telephones are the most commonly used, while fax machines are the least utilised Many hotels have adopted internet services, reflecting advancements in telecommunications and the growing importance of online connectivity in hotel operations. Hotels reported several benefits from ICT usage, including improved access to hospitality information, enhanced customer service, and increased patronage Larger hotels, particularly 3-star establishments, are more likely to employ advanced ICT tools such as Wi-Fi, key card systems, and mobile communication devices compared to smaller guesthouses	Although the study examines the adoption of ICT in hotels, it does not discuss the implementation of advanced ICT tools in smaller hotels, nor does it offer longitudinal data regarding the impact of ICT over time.
Boakye, A., Nwabufo, N., & Dinbabo, M. (2021). The impact of technological progress and digitization on Ghana's economy	A quantitative Approach Econometric analysis using panel data from 2009 – 2019. Augmented Dickey–Fuller method was used to test the relationship Also, the long-run relationship between the variables was tested using the Engle-Granger and Error Correction models	Adopting technology or digitizing the economy has the potential to drive sustainable growth and development (ICT investments drive high productivity rates and faster economic growth)	The study on digitisation in Ghana offers broad insights; however, it does not include a detailed analysis of the impact of digitisation on various sectors.
Jibril, A. B., Amoah, J., Panigrahi, R. R., & Gochhait, S. (2024). Digital transformation in emerging markets: the role of technology adoption and innovative marketing strategies among SMEs in the post – pandemic era.	Quantitative Approach Survey used to collect data from SMEs in Ghana and Nigeria for analysis	Digital adoption and marketing strategies enhance competitiveness and growth among SMEs in post-pandemic Africa.	The article looks at digital transformation but does not conduct comparative studies across emerging markets or consider its long-term impacts.
Konlan, I., Abdulai, M., & Ibrahim, H. (2023). Exploring the effects of social media on	Qualitative Approach Interviews conducted on married couples and individuals in northern Ghana.	Social media affects marital stability, with both positive (communication) and negative (infidelity, distrust) impacts	The study discusses the negative effects of social media on marriages but does not address coping mechanisms or interventions to mitigate them.

marriages in northern Ghana			
Yaw Asabere, N., Doku, V., Kusi-Sarpong, S., & Oppong, D. (2014). Adopting electronic business in Ghana: Story of the hospitality industry.	A qualitative research approach, utilizing an extensive literature review to explore the adoption of e-business in Ghana's hospitality sector Technology Acceptance Model 2 (TAM2) served as the theoretical framework to assess factors influencing the acceptance and use of e-business technologies	Opportunities for E-Business Adoption E-business platforms provide additional channels for interacting with customers, thereby enhancing loyalty. Automation and improved online services streamline the customer experience Online presence allows 24/7 operations, catering to a global audience Real-time updates on services and pricing enhance transparency Digital operations reduce traditional business correspondence and communication costs E-business enables access to international markets, increasing competitiveness.	The study highlights that the implementation of TAM2 within Ghana's hospitality industry lacks empirical validation and fails to consider user experience and customer satisfaction.

Results

Research methods overview

Among the studies reviewed, 45.5% used quantitative methods, and an identical percentage (45.5%) used qualitative methods. Only 9.0% of the studies used mixed-methods designs, suggesting limited adoption and integration of the mixed-methods approach. The reviewed studies employed a diverse array of methodologies, including qualitative approaches such as case studies and fieldwork and quantitative methods such as surveys. Regarding the mixed-methods approach, case studies and surveys were employed as research designs. With respect to the data analysis, thematic coding was employed in the qualitative analysis, and statistical analyses, such as descriptive and inferential statistics, science mapping, and network analysis, were conducted; advanced time-series techniques were also adopted, including Augmented Dickey-Fuller tests, Engle-Granger cointegration, and error-correction models.

Publication trend

The publication of literature for this study has been modest. In 2024, there were three (3) publications, while in both 2021 and 2023, there were two publications each. Also, 2014, 2016, 2022, and 2025 each had one (1) publication. This trend indicates a significant increase in academic focus in the area in 2024. However, the pattern suggests that research in this area has developed sporadically, with occasional peaks rather than steady or sustained growth.

Studies by data type

The findings show that seven (7) of the studies used primary data, indicating commitment to producing original evidence suited to research settings. In contrast, four (4) studies used secondary data, demonstrating how existing datasets contribute to a broader contextual understanding of the issues. The predominance of primary data studies indicates researchers' active efforts to generate new evidence in this field, potentially enhancing the relevance and originality of the findings. Secondary data studies complement this by providing broader context or supporting evidence from existing knowledge. This mix of methods underscores the field's dual focus on novel evidence and efficient use of available resources.

Thematic synthesis of key findings

The studies included in this review identified key opportunities and emerging trends associated with the digitalisation of the events industry in Ghana, particularly in market innovation, operational efficiency, event format innovation, sustainability in event management, and social and behavioural dynamics. According to the review, five (5) studies found growth in the utilisation of digital platforms, such as social media, for marketing, promotion, and customer engagement. Also, four (4) of the articles found that digitalisation facilitates task automation, and three (3) papers noted a shift from conventional in-person meetings to virtual and hybrid formats. Additionally, three (3) other articles examined the adoption of digital technologies in the context of sustainable development and economic growth driven by information and communication technology (ICT). Furthermore, two (2) articles examined both the positive and negative effects of social media on interpersonal relationships and communication. One (1) article investigated the use of AI technologies in event planning, focusing on personalised experiences for attendees, predictive analytics, and data-driven decision-making.

Discussion

This discussion focuses on six key insights that highlight how digitalisation is transforming Ghana's events sector. It begins by examining operational efficiency, focusing on how digital tools streamline planning and execution. Next, it explores exciting innovations in event formats, especially the rise of hybrid and tech-driven events. The discussion then shifts to market innovation and the adoption of AI, highlighting how these data-informed strategies are driving digitalisation beyond just operations. The issue of sustainability

is then addressed, highlighting a significant benefit that runs throughout digital practices. Finally, the discussion wraps up by examining social media and behavioural dynamics, which reveal how digital platforms shape attendee engagement and actions.

Operational efficiency and automation have become central to digital transformation in event management. Operational efficiency focuses on using resources more effectively to minimise waste and improve outcomes, while automation replaces repetitive manual tasks with digital systems that increase speed, accuracy, and scalability (Fuad et al., 2025). In the Ghanaian context, Ankapong (2023) highlights the efficiency gains of automation, particularly through the reduction of manual processes and operational costs. Fatima (2025) further links efficiency to sustainability by highlighting the importance of resource optimisation. Mensah & Boakye (2021) also argue that digitalisation and social media integration strengthen operational efficiency by simplifying booking and communication processes, automating customer interactions, and supporting data-driven resource allocation, thereby lowering costs while improving service delivery. Evidence from Ghana's hospitality sector shows the value of digital technologies. Quarshie and Amenumey (2016) found that hotels in the Central Region widely use ICT tools, improving access to information and customer service. Larger hotels are more likely to adopt advanced technologies such as Wi-Fi and key-card systems than smaller ones. Earlier research by Yaw Asabere et al. (2014) highlights inefficiencies embedded in traditional event systems, indirectly reinforcing the need for digital solutions, even though the study does not explicitly frame these concerns in terms of operational efficiency. Beyond Ghana, Cioppi et al. (2023) show that digitalisation is reshaping business processes by streamlining workflows and strengthening coordination among employees, customers, and digital systems. Their study further demonstrates that automation allows organisations to redirect time and resources towards higher-value activities. Poulose et al. (2025) underscore that enhancing organisational efficiency through digital transformation depends on sufficient digital capabilities, proficient personnel, and conducive institutional frameworks that facilitate the integration of automated systems into operational workflows. In line with this viewpoint, De Mattos et al. (2024) emphasise that technological transformation also drives efficiency by integrating digital capabilities into operational and strategic processes, especially in small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), where limited resources make such integration essential for maintaining competitiveness and resilience. Digitalisation has become a strategic component of organisations, driving operational efficiency through process optimisation, innovation, and adaptability (Doran et al., 2024). Automation also plays a critical role by reducing human error and enhancing data accuracy, thereby improving reliability and consistency in event delivery (Sharabati et al., 2024). These benefits are particularly significant in resource-constrained environments, where scalable digital solutions can help overcome infrastructure limitations. Such solutions not only expand geographic reach but also enable hybrid and virtual event formats, allowing organisers to engage larger audiences while maintaining operational continuity (Doran et al., 2024; Almusharraf, 2025). As the events sector increasingly adopts new digital formats, enhancements in operational efficiency and automation are transforming event management practices. These advancements facilitate more adaptable and creative event strategies that can more effectively address the changing expectations and preferences of audiences. Consequently, this can boost participation and foster economic growth.

Regarding event formats, the literature reviewed reveals an ongoing transition towards virtual and hybrid models. The COVID-19 pandemic is frequently cited as a significant driver that hastened this change, forcing event organisers to adopt innovative strategies to maintain continuity and engage participants (Shahadu et al., 2022). These findings align with Tung (2021), who observed that the pandemic hastened the integration of digital technologies within tourism-related industries and fostered the emergence of virtual and hybrid engagement models as strategies for maintaining operations amid disruptions. Similarly, Singh and Deri (2024) found that virtual and hybrid formats strengthened the resilience of MICE events during crises by supporting business continuity and information sharing. However, their findings also identified persistent challenges, particularly unreliable internet connectivity and the substantial capital investment required to implement virtual and hybrid event technologies. However, the findings indicate that virtual and hybrid formats are not merely temporary solutions to a crisis; rather, they signal broader trends of resilience and adaptability within the events industry. These formats supported operational continuity during lockdowns and periods of social distancing while also broadening access by alleviating geographical, financial, and mobility-related barriers (Lomellini et al., 2025). Wu et al. (2022) and Doran et al. (2024) both emphasise the capacity of virtual and hybrid events to enhance participation of marginalised and remote populations, while underscoring that achieving inclusive outcomes relies on meticulous planning and accessibility across all phases of the event. In Ghana, the gradual embrace of hybrid event formats illustrates both the global prospects associated with digitalisation, as highlighted by Chen et al. (2025), and the country's distinct contextual challenges. Poulose et al. (2025) identify infrastructure quality, technological readiness, employee skills, and organisational flexibility as essential factors for effective digital

transformation. Nevertheless, the anticipated efficiency improvements offered by hybrid formats, such as streamlined processes and enhanced audience engagement, are somewhat restricted. Ongoing infrastructural deficiencies and elevated implementation costs (Akyeampong, 2021), along with varying degrees of digital literacy among participants (Anim-Yeboah et al., 2020), continue to limit their transformative potential. This contrast underscores the importance of developing context-sensitive strategies that respond to local realities while still leveraging the efficiencies and innovations digitalisation brings to the events industry.

A key theme that emerged from the review is the transformative impact of digitalisation on event marketing, promotion, and audience engagement (Chen et al., 2025). The results from the review indicate that event organisers increasingly rely on digital platforms, particularly social media, to expand reach, facilitate real-time interaction, and sustain engagement throughout the event lifecycle (Mensah & Boakye, 2021; Ankapong, 2023; Fatima, 2025; Jibril et al., 2024; Yaw Asabere et al., 2014). This finding aligns with Chamboko-Mpotaringa & Tichaawa (2021), who noted that digital marketing tools have become critical to tourism promotion by improving visibility, enhancing customer engagement, and enabling more tailored communication strategies. This trend reflects broader developments in digital marketing, where personalisation, interactivity, and data-driven strategies are central to improving visibility and audience engagement. Practices such as user-generated content, live streaming, and hashtag campaigns have been shown to significantly amplify reach and deepen engagement, underscoring the growing strategic importance of digital tools in contemporary event marketing (Chen et al., 2025). This supports the assertion by Nadkarni and Prügl (2021) that digital transformation redefines customer engagement and value generation through digitally enabled business models and strategic innovation. These findings align with prior systematic reviews and empirical studies that frame digital transformation as a multidimensional process that can improve customer engagement and organisational performance by integrating digital technologies and reconfiguring marketing processes (Cioppi et al., 2023; Sharabati et al., 2024). In the Ghanaian context, this transformation is particularly salient, as digital platforms provide cost-effective and inclusive means of reaching geographically dispersed and culturally diverse audiences, yet the industry remains underdeveloped. Therefore, digitalisation is not merely a means of operational improvement but also a crucial strategic necessity for the efficient and sustainable management of events, although its full implementation across the industry remains unattainable.

Emerging technologies, particularly artificial intelligence (AI) and AI-enabled personalisation, are increasingly reshaping tourism, hospitality, and event experiences globally (Alananzeh, 2022; Idris et al., 2026). However, findings from the present study indicate that their adoption within Ghana's events industry remains notable yet nascent (Demong et al., 2024). Evidence from international contexts highlights the transformative potential of these technologies, with AI-driven solutions used to customise attendee experiences, streamline event management, and deliver predictive analytics to guide strategic decision-making (Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019). Applications such as AI-based matchmaking, tailored content delivery, and conversational agents are linked to improvements in participant engagement and operational efficiency worldwide (Gretzel et al., 2015; Kasemsap, 2020). Farayola et al. (2024) identify systemic challenges and updates in event technology as ongoing obstacles to digital adoption, particularly in low-resource environments, including numerous African contexts. Cross-regional research highlights key issues, including data privacy concerns, a lack of necessary technical expertise, and unequal access to enabling technologies and infrastructure (Gretzel et al., 2015). Razack et al. (2025) underscore similar issues, noting that digital literacy and technological competencies are vital prerequisites for effective engagement in the increasingly digitalised realms of hospitality and tourism. Their research indicates that investing in developing digital skills is crucial for facilitating technology adoption and fostering innovation. Poulose et al. (2025) also emphasise that organisational readiness, employee digital competencies, governance structures, and technological infrastructure are fundamental drivers influencing the adoption and sustainability of digital transformation initiatives. Empirical studies focusing specifically on Ghana remain scarce (Akyeampong, 2021; Boateng & Nagaraju, 2020), indicating that while the sector holds substantial potential for digital transformation, realising these advantages will require focused capacity building, infrastructure investment, and governance strategies (Kuuyelleh et al., 2024). Leveraging international best practices tailored to local socio-technical realities could accelerate the responsible and equitable incorporation of AI and personalisation into Ghana's events landscape. However, future research must assess the contextual viability, ethical considerations, and long-term effects of such initiatives (Gretzel et al., 2015; Farayola et al., 2024). Beyond enhancing efficiency and personalisation, the strategic adoption of AI-enabled digital practices offers significant sustainability benefits by optimising resource use, reducing waste, and lowering the environmental impacts of events, particularly within resource-constrained contexts (Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019; Gretzel et al., 2015)

Digitalisation is a vital enabler of sustainable development and economic advancement within the global events and hospitality sectors. This research interprets sustainability as the strategic and equitable

incorporation of environmental accountability, social inclusiveness, and economic feasibility within the frameworks of event management (Attygalle et al., 2025; Elkington, 1997). Sustainability, as a multi-dimensional approach, ensures that current event activities generate long-term value and positive legacies without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs (Van Niekerk & Coetzee, 2011; Chen & Yu, 2024). The reviewed literature indicates that the implementation of digital tools boosts productivity, fosters economic growth, and enhances competitiveness (Boakye et al., 2021; Ankapong, 2023). According to Gretzel et al. (2015), these advantages extend beyond individual entities, as enhanced digital capabilities are linked to greater destination competitiveness, thereby supporting broader economic and development goals. Likewise, Chen & Yu (2024) emphasise the importance of digitalisation in fostering inclusivity within the events ecosystem. Notably, digital platforms empower small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) to overcome conventional operational and market-entry barriers, thereby facilitating access to broader markets and promoting more equitable economic participation (Rosyidah et al., 2023). This corroborates the conclusions of De Mattos et al. (2024), who contend that technological transformation facilitates innovation in SMEs' business models, enhances SMEs' responsiveness to market changes, and boosts competitiveness through digital integration. Numerous studies further indicate that the transition to digital and hybrid event formats reduces resource consumption and travel-related impacts, aligning event practices with environmental sustainability objectives (Brydges & Hanlon, 2020; Funke & Lago, 2022; Santos et al., 2024). These insights highlight the connection between digital transformation in the events industry and the overarching goals of a resilient digital economy, reflecting aspirations articulated in national development frameworks such as Ghana's. Within this sustainability-oriented digital environment, social media platforms play a pivotal role in communicating sustainable event practices and shaping stakeholder engagement and attendee behavioural responses, thereby necessitating closer examination of their behavioural dynamics.

Digitalisation has greatly transformed the social and behavioural dynamics in the events industry, presenting both substantial benefits and intricate challenges. Konlan et al. (2023) indicated that social media is reshaping social behaviour in Ghana by expanding opportunities for interaction and engagement, but also by creating forms of dependency that can weaken trust. This finding highlights the need for intentional and well-managed digitalisation strategies in the events industry to protect interpersonal relationships and sustain long-term value. These technologies enable the creation of virtual communities surrounding events, promote collaboration, and enhance professional relationships, rendering them essential to contemporary event management (Kim et al., 2021; Tjønndal, 2022). Nevertheless, researchers warn that these same digital tools pose new social risks that require vigilant oversight. For example, Kim et al. (2021) noted that excessive reliance on social media during events can lead to miscommunication, reduced trust, and even social fatigue among attendees. Furthermore, Marlowe et al. (2016) explain that, although digital interactions are efficient, they can sometimes undermine the quality of interpersonal connections, leading to feelings of isolation or encouraging behaviours that jeopardise relational trust. These insights demonstrate that while digitalisation through social media has the potential to improve collaboration and engagement in the events industry (Sigala, 2018), it also necessitates the establishment of strong governance frameworks, ethical guidelines, and intentional strategies to protect interpersonal trust and guarantee sustainable social value (Floridi & Cowls, 2019; UNESCO, 2023; Andersson & Lundberg, 2013). In summary, digitalisation is transforming event management by improving operational efficiency, reducing costs, and enabling automation that supports both hybrid and virtual event formats. Social media and digital platforms have broadened marketing reach and strengthened audience engagement, while emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence are introducing new possibilities for personalisation, predictive analytics, and more sustainable event practices. In Ghana and similar contexts, however, the adoption of these innovations is often constrained by infrastructure limitations, varying levels of digital literacy, and high implementation costs. Despite these challenges, digitalisation still presents important opportunities for greater inclusivity and resilience within the events industry. Sustainability has also become a key priority, with digital tools helping to reduce resource consumption while creating new opportunities for small and medium-sized enterprises in the events industry. At the same time, the growing influence of social media is reshaping behavioural patterns by encouraging collaboration and interaction, though it also raises concerns about reliance, misinformation, and declining trust. These developments highlight the need for stronger governance structures and ethical frameworks, with careful planning guiding the responsible use of digital technologies in emerging event industries such as Ghana's.

The findings reveal clear implications for Ghana’s events industry. Digital tools can make event planning and delivery more efficient, helping organisers save time, reduce costs, and improve overall experiences. Hybrid and technology-driven events also create opportunities to reach wider audiences and build resilience in an increasingly uncertain environment. Such opportunities are especially significant for small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in Ghana's events sector, as digital transformation can foster

innovation, enhance adaptability, and promote sustained competitiveness (De Mattos et al., 2024). AI and data-driven approaches support innovation by enabling more personalised and effective audience engagement. At the same time, digitalisation can promote more sustainable event practices by reducing material use and environmental impact. However, the growing influence of social media underscores the need for thoughtful, ethical digital strategies that build trust and encourage positive attendee behaviour. Overall, a strategic and context-aware approach to digitalisation can strengthen competitiveness and support long-term value creation in Ghana's events industry.

Conclusion

The review highlights that digitalisation has the potential to shape Ghana's events industry by opening new ways for organisers to collaborate, engage stakeholders, and reach wider markets, particularly for SMEs. While social media and digital platforms make events more inclusive and interactive, they also influence behaviour in ways that require careful attention and responsible management. Importantly, the literature suggests that the benefits of digitalisation are not automatic and remain uneven across the sector. Without strong governance, clear ethical standards, and deliberate efforts to build and maintain trust, digital tools can fall short of their potential. Rather than being just a technological upgrade, digitalisation emerges as a broader socioeconomic shift, one that calls for thoughtful policies and practices that balance innovation with inclusivity and long-term sustainability.

References

Adarkwah, M. A., & Huang, R. (2023). Technology addiction, abduction, and adoption in higher education: Bird's eye view of the ICT4AD policy in Ghana 20 years on. *British Journal of Educational Technology, 54*(6), 1484–1504. https://doi.org/10.1111/bjet.13352

Adeniran, A. M., Karim, A. M., & Joseph, K. (2022). Evolving trend and the hybrid model for event management during and after the COVID-19 pandemic in Nigeria. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 12*(11). https://doi.org/10.6007/IJARBSS/v12-i11/15650

Akyeampong, O. A. (2021). Tourism and events in Ghana: Prospects and challenges in the digital era. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 10*(5), 1422–1436. https://doi.org/10.46222/ajhtl.19770720-151

Alananzeh, O. A. (2022). Drivers and challenges for future events and their impact on the hotel industry. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 11*(3), 1273–1287. https://doi.org/10.46222/ajhtl.19770720.290

Almusharraf, A. I. (2025). Automation and its influence on sustainable development: Economic, social, and environmental dimensions. *Sustainability, 17*(4), Article 1754. https://doi.org/10.3390/su17041754

Andersson, T. D., & Lundberg, E. (2013). Commensurability and sustainability: Triple bottom line performance of events. *Tourism Management, 37*, 99–109. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2012.12.015

Anim-Yeboah, S., Boateng, R., Odoom, R., & Kolog, E. A. (2020). Digital transformation process and the capability and capacity implications for small and medium enterprises. *International Journal of E-Entrepreneurship and Innovation, 10*(2), 26–44. https://doi.org/10.4018/IJEEI.2020070102

Ankapong, E. (2023). *Impacts of internet accessibility and cost on SMEs in Ghana* [Bachelor's thesis, Lapland University of Applied Sciences]. Theseus. https://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi:amk-2023053116509

Aromataris, E., & Munn, Z. (Eds.). (2020). *JBI manual for evidence synthesis*. Joanna Briggs Institute. https://doi.org/10.46658/JBIMES-20-01

Asongu, S. A., & Roux, S. L. (2017). Enhancing ICT for inclusive human development in Sub-Saharan Africa. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change, 118*, 44–54. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.techfore.2017.01.026

Attygalle, K., Yasara, W., Janathanan, C., & Amir, S. (2025). Breaking barriers: Innovations and strategies for sustainable event management. *International Journal of Business and Management Review, 13*(7), 1–10. https://doi.org/10.37745/ijbmr.2013/vol13n7110

Baker, A. (2021, May 26). The American drones saving lives in Rwanda. *TIME*. https://time.com/rwanda-drones-zipline/

Billi, A., & Bernardo, A. (2025). The effects of digital transformation, IT innovation, and sustainability strategies on firms' performances: An empirical study. *Sustainability, 17*(3), Article 823. https://doi.org/10.3390/su17030823

Boakye, A., Nwabufo, N., & Dinbabo, M. (2021). The impact of technological progress and digitization on Ghana's economy. *African Journal of Science, Technology, Innovation and Development, 14*(7), 1981–1986. https://doi.org/10.1080/20421338.2021.1994239

Boateng, K., & Nagaraju, Y. (2020). The impact of digital banking on the profitability of deposit money banks: Evidence from Ghana. *International Journal of Research in Finance and Management, 3*(1), 144–150.

Booth, A., Moore, G., & Flemming, K. (2021). *Guidance on the use of the PICCO framework in complex reviews*. *Journal of Evidence Synthesis, 13*(2), 145–160. https://doi.org/10.1016/jes.2021.02.005

Brennen, J. S., & Kreiss, D. (2016). Digitalization and digitization. *Culture Digitally, 8*(2), 1–12.

Brydges, T., & Hanlon, M. (2020). Garment worker rights and the fashion industry's response to COVID-19. *Dialogues in Human Geography, 10*(2), 195–198. https://doi.org/10.1177/2043820620933851

Buhalis, D., & Sinarta, Y. (2019). Real-time co-creation and nowness service: Lessons from tourism and hospitality. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 36*(5), 563–582.

Buza, M., & Taha, S. (2025). *DPA digital digest: Ghana [2025 edition]*. Digital Policy Alert.

Chamboko-Mpotaringa, M., & Tichaawa, T. M. (2021). Tourism digital marketing tools and views on future trends: A systematic review of literature. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 10*(2), 712–726. https://doi.org/10.46222/ajhtl.19770720-128

Chen, J., Jung, S., & Cai, L. A. (2025). A critical review of technology-facilitated event engagement: Current landscape and pathway forward. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 37*(13), 169–189. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-02-2025-0236

Chen, Z., & Yu, T. (2025). Festivals and digitalisation: A critique of the literature. *Tourism Critiques: Practice and Theory, 6*(1), 2–17. https://doi.org/10.1108/TRC-05-2024-0022

Choi, N., & Kim, H. (2025). Technological convergence of blockchain and artificial intelligence: A review and challenges. *Electronics, 14*(1), Article 84. https://doi.org/10.3390/electronics14010084

Cioppi, M., Curina, I., Francioni, B., & Savelli, E. (2023). Digital transformation and marketing: A systematic and thematic literature review. *Italian Journal of Marketing, 2023*, 207–288. https://doi.org/10.1007/s43039-023-00067-2

De Mattos, C. S., Pellegrini, G., Hagelaar, G., & Dolfsma, W. (2024). Systematic literature review on technological transformation in SMEs: A transformation encompassing technology assimilation and business model innovation. *Management Review Quarterly, 74*(2), 1057–1095. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11301-023-00327-7

Demong, N. A. R., Maon, S. N., Zamzuri, N. H., Khir, M. M., Sabar, S., & Abdul Halim, A. H. (2024). Bibliometrics analysis of event management in the digital era: Challenges and opportunities for event planners. *Information Management and Business Review*, 16(3), 53–64. https://doi.org/10.22610/imbr.v16i3(I).3926

Doran, A. L., Dutch, V., Warren, B., Watson, R. A., Murphy, K., Aldis, A., Cooper, I., Cockram, C., Harp, D., Desmau, M., & Keppler, L. (2024). Planning virtual and hybrid events: Steps to improve inclusion and accessibility. *Geoscience Communication, 7*(4), 227–244. https://doi.org/10.5194/gc-7-227-2024

Elkington, J. (1997). *Cannibals with forks: The triple bottom line of 21st-century business*. Capstone.

Farayola, O. A., Olorunfemi, O. L., & Shoetan, P. O. (2024). Data privacy and security in IT: A review of techniques and challenges. *Computer Science & IT Research Journal, 5*(3). https://doi.org/10.51594/csitrj.v5i3.909

Fatima, E. A. (2025). The role of technology in enhancing event management efficiency. *SSRN Electronic Journal*. https://doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.5112850

Floridi, L., & Cowls, J. (2019). A unified framework of five principles for AI in society. *Harvard Data Science Review*. https://doi.org/10.1162/99608f92.8cd550d1

Fuad, A. M., Takia, N. A., Zafir, H. A., & Farrok, O. (2025). Enhancing operational efficiency through overall equipment efficiency optimization and Kaizen initiatives. *PLOS ONE, 20*(5), e0320761. https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0320761

Funke, M., & Lago, P. (2022, June). Let's start reducing the carbon footprint of academic conferences. In *2022 International Conference on ICT for Sustainability (ICT4S)* (pp. 160–171). IEEE.

Gretzel, U., Sigala, M., Xiang, Z., & Koo, C. (2015). Smart tourism: Foundations and developments. *Electronic Markets, 25*(3), 179–188. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12525-015-0196-8

Gulliksen, J., Lilliesköld, J., & Stenbom, S. (2022). The 'new' new normal—Digitalization and hybridization of work and education before, during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. *Interacting with Computers, 35*(5), 691–706. https://doi.org/10.1093/iwc/iwac034

Hanelt, A., Bohnsack, R., Marz, D., & Marante, C. A. (2020). A systematic review of the literature on digital transformation: Insights and implications for strategy and organizational change. *Journal of Management Studies, 58*(5), 1159–1197. https://doi.org/10.1111/joms.12639

Harzing, A.-W. (2006). *Publish or Perish* [Computer software]. Harzing.com. https://harzing.com/resources/publish-or-perish

Hong, Q. N., Pluye, P., Bujold, M., & Wassef, M. (2017). Convergent and sequential synthesis designs: Implications for conducting and reporting systematic reviews of qualitative and quantitative evidence. *Systematic Reviews, 6*(1), Article 61. https://doi.org/10.1186/s13643-017-0454-2

Idris, I., Lee, C. W., & Chen, P. H. (2026). Exploring the role of artificial intelligence in transforming tourism: A systematic review of its impact on business performance. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 15*(1), 21–35. https://doi.org/10.46222/ajhtl.19770720.714

Jibril, A. B., Amoah, J., Panigrahi, R. R., & Gochhait, S. (2024). Digital transformation in emerging markets: The role of technology adoption and innovative marketing strategies among SMEs in the post-pandemic era. *International Journal of Organizational Analysis*. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJOA-05-2024-4509

Joanna Briggs Institute. (2020). *JBI manual for evidence synthesis*. https://jbi.global/critical-appraisal-tools

Kasemsap, K. (2020). The role of artificial intelligence in event management and tourism. In K. Kasemsap (Ed.), *Factors affecting firm competitiveness and performance in the modern business world* (pp. 134–149). IGI Global.

Kim, S. E., Kim, H. L., & Lee, S. (2021). How event information is trusted and shared on social media: A uses and gratification perspective. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 38*(5), 444–460. https://doi.org/10.1080/10548408.2021.1943600

Konlan, I., Abdulai, M., & Ibrahim, H. (2023). Exploring the effects of social media on marriages in northern Ghana. *Human Arenas, 8*(2), 394–413. https://doi.org/10.1007/s42087-023-00333-x

Kuuyelleh, E. N., Akanpaadgi, E., & Korley, B. (2025). Digital governance in Ghana: Exploring the prospects and constraints. In *Studies in national governance and emerging technologies* (pp. 225–250). https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-75079-3_10

Lomellini, A., Lowenthal, P. R., Snelson, C., & Trespalacios, J. H. (2025). Accessible and inclusive online learning in higher education: A review of the literature. *Journal of Computing in Higher Education, 37*(1), 1–25. https://doi.org/10.1007/s12528-024-09424-2

Marlowe, J. M., Bartley, A., & Collins, F. (2016). Digital belongings: The intersections of social cohesion, connectivity and digital media. *Ethnicities, 17*(1), 85–102. https://doi.org/10.1177/1468796816654174

Medhioub, N., & Boujelbene, Y. (2024). Does digitalization moderate the link between innovation and economic growth? A two-step difference GMM analysis of developed and developing countries. *Journal of the Knowledge Economy, 16*(1), 339–365. https://doi.org/10.1007/s13132-024-01963-4

Mensah, E. A., & Boakye, K. A. (2021). Conceptualizing post-COVID-19 tourism recovery: A three-step framework. *Tourism Planning & Development, 20*(1), 37–61. https://doi.org/10.1080/21568316.2021.1945674

Moher, D., Shamseer, L., Clarke, M., Ghersi, D., Liberati, A., Petticrew, M., Shekelle, P., & Stewart, L. A. (2015). Preferred reporting items for systematic review and meta-analysis protocols (PRISMA-P) 2015 statement. *Systematic Reviews, 4*(1), Article 1. https://doi.org/10.1186/2046-4053-4-1

Nadkarni, S., & Prügl, R. (2021). Digital transformation: A review, synthesis and opportunities for future research. *Management Review Quarterly, 71*(2), 233–341. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11301-020-00185-7

Nyakanini, G., Sayinzoga, M., Gates, N., Almqvist, E., & Erkan, K. (2020). *Unlocking the digital economy in Africa: Benchmarking the digital transformation journey*. Dalberg & Smart Africa.

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. (2024). *OECD digital economy outlook 2024 (Volume 2): Strengthening connectivity, innovation and trust*. OECD Publishing. https://www.oecd.org/en/publications/oecd-digital-economy-outlook-2024-volume-2_3adf705b-en.html

Page, M. J., McKenzie, J. E., Bossuyt, P. M., Boutron, I., Hoffmann, T. C., Mulrow, C. D., Shamseer, L., Tetzlaff, J. M., Akl, E. A., Brennan, S. E., Chou, R., Glanville, J., Grimshaw, J. M., Hróbjartsson, A., Lalu, M. M., Li, T., Loder, E. W., Mayo-Wilson, E., McDonald, S., … Moher, D. (2021). The PRISMA 2020 statement: An updated guideline for reporting systematic reviews. *BMJ, 372*, n71. https://doi.org/10.1136/bmj.n71

Parida, V., Sjödin, D., & Reim, W. (2019). Reviewing literature on digitalization, business model innovation, and sustainable industry: Past achievements and future promises. *Sustainability, 11*(2), Article 391. https://doi.org/10.3390/su11020391

Paul, J., Ueno, A., Dennis, C., Alamanos, E., Curtis, L., Foroudi, P., Kacprzak, A., Kunz, W. H., Liu, J., Marvi, R., Nair, S. L. S., Ozdemir, O., Pantano, E., Papadopoulos, T., Petit, O., Tyagi, S., & Wirtz, J. (2024). Digital transformation: A multidisciplinary perspective and future research agenda. *International Journal of Consumer Studies, 48*(2), e13015. https://doi.org/10.1111/ijcs.13015

Petticrew, M., & Roberts, H. (2019). *Systematic reviews in the social sciences: A practical guide*. Wiley.

Piccioni, N., Nosi, C., Ottolenghi, C., & Nevi, G. (2023). COVID-19 and the digitization of business events: How the health crisis accelerated ethical issues. *International Journal of Event and Festival Management, 14*(2), 157–169. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJEFM-04-2022-0026

Popay, J., Roberts, H., Sowden, A., Petticrew, M., Arai, L., Rodgers, M., & Britten, N. (2022). Narrative synthesis in systematic reviews: An updated guidance. *Journal of Health Research Methods, 18*(1), 23–39. https://doi.org/10.1177/0958928721102345

Popay, J., Roberts, H., Sowden, A., Petticrew, M., Arai, L., Rodgers, M., Britten, N., Roen, K., & Duffy, S. (2006). *Guidance on the conduct of narrative synthesis in systematic reviews: A product from the ESRC Methods Programme*. Lancaster University.

Poulose, S., Bhattacharjee, B., & Chakravorty, A. (2025). Determinants and drivers of change for digital transformation and digitalization in human resource management: A systematic literature review and conceptual framework building. *Management Review Quarterly, 75*(3), 1911–1936. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11301-024-00423-2

Quarshie, J. M., & Amenumey, E. K. (2016). Utilisation of information and communication technologies in hotel operations in the Central Region of Ghana. *Journal of Hospitality Management and Tourism, 9*(1), 1–13. https://doi.org/10.5897/JHMT2016.0182

Razack, F., Singh, P., & Naidoo, V. (2025). Digital literacy and employability skills in hospitality and tourism education: A systematic review. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 14*(2), 437–444.

Romanova, A. (2024). Digitalization in the event industry: A bibliometric analysis. *EuroMed Journal of Business*. https://doi.org/10.1108/EMJB-11-2023-0306

Rosyidah, U., Sudarmiatin, S., & Sumarsono, H. (2023). Digitalization and internationalization of SMEs: A systematic literature review. *Journal of Enterprise and Development (JED), 5*(3), 479–499.

Santos, J. A. C., Fernández-Gámez, M. A., Puig-Cabrera, M., & Santos, M. C. (2024). Sustainability in business events: How hybrid formats shape attendee decision-making. *Journal of Tourism and Services, 15*(29), 320–348.

Shahadu, M., Halidu, N. A., Amissah, A., & Agbenyeke, L. (2022). The influence of virtual meeting platforms (200m) during coronavirus period on the MICE industry in Koforidua, Ghana. *ADRRI Journal of Agriculture and Food Sciences, 6*(1[5]), 20–42.

Sharabati, A. A., Ali, A. A. A., Allahham, M. I., Hussein, A. A., Alheet, A. F., & Mohammad, A. S. (2024). The impact of digital marketing on the performance of SMEs: An analytical study in light of modern digital transformations. *Sustainability, 16*(19), Article 8667. https://doi.org/10.3390/su16198667

Sigala, M. (2018). Implementing social customer relationship management. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 30*(7), 2698–2726. https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-10-2015-0536

Singh, A., & Deri, M. N. (2024). Exploring the use of virtual and hybrid events for MICE sector. In *Advances in hospitality, tourism and the services industry (AHTSI) book series* (pp. 47–70). IGI Global. https://doi.org/10.4018/979-8-3693-2272-7.ch003

Suri, T., & Jack, W. (2016). The long-run poverty and gender impacts of mobile money. *Science, 354*(6317), 1288–1292. https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aah5309

Tjønndal, A. (2022). Digital transformation of event management: Opportunities and challenges. *Event Management, 26*(1), 29–44. https://doi.org/10.3727/152599521X16291299450412

Tung, V. W. S. (2021). Impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on global tourism: A synthetic analysis. *African Journal of Hospitality, Tourism and Leisure, 10*(4), 1327–1341.

UNESCO. (2023). *Guidelines for the governance of digital platforms: Safeguarding freedom of expression and access to information*. https://www.unesco.org/

Uwambajimana, E., Rugirangoga, P., Musabyimana, E., Ingabire, N., Ikibasumba, J., Turikumwenimana, R., Munezero, A., Mukashyaka, J., Theobald, G., Musabyeyezu, A., Mutuyimana, H., Nyinawabeza, S., Havugimana, S., Kamayirese, E. N., Uwamahoro, B., Nshimiyimana, E., Niyoyita, J. C., Mutabazi, V., Niragire, E., … Emmanuel, U. (2024). Assessment of the use of electronic medical records system and barriers in Rwanda. *Research Square*. https://doi.org/10.21203/rs.3.rs-4763866/v1

Van Niekerk, M., & Coetzee, W. J. L. (2011). Utilizing the VICE model for the sustainable development of the Innibos Arts Festival. *Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management, 20*(3–4), 347–365. https://doi.org/10.1080/19368623.2011.562422

World Bank Group. (2016). *World development report 2016: Digital dividends*. World Bank.

Wu, E. E., Stefanoudis, P. V., Zeppilli, D., Menot, L., Easton, E. E., Weber, A. A.-T., & Puccinelli, E. (2022). Hybrid conferences: Opportunities, challenges and ways forward. *Frontiers in Marine Science, 9*, Article 902772. https://doi.org/10.3389/fmars.2022.902772

Yaw Asabere, N., Doku, V., Kusi-Sarpong, S., & Oppong, D. (2014). Adopting electronic business in Ghana: Story of the hospitality industry. *International Journal of Computer Applications, 85*(4), 1–9. https://doi.org/10.5120/14826-3067

Yawised, K., Apasrawirote, D., & Boonparn, C. (2022). From traditional business shifted towards transformation: The emerging business opportunities and challenges in 'Metaverse' era. In *INCBAA 2022* (pp. 162–175).

Yawson, F., & Mahmoud, T. (2024). *Innovation meets growth? Navigating the digital landscape in Ghana* (Megatrends Working Paper No. 11). Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik & African Center for Economic Transformation.