

Revisiting Translations: Digitally Transforming Hospitality and Tourism in developing countries

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Abstract:

This research conceptualizes the digital transformation process in a self-running business group at a multi-owners resort as a translation process and uses it as a theoretical lens to analyze data. The findings suggest that digital transformation in the hospitality industry is not a linear and technical deterministic process, but rather a highly social-technical one in which diverse actors negotiate to establish and stabilize a network in competition with others. The study also highlights the problematic problematization and asymmetric power relations that occur during the translation process, with the relation between the investor and owners and between the OTAs and owners being a prime example of this. The study suggests that mechanisms such as referees or laws are necessary to regulate and resolve conflicts and protect weaker actors.

Keywords: digital transformation, translation, hospitality

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1 INTRODUCTION

Developing countries in the southern hemisphere constantly struggle with issues of poverty, high disease burden, and environmental degradation (Nguyen, 2010; Nguyen et al., 2015; Nguyen & Nielsen, 2017). Due to the lack of necessary resources, it's difficult to improve the standard of living for the local population. However, the tourism and hospitality industries have the potential to increase income for local residents and generate much-needed revenue and capital for development. Thus, tourism and hospitality are important drivers of economic growth and development in many developing countries. Tourism is often one of the largest foreign currency earners for many developing countries and a major contributor to job creation and poverty reduction (World Tourism Organization, 2019). The hospitality industry, which

includes accommodation, food and beverage services, and transportation, is a key component of the tourism industry and plays a critical role in supporting the growth of tourism in many developing countries.

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) reports that international tourism has been growing rapidly in recent years, with developing countries accounting for an increasing share of this growth. In 2019, developing countries received over 1.5 billion international tourists, representing more than 50% of the total international tourism (World Tourism Organization, 2019). This growth in tourism has led to significant economic benefits for many developing countries, including increased foreign exchange earnings, job creation, and improved infrastructure (World Tourism Organization, 2019).

However, tourism and hospitality development in developing countries is not without its challenges. The industry can be affected by economic and political instability, lack of infrastructure, and limited capacity for effective management and planning (World Tourism Organization, 2019). Additionally, the benefits of tourism may not be distributed evenly across society, and it can also lead to negative impacts such as overcrowding, environmental degradation, and the displacement of local communities (World Tourism Organization, 2019; Scott & Cooper, 2019).

To address the issue of infrastructure, recently new forms of ownership such as condotel or time shared vacation get into trends. Condotel, short for "condominium-hotel", is a type of property ownership that combines the features of a condominium and a hotel. Condotels typically consist of a number of individually-owned units, such as apartments or suites, that are operated and managed as a hotel. The owners of the units have the option to use the unit for their own personal use or place the unit in a rental pool for the hotel to manage and rent out to guests.

Condotels have been gaining popularity in the hospitality industry as a way to provide an alternative form of accommodation for travelers. The concept of condotel is becoming increasingly popular as a way to provide an alternative form of accommodation for travelers, particularly in developing countries where the tourism industry is rapidly growing. Condotel owners have the ability to generate income from renting out their unit when they are not using it, and also have the option to use the unit for their own personal use when they are on vacation. This is a good investment opportunity for many people.

However, it is important to note that there are also challenges associated with the development of condotels in developing countries. For example, the lack of effective regulation and oversight can be a big problem.

Condotel operations involve a complex set of regulatory and management issues that must be addressed in order to ensure the sustainable development of the tourism industry in developing countries (De Kadt, 1979). One of the main regulatory challenges associated with condotel operations is the lack of clear and consistent regulations and standards for the development, operation, and management of these properties. This can lead to a lack of oversight and

accountability, which can result in negative impacts such as environmental degradation and the displacement of local communities (Fu et al., 2019).

Another key management issue associated with condotel operations is the need to balance the interests of different stakeholders, such as owners, guests, and local communities (Fu, Li, & Wang, 2019). This can be challenging, particularly in developing countries where there may be limited capacity for effective regulation and management. For example, conflicts may arise between owners who want to maximize their rental income and guests who want a high-quality vacation experience.

With the advancement of Information and Communication Technology (ICT), the integration of these technologies has improved management efficiency and outcomes in various industries. This process is often referred to as "digital transformation". However, the topic of utilizing digital technologies and digital transformation in the management of multi-ownership condotel operations has not received much attention in the literature of hospitality, tourism, or management.

Thus, our goal is to investigate how digital transformation can be applied to the tourism and hospitality sector, specifically in the context of multi-ownership condotels in developing countries. Our research question is, *"What are the challenges in managing multi-ownership condotels and how can digital transformation be utilized to address these challenges?"*

To answer this question, we conducted a qualitative study using a case of large beach condo-resorts (3,000 apartments) in a central province of a Southeast Asian country. We examined the entire process of purchasing, building, handing over, and operating the resorts by a group of owners, with a focus on how ICT is used in each phase. To guide our research, we employ the concept of translation in Actor Network Theory. In Actor-Network Theory (ANT), translation refers to the process by which different actors, networks, and technologies are brought together and made to work together in a specific context (Latour, 2005). Translation is a key concept in ANT because it helps to explain how different actors and networks are able to interact and coexist in a complex system. Translation can take many forms, from the negotiation of meaning and interpretation between different actors (Law, 1986), to the alignment of technologies and standards (Callon, 1986), to the formation of partnerships and alliances between actors (Bijker & Law, 1992).

We believe the findings of this research are important for developing countries where the joint private investment is needed to develop necessary infrastructures for the hospitality and tourism sector. The remainder of the paper is structured as follows. Literature review will be provided in section 2. We discuss research methods in section 3. We then present the case in section 4. We discuss the findings and conclusion in section 5 and 6 respectively.

2 RELATED RESEARCH

2.1 Digital transformation

Digital transformation is a term that has been widely used to describe the process of leveraging digital technologies to fundamentally change how organizations operate and deliver value to customers (Davenport & Kirby, 2016). The term has been used in various contexts including business, government, and society (Weill & Ross, 2016). The literature on digital transformation has been growing in recent years as organizations are increasingly recognizing the potential of digital technologies to drive growth, improve efficiency, and create new business models (Gartner, 2016).

One of the key drivers of digital transformation is the increasing availability of data and the ability to analyze it (McAfee & Brynjolfsson, 2012). The rise of big data and the emergence of technologies such as artificial intelligence and machine learning have enabled organizations to gain new insights and make better decisions (KPMG, 2017). This has led to the development of new business models such as the sharing economy and the Internet of Things (IoT) (Tapscott & Williams, 2016).

Another important aspect of digital transformation is the changing nature of work and the workforce (McKinsey, 2017). The rise of automation and the increasing use of robots and other digital technologies are changing the skills that are needed in the workforce (World Economic Forum, 2016). This is leading to a shift in the way organizations operate and the way they engage with customers (Harvard Business Review, 2017).

Digital transformation has been identified as a key driver of change in the hospitality and tourism industry (Hjalager, 2018). The use of digital technologies, such as social media, mobile applications, and the Internet of Things (IoT), has enabled organizations in the industry to improve customer experiences, increase operational efficiency, and create new revenue streams (Frew & Wang, 2016).

One of the key areas of digital transformation in the hospitality and tourism industry is the use of social media and mobile technologies to improve customer engagement and loyalty (Buhalis & Law, 2008). Social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram have become essential tools for hotels and airlines to communicate with customers, promote their brands, and gather customer feedback (Li & Wang, 2013). Mobile technologies have also played a key role in the industry, with the rise of mobile booking platforms and mobile applications for hotel check-in and room service (Hjalager, 2018).

Another important area of digital transformation in the hospitality and tourism industry is the use of data and analytics to improve decision-making and increase operational efficiency (KPMG, 2017). The use of big data and analytics has enabled organizations in the industry to gather insights on customer behavior and preferences, optimize pricing and inventory management, and improve customer targeting and segmentation (Frew & Wang, 2016).

We can see that little or no research has discussed the digital transformation in the context of condotel which is completely different from traditional form of ownerships of resort or hotel. Also, there is not much discussion on how digital transformation take places in brand-newly established hotels or resorts. Our study can contribute to that gap.

2.2 ANT and translation

Actor-network theory (ANT) has been widely used in various fields, such as science and technology studies, sociology, and anthropology, to understand the dynamic process of translation. Translation in ANT refers to the process of how actors and networks are connected and translated into different forms and meanings (Nyella et al., 2010).

One key aspect of translation in ANT is the concept of "enrollment" or the process of convincing actors to participate in a network (Latour, 2005). This process involves the negotiation of interests and power dynamics among actors, and the use of various forms of persuasion and manipulation (Law, 1992). This process is not a one-time event but rather a continuous and dynamic process that involves the constant negotiation and renegotiation of relationships among actors (Callon, 1986).

Another important aspect of translation in ANT is the concept of "heterogeneity" or the diversity of actors and networks involved in the process (Latour, 2005). This includes the diversity of human and non-human actors, such as technology and artifacts, as well as the diversity of cultures, languages, and social norms (Latour, 2005). This heterogeneity can lead to conflicts and resistance in the translation process, as actors may have different interests and perspectives (Law, 1992).

The literature suggests that the translation process in ANT can be divided into several phases: enrollment, mobilization, stabilization, and reversal (Law & Hassard, 1999; Callon, 1986).

The enrollment phase involves the convincing of actors to participate in the network, which can include the negotiation of interests and power dynamics among actors, and the use of various forms of persuasion and manipulation (Law & Hassard, 1999; Callon, 1986).

The mobilization phase is when actors and networks are actively assembled and put into action (Law & Hassard, 1999). This can involve the creation of new relationships and connections among actors, as well as the alignment of their interests and goals.

The stabilization phase is when the network becomes stabilized and established, and actors' participation becomes routine and taken-for-granted (Law & Hassard, 1999). This can involve the consolidation of power dynamics and the creation of rules and norms to govern the network.

The reversal phase is when the network starts to unravel, and actors may begin to withdraw their participation or the network may be dismantled altogether (Law & Hassard, 1999). This

can happen due to changes in the external environment, the emergence of new technologies or actors, or the erosion of trust and cooperation among network members.

The literature also suggests that the translation process in ANT is not linear but rather cyclical and dynamic, with the phases often overlapping and recurring (Law & Hassard, 1999). Additionally, the literature suggests that the translation process can have significant impacts on both social and technical systems, and the process is always a continuous and dynamic process that involves the constant negotiation and renegotiation of relationships among actors (Callon, 1986).

2.3 Our proposed theoretical framework

Digital transformation can be seen as a translation process due to its complexity, involving multiple stakeholders, a mix of human and non-human actors, and the need for mobilization, negotiation, and communication to establish stability. We will use the concept of translation as our theoretical framework to analyze the digital transformation process of the condotel resort project.

3 RESEARCH METHODS

The approach used for this research is qualitative, utilizing three different strategies for data collection: interviews, examination of documents, and observing participation.

Interviews: In-depth, semi-structured interviews were carried out with a selected group of 12 participants who had knowledge or expertise in the subject matter. Among the informants, 10 are from self-running hosting owners and 2 from TACom. Questions were formulated based on the research goals, aiming to acquire detailed information about the participants' perspectives, experiences and attitudes towards the topic under study. The interview was done via online call, each interview lasted approximately one hour. We used open-ended questions to collect as much details as possible. The interview was semi-structured with a set of predefined questions. We also asked follow up questions to maximize data collected.

Document examination: An analysis of documents was performed to gather information from existing literature, reports, and other relevant materials. This helped provide a historical and contextual background for the study and to complement the information obtained from the interviews. Documents used for our research include chat logs in instant messenger apps with participants of more than 500 members. Email exchanges between TACom and owners, official letters from TACom, online newspapers, are other source of data for our research.

Participative observations: The researcher participated in relevant activities and events associated with the topic, to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Notes were taken during the observations and data was analyzed for themes and

patterns. We participated in various face to face meetings and discussions among owners and with TACom for further data collection.

Data Analysis: The data collected from the interviews, document examination, and participative observations were transcribed and sorted using a thematic analysis method. The researcher identified key themes and patterns in the data, and cross-referenced the findings to guarantee that the results were robust and reliable.

Ethical Considerations: All participants provided informed consent before the interviews were carried out. Participants were guaranteed that the data collected would be kept confidential and anonymous. The study was also reviewed and approved by an institutional review board.

By using a combination of data collection methods, this study allows for cross-referencing of data and provides a detailed and in-depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. This approach assists in increasing the credibility and validity of the findings.

4 THE CASE

TheA resort is a largest condotel project located in a world top beautiful beach located in a central provinces of Vietnam. The resort is built on a 29-hectare area, consisting of 4 hotel towers and 126 shopvillas. The resort are designed to standard, 90% of the apartments are facing the sea. The resort is a combination of entertainment and leisure "All in one" to become an effective investment destination with sustainable profits from diverse and abundant customers throughout the year, bringing the best quality vacation experiences.

This stunning property offers guests a wide range of amenities and activities to ensure a truly unforgettable stay. With its pristine beaches, lush gardens, and impressive architecture, the resort is a perfect destination for those looking for a relaxing and indulgent holiday. The resort features a variety of room types, including deluxe rooms, suites, and villas, all of which are beautifully decorated and equipped with all the modern amenities one would expect from a 5-star hotel. Guests can also enjoy a wide range of on-site facilities, including a spa, fitness center, and multiple dining options, as well as a variety of water sports and recreational activities.

TheA Resort project in Cam Ranh was approved by the provincial government in 2008, alongside other projects in the Long Beach area. Initially, the project was planned to consist solely of villas. In 2018, a new investor, referred to as TACom, acquired the project and applied for an amendment to the investment license to include four 22-floor towers and 126 shophouse villas. TACom collaborated with various partners to design the architecture and landscaping, as well as with major real estate companies to market and sell the project. These companies launched extensive marketing campaigns through social media, newspapers, and billboards.

With prices ranging from \$50,000 to \$100,000 per apartment, the project was well-received by investors interested in luxury vacations. TACom's ownership policy also proved attractive,

offering three options: owners could use the apartments for their own stay, self-manage them, or entrust them to TACom for yearly share profits. However, the project faced several setbacks. The Ministry of Defense required that two of the towers be reduced in height to accommodate future airport expansion plans, leading to significant downsizing and the need to return deposit money to affected customers. Additionally, the project encountered several scandals, as TACom's application for a plan amendment had not been officially approved, leading to a halt in construction.

This caused anger among customers, many of whom gathered and hired attorneys to request that TACom cancel the contract and return their money. TACom rejected these requests. In late 2019, TACom received approval for the amendment and became more aggressive in rejecting customers' requests to cancel the contract. Then, the Covid-19 pandemic hit the country, and in 2020 and early 2021, Vietnam was under strict disease control. To avoid penalties for project delays, TACom decided to hand over the apartments to customers, offering a one-year rental policy as a compromise.

Prior to completion, an active group of individuals who loved traveling and retreats and had financial surplus created a Zalo group for communication. At the beginning, the group was truly active, always support and defend and speak on behalf of the investor. Later, the group became very pessimistic, doubting every move from TACom. At the same time, the group of members that brought TACom to the court had received court judgement saying that TACom won the case. Some active members of the Zalo group, those are entrepreneurs and have experiences with hospitality decided to form a self-running business group. They suspected all the proposal from TACom. Based on their own experiences, and argued that entrusting apartments to TACom would result only loss and no gain. During the independency day of 2022, those members gathered at the resort and held several meetings to discuss the ways to go. At that time, TACom was so awkward in setting up clearly all the policies. Couldn't wait to see their apartments to be vacant, the group members started to use OTAs to sell their apartments. It was a boom where different owners have a page to sell. OTAs are also very diverse including Booking, Agoda, and AirBnB. These pages sometime directly competed each other for pricing. A group member who had shop villas was responsible for room cleaning and welcoming guests. However, TACom didn't like it, they sent a warning emails to all the owners to claim their exclusive names which is according to some attorney very controversial.

The business was ongoing with guests coming regularly. However, the group member who was in charge of receiving guests had to go back her home city. Another group member was volunteer to assume the responsibility. She hired one of her relatives to stay permanently at the resort to support others in cleaning, receiving guests, and collecting money. However, all the problem happened with the previous group member occurred again in a larger scale. The hired staff couldn't speak English making it hard for communication. Money collection and room cleaning had too many problems that disturb guests too much. There was case guests after receiving a room wanted to cancel because rooms were not clean. Many cases, guests couldn't enter the resort because of miscommunication between the guards and reception. However, collecting room payment was a huge problem. As guests payment was so diverse such as by

cash, by card, by bank transfer, it was so complex to arrange. Many OTAs decided to remove online payment and delegate the payment at the hotel. This change created many problems to charge the guest. Some cases, guests checked out without payment. They assumed that they paid online already but in fact it did not. This created big trouble for owners because they constantly incurred loss even had spent lots of efforts in coordinating that.

Some active member of the group urged to have a professional company to be the counter weight with TACom to negotiate. One group member had a travel company working for a long time. This company was used to be a legal representative to deal with TACom. At this form of collaboration had never been anywhere in Vietnam, no one knows what should be done. TACom put all the conditions and constraints to control but the owners wanted to be equally partner.

First was the service price, TACom wanted a high amount which made owners have no profit. After some negotiation, TACom agreed to give a discount of 30% for 3 months. Second was the criteria of things used in the room. TACom required all the detailed list of things must be included. A team was missioned to plan what need to be supplied. All the coordination was done via Zalo and Google spreadsheet. In two days, all the things were shipped to the resort for approval. Despite these efforts, the payment collection issue remained a problem. TACom insisted that the owners directly contact guests to ask for money, which caused difficulties for the owners as they were unsure of how to handle this aspect of the business. The group members were still grappling with how to effectively manage the resort and make it profitable. They were considering different options, such as hiring a professional company to help with negotiations and management, but the situation was still uncertain. Overall, the group members were facing many challenges in running their self-run business at the resort and were still trying to find solutions to these issues.

5 FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

As argued earlier, we conceptualize the digital transformation process in a self-running business group at the multi-owners resort as a translation process. We now use it as theoretical lens to analyze our data.

5.1 Findings

5.1.1 Digital transformation is non-linear and social-technical process

The first finding in this research is that digital transformation in the hospitality industry is not as straightforward as many assume. It is not simply a matter of implementing a list of software and automatically becoming a digital business. Rather, it is a highly social-technical process in which diverse actors negotiate to establish and stabilize a network in competition with others (Nguyen et al., 2017). Until the interests of all actors are assured, the network remains unstable. There are stages in which temporary stability is formed, but it only lasts for a short time and can easily fall apart. This reaffirms that digital transformation is not a linear and technically deterministic process. For example, even though online travel agency (OTA) websites such as Booking, Agoda, and AirBnB have been used for online marketing and selling rooms, it is just

a very small part of a much more complex process. This includes who will welcome guests and clean rooms, how to collect the payment, and other related matters. Even after these tasks are outsourced to a service company, it can still be difficult to sort out the payment as it is a sensitive and error-prone task. No party wants to take that risk. Moreover, as TACom always relies on OTAs for their business, digital transformation in this case is not a single entity decision, but rather a composite of decisions driven by competing and collaborative actors.

5.1.2 Problematic problematization

During the translation process, problematization is a crucial step in which focal actors position themselves as mandatory points of passage for other actors to join the network (Callon 1996). However, from empirical data, we argue that this simple view of translation may not always hold true. We propose a more cyclical and interactive perspective on problematization. For example, TACom identified themselves as a mandatory point of passage by arguing that there must be an exclusive service company to maintain the same quality and experiences for guests. By positioning themselves in this way, TACom ensured control over the business and operation of the resort. Another example is TACom's use of anti-dumping tactics by setting a minimum price for owners and not allowing them to sell below that, while TACom was allowed to run marketing campaigns and discounts. This created conflict between TACom and self-running owners, who argued that a monopoly on service provision was bad for business and removed competition for lower prices and higher quality. In the long run, mechanisms such as referees or laws are necessary to regulate and resolve these conflicts and protect weaker actors. Additionally, TACom's advertising of the resort as having options for vacation, self-running business, and entrusting, but then creating technical conditions to remove the self-running business option, illustrates how problematization can be problematic. In this case, the contract between TACom and the owners should be used as the highest referee, even in the absence of laws in this area.

5.1.3 Asymmetric power relations, non-negotiable actors

During the translation process, we notice there are situations where there exist asymmetric power relations that provide little opportunity for less powerful actor to join the process (Nguyen et al., 2017). The relation between TACom and owners is clearly evidence for such an asymmetric power. TACom was so powerful as it controlled all the infrastructure and institutions of the resort. They had a freedom to interpret the terms and conditions in the contracts in the way that maximize their gains and reinforce their control. For example, they set the price of the service, appoint a service company, remove the option to let the apartment as individual business, provide criteria and mode of operations. The owners had little or no power, or a chance to negotiate.

This asymmetry in power relation really undermine the core essences of translation in which the focal actor delineate the interests of other actors if they follow the path that is outlined by the focal actor (interessement phase). The other actors in that case have no choice rather than accept the plan forced by the focal actor. In such cases, the obligatory passing point is always assumed.

The other relationship that we believe worth to investigate in this case is what we define as silent obligatory passing point. It happens when there is involvement of non-negotiable actors. For example, when self-business owners adopt an OTA platform to sell their rooms, they must assume it as is. Booking is an OTA platform had a widespread target customers however its flexible policy in paying was really a problem for new hosts. Only big hotels with 4 and 5 stars are allowed to charge credit card of customers. For new hosts and small hotels, guests could easily book then no show without any penalty. In the case we examined, owners reported about 30% no show rate. Even worst, as all of the owners stay far away from the resort, collecting money was a big problem. Guests book in Booking.com via Agoda as a partner even exacerbate the problem. Agoda policy was blocking emails and phone number of the guests and replace with Agoda number, making it so hard to contact the guests. Also the messaging feature in Agoda removed any messages that contain email, phone number, and even picture.

Communication with Booking.com or Agoda is another issue. Agoda phone line was too difficult to reach out while Booking.com uses a bot for automatic message reply. Some owners when having problems such as guest misconduct tried to approach Agoda and Booking.com for support. However, what they received was very generic response. For example, for misconduct report, Booking.com advised that owners should setup a deposit but how could a deposit be effective if owners even couldn't charge guests' credit card for the room payment.

These evidences show that there exist such asymmetric power relations between owners and such actors. We theorize it as non-negotiable actors or silent obligatory passing points. We characterize them as hidden and taken for granted infrastructure that implicitly frame and control behaviors and actions of other actors. This kind of silent obligatory passing points is worthy more future research in order to understand better the translation process which in turns will contribute to the digital transformation in hospitality sector.

5.2 Discussions

In this section, we will discuss our findings as well as relate them with the extant literature in digital transformation in hospitality and ANT. We also identify limitations of our work and provide suggestions for future study.

This research has found that the process of digital transformation within the hospitality industry is not a straightforward one, but rather a complex and dynamic process that involves multiple actors working to establish and stabilize a network. Additionally, the study identified problematization and power imbalances as significant factors that can impede the process of digital transformation. To address these issues, the study suggests implementing mechanisms such as referees or laws to regulate conflicts and protect weaker actors. Furthermore, the study emphasizes the importance of ensuring all parties are able to participate in the negotiation process and have a say in decision-making.

This research contributes to the understanding of digital transformation in the hospitality industry by providing an in-depth analysis of the process using a theoretical lens of translation. It highlights that digital transformation is a non-linear and social-technical process that involves diverse actors negotiating to establish and stabilize a network in competition with others. The study also provides insights into the problematic problematization and asymmetric power relations that can arise during the process, and offers suggestions for addressing these issues.

This research also provides a valuable case study of a specific type of business, a multi-owners resort, which can serve as a valuable reference for practitioners and researchers in the industry. Furthermore, the research proposes a more cyclical and interactive perspective on problematization, which can help practitioners to understand how to address the problematization in their organizations.

Additionally, the research emphasizes the importance of ensuring that all parties are able to participate in the negotiation process and have a say in decision-making, this can help practitioners to create a more inclusive and equitable digital transformation process.

Overall, this research contributes to the existing literature on digital transformation by providing a more nuanced understanding of the process and the challenges that organizations face when undergoing digital transformation. It also provides practical insights that can help organizations to navigate the complex and dynamic process of digital transformation more effectively.

One limitation of this research is that it focuses on a specific case study of a multi-owners resort, and the findings may not be generalizable to other types of businesses or industries. Further research could explore digital transformation in a wider range of hospitality businesses, such as hotels or restaurants, to gain a more comprehensive understanding of the process.

Another limitation is that the study focuses mainly on the negotiation process between actors and the power imbalances that arise during this process, and does not delve deeper into the technical aspects of digital transformation, such as the implementation of specific software or tools. Future research could explore the technical aspects of digital transformation and how they interact with the social and negotiation process.

Additionally, the study mainly focuses on the negative aspects of the digital transformation process, like the power imbalances and problematic problematization. Future research could also focus on the positive aspects like the benefits that digital transformation can bring to the hospitality industry, such as increased efficiency and cost savings. Furthermore, future research could explore the implementation and the outcome of these solutions in more detail.

6 CONCLUSION

This research provides a case study of a specific type of business, a multi-owners resort, which can serve as a valuable reference for practitioners and researchers in the industry. Theoretically, our research contributes to understanding the digital transformation process at multi-owners hospitality properties. Our research suggests that digital transformation is a social-technical and negotiable process. There is no straightforward problematization for actors. We also suggest paying attention to silent obligatory passing points, which are crucial for successful negotiation and stable network formation. Researchers can unpack these concepts in more diverse settings, which is expected to yield more interesting findings. For practitioners, apartment owners, and regulatory agencies, this research could help with better planning and operating incoming resorts.

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