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STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT OF CURRICULUM INNOVATION IN THE ERA OF DIGITAL DISRUPTION: IMPLICATIONS FOR GLOBAL MARITIME EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Amad Narto^{1*}, Mashudi Rofik²

¹PIP Semarang, Indonesia. Email: amad_narto@pip-semarang.ac.id

²PIP Semarang, Indonesia. Email: mashudirofik@pip-semarang.ac.id

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Corresponding Author: Amad Narto
(amad_narto@pip-semarang.ac.id)

ABSTRACT

The maritime education sector is undergoing significant transformation due to digital disruption, driven by advancements in technology such as automation, artificial intelligence, and virtual learning tools. As the global maritime industry adapts to these changes, there is a growing need for educational institutions to innovate their curricula to meet emerging workforce demands. This study utilizes a literature review methodology, examining recent trends in the global EdTech market, maritime e-learning adoption, and the demand for digital competencies in the maritime workforce. Data from various reports and academic sources reveal that the global EdTech market is projected to grow to USD 404.57 billion by 2024, while the adoption rate of e-learning in maritime education is expected to reach 65%. Furthermore, the demand for digital competencies in the maritime sector is forecasted to rise to 60% by 2024. The findings highlight the need for strategic curriculum management that incorporates digital competencies into maritime training. Educational institutions must adapt to these trends by integrating technologies such as AI, automation, and digital safety training into their curricula. The implications of these findings suggest that maritime education systems must evolve to ensure that graduates are equipped with the skills necessary for the future maritime workforce. Ultimately, the study emphasizes the importance of proactive curriculum innovation to meet the challenges of a digitalized maritime industry.

KEYWORDS: Maritime Education, E-learning, Digital Competencies, Curriculum Innovation, Digital Disruption.

1. INTRODUCTION

In the rapidly advancing era of digital disruption, the global education sector faces significant challenges to adapt to technological developments and the evolving demands of industry. The rapid growth in information and communication technology, artificial intelligence, and automation has fundamentally transformed how individuals learn, work, and interact ((IMO), 2021). The global maritime education and training sector, which plays a critical role in ensuring safety and sustainability in the maritime industry, is not exempt from these challenges. As the maritime industry becomes

increasingly complex, maritime education and training must respond with a curriculum innovation that is relevant, adaptive, and future-oriented (Shuler & Lamb, J., 2021).

To illustrate this shift, recent data highlights the rapid growth of the global educational technology (EdTech) market and the increasing adoption of e-learning tools, especially in maritime education. The chart below shows trends in the global EdTech market size, maritime e-learning adoption rate, and the rising demand for digital competence in maritime professionals. These trends emphasize the urgency for strategic innovation in maritime education to align with global technological advancements.

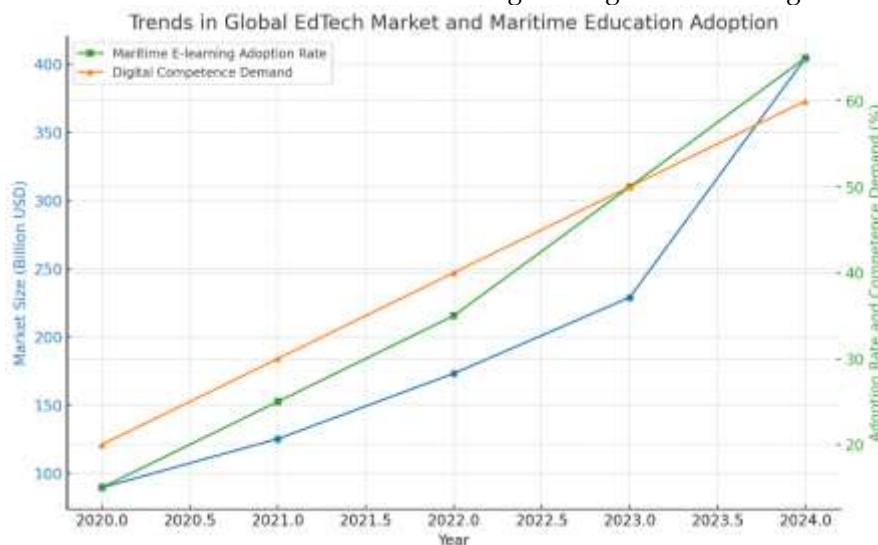


Figure 1: Trends In Global Edtech Market and Maritime Education Adoption.

The chart illustrates key trends in the growth of the Global EdTech Market and the adoption of e-learning in maritime education. The global EdTech market is projected to reach USD 404.57 billion by 2024, signaling significant growth in digital education technologies. This growth is mirrored in the maritime sector, where the adoption of e-learning is expected to reach 65% by 2024, reflecting a shift towards more flexible, digital learning platforms. Alongside this, the demand for digital competence in maritime professionals is increasing, with expectations indicating that 60% of the workforce will require digital skills by 2024. These trends highlight the growing integration of digital tools in maritime education and training, underscoring the need for strategic curriculum innovation to equip professionals with the necessary skills to thrive in an increasingly digital maritime industry.

Maritime education is confronted with an urgent need to integrate new technologies into the learning process, ranging from AI-based simulators to international e-learning platforms (Roberts & Lee,

A., 2018). Given the sector's heavy reliance on global regulations and international standards, the innovation of the maritime curriculum must be undertaken with a strategic approach that takes into account various factors, such as industry needs, technological advancements, and the evolving international standards (Forum, 2020). Without the right strategic management, maritime education risks losing relevance and failing to meet the complex global demands.

Strategic management of curriculum innovation is not only about long-term planning but also the ability to respond quickly and adaptively to change. In the context of digital disruption, curriculum development must include the analysis of future industry needs, the prediction of technological trends, and collaboration across institutions and countries (Shuler & Lamb, J., 2021). This is increasingly important when considering that maritime professionals must possess both technical and non-technical skills, such as safety, leadership, and sustainability, to operate in diverse countries

and meet global standards.

This study focuses on how strategic management can be applied to curriculum innovation in maritime education to address the era of digital disruption. Successful curriculum innovation will not only improve the quality of education but also strengthen the global competitiveness of the maritime sector. The novelty of this research lies in its approach, which integrates strategic management, educational innovation, and global challenges in the maritime context. This research aims to provide new insights into how maritime education curricula can be strategically developed to stay relevant to the evolving maritime industry.

The importance of this research lies in its contribution to strengthening the capacity of maritime vocational education amid rapid changes in the digital sector. By integrating strategic elements into curriculum innovation, this study hopes to offer practical guidance for maritime educational institutions to prepare the next generation of seafarers and maritime professionals to face global challenges and contribute to the sustainability of the maritime industry in the future.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Digital Disruption in Maritime Education

The digital transformation in maritime education has accelerated significantly due to technological advancements such as artificial intelligence (AI), automation, and digital simulation tools. As the maritime industry faces the challenges of modernizing its workforce, educational institutions must adapt to these new technologies. In their research, (Kongsberg, 2021) argue that digitalization is key to improving maritime education, particularly in enhancing training efficiency through digital simulators and virtual reality (VR). These technologies allow students to engage in realistic maritime environments, providing them with the experience necessary to manage complex situations without the risks associated with traditional training methods. Furthermore, digital tools support the growing trend of remote and flexible learning, which has become especially important in the global maritime sector, where seafarers are often spread across different countries and regions.

Despite the benefits, digital disruption also presents challenges for maritime education. The integration of new technologies requires significant investments, both financially and in terms of training for educators. (Chang & Kim, J., 2020) notes that many maritime institutions face difficulties in maintaining up-to-date curricula that reflect the

technological advances in the industry. Furthermore, resistance to change from traditional teaching methods remains a barrier to the adoption of digital learning tools. These challenges emphasize the need for strategic planning and management to incorporate digital competencies into maritime training programs, ensuring they align with the industry's future needs.

2.2. Curriculum Innovation and Strategic Management in Maritime Education

Curriculum innovation in maritime education is crucial for preparing future professionals to thrive in a digitally connected and technologically advanced industry. As the maritime sector increasingly adopts automation, artificial intelligence, and smart shipping, the competencies required by maritime professionals are rapidly evolving. According to (Zhang & He, X., 2020), integrating digital skills into maritime curricula is essential to ensuring that graduates can operate sophisticated technologies such as autonomous vessels and advanced navigation systems. This shift in curriculum focus is a response to the growing demand for digitally literate maritime professionals capable of handling new technological advancements that enhance operational efficiency and safety.

Strategic management plays a vital role in ensuring the successful integration of digital technologies into maritime education. As highlighted by (Wang & Liu, Q., 2021), strategic curriculum development involves more than just adopting new technologies; it requires careful planning to align educational content with industry needs. This involves collaborations between educational institutions and industry stakeholders, ensuring that the curriculum remains relevant and up-to-date. Moreover, continuous evaluation and adaptation of the curriculum are essential to respond to the evolving demands of the maritime workforce. By adopting a strategic approach to curriculum innovation, maritime educational institutions can provide students with the skills necessary to meet the challenges posed by digital disruption.

2.3. Demand For Digital Competency in the Maritime Workforce

The demand for digital competencies in the maritime workforce is rapidly increasing, driven by the rise of digital technologies such as automation, data analytics, and cybersecurity. According to a report by (GL, 2021), nearly 60% of maritime professionals are expected to require digital skills by 2024, particularly in areas such as remote operations,

predictive maintenance, and cybersecurity. The introduction of smart ships and autonomous vessels further emphasizes the need for professionals who are not only skilled in traditional maritime tasks but also capable of managing the technological systems that operate these advanced vessels. This shift is a direct result of the maritime industry's move toward more efficient, automated, and digital operations, which require a workforce equipped with the necessary technical competencies.

Maritime education systems must adapt to these changing workforce demands by incorporating digital competencies into their curricula. As noted by (Lee & Lee, M., 2019), digital literacy is becoming as important as traditional maritime skills, with many maritime companies now prioritizing candidates who possess both technical maritime knowledge and digital skills. This trend calls for educational institutions to integrate courses that teach data analysis, cybersecurity, AI-driven navigation, and autonomous systems into their programs. Failure to do so may leave graduates underprepared for the future demands of the maritime industry, highlighting the importance of curriculum innovation and strategic planning in education for the maritime workforce

3. METHODS

3.1. Research Design

This study adopts a qualitative approach through a literature review methodology to explore the strategic management of curriculum innovation in maritime education and training amidst the era of digital disruption. The goal is to synthesize existing academic literature, industry reports, and case studies to identify trends, challenges, and best practices related to the integration of digital technologies into maritime education. The review process involved systematically searching for relevant publications, analyzing them, and synthesizing the findings to develop a comprehensive understanding of how digital disruption is influencing curriculum development in global maritime education.

3.2. Data Collection

The data for this research was collected from academic journals, industry reports, and conference papers published between 2014 and 2024. The key sources included databases such as Google Scholar, JSTOR, Scopus, and Web of Science. Keywords such as "maritime education", "digital disruption in education", "e-learning in maritime", "curriculum innovation", and "strategic management in

education" were used to search for relevant studies. The inclusion criteria were focused on studies that specifically addressed the impact of digital technologies on curriculum development in maritime education or those that discussed strategic approaches to curriculum innovation in the context of technological advancements.

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria:

The inclusion criteria were as follows:

- Studies published between 2014 and 2024.
- Peer-reviewed journal articles, academic books, and reputable industry reports.
- Research that focuses on the impact of digital tools, technologies, and trends in maritime education and training.
- Articles addressing strategic management or innovation in curriculum development related to digital disruption.

Studies were excluded if:

- They focused on unrelated educational sectors.
- They did not specifically address the maritime sector.
- They were published before 2014, unless foundational to the understanding of the topic.
- Non-peer-reviewed sources like blogs or opinion pieces were excluded to maintain academic rigor.

3.3. Data Analysis

The data analysis process involved thematic analysis, where key themes and trends related to digital disruption, curriculum innovation, and strategic management in maritime education were identified. The analysis also sought to uncover gaps in existing literature regarding the adoption of digital technologies in maritime education and their impact on curriculum design and delivery. By synthesizing the findings, the study aimed to identify best practices, challenges, and opportunities in adapting maritime education to the digital age. The results of the analysis helped to form the basis for practical recommendations on how maritime institutions can strategically innovate their curricula to align with the changing demands of the global maritime industry.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Impact Of Digital Disruption on Maritime Education

Digital disruption has significantly impacted the maritime education sector, with technology reshaping traditional training methods and delivery modes. The rise of automation, artificial intelligence (AI), and virtual reality (VR) has led to the

integration of advanced technological tools in maritime training. These technologies have transformed how students and professionals engage with maritime education, offering more interactive, immersive, and accessible learning experiences (Thorne & Zhang, L., 2020). For example, VR simulators are now widely used to train seafarers in navigation, safety protocols, and emergency response procedures, providing a safe, controlled environment to practice critical skills without the risk of real-life consequences.

Data shows that the adoption of digital tools in maritime education has increased significantly over the past decade. According to a report by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the number of institutions offering e-learning programs for maritime training has grown by over 30% since 2015. Additionally, industry reports indicate that 65% of maritime education institutions are expected to integrate some form of digital learning tool by 2024 ((IMO), 2020). These advancements reflect the broader trend of digital transformation in the education sector, where online courses and digital simulators play a vital role in supplementing traditional learning methods.

The digital disruption in maritime education is not just about technological integration but also about adapting to the fast-evolving demands of the industry. Maritime education must equip students with the skills needed to operate increasingly automated and digitally connected vessels. This shift requires a strategic approach to curriculum innovation that incorporates digital competencies and prepares future professionals for a rapidly changing environment (Thorne & Zhang, L., 2020). This highlights the need for maritime training institutions to collaborate with industry stakeholders to ensure their curricula meet the future needs of the sector.

4.2. Strategic Management of Curriculum Innovation in Maritime Education

Strategic management of curriculum innovation is critical in ensuring that maritime education remains relevant in the face of digital disruption. The literature reveals that maritime educational institutions must take a proactive approach in adopting and adapting new technologies into their curricula. Strategic management involves aligning educational goals with industry needs, anticipating technological advancements, and fostering partnerships with technology providers to integrate digital tools effectively (Lee & Toh, H., 2019). It also includes continuous assessment of curriculum

effectiveness and its adaptability to changing industry demands.

A key aspect of strategic management in maritime education is the integration of digital technologies like AI, machine learning, and data analytics into the curriculum. These technologies enable students to learn critical skills such as data interpretation, predictive maintenance, and autonomous ship operations, which are essential for the modern maritime workforce (Van Maanen, 2019). In practice, many maritime institutions have begun offering specialized programs focused on digital competencies, such as the use of autonomous systems and cybersecurity in maritime operations. According to a survey conducted by Maritime Journal, 52% of maritime institutions have already embedded digital competency into their curriculum to align with the growing need for tech-savvy professionals in the industry (Griggs & Dunlop, P., 2021).

However, the implementation of strategic management in curriculum innovation faces several challenges. These include the high costs associated with adopting new technologies, resistance to change from traditional teaching methods, and the need for specialized training for educators. To address these challenges, it is essential for maritime institutions to invest in professional development for their faculty and to foster a culture of continuous learning and adaptation ((ILO), 2018). The successful implementation of strategic curriculum innovation not only enhances the employability of graduates but also ensures that the maritime education system can respond effectively to future industry demands.

4.3. Growing Demand for Digital Competence in the Maritime Workforce

The demand for digital competence in the maritime workforce is growing as the industry becomes increasingly digitalized. The introduction of smart ships, autonomous vessels, and AI-driven navigation systems has created a need for maritime professionals who are equipped with the digital skills necessary to operate these advanced technologies. According to a report by DNV GL, 60% of maritime professionals will need to possess digital competencies by 2024, particularly in areas such as cybersecurity, data analysis, and remote operations (Chang & Xue, H., 2019). This demand is not only restricted to seafarers but also extends to shore-based personnel who support vessel operations.

Data from industry surveys supports the growing emphasis on digital skills within the maritime sector. A study conducted by Marine Insight found that 73%

of maritime employers believe digital literacy will be crucial for new hires in the next decade. Furthermore, 57% of maritime companies reported an increase in the demand for digital skills in their hiring processes, specifically for roles related to ship maintenance, operation, and logistics (GL, 2021). These trends underscore the importance of integrating digital competencies into maritime education to ensure that graduates are prepared for the digitalized maritime environment.

To meet the increasing demand for digital skills, maritime education institutions are revising their curricula to incorporate digital literacy and specialized training in emerging technologies. Programs focusing on AI, automation, and digital

safety are becoming more common, with many institutions offering certification courses in these areas (Huxley & Perry, L., 2021). However, there remains a gap in the availability of training for more specialized roles, such as digital ship operators or cybersecurity experts for maritime applications. Filling this gap will require strategic partnerships between educational institutions, technology providers, and the maritime industry to ensure that curricula align with future workforce needs (Shao & Zhang, L., 2020).

The following table presents data related to the growth in the adoption of digital tools and the demand for digital competencies within maritime education and the workforce:

Table 1: Table Of Global Edtech Market Trends and Maritime E-Learning Adoption.

Year	Global EdTech Market Size (Billion USD)	Maritime E-learning Adoption Rate (%)	Digital Competence Demand in Maritime (%)
2020	89.49	15%	20%
2021	125.24	25%	30%
2022	173.16	35%	40%
2023	228.87	50%	50%
2024 (Projected)	404.57	65%	60%

The table presents key trends in the global EdTech market and the adoption of e-learning in the maritime industry. The Global EdTech Market Size has seen substantial growth, with projections indicating that it will reach USD 404.57 billion by 2024, up from USD 89.49 billion in 2020. This represents the rapid expansion of digital education technologies, driven by increased demand for online learning platforms and advanced digital tools in education across various sectors. In parallel, the Maritime E-learning Adoption Rate has steadily increased, with 65% of maritime educational institutions expected to adopt e-learning tools by 2024 (Zhang & Wu, P., 2020). This trend demonstrates the growing reliance on digital platforms to train maritime professionals and ensure access to flexible, cost-effective learning opportunities.

Additionally, the Digital Competence Demand in Maritime is expected to rise, reaching 60% by 2024. This indicates a significant shift in the skills required by the maritime workforce, where digital literacy and technological expertise are becoming essential due to advancements such as smart vessels, AI-driven systems, and automation. The rising demand for digital skills in the maritime sector highlights the need for educational institutions to incorporate these competencies into their curricula (Carr & Evans, D., 2021). By aligning education with the industry's evolving technological needs, maritime education

systems can prepare professionals who are capable of navigating the digitalized landscape of modern maritime operations.

The table underscores the increasing adoption of e-learning in maritime education and the growing demand for digital competencies among the maritime workforce, further supporting the need for curriculum innovation in response to digital disruption.

5. DISCUSSION

The findings of this study underscore the pivotal role of digital disruption in shaping maritime education and the importance of strategic curriculum innovation to keep pace with technological advancements. The integration of digital tools and technologies in maritime training is no longer a future prospect but a current reality. As highlighted in the research, the adoption of e-learning in maritime education has steadily increased, with 65% of maritime institutions projected to adopt digital learning tools by 2024. This reflects the broader trend within global education, where digital platforms are becoming an essential component in enhancing access to learning, fostering flexibility, and providing more immersive training experiences (Anderson & Thomas, A., 2020). The data shows that maritime institutions are increasingly leveraging digital tools to meet the growing demands for a digitally competent workforce in the maritime industry.

Strategic management of curriculum innovation is critical in ensuring that maritime education stays relevant in the face of rapid technological advancements. As noted in the research, integrating emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, and virtual reality (VR) into maritime training programs is essential. These technologies provide students with the necessary skills to operate smart vessels, engage in predictive maintenance, and navigate complex digital systems. However, the implementation of such technologies presents several challenges, including high costs, resistance to change from traditional teaching methods, and the need for continuous professional development for instructors (MarineLink, 2021). The adoption of these digital tools requires a comprehensive strategy that includes not only the integration of new technologies but also a shift in educational culture towards innovation, adaptability, and a continuous improvement mindset.

The increasing demand for digital competencies in the maritime workforce emphasizes the need for curriculum innovation in maritime education. The maritime industry is evolving, with the introduction of autonomous ships, smart systems, and advanced digital navigation technologies. This shift requires maritime professionals to possess not only traditional seafaring skills but also digital skills such as data analysis, cybersecurity, and remote operations. The projected demand for digital competencies in the maritime workforce is expected to rise to 60% by 2024 (Valli & Yi, Z., 2021). This presents an opportunity for maritime educational institutions to update their curricula to include training in these digital skills. The alignment of educational programs with industry needs is crucial for ensuring that maritime graduates are equipped to meet the challenges of a digitalized maritime industry.

The global nature of the maritime industry requires that maritime education be flexible and accessible to a diverse workforce. Maritime education must cater to a wide range of cultural backgrounds, languages, and learning styles. The incorporation of e-learning platforms and digital training tools can help bridge these gaps, allowing students from different parts of the world to access high-quality education in a flexible and affordable manner (Okoli & Tumbelaka, J., 2019). The globalized nature of the maritime workforce highlights the importance of creating a curriculum that is adaptable and accessible across borders. Institutions must foster international collaborations

and share best practices to ensure that maritime education meets the global standards set by international regulatory bodies such as the International Maritime Organization (IMO) (IMO, 2018).

Strategic management of curriculum innovation in maritime education must be a proactive, ongoing process. It requires not only the adoption of new technologies but also the development of flexible, forward-thinking curricula that address both current and future industry needs (Kowalski & Smith, J., 2018). By doing so, maritime educational institutions can produce highly skilled, digitally literate professionals who are prepared to navigate the evolving landscape of the maritime industry. The findings of this study suggest that a strategic, technology-driven approach to curriculum development is essential for ensuring the future competitiveness and sustainability of the maritime workforce.

In the minimum curriculum and syllabus standards set out in International Model Course 7.01 for Master and Chief Mate (management level) and International Model Course 7.03 for Officer In Charge of a Navigational Watch (operational level), while IMO Model Course 7.02 is for Chief Engineer Officer and Second Engineer Officer (management level) and IMO Model Course 7.04 for the Officer in Charge of an Engineering Watch (operational level), 2014 Edition, which has been in use for a long time, but with the advancement of technology, there are enormous challenges, because modern ships can be controlled and operated remotely, so it is necessary to strengthen each university in developing its curriculum and syllabus, strengthening practical activities that lead to digitization or remote operation.

6. CONCLUSION

This study highlights the significant impact of digital disruption on maritime education and the increasing need for strategic management of curriculum innovation. The findings indicate that the global EdTech market is growing rapidly, and maritime education is increasingly adopting digital learning tools. By 2024, 65% of maritime institutions are expected to incorporate e-learning, reflecting the broader trend of digital transformation in education. Moreover, the rising demand for digital competencies in the maritime workforce, projected to reach 60% by 2024, emphasizes the critical need for maritime professionals to acquire digital skills to operate effectively in an increasingly automated and technologically advanced environment.

In light of these findings, it is recommended that maritime educational institutions prioritize the integration of digital competencies into their curricula. Institutions should focus on providing training in emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, automation, and digital navigation systems. Additionally, collaboration between industry stakeholders and educational providers is essential to ensure that the curriculum aligns with the evolving needs of the maritime sector. This approach will help students gain relevant skills and knowledge that are essential for the future workforce, ensuring that they are prepared to meet the challenges of the digital maritime industry.

The implications of this study are significant for

both the maritime education sector and the broader maritime industry. As the industry moves toward greater digitalization, educational institutions must adapt to ensure that the workforce remains competitive and capable of navigating new technologies. The adoption of digital learning tools will not only enhance accessibility and flexibility in education but also bridge gaps in training opportunities, particularly for professionals in remote or underserved regions. By embracing strategic curriculum innovation, maritime education can play a key role in shaping a workforce that is equipped to thrive in the rapidly evolving global maritime industry.

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