

Evaluating Staff Perception of Management Practices to confront Epidemics in Egyptian hotels: A case of COVID-19

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Abstract

During any crisis, the industry that suffers the most is hotel industry as it is the most sensitive to crises such as terrorists' attacks, SARS epidemic, bird flu and COVID-19 pandemic. The present paper investigates the negative influence of epidemic COVID-19 upon both of the resorts employees and management practices in Egyptian resorts during Corona pandemic spread. The impact of COVID-19 on hotels industry in Egypt has been approached by few studies. This paper aims at evaluating staff perception of COVID-19 disease in resorts' performances in three Egyptian coastal cities: Sharm El-Shiekh, Hurghada and Marsa Alam. A mixed methods approach was adopted using a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The first method was eighteen general managers of five and four resort hotels were interviewed. The research was accomplished by distributing questionnaires to 360 employees. Statistical techniques, Mann-Whitney U test and Kruskal-Wallis H test and Simple Linear Regression, were used to test the research hypotheses. The results showed that the non-financial hotel performance during COVID-19 crisis is affected by three management practices, namely working environment, staff management and the relations with customers. Accordingly, a set of suggestions is presented to management that could be applied in resort hotel sector to minimize COVID-19 negative impacts on employees.

Review of Literature

Corona virus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is an exceedingly infectious disease with a long incubation period (Singhal, 2020).The COVID-19 epidemic started in China in January 2020 and, within the following two months, it has penetrated many other countries all over the world (Ghanem, 2020).Travelling and enjoying the services of hospitality and tourism operators have been reduced in an extraordinary way especially in times of the world wars of the twentieth century and that of the invasion of Corona virus to countries of the world. (Baum and Hai, 2020).Since March 2020, tourism has been greatly affected and the World Tourism Organization has revised its 2020 forecast for international arrivals and receipts, though it shows that such predictions may be further revised (UNWTO, 2020).Barro (2020) travel companies

suffered from being unable to predict travelers' behaviors; those who might be postponing their booking as they need be assured about their harmless travelling. The situation has become more sophisticated, especially while travelling on airplanes where the COVID-19 is spread by touching other people and surfaces; this could happen during flight (Bloom, 2020). This situation has led to an enormous number of cancellation rates worldwide (Engels, 2020). The employees need special procedures, education programs about health awareness and new hygiene equipment to be used after the outbreak of any pandemic (Kim *et al.*, 2005). This results from the fact that the hotel industry (as well as all other sectors related to mass traveling) is highly affected by social distancing as the proposed response to epidemics (Tomes, 2010).

It is worth pinpointing that this paper has been written during the pandemic crisis when deaths have been horribly increased worldwide. Simultaneously, a number of countries have decided tentatively to reopen their social and business activities. Hospitality industry is usually expected to be the last category to reopen. However, it is still indefinite to know how hospitality industry is expected to survive in a post-COVID19 world. To achieve this aim, the following research objectives have been set: a) investigating COVID-19 outbreak negative influence on hospitality sector; and 2) clarifying the best management practices in Egyptian resorts during Corona pandemic.

Overview of COVID-19

The entire world has been overwhelmed by COVID-19 within weeks, attacking the health and lives of millions of people all around the globe, especially in East Asia, Europe and North America. Consequently, the spread of the virus has gone through major compulsions to isolated communities in the Global South (UNWTO, 2020). The COVID-19 virus and prolonged travel restrictions have together led to corrupting global tourism and hotels industry.

In her open letter, Gloria Guevara, President and CEO of the World Travel and Tourism Chamber, pointed out that 50 million employments are globally threatened since the pandemic widespread. That letter clarifies that travelling and tourism segment are likely to collapse, attempting to survive because of the COVID-19 worldwide wellbeing emergency (Guevara, 2020). Hence, diverse countries have closed the hospitality and tourism operations as well as the international travel and, in some other countries, domestic travel. Air and sea travel have been temporarily banned as both are regarded as main causes of such global spread of the pandemic of coronavirus (Chinazzi *et al.*, 2020).

In hospitality industry, Covid-19 has resulted in economic and labor crises. Such pandemic, to a great extent, affects production of both hospitality services and goods that represent the supply side. It has also affected investment and consumption related to such services and goods that represent the side of demand (ILO, 2020). It is, thus, always advised to avoid crowded cities, including bars, entertainment places, conferences, meetings and other hospitality places. This has resulted in making hospitality premises extremely suffer (Han *et al.*, 2020). Both travelling and transportation are basic pillars in hospitality, especially in destinations that rely on

international tourists. Accordingly, flight cancellations occurred repeatedly (Tams, 2020). Much evidence is provided in diverse international destinations, showing the extent to which COVID-19 influences international airlines flights and travel industry. Additionally, business travels are also cancelled, leading a lot of people to return back home to spend their holidays with their families (Yiu, 2020). In Egypt, the government decided to halt all air flights to and from Egypt from March 19, 2020 for two weeks. This period is prolonged to the 23rd of April. Along the same lines, all Nile cruise trips were also stopped as a precautionary procedure to restrict spreading the COVID-19. These decisions were taken after enormous infections had been detected among some tourists after returning to their homelands back from Egypt (Moustafa, 2020).

The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on hospitality industry

The first infection of coronavirus (COVID-19) was detected in December 2019 in Wuhan, Mainland China. Since then, the swift spread of the virus has significantly reduced almost all global tourism (Estrada *et al.*, 2020). Tourism is likely to be the main industry that would be negatively influenced by such pandemic (Ayittei *et al.*, 2020). China was the first country that has suffered from the first economic downturns because it was the first country that has been hit by the coronavirus. Similarly, in Italy, almost 90% percent of hotel and travel agency bookings for March 2020 were canceled in Rome, exceeding 80% in Sicily (Federazione Italiana del Turismo, 2020). Furthermore, after the outbreak of the corona virus in Egypt, a remarkable decline in tourists since February 2020 has been detected. After the first coronavirus infection had been announced in Egypt, and about 200 cases had existed by the mid-March, many hotel reservations were canceled and tourists could barely visit any tourist sites (Al-Monitor, 2020).

The World Travel and Tourism Council have declared that the COVID-19 pandemic could end 50 million jobs worldwide in the travel and tourism industry. Moreover, Asia has been predicted to be the worst affected. It is worthy to note that it could take more than ten months for tourism industry to recover when the outbreak will be over (World Economic Forum, 2020). Such impact would rely on how long the epidemic would last and also on the way the virus could get worsened even after applying restrictive measures, like those applied by the U.S. administration on flights to Europe (World Travels and Tourism Council, 2020). Further, chief executive of WTTC described coronavirus as a substantial threat to the tourism industry as it could cause the travel sector to shrink by up to 25% in 2020 (BBC, 2020). On the universal level, it is also expected that the international tourist arrivals are to be deteriorated by 1% to 3% during 2020. Before the widespread COVID-19, WTO expected tourism to grow by 3% to 4% for the year 2020. After the outbreak of the virus, tourism growth dropped to about 1% which is equal to \$30 to \$50 billion loss. Negative records as such make the organization cooperate frequently with the WHO since the beginning of the outbreak. In addition, the UNWTO requested all governments, agencies and international organizations to prioritize tourism industry in their plans of recovery (WTO, 2020). Around 5 million domestic trips all around the world have been cancelled in 2020 (Tourism Economics, 2020). Accordingly, Henry and Nazier (2020)

pinpointed that in the hotel industry all over the world both hotel operators and hotel technology suppliers contribute to establishing an ecommerce platform or connecting properties directly via providing healthcare services such as beds or laundry services for medical workers and hospitals. Free rooms are also provided by those suppliers who aid hotels to cover fixed costs.

Generally speaking, tourism industry participates in the world's GDP and jobs by 10%. Concerning tourism labor market, The World Travel and Tourism Council have expected that COVID-19 would globally end 50 million jobs; most of them are in Asian travel and tourism market. In the beginning of 2020, global tourism jobs dropped by 12% and 14% after COVID-19 had been spread. According to Tourism Council, tourism industry requires about 10 months to recover from ramifications of such crisis. Losses resulting from this crisis could be escalated if the epidemic lasted longer (Faus, 2020). Additionally, the COVID-19 outbreak entirely affects hotel industry. For instance, occupancy rates are reduced, average daily rates are decreased, operating expenses are elevated due to sanitary instructions, employees suffer and owners are asked to pay employment costs, and they are required to follow all legal requirements set by government authorities. Owners and employees are also asked to deal with the outbreak, retrieving their insurance policies to guarantee sufficient cover of their losses throughout the outbreak (Hotel News Now, 2020). All hotels all over the world are nowadays trying to reduce all their costs. Yet, worries from COVID-19 are reflected in increasing hotels' expenditures on housekeeping where cleaning suppliers and detergents are basic constituents to provide (Nair, 2020). Consequently, Wen et al. (2020) affirmed that focusing on health conditions and hygiene will directly influence recovery of tourism and hospitality industry after the COVID-19 outbreak because of the fear of this pandemic and similar diseases. Conversely, the situation in Egypt is not clear. Documented data about the impact of COVID-19 upon hospitality industry are not adequate enough. Such inadequacy, especially in Egypt, together with the accelerated global crisis have made studying this matter extremely vital in order to identify the situation of the Egyptian hospitality industry with respect to the spread of the COVID-19 locally and universally (Ghanem, 2020).

COVID-19 crisis totally transformed the tourism industry through cancelling mass trip, postponing national and international flights, or delaying events [Cohen, 2020; Nishiura, et al., 2020]. These changes lay impact upon hotels because: 1) a reduced tourism demand leads to reduced occupancy and revenues in the hotel industry, and 2) consequently, this leads to decreased employment and decline of living conditions of local communities (Napierała *et al.*, 2020). To retrieve tourism industry after the crisis, light must be shed not only on tourism promotion and marketing but also on financial policies to permit tourism enterprises to raise their finance liquidity and staff retention and to improve service quality (Law, 2001 and Smeral, 2009). Furthermore, Smeral (2009) stressed that, after COVID-19 pandemic, consumer behavior and tourism demand have become equal because reduced incomes of consumers will cause even deeper reduction of the consumption of tourist services. This, in turn, is referred to as higher-order services and it is featured by a quite higher income elasticity of demand (Momsen *et al.*, 2010). Hence, hoteliers concentrated on the fact

that both high quality and a brand image can manage the crisis smoothly (Alonso and Bremser, 2013). Hotels offering quite cheap holiday options for domestic guests are less influenced by such crisis than other hotels in other locations (Song *et al.*, 2011).

During the crisis, hotel industry effectiveness should be developed via: 1) communicating and cooperating with crucial local and international stakeholders, 2) rearranging or decreasing overall costs, such as terminating or readjusting agreements with vendors and suppliers (Ritchie, 2004; Dzhandzhugazova *et al.*, 2015; Erulin, 2020; Lund, 2020; Kimes and Anderson, 2020). Online travel agencies should be given special attention as they are most powerful element of a tourism supply chain (Iazzi and Trio, 2017), 3) emerging new income sources and new market segments, 4) integrating all departments together, 5) reorganizing all departmental schedules relying on the new tasks that have to do with the present crisis, 6) boosting the staff to be capable of facing the crisis, 7) making use of more adaptable cancellation policies, 8) adjusting techniques, facilities, and standards to function efficiently during the crisis, and, lastly, 9) reassessing operational and financial data collection, analysis, and prediction to be able to deal successfully with the crisis; the strategy which hotel enterprises usually ignore (Okumus and Karamustafa, 2005).

Kim *et al.*, (2005) clarified the way SARS outbreak influenced hotel industry. They observed that the superlative method to be used to survive during the crisis was applying prevention plans by the management. Proactive management policies are demanded (Okumus and Karamustafa, 2015). Thus, the employees need exceptional procedures, education programs about health awareness issues, and new hygiene equipment that are used after the COVID-19 outbreak (Kim *et al.*, 2005). Moreover, various crises trigger employees to have diverse emotional, attitudinal, and behavioral consequences which shall be investigated (McDonald *et al.*, 2010). For instance, during a crisis, employees undergo fear and panic, leading them to leave their organizations (Johansen *et al.*, 2012). As a result, negative feelings may arise from poor communication amongst employees, prompting them to search for information through rumors (Proctor and Doukakis, 2003). Hence, organizations need to communicate with both external and internal stakeholders to get rid of rumors, unfounded allegations and false information. Accordingly, Lockwood (2005) added that constituting a team by the hotel management, to deal with crisis, includes the following:

- 1) Team Leader, a senior executive: a decision maker on behalf of the organization.
- 2) Security Director: facilitates plan development, training employees to establish a crisis center and also functions as the primary information officer.
- 3) Finance Director: evaluates the financial consequences of each disaster covered by the plan, manages funds required for any emergency, directs payment of funds and preserves records of cost of crisis for the company.
- 4) Legal Counsel: legal advisor of the team who advises with probable legal suggestions of recommended actions.

- 5) Media Spokesperson: expresses significant details without revealing proprietary information, negotiating employee privacy or confusing investigative efforts.
- 6) HR Director: capable of having access to personnel records and aids the information officers reach affected people and their families. HD Director also attempts to find solutions for human issues caused by the crisis.
- 7) Security Specialist: an expert who can deal with diverse emergency planning issues. Security Specialists are usually included from outside of the organization, educating the team about the strategies used to handle diverse crises. They also provide the team with beneficial advice during the crisis event, conducting the debriefing afterward.

The significance of taking a tactical perspective on experiencing potential crisis events is predominantly highlighted for those destinations; the latter are described by high shares of tourism in their entire economic activity, a comprehensive and proactive method employed to manage undesirable events, and, thus, emerges a substantial requirement for keeping sustainability of both tourism and the total economy in several destinations (Mikulić, 2016). Unquestionably, hospitality and tourism will re-arise from the impact of any pandemic over a prolonged timeframe and at different speeds in various countries. Access to domestic travel in most destinations, triggered via visiting friends and relatives, may flourish, then followed gradually by international travel as countries tend to lessen their border controls and allow international flights (Mikulić, 2016). Consequently, hoteliers have to focus on changes in consumer demand after the unexpected spread of COVID-19 pandemic and to restore travelers' confidence. Since that the COVID-19 crisis may cause extraordinary impact on hotels all over the world, researchers should approach and support theory and knowledge in this vital hospitality sector in order to help hotels become stronger and more flexible, achieving effective post-crises recovery (Jiang and Wen, 2020)

At a hotel level, witnessing demand downturn results in many negative consequences (Mohammad, 2014). Tranter et al. (2009) discussed that downturn of hotel demand results in decreased occupancy rates and reduced sales of other hotel departments which in its turn cause hotel revenues to decline. Ritchie (2009) explained that in severe downturn times, many hotels close some of their facilities or even stop their whole operation for period of time until the market recovers. Therefore, this affects the work environment of employees, employee management and employee relations with customers. Therefore, management should practice crisis strategies that will provide an appropriate environment to improve the employee's conditions which leads to decreasing the turnover rate.

Wu *et al.*, (2012) stated that to understand the employees' attitudes and be able to predict their behavior during crises can help management to handle the incidents and reduce their turnover rates after the crisis. However, most of these studies focus on crisis management and crisis responsiveness in terms of organization survival and the customer's perspective. Therefore, Israeli *et al.* (2010) added that the list of practices comprises six themes during the crisis period: marketing, infrastructure (or hotel)

maintenance, human resources, the relations with customers and crisis exploiting and governmental assistance. In each of the themes, practices relevant to the crisis in the hospitality industry were listed. For example, in the marketing theme, previous study suggested that marketing efforts towards foreign tourists may be extremely relevant. Additionally, in the government theme; requests for government support and tax relief were traditional practices. With respect to maintenance, manager's point out the importance of maintenance so that the hotel can return after the crisis, renewed and to be different for customers, At the same time, the employees feel comfortable when the hotel is able to renew the equipment and buildings, and thus he can make a greater effort to increase productivity.

Based on the literature review, the global panic associated with COVID-19 may have enduring consequences on travel and thereby on hotel performance. Therefore, staff perception of management practices are necessitated to boost staff confidence and customer satisfaction to help hotels recover in a timely manner after this crisis (Jiang and Wen, 2020). Therefore, this study focuses on the effect of management practices in resort hotels to add new thinking and to expand the original scope of professional management research in various fields. To explore the relationship between management practices regarding (working environment, staff management, marketing policies, customer relations and redevelopment exploiting) and non-financial hotel performance this research proposed the following five hypotheses (figure1):

- H1:** There was a significant positive relationship between working environment attributes and non-financial performance during COVID-19 pandemic crisis.
- H2:** There was a significant positive relationship between staff management and non-financial performance during COVID-19 pandemic crisis.
- H3:** There was a significant positive relationship between marketing policies and non-financial performance during COVID-19 pandemic crisis.
- H4:** There was a significant positive relationship between customer relations and non-financial performance during COVID-19 pandemic crisis.
- H5:** There was a significant positive relationship between redevelopment exploiting and non-financial performance during COVID-19 pandemic crisis.
- H6:** There was a variance between management practices in terms of resort profile.

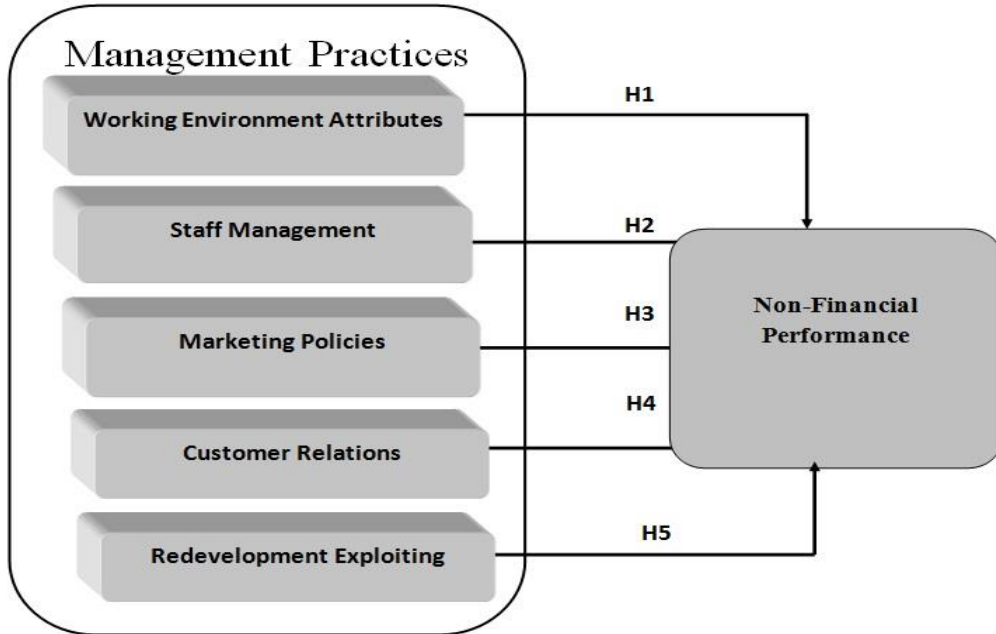


Figure1: Research model of the relationship between the management practices and hotels non-financial performance (adapted from Israeli *et al.*, 2010; Promsri, 2014; Promsri, 2015 and Ghanem, 2020)

Research Methodology

This paper tries to investigate the staff perception of management practices to confront COVID-19 Pandemic in five, four star, local and international resort hotels located in Sharm El-Shiekh, Hurghada and Marsa Alam in Egypt. This research aims to:

1. Investigate COVID-19 outbreak negative influence on hospitality sector through the perspectives of hotel managers and what are the procedures taken by these hotels during the crisis;
2. Clarify the best management practices in Egyptian resorts during Corona pandemic through staff perceptions in a sample of five and four star resort hotels in Sharm El-Shiekh, Hurghada and Marsa Alam; and
3. Develop a set of recommendations to deal the crisis which lead to enhancing staff satisfaction and non-financial hotel performance.

A combination of both qualitative and quantitative methods was used in this research. Creswell and Clark (2007) argued that a mixed research method is "*focuses on collecting, analyzing, and mixing both qualitative and quantitative data in a single study or series of studies. Its central premise is that the use qualitative and quantitative approaches in combination provide a better understanding or research problems than either approach alone*".

Therefore, a mixed methods approach was adopted in this research. This approach was selected due to the nature of the current research which requires rich and detailed data about the problem under investigation in order to achieve the aim and objectives of the study. A qualitative approach was done through conducting a semi-structured

interview with eighteen managers to identify their perspectives regarding COVID-19 pandemic crisis in Egyptian resorts and its effects on employees. The quantitative approach was performed through using a questionnaire survey with resorts' employees. The employees were asked to answer some questions concerning management practices of COVID-19 pandemic crisis and the staff were asked about their opinion (agree or disagree with each statement) A 5-point Likert scale, was used: 1 = "strongly disagree," 2 = "disagree," 3 = "neutral," 4 = "agree," 5 = "strongly agree." Questions 1-6 measured working environment attributes, questions 7-12 measured staff management, questions 13-16 measured marketing policies, questions 17-21 measured customer relations, and questions 22-25 measured redevelopment exploiting, question 26-30 measured the non-financial performance during COVID-19 crisis.

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) is a software of statistical data. SPSS version 23 was used to analyze the staff perception concerning management practices of COVID-19 pandemic crisis in resort hotels (i.e., 30 items) descriptively. Thirty items were analyzed by their means and standard deviations as showed in Table (3).

Research Population and Sampling Technique

The questionnaire was pre-tested by colleagues, general managers and staff who working resort hotels in Sharm El-Shiekh, Hurgada and Marsa Alama. Ten different senior executives of resort hotels were contacted, five showed keen interest and agreed to participate and make suggestions to improve the questionnaire. Only minor amendments were required and were made to the questionnaire. Two different types of sampling strategies were adopted in this study, convenience sampling and expert sampling. A convenience sampling technique has been adapted to select five and four star (i.e., 18 resorts), who participated the questionnaire survey. The questionnaire final version was distributed to a sample of 360 employees who work in Sharm El-Shiekh, Hurghada and Marsa Alam (twenty forms in each resort hotel), of them 218 forms were valid.

Survey Validity and Reliability

One of the most commonly used measures of reliability is the Cronbach's alpha coefficient. Table (1) reveals that this coefficient for the overall research scale and the extracted results was greater than 0.7 proving that the data are reliable (Pallant, 2005).

Table 1
Reliability Analysis using Cronbach's Alpha test

Construct	Cronbach alpha
Working environment attributes	.711
Staff Management	.711
Marketing Policies	.753
Customer Relations	.745
Redevelopment exploiting	.755
Non-financial performance during COVID-19 crisis	.727
Total Questionnaire	.795

Research Findings

1- Analysis of the Semi-Structured Interviews Findings

Interviews with managers' analysis

This section presents the results and analysis of the semi-structured interviews conducted with eighteen hotel managers. These interviews address the first objective of the paper; i.e. to Investigate COVID-19 outbreak negative influence on resorts and to identify their perspectives regarding measures taken by these resorts to deal with the COVID-19 crisis. Data were collected from the hotel managers via face-to-face and phone interviews in the investigated resort hotels. The researcher asked the hotel managers a set of questions focusing on their perspectives regarding negative impacts of COVID-19 on resort hotels.

- **The results of the interviews are as follows:**

1- Egyptian resorts are experiencing demand downturn during the current period as a result of COVID-19 crisis.

All managers in the investigated resort hotels stated that their resorts are experiencing a severe demand downturn during the current period as a result of COVID-19 crisis. This is because the sharp decline in demand for hotel rooms was horrific due to halting aircraft flying worldwide. Moreover, eleven managers added that COVID-19 crisis is significantly different from any other previous crisis, and they have suffered more because of it than all other crises. Furthermore, five managers added that one of the most important reasons that made COVID-19 crisis a fierce one is that it happened without any predictions that we found ourselves inside the crisis without any prior warning. These findings are supported by two of the interviewees who stated that: *"The decrease in demand for hotel rooms because of COVID-19 reached for the first time a zero percent occupancy rate, unlike the January 25 revolution or the fall of the Russian plane in Egypt, which were severe crises, but we were achieving occupancy rates even if they were relatively few. We have never encountered this drop to zero percent before"*.

2- The negative impacts of COVID-19 pandemic crisis at the country level:

All managers agree that the increase in unemployment is the most important negative impact of COVID-19 crisis. Hence, they mentioned that a large proportion of employment in coastal cities depends on the hospitality industry. If tourism stops, the city will be completely crippled and unemployed. Furthermore, eight managers added that the impact of COVID-19 crisis is produced on the country's moral condition, and there has become a state of frustration due to the interruption of the tourism industry, which is the source of income for most hotels staff members in the city. On the other hand, because of the COVID-19 crisis, as six managers mentioned, the country has been affected by the inability of hotels to pay financial obligations to the state such as taxes and insurance. These findings are supported by two of the interviewees who stressed that: *There is indirect employment that benefits from tourism. Indirect employment is represented by taxi drivers, souvenir shops, diving centers, malls and resort hotels suppliers. Therefore, because of COVID-19 crisis, both direct and indirect types of employment have been affected. This has affected the country in general.*

3- The negative impacts of COVID-19 pandemic crisis on the hotel sector:

Seven managers stated that the most negative impacts of COVID-19 pandemic crisis on the hotel sector are represented in the inability of hotels to meet their financial obligations towards employees' salaries, suppliers, and country taxes. Furthermore, six managers added that skilled staff members in hotels were enforced to work in other sectors, and it is considered a great loss for the hospitality field. Moreover, five managers pinpointed the major loss in hotel investment, leading to stoppage of the expansion of building other hotels of the same chain and hindrance of development in hotels. These findings are supported by three of the interviewees who mentioned that: *"Coronavirus can influence hotels in two ways. Internal obligations are related to payment of staff's salaries, taxes and insurance to the country and payment of the debt of suppliers. On the other hand, external impact is represented in stopping marketing completely to foreigners because international fighting is stopped, and Egyptians were banned from going outdoors to protect themselves from Coronavirus; meaning there is no income. Unfortunately, your expenses are huge and there are no revenues at all"*.

4- The common practices that hotel management usually undertakes regarding COVID-19 pandemic crisis:

All managers stated that after March 21, and with the flight stopped, hotels have become completely sterilized and employees have been given vacations to reduce housing, transportation, and energy expenses, and some employees have remained in the necessary departments of the hotel such as security, maintenance (agriculture) and housekeeping. Furthermore, fourteen managers stated that dealing with the crisis by basically focusing on layoffs of casual labor and staff under probation period, giving 50 per cent of basic salary without any bonus to recruited staff. On the other hand, four managers mentioned that they refused to fire any type of staff with giving 100 per cent of basic salary without any bonus but they only stopped recruitment. Ten managers added that hotels attempted to reduce operating expenses by closing an entire building of the hotel; if the hotel belongs to a chain, two hotels are closed, for example, and one hotel is being operated. These findings are supported by one of the interviewees who clarified that: *"Reducing expenses was one of the priorities of the administration, so all the top management gave up 35% of the total salary. On the other hand, the middle and lower management basic employees' salaries were given only, and the staff housing was evacuated to reduce lighting costs. The hotel had 600 employees, so we kept only 60 in work. Hence, the employees' bus expenses were saved because it costs 90,000 per month"*.

5- The precautionary procedures taken by the Ministry of Tourism after reopening hotels:

Eleven managers mentioned that the precautionary measures taken by the Ministry of Tourism are ideal measures because they protect both employees and clients. Meanwhile, customers have confidence in the hotel which takes strict measures to prevent the virus from being spread. On the other hand, seven managers mentioned that the precautionary procedures are exaggerated, costing a lot of money. At the same time, the Ministry stressed at the beginning that the occupancy percentage must

not exceed 25% as a first stage to open the hotel, and then this percentage increased to 50%, causing an increase in expenses with our inability to raise occupancy percentage and selling prices due to dependence of hotels marketing on domestic tourism. These findings are supported by one of the interviewees who stated that: *"There are precautionary measures that we have been informed of by the Ministry of Tourism as stated in the publication No. 39, which states that the employees stay working in resorts located in coastal cities for 60 days, including a week of quarantine upon arrival. This exposes us to daily problems with staff because staff members cannot stay for that long without seeing their families as this affects the quality of work"*.

6- The average labor turnover in hotel after COVID-19 pandemic crisis:

Seven managers illustrated that the average turnover rate for employees ranged from 20 to 30%. Furthermore, five managers mentioned that it is difficult to calculate the rate of turnover of staff in this period because most staff is on vacation. The instructions of the Ministry of Tourism states that the occupancy rate must not exceed 50% which makes us need only half the number of staff. Consequently, there are employees who receive the basic salary and we do not know anything about them. On the other hand, four managers stated that the turnover rate exceeded 40%. Meanwhile, two managers stated that the turnover rate of staff does not exceed 10% because if the staff submits resignation, there is a recession in all jobs in all sectors. In this case, staff is forced to endure the crisis with us. These findings are supported by four of the interviewees who stated that: *"Marsa Alam hotels are in an unenviable position, in spite of hotels reopening after enforcement precautionary procedures, because a large number of hotels have stopped there. Such stoppage has resulted from due Egyptian guests' preference of Sharm El-Shiekh and Hurghada to Marsa Alam because of the distance, in addition to losing the Italian and German markets being the most important markets for the Marsa Alam region because of Aviation suspension to countries. Thus, we have lost our opportunity to promote for the hotel in the domestic and foreign markets. Hence, there is no occupancy rate at all, so we are forced to pay part of basic salary to employees who no more work. This is the reason of not knowing the employee turnover rate"*.

7- The kind of the employees' training is essential during COVID-19 pandemic crisis:

Eight managers reported that all hotel employees were given training courses about awareness of the Coronavirus, safety and hygiene by hotel training coaches at the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. Employees in each department are given refresher courses every now and then by the hotel coaches, regarding how each department has dealt with the Coronavirus. In the meantime, five managers added that, unfortunately, there is no training due to the pressures they are exposed to as a result of the absence of the financial ability to provide trainers and scientific material for training and also their inability to host staff in the staff housing and transfer them from their places of residence to the hotel. All that matters to managers in this period is to provide part of the salary. These findings are supported by one of the interviewees who commented that: *"The role of the Egyptian Hotel Association in the training was completely absent during the Coronavirus crisis despite the deduction of a financial allocation for the Egyptian Hotel Association from the hotels. Additionally*

and there are some hotels which suffered from financial obligations and could not provide training courses during this period. Hence, the Egyptian Hotel Association had to provide even any online training courses like zoom conference meeting".

On the other hand, five managers mentioned that on the job training courses were given by each department manager without a training coach. They added that such training is limited to how to deal with the Coronavirus and prevent its transmission in each department. These findings are supported by two of the interviewees who commented that: *"The interest of the hotels affiliated with the chains concerning training courses during COVID- 19 crisis was pivotal with the presence of trainers appointed for training only. Thus, the opportunity was taken to conduct training courses for all employees before closing hotels where all the senior management were given around 25 online training courses per month as top management were required to do so. Hence, the secret of the superiority of these hotel chains is represented in paying attention to training courses".*

8- The resorts' plans to keep employees retention:

All managers except three managers stated that staff retention during that COVID-19 crisis was out of their control as the financial crisis hindered them from doing anything. The Coronavirus crisis has affected tourism in particular and all sectors in general. On the other hand, three managers mentioned that moral motivation and training were the most important tools they had to maintain staff retention because employees always know that hotels are trying to invest in them through training, but moral motivation may be a way to keep employees to a greater extent by promising them with better future. These findings are supported by one of the interviewees who explained that: *"We are all in the same boat going through the same crisis and the staff appreciates our circumstances. Our role during this period is to pay the largest amount of staff salaries to keep staff retention while, at the same time, there are some hotels that did not pay their employees' salaries, leading to withdrawal of their license by the Ministry of Tourism".*

9- Resorts' marketing strategy after reopening hotels by taking precautionary procedures regarding the Coronavirus:

Nine managers stated that Egyptians are the main customers which the resort hotels depend on in their marketing. Moreover, there is no opportunity to attract another nationality because of stopping international aviation. Moreover, six managers mentioned that they are trying to attract Ukrainian and Belarusian guests, but unfortunately, they do not exceed 10% of the occupancy percentage, and the main market relies on Egyptian customers. On the other hand, three managers stated that they hope international flights would be revived because their hotels rely on foreign customers. These managers also mentioned that they try to contract with tour operators to ensure reservations even if they will wait for the coming months as their marketing depends on foreigners more than Egyptian guests. Marsa Alam city, as the three managers clarified, is not preferred by Egyptians as it is extremely far. These findings are supported by two of the interviewees who stated that: *"We are trying to market the resort to the Egyptians through clubs, corporates and unions. Reliance on domestic tourism will remain the savior, especially in times of crisis".*

10- Tools used to promote resort hotels during COVID-19 pandemic crisis:

All managers in the investigated resort hotels reported that the guests were given special offers through intermediary applications. These applications are considered as the most important tools that the resort hotel usually uses to attract Egyptian customers. In addition, ten managers in the investigated resort hotels added that they try with tour operators to attract foreigners; this is also another tool utilized to promote hotels services. These findings are supported by two of the interviewees who mentioned that: *"Today booking.com and other intermediary applications are considered the most essential tools of promoting resort hotels for customers, especially after giving big discounts for all-inclusive programs accommodation. This motivates Egyptians to spend their vacations at our hotels"*.

11-The challenges facing resort management during recessions to satisfy customers:

Seven managers reported that recreation is one of the most important distinctions of resort hotels, but after the Coronavirus crisis, and after the precautionary procedures were taken by the Ministry of tourism, there is no more permission for animation teams to maintain social distancing in addition to closing the gym and spa. Four managers added that the precautionary procedures restricted the satisfaction of guests. For example, the buffet is now different; it is called a closed open buffet. The secret of the name is that there is a glass or acrylic partition between the buffet and the guest. Meanwhile, three managers mentioned that due to the Ministry of tourism instructions the hotel occupancy rate should not exceed 50%, the hotel was forced to close many specialty restaurants and outlets. So, the main restaurant and beach restaurant were retained open only. Meanwhile, two managers stated that during Coronavirus crisis, skilled employees dropped out. Consequently, they left negative impact upon work quality and customer satisfaction. On the other hand, two managers referred to selling all-inclusive packages for relatively lower prices that have almost reached 22\$ for foreigners and, in turn, managers attempt to achieve breakeven point. This affects the quality of the service as well as the ingredients of food and beverage service. These findings are supported by one of the interviewees who stated that: *"Unfortunately, many countries put Egypt in red zone because of Coronavirus spread, but there are countries that have opened aviation to Egypt, such as Ukraine and Belarus. However, these countries do not represent 10% of the hotel's occupancy. So we are forced to open the hotel to Egyptian guests who reject any increase in prices and, therefore, we cannot improve the quality to increase customer satisfaction"*.

12- Suggestions and recommendations for resorts to quickly overcome the crisis of COVID-19 pandemic:

The additional comments and observations gathered from the interviewees in relation to the crisis of COVID-19 pandemic. Interestingly, the interviews provided some additional suggestions and recommendations for resorts to quickly overcome the crisis of COVID-19 pandemic:

- Promoting resort hotels for Egyptian customers with required quality and fair price will enable management to overcome financial obligations and enhance the quality of service to achieve customer satisfaction;

- Egyptian Hotel Association should emphasize the importance of continuous training especially during the crisis for resort staff to enhance performance even via online training courses;
- The ministry of tourism should monitor the practices of hotel managements with staff by constantly asking employees about the constant payment of their salaries, especially regarding crisis period to keep skilled staff drop out to other sectors;
- Establishing a strong union, especially for hotel staff, that is able to protect staff against hotel owners and support them with all kinds of support in crises.
- Establishing an emergency fund for each hotel, 1% of the employee’s salary is deducted, and an agreed percentage of the hotel’s profits are set, forming an annual board of directors to manage the fund to face critical situation.
- The Ministry of Tourism will ensure the existence of a training department in each hotel to develop the performance of employees to improve quality, especially in times of crisis.
- Establishing strong advertising campaigns in foreign media to publicize that Egypt has overcome Coronavirus and that the number of infected people has decreased. This is to increase confidence, managing it with tour operators to raise the number of tourists coming from the countries that permitted aviation with Egypt.

2- Analysis of Employees Questionnaire Findings

- This questionnaire included six sections (Table 3)

Hotel Profile of Respondents

This study investigated the employee’s perception regarding the effectiveness of management practices during COVID-19 pandemic crisis. A survey was distributed to 360 employees. Among the questionnaires returned, 218 were valid, constituting a response rate of 60.5 percent. Table (2) represents the hotel profile of staff who participates in the study. Among the 218 employees who participated in the study, 50.5% worked in five star hotels and 49.5% worked in four star hotels. With regards to hotel management, 51.8% of all staff worked in local hotels, compared to 48.2% who worked in international hotels. The majority of the employees worked in Sharm El-Shiekh hotels (37.2%), followed by 33.5% of the employees worked in Hurgada region, and 29.4% worked in Marsa Alam city.

Table 2

Resort Hotels Profile of respondents (N=218)

Hotel Profile		Frequency	%
Hotel Category	Five stars	110	50.5
	Four stars	108	49.5
Hotel Chain Affiliation	International chain	105	48.2
	Local chain	113	51.8
Hotel Region	Sharm El-Shiekh	81	37.2
	Hurgada	73	33.5
	Marsa Alam	64	29.4

A Descriptive Analysis of management practices Influencing employee’s perception

Table (3) shows that employee’s perceptions were mostly agreed with the some management practices during the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, as follows: “If a coronavirus infection occurs, the hotel management is concerned with the employees’ health with immediate isolation to salvage other employees and customers.” (M = 4.20); “We offered some special rates to attract guests during COVID-19 pandemic” (M = 4.19); “Disinfectants are provided intensively everywhere in the hotel during the crisis” (4.16) “We relied on electronic intermediaries to present special offers to attract customers”. (M = 4.16); “In the case of non-compliance with precautionary procedures, hotel employees immediately intervene to inform the customer that adhering to such procedures” is a must (M= 4.12); “My resort hotel has provided each employee with a basic emergency preparedness kit (e.g. facemask, hand gloves, sanitizers, etc.)” (M = 4.10);. However, the employees were mostly disagreed with some management practices during COVID-19 like Redevelopment exploiting as follows: “We have been exploited this period in renovating some parts of our hotel.” (M = 2.04); “We have been exploited this period in explaining performance appraisal to develop staff capabilities ” (M = 2.30); “The workload and working hours are suitable for us after imposing the precautionary measures by the ministry of tourism” (2.39); “Human resources practices – like permitting vacation – are adequate during the crisis”(2.62).

Table 3
Construct measurements

Construct	Code	Measure	Mean	Std. dev.
Working Environment Attributes	ENV1	My resort hotel has a handbook of COVID-19 pandemic crisis management plan and all employees know where to get this information from.	2.66	1.25
	ENV2	My resort hotel conducts training and simulation about COVID-19 pandemic crisis for all employees.	3.93	1.15
	ENV3	There is coordination between my hotel and hospitals to deal with any corona virus case that might appear in the hotel.	3.18	1.37
	ENV4	Security at my workplace has been significantly increased since the spread of corona virus.	3.79	1.26
	ENV5	My resort hotel has provided each employee with a basic emergency kit (e.g. facemask, hand gloves, sanitizers, etc.)	4.10	.966
	ENV6	Some floors or buildings in our hotel were closed during the crisis to rationalize expenditure.	3.66	1.34
Staff Management	MAN1	In case I am infected with Corona virus, I will still benefit from the benefits of the hotel staff (such as health insurance).	2.47	1.22
	MAN2	I benefited from the training programs and their diversity.	3.21	1.43
	MAN3	Although my resort hotel is nowadays suffering from a pandemic crisis COVID-19, I still get paid until the hotel can be reopened.	2.90	1.24
	MAN4	The workload and working hours are suitable for us after imposing the precautionary measures by the ministry of tourism.	2.39	1.12

Table 3: (continued)

Construct	Code	Measure	Mean	Std. dev.
	MAN5	Human resources practices – like permitting vacation– are fair during the crisis.	2.62	1.31
	MAN6	If a coronavirus infection occurs, the hotel management is concerned with the employees’ health with immediate isolation to salvage the health of other employees and customers.	4.20	.847
Marketing Policies	MAR1	The resort hotels focus on domestic tourism to increase occupancy percentage.	3.90	1.14
	MAR2	We offered some special rates to attract guests during COVID-19 pandemic.	4.19	1.05
	MAR3	We relied on electronic intermediaries to present special offers to attract customers.	4.16	1.00
	MAR4	We have exploited the period of corona virus crisis in developing the product and recipes to be ready after crisis will end.	2.85	1.29
Customer Relations	CUS1	Signs are everywhere in the hotel to maintain social distancing.	3.83	1.04
	CUS2	There are instructions to increase food that is rich with vitamins to strengthen the body's immunity to overcome the Corona virus.	2.39	1.09
	CUS3	Disinfectants are provided intensively everywhere in the hotel during the crisis.	4.16	.791
	CUS4	In the case of non-compliance with precautionary procedures, hotel employees immediately intervene to inform the customer that adhering to such procedures, is a must	4.12	1.02
	CUS5	Customers help us to keep precaution procedures applied.	2.26	1.20
Redevelopment exploiting	EXP1	We have been exploited this period in training our key employees	2.55	1.17
	EXP 2	We have been exploited this period in renovating some parts of our hotel.	2.04	1.00
	EXP 3	We have been exploited this period in explaining performance appraisal to develop staff capabilities	2.30	1.17
	EXP 4	We have been exploited this period in renovating furniture, fixture and equipment	2.94	1.31
Non-financial performance during COVID-19 crisis	TUR	The rate of employee turnover was moderate during the covid-19 crisis	2.22	1.19
	ABS	the absenteeism of staff after their vacation during the Corona crisis was average	2.35	1.34
	LAT	The staff lateness at its normal rate after the COVID-19 crisis	3.52	1.31
	COM	Employees handle customer complaints quickly to meet their needs	3.58	1.24
	REQ	The employees has the ability to execute the guests request immediately	3.20	1.20

Source: (Adopted fromIsraeli *et al.*, 2010; Promsri, 2014; Promsri, 2015 and Ghanem, 2020)

Analysis of Variance

To choose the suitable test for measuring the variance analysis of the questionnaire, a survey normality test using SPSS have been undertaken. Normality tests have a p-value ($K-S = 0.000$) less than 0.05, indicating non-normal distribution of the data. Therefore, the suitable test for measuring variance analysis of the questionnaire is the "Nonparametric Tests" (i.e. Wilcoxon X, Mann-Whitney U, and Kruskal-Wallis H tests).

The variance between staff perception in five and four star resorts in terms of management practices

The Mann-Whitney U test was used to test for differences between five star hotel staff perception ($n=110$) and four star hotel staff perception ($n=108$) regarding management practices during COVID-19 pandemic crisis (Table 4). For example, do five star staff and four star staff perception differ in terms of management practices during COVID-19 pandemic crisis?

A Mann-Whitney U test revealed no statistically significant difference between five star and four star employees in terms of 21 management practices items. More specifically, five star and four star employees had the same perceptions towards "resort hotel conducts training about COVID-19; Some floors or buildings in our hotel were closed during the crisis to rationalize expenditure.; We relied on electronic intermediaries to present special offers to attract customers.; Signs are everywhere in the hotel to maintain social distancing.". On the other hand, Mann-Whitney U test revealed a statistically significant difference between five stars and four stars in terms of four management practices. The results showed that five star employees had higher perceptions towards "My resort hotel has a handbook of COVID-19 pandemic crisis" ($m = 121.30$), "I benefited from the training programs and their diversity" ($m = 123.91$), "Although my resort hotel is nowadays suffering from a pandemic crisis COVID-19, I still get paid until the hotel can be reopened." ($m=127.40$), "Human resources practices – like permitting vacation fair – are adequate during the crisis" ($m=130.20$). While the results indicated that four star employees had not higher perceptions than five star employees regarding management policies.

The variance between staff perception in international and local resort chain in terms of management practices.

The Mann-Whitney U test was used to test for differences between staff perception regarding international hotels ($n=105$) and local hotels ($n=113$) in terms of management practices during COVID-19 pandemic crisis (Table 4). For example, do staff perception regarding international hotels and local hotels differ in terms of management practices during COVID-19 pandemic crisis?

A Mann-Whitney U test revealed no statistically significant difference between staff perception concerning international hotels and local hotels in terms of 20 management practices items. More precisely, staff perception regarding international hotels and local hotels had the same perceptions towards "Security at workplace has been significantly increased since the spread of corona virus; If a coronavirus infection occurs, the hotel management is concerned with the employees' health with

immediate isolation to salvage the health of other employees and customers; The resort hotels focus on domestic tourism to increase occupancy percentage.; Signs are everywhere in the hotel to maintain social distancing”.

Meanwhile, Mann-Whitney U test revealed a statistically significant difference between staff perception concerning international hotels than local hotels in terms of five management practices. The results showed that employees who worked in international hotels had higher perceptions towards “My resort hotel has a handbook of COVID-19 pandemic crisis” (m = 119.82), “I benefited from the training programs and their diversity” (m = 126.50), “Although my resort hotel is nowadays suffering from a pandemic crisis COVID-19, I still get paid until the hotel can be reopened.”(m=123.71), “Human resources practices – like permitting vacation – are fair during the crisis” (m=137.15), “exploiting the period of corona virus crisis in developing the product and recipes to be ready after crisis will end” (m= 118.02). While the results indicated that staff perception who worked in local chain hotels had higher perceptions than international hotels staff perception towards “We offered some special rates to attract guests during COVID-19 pandemic.” (m = 117.04).

Table 4

A summary of the Mann-Whitney U test between resort category and chain affiliations in terms of management practices

Items	Resort Category				Chain Affiliations			
	Hotel category	Mean rank score	Mann-Whitney U test	Sig. (2tailed)	Chain affiliation	Mean rank score	Mann-Whitney U test	Sig. (2tailed)
Working Environment Attributes								
My resort hotel has a handbook of COVID-19 pandemic crisis	Five star	121.30	4641.5	.004*	International	119.82	4849.0	.016*
	Four star	97.48			Local	99.91		
My resort hotel conducts training about COVID-19	Five star	111.64	5704.0	.589	International	117.79	5.216.0	.100
	Four star	107.32			Local	101.80		
There is coordination between my hotel and hospitals to deal with any corona virus case that might appear in the hotel.	Five star	113.34	5518.0	.350	International	116.40	5208.0	.108
	Four star	105.59			Local	103.08		
Security at my workplace has been significantly increased since the spread of corona virus.	Five star	104.90	5434.0	.254	International	111.87	5684.0	.575
	Four star	114.19			Local	107.30		
My resort hotel has provided each employee with a basic emergency preparedness kit (e.g. facemask, hand gloves, sanitizers, etc.)	Five star	113.59	5490.0	.296	International	112.40	5628.0	.478
	Four star	105.33			Local	106.80		
Some floors or buildings in our hotel were closed during the crisis to rationalize expenditure.	Five star	106.87	5650.0	.515	International	104.55	5412.0	.242
	Four star	112.18			Local	114.10		
Staff management								
In case I am infected with Corona virus, I will still benefit from the benefits of the hotel staff (such as health insurance).	Five star	115.46	5284.0	.142	International	112.86	5580.0	.430
	Four star	103.43			Local	106.38		
I benefited from the training programs and their diversity.	Five star	123.91	4355.0	.000*	International	126.50	4147.0	.000*
	Four star	94.82			Local	93.70		

Table 4: (continued)	Items	Resort Category				Chain Affiliations			
		Hotel category	Mean rank score	Mann-Whitney U test	Sig. (2tailed)	Chain affiliation	Mean rank score	Mann-Whitney U test	Sig. (2tailed)
Although my resort hotel is nowadays suffering from a pandemic crisis COVID-19, I still get paid until the hotel can be reopened.	Five star	123.71	4377.0	.000*	International	127.40	4053.0	.000*	
	Four star	95.03			Local	92.87			
The workload and working hours are suitable for us after imposing the precautionary measures by the ministry of tourism.	Five star	108.16	5793.0	.739	International	111.07	5768.0	.708	
	Four star	110.86			Local	108.04			
Human resources practices – like permitting vacation – are fair during the crisis.	Five star	130.20	3663.0	.000*	International	137.15	3030.0	.000*	
	Four star	88.42			Local	83.81			
If a coronavirus infection occurs, the hotel management is concerned with the employees' health with immediate isolation to salvage the health of other employees and customers.	Five star	114.20	5424.0	.227	International	113.23	5540.0	.359	
	Four star	104.72			Local	106.03			
Marketing Policies									
The resort hotels focus on domestic tourism to increase occupancy percentage.	Five star	102.29	5146.5	.071	International	109.18	5898.0	.937	
	Four star	116.85			Local	109.80			
We offered some special rates to attract guests during COVID-19 pandemic.	Five star	104.17	5354.0	.169	International	101.38	5080.0	.046*	
	Four star	114.93			Local	117.04			
We relied on electronic intermediaries to present special offers to attract customers.	Five star	109.43	5932.0	.985	International	112.36	5632.0	.484	
	Four star	109.57			Local	106.84			
We have exploited the period of corona virus crisis in developing the product and recipes to be ready after crisis will end.	Five star	117.31	5081.0	.058	International	118.02	5038.0	.048*	
	Four star	101.55			Local	101.58			
Customer Relations									
Signs are everywhere in the hotel to maintain social distancing.	Five star	110.42	5839.0	.816	International	109.82	5899.0	.939	
	Four star	108.56			Local	109.20			

Table 4: (continued)	Items	Resort Category				Chain Affiliations			
		Hotel category	Mean rank score	Mann-Whitney U test	Sig. (2tailed)	Chain affiliation	Mean rank score	Mann-Whitney U test	Sig. (2tailed)
	There are instructions to increase food that is rich with vitamins to strengthen the body's immunity to overcome the Corona virus.	Five star	110.02	5883.0	.895	International	115.19	5335.0	.165
		Four star	108.97			Local	104.21		
	Disinfectants are provided intensively everywhere in the hotel during the crisis.	Five star	113.19	5534.0	.335	International	116.32	5216.5	.089
		Four star	105.74			Local	103.16		
	In the case of non-compliance for precautionary procedures, hotel employees immediately intervene to inform the customer about necessity of adhering to such procedures.	Five star	110.85	5791.5	.729	International	117.16	5128.0	.060
		Four star	108.12			Local	102.38		
	Customers help us to keep precaution procedures applied.	Five star	109.25	5912.0	.950	International	102.62	5210.5	.104
		Four star	109.76			Local	115.89		
Redevelopment Exploiting									
	We have been exploited this period in training our key employees	Five star	114.21	5422.0	.238	International	118.93	4.942	.024
		Four star	104.70			Local	100.73		
	We have been exploited this period in renovating some parts of our hotel.	Five star	111.36	5735.5	.638	International	114.20	5438.5	.256
		Four star	107.61			Local	105.13		
	We have been exploited this period in explaining performance appraisal weakness and strength points to develop staff capabilities	Five star	115.74	5254.0	.123	International	111.92	5678.5	.568
		Four star	103.15			Local	107.25		
	We have been exploited this period in renovating furniture, fixture and equipment	Five star	116.22	5201.0	.101	International	113.89	5472.0	.306
		Four star	102.66			Local	105.42		

* P-value<0.05= Significant difference

The variance between staff perception regarding resort region in terms of the management practices.

The Kruskal-Wallis H test, as shown in Table 5, shows that there were statistically significant differences between the investigated resorts according to their regions in relation to management practices during COVID-19 Pandemic crisis. The results revealed that marketing policies showed a statistically significant difference among different resorts' regions. Sharm El-Shiekh achieved the highest mean rank score (M=125.94); followed by Hurgada by an average of (M=106.93); followed by Marsa Alam by an average of (M=91.62) (see Table 5). This means that staff perception who worked in Marsa Alam had the lowest perceptions concerning marketing policies.

Table 5

A summary of the Kruskal-Wallis H test between resort regions in terms of management practices during COVID-19 crisis

Management Practices	Hotel Region	Mean Rank score	Chi-Square	Asym. Sig.
Working Environment attributes	Sharm El-Shiekh	115.90	2.243	.326
	Hurgada	110.50		
	Marsa Alam	100.26		
Staff management	Sharm El-Shiekh	115.37	4.455	.108
	Hurgada	115.21		
	Marsa Alam	95.56		
Marketing policies	Sharm El-Shiekh	125.94	10.920	.004*
	Hurgada	106.93		
	Marsa Alam	91.62		
Customer relations	Sharm El-Shiekh	110.30	1.953	.377
	Hurgada	115.99		
	Marsa Alam	101.08		
Redevelopment exploiting	Sharm El-Shiekh	119.09	3.867	.145
	Hurgada	108.37		
	Marsa Alam	98.65		

* P-value<0.05= Significant difference.

Regression Analysis

The regression analysis was conducted between the five management practices as the independent variables; and non-financial performance as the dependent variable. Table (6) indicates that R is equivalent to 0.464 (46.4%). This value demonstrates the regression model of the three dimensions of trustworthiness and attitudinal loyalty, indicating a good fitting degree. “R square” is another significant outcome, which demonstrates the level of determination between the five management practices, indicating the degree to which (non-financial performance) as the dependent variable can be clarified and determined by the independent variables. Hence, R square is equivalent to 0.216 (21.6%).

Table 6

Fitting degree of management practices and non-financial performance

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.464 ^a	.216	.197	.48243

a. Predictors: (Constant), five management practices.

b. Dependent Variable: Non-Financial performance

As shown in table (7), the regression model shows that the result variable is highly significant. Moreover, it was shown that the significance value (Sig.) in the regression row is 0.000. This value means that the model is highly significant. "F" value (11.654) is considered to be another important outcome, indicating the strength of the relationship between variables.

Table 7

Variance of management practices and non-financial performance

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	13.562	5	2.712	11.654	.000 ^a
Residual	49.341	212	.233		
Total	62.903	217			

From the results of table 8, working environment, staff management and customer relations have proved to be significant management practices of non-financial performance. These provide strong support to the hypotheses H1, H2 and H4 that there are significant positive relationships between working environment, staff management, customer relations and non-financial performance during COVID-19 pandemic crisis. This means that the work environment, employee management and relations with guests have a strong positive relationship with the hotel's non-financial performance during the Covid-19 crisis. Therefore, we should improve the work environment and put in place new strategies in managing employees and developing mechanisms to deal with customers in order to improve the hotel's non-financial performance during the periods of crisis. Meanwhile, marketing policies and redevelopment exploiting are not significant; hypotheses H3 and H5 cannot be supported

Table 8

Regression analysis of management practices and non-financial performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.	Hypotheses Test
	B	Std. Error	Beta			
(Constant)	1.182	.262		4.507	.000	
Working Environments	.234	.067	.186	3.495	.001**	H1 =Supported
Staff Management	.199	.059	.240	3.413	.000**	H2 =Supported
Marketing Policies	.031	.053	.046	.577	.564	H3 =Rejected
Customer Relations	.274	.061	.292	4.495	.000**	H4 =Supported
Redevelopment Exploiting	-.052-	.071	-.063-	-.732-	.465	H5 =Rejected

** Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Discussion and Implications

In this study, three research objectives were set to achieve the research aim. The first objective was accomplished through interviews conducted with 18 hotel managers in the investigated hotels. The interviews aimed to state the executive's perspectives regarding COVID-19 outbreak negative influence on the hospitality sector and what the procedures are taken by these hotels during the crisis. The second objective was achieved through an employee's questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed and distributed to a random sample of hotel staff in all investigated resort hotels. A number of 360 forms were distributed, among them 218 were valid which represent 60.5%. To achieve the last objective of this study, a suggested practice model was developed and these recommendations might help managers for improving management practices which leads to better working condition as well.

This research presented the findings and results of personal interviews in the investigated resort hotels under twelve main headings which are: Egyptian resorts are experiencing demand downturn during the current period as a result of COVID-19 crisis, the negative impacts of COVID-19 pandemic crisis at the country level, the negative impacts of COVID-19 pandemic crisis on the hotel sector, the common practices that hotel management usually undertakes regarding COVID-19 pandemic crisis, the precautionary procedures taken by the Ministry of Tourism after reopening hotels, the average labor turnover in hotel after COVID-19 pandemic crisis, the kind of the employees' training is essential during COVID-19 pandemic crisis, The resorts' plans to keep employees retention, resorts' marketing strategy after reopening hotels by taking precautionary procedures regarding the Coronavirus, tools used to promote resort hotels during COVID-19 pandemic crisis, the challenges facing resort management during recessions to satisfy customers and finally suggestions and recommendations for resorts to quickly overcome the crisis of COVID-19 pandemic. The most findings from the interviews analysis illustrated that the most important negative impact of the COVID-19 crisis summarized into the increase in unemployment and the inability of hotels to meet their financial obligations towards employees' salaries, suppliers, and country taxes. Moreover, after March 21, and with the flight stopped, hotels have become completely sterilized and employees have been given vacations to reduce housing, transportation, and energy expenses, and some employees have remained in the necessary departments of the hotel such as security, maintenance (agriculture) and housekeeping. These findings are consistent with Hoque et al., (2020) which showed that tourism and hospitality industry is most affected because of the hotels, airlines as well as the cruise operations were stopped. This is leading to retreat hotel economics which affects the employment in hotels. Thus, the tourism industry is seen to be facing the unprecedented threats.

Employee's perceptions of management practices during COVID-19 crisis vary according to hotel category whether five or four star and according to chain affiliation whether local or international management. Moreover, there are some management practices such as marketing policies approved by the employees as a solution to get out of the crisis and to improve the low occupancy rate, and there are some practices that the employees rejected, such as work load including long working hours and

human resources practices during the crisis, such as layoffs and giving employees vacations. on the other hand, the findings of this study revealed some suggestions to management and the governments concerned with improve employees satisfaction This, in turn, will lead to a decrease in the turnover rate and an attempt to retain the skilled employees, which are the backbone of tourism and hotels, instead of their leakage to other sectors.

The study indicated that the staff perception regarding working environment regarding management practices especially in resort hotels .For research question #1, results showed that the total mean score (2.66) of perceived staff perception regarding “ resort hotel has a handbook of COVID-19 pandemic crisis was “not satisfied”. Therefore, this study suggests distributing a guide on crises, whether paper or electronic, especially to deal with Coronavirus crisis, to educate staff on how to deal with this crisis. These findings are consistent with Promsri (2014) which showed that having crisis management plan solely was not enough if employee’s s in a specific hotel did not have enough knowledge through handbook on how to implement it in the certain problem). For research question #2, findings found that staff perception was high regarding “resort hotel conducts training and simulation about COVID-19 pandemic crisis for all employees”. This was consistent with the findings of Regester (1989) who indicated that it is also important to remember that the importance of training staff It is indispensable, especially in periods of crisis as the adrenaline-rush associated with a crisis can have a significant impact on individuals. Therefore, the Presence of training is extremely important to pass through the crisis safely. Furthermore, question #3, results indicated that the total mean score (3.18) of staff perceptions regarding “There is coordination between my hotel and hospitals to deal with any corona virus case that might appear in the hotel”. Was average Moreover, the study suggest the importance of having comprehensive medical insurance by contracting with distinguished hospitals for all employees, especially in times of crisis, to ensure employees feel safe. This is consistent with a previous study of Buklemishev (2020) this proved that the state and hotel establishments will be forced to assume new responsibilities, including the training and simulations, health care and social protection systems during the pandemic crisis. Furthermore, the study mentioned high staff perceptions regarding some significant towards “Security at workplace has been significantly increased since the spread of corona virus; resort hotel has provided each employee with a basic emergency preparedness kit (e.g. facemask, hand gloves, sanitizers, etc.)”. These findings are similar to the study of Alan et al. (2016) and Jiang and Wen (2020) who mentioned that hygiene and cleanliness issues have been considered in pandemic outbreaks as a culprit of disease. Thus, when predicting the hotel industry’s recovery post-COVID-19, hygiene and cleanliness must be focal points given the severe effects of this pandemic and hotel guests’ higher safety-related expectations during travel. Moreover, results showed that the total mean score (3.66) of perceived staff perception concerning “Some floors or buildings in our hotel were closed during the crisis to rationalize expenditure”. This finding supported the findings of Mansour (2013) as he found that from reviewing recovery strategies that were adopted and employed by hospitality industries, and tourism destination authorities, it could be concluded that a reduction in expenses

during the crisis is an essential component of crisis solution for hotels and their stakeholders.

Further, the results indicated that there are some practices had significant effects regarding staff management. Employees mostly agreed that “If a coronavirus infection occurs, the hotel management is concerned with the employees’ health with immediate isolation.” with total mean rank score (4.20). These findings are consistent with Jiang and Wen (2020) who mentioned that Since hotels are prominent victims of epidemics, it is necessary to examine how hotels put in place contingency plans to combat infectious diseases, for example, isolating the patient in the event of any symptoms of the disease. Moreover, employees perception were neutral regarding “I benefited from the training programs and their diversity”. Therefore, the research suggests hotel managers should pay attention to the diversity of training programs to exploit periods of crises, invest in the human element. On the other hand, staff mostly disagreed that “The workload and working hours are suitable for us; Human resources practices; getting paid until the hotel can be reopened.” This is because only half of the employees are allowed to work and the other half are forced to take vacation because the ministry of tourism allowed that the maximum hotel occupancy is 50%, and therefore pressure is placed on the employees in addition to the human resource practices are not satisfactory to the employees during that crisis. These findings are in consistent with kim et al., (2005); Enz & Kosová (2012) and Kamoche (2013) who stated that external crisis leads to demand downturn from the customers, which seriously affects the performance and growth of a hotel for a period of time. To sustain revenue, the hotels are forced to reduce their room rates (by up to 50% or more) and cut wages, which causes job insecurity, a decline in morale, and possibly low organizational commitment. Therefore, hotel managers should pay attention to the importance of crisis management and execute a practical and realistic approach to overcome the crises. Consequently, the research recommends improving the conditions of employees by establishing an emergency fund for employees to be financed from the hotel’s annual profits in proportion to all hotels through which it is disbursed to employees during times of recession and the government inspects human resource practices during periods of crisis to ensure that employees are not laid off and get paid which prevent the hotel sector loses the skilled employees to another sectors and lose their competence

Staff satisfaction regarding marketing policies proved in this study that had a significant effect on the management practices. Employees mostly agreed that “The resort hotels focus on domestic tourism to increase occupancy percentage; offering some special rates to attract guests during COVID-19 pandemic; relying on electronic intermediaries to present special offers to attract customers.” is the most important management practices enable employees getting the most of the salary to get out of the crisis quickly with the least losses. This was consistent with the findings of Ranasinghe et al., (2020) who mentioned that in times of crisis, the promotion strategies of resort hotels are based on attracting native customers through domestic tourism, because it is the only hope to survive after losing international tourism. As this type of crisis affects the global hospitality sector, it is important to realize the

value of promoting local tourism. However, the majority of employees were not satisfied with the item of “exploiting the period of corona virus crisis in developing the product and recipes to be ready after crisis will end.”, with the total mean score (2.85). This was inconsistent with the findings of Jiang (2019) who mentioned that as the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences have led to fears, worries, and anxiety among travelers, it is especially important to show empathy and understanding their expectations and to delight customers by developing the products and services. Therefore, the research recommends using the period of crisis to develop products and services to be in line with the ever-changing tastes of customers.

Regarding staff perceptions regarding customers relations results showed that the staff mostly agreed that “Disinfectants are provided intensively everywhere in the hotel during the crisis; In the case of non-compliance for precautionary procedures, hotel employees immediately intervene to inform the customer about necessity of adhering to such procedures.; Signs are everywhere in the hotel to maintain social distancing.” these practices is considered the most important management practices that protect employees and customers from the transmission of the Corona virus, and the employees' praise for its implementation is a good indicator for dealing seriously with this crisis. These findings are similar to the study of As Jiang & Wen (2020); Chen et al. (2020) and Park et al. (2019) who motioned that hotel surfaces receiving frequent human contact are more likely to be contaminated through touch and become sources of transmission of infectious diseases such as COVID-19. Therefore, the role of social distancing as an effective prevention strategy against COVID-19, which leads to can help to protect guests and frontline service employees. On the other hand, results indicated that staff perceptions mostly disagreed regarding “There are instructions to increase food that is rich with vitamins to strengthen the body's immunity to overcome the Corona virus.” with the total mean score (2.39). These findings differ from the findings by Jiang and Wen (2020) who indicated that In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, many hotels had begun focus on physical and mental well-being. Considering this newly prominent consumer need, helping guests lead a healthy lifestyle could become a post-pandemic trend for hotels. For example, meditation programs, digital detox programs, fitness programs, healthy and diet programs are likely to become more popular in hotels' marketing mix. Moreover, concerning “Customers help us to keep precaution procedures applied” mostly staff disagreed with the total mean rank score (2.26). This is due to the focus on the domestic tourism segment, which refuses to exercise restrictions on it. These findings were consistent with Emam and Atef (2017) who stated that the Egyptian customers do not commit to the hotels' regulations including the dress code in the restaurant and swimming pool, their inaccuracy to the hotel timetable including check-in and out.

Furthermore, the study mentioned some significant towards redevelopment exploiting because of the responses of staff regarding this issue was not satisfied for them such as “exploiting this period in on line training our key employees; exploiting this period in renovating some parts of our hotel; exploiting this period in explaining performance appraisal weakness and strength points to develop staff capabilities ; exploiting this period in renovating furniture, fixture and equipment” Unfortunately,

most of the staff responses receded in that most of the investigated hotels regarding the exploiting the time of COVID-19 crisis during the suspension hotels in the renovations required to return strongly after the end of the crisis. This is consistent with a previous study of Jiang and Wen (2020) which proved that crisis management is another important topic requiring further investigation. As hotels are a prominent victim of pandemics, it is necessary to examine how hotels should establish contingency plans for redevelopment during the crisis periods.

Regarding hotel profile frequency varies by hotel category, chain affiliation, and hotel region. First, five star employees similar to staff perception who worked in chain hotels are more satisfied regarding “a handbook of COVID-19 pandemic crisis; the training programs and their diversity; getting paid until the hotel can be reopened; Human resources practices” than four and local chain staff perception. Therefore, the study suggests that paying attention to four-star hotels and local hotels in the aforementioned management policies in order to be able to resist the crisis, just like five-star hotels and international hotels. These findings are consistent with the findings of Mohammad (2014) who stated that individual hotels are prone to greater exposure of political, economic, social, environmental and technological change at a country level that might threaten their business and require managers to effectively handle such crises and disasters. Second, according to hotel regions staff perceptions who worked in Sharm El-Shiekh, Hurgada and Marsa Alam are the same perceptions except Marsa Alam staff perceptions was not satisfied regarding marketing policies This is because they do not depend on domestic tourism because it is far from the capital, and for this reason the study recommends reducing airline tickets to Marsa Alam to be marketed at the level of domestic tourism and their ability to deal with the crisis such as Sharm El-Shiekh and Hurghada.

By using Linear Simple Regression Analysis, the results showed a statically significant effect of the working environment, staff management and customer relations on the dependent variable (non-financial performance). This means that any increase of the former will positively affect the latter. One of the errors in crisis management planning is to deal with the crisis to to get out of it with the least losses and people last on the list. These findings are consistent with the findings of Lockwood (2005) who stated that organizations need to pay greater attention to the impact of critical events on employees, their management and working environment. Business recovery cannot occur without employees. HR plays a strategic role in promoting trustful and prepared leadership throughout the organization to help reassure employees of their safety. Meanwhile, results showed no statically significant the effect of marketing policies and redevelopment exploiting on non-financial performance during COVID-19 crisis.

Limitation and future research

This study consists of several limitations, first, this study employed only self-reported questionnaire without distributing another questionnaire to customer to assess their perception. Second, concerning staff questionnaire the current study investigated the influence of 30 independent variables on one dependent variable, i.e., employee’s perception during COVID-19 pandemic crisis. Third the interview was conducts with

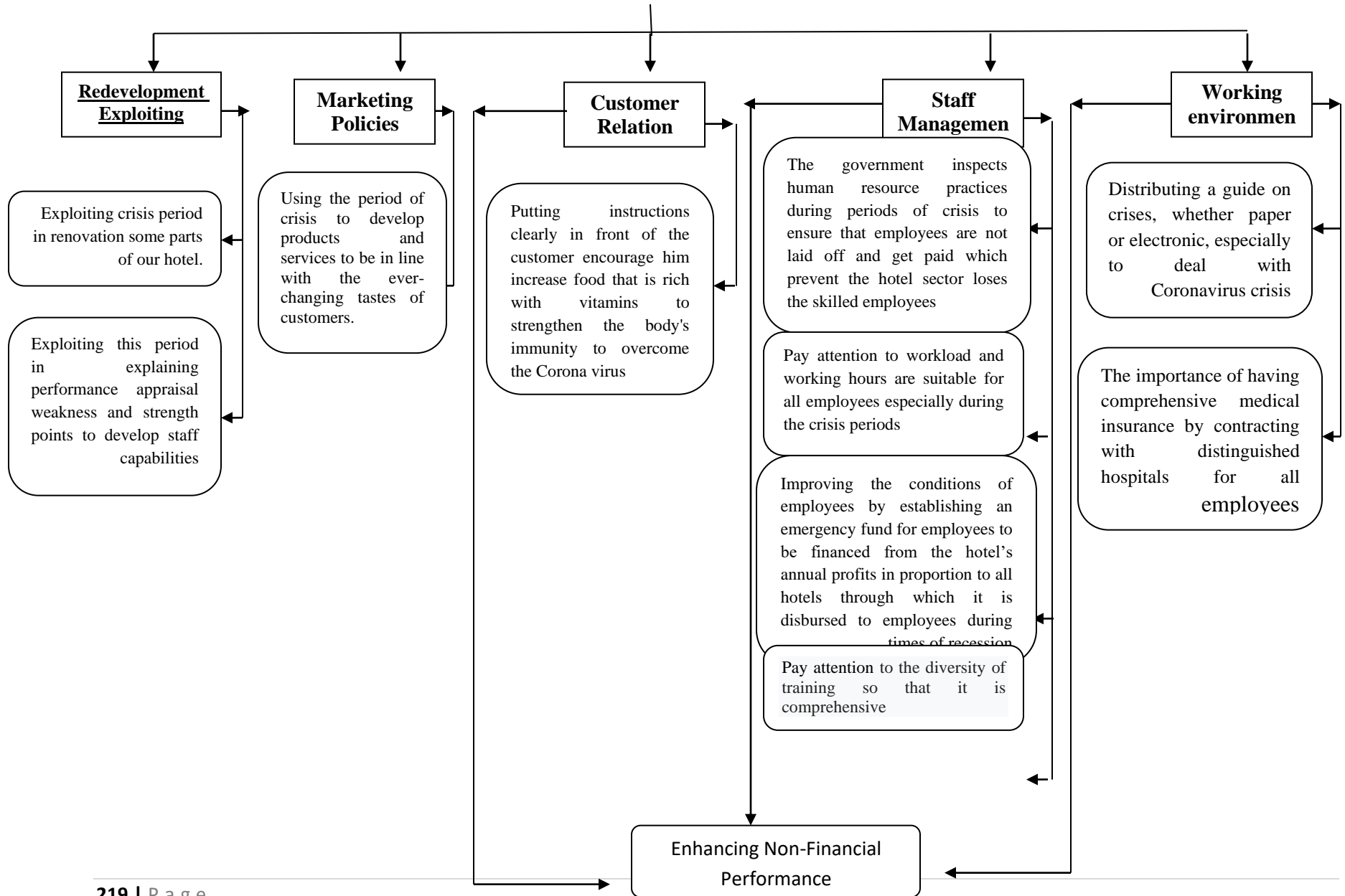
resorts managers to identify their perspectives of COVID-19 crisis. Employee's demographic data on variables should be simultaneously added to measure their perception of the effectiveness of management practices during COVID-19 crisis.

The results of this study provide valuable information for hotel managers. However, the increase of the geographical coverage in further studies is needed; because it can present valuable results. All of the recommendations mentioned may increase the quality of hotels, governments as well as the effectiveness of hotelier decisions during a crisis. Hotel owners shouldn't be willing to just quick response of the crisis only, but also able to manage future crisis in a way that makes them stronger after the end of the crisis and able to protect the human resources. Future studies using mixed methods approach quantitative and qualitative methods should give a broader understanding of factors influencing customer satisfaction in resorts hotels after COVID-19 crisis. Finally, Future research may attempt to extend this study to all local and international resorts towards more geographic coverage to obtain a generalized view of the situation of service quality customer's perception offered after the period of COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

Based on the above discussion, suggested is a model reflecting the most important results obtained from managers to overcome the crisis of COVID-19 pandemic within a short period of time. (see the figure). Hotel managers, especially during recession, should follow all these management practices in order to achieve high employee's perception, and, thus, enhance non-financial performance

Figure (2): A suggested practice model for hotels management to improve management practices in order to achieve high employee's perception, and, thereby, enhance non-financial performance

Management Practices During COVID-19 crisis



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تقييم إدراك العاملين لممارسات الإدارة لمواجهة الأوبئة في الفنادق المصرية: دراسة حالة

كوفيد - 19

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المخلص

خلال الربع الأول من عام ٢٠٢٠ تعرض العالم لوباء عالمي جديد، وهو ما يعرف بفيروس كورونا المستجد COVID-19، الذي سرعان ما أخذ في التوسع في كافة أنحاء العالم، مما شكل تأثيرا مباشرا في صناعة الفنادق. لقد أثر تفشي فيروس كورونا في الطلب السياحي العالمي، ولهذا تقوم إدارات الفنادق ببذل قصارى جهدها للحفاظ دائما على العاملين، ولكن تجد تحديا خاصة مع انتشار جائحة كورونا وعدم استقرار وضع السياحة في العالم وتعليق الطيران الدولي. اتجهت أغلبية إدارات الفنادق إلى اتخاذ ممارسات خلال فترات الكساد، لكي تتمكن من التغلب على تلك الأزمة، وفي نفس الوقت الحفاظ على العمالة المميزة واستمرار الفندق في المنافسة. ومن أهم أهداف البحث التعرف على أثر انتشار الوباء على العاملين وتحديد إدراكهم للممارسات الإدارية التي اتخذتها الإدارة خلال تلك الازمة لمعرفة وقياس مدى رضا العاملين تجاه ممارسات الإدارة. وأشار البحث إلى تأثير العاملين والإدارة الفندقية في فنادق الغردقة وشرم الشيخ ومرسي علم بالأزمة تأثرا سلبيا منذ انتشار جائحة الكورونا حتى الآن ، وكان تأثرا كبيرا نتج عنه اعتمادهم بشكل كبير على السياحة الداخلية وتشجيعها. حيث إنها البديل الوحيد وطوق النجاة لمواجهة التحديات السياحية خلال تلك الفترة. جمعت النتائج باستخدام استمارات استقصاء ووزعت على عينة من العاملين في الأقسام المختلفة في ثمانية عشر فندقا فئة الخمسة والأربعة نجوم وشملت العينة فنادق محلية ودولية في الغردقة وشرم الشيخ ومرسي علم. كما اشتملت الدراسة أيضا على المقابلات الشخصية مع ثمانية عشر مديرا لمعرفة التأثير السلبي لتفشي COVID-19 في قطاع الضيافة من خلال وجهات نظر مدراء الفنادق، وما الإجراءات التي اتخذتها هذه الفنادق خلال الأزمة. خلص البحث إلى مجموعة من التوصيات لكل من وزارة السياحة ومدراء الفنادق تتعلق بضرورة الاهتمام بالتدريب خلال فترات الأزمات وتوزيع ضغط العمل (ساعات العمل) على الجميع بالإضافة إلى استغلال تلك الأزمات في ابتكار أصناف جديدة يتميز بها الفندق بالإضافة إلى استغلال تلك الازمات بإعادة تطوير الفنادق من حيث التجهيزات والإنشاءات.

معلومات المقالة

الكلمات المفتاحية

إدراك العاملين؛ الأوبئة؛ الفنادق المصرية؛ كوفيد - 19.

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