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**ADDIS ABABA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF BUSINESS & ECONOMICS
DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS ADMINISTRATION**

**Title: Assessment of Hotel Management Response on the effects of Covid-19
on Hotel Marketing: A comparative Analysis of Radisson Blu Hotel and Elilly
International Hotel**

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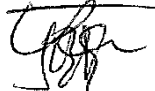
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This is to certify that the thesis prepared by **Nebyou Necho**, ``**Assessment of Hotel Management Response on the effects of Covid-19 on hotel marketing in Addis Ababa**, A comparative analysis of Radisson Blu hotel and Elilly International Hotel`` and submitted in partial fulfillment for the degree of Master of Business Administration (MBA in Management) compiles with the regulation of the university and meets the accepted standard with respect to originality and quality.

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Abstract

The primary objective of this thesis is to perform comparative analysis on hotel management response towards the effects of Covid-19 on hotel marketing in Addis Ababa. Among the nine five-star hotels in Addis Ababa, my research work is conducted on two hotels: one international chain hotel (Radisson Blu Hotel) and one local international hotel (Elilly International Hotel). The two hotels are located at ideal place, kazanchis business district adjacent to UNECA. Radisson Blu hotel was opened in 2012 in Addis Ababa at Kazanchis business district with a room capacity of 212 and other facilities like, restaurant, bar, coffee shop, conference & events, gym, and spa services. It was the third international chain brand to be opened after Hilton and Sheraton hotels. Elilly international hotel was opened in 2013 as a five-star local brand international hotel and among the first local five-star hotels with a capacity of 152 rooms in its twin towers and giving other similar facilities with Radisson except that Elilly has swimming pool services. For the purpose of the study, the data was collected from management team of the two hotels: 24 from Radisson and 21 from Elilly through self-administered questionnaire using non probabilistic purposive sampling design. In addition, a semi structured interview was performed with identified Managers of both hotels. The research work result indicates that Radisson hotel management team strongly agree on the measures taken to respond and recover while Elilly hotels management responded that they agree on the responses.

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Stay safe during such critical time and GOD bless you all!

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ABBREVIATIONS/ACRONYMS

AAU	Addis Ababa University
AHA	Addis Ababa Hotel owners Association
AI	Artificial Intelligence
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ILO	International Labor Organization
MBA	Master of Business Administration
MoTC	Ministry of Tourism & Culture
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
SARS	Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome
UNCC	United Nations Conference Center
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific, And Cultural Organization
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
WHO	World Health Organization
WTTC	World Travel & Tourism Council

Chapter One

Introduction

1.1. Background of the study (General information)

Covid-19 also known as Coronavirus was detected first in China in December 2019. Covid-19 is a health and economic crisis on global scale. While little is known at this time about many aspects of the disease (such as asymptomatic transmission, preventive measures, possible treatments, the likely hood of vaccine and long-term effects), it is generally agreed that the virus is easily transmissible and the fatality rate is low when compared to previous pandemics such as SARS, Ebola and the public plague (UNCTAD, 2020). Within months after detection, Covid-19 spread to several countries and the World Health Organization (WHO) declared Covid-19 a pandemic on March 11, 2020. Covid-19 has affected every sector across the globe and the hotel industry is among the hardest hit.

Like many of other countries, Ethiopia adopted travel and flight bans to contain the spread of Covid-19 following the first case report on 13 March 2020. The travel bans and reservation cancellations majorly affected the usual operation in the hotel and tourism sector and the Ethiopian government has taken certain measures regarding this sector to limit the effects of the adverse problems like tax relief to firms affected by Covid-19.

Hospitality, the Hotel, and Tourism sector is among the hardest hit due to the fear of people spread through travel and group environments. Curfews, lock downs and travel ban in many tourist generating countries have created risky business climate for hotels, restaurants, bars, cafes, tour operations, airlines and other guest dependent businesses which significantly affected their bottom-line. The Addis Ababa Hotel Trade Association has been featuring the postponement and cancelation of

conferences and events, conventions which was assumed to drive the revenues both for the hotels and the country in general.

The Hospitality Industry from which Hotels are a main part, is service intensive and consequently relies heavily on its human resources. For a whole hotel to operate smoothly, it needs the involvement of staff of all departments: from the departments directly dealing with guests like Front Office, Housekeeping, Food and Beverage to back office departments such as Accounting or Engineering. How their work managed directly impacts to the service, and thus to the guests` satisfaction (Hayes & Ninemeier 2009). In the event of such a significant disruption such as Covid-19, there must be response measures that businesses and management team should take. Hence, emergency response measure during such critical cases is an essential part of management team actions.

Addis Ababa as a capital of the continent Africa and well-known diplomatic hub of the world, has shown significant progress in tourism and related service-related developments. Currently it has become one of the eminent destinations of successive conference tourism and business undertakings. With the government policies and tireless effort and dedication of business community, Addis and elsewhere in Ethiopia are working hard to satisfy the quickly growing demands in tourism and hospitality sector and the entire tourism value chain (Hotel Guide, 2017).

There are more than 400 star rated hotels in Ethiopia (The Ethiopian Herald, 2020). Among the star rated hotels in Ethiopia, only nine of them are rated five stars by Ethiopian Ministry of Culture & Tourism (MoCT). Radisson Blu and Elilly International Hotel are among the five star rated hotels in Addis Ababa according to the Ministry of Culture & Tourism (MoCT) report on city hotel grading in 2015 with consultation of United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) experts in the

process of preparing criteria and actual assessment for the rating. These five-star private hotels with their beautiful design and architect are situated in the heart of Addis Ababa at Kazanchis business district around the main entrance of United Nations Conference Center (UNCC). The hotels are ideally placed at focal point between the city`s business district, historical landmark, major government offices, National Palace, and shopping centers.

So, as Covid-19 and other health crisis present organizational and managerial challenges, proper comparative assessment of the effect of Covid-19 on these high class hotels marketing will help to understand the organizational and managerial aspects of emergency response measure of chain hotel and local international hotel during such Covid-19 disruption in order to keep proper track of sustainable effective operations of the organization, employee performance and customer demand for sustainable operation and to put themselves on top of others through strategic recovery approaches. And the research was conducted to see the effectiveness of the management response measure in assessing the effects and impacts and tried to assess the strategy response measures of the two international hotels.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Hotel and Tourism Industry is one of the fastest growing industries in the world and it has high contribution to the economy of one country. Almost all nations are interested in this sector while some majorly depend on this sector. Especially developing countries like Ethiopia are giving a great deal of emphasis towards the growth and development of the sector. In these countries, the sector is becoming the backbone of their economy as it generates foreign currency from international guests. Ethiopia has

a huge attraction sites, has registered more than nine heritages on UNESCO and was chosen among the first seven best tourist destinations in Africa by Forbes (2020).

Tourist attraction sites are visited by both international and local tourists. However, due to the Covid-19, most hotels and other accommodation services are either totally closed or partially operating. AHA reported that 88% of its member hotels found to be fully or partially closed due to the low occupancy rates (AHA, 2020). But it was difficult to be sure how much the hotels had practically developed management of emergency response measures/plans to overcome, respond and put recovery strategies for the effective performance of their organization. Effective implementation of management response measure ensuring that the business is prepared to prevent the spread of the virus to protect employees and guests for the performance and revenue maximization depend on the experience and leadership ability of the management team.

Lack of well-defined emergency preparedness and business continuity plan affects the whole employee, employer, customer, and the work of the hotels. With the pre-assessment observed, there was a gap and challenge in the management response that affected the effective operation and performance of the hotels with regards to the current corona virus issue. Thus, the study was conducted to address effects of Covid-19 on the hotels marketing and management response measure of the two hotels comparatively and to check if there was any mal operation of the management response measure addressed by management team of these five-star hotels and to forward possible solution to correct/respond to negative implications.

Hence, the research tried to study the actual and differences of management response measure of the two hotels pointing out the effects that the Covid-19 brought on the market comparatively and forward possible recommendation and conclusions so as to

improve the strategies of the marketing effectiveness and performance of the two hotels. Therefore, the researcher tried to provide and incorporate the undermentioned research questions in the study to trace the effect and where the response challenge is.

Research Questions

The study was conducted to answer research questions on the effect of Covid-19 on the hotel marketing and management response measure of the two five-star hotels to address the below research questions. And the study came up with the following questions.

- How Covid-19 affected the market of the hotels?
- How these effects influenced hotel management action and response?
- With these influences what strategy they adopt to mitigate the influence?
- Is there effective emergency response practice and do managers have adequate experience on it?
- What are the possible problems and challenges of the hotel management team during this time that hinder the effective performance of the organization?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 General Objectives of the Study

The general objective of the study was to assess the comparative effects of Covid-19 on marketing issues of the hotels and Management response measures of Radisson Blu Hotel and Ellily International Hotel so as to forward the possible recommendation of strategy for effectiveness of the hotels.

1.3.2 Specific Objective of the Study

- To identify the effects that Covid-19 brought to the hotels marketing.
- To assess the effectiveness of the emergency response practice

- To outline and the emergency response measures and strategies used in the hotels.
- To check how management response measure and strategy is practiced between the local and international chain hotel.
- To identify possible problems that hinder effective implementation of response measure.
- To make necessary recommendations based on the findings of the study that helps the other hotels in designing and implementing effective emergency response plans in the future.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The study is basically significant to provide the top management team of the hotels with a clear understanding and awareness of the emergency crisis response plans and the strategies to be practiced in the emergency response cases of the hotels. The study is assumed to have an important implication for the hotels to ensure the existence of well-defined emergency response plan and strategies to be utilized during such disruption for effective performance and business continuity of the hotels. It will also be taken as a reference by similar standard hotels and others to redesign their management emergency crisis plan and strategies. Furthermore, the result of the study will serve as an input and used as a reference for other researchers who have interest to work in this area of study.

1.5 Scope/Delimitation of the Study

This study was confined to assessing the effects of Covid-19 and Management response measure practice of Radisson Blu Hotel and Eilly International Hotel. It was only limited to the two hotels hotel management response on the effects of Covid-19

on the hotels marketing and emergency management response measure by excluding other management actions and practices of the organizations. Moreover, the study focused only on management team. The scope of the study was limited mainly because of the pandemic and time constraint.

1.6 Organizations of the Study

The research work is organized in to five chapters. **The first chapter** provides the background of the study, statement of the problem, research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study and scope/delimitation of the study.

The second chapter deals with review of related literature of different authors, industries about the subject under the study that shall be stated and critically investigated. **Chapter three** is focused on research methodology and provided explanation for data collection techniques and methods while **Chapter four** focused on data presentation, data analysis and interpretation of the two hotels.

The final chapter (**Chapter five**) will draw findings, conclusions, and recommendations of research study on analysis, and interpretation.

Chapter Two

Review of the Related Literature

2.1 Hotels

A hotel is an establishment providing accommodation, food & drink for travelers, temporarily residents, meals, refreshments, and other facilities for other users (Medlik 1994: 4). Hotels are not the only places where one can get food and comfortable rooms; they are also centering for community life, with facilities for meeting, entertainments, communication, and other personal services creating atmosphere of home for guests (Henkin, 2001:1).

Hotels are classified by star level depending on the level of services and range of services they provide. Currently there are more than 400 star rated hotels in Ethiopia (The Ethiopian Herald, 2020) of which nine of them are five stars; Getfam Hotel, Sheraton Addis, Elilly International, Capital Hotel & Spa, Radisson Blu, Golden Tulip Addis Ababa and Marriot Executive Apartment (Capital, 2019) and Skylight Hotel and Hyatt Regency (The Reporter, 2020) and ten of them are international chain hotels.

The Addis Ababa Hotel market which has grown due to the diplomatic aid and NGO market including meetings, conferences, exhibitions segment has contributed the growth of the hotels in the city as per AHA (2020).

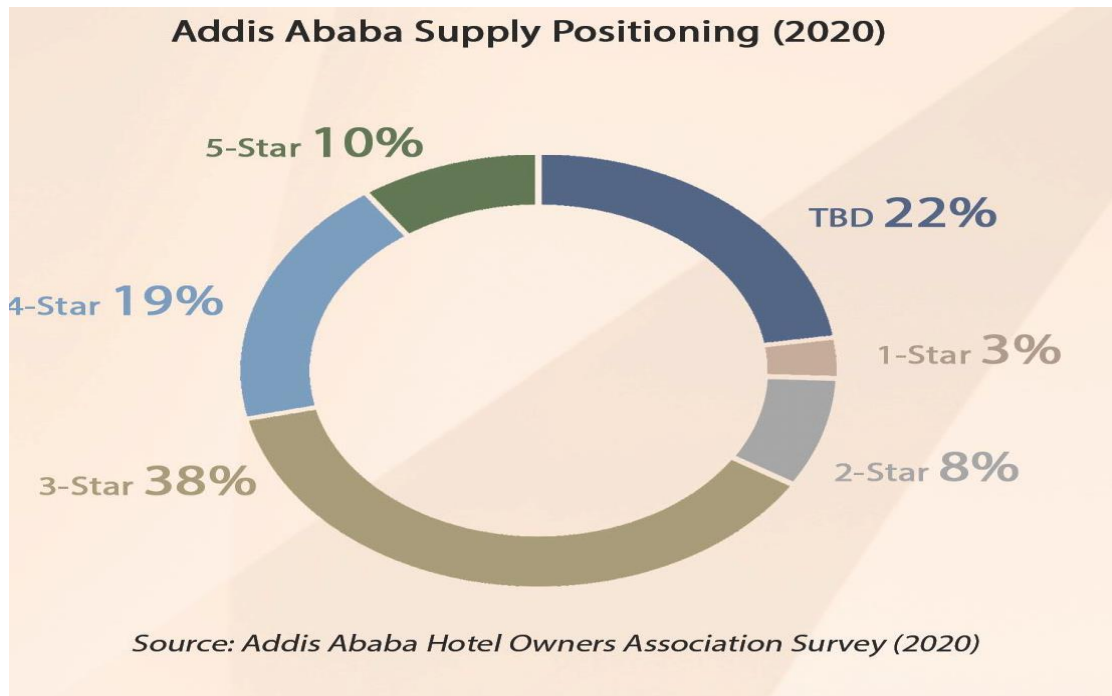


Figure 1: Addis Ababa Supply Positioning, taken from AHA (2020)

The travel and tourism in which hotels are key part is a major source of employment, government revenue and foreign exchange for many developed and developing countries (UNCTD, 2020). According to World Travel & Tourism Council report (WTTC, 2019), the sector is accounted for US\$ 8.9 trillion contribution to the world's GDP, 10.3% of global GDP and created 330 million jobs, 1 in 10 jobs around the world. According to WTTC, in Ethiopia, the sector contributed \$7.4 billion to the country's economy representing 9.4% of Ethiopia's total economy.

Figure 3.1 Tourism is one Ethiopia's top exports (Smillions)

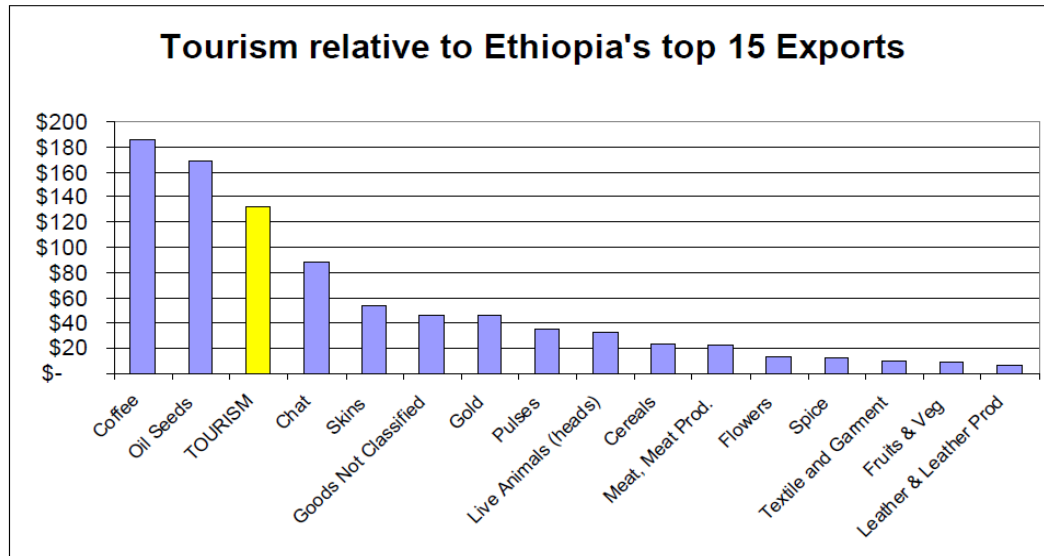


Figure 2: Tourism statics relative to Ethiopia`s top 15 exports, taken from world bank report 2006

Furthermore, WTTC mentioned that the sector supported 2.2 million jobs which is 8.3% total employment and reported that Ethiopia recorded the biggest tourism growth.

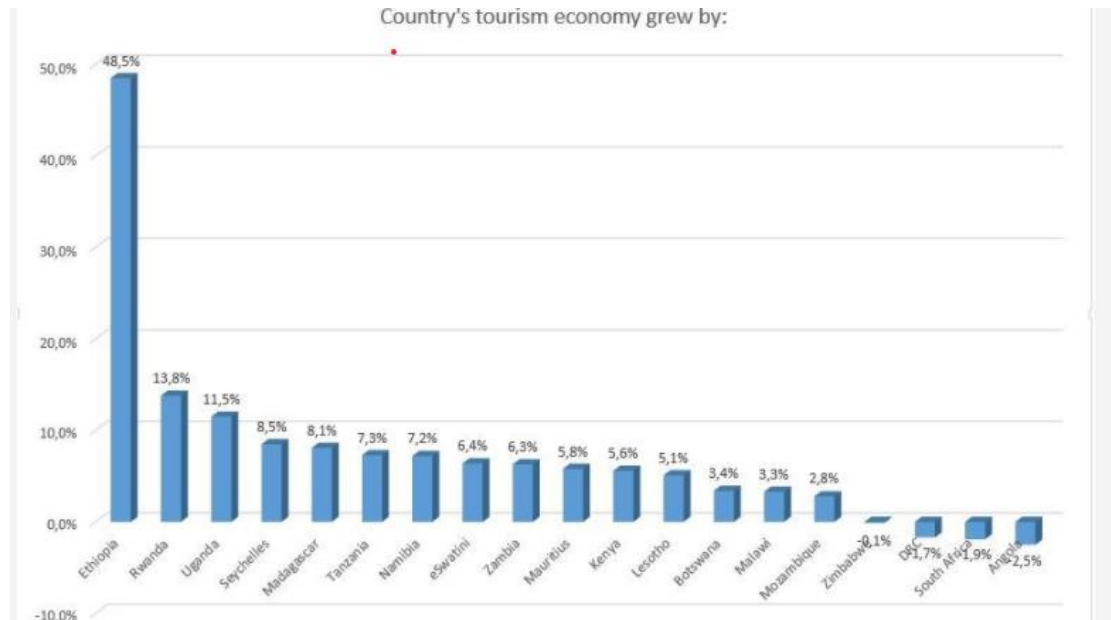


Figure 3: Countries tourism growth data, taken from WTTC report

2.2 Hotel Management

Today, it is an established principle of international hospitality industry that ownership and operation of a hotel are more or than not separated. In addition to properties that are owner operated, the following three common concepts of operation have evolved over time: lease (either fixed or contingent), franchising and management agreements (Schlup, R., 2003).

At present, around 70% of all rated hotels around the world are branded/operated by hotel companies, (Smith Travel Research). More independent hotels around the world are joining/entering into agreements with professional operators/management companies or brands with the objective to tap into their marketing power distribution channels and operating efficiency, given the growing challenges of operating as independent hotel, even though the independent hotels with strong established positions in their respective markets most likely to reject offers to join a large group/chain (Angelini, G., 2020). According to World Tourism Forum, Hotels and the hospitality market are constantly evolving because of brands consolidating, owner profile changing, technology disruption, changing travel behaviour as well as hotel investment altering.

Freyberg, Henschel and Gruner (2013) describe throughout their book, hotel management as the most importance areas of a hotel. The size and complexity of a hotel management organizational structure varies significantly depending on the size, features, and function of the hotel or resort; a small hotel operation normally may consist of a small core management team consisting of a hotel manager and a few key department supervisors who directly supervise day to day operations, on the other hand , a large full service hotel or resort complex often operates more similarly to a large corporation with an executive board headed by the general manager and consisting of key directors serving as heads of individual hotel departments which can

further consist of line managers and supervisors who handle day to day operations (Wikipedia).

Management of a hotel operation includes, but not limited to management of hotel staff, business management, keeping up sanitary standards of hotel facilities, guest satisfaction and customer service, marketing management, sales management, revenue management, financial management, procurement, and other functions (Denney, G. & Michael, J., 2007). Managing a hotel is a complex activity involving the application of a wide range of skills and a broad spectrum of knowledge to many types of business problem (Walker, 2003). The scope of management in the hotel industry demands expertise unlike that in most other industries as it demands 24-hour service throughout the year and full range of commercial activities occurs under the same roof. Knowledge management contributes to and improves crisis management and helps immensely to solve reply to crises. It is useful in that companies can share and re-use efficiently through a better communication within a corporation and a space to create new approaches (Massingham, P., 2009).

Manager of hotels are facing several challenges in a continuous changing environment but always need to maintain the hotel position, and meet all expectations from customers, stakeholders, and media. Crisis management though, is a helping tool for manager to lead a business successfully and specifically to keep position during harder times when business is suffering (Ribaric, R., 2010). The Minnesota Department of Health by its INTERIM GUIDANCE FOR HOTEL MANAGERS AND OWNERS updated on April 28, 2020 stated that hotel managers should develop business continuity plan, develop a plan to monitor staff, cross train personnel to perform essential function, should work with local and state health departments, develop policies for worker protection and other related measures.

2.3 Covid-19 and its effect on Ethiopian hotel industry

There exists a literature gap; however, UNWTO has extensively studied the impact and response measure in hospitality industry. The literature review findings suggest that Covid-19 emerged the most popular topic and hit hard the hotel industry. (UNWTO, 2020) estimated that US\$ 910 billion to US\$ 1.2 trillion loss in export revenues from tourism in 2020 across the globe while WTTC estimated US 2.1 trillion (The Ethiopian Herald, 2020). As reported by The Ethiopian Herald dated March 31, 2020 citing WTTC, the Covid-19 pandemic is putting up to 50 million jobs at risk in the global travel and tourism sector. Asia is the most affected continent as per WTTC. As per Hao, Xiao & Chon (2020) citing China Hospitality Association (2020), China hotel industry lost over 67 billion yuan (approximately US\$9.44 billion) in revenue.

As far as the Ethiopian case is concerned, Hotel and Tourism business is one of the areas of Ethiopian government from the intension of maximizing national income from hotel accommodations and tourist fees (Dereje, 2014). However, the hotel and hospitality segment is experiencing a devastating decline in occupancy and operating revenue since the outbreak of the Covid-19. According to AHA survey (2020) occupancy rates in Addis Ababa were 64% in 2018/19 and following the Covid-19 impact member hotels have reported occupancy rates below 2% across the city.

In the event of a crisis, immediate action is what is required to protect short, mid and long-term results. To be able to do so, business organizations should have a professional crisis management response plan in place that can address employee well-being, financial management, company brand reputation, supply chain, legal and other issues that the crisis might cause. (Deloitte, 2020) In other way, the situation we are in brings new business models and opportunities in defining for instance; new

delivery concepts, human capital sharing platforms, initiatives in promoting the ``staycation or holistay`` concept and the use of less productive time to work on activities that were normally pushed forward like asset counts, security plans, defining standard operating procedures, social media plans etc.

2.3.1 Covid-19 and its effect on hotel business marketing /revenue

Hotels are susceptible to reduced travel and tourism with slowdown in economic activities (Hoisington, 2020). Hotels have different revenue streams like room sales, food and beverage, meeting and events, Gym & Spa, Laundry services etc. Room night sales are not the only affected revenue stream, food and beverage, sales & events are also inexistent with restrictions imposed on social events and public gatherings.

Accommodation

As cited by Pavlatos et al (2020) in the article ``Crisis Management in the Greek hotel industry in response to Covid-19 pandemic``, Covid-19 has triggered a chain of changes in the hospitality industry which based on the interaction of guests, services and many other factors which showed that the loss mounted up to -90% on international accommodations in the first month of restrictions. For instance, in February 2020, revenue-per available-room at Marriott hotels fell by nearly 90% in Greater China and declined by 25% in other parts of the Asia-Pacific region compared with the same period last year (Wallis, 2020). US hotel revenue per available room is forecast to decline 50.6% (Stephen et al, 2020).

The hotel and Tourism sector in Ethiopia is one of the most important contributors to the economy of the country. According to AHA (2020), the Addis Ababa hotel market features a range of high level local and global branded properties. The primary drivers

of demand in Addis Ababa include diplomatic, aid and non-governmental organizations while, the meetings, conferences, incentives, exhibitions, and corporate market has contributed to the growth of the hotels, however, the ongoing impact of the virus will likely result in low customer confidence and less disposable income which directly affect the travel behavior of both leisure and business travelers.

The revenue from this sector dramatically dropped due to the crisis resulted from the pandemic. With this effect of the virus AHA reported that the sector is affected severely and estimated that the expected revenue loss is \$ 35, 000 per month in its survey report published April 2020.



Figure 4: Occupancy, revenue and work force statics report taken from AHA (2020)

Food & Beverage

With restaurant closures in most countries, and an expectation that social distancing will have to remain a key strategy to manage COVID-19 in many countries for several months, it can be expected that restaurants will face problems recovering, specifically as they usually have limited liquidity and small profit margins (Stefan et al, 2020). This is true for several Internet-based businesses, such as those related to online entertainment, food delivery, online shopping, online education, and solutions for remote work. People have also changed their consumption patterns, increasing the demand for takeout, snacks, and alcohol as well as cleaning products as we spend

more time in our homes. As room revenue dried up, hoteliers looked for new ways to generate revenue, meal deliveries and customer loyalty programs for both sustenance and prosperity (Hotel News Resource, 2020).

Conferences and Events

Expos, conferences, sporting events, and other large gatherings as well as cultural establishments such as galleries and museums have been abruptly called off (Asmelash & Cooper, 2020), while some businesses are struggling, some businesses are thriving. As most countries plan to avoid a peaking in COVID-19 cases that would exceed hospital capacity, social distancing will remain a major part and all forms of events in which larger groups of people meet will be restricted, including events as diverse as concerts, meetings, conferences, sports, or large family gatherings (Stefan et al, 2020).

Gym & Spa Services

Wellness and spa are other trends that are becoming stronger coming out of the pandemic (Hotel News Resource), properties that cater to this experience or can expand to tap into this audience set could benefit greatly.

The hotels are facing severe time for declining number of customers due to the pandemic (The Ethiopian Herald, 2020), some hotels reported that they lost about 70 percent of their customers due to coronavirus while some expressed total absence of the users.

A market is not just a firm; it is a network of actors (i.e., firms, customers, public organizations) acting in accordance with a set of norms (Vargo & Lusch, 2011), the Covid-19 outbreak poses a unique opportunity to study how markets are created and how they disappear within a very limited time span.

In increasing numbers, professionals in the hospitality industry are coming to the realization that management of their revenue is critical to their organizations success (Hayes, D., Miller, A., 2011:3). This is the reason why crisis must be managed carefully, and a high educated and well-informed manager is needed to cope with such challenge (Benaben et al., 2016).

2.3.2 Covid-19 and its effect on employee's performance

The World Travel & Tourism Council has warned that the Covid-19 pandemic could lead to a cut 50 million jobs worldwide in the travel and tourism industry. Following this many governments and businesses have taken measures to keep their staffs safe from being contracted and loose job. Covid-19 has affected the workforce severely and in Ethiopia, the sector created job opportunity for about 2.2million (WTTC, 2019). As it is reported by the Ethiopian Herald dated May 19, 2020, Ethiopia's Job Creation Commission projected that over 2 million Ethiopian will lose their job within three months due to the virus of which 300, 000 could be from the service sector. AHA (2020) has also estimated that more than 15, 000 employees working in its hotel members has been affected due to the pandemic.

Moreover, some hotels have advised their employees to proceed on annual leave (paid or unpaid) and some has cut allowances based on government guidance and some are forced temporarily work from home remotely which questioned the performance of employees during such time low occupancy.

As the Addis Ababa Hotel Workers Association reported in different times, the termination, lay-off, salary deduction, unpaid leave, service charge cut, management support, owner involvement, no tip and other related issues have lowered the moral

and performance of their job and caused a crisis among their personal, social and organizational life(Documents are available for this verifications).

In the era of Covid-19 and around employer-employee relationship, changes are becoming diverse and unrepresented. Employee stress towards the situations resulting from the Covid-19, including but not limited to their health, lay off, termination, suspension, unpaid leave, no allowances, no service charge, no tip, other management and owner decisions has disrupted the health work environment, and which can lead to poor performance. Interpersonal tensions at work were linked to lower job satisfaction and greater turnover intentions (O'Neill, J. W, & Davis, K. (2011). Measuring work performance at this critical time, is a key challenge as it raises a question of manager's ability and readiness to measure output rather than physical presence as employees may work from home, employee moral may be low and as rotation of staffs/multitask may be applied.

2.3.3 Covid-19 and its effect on hotel brand image (Guest perspective)

As businesses are surviving Covid-19 pandemic, hotel companies need to work on business continuity. The strong image of a hotel raises customer confidence and trust in its accommodation and amenities. Customers' perceptions of the hotel affect their expectations, their reactions to its offers.

Hotel image depends not only on functional attributes of price and convenience (Michman, 1995). Guests look at hotels with a pseudo home feeling. They expect it to be comfortable, private, secure, and clean. However, due to the current healthy crisis, health and safety procedures in a post covid-19 world are all about showing and telling guests that they will get reassurance from visible signs of the highest standards of cleanliness and safety measures in place. Hence, it is most important that these companies should work on rebuilding company initiatives to demonstrate relicense,

emphasis and trust on the health and safety cleaning protocols. Many hotels have adopted cleaning policies to get the trust back. According to Hotel News Resource report (2020) citing the hotels websites and representatives; Marriot International launches global cleanliness council to promote higher standards of cleanliness, Hilton a Clean Stay program with Lysol protection to deliver standards of cleanliness and disinfection, Hyatt announced global care & cleanliness commitment program and Radisson Hotel Group announces Radisson Safety Protocol. The protocol will be implemented at all areas of guest contact and some hotels have also applied technology to minimize contactless check-in, keyless entry, online directory, digital menus, booking amenities online and considering Mobile Apps.

2.3.4 Covid-19 and its effect on hotel supply chain

Supply chain network is another channel through which Covid-19 impacted the global economy. As evidence from different markets confirms, the functioning of different supply chain has been disrupted by the current crisis and this is bringing spillover effects throughout different supply networks (Fernandes, N., 2020). The supply chain has been disrupted due to the shortage of air and ocean freight options to move around the world. As the damage is real, it is questioning the just-in time strategy for many companies which is very clear to managers in having inventories low and having suppliers at different countries as a risk minimization strategy even if this may seem slightly higher than average cost.

2.3.5 Covid-19 and its effect on hotel managers & owners' actions

Unless hotel owners inject capital to shore up their cash reserves, it will be extremely difficult for hotels to stay open in covering operational costs and let alone staff salaries. Hotel owners with heavy debts are now feeling the heat and realizing that the industry could fall into a tailspin leading to a potential uptick in defaults as reported

by AHA (2020). Hotel owners are now pleading with banks to reschedule loan payment periods. They are also asking the Ministry of Revenue to give them time to pay manage their tax dues (The Reporter, 2020).

Given the rapid decline in occupancy rates and limited revenue streams for hotels, it is possible hotel management might consider closing hotels completely (AHA, 2020). Hyatt Regency closes doors, temporarily (Fortune, 2020). The owner of Titas International Hotel at Adama also decided to change the hotel to hospital (BBC Amharic, 2020).

2.4 Emergency Crisis Management Response in the hotel and Tourism industry

Crisis and disaster are prevalent nationally and internationally (Blakie et al., 1994) and commentators maintain that it is no longer a question of whether they will arise, but when and how they will be dealt with (Barton, 1994; Kash & Darling, 1998).

The travel industry, although not unique to in its vulnerability, is nevertheless highly exposed to risks and prone to crisis because of external events (Examples of such cases are Ebola, Tsunami, the 9/11 events in the USA, car bomb at the Marriott international capital of Jakarta in 2003, suicide bombings in the Radisson SAS, Days Inn and Grand Hyatt hotels in Amman, Jordan, in 2005(Henderson, J., Shufen, C., Xiang, L. 2010). Ethiopia`s tourism industry is also certainly no stranger to hardship. Tigray hotel bomb attack in Addis Ababa in 2002 (BBC), the 2008 Negele Borena bombings on two hotels (Wikipedia), fire damages Addis Ababa Hotel, Taitu hotel (The Guardian, 2015).

Crisis can happen any time and Covid-19 is among the hardest. In these unprecedented times, failure to address the effects of Covid-19 may have a devastating impact on hotel and tourism across the globe.

Crisis management plays a vital role in restoring tourism and hospitality industry crisis, including improving tourist's confidence, mitigating a crisis' or disaster's impact on tourism and improving security (Beirman, 2003). Henderson (2003) asserted that tourism is prone to crisis and disaster must be planned for and managed. Several authors have sought to develop typologies of crisis, which can be useful in developing an understanding of crisis and developing appropriate managerial responses (Evans, N., Elphick, S., 2005).

Crisis management can be viewed as involving the 4 R's of four strategic process. Reduction, Readiness, Response and Recovery (PATA, 2003). Several models have been developed by many authors. A literature has also developed which focuses on the management of crisis in travel and hospitality. (Glasesser, 2004) in his book assesses a wide range of issues relevant managerial responses. (Lettieri et al., 2009) identified the mitigation, preparedness, response, signaling, recovery and learning phase. As cited by Hendersson & Ng (2004), Faulkner's (2001) exploration of the dynamics of tourism disaster is commonly cited by researchers and he traces the disaster process through a series of phases as Pre-event, prodromal, emergency, intermediate, long term recovery and resolution.

Theories of different disciplines shed light on management literature, however from the tourism and hospitality perspective, most disaster management are guided by management-oriented theories (Fei, H., Qu, X., Kaye, C., 2020). For instance, (Jia et al., 2012) adopted the crisis management theories emphasizing on the proficient dissemination of information and communication between different stakeholders.

Because crisis management is considered as a process, rather than a one-shot operation (Cioccio & Michael, 2007) several perspective managements models and frame works can provide directions and guidelines for effective tourism crisis

management. But current crisis and disaster management are studied mainly from the perspective of different phases which can be divided to ``prevention and planning``, ``response & recovery`` and ``Resolution & reflection`` (Ritchie B, Jiang, Y., 2019). According to the study more than 50% of the responses fall in Response and Recovery stage.

Pauchant and Mitroff (1992) as cited by Sausmarez (2004) categorized crisis management approaches as either proactive or reactive responses. Crisis management also linked to the size of organizations as in larger organizations the experience of managers and proactive responses are more important (Rousaki & Alcott, 2006).

Malhotra & Venkatesh (2016) has well cited stating different authors in this regard. Accordingly, Higgins (2005) reports on Walt Disney`s response to an initial hurricane enable their Florida Resort to prepare and respond effectively and, in the aftermath, they invested time and resources to reviewing their plans and by learning from their experiences, they were able to reopen for business swiftly and continue providing exceptional service.

Organizations may have equipped themselves with resources, experienced managers but some literatures suggest that they are not generally well prepared in terms of proactive planning. Therefore, it is recommended that organizations should have crisis guideline and must respond and recover the situation for business continuity.

2.4.1 Covid-19 and Hotel Management Team Response measure

The hotel sector has been enduring enormous losses from facing continual crisis from epidemic outbreaks, economic and political turbulence (Ritchie, B., Jiang, Y., 2010). However, it has been observed that hotel management`s ability and capability to deal with crises are limited (Henderson and Ng, 2004). As cited by (Ritchie, B., Jiang, Y., 2010), the literature on crisis management in the hotel and tourism industry indicates

that many staffs have limited knowledge and formal education concerning emergency crisis management response as very high number of hotels did not predict crisis and failed to respond against the emergency.

Crisis Plan

The role of emergency crisis and risk management response for organizations to achieve their objectives in uncertain world is challenging. Setting an emergency crisis response plan as a manager of a business entity in dealing with current issue and preparing for future is a must. Good leadership, good communication and good technology can be among factors to able to maintain operations of a business. Knowledge Management is useful in the sense that companies can share and reuse knowledge & experience efficiently through a better communication and space to create new opportunities (Massingham, 2009).

As cited by Renner, M. (2018) using different sources, generic planning is important in determining certain crisis situations or concentrating on certain crisis or specifying other determinants as determinants cannot be estimated beforehand in many cases where many organizational issues can be planned. There is more that can be included in the crisis plan of hotel management response by specifying the structures of responsibilities during crisis management. It is also ideal to compile job descriptions of various persons involved. In the sense of communication crisis response, the crisis plan can include communication channels, the target audience can be defined, and key messages can be roughly formulated according to the developed generic crisis strategy of the company.

Communication Response

As cited by Renner, M. (2018) using different sources, Crisis Communication crisis communication can be characterised by defensive or offensive; quantitative or

qualitative where the marketing mix contains everything that can be communicated to the customer and serves as a suitable tool for describing crisis communication. In the product policy, all measurements must aim to restore the original condition of the product and the benefit that was offered to the guest. Communicating with your own employees and guest in the event of a crisis is very important, in addition, tour operators and partners have further information needs.

Other issues of the price policy during a crisis are cancellations and rebooking, this can be an important instrument of crisis management for guests Renner M. (2018). During a crisis, the direct and indirect communication policies as well as the promotion strategies, included in the promotional tool of marketing mix, need to be adjusted to the crisis and the chosen crisis strategy. This is because through the promotion tool, the hotel can reach most of the interested groups of people or the target group (Sattler, H., 2018).

Operational Response

Considering crisis management needs to start with considering the hotel management itself. Various things need to be analyzed and decided and therefore it is important to understand the complexity of the hotel management. This task relies on the hotel manager itself but also on the duty of various department managers to fulfill the expectations of guests when it comes to health and security issues within the hotel premises (Hartmann, J., 2011). Therefore, the purpose of crisis management is as in this Covid-19 case is to help the hotel sector to combat the outbreak threat and survive in the market.

As a response to a crisis, the marketing management department of a hotel will have a big focus. Marketing and communication are really a big part of hotel management and a big part of related literature is dealing with it. The hotel Marketing can be

understood as the performance of the hotel, at the right time and in the right place, with the right price on the appropriate sales channel with effective sales promotion, advertising and public relation works, offered to the right guests, to achieve a reasonable profit (Freyberg et al., 2013).

Digital Marketing

According to Sing, V., & Kaushik, T. (Prof) (2020), in the last couple of months of the lockdown era, people have increased the time spent on their mobile phones to access interactive content. The authors stated, citing Global Web Index that users devote an average of two hours and twenty-four minutes per day on social networks and messaging apps. The estimates are sufficient to substantiate the results that a wide number of audiences are drawn to multimedia, social and network content.

Cost effective campaigns

Cost management is also another area of crisis because extra costs which normally do not occur. In such situations, spending that are not necessarily need to be cut, however, a hotelier should not be cheap with expenditures that contribute to safety or basic comfort for guests during the crisis (Renner, M., 2018). Hotels will have to be extremely aggressive with promotional campaigns and spend at a time when corporations are hitting rock bottom. Hotels are investing in marketing instruments that will make them self-efficient by assisting them everyday activities as we transition to post Covid-19 period industry practices (Sing, V., & Kaushik, T. (Prof), (2020).

Interact with customers regularly

Connecting with customers is required. Hotels can use social media platforms to generate and share stories on hotel blog and communicate via email on regular basis using customer relation management, whether it is ``Book Now``, ``Stay Later`` offer

or useful content related to your destination, provide future guests with value. Entertain, delight, inform just consistently (Sing, V., & Kaushik, T. (Prof) (2020)

Immunity boosting foods

The most important task of food and beverage management during a crisis is to ensure to have enough essential and appropriate supplies (Renner, M., 2018). Many hotels in Delhi are focussing and have used as a tool to attract tourists in current scenario. Food that are having health benefits are being promoted to attract guests (Sing, V., & Kaushik, T. (Prof) (2020).

The Human resource management provide, deploy, and develop employees in the right number, with the right qualifications in the right place and at the right time. The quality perception of guests is no longer limited to the quality of the service but also to the assurance of safety. Other operational management responses should also focus on the way to give back to guests and employees at this critical time (Renner, M., 2018).

According to Niininen (2012), there has been a plethora of international crisis demonstrating how fragile the business environment can be and the most cited crises have been caused by nature (e.g., tsunami, hurricanes, bushfires, floods, or disease) or by man (e.g., terrorism and the current Economic Tsunami).

As cited by (Jiang, Y., & Wen, J., 2020) using different authors, different types of catastrophes bring distinct industry consequences and prompt hoteliers to take measures to tackle various challenges caused by different crisis stating that hoteliers in Hongkong introduced toughened security by upgrading security camera during 9/11 attacks the Korean hotel industry installed new hygiene equipment during the Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS) outbreak. The authors mentioned the concern about security and health risk that can directly affect individuals travel behaviour and

addressed the essentials for hoteliers to address changes in consumer demand following Covid-19 pandemic and restore traveller's confidence to help hotels become more resilient and achieve effective post-disaster recovery. The authors further cited and based their perspective article ``Effect of Covid-19 on hotel marketing and management`` on three areas of concern that hotel operators are beginning to pay closer attention to the potential benefits of artificial intelligence (AI) and its applications in hotel management practices, hygiene and cleanliness which are essential to successful hotel operations and which have garnered increased attention after public health crises such as the 2003 SARS outbreak and public healthcare facilities which played imperative roles in pandemic prevention and control.

According to Singh, V., & Kaushik, T., (2020), the shifting hotel service landscape offers an opportunity for hoteliers to better serve and delight guests in innovative ways through AI and robotics. The notion of hygiene can extend beyond sanitization to encompass broader aspects of healthcare. Customers are likely to become more concerned about general healthcare access when planning trips following the COVID-19 pandemic, such as how to seek medical care if they fall ill. On a personal level, guests tend to prioritize their health and hygiene, such as through a healthy diet and sleep hygiene, as lines of defence against diseases. The authors further described that the new hotel standard in 2020, like printing signages and using automations reducing as many physical contact points as possible. This goes beyond spaces, too. At their bars, cafes, and other outlets, hotels must consider all the multiple customer contact points. A helpful reopening guide for restaurants after lockdown. Voice-activated digital assistants that can be configured, such as Alexa or Amazon's Google Assistant, to monitor lighting and run TVs. Mobile apps with features such as digital room keys and secure payment handling. Messenger chatbots will order new towels or dining

facilities in the room easily, as well as answer frequently asked questions such as check-out time or operating hours of the restaurant.

In such environment as per advice from different industry sources, the Hotel Managers' duty of care should also involve planning and preparing for unforeseen events; running 'what if' scenarios, designing action plans for all departments, allocating individual responsibilities; building back-up capacity and training their staff to respond in appropriate manner to Health and Security concerns.

Artificial Intelligence & Robotics

Covid-19 is highly contagious via person-to-person transmission (Chan et al., 2020) and people have been urged to decrease personal contact and increase physical contact (WHO, 2020a). The Covid-19 outbreak can thus be expected to accelerate the penetration of AI and Robotics technology to the hospitality industry (Jiang, Y., & Wen, J., 2020).

According to Singh, V., & Kaushik, T., (2020) citing different scholars and researchers, the adoption of AI & Robotics during Covid-19 where especially where there are high contact scenarios, it assists visitors and frontline support personnel's, and the service creativity will also boost the sustainable productivity of the hotels. Furthermore, it also enables hoteliers to best represent and delight customers in creative ways (Huang & Rust, 2018).

According to Hotel news resource (2020), on the topic, how Covid-19 has changed hospitality for good, worldwide lockdowns and no-contact safety measures triggered a forced digitalization in every sphere of activity where the hospitality industry has adopted this change with agility from booking to check-out, as the digitalization is apparent. The news resource further states that the online booking process has been made more robust with online check-in and payments, mobile check-in is a common

place where needed which reduces longer queues and guests can also order meals in rooms with smarter room service system. Going into the future, apart from on-floor use of digital applications, hoteliers will also need to become smarter about data collection and utilization.

Hygiene and Cleanliness

The importance of hotel cleanliness and hygiene has become extremely important because of Covid-19 spread by touching surfaces contaminated with the virus (WHO, 2020b). The post pandemic guest is already shaping up to be very different from the ones we left in January 2020, health and hygiene are the center and front of every experience (Hotel News Resource, 2020), guests need to be assured of cleanliness-not just the dust, but a deep clean and complete disinfection. Due to the Covid-19 outbreak, travelers will likely patronize hotels that offer reassuring lodging services and accommodation products in terms of hygiene and cleanliness (Jiang, Y., & Wen, J., 2020). Guestroom cleanliness (e.g., of bedrooms and bathrooms) is a core component of hotel reputation (Gu and Ryan, 2008), in addition, hotel restaurants and other departments should be committed to safety and hygiene protocols and high housekeeping standards. On the hotel website, Covid-19 protection and cleanliness protocols must be clearly displayed to meet guest wishes and to convince visitors that have gone beyond and above high standards (Singh, V., & Kaushik, T., 2020).

Given the growing consumer demand for hotel hygiene following the Covid-19 outbreak, enhanced cleanliness, and sanitization to prevent or limit the spread of the disease can be promoted as a selling point during and after this pandemic (Jiang, Y., & Wen, J., 2020).

Health and Healthcare

During the COVID-19 pandemic, many people have begun to reconsider their lifestyles (Wang et al., 2020) and focus on physical and mental well-being. Customers are likely to become more concerned about general healthcare access when planning trips following Covid-19 pandemic, such as how to get medical care if they fall ill (Jiang, Y., & Wen, J., 2020), considering this newly prominent consumer need,

helping guests lead lifestyle could become a post pandemic trend for hotels in meditation programs, digital detox programs, fitness programs, health diet programs, and sleep hygiene programs likely become more popular in hotels 'marketing mix.

Customers are likely to become more concerned about general healthcare access when planning trips following the COVID-19 pandemic, such as how to seek medical care if they fall ill.

So, to address how the hotel management responded so far as far as Ethiopian case is concerned, this study adopted the three concern areas of hotel management response at Covid-19 era, Crisis Plan, Communication Response, Operational Response, **Artificial Intelligence (AI) & Robotics, Hygiene & Cleanliness and Health & Health Care** based on (Jiang, Y., & Wen, J. (in press), (Sing, V., & Kaushik, T. (Prof) , (Renney M, 2018) on their recent research article and also based on different industry suggestions. So, the overall framework comprises effects of covid-19 on the hotels marketing, Hotel Management response (Crisis Plan, Communication Response, Operational Response, Artificial Intelligence (AI) & Robotics, Hygiene & Cleanliness and Health & Health Care), Recovery strategies adopted, and challenges encountered.

2.4.2 Government initiative and response with the hotel industry after Covid-19

In attempt to contain the spread of this pandemic, several countries including Ethiopia have taken extraordinary measures such as quarantines, social distancing, travel bans (restrictions on inbound and outbound travel), border closures, all of which have been a de facto closure of tourism (Capital, 2020). The rapid spread of the pandemic forced many countries to take policy measures towards the sector. UNWTO in its report issue 1 published in June 2020 stated that it has launched an online interactive

dashboard on country and international policy response covering 220 countries and territories, 30 international and regional institutions where most countries adopted economy stimulus package along with job opportunities.

During any crisis, governance is key, and, in some countries, public-private partnership models have been reinforced with participation of stakeholders across different levels of administration and private sector. In addition, countries have adopted a wide range of economic and social measures to respond to the crisis in many cases supported by international and regional institutions. Overall, the immediate and first response from governments consisted of cross-cutting fiscal and monetary measures to mitigate the economic impact of the crisis with a special focus on liquidity and protecting jobs in most severely affected sector, tourism being one of the most directly affected (UNWTO, ISSUE 2, 2020).

The Government of Ethiopia has implemented measures to slow the spread of the virus and promote safety including a five-month state of emergency to fight the spread of the virus on April 11. On the Covid-19 response bulletin published on March 27, 2020, it is reported that the Ethiopian government has put new measures to prevent the spread of Covid-19 outbreak including approval of allocating 5 billion birr (USD 150 M) for the fight against the corona virus outbreak and the government has also directed the ground crossing points in that all travelers coming to Ethiopia should undergo 14 days quarantine and the federal government workers to work from home. On March 21, 2020, the Covid-19 ministerial committee heralded the closure of night clubs and bars to strengthen the fight against the virus.

Following this, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism together with AHA made an observation to evaluate whether the hotel industry is applying social distancing and avoidance of overcrowding to prevent coronavirus (The Ethiopian Herald, 2020).

The Prime Minister Office and National Bank of Ethiopia declared they would inject ETB 15 billion (USD 456 million) as liquidity for private banks to enable the rescheduling of debt with potential interest holiday and additional loans with below market rates to clients, so that businesses can endure cash flow strains (AHA, 2020).

As many countries have started to work on recovery strategies during the crisis and post covid-19 time, Ethiopia is also making necessary preconditions to reactivate the tourism sector. The long vision of the government is to make Ethiopia one of the top ten tourist destinations in Africa by the year 2020 (World Bank, 2006), top five tourist destinations in Africa by 2025 (UNECA, 2015). Recently Forbes.com listed Ethiopia as one of the seven major tourism destinations in the world during the post-Covid-19 period (Forbes, 2020). As reported by (The Reporter Ethiopia, 2020), Ethiopia Tourism is working with Ministry of Culture & Tourism in mobilizing regional states, hotels, and tour operators in putting in place all the necessary health safety instruments in tourist destinations adopting the international travel protocol introduced by World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC).

2.4.3 Hotel Sector Collaboration Response to mitigate the effect of the epidemics.

Hotels are often the first point of contact for tourists arriving at host country. Hotels could provide an additional line of defense beyond entry border screening, and they could offer another layer of protection against illness that border screening may have missed. In view of this, the capacity of hotels in detection of potential illness and the launching of initial response should be fully recognized and utilized (Hung K., Mark C., Yeung M. 2003, 2009). World Health Organization (WHO) in its Interim Guidance published on March 31, 2020 for accommodation sector recommended that every staff member must comply with the basic protective measure against Covid-19

recommended by WHO and that management team should follow strictly the health of their staffs and guests stating that the place is where there is a high interaction among guests and workers.

The sector is severely hit by the pandemic and because of this, the sector's associations and individual hotels are responding accordingly. WTTC is leading and coordinating number of task forces for members, industry associations and international organizations; and the travelers which focus on the management of and recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic. According to WTTC, the biggest risk is often not the crisis itself but rather the preparation, management, and response. So, it is essential that the public and private sector come together so as to enhance their preparedness to mitigate the impact of a crisis, better manage to effectively address a crisis and enhance their responsiveness through strong policies to ensure a speedy recovery. Each week, WTTC hold weekly calls with all the key associations and members, participate in webinars and has also launched safe travel protocol and stamp (WTTC, 2020).

As the international response continues to develop, the AHA acted in knowing that its member hotels are facing potentially significant challenges to which they need to respond rapidly. As a result, the Addis Ababa Hotel Owners Association (AHA) reached out to its members to get a perspective on the current situation and how they are handling the pandemic. Following the spread of Covid-19 and subsequent travel bans impacting international travel, the AHA (2020) found that 88 % of its member hotels in Addis Ababa have decided to partially or fully close their hotel due to low occupancy rates. As reported by (The Ethiopian Herald, 2020), the Addis Ababa Hotel Association is collaborating with Government of Ethiopia to help institute some reliefs and stimulus packages for members of the association. Furthermore, AHA and

Tour operators 'association appealed to ease financial burden through debt relief and delaying the payment of installments on loans.

2.4.4 Covid-19 impact on hospitality workforce and their response measure

As the virus continues to rapidly spread across the country, causing many businesses and employers to look at measures to be legally taken to mitigate risks in the workplace and to protect health of their employees. The primary focus for government and business should be the safety of their people (Deloitte, 2020). With a Covid-19 Workplace Response Protocol issued by FDRE Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs on 18 March 2020, the Ministry has set precautions to be implemented by employer as well as employee and administrative legal issues to be taken step by step in ensuring International Labor Organization (ILO) guideline during crisis time.

The hospitality workers, with limited levels of educational achievement (Marchante, Ortega and Pegan, 2005) are among the lowest wage earners in all industry comparisons (Casado-Diaz and Simon, 2016). Due to their low earnings, many hotel workers are surviving high risk (Fortune, 2020) and governments and stakeholders may should supporting the hotel workers.

According to Fortune (2020), with the hotel sector challenged by plummeting revenues due to Covid-19 pandemic, owners now pressured to let go of employees. Many workers have taken complaint of lost or cut wages to government entities, but hoteliers say that they are still waiting to receive a promised bailout from the central bank. As reported on Capital (2020), the Ethiopian Hotel Professionals Associations asked the government to control over the implementation of directives and regulations imposed on employment, layoff, and termination. The Association reported that 14 hotels with different cases related with employment lay off and salary cut and that it is trying to solve. According to the Association, there is a huge mess on implementing

the national directives and lacks follow up from the government side. In contrast, the government told that these sectors can borrow from commercial banks with low interest rates mainly to pay their employee salary and survive the crisis together. Moreover, Ethiopian Government and Hotel Association encouraged employers to keep paying employees and not to fire. Following this, as reported by The Ethiopian Herald (2020), Hotel owners have agreed to pay employees for half a year to keep their employees from firing and promoting unemployment if they stop working because of Covid-19, and have asked the government to reduce the tax, to create a conducive condition for credit.

However, hospitality employers are not able to match responding to Covid-19 crisis. And Addis Ababa Hotel Workers Association claim that even if the government has passed assistance of banks, they questioned that the financial aid is aimed at saving the owners rather than the staffs and the owners are still not respecting the regulation passed by Ethiopian Job Affair and Labor Law (capital, 2020). Addis Ababa Hotel Workers Association is still communicating with government and finding ways to put common sense measures to support employee cases.

2.5 The Role of Strategy during an emergency crisis

Strategy is an essential concept for people at all levels of the organization to understand and how it affects their job, understanding strategic management process which is important for the performance of the organizations as hospitality firm's performance is linked to the thoroughness, sophistication, participation, and formality of strategic planning processes (Enz, C. A., 2011).

In the context of Covid-19 and progressively disaster-prone world, the hospitality industry must develop a framework for understanding and implementing disaster management strategies (Chan et al., 2019)

(Leung & Terry, 2004) cited that Smith & Sipika (1993) proposed a strategic framework for a turnaround model that they called ``the 7C`s model``, comprising contingency planning, control, configuration, cost, system`s coupling and complexity, culture, and communication. As it is deeply cited by (Fei, H., Qu, X., Kaye, C., 2020) covid-19 management framework is proposed models as anti-pandemic process, principles and anti-pandemic strategies. The ant pandemic strategies were seen by classifying as leadership and communication strategies, human resource strategies, service provision strategies, finance strategies and disaster management operating procedures.

Moreover, since it is not yet known that when the pandemic stops, it is important to investigate some aspects of post covid-19 measures.

1. Multi business and multi-channel
2. Product design and investment preference
3. Digital and intelligent transformation
4. Market reshuffle

Some hotels are now looking for creative ways to generate revenues to stay afloat, thereby employing people and ensuring a future for the business. For example, Jupiter international hotel and Zmall (Zmallshop.com) has partnered up to give delivery service while Skylight and some others have done with Delivery (delivery addis.com). In this critical time, the hotel management staffs are also expected to come up with innovative approaches as a response measure a strategy like take-out services, delivery services, new pricing strategy, cleaning initiatives, technology approaches, considering social responsibilities and the like.

Chapter Three

Research Design and Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This part presents a description of the methodology that was used in the study. It tells us the techniques and methods of sampling, data collection, processing, analysis, and the area in which the study is carried out. The chapter also explains the sampling frame, sampling size and how the hotels and management staffs included in the study was selected. And it also further elaborates ways in which data collected was analyzed and presented.

3.2 Research Design

Research design is a framework or structure for data collection and analysis. It is a plan for conducting a research which usually contains specifications of elements to be investigated and the procedures to be followed. According to Crano and Brewer (2002) points out that the term research design refers to a basic plan or strategy of research. A survey type strategy, descriptive research method was adopted. Both primary and secondary data were collected. Interviewer administered questions were also be conducted with the hotel general or operations manager, marketing manager and guest relation managers. Surveys can be useful when the researcher wants to collect data on phenomena that cannot be directly observed. Data are usually collected through questionnaires and interviews. Surveys can use qualitative (e. g. ask open ended questions) or quantitative (e. g use forced-choice questions) measures (Earl R. Babbie, 2000).

Interviewer administered questions were also used since they usually result in higher response rate compared to self-administered ones, especially when the samples are small (Saunders et al, 2000).

3.3 Methods of Data Collection

Questionnaires of both close and open-ended questions were used. Five Scale Likert's Scale (Strongly agree -5, Agree -4, Neutral -3, disagree -2 and Strongly disagree -1) was also applied and rated. In conducting the research, primary and secondary data collection methods that are necessary were carried and utilized. This research was done based on the following categories: The effect of Covid-19 on the hotels, the management responses and the strategies and actions adopted based on the research questions.

So, the questionnaire was divided in to two major sections: Background information and general information. The questionnaire was also followed by semi-structured interviews conducted with the two hotel managers or operation managers, Marketing managers and Guest relation manager representative of the hotels to help explore and provide a better understanding of the research questions.

3.4 Sample Design

By taking some representative elements from the entire population based on the result of the sample inferences are made to wider population. A sample means some members of a society with particularly like the particulars of the society who represent the society and who are homogenous with the other members. Nonprobability purposive sampling was adopted for the selection of the sample representing the population. Hence all management team of the hotels were considered as the sample.

3.5 Target population

The study has focused on five-star hotels in Addis Ababa where only two hotels were considered, one chain and the other local brand hotel. The target population is all Radisson Blu and Elilly International hotel's management staffs. The target population has direct involvement with the understudy and has the best source of information to get valuable data to answer the research questions. For this reason, the study included hotel managers, operation managers, directors, departmental managers and others considered as hotel management team of the organizations.

3.6 Sample Size

Radisson Blu Hotel has a total of 270 employees and Elilly International Hotel has a total of 252 employees as of January 2021. As the study is comparative analysis, it was conducted on the two hotels management staffs: Radisson Blu Hotel and Elilly International Hotel's management staffs were the sample size. Hence, as the sample was small, all management staffs of the two hotels were considered, 26 management staffs from Radisson and 22 management staffs, from Elilly were the sample size.

3.7 Procedures of Data Collection and Ethical consideration

The researcher initially informed the representatives and participants concerning the study and questionnaire in assuring the confidentiality. Accordingly, 26 questionnaires for Radisson Blu and 22 questionnaires for Elilly hotel distributed to the management staffs and the researcher personally collected 24 from Radisson and 21 from Elilly. In addition, the researcher interviewed Marketing manager and Guest relation manager of Radisson Blu and Operation manager and Marketing Manager of Elilly Hotel. Furthermore, the secondary was collected to help for strengthening the thesis report.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

Data that are gathered from respondents are analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. In supporting this, Creswell (2003), explained the strategies associated with mixed method approach, involving collecting and analyzing both forms of data in a single study. In quantitative case, descriptive statically tools like frequencies, percentages, mean, standard deviation and serious of tables & charts employed. In addition, for the Likert Scale types of items analysis of mean scores was made to see their similarities and/or differences in perception of the two study groups. On the other hand, qualitative data was categorized, and identified systematically to support the quantitative data. At the end, after quantitively and qualitative data were assessed, summary, conclusions and recommendations were made accordingly.

3.9 Validity

Validity is the degree to which the questions measured the content employed in the questionnaire (Orodho, 2004). It measures how the questionnaires are representatives of all the possible questions about the hotel management response towards the effect of Covid-19 on hotel marketing. The questionnaires were adopted from prior similar researches, recent industry surveys and assessments where the researcher also consulted some key experts in the hotel industry and by pilot testing and getting feedback.

Chapter Four

Results and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis and assessment of the study by using data gathered and collected from two five-star hotels in Addis Ababa namely, Radisson Blu Hotel & Elilly International Hotel. Among the 48 questionnaires distributed, 45 of them are collected from operation managers, directors, marketing managers, guest relation managers, department managers, outlet managers who were management team of the two hotels of which 24 from Radisson and 21 from Elilly.

Data collected from respondents were analyzed using descriptive statistics about the hotel management response to the effects of Covid-19 on the hotel marketing and the strategies adopted to recover the challenges. Finally, the challenges faced by the management team were also incorporated in the interview section.

4.2 Response Rate

Out of the total number of 48 questionnaires distributed to the two hotels, 45 were returned and used in the study. Hence, the response rate=total number of responses/total number in sample x 100. Thus, the response rate= $45/48 \times 100 = 93.75$ %. Three questionnaires were not returned translating to 6.25 %.

Table 4.1 Hotel management response rate in both hotels

		Frequency	Percent (%)
Valid	Radisson Blu Hotel	24	50
	Elilly Hotel	21	43.75
	Total	45	93.75
Missing		3	6.25
Total		48	100

4.3 Demographic Profile of Respondents

On the general background data, questions were asked about the respondents gender, age, level of education and years of experience in the hotel. They were summarized as follows.

4.3.1 Gender of Respondents

Table 4.2 Gender composition of respondents

		Gender		Total
		Male	Female	
Hotel	Radisson Blu Hotel	16	8	24
	Elilly Hotel	17	4	21
Total		33	12	45

According to Table 4.2, 33 of all respondents were males and 12 females which made it a total of 73.3% males and 26.6% females in both hotels. While it is compared, Radisson Blu`s respondents were 16 males and 8 females (66.7% and 33.3%) where Elilly`s respondents were 17 males and 4 females (81% and 19%).

4.3.2 Age Distribution of Respondents

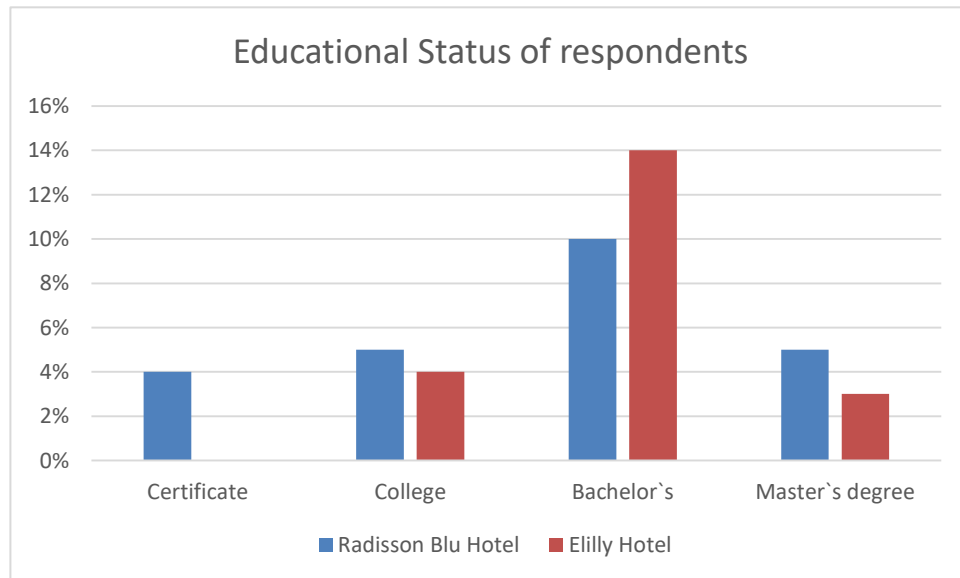
Table 4.3 Age distribution of respondents

		Age				Total
		Less than 26 Yrs	26-35 Yrs	36-45 Yrs	Greater than 45 Yrs	
Hotel	Radisson Blu Hotel	0	6	11	7	24
	Elilly Hotel	0	10	7	4	21
Total		0	16	18	11	45

The data obtained from questionnaire shown in Table 4.3 inform that hotel management team aged between 36 to 45 were dominating the other groups for Radisson while the management team aged between 26 to 35 considered to be young were dominating Elilly hotel.

4.3.3 Education Level of Respondents

Figure 4.1 Educational Status of respondents



It was necessary to determine the education level of respondents and according to Figure 4.1, majority of the Elilly management team are educated with data showing degree holder of 14% while Radisson staffs incorporated with teams who had master's degree. Overall, it also helped the researcher to answer the questions properly. It also further indicated that the hotels are occupied with educated managerial teams in general.

4.3.4 Respondents` Years of experience in the hotel

Table 4.4 Respondents Years of experience in the hotel

		Years of Experience in the hotel				Total
		Less than 1 year	Between 1 and 2 years	Between 2 and 5 years	Between 5 and 10 years	
Hotel	Radisson Blu	0	3	14	7	24
	Elilly Hotel	0	4	12	5	21
Total		0	7	26	12	45

As shown in the Table 4.4, 58% of the respondents have been with Radisson hotel in between 2 to 5 years and 57% for Elilly. This helps that the length of management

stay with the hotels helped them to gain experience and knowledge about the culture, work ethics, standards to accomplish tasks properly and tact accordingly especially in such critical times.

4.4 Analysis of data related to Covid-19 effects on the hotel marketing, the management response measure and strategy adopted.

This section presented the analysis of collected data related to the effects of Covid-19 that it brought on the hotels marketing performance influence, how the management team responded to this influence, whether the managers have experienced such encounter to respond, whether the management team have emergency preparedness and action plans to such cases and how they responded to guests with regards to the market issues for the overall performance and profitability and sustainability in such critical Covid-19 era where the industry hit hard.

4.4.1 Data analysis on the effects of Covid-19 on hotel marketing

Table 4.5 Effects of Covid-19 on hotel marketing

Effects of Covid-19 on hotel marketing	Radisson Blu		Elilly Hotel		Total
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	
Not affected	---	---	---	---	---
Slightly affected	---	---	---	---	---
Moderately affected	---	---	1	4.8%	1
Strongly affected	24	100%	20	95.2%	44
Total	24	100	21	100%	45

As indicated in the Table 4.5, it shown that most of the respondents reply that the hotels marketing is strongly affected by Covid-19 where the respondents from Radisson Blu agreed 100 % and while Elilly`s agreed by 95.2 %. This is an indication that the hotel management have a lot towards the performance of the organizations and recovery.

4.4.2 Data Analysis on the experience of the management team on similar crisis

All respondents from both hotels replied that they do not have experienced such

similar incident or emergency cases. This question was intended to make sure whether the management team of the hotels had experience on such cases as some of the management team of the two five-star hotels are foreigners. However, none of them replied that they had experienced such or similar emergency cases. Data analysis related to actions taken if they experienced to such cases was not answered due to the non-response of the respondents that they had no experience and did not take any action accordingly.

4.4.3 Data Analysis related to the availability of emergency preparedness plan

Table 4.6 Availability of emergency preparedness plan

Availability of emergency preparedness plan	Radisson Blu		Elilly Hotel		Total
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	
Yes	19	79.2%	14	66.7%	33
No	5	20.8%	7	33.3%	12
Total	24	100%	21	100%	45

As shown in the Table 4.6, majority of the respondents of both hotels responded that there is an availability of an emergency preparedness plan, 79.2 % for Radisson Blu hotel and 66.7% for Elilly Hotel. It implies that the two hotels were having an emergency preparedness plan which helped them to put action plans and took roles to management and staffs across the organization accordingly.

4.4.4 Data Analysis related to crisis management and business continuity actions & plans

Table 4.7 crisis management and business continuity actions plans satisfaction

Crisis management & business continuity action plans and preparedness satisfaction	Radisson Blu		Elilly Hotel		Total
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	
Very satisfied	2	8.3%	1	4.8%	3
Satisfied	9	37.5%	5	23.8%	14
Dissatisfied	10	41.7%	11	52.4%	21
Very dissatisfied	3	12.5%	4	19%	7
Total	24	100%	21	100%	45

As indicated in Table, 4.7, most respondents were not satisfied with the crisis management and business continuity action plans for both hotels. 41.7 % and 52.4 % of the respondents for Radisson Blu and Elilly Hotel respectively replied that they were not satisfied on the business continuity and action plans that the organization was taking. This implied that the management team of the hotels should work and find out ways to improve on putting business continuity plans for the efficient and effective recovery and performance of the hotels.

4.4.5 Data related to hotel management time usage

Table 4.8 Efficiency of hotel management time

Hotel management time usage	Radisson Blu		Elilly Hotel		Total
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage	
Training employees	12	50%	10	47.6%	22
Handling guest issue	3	12.5%	5	23.8%	8
Involved in response committee	4	16.7%	0	---	4
Special projects related to the crisis	4	16.7%	4	19%	8
Special order from the GM	1	4.2%	2	9.5%	3
Total	24	100%	21	100%	45

Based on Table 4.8, majority of the respondents replied that they used their available time during low occupancy for training employees to maximize their time towards the overall performance of the organization (50% for Radisson Blu Hotel and 47.6% for Elilly Hotel) while few of them were only responding to guest related issues (12.5% for Radisson Blu and 23.8 % for Elilly Hotel).

4.4.6 Data Analysis on the overall management response measures and strategy adopted

Table 4.9 Overall management response measures and strategy adopted

Parameter	Hotel					
	Radisson			Elilly		
	Mean	Mode	SD	Mean	Mode	SD
Ontime action plan preparation	4.167	5	0.722	3.95	4	0.617
Effective communication response	4.38	5	0.401	3.86	4	0.694
Effective & efficient operation response	4.33	5	0.556	3.81	4	0.63
Implementation of Artificial intelligence & robotics	3.83	5	1	3.14	3	0.789
Implementation of hygiene & cleanliness	4.42	5	0.67	3.48	3	0.63
Health & health care programs	4.25	5	0.771	3.76	4	0.753
Recovery strategies & actions adopted	4.25	5	0.521	3.57	4	0.816

Table 4.9 showed that the overall agreement of hotel management team response in relation to the parameters indicated. The mean value of 4.17 of the sample which is indicated under the parameter on time action plan preparation shows that most respondents replied in between strongly agree and agree for Radisson Hotel where the most frequently appearing response was strongly agree. The data for Elilly hotel indicated that the average lies on 3.95 between neutral and agree and the most frequently appearing to be four which is agree. It is similar implication and consistent for the Radisson Blu hotel response for the rest parameters except the Implementation of Artificial intelligence & robotics while Effective communication response, Effective & efficient operation response, Implementation of hygiene & cleanliness, Health & health care program, Recovery strategies & actions adopted were under in

between agree and strongly agree. And the average respond for Elilly hotel lies in between neutral and agree where the most frequently occurring data was agreed.

Figure 4.2 Hotel management agreement response for Radisson Hotel

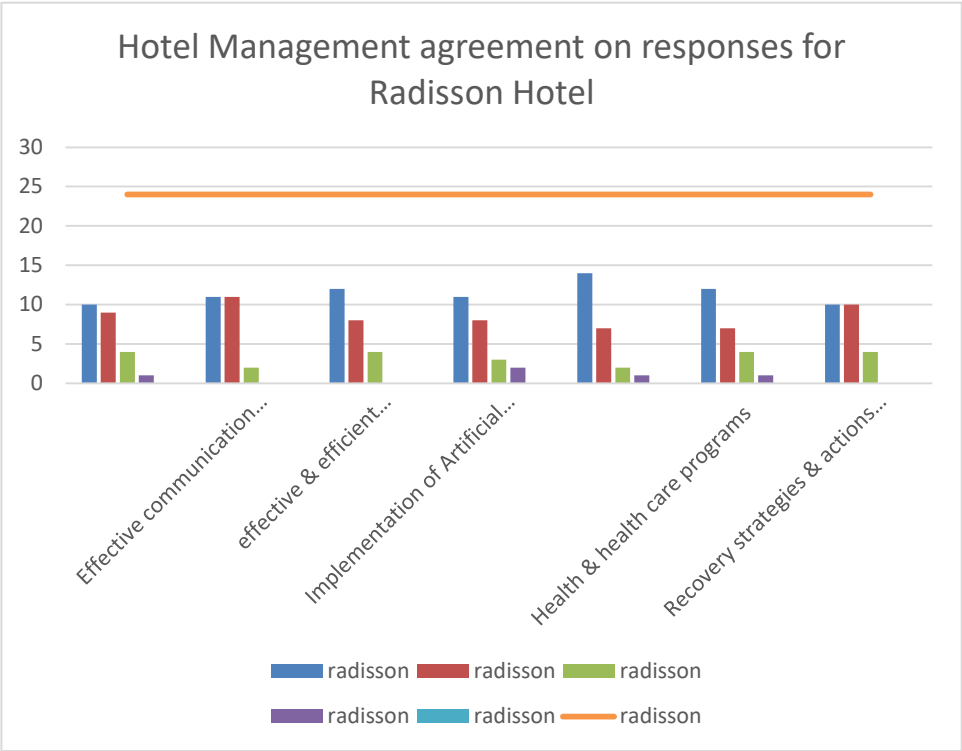


Figure 4.3 Elilly Hotel management response agreement

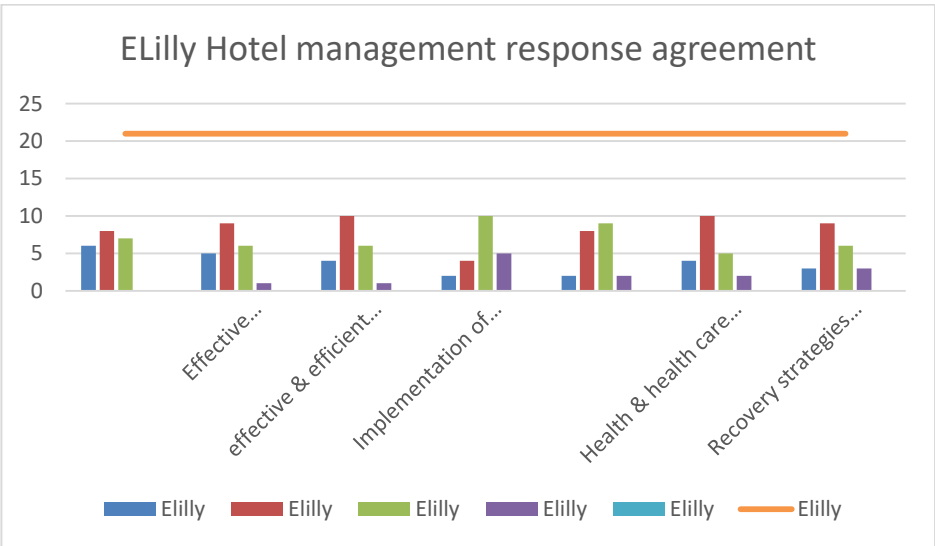


Figure 4.2 and 4.3 indicated that the majority of the respondents strongly agree on all parameters for Radisson Blu while majority of Elilly`s respondents replied that they agree to those specified parametersz

4.4.7 Analysis of data collected from hotel management through interview

Under this section, the interview results of the Hotel manager or Operations Manager, Marketing Manager Representatives and Guest Relation Managers were presented.

Effect of Covid-19

1. When asked about what are the biggest covid-19 related issues/effects that you are dealing with at your hotel in relation to marketing?

As the crisis was unexpected and unpredicted it was difficult to get confirmation of bookings and hope as the industry has been hit hard. Travel agents, airlines and tour & travel agencies had similar issues and the business gained from these related companies had been also made the business worse. Radisson hotel interviewed management team explained that since their business was mostly from foreigners (99% of the business), they had a challenge in getting the guests and business back. Elilly hotel management team's response had similar, but they do have local markets as their price was quite lower than Radisson.

2. When asked about the influence it brought on the performance of the hotel business and management action/decision?

Both hotels management team mentioned that its influence has been severe, and they tried to act and respond shortly. Radisson Management mentioned that the hotel management decided a 35-50% discount on room sales which has been done since its opening where the biggest discount in normal times by approval of the general manager was 19%. They further tried to do local meeting and events business in taking aggressive steps towards the safety measures. Elilly hotels management had explained that they continued with a less discount measure while they are also chasing the local meeting and events business which they had already the market for it.

Management Response

3. Questions asked on whether the hotels have crisis management framework/steps you adopted?

Both hotels interviewed management team replied that they do not have a formal framework that was set by the hotel management team apart from other guidelines and protocols provided by WHO and tourism agencies.

4. When asked about actions they did take and currently taking in response to Covid-19 towards improving the market performance of the organization?

Both hotels interviewed managers indicated that they have been implementing guidelines set by WHO and WTO and local government policies especially on the safe stay of guests and all employees to make sure the available guests had confidence on the prevention plans of the hotels. Radisson Blu hotel mentioned that they had been accepting quarantine guests and currently transit guests to at least survive and pay salaries. Elilly hotel explained that they had been also taking discounting prices, focus on safety measures based on WHO Covid-19 health standards especially on rooms, housekeeping, gym, and spa services and are currently taking aggressive meeting and events business at their newly built big conference room apartment which had a capacity of more than 200 parking lots. They also did renovation works.

5. Questions regards to development of any new business models to bring in revenue?

Radisson hotel interviewed managers mentioned that they are currently started to function outlets that had been partially closed due to the pandemic. They also started aggressive online marketing campaigns. While Elilly interviewed managers told that they focused on the local meeting and events business.

6. When asked about their business to serve its core customers. How are they engaging with your customers to understand how covid-19 is affecting them to respond to it? What directives, guidelines, policies you adopted and developed during this crisis in response to customer needs?

Interviewed Radisson Blu managers replied that there had been guidelines, standard operating procedures and checklists prepared for this purpose. In addition, they were provided a 20-safety protocol by their head quarter. The researcher had a chance to investigate the documents. Elilly Hotel mentioned that they had some guidelines prepared for this purpose.

7. Questions on how are they identifying and organizing response work streams across all functional areas of the hotel department towards the effective performance of the organization?

Both hotel's interviewed managers mentioned that they do have a daily morning briefing intended to discuss on the updates and actions needed to be taken. Contrarily Radisson Blu hotels had established a Covid-19 response committee which frequently meet and discuss on the safety and all measures to be taken and put action plans and its daily progress headed and supervised by the general manager.

8. When asked what have they done to cut costs related to marketing and stay afloat?

Interviewed Radisson Blu managers said that they reduced a sales call and travel program which they used to do by travelling to different African and middle east countries while Elilly hotel's interviewed mentioned that they had tried to be made lowering the promotion costs.

9. Questions on the influence of the responses taken to covid-19 will reinforce the brand, purpose, and core values?

Both hotels interviewed managers said that their response helped them to gain confidence by their guests and customers on the responses they had been taking especially on the safety and cleanliness protocols.

10. Questions on whether the hotel management response to covid-19 enabling or accelerating the deployment of product or service innovations that you otherwise would not have developed?

Interviewed Radisson Blu hotel managers mentioned that they had moved a lot on some key areas of safety measures like sanitizer dispenser, digital temperature checking screen, QR software for menu reader, security metal detector checking, elevator usage by room keys and interactive television in the room where all information's were available for guests like wake-up calls, room service order and other facilities of the hotel and the country information's. Elilly Hotel's interviewed managers replied that they did move

steps to focus on the safety and cleanliness protocols, steamer facilities in rooms but not that much as Radisson Blu hotel.

Strategies

11. When asked about what are the strategies and recovery steps taken during these times?

Both hotels interviewed managers replied that they focused on the safety recovery protocols set by WHO, WTO and ministry of health of Ethiopia. They had also put strategic action plans like focusing on local markets for meeting and events, training employees on the latest protocols and ways forward on to give the best confident safety and cleanliness accommodations in line with starting to promote the measures taken by the hotels to the public at large. Radisson Hotels through its head quarter put a guideline online mentioning the recovery steps being taken at the property from Check-in to Check-out processes.

12. When asked about the actions taken to protect shareholder interests, manage growth, and profitability. How are you evaluating growth and profitability strategies, identifying specific improvement levers, and planning their activation?

Interviewed Radisson Blu hotel managers mentioned that they are working on every department for the activation and currently holding different training programs to wake up the moral of employees who the forerunners of the business are. Deep mining, brain storming, implementing best experiences and focusing on safety and healthy programs. Elilly hotel`s mentioned that they do have meetings towards laying down the improvements and accordingly to work on improvement areas.

13. Questions about strategic ways to differentiate and bring the business back because of your response to covid-19?

Radisson Blu hotel`s interviewed managers believe that they are differentiated to some extent as they had consistent safety protocols which is audited by external well-known company. While Elilly hotel`s interviewed managers said that their hotel safety measures were assessed by United Nations Economic

Commission for Africa and they were chosen by the company and believe that they were differentiated.

14. When asked about the treat of pandemics which is increasing with the new second round virus and may represent a new normal. How is the management and organization are learning from Covid-19 to make permanent improvements to your plans and process and strategy?

Both Hotels interviewed managers replied that the pandemic was unique, unpredicted, and unexpected. Hence, they mentioned that they took the best experience from it and trying the best possible solution and recovery steps along with the whole management and staffs with the support of owners and stakeholders.

Challenges

15. When asked about the challenges they were facing during these critical times? As a hotel operation manager, what has been the most challenging in response to the effective performance of the hotel business? As a manager, what has been the hardest part of the crisis?

Both Hotels interviewed managers told that the very challenging response regards to guests and employees. Inability to provide guests something that is beyond the company`s control and bring back the moral and motivation of employees to the normal working culture. While Elilly Hotel`s response further indicated the difficulty of meeting the expectation of the owners as the revenue was needed to pay salaries and bank loans. Elilly`s further mentioned that the hotel was operating below 5 % performance for almost seven months consecutively and highlighted the challenge to these regards in paying back bank loans and the owner had been paying salaries from his personal account.

Chapter Five

Summary, Conclusions and Recommendations

5.1 Introduction

This final chapter is all about the summary, findings, conclusions, and recommendations of the research work that has been gone through chapter four. To this end, data regards to the assessment of hotel management response on the effects of Covid-19 on the hotel marketing has been carefully collected, analyzed, and readied for recommendations.

5.2 Major Findings

The research work has dealt with the assessment of hotel management response and strategies adopted on the effect of Covid-19 on the hotel marketing business of two selected five-star hotels in Addis Ababa; one brand chain hotel and one local international hotel.

The sector is extremely hit hard due to the pandemic and most hotel management were facing difficulties coping up on to respond and recover quickly by taking different response measures. As a result, the hotel management being the foundation to propose, put action plans and put strategies to the best level of performance in such critical era.

The research was aimed to assess the practice of the hotel management team response in such emergency cases comparing the international brand chain hotel and local international brand hotel namely Radisson Blu Hotel and Elilly International Hotel whose performances had been among the best standard five-star hotels in Addis Ababa.

Both hotels incorporated with hotel management team who has been with the hotels for the minimum of two years and having educational level of degree and above overall.

The overall effect of the Covid-19 on the performance of the business for both hotels were very critical as the report indicated an occupancy drop to 5% for Elilly and less than 12% for Radisson Blu where most outlets, swimming pools, restaurant and bars and meeting businesses had been fully distorted and partially been working. And almost all the respondents replied that the business of the hotels were strongly affected. But the two hotels had no Covid-19 emergency preparedness framework but Radisson Had been strongly working on establishing Response committee who seriously been supervised by head quarter. While, Elilly Hotel had been using a daily briefing approach where the management team communicate and discuss on action plans set by the hotel. Overall, the with the severe effect and new virus erupted, it affected the management teams action and responses where both hotels had been aggressively working on prevention and controlling mechanism based on the guidelines set by WHO, Ministry of Health and Ministry of Culture and Tourism in line with the internal hotels guideline, policies and procedures of the hotels where the good practice of Radisson Blu hotel establishment of response committee, implementation of guidelines, different standard operating procedures, checklists and a 20 safety protocol measures are to be an experience for Elilly's management team.

With the influences, it was also important and must for the management team to put recovery steps and strategies for post covid-19 measures. The two hotels management team had gone some steps to put and implement strategies for improving the performance of the business and accordingly, Radisson Blu hotel had started discounting to a very much lower price in his history from 35-50% room discount much lower than normal time 19% discount. They also put a strategy to accommodate quarantine guests and transit businesses where Elilly much focused on local meeting and events business using its newly built conference room adjacent to its hotel.

The two hotels had also gone extra mile to be consistent in controlling and supervising action plans using the level of communication protocol set by the management team. The level of Radisson Blu hotel in preparing on time action plan and establishing response committee, operational responses, communication responses, and especially application of some systems, software and machines intended to help guests are socially distancing, minimizing touch points and other reducing physical interactions is exemplary for Elilly Hotel. In addition, the level of cleanliness and safety measures for both hotels were good apart from the Elilly`s hotel unable to change touch free dispensers, temperature checks and interactive television systems as compared to Radisson Blu Hotel.

5.3 Conclusions

Hotel management is the key resource in rolling out different tasks related to the overall performance of the organizations exercising the management functions; planning, organizing, decision making, leading, and controlling processes. They are also responsible for putting and implementing strategies and day to day operations with the best effective communication protocols. Working hard to bring in revenue and maximize the profit and benefit of the organization requires a lot of exercise and commitment, experience, and motivation especially in such critical emergency cases.

- It could be concluded that the effect of the pandemic was so strong and challenging.
- The management action of Radisson Blu Hotel towards establishing a response committee immediately and acting consistently working on it effectively was exemplary.
- The focus on health and safety measures, cleanliness, and hygiene at all levels of the hotel was the key concern of guests and management team of the hotels.

However, it could be concluded that there were many areas of innovation towards the safety and health measures where Elilly's management team should learn from Radisson team.

- The managers of both hotels had an experience with the hotel for more than two years and this implied that they had gone through trainings and adapted the organizational culture where they can act to the responses. Both hotels managers replied that they focused on the training employees during the low occupancy as they are experienced and considered to be trained.
- The hotels management team focused on the promotional activities and towards the strategy of maximizing revenues in making sure guests were getting the highest possible safety standards by implementing the protocols set and communicating and sharing on social medias.
- The strategies adopted towards improving the market of the hotel is quite interesting in using the available options like discounting, opening outlets, using local markets and other transit businesses.
- Both hotels management team faced challenges to cope with owners and stake holders need in improving sales to cover bank loans and salaries. The management of employee moral building was also an issue.
- Covid-19 and similar health crisis emergency preparedness framework for both hotels were not available and should be prepared and put as an experience.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the conclusion of the research study, the following recommendations were made and forwarded.

- The hotel management team must have emergency preparedness plan, get trained and use it as on-going crisis management response measure. The team

at both hotels should agree and follow-on hotel management response frame works in the processes of response measures.

- The action plans and decisions made should be clear and implemented efficiently and effectively.
- The hotel management team had not experienced such crisis before and should learn the best practice for the next or second round virus erupted recently to make efficient and effective responses.
- The management team should stay alert and up to date on the information's and recommendations by the industry updates using updated technologies and different social medias.
- The hotel management team should monitor other relevant and applicable marketing strategies to bring revenue and increase sales.
- To overcome guests, doubt and increase their level of confidence, the management team should always take necessary steps recommended by the industry and government bureaus.
- The hotel management should consider online deliveries, take out services, outside caterings, online meetings, and other relevant services.
- During such critical times, the management ability to work in challenging times should also be one criteria of leadership qualities.
- The study was done only on two five-star hotels; one brand chain and the other local international brand hotel which the researcher assumed among the best performing and their steps will help other hotels too. Furthermore, the result of the study would serve as an input and used as a reference for other researchers who have interest to work in this area of study by incorporating other similar or same standard hotels for future implications.

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Appendix I

Questionnaire

Dear Respondent,

I, the underlined postgraduate student at Addis Ababa University, Business and Economic department currently carrying research for my master's thesis on ``Assessment of Hotel Management Response on the effects of Covid-19 on hotel marketing in Addis Ababa``: A comparative analysis of Radisson Blu Hotel and Elilly International Hotel.

I hereby request you to assist me in completing this questionnaire to achieve my research objective. The information provided will be used purely for academic purpose and will be treated with very strict confidentiality.

If you have any questions or concerns about completing the questionnaire, please feel free to reach out to me via the address provided below.

By completing and submitting the survey, you are indicating your consent in participating the study. Your participation is highly appreciated and please answer honestly.

Thank you in advance.

Nebyou Necho, MBA prospective graduate student

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Email: nebyou.necho2000@gmail.com/nebyou2000@yahoo.com

This questionnaire consists of (2) parts, Part A deals with the background of the respondents and Part B consists of the main survey questions.

Part A: Background Information of the respondents

Please select the correct answer by putting an (X) appropriately in the provided box.

1	Gender		Answer
		Male	
		Female	
2	Age		
		Less than 26 years	
		26-35 years	
		36-45 years	
		Greater than 45 years	
3	Level of education achieved		
		Certificate	
		College diploma	
		Bachelor`s degree	
		Master`s degree and above	
4	Years of experience in the hotel		
		Less than 1 year	
		Between 1 and 2 years	
		Between 2 and 5 years	
		Between 5 and 10 years	

Part B: Main Survey Questions

The following statements are intended to assess the extent to which Hotel Management team has responded to Covid-19 effects on the hotel marketing, the management response measure and strategy adopted during this critical time. Please select the correct answer by putting an (X) appropriately in the provided box.

1. How have your business been affected by the coronavirus (Covid-19) Pandemic?
☐ Not affected ☐ Slightly affected ☐ Moderately affected ☐ Strongly affected
2. Have you experienced similar crisis before?
☐ Yes ☐ No

3. If you had previously experienced a global pandemic, or similar, what actions did you take?

☐ No actions were taken ☐ We implemented all the necessary measures

☐ We tried to ensure a response but did not succeed

4. Do you have an emergency preparedness plan prepared for this purpose?

☐ Yes ☐ No

5. How satisfied are you with how your crisis management and business continuity actions and plans that you are currently taking as a management of the hotel in response to the hotel market recovery?

☐ Very satisfied ☐ Satisfied ☐ Dissatisfied ☐ Very dissatisfied

6. During low occupancy, how you maximize your time and company performance?

☐ Training employees ☐ Handling guest issue ☐ Involved in response committee

☐ Special projects related to the crisis ☐ Special order from the GM

	<u>Hotel Management response measure and strategic response agreement questions</u> To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements in relation to your efficient and effective management response measure and strategy adopted?	Strongly agree (5)	Agree (4)	Neutral (3)	disagree (2)	Strongly disagree (1)
7	<u>On time Action Plan Preparation</u>					
	There is a flexible set of response module prepared and crisis action plans put in place in establishing a crisis management team in responsibility for leading, executing and supporting our hotel's response to covid-19 in improving the market where our plans provided our response team, guests, and other staffs with relevant guidance for the current situation and are enabling us to get customers back					
8	Effective Communication response					
	We are communicating with our guests, internal and external stakeholders, including increasing organization-wide adherence to communications protocols to address that our hotel is open, cancellation policies, rebooking and that there is a prevention plan in place across critical channels such as our website,					

	local listings, social media, and email					
9	Effective and efficient Operational response					
	We have trained staffs to prepare and execute on the operational plans and encouraged to follow Government & WHO guidelines, allowed flexibility for all hotel bookings, made effective and efficient marketing promotional campaigns to bring in revenue while reducing costs, by setting guidelines, checklists, standard operating procedures to track the work force schedule and performance to give efficient customer services, in prioritizing the health and well-being of our guests by interacting regularly					
10	Implementation of Artificial Intelligence & Robotics					
	We have integrated technologies to enable automation such as contactless payments, digital messaging, self-service check-in, smartphone activated room keys and digital menus.					
11	Implementation of Hygiene & Cleanliness					
	We have implemented continuous processes focused on enhanced sanitation, disinfection and deep cleaning as well as increasing its frequency at high frequency touch and usage points for the safety of guests					
12	Health & Health care programs					
	We have been helping for the physical and mental well-being of guests lead lifestyle fitness programs, health diet programs, medical care and sleep hygiene programs					
13	<u>Recovery Strategies and actions adopted</u>					
	We have set different leadership and service recovery provision strategies, in response to the effect of the crisis towards hotel marketing , where we strategically shifted to using the technologies, focused on enhancing digital marketing, improving online review strategies, updated website and upselling considering new revenue streams with flexible cancellation policy, food & beverage sales strategy in preparing a protocol document that includes a wide range of control, hygiene and safety measures (on transport, entrance, reception, public areas, lifts, guest rooms, restaurant & bars, pool, gym & spa, business center and checkout)					

Interview questions

Interview questions for Hotel manager or Operations Manager, Marketing Manager Representatives and Guest Relation Managers

Effect of Covid-19

16. What are the biggest covid-19 related issues/effects that you are dealing with at your hotel in relation to marketing?
17. What influence it brought on the performance of the hotel business and management action/decision?

Management Response

18. What are the crisis management framework/steps you adopted?
19. What actions did you take and currently taking in response to Covid-19 towards improving the market performance of the organization?
20. What have you developed any new business models to bring in revenue?
21. A very core component of your business is to serve its customers. How are you engaging with your customers to understand how covid-19 is affecting them to respond to it? What directives, guidelines, policies you adopted and developed during this crisis in response to customer needs?
22. How are you identifying and organizing response work streams across all functional areas of the hotel department towards the effective performance of the organization?
23. What have you done to cut costs related to marketing and stay afloat?
24. How is your response to covid-19 will reinforce your brand, purpose, and core values?
25. Beyond the initial effects, a company's response to covid-19 may represent several opportunities: is your hotel management response to covid-19 enabling or accelerating the deployment of product or service innovations that you otherwise would not have developed?

Strategies

26. What are the strategies and recovery steps you took during these times?
27. It is necessary upon every management team to take actions that protect shareholder interests, manage growth, and profitability. How are you evaluating growth and profitability strategies, identifying specific improvement levers, and planning their activation?
28. Is your company considering strategic ways to differentiate and bring the business back because of your response to covid-19?
29. The treat of pandemics is increasing with the new second round virus and may represent a new normal. How is your management and organization is learning from Covid-19 to make permanent improvements to your plans and process and strategy?

Challenges

30. What are the challenges you are facing during these critical times? As a hotel operation manager, what has been the most challenging in response to the effective performance of the hotel business? As a manager, what has been the hardest part of the crisis?