

An Analysis of the Impact of Coronavirus Lockdown on the Strategic and Operational Approaches Used by the HR Department to Upkeep the Wellbeing of the Staff in Hotels: the Case of Bürgenstock Hotels and Resort, Luzern

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Abstract

This study discusses the implications and effects of the CoronaVirus lockdown on the hospitality industry, specifically the case of Bürgenstock hotels and resorts located in Luzern, Switzerland and the methods and strategies employed by the Human resources department to combat the effects of the virus. The study critically assesses the measures implemented by the human resources department, and how they have adapted to these unprecedented circumstances. It looks at and evaluates the methods used by the HR department to retain employees as well as how these measures have affected the employees wellbeing throughout the lockdown. Through extensive quantitative research including the use of surveys and interviews, the study explores all the different methods employed by Bürgenstocks HR department to maintain operations successfully while simultaneously taking into account the wellbeing of their employees. The results of this study show the ingenuity and adaptability of the human resources department when faced with an unforeseen situation. The findings of this study contribute to a more in depth understanding of the human resource departments crucial role in maintaining employee well-being in crisis situations. This study also shines light on the effects of unforeseen situations on employee wellbeing, as very few studies have delved into this topic.

Keywords: COVID-19, Employee Well-being, Chaos Theory, Crisis Management, Human Resources

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Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1: Background Information

As a direct consequence of the rapid spread of COVID-19 over the globe, the tourist and hotel sector is presently dealing with one of the most significant operational, commercial, and financial problems it has ever experienced (Thams et al.,2021). Both the destination markets and the source markets have been significantly impacted, and both their operations and commercial activities have been interrupted. Major market

players in all areas of the touristic value chain, such as airlines, tour operators, hotels, cruise lines, and retailers, have either minimised or even completely stopped their production for an undefined period of time, which has resulted in the sudden and total cut-off of their revenue streams (Thams et al.,2021). This has caused the sudden and total loss of revenue.

Officials in China confirmed on January 7, 2020, that a new coronavirus was responsible for the outbreak of pneumonia in Wuhan city. It was a brand-new virus that had never been seen before in human beings. Not just in China, but also in

other countries, the virus began to spread once it was released.

According to Milovanović (2021) the current pandemic caused by the coronavirus has caused major disruptions in hotel operations, including changes in guest demand for services, visitor behaviour, hotel company finances, and the jobs of employees working in hotels.² Although the current economic crisis has had severe effects on the hotel industry, there is a silver lining: the business will emerge more innovative, resilient, communicative, and customer-focused than it has ever been in the past, which will be to the advantage of both internal and external visitors (Milovanović 2021).

Because HR rules are so important, especially during times of crisis, companies should always have a backup plan in place so that they can respond appropriately to unforeseen events (Carnevale and Hatak 2020). Businesses have the ability to be ready for a crisis in advance by making investments in their employees in the form of training (Vardarler, 2016). One of the metrics that is used to measure how effectively firms are able to cope with new HR difficulties is the efficiency of their HR operations. During this unprecedented epidemic, the use of HR methods that are both efficient and effective is intended to help alleviate the consequences of COVID-19 as well as increase the resilience of organisations (Vardarler, 2016). As a consequence of this, a second research question has arisen, which is as follows: what related HR solutions are being used to handle new HR difficulties during the COVID-19 pandemic?

1.2: Rationale

The study of this topic was prompted by the author's interest in crisis management in hotels, which have been discussed throughout the history of hotel management. However there seems to be a lack of research on crisis management in the human resources department within hotels. The current research conducted has mainly focussed on industries outside of the hospitality sector. For example, according to Chong (2004), crises can put an organisation's survival in jeopardy. Chong (2004) is only focusing on an organisation as a whole and is not going into a deeper study within a specific industry. According to Staw et al., (1981) certain companies and industries will be hit worse than others, therefore resources are vital for surviving an epidemic and the ensuing economic downturn. Here Staw et al. (1981) is mainly talking about financial and material resources, not the use of human resources. As Meyer et al. (1990) states in a quote that; a pandemic can throw the hotel industry into utter chaos, and management departments will struggle to cope with the situation. While Meyer et al. (1990) talks about

management in the hotel sector, they do not speak about the human resources department. The author aims to use the information provided by various authors and studies in order to give a detailed analysis of the current situation caused by the corona virus outbreak and lockdown period, on the human resource department within the hotel sector. While many other authors go through with their studies not many of them give thought to the people that are affected by the thing they are studying, therefore the author of this paper will go into a study about the human resource management and other techniques used to keep a business afloat, during this coronavirus pandemic.

1.3: Aims & Objectives

The aim of this research paper is to discern and analyse the effects of the Covid lockdown on the strategic and operational approaches used by the Human Resources department of hotels to facilitate the wellbeing of the employees. This paper will be looking specifically at the case of the Bürgenstock Resort and Hotel in Luzern Switzerland.

To achieve the aims listed above, there are three objectives which will be investigated through out this study:

- To evaluate the Human Resources Department's strategic and operational initiatives used during the coronavirus lockdown at Bürgenstock Hotels and Resort in Luzern.
- To investigate the influence of the coronavirus lockdown on the employee wellbeing at Bürgenstock Hotels & Resorts.
- To investigate the efficacy of the Human Resources Department's strategic and operational measures.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

2.1: Introduction

First, while reviewing the eligible articles, a data-driven thematic analysis was used. Second, connecting emerging topics to the theoretical framework of sense-making and proposing research paths for using sense-making in tourism and hospitality crisis management. As a result, the author believes that these two studies complement one another and contribute to the growing body of hospitality and tourism crisis management knowledge.

2.2: Theoretical Framework

2.2.1: Chaos Theory

Instead of chaos theory, some scientists prefer to call this field of study nonlinear dynamics, bifurcation theory, change theory, or self-organising theory. Even if chaos involves some randomness, it is not the same thing as complete anarchy (Biswas, et.al. 2018). Instead, chaos theory tries to explain things that can't be explained by simple, traditional cause-and-effect chains. When examined in their whole, these systems reveal discernible structures and patterns. Their path forward, however, was never predictable based just on their past. Although it is impossible to forecast how any one individual will feel about a topic, trends in public opinion may be seen and understood over time. By this definition, chaos is not random, and from a scientific point of view, chaotic systems may be both predictable and unpredictable (Biswas, et.al. 2018). According to Çambel (1993), chaos theory is often seen as a postmodern break from the social science perspective that developed out of the physical ideas of Galileo, Bacon, Descartes, and Newton.³ While chaos theory encourages us "to view the cosmos as being produced by forces of disorder, variety, instability, and non-linearity," both theories have their advantages. There is a possibility of self-organisation and renewal in chaotic systems, with ephemeral intervals of stability interspersed with radical shifts whose outcomes are contingent but irreversible. It is impossible to understand the central ideas of chaos theory without first being familiar with its unique vocabulary (Çambel, 1993).

The field of problem management, where new societal concerns and interest-group activities must be organised, finds chaos theory to be very helpful. Before a disagreement gets out of hand and causes a major crisis that can't be stopped, issues management tries to figure out how public opinion is changing and act on it (Burnes, 2004). For effective problem management, you need to be very aware of the context. This means being able to show how things like societal concerns, news events, cultural values, and company goals interact with each other. In a manner similar to fractal analysis, problem managers explore correspondences between the micro-level behaviours of businesses and organisations and the macro-level societal setting in which such concerns emerge (Burnes, 2004).

Furthermore, the chaos theory raises the problem of conflicts between PR and other management responsibilities.⁴ A public whose behaviour is inherently chaotic is necessary for most public relations departments to operate under a different paradigm than their management (Kim, 2015). Although public relations professionals are sometimes criticised for trying to make sense of the past after the fact, this may be the most effective strategy for dealing with a chaotic system whose consequences are unpredictable and whose structure is only exposed with the

passage of time (Burnes, 2004). Therefore, the thinking component of public relations strategy consists of framing metaphors in order to make meaning of the actions, in contrast to the practice of conventional management, where "the ideas, analyses, and conclusions are typically supposed to precede the implementation or acts." This is due to the fact that "the ideas, analyses, and choices are typically presumed to precede the implementation or actions" in conventional management. "In its most limiting form, the chaos model suggests that public relations practitioners may have knowingly adopted expectations that are impossible to achieve (Kim, 2015).⁵ Monitoring and understanding the context of change may be more realistic goals in public relations than prediction and control. In addition, the value of public relations to management may not lie so much in the ability to sway the opinions of target audiences in a predefined direction as it does in the ability to capitalise on opportunities that were not initially envisioned.

According to Farazmand (2003) the chaos theory model works very well in times of crisis. Typically, a crisis develops as a chain of events that, over time, appear to gain intensity and complexity at an accelerating rate. Because of this, its behaviour is similar to that of a chaotic system, as it goes through increasingly complicated stages on its way to a state of complete chaos (Farazmand, 2003).

2.2.2: Crisis Management

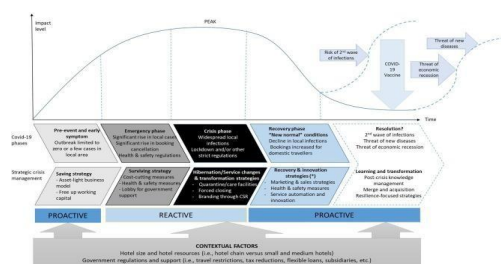
According to Chong (2004), crises can put an organisation's survival in jeopardy. Managers must therefore improve their crisis decision-making abilities in today's extremely unpredictable and volatile corporate climate. They also claim that crisis management is an important part of modern strategic management. Despite the fact that there is a growing amount of data on crisis management to support this statement, existing models typically recommend a "one size fits all" approach, neglecting the fact that crises vary greatly in length, scope, and impact. Apart from the fact that they are mostly focused on tourism and business, instead of hospitality, these models are largely conceptual, seldom experimentally verified, and do not provide realistic solutions to specific scenarios such as a worldwide pandemic.

On the other hand, according to Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT), there are three main crisis categories, as well as three clusters of response methods that correspond with the degree of accountability that the organisation holds for the crisis (Coombs, 2007). According to Coombs (2007) managers dealing with crises are expected to adopt a response technique that includes the proper amount of responsibility

acceptance.⁶ For instance, it has been confirmed that for a preventable crisis, the best action is to take full ownership and apologise to customers. The significant impact of crises on the hotel sector, according to Leta and Chan (2020), has garnered attention from researchers. before-crisis preparation, during crisis management, and after-crisis recovery are all covered by this three-stage structure. In the literature, there are two primary perspectives: one from the service providers within the hospitality sector and the other from the stakeholders.

Mair et al. (2016) published a review that focused on the mechanisms of post-crisis recovery. Some aspects of crisis recovery management got less attention in the literature, according to Mair et al. (2016), and many studies did not provide any theoretical foundations in their research. Ritchie and Jiang (2019) conducted an in-depth assessment of papers concentrating on all stages of crisis development in a subsequent research. Wut Xu, and Wong (2021), who published concurrently with the study, reviewed the literature on crisis management in the hotel and tourist business. In two major ways, the current study varies from the previous one.

Managers will very certainly continue to face substantial difficulty and variability as a consequence of the post-pandemic "New Normal." It might help us understand and explain business effectiveness and attitude by revealing the boundaries of RBT, agency theory, and possibly other frameworks (Porter, 1980). Businesses must adapt to or influence their environments to deal with the substantial changes that are occurring by discovering, generating, and exploiting opportunities. According to Harrison (2020), comprehending value production in a new nonergodic environment necessitates the integration of theories that attempt to explain processes, assets, and stakeholders. Administrative hybridity, which is the integration of multiple methodologies, reasoning, and systemic forms (e.g., structural flexibility) to handle difficult issues, may be necessary to effectively manage resources and stakeholders in the post-pandemic period. Fluidity, quickness, and attitudes that foster creative thinking and resilience are also required for organisations to successfully create and implement strategic changes. In this New Normal context, identifying, seizing, and changing the components of dynamic capacities is much more challenging.



Saving approach can be seen as one of the most prevalent hotel practices of preparedness for crisis in the pre-event and symptom period. To avoid financial risk, hotel organisations have promptly halted or withdrawn their fundings for new projects at the start of a pandemic. As a result, these hotel chains may increase short-term cash flow while compensating for future profit losses. Many medium-sized and small hotels save money in numerous ways, mostly by freeing up working space, boosting company efficiency, and deferring non-essential improvements (Israeli et al., 2011).

Many hotels employed a defensive or survival strategy through cost-cutting measures as soon as the pandemic became obvious (i.e., quick increase in the number of patients in the local population and booking cancellation) (Wang and Ritchie, 2011). Hotel policies include minimising employee working hours, increasing unpaid leave, and compulsory separation. (Kim et al., 2005). Government restrictions (such as travel advisories and bans, border closures, and health and safety requirements) affect both demand and everyday operational processes at hotels during an emergency.

With a few exceptions, such as Sweden, most countries implemented a lockdown strategy throughout the crisis. As a consequence, hotel managers were allowed very little control and were only offered two strategic alternatives: alter the service or hibernate. The 2-week obligatory quarantine rule gave major hotels with adequate rooms, personnel, health and safety standards, and government ties a limited golden opportunity to supply quarantine facilities (Chaturvedi, 2020). Many hotels with restaurants supplied take-out for surrounding populations in order to boost cash flow. Furthermore, discount deals were extensively used within many European nations and across China for sale promotions. As the epidemic continues, big hotel brands have engaged in branding through CSR initiatives, which include offering free lodging for medical personnel as well as charitable gifts. Furthermore, social media channels were used to disseminate internet marketing efforts to a great majority of the globe's population who were under siege. Many hotels that have access to high cash reserves also have exploited their non opening hours and days off for the refurbishment of the premises in order to be prepared for the recovery part of the crisis cycle (Roan and Kelly, 2020).

Immediately after the amount of cases begins to fall and as governments begin to loosen travel restrictions, interest in domestic travel swiftly recovers and becomes the driving factor behind hotel recovery. For example, hotel occupancy in the United States climbed to around 50% in the summer after plummeting to around 20% in the fall. Due to foreign travel limitations, "recovery

measures" mostly target local tourism with staycation packages. To minimise tourists' perceptions of danger, the government, hotels, and the rest of the tourism industry must work together to provide consistent messages to visitors.

Through service automation and income diversification, the pandemic has accelerated "enterprise innovation." New automated service procedures including digital menus, online check-in and check-out, and smart room control have all seen rapid adoption (Jiang and Wen, 2020). Hoteliers can decrease physical contacts and infection hazards while still delivering customised service to ensure client pleasure thanks to digitalization (Maaty, 2020). Following a large-scale crisis incident, the system may never return to how it was before, as portions of it are more likely to become altered (Scott et al., 2008). The hotel industry has begun to proactively adjust to an uncertain (post)-pandemic environment in nations where the Covid-19 is reasonably under control. Because of the risk of another surge of infectivity, continuing to save while aggressively investigating opportunities for technological efficiency and innovation is a crucial component of a disaster readiness and resilience plan for small companies. The typical hotel business model, which is based mainly on revenue from room sales, could be converted into a more varying income model.

Finding strategies to preserve the "human touch" while balancing service automation is another issue under the "new normal" settings (Rivera, 2020). During quarantine periods, several hotels have employed companion robots to help clients feel less lonely and alone (Henkel et al., 2020). Due to the fact that customers' inclinations for leisurely tourism can be enhanced as a result of the pandemic, wellness facilities within hotels may become a crucial part of the new normal after the pandemic (Wen et al., 2020).

In new and developing situations, further refining of current crisis management frameworks is important (Jiang et al., 2019). According to the findings, three major areas for improving and expanding the traditional crisis management framework in tourism and hospitality are recommended.

2.3: Empirical Research

The aim of the research was to discern potential threats to the human resources sector in the Burgenstock Resort in Luzern. Research was conducted via surveys and interviews that were sent out to the participating subject, i.e. Burgenstock HR, as well as interviews with a variety of staff from different departments. Overhead expenditures are the most expensive component of a hotel's budget, and workers are the most expensive and simultaneously the most

valued asset. During an economic downturn in which producing revenue can become difficult, hotels were careful with fixed and variable expenses (Compiranon and Scott 2014). It is critical to have a people management strategy in place that can be implemented and adjusted in the event of an economic downturn (Ruff & Aziz, 2003). In the 1960s and 1970s, sociological study on communities affected by natural disasters (Quarantelli & Dynes, 1977) and studies of international crises grew rapidly (Hermann, 1972). The number of theoretical viewpoints and models that might be integrated expanded as a result of case studies (Lagadec, 1993). A great deal of effort was put into explaining a variety of "practices" for coping with these events and their implications (Fink, 1986).

In 2010 Compiranon and Scott (2014) conducted interviews with hotels in Phuket, Thailand. The interviews were on crisis management in hotels and they received 25 responses out of a total of 60 hotels that were chosen, roughly 41%. They state that "Each interview...was tape-recorded. These recordings were...categorised based on themes, concepts, or other common features, a process known as "content analysis" (Ruhanen, 2006)" (Compiranon and Scott 2014). Compiranon and Scott (2014) Then, using a content analysis method, grouped comparable critical success factors (CSFs) into five distinct groups. The CSFs are Crisis Management Plan, Market Segmentation, Promotional Marketing, Collaboration, and Personnel Management, according to their results. A crisis management strategy is the first CSF. A number of academics have previously addressed this issue (Augustine, 2000; Campbell, 1999; Coombs, 1999; Ruff & Aziz, 2003). To guarantee that a hotel maintains its business, a crisis management strategy should be in place. Even if business is lost, a hotel's ability to maintain connections with current businesses or clients is critical. A crisis management strategy, on the other hand, is only a starting point (Aktas and Gunlu 2005). The second CSF speaks about market segmentation, the findings of the study by Compiranon and Scott is backed with previous research that suggests that businesses recovering from a crisis should concentrate on revenue-generating areas (Johnson et al., 2005, p. 524). To start, hotels should select the appropriate combination of market categories. However, this may prove difficult in some aspects. It is critical for hotels in a state of lockdown to concentrate on either unaffected areas or growing markets (Compiranon and Scott 2014). The next part in their findings is the recovery promotion period, in which they state that after an economic downturn, tourists become more cost cautious. As a result, a hotel's marketing promotion must explain how to have a wonderful vacation at a reasonable price. According to the findings of this

study, there are essentially two ways to do so: lowering or increasing value to tourism items. During an economic downturn, for a big number of hotels, the most essential thing is to earn cash through discounts, without looking at prices. Another responder to the survey suggested that hotels determine prices depending on consumer desire, implying that lowering prices can boost income by encouraging demand (Compiranon and Scott 2014). The fourth part in their plan mainly talks about how hotels should be more collaborative with suppliers in order to create a more harmonious economic environment. Finally the fifth part of their research shows how hotels need to manage their staff in order to cut down on costs. When seeking to reduce labour costs, hotels are recommended to cautiously pick human resource management alternatives (Compiranon and Scott 2014). There are a variety of human resource management solutions available when occupancy is low. There are two types of leave: paid and unpaid. Many employees can be reassigned to a place that has not been impacted by the economic crisis for major hotels with branches in several areas. These alternatives to regular human resourcing options demonstrate that measures to minimise overhead expenses can enhance an organisation's financial outlook, supporting such tactics.

2.4: Conclusion

Though there is not much evidence to support the claim, the author believes that many hotels have had a similar approach to how they have mitigated the pandemic. Many of them seem to have used a reduced labour force, they have done this by reducing the working hours of the staff, as well as reduced the number of full time employees within the hotel. As stated above the hotel industry can be hit fairly hard during a pandemic, therefore it is not surprising that many have closed down during the lockdown period. However, as seen in this research, many hotels including Burgenstock have found innovative ways to stay open during the lockdown.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.1: Research Aim & Objectives

The aim of this research paper is to discern and analyse the effects of the Covid lockdown on the strategic and operational approaches used by the Human Resources department of hotels to facilitate the wellbeing of the employees. This paper will be looking specifically at the case of the Bùrgenstock Resort and Hotel in Luzern Switzerland.

To achieve the aims listed above, there are three objectives which will be investigated through out this study:

- To assess the strategic and operational approaches implemented by the Human Resources Department at Bùrgenstock Hotels and Resort in Luzern during the coronavirus lockdown
 - To analyse the impact of the coronavirus lockdown on the wellbeing of the staff at Bùrgenstock Hotels and Resort
 - To investigate the effectiveness of the strategic and operational measures undertaken by the Human Resources Department
- For the purpose of accomplishing the aims and objectives this study, the following hypotheses were formulated;
- + H0 The Protocols implemented by the human resource department has no significant impact on the wellbeing of the staff
 - + H1 The protocols implemented by the human resource department during the covid pandemic had a positive impact on the wellbeing of the employees
 - + H2 The protocols implemented by the human resource department during the pandemic had a negative impact on overall wellbeing

3.2: Research Design

The approach that will be taken over the course of this paper would be a mixed methods approach, through the use of a case study on the given topic. Through the use of a pragmatic worldview, (Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. 1994) the first step would be to gather quantitative data that will be collected through interviews, surveys, and emails asking for statistical data on the human resources of the hotel over the time period of the covid lockdown. Second, qualitative research, such as analysing the statistics of the department or interpreting the surveys completed by the department, will be conducted on the quantitative data, in order to discern the effects (Creswell, 2014) of the coronavirus lockdown on the human resources department and their approaches to help the staff in this time of need. The author has decided to use a pragmatic worldview because they believe that this would be the most appropriate approach, as it gives an insight with the least amount of bias.

3.3: Sampling

Sampling is the act of selecting a representative portion of a population in order to observe and assess the population's attributes and traits (Investopedia, 2020). In order to fulfil the aim of this research paper, the author will be focussing on the non-probability method for sampling. As highlighted by Ayhan (2005) the process of picking units from a population via the use of a subjective (or otherwise non-random) approach is referred to as non-probability sampling. Non-probability sampling is a method of case selection

that is characterised by its speed, ease of use, and low cost; this is due to the fact that it does not need a full survey frame. The type of sampling that will be conducted in this research will be the Judgement sampling method. This approach to sampling is predicated on hypotheses regarding the composition and behaviour of the population that is being studied (Ayhan,2005). In order to achieve the aim and objectives of this paper, the sample selected will be a mix of employees from different areas of the Bürgenstock resort and hotel located in Luzern, Switzerland, specifically, a sample group of five employees from different departments will be interviewed and asked to fill out surveys in the conduct of this research. Therefore, the author will select what they consider to be a representative sample of the population as a whole. Because the study relies on the researcher's subjective evaluations, this method of sampling, which is known as "judgement sampling," is even more prone to bias than "haphazard sampling." (Ayhan,2005). If a researcher has any biases, those biases will show up in their sample, so it is of the utmost importance to keep an open mind when conducting the research. In exploratory studies, on the other hand, particularly when selecting participants for focus groups or in-depth interviews, it can be useful to use this method.

3.4: Data collection

To fully understand the depths of this paper, the author plans on performing interviews with the HR staff of Burgenstock, to discern their positions on their policies and how they have implemented them to better benefit the overall working experience at Burgenstock. The author then plans on conducting in-depth interviews as well as surveys with certain focus groups of the Burgenstock team, covering a broad range of different departments. Judgmental sampling works best when there are a few members of the population who exhibit characteristics typical of the study's target group (Curtis,2011). According to Curtis (2011) researchers like using Judgmental sampling when they have sufficient expertise to pick a sample and when they anticipate that alternative sampling methods will need more time. Since there are no additional obstacles to overcome, picking a sample is made much easier by relying on the knowledge and experience of the researchers participating in the study (Curtis,2011). Moreover, it facilitates direct interaction between researchers and their intended audience: The researcher's choices are the only criterion for picking a sample. Because of this, he or she can effectively reach and influence the intended audience (Curtis,2011). Due to the researchers personal connection to the case, this makes judgement sampling a viable option, as the

researcher can discern which groups will give the best results.

Judgement sampling is also a very time effective method of obtaining information, as judgement sampling facilitates the use of rapid polls or interviews. Due to the fact that the sample being researched has sufficient knowledge of the issues present as well as an expertise in the field it makes obtaining information from the sample very simple and creates almost instantaneous outcomes of the research (Curtis,2011).

3.5: Data Analysis

The research intends to use a mixed methods approach to the research conducted. Through this the researcher hopes to gain more insights to the data attained. Once the author has collected all the relevant data from the sample group, the author will begin analysing the collected data by first utilising 'descriptive statistics'. This would mainly be used to organise and consolidate the responses from the surveys in the data collection phase of the research (Kaur et al., 2018). The 'measure of frequency distribution' is the process of gathering the total number of times each specific response appears throughout the sample group's data set which would be applied throughout and within this study to better analyse the responses of the participants (Cooksey, 2020). According to Sandelowski (2000), Quantization refers to a means through which qualitative data sets, such as interviews, are analysed using quantitative techniques in order to transform the aforementioned qualitative data into quantitative data. Firstly the researcher reduces verbal or visual data into variables or constructs to only mean one thing and can therefore be represented numerically. Forby, a quantitative analysis of a qualitative data set will be utilised to authenticate the researchers' impressions of the data and can extract more information from the material (Sandelowski, 2000).

3.6: Validity

Validity is a measure of how well a measuring instrument fulfils its purpose and relates to whether the measuring instrument measures the behaviour or quality that it is designed to measure (Sürücü & Maslakçi, 2020). For this specific paper, internal and external validity will be examined. Internal validity refers to the degree to which you may be convinced that a cause-and-effect link revealed in a research cannot be explained by other factors. Likewise, external validity can be defined as the amount to which the findings of a research may be generalised to other circumstances, persons, places, and measurements is referred to as external validity (Bhandari, 2023).

According to Rogelberg (2002), a single data point is not enough to form concrete evaluations of the data set as a single outlier can drastically obscure the outcomes of the data. To mitigate this Rogelberg (2002) suggests using a method of validity generalisation. Rogelberg (2002) states that validity generalisation collects coefficients from a specific hypothesis, therefore bypassing the outliers and providing a more conclusive outcome to the research.

However, further study would be required due to the intricacy of the human psyche in this specific research based social experiment, as well as the compulsion to nullify other causes of behavioural changes.

3.7: Ethical Issues

Research ethics refer to a set of guidelines for conducting studies in a morally responsible manner. When conducting interviews or surveys with subjects, researchers and scientists have a responsibility to act ethically at all times. Understanding occurrences in the actual world, researching effective remedies, gaining insight into human behaviour, and bettering people's everyday lives are all common motivations for doing research on humans. (Bhandari, 2021).

Everyone behaves in a way that is consistent with his or her own moral compass and standards of decency. Because every individual's combination of experiences and connections is singular and distinct, that person's moral viewpoint will be distinctively their own (Wiles, 2008). As a result, every person will have their own unique set of moral principles. Even though there is significant disagreement over how to put broad moral concepts like justice and fairness into practice, many individuals may nonetheless agree that such values do in fact exist. When put into practise, basic moral notions provide the foundation upon which ethical techniques and systems are built (or principles). In order to conduct themselves in an ethical manner, researchers need to think about concerns of right and wrong. (Wiles, 2008)

3.8: Limitations

Limitations are defined by Conelly (2013) as weaknesses of the study that are unavoidable by the researcher, and outside of their control. Some limitations of this specific study are listed below. Avoiding Prestige Bias at Bürgenstock Hotel: Prestige bias is one of the more well known biases. Prestige bias implies that the recognition of a famous or luxurious affiliation subconsciously motivates participants to answer the questions of the interview and the survey preferentially towards the entity in question (Frachtenberg & McConville, 2021). In this case, the employees of Bürgenstock may feel pressured to answer in a way that shines a good light on the

Bürgenstock brand. In order to mitigate the risk of prestige bias, the researcher will encourage the employees participating in the study to speak up freely without fear of job security, by assuring them that their answers will remain anonymous and not be spread to the management of Bürgenstock.

Social Desirability Bias: Social desirability is one of the most common sources of bias affecting the validity of this research paper. Social desirability mainly manifests in participants wanting to paint themselves in a positive light in order to conform to social norms or to please others (Nederhof, 1985). In terms of Bürgenstock, employees might feel obligated to provide feedback that reflects positively on themselves as well as the business. In order to avoid this the answers will remain anonymous, therefore mitigating the risk of participants believing that their answers will be shared with others.

Chapter 4: Discussion

4.1: Introduction

This discussion chapter delves into the implications of the coronavirus lockdown on the Human Resources (HR) Department's strategic and operational tactics in the sphere of employee well-being in the hotel business. Earlier sections of this research, which concentrated on the unique setting of Bürgenstock Hotels and Resort in Luzern, Switzerland, studied the varied responses to a worldwide crisis (Bhaskar and Joshi 2020).

In this chapter, the author synthesises the empirical data and interpretive insights acquired from the investigation. This chapter lays the groundwork for a full examination of the expected as well as the unforeseen effects of the lockdown, and their alignment with the core values guiding HR practices. Furthermore, the author investigates the innovative policies implemented by the HR to mitigate the pandemic's impact on employee well-being, including physical and mental health, job satisfaction, and the balance between professional and personal life. As a result, the author will critically link and examine the current data acquired in the literature study and empirical research to explain the assumed outcomes of each aim developed in this work.

4.2: Objective 1: To evaluate the Human Resources Department's strategic and operational methods

The study's goal was to identify possible dangers to the human resources sector at the Bürgenstock Resort in Luzern. As mentioned above, surveys were distributed to, and interviews were conducted with, the participating subjects, i.e. Bürgenstock HR. This was in order to discern the

strategic and operational methods used by the HR department. Overhead expenses are the most expensive component of a hotel's budget, and employees are both the most expensive and most valuable asset. Hotels were cautious with fixed and variable expenditures during an economic crisis in which creating income might be challenging (Compiranon and Scott 2014). In the case of an economic downturn, it is vital to have a human resource management plan in place that can be executed and altered in a continuously changing environment as well as be fast acting to mitigate risks that may arise (Ruff & Aziz, 2003). During the pandemic, the following new policies were implemented in many hotels across the world: (1) A reduction in employee working hours, letting employees go, and cutting employee salaries. (2) Implementing health protocols and conducting antigen swab tests on a more regular basis, and paying special attention to any and all sick employees. (3) Outsourcing as a way to mitigate costs, an organisation will have the need to outsource in order to lessen its load financially. (4)

Provide training to employees in order to have their abilities increased to a higher level, as well as making them more flexible in terms of working hours and working routines enabling them to multitask and work as all round employees instead of having a specific fixed position. (Parantika, et.al., 2021).

4.3: Objective 2: To investigate the influence of the coronavirus lockdown on the employee well-being at Bürgenstock Hotels & Resorts

The COVID-19 epidemic had a tremendous impact on the global tourism industry, leading to severe employment losses and financial insecurity for individuals who make their livelihood in this sector. According to the National Health Institute (2023), "the epidemic has also contributed to a drastic increase in negative mental health among hospitality workers, including anxiety, stress, and depression." Anxiety and depression have been reported to be the leading mental illnesses that have a large impact on a person's behaviour and mood (Yu, et.al., 2021). Hospitality workers interact with guests on a daily basis as a given part of their job, this can lead to stressful situations that can lead to the employee feeling frustrated or despair or even in acute cases depression. With the impact of the coronavirus these feelings were likely increased due to the threat of job security and financial income to provide for oneself and one's family. Thus, many hospitality workers likely had a drastic rise in stress levels as well as depression. (Yu, et.al., 2021).

4.4: Objective 3: To investigate the efficacy of the HR Department's strategic and operational measures

According to Aziz et.al. (2021) during the covid pandemic the effectiveness and management intelligence of the HR department is of utmost importance, as they are what keeps the company together. The strategies implemented by the HR Department include flexibility, staff safety, working conditions focus, development and motivation of employees through creative communication methods, strengthening cohesion between employees and employers from all levels of management down to the lowest employee, providing training and gaining new talent to strengthen any gaps in the workplace. As well as making necessary organisational changes based on assessments of the organisation itself (Aziz, et.al, 2021). These implementations of strategy and different policies seemed to have a positive effect on the organisation as a whole.

4.5: Conclusion

In summary, through the observation of the outcomes and evaluation of the aforementioned objectives, there are a variety of outcomes that can be concluded from the existing research that has been collected. For example, it can be concluded that the policies and strategies used by the HR department of Bürgenstock were carefully thought out and implemented in a way that would create a positive working environment. Secondly, the coronavirus pandemic had a huge impact on the wellbeing of the employees, and their work. Lastly, the aforementioned strategies from the HR department were implemented effectively and were able to mitigate some of the problems caused by the lockdown in the hotel and for the staff as well.

Chapter 5: Conclusion & Recommendations

5.1: Conclusion

The covid-19 pandemic has had a devastating effect on the entire world, and has affected the hotel and tourism industry especially. Due to many lockdown measures many hotels have been closed and struggled to make a profit. Many hotel staff have also felt the impact of the lockdown on a personal level. The policies and strategies that the Human Resources department of Bürgenstock have implemented were not only designed to bring profit to the business, but to also generate a working environment that was conducive to retaining employees. The HR department used a variety of strategies to ensure that the employees of Bürgenstock were well looked after. They made sure that the employees' health, both physical and mental, were in good condition. They also incorporated a variety of unique ideas to mitigate the shortage of staff as well as the shortage of work, in order to keep the

employees feeling as though life was somewhat normal.

5.2: Recommendations

This paper mainly focuses on the strategies implemented by the HR Department and how these strategies affected the employees, through a series of interviews and surveys conducted with the help of a sample of the employees. Some future recommendations would be to firstly increase the size of the sample, this would allow for a more in depth analysis of the overall structure of the strategies used. Another suggestion would be to focus on a specific strategy or policy implemented by the HR. This would be an interesting addition, as it gives insight into which policies were more or less influential in the wellbeing of the employees. Lastly, the author would recommend to perform the same experiment in different locations, as this study is focused on one location the cultures of the people there might be similar and therefore give a skewed view of the hospitality industry as a whole. By conducting a similar study in other locations, one could then compare organisational culture and how that impacts the decision making process.

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