



(RESEARCH ARTICLE)



The challenges of hospitality industry in Zambales: An assessment

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Abstract

This pandemic introduced the hospitality industry to unprecedented challenges such as lockdowns, social distancing, stay-at-home orders, and travel and mobility restrictions, resulting in the temporary closure of many hospitality businesses and a significant decrease in the demand that could operate. The study aimed to assess the challenges of the hospitality industry during the pandemic in Zambales. The study utilized the quantitative approach and the descriptive-survey research methodology. Based on the summary of the investigations conducted, the researchers have concluded that the majority of the respondents were males, 26-35 years old, staff/crew and from lodging/accommodation. The respondents Strongly Agree on all factors as to the operation, marketing, and financial on the Assessment of the respondents on the challenges of the hospitality industry during the pandemic. And there is no significant difference on the challenges of the hospitality industry during the pandemic as to the operation, marketing, and financial when grouped according to sex and establishment classification. On the other hand, there is a significant difference in the perception of respondents on the challenges of the hospitality industry during the pandemic as to age, and job position when grouped according to the respondents' profile variables. In this study, it is highly suggested that beach resorts should make the best use of their employees to cut costs and expenses, encouraged to maintain cleanliness and customers' safety and security to promote the establishments, use of various marketing strategies is needed to draw more customers, and should patronize locally produce products and put innovation in their products to maximize their profit.

Keywords: Hospitality Industry; Challenges; Zambales; Assessment

1. Introduction

The current global COVID-19 pandemic has caused many different problems and challenges around the world. Learning, social, financial, and economic factors are among the many aspects of life that change. Also, one of the most affected was the hospitality industry. The world economy was on the verge of destruction.

Almost all establishments were asked to limit their operations to only take-outs, and enforced restrictions in hotel occupancies and revenues. However, the reopening process has a slowly began and authorities have started to ease restrictions. While the hospitality industry is slowly recovering, the COVID-19 crisis continues to exert a profound impact on how hospitality industry businesses operate. (Gossling, 2020)

The provinces in Zambales are also immensely affected by COVID-19 and this have an overwhelming impact on large businesses' revenue worldwide, more so in small locally owned business establishments like beach resorts. Beach Resorts were forced to shut down, and other related businesses had to suffer for months of hiatus. To which the events have compelled business owners to take extreme measures to pursue operations. (Mobol, Rahmat, & Pagal, 2021).

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In this current issue, the researchers intended to study the challenges faced by the hospitality industry during the pandemic.

The study assessed the challenges of the hospitality industry during the pandemic in Zambales. Specifically, it sought answers to the following questions:

- What is the profile of the respondent in terms of:
 - Sex;
 - Age;
 - Job Position; and
 - Establishment's classification?
- How do the respondents assess the challenges of the hospitality industry during the pandemic in terms of the following dimension:
 - Operation;
 - Marketing; and
 - Financial?
- Is there a significant difference between the challenges of the hospitality industry during the pandemic when grouped according to the profile variables of respondents?

2. Material and methods

The concept of this study focused on the assessment of the respondents on the Challenges of the Hospitality Industry during the Pandemic in Zambales during Pandemic. The study utilized the quantitative approach and the descriptive-survey research methodology. The population of the study comprised the owners/managers and employees of beach resort businesses. In this study, there were one hundred (100) owners/managers and staff/crew as respondents representing different establishments from different sectors in the hospitality industry. The study was conducted in Zambales.

The main instrument in gathering data in this study was a survey questionnaire. The first part of the questionnaire focused on determining the profile of the respondents in the hospitality industry. The second part was the challenges of the hospitality industry.

The profile of the respondents focused only on sex, age, job position, and establishment classification. And the challenges of the hospitality industry during the pandemic were limited to operation, marketing, and financial. Respondents will be answering on a scale ranging from 4 (Strongly Agree), 3 (Agree), 2 (Disagree), and 1 (Strongly Disagree).

3. Results and discussion

3.1. Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 The frequency and percentage distribution on the respondents' profile variables

Profile Variables		Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
Sex	Male	53	53.00
	Female	47	47.00
	Total	100	100.00
Age Mean = 30.97 or 31 Years Old	18-25	11	11.00
	26-35	78	78.00
	36-50	10	10.00
	51 above	1	1.00
	Total	100	100.00
Job Position	staff/crew	94	94.00
	Manager	5	5.00
	Owner	1	1.00
	Total	100	100.00
Establishment Classification	Lodging/Accommodation	75	75.00
	Food and Beverage	25	25.00
	Total	100	100.00

Table 1 shows the frequency and percentage distribution on the respondents' profile variables.

3.1.1. Sex

Out of one hundred (100) respondents, the majority were male with 53 or equivalent of 53.00%, while 47 or equivalent of 47.00 % are female respondents.

This means that during the distribution of the questionnaire more males participated in the study. It can be seen that there is a small difference in the frequency of male and female respondents. Also, it appears that more men are now working in the hospitality industry as skills are needed to sustain the activity/work.

3.1.2. Age

Out of one hundred (100) respondents, most were from the age group of 26-35 years old with 78 or equivalent of 78.00%, 11 or equivalent of 11.00% from age group of 18 - 25 years old; 10 or 10.00% were from the age group of 36-50 and 1 or equivalent 1.00 % from the age group of 51 and above. The mean age is 30.97 or 31 years old.

The data simply implies that the respondents were classified in their Young Adult period, which ranges from twenty to thirty-nine years old who experience increased pressure in making decisions and commitments that will affect the rest of their lives, and this includes choosing their career conclusion, students who are under the adolescence stage are experiencing pressure in terms of making decisions that will affect the rest of their lives which includes choosing a career that they would want to pursue.

3.1.3. Job position

Out of one hundred (100) respondents, most were staff/crew with 94 or equivalent of 94.00%, 5 or equivalent of 5.00% were managers; and 1 or 1.00% was an owner.

This implies that in the hospitality industry dominance of staff/crew was evident. The hospitality the staffs/crews serve myriad purposes. Their functions include physical and abstract roles. Considerations when calculating the value of a hotel employee include the overall aim of a hotel as a business, the actual role of the employee in question and nature of the hospitality industry.

3.1.4. Establishment Classification

Out of one hundred (100) respondents, most were from lodging/accommodation with 75 or equivalent of 75.00%, and 25 or equivalent of 25.00% were from food and beverage.

This implies that the respondents are currently staying/working in the lodging or accommodation industry because it is one of the fastest growing industry under the hospitality. But, along with changing market trends, customers are now becoming more sophisticated and demanding.

3.2. Assessment of the respondents on the challenges of the hospitality industry during the pandemic.

3.2.1. Operation

Table 2 shows the Assessment of the respondents on the challenges of the hospitality industry during the pandemic as to Operation.

The overall weighted mean for on the challenges of the hospitality industry during the pandemic as to Operation is 3.77 with a descriptive rating of "Strongly Agree".

The result shows that during pandemic as to operation, it is noted that the establishments are having a hard time in improving their place, amenities and services to attract more customers.

On the other hand, according to Attala (2019), hospitality industry is changing everything from the homes we live in to how our cities are managed. The hospitality industry is no exception as well in upgrading or improvement of their business as it helps to attract more customers. Furthermore, the successful properties will be the ones that invest in collecting and analyzing it in an actionable fashion.

Table 2 Assessment of the respondents on the challenges of the hospitality industry in Zambales during the pandemic as to Operation

	Operation	Weighted Mean	Qualitative Interpretation	Rank
1	The establishment upgraded its amenities to draw more customers.	3.92	Strongly Agree	1
2	The establishment only allows 50% of its total capacity of customers to enter to prevent the spread of the new disease.	3.83	Strongly Agree	2
3	The customers must comply with COVID-19 health and safety rules for the establishment's employees' safety (vaccination card or vaccination certificate)	3.75	Strongly Agree	3
4	The establishment has a limit on the number of employees due to the pandemic.	3.71	Strongly Agree	4
5	The establishment personnel multi-task to maximize productivity due to insufficient staffing.	3.65	Strongly Agree	5
	Overall Weighted Mean	3.77	Strongly Agree	

3.2.2. Marketing

Table 3 shows the Assessment of the respondents on the challenges of the hospitality industry in Zambales during the pandemic as to Marketing.

Table 3 Assessment of the respondents on the challenges of the hospitality industry during the pandemic as to Marketing

	Marketing	Weighted Mean	Qualitative Interpretation	Rank
1	The establishment offers promos to attract and encourage people to avail of their products.	3.73	Strongly Agree	3
2	The establishment keeps its good reputation in terms of cleanliness, customer security, and safety.	3.76	Strongly Agree	2
3	The establishment provides more exciting and entertaining activities for the customers to stay.	3.80	Strongly Agree	1
4	The establishment made advantage of social media to market itself.	3.72	Strongly Agree	4
5	The establishment utilizes print and television marketing to market their offerings	3.69	Strongly Agree	5
	Overall Weighted Mean	3.74	Strongly Agree	

The overall weighted mean for the challenges of the hospitality industry in Zambales during the pandemic as to marketing is 3.74 with a descriptive rating of “Strongly Agree”.

This implies that providing more activities for customers to stay as their form of marketing is a significant challenge. It is essential that different businesses have different offerings and services so that customers have a good quality experience.

3.2.3. Financial

Table 4 shows the Assessment of the respondents on the challenges of the hospitality industry in Zambales during the pandemic as to Financial.

Table 4 Assessment of the respondents on the challenges of the hospitality industry during the pandemic as to Financial

	Financial	Weighted Mean	Qualitative Interpretation	Rank
1	The establishment patronizes locally produce products for consumption to increase profit.	3.81	Strongly Agree	1
2	The establishment limits the number of employees to sustain its finances and operation.	3.66	Strongly Agree	4
3	The establishment upgrades their products to gain more profit.	3.71	Strongly Agree	2
4	The establishment innovates items for other use such as decorations and the like to reduce expenses.	3.70	Strongly Agree	3
5	The establishment conserves water and electricity to reduce its bills.	3.65	Strongly Agree	5
	Overall Weighted Mean	3.71	Strongly Agree	

The overall weighted mean for the challenges of the hospitality industry in Zambales during the pandemic as to financial is 3.71 with a descriptive rating of “Strongly Agree”.

This indicates that upgrading products for profit is a challenge during the pandemic. However, the most significant financial challenge faced by hospitality companies is the liquidity that restaurants, beach resorts, or hotel businesses face. The difficulty of managing business uncertainties discourages owners from accurately forecasting the new investment required to grow in the coming economic period. The business uncertainties appear to be the result of rapid change in the regulated sector. In which lockdown or restriction orders could be imposed without warning. Indeed, many experts advise hospitality business owners to reduce their cash requirements in order to maintain financial balance.

3.3. Test of difference on the challenges of the hospitality industry in Zambales during the pandemic when grouped according to the respondents' profile variables.

3.3.1. Operation

Table 5 shows the Analysis of Variance to test difference on the challenges of the hospitality industry in Zambales during the pandemic as to Operation when grouped according to the respondents' profile variables.

Table 5 Analysis of Variance to test difference on the challenges of the hospitality industry in Zambales during the pandemic as to Operation when grouped according to the respondents' profile variables

Sources of Variations		SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	Decision
Sex	Between Groups	0.004	1	0.004	0.049	0.825	Accept Ho Not Significant
	Within Groups	7.414	98	0.076			
	Total	7.418	99				
Age	Between Groups	0.834	3	0.278	4.056	0.009	Reject Ho Significant
	Within Groups	6.583	96	0.069			
	Total	7.418	99				
Job Position	Between Groups	0.597	2	0.299	4.246	0.017	Reject Ho Significant
	Within Groups	6.821	97	0.070			
	Total	7.418	99				
Establishment Classification	Between Groups	0.002	1	0.002	0.028	0.867	Accept Ho Not Significant
	Within Groups	7.415	98	0.076			
	Total	7.418	99				

This implies that age and job position are factors to consider in the challenges of the hospitality industry during the pandemic as to operation.

According to Gossling (2020), almost all establishments were asked to limit their operations to only take-outs, and enforced restrictions in hotel occupancies and revenues. However, the reopening process has a slowly began and authorities have started to ease restrictions. While the hospitality industry is slowly recovering, the COVID-19 crisis continues to exert a profound impact on how hospitality industry businesses operate.

3.3.2. Marketing

Table 6 shows the Analysis of Variance to test difference on the challenges of the hospitality industry in Zambales during the pandemic as to Marketing when grouped according to the respondents' profile variables.

Table 6 Analysis of Variance to test difference on the challenges of the hospitality industry in Zambales during the pandemic as to Marketing when grouped according to the respondents' profile variables

Sources of Variations		SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	Decision
Sex	Between Groups	0.027	1	0.027	0.659	0.419	Accept Ho Not Significant
	Within Groups	4.013	98	0.041			
	Total	4.040	99				
Age	Between Groups	0.570	3	0.190	5.255	0.002	Reject Ho Significant
	Within Groups	3.470	96	0.036			
	Total	4.040	99				
Job Position	Between Groups	0.598	2	0.299	8.430	0.000	Reject Ho Significant
	Within Groups	3.442	97	0.035			
	Total	4.040	99				
Establishment Classification	Between Groups	0.013	1	0.013	0.325	0.570	Accept Ho Not Significant
	Within Groups	4.027	98	0.041			
	Total	4.040	99				

This implies that age and job position are factors to consider on the challenges of the hospitality industry during the pandemic as to Marketing.

According to Williams (2018), the age is vital because people do have different level of needs, maturity and understanding for them to enjoy the beach resorts offering and services during their stay.

Further, job position has different expectation because of the different interest they have or different activities they love. Some people prefer activities that are enjoyable and new, while others expect that the beach resort is a place to relax and sleep (Habel, et. al).

3.3.3. Financial

Table 7 Analysis of Variance to test difference on the challenges of the hospitality industry in Zambales during the pandemic as to Financial when grouped according to the respondents' profile variables

Sources of Variations		SS	df	MS	F	Sig.	Decision
Sex	Between Groups	0.027	1	0.027	0.391	0.533	Accept Ho Not Significant
	Within Groups	6.730	98	0.069			
	Total	6.756	99				
Age	Between Groups	0.606	3	0.202	3.153	0.028	Reject Ho Significant
	Within Groups	6.150	96	0.064			
	Total	6.756	99				
Job Position	Between Groups	0.543	2	0.272	4.240	0.017	Reject Ho Significant
	Within Groups	6.213	97	0.064			
	Total	6.756	99				
Establishment Classification	Between Groups	0.039	1	0.039	0.562	0.455	Accept Ho Not Significant
	Within Groups	6.718	98	0.069			
	Total	6.756	99				

Table 7 shows the Analysis of Variance to test difference on the challenges of the hospitality industry in Zambales during the pandemic as to Financial when grouped according to the respondents' profile variables. This implies that there are factors to consider on the challenges of the hospitality industry during the pandemic as to Financial. But as stated by Al-Mughairi, Bhaskar, and Alazri (2021), the pandemic globally affected various sectors, especially the tourism and hospitality industry economically and socially. Their results show that the majority of the respondents stated that the pandemic crisis negatively affected some aspects of their business such as the: financial conditions of their business demand for the services or products, supply chain and suppliers, and channels of distribution of the services or products to the customers. Lesser people also inquired or booked and a lot of them declined which decreased their progress in international business. The owners also expressed a negative response to the recovery of their losses because of the pandemic, because of their belief that it may take about one year to recover from it.

4. Conclusion

Based on the summary of the investigations conducted, the researchers have concluded that:

- Majority of the respondents were males, 26-35 years old, staff/crew and from lodging/accommodation.
- The respondents Strongly Agree on all factors as to the operation, marketing, and financial on the Assessment of the respondents on the challenges of the hospitality industry during the pandemic.
- There is no significant difference on the challenges of the hospitality industry during the pandemic as to the operation, marketing, and financial when grouped according to sex and establishment classification. On the other hand, there is a significant difference in the perception of respondents on the challenges of the hospitality industry during the pandemic as to age, and job position when grouped according to the respondents' profile variables.

Recommendations

- Beach resorts may make the best use of their employees to save money.
- Beach resorts are encouraged to maintain cleanliness as well as customer safety and security in order to promote their businesses. In order to attract more customers, various marketing strategies must be used.
- Beach resorts may purchase locally produced goods and incorporate innovation into their products in order to maximize profits.

Compliance with ethical standards

Acknowledgments

Acknowledgments must be inserted here.

Statement of informed consent

If studies involve information about any individual e.g. case studies, survey, interview etc., author must write statement of informed consent as "Informed consent was obtained from all individual participants included in the study."

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