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ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING IN TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY CRISIS MANAGEMENT

Edited by Zahed Ghaderi and Alexandros Paraskevas

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Zahed Ghaderi and Alexandros Paraskevas

1 Introduction

Approaching organizational learning through crisis management

Do organizations learn from crises? And if they do, how? These questions have been an ongoing debate among scholars for over two decades. This debate has focused on the pessimist versus optimist perspective, inquiring into whether organizations are capable of learning from a crisis (c.f. Antonacopoulou & Sheaffer, 2014; Broekema, et al., 2017; Moynihan, 2008; Smith & Elliot, 2007; Zhou et al., 2018) and on the individual versus organizational perspective towards identifying the learning agents (Argyris & Schön, 1996, Deverell, 2013; Ellinger et al., 2015; Stemn et al., 2018; Weick & Ashford, 2001). There is full consensus that organizational crises are conducive to the process of intensive organizational knowledge acquisition as, more often than not, these crises are unique in their nature and the actions undertaken for their management are steps to the unknown. Crises also trigger organizational changes that would otherwise be impossible to happen. Therefore, shaping the ability of an organization to learn from a crisis is an important antecedent for its capability to cope with future crises.

Yet, despite the significance of this topic, little research has been thus far undertaken on how tourism and hospitality organizations learn from crises and their management process, and if they actually deploy any of this learning in their risk and crisis management planning. An analysis of the extant literature indicates that organizational learning from crises can be classified into two distinct streams of research. The first stream includes studies that identify organizational learning as either a separate stage or a part of the crisis management cycle, i.e., the resolution and feedback stage (c.f., Anderson, 2006; Blackman & Ritchie, 2008; Ghaderi et al., 2012; Hystad & Keller, 2008; Pforr & Hosie, 2008; Ritchie, 2009; Santana, 2004). In these studies, organizational learning mostly happens during the resolution stage of crisis and disaster management (differences between crisis and disaster management are elaborated in Chapter 2 – section 3). It is a form of reflective learning' where the crisis does not only present an opportunity to acquire knowledge that can be useful in dealing with future crises but also enables the organization to see more clearly its strengths and weaknesses and evaluate the effectiveness of its crisis response. This evaluation can point to problems related to the operational model not only of the organization but of the entire tourism value chain. For example, Blackman and Ritchie (2008) noted the important role of organizational learning in improving the potential efficiency of crisis management strategies, particularly at the resolution stage of tourism crises for Destination Marketing Organizations (Ritchie &

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Jiang, 2019). This kind of reflective crisis learning must be translated into knowledge and new practices if it is to change the organization.

The second stream of tourism and hospitality crisis research includes studies that consider lessons learned from the analysis of causes and consequences of the crisis and contemplate possible measures that need to be taken to address similar situations in the future. The methodological approaches used in this literature are predominantly qualitative due to their exploratory nature to understand action and reaction to crisis phenomena (c.f., Faulkner, 2001; Ghaderi et al., 2014; Henderson, 2007; Ritchie, 2004). This stream's contribution is more in the direction of learning through understanding the crisis and its management cycle. The knowledge that is acquired from this type of more "strategic learning" is the feedback that organizations gain from analyzing how a crisis emerged and what actions proved to be effective or ineffective. A significant part of this stream is also devoted to the impact of crises on hospitality and tourism and employs a mix of quantitative and qualitative techniques for the estimation of this impact, mostly in monetary terms (Blake & Sinclair, 2003; Blake et al., 2003; Pizam & Fleischer, 2002).

It is evident that a knowledge gap still exists on how tourism and hospitality organizations learn from crises and how they manage the knowledge they generate from them. This gap triggered the creation of this edited book, in which several contributing scholars are making stronger links between organizational learning and crisis management and explore these concepts at different levels and depth as well as in different geographic contexts across the globe.

Structure of the book

Zahed Ghaderi, *Ahmad Puad Mat Som*, and *Jia Wang* set the scene for the book by defining organizational learning and presenting an integrated model of organizational learning for crisis management. However, their study among 25 key hospitality, travel, and tourism organizations in Malaysia showed that only the ones that are highly crisis-prone (airlines and hotels) had set up their own crisis or disaster management plans and focused on double-loop organizational learning whereas other key players, such as travel agencies and governmental organizations did not.

The second chapter by *Alexandros Paraskevas*, *Levent Altinay*, *Jacqueline McLean*, and *Chris Cooper* look at learning and knowledge flows to enhance the resilience of tourism organizations and destinations in crisis situations, strengthen their defense mechanisms, limit potential damages, and allows them to bounce back to normalcy faster. The contributors use critical incident interviews with 21 tourism executives around the world to identify the types of crisis knowledge they employ in the advent of a crisis. They explore the crisis knowledge management processes and flows they implement within their organizations and propose a framework for the governance of crisis knowledge.

As crises can have a significant impact on fundamental dimensions of an organization, *Christos Kakarougkas* and *Theodoros Stavrinoudis* examine the effects of COVID-19 on human resource management aspects of organizational culture and the learning opportunities that emerge from these effects, in the context of the Greek hospitality industry. The findings of their study show how hotel executives can learn lessons that will help them deal with the negative consequences caused on the human aspect of the organizational culture of their hotels, and how this learning can effectively shape a new organizational culture.

The next chapter looks also at organizational culture but at a different dimension: the learning culture of organizations and specifically about learning from a crisis. Using the experiences of Japanese hoteliers from the cascading crisis caused by the Great East Japan Earthquake in 2011, *Alexandros Paraskevas* explores the factors that underpin an effective crisis learning stewardship and proposes a framework for organizations to instill and enhance a crisis learning culture.

In a more conceptual discussion, *Ron Fisher*, *Mark Francis*, and *Claire Haven-Tang* present a four-stage action-learning model for crisis management that can facilitate organizational learning and improve response in future crises. The first two stages focus on the environmental level, where opportunities are identified through a situational analysis then further considered in terms of required resources. In stage three organizational attributes are matched against opportunities then strategies and tactics are developed. Stage four is the embedding of knowledge into the collective memory of the organization, the “refreezing” step of the change process.

Looking at how tourism organizations learn and at less explored ways for learning acquisition, *Sara Sadat Makian* and *Mohammad Nematpour* explore foresight thinking and scenario planning as a tool for organizational learning crisis management at a tourism destination level. They discuss how scenario planning can extend existing knowledge, assumptions, and attitudes about future tourism and how it can enable management to assess the impact of various driving forces of change on the destination’s tourism activities and evaluate the likely impact of their alternative crisis responses.

Organizational learning does not come naturally, and as discussed in previous chapters, requires a culture and a strategy for its development. This development does not come easy and organizations attempting it are normally facing several challenges. These barriers to learning are explored by *Juan Manuel Tello Contreras* who explores this topic in the context of managing the COVID-19 pandemic in Mexico. Although the mainstream crisis literature discusses extensively barriers to organizational learning from crises, this study in Mexico focuses on cultural differences within the country, political barriers, differences in time pressure tolerance, insufficient competence levels, lack of leadership, local patriotism, and rigid hierarchical structures.

Once these barriers are overcome and organizational learning is finally generated or acquired, it must become part of the organization's entire "fabric" through dissemination and institutionalization. *Wendy Rop* proposes institutionalization of organizational learning generated before, during, and after a crisis into pillars/functions of a tourism crisis management framework: services, human resources, information, products and technologies, financing as well as leadership and governance.

Institutionalized crisis learning can be transferred across organizations but also across industries and sectors. The advent of such knowledge transfer is investigated by *Ivan Sikora* who identifies "hidden links" on crisis management elements observed between aviation and hospitality. The long history of aviation dealing with crises on the global stage makes it a potentially valuable place to look for inspiration and indication of how to design, operate and improve crisis management approach and systems in tourism. He argues that explicit and tacit knowledge identification facilitates knowledge transfer and learning sharing between the two sectors while organizational learning strategies and methods from the aviation map to comparable characteristics in hospitality.

The last four chapters of the book take a more "case study" approach and look at organizational learning from responses to specific crises.

Mehmet Ertas and *Burçin Kirlar-Can* investigate the organizational learning of hotels in Denizli, Turkey, from a series of crises over the years and identified the lessons learned and implemented. Their study showed a general lack of proactivity, general crisis unpreparedness, and lessons recorded but not actually learned. The crisis responses were more informed by trial-and-error experimentation or makeshift crisis management policies rather than institutionalized crisis knowledge.

Alfonso Vargas-Sánchez and *Diego Rodríguez-Toubes* look at organizational learning from the COVID-19 pandemic in the tourism sector in Spain and how this crisis has challenged extant crisis management models at tourism destination level. Pretty much as Tello Contreras in Mexico they argue that what happened in Spain cannot be understood if particularities such as the political-administrative landscape of the State as well as the representation and weight of the tourism sector in dialogues with public administrations and other social agents are overlooked because they can become not only barriers to learning but also to effective crisis response.

Across the Atlantic, *Bingjie Liu-Lastres*, *Alexa Bufkin*, and *Hany Kim* explore the effects of organizational learning on crisis communication based on an empirical evaluation of New York City hotels' social media strategies during the 2010 bed bug crisis. They found that although the responses reflected a learning curve where NYC hotels have been steadily improved their crisis response but there are still important gaps that show some inability or unwillingness to learn as evidenced also in the Denizli chapter whilst the authors propose specific areas for improvement.

Finally, *Zahed Ghaderi*, *Ian Paterson*, *Ahmad Puad Mat Som*, and *Zahra Behboodi* investigate crisis knowledge management in the tourism supply chain in Iran. Exemplifying the crisis in a sanction-affected country, they reveal how the lack of proper organizational learning and knowledge management throughout the Iranian tourism supply chain rendered its key players incapable to effectively respond to the complex crises they are facing.

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Zahed Ghaderi, Ahmad Puad Mat Som, and Jia Wang

2 Organizational learning in tourism crisis management: An experience from Malaysia

Introduction

Nowadays, the tourism industry is among the most vulnerable sectors to crises. Not a day passes without the occurrence of devastating events around the globe that endanger the survival of tourism businesses. The catastrophes include a wide spectrum of events from natural disasters to human-induced crises (Blackman & Ritchie, 2008; Faulkner, 2001). The literature also shows the occurrence of hundreds of crisis incidents, which have created devastating impacts upon the volatile tourism industry. However, many of the recurrent crises can be averted, or their effects will likely be mitigated if organizations adopt effective crisis management practices with significant learning efforts (Blackman & Ritchie, 2008). Nevertheless, evidence shows that organizations are usually resistant to learning from crisis events (Elliott & Smith, 1997; Smith & Elliott, 2007).

Further, there lacks investigation into how organizations learn from previous crises. Several researchers highlighted the important role of organizational learning outside tourism, but amazingly little research was undertaken on this subject within tourism sectors (e.g., Blackman & Ritchie, 2008; Faulkner, 2001; Henderson, 2003a). The tourism industry grows in uncertainties, and the levels at which organizations learn may become a turning point in their ability to survive or adapt. Such realization warrants the need for this study. Considering the dearth of research on crisis management and organizational learning, this study follows three objectives:

1. To explore the role of organizational learning in effective tourism crisis management;
2. To understand how tourism organizations learn lessons from crisis events and apply these lessons for future crisis management; and
3. To examine the level of readiness of major tourism industry players in Malaysia.

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Although a few studies highlighted the importance of organizational learning in the final stage of tourism crisis management (i.e., the resolution or review stage), and stressing single-loop and double-loop learning, limited empirical studies examined organizational learning that may have occurred at different stages of the crisis. This study is an attempt to examine how organizations involved in tourism crisis management can learn from crisis events, and it calls for learning in different stages of crisis management rather than only in the final stage of crisis management (Wang, 2008). The chapter echoes an important but relatively neglected aspect in this field, which is mindful organizational learning and calls for devoting more attention to critical learning from managing tourism crises. It also recommends applying the integrative model of organizational learning in crisis management to encourage a knowledge-based culture in managing uncertainties.

Understanding organizational learning

The organizational learning literature documents multiple definitions developed by different scholars (Argyris, 1999; Garratt, 1987; Prang, 1999). It appears that there is little consistency among different approaches of organizational learning due to wider applications of this term to different fields (Crossan et al., 1999; Prang, 1999). For instance, while some definitions emphasize individual learning in organizations, others argue that organizational learning is more than individual learning despite the recognition of individuals as active agents (Huysman, 1999). Argyris and Schon's (1978) definition is regarded as one of the oldest ones in which organizational learning is understood as the process by which organizational members detect errors or anomalies and correct them by restructuring organizational "theory-in-use" (p. 313). Other scholars, such as Levitt and March (1988), define organizational learning as "encoding inferences from history into routine behavior" (p. 320). Endeavoring to make a distinction between organizational and individual learning, Hystad and Keller (2008) observe that organizational learning is more complicated and dynamic than individual learning and thoroughly different. Moreover, organizational learning has been proposed to enhance the "knowledge intensity" of organizations, a prerequisite for coping with crises and disasters (Prang, 1999, p. 23).

Argyris (1999) believes that the theory of organizational learning needs to consider the interaction between individuals and organizational entities to yield new knowledge to practitioners of organizational learning. Such new knowledge, however, makes it possible to reappraise the recently applied beliefs and ideas and leads to the likelihood of change (Blackman & Ritchie, 2008). However, looking at the processes of organizational learning, one may note that "learning from experiences" is a bona fide element of almost all approaches (p. 27). Most researchers argue that organizational learning should lead to changes in the action and behavior of organizational members. Organizational change, however, is frequently observed as an enhanced consequence of organizational learning (Huysman, 1999).

Traced back over six decades, the concept of organizational learning has attracted much attention from scholars since the 1960s (Argyris & Schon, 1974; Cangelosi & Dill, 1965; Prang, 1999). However, a scattered but constant flow of publications in the late 1970s emerged in the literature. Easterby-Smith and Araujo (1999) believe that although the idea of organizational learning entered into management studies for decades, it has only become broadly recognized in the 1990s. During this time, substantial works have helped to strengthen its foundation, creating interest in the topic of organizational learning (Easterby-Smith & Araujo, 1999). Two development scenarios have significantly contributed to the advancement of this field. The first scenario was scholars' particular attention towards organizational learning from various perspectives that had previously exposed little attention in learning processes. The second scenario is that many consultants and practitioners from private and public organizations have realized the benefits of organizational learning for their business (Easterby-Smith & Araujo, 1999). The second scenario, in any case, is more practice-oriented and looks at commercial benefits for organizations. This scenario, however, has been supported by several theories (see, for example, Argyris & Scho, 1996; Field & Ford, 1995; Laws et al., 2007) that practically helped organizations become "learning organizations." These theories have attempted to recognize simulations, or desired forms, that organizations could emulate in a real situation. While many learning organization models are grounded in observations of organizations that apparently could be good at learning, others are banked more on theoretical principles, such as system dynamics or psychological learning theory, from which implications for design and implementation have been derived (Easterby-Smith & Araujo, 1999).

Levitt and March (1988) observe organizational learning based on three previously predominant approaches: First, organizations behave according to certain procedures; second, organizational works are history-oriented; and third, organizations are aim-oriented. Based on these presumptions, organizations learn by encrypting inferences from past events into routines that lead their behavior. The term "routine" is broad and has many meanings for organizations. It embraces all rules, regulations, procedures, strategies, cultures, beliefs, paradigms, and so on (Levitt & March, 1988). Levitt and March further argue that the experiential lessons of history can be gained by routines, and these lessons are accessible to organizations and their members. These organizational routines, however, may change due to feedback of experience within a community of other learning organizations. Argyris and Schon (1978) discussed that organizations fail to learn unless they can revise their theories of action. They further state that organizations construct their own theories of action for their followers. Two common theories were proposed: "espoused theories of action and theories-in-use" (Argyris & Schon, 1974, pp. 6–7). The espoused theories of action are used to rationalize behavior, while theory-in-use is employed to communicate how the espoused theory is actually working. The main distinction between these theories is shifting attention from the given information to one person to the acquired knowledge (Inglis et al., 2002). Argyris (1999) asserts that learning takes place under two situations. First, organizations acquire what they specified; it means their plan of action suits the real results. Second, learning takes place when there is an inconsistency between aims and outcomes, and then it is corrected; it means the inconsistency is converted into consistency.

Argyris and Schon (1974) developed two organizational learning models based on their theory of action. The first one is "single-loop learning," which is when the mismatches or problems are created or they are solved by changing actions, but underpinning facts are never questioned. This kind of learning, which has short-term implications, is referred to in the literature as repetitive, rote, or surface learning (Cope & Watts, 2000; Reynolds, 1997). Wolfe and Kolb (1984) argue that this is just "re-adjustment" instead of learning because the experience does not necessarily lead to changes in individual behavior and personal development or increased awareness.

The second model proposed by Argyris and Schon (1974) is "double-loop learning," which is when mismatches are corrected by investigating and altering the governing variables and then the current actions to lead to the new knowledge. This kind of learning is very important to stimulate fundamental changes and motivate the individual and organization to reflect on and inquire into not only their actions but also the reasons and values behind their behavior (Cope & Watts, 2000). It may also lead to a shift in the approach to which strategies and consequences are shaped and will lead to new aims and priorities (Pierre et al., 2011). The main goal in the second model is to help organizations exercise double-loop learning rather than single-loop learning to create a steady or tacit change in one's orientation or attitude. Nevertheless, the learning capability of organizations is dependent on the degree to which they are intended to learn from incidents as well as their organizational culture (Ritchie, 2004).

Ritchie et al. (2004) note the inability of local tourism organizations in the United Kingdom after the Foot and Mouth Outbreak to think long-term and predict future events. Therefore, educational theory and loop learning may give some insight into the nature of organizational learning from crises. Blackman and Henderson (2004) also researched organizational foresight, single-loop, and double-loop doubting. They argue that organizations need to doubt much more than they do. Few researchers, however, have examined the applicability of organizational learning in crisis management (Blackman & Ritchie, 2008; Pforr & Hosie, 2008; Ritchie, 2004). Smith (2001) indicates the essential role of double-loop learning (deep learning) to crisis and disaster management because it provides the hindsight through which desirable outcomes can be achieved. Pforr and Hosie (2008) posit that "organizational learning resulting from double-loop learning is a complex undertaking which takes time and commitment by all concerned to be achieved" (p. 258). When organizations have a continuing plan for learning opportunities about crisis management, it is very likely to lead to deep organizational learning.

Tourism crises and disasters

The term crisis originates from the Greek word "krisis," which means differentiation or decision (Glasser, 2003) and is applied in various contexts (Ghaderi et al., 2012; Laws & Prideaux, 2005). As the literature suggests, there is no universally accepted definition, but most analysts consent that a crisis is an unexpected event or occurrence that can interrupt normal operations and that necessitates immediate action from practitioners (Faulkner, 2001; Laws et al., 2007; Santana, 2004). It also has been defined as a turning point that can create loss or opportunity (Fink, 1986).

Analysts have differentiated crises from disasters and attributed the root cause of crises to factors that to some extent are self-inflicted, such as inept management or failure to adopt new changes, but disasters resulted from unpredictable changes over which an organization has little control (Faulkner, 2001; Ritchie, 2004; Santana, 2004). Nevertheless, disaster and crisis are terms that are sometimes used interchangeably (Faulkner, 2001; Ritchie, 2004), and one can evolve into the other within the tourism arena (Faulkner, 2001; Ritchie, 2008). At the same time, they are distinct (Drabek, 1995), and Faulkner (2001) observes that disasters usually owe their origin to external factors, exemplified by extreme weather. Crises are therefore by implication more amenable to control than disasters, and some can be avoided.

Many researchers have devised typologies of crises that can help manage them. Various classifications pertain to business crises and are based upon measures such as underlying reasons, gravity, form, and scale (Mitroff et al., 1987). Seymour and Moore (2000) identify cobra and python crises; the first, erupts suddenly, while the second creep up on an organization. Writing specifically about tourism, Glasser (2003) applies time pressure criteria to describe potential, latent, and acute crises. Other categorizations relate to the scope and magnitude (Laws & Prideaux, 2005) and cause (Henderson, 2007). Triggers are numerous and can be considered under the broad headings of economic, political, sociocultural, environmental, technological, and commercial, which act internally and externally.

It seems that the tourism industry is especially prone to crises, and Faulkner and Russell (1997) maintain that it exemplifies chaos theory, whereby even apparently stable structures and processes exist on the edge of chaos. Occurrences that might be judged minor have the power to precipitate instability and uncertainty, which endangers whole systems. All industries can, however, be deemed to be vulnerable to crisis and, according to Fink (1986), any organization not in crisis is in a pre-crisis mode. The tourism literature documented hundreds of human-induced crises and natural disasters that impacted the tourism industry. Crises such as the global economic crisis, various terrorist attacks that targeted tourists and the tourism industry, outbreaks of diseases such as SARS, H1N1, and Avian Flu, and the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami were among those events that affected travel and tourism globally. The study of tourism crises circulated around exploring the negative impacts of these events on businesses (Anderson, 2006; de Sausmarez, 2004; Faulkner, 2001; Henderson, 2007; Sonmez et al., 1999) and responses of industry stakeholders to the events (Faulkner & Vikulov, 2001; Ghaderi et al., 2012; Henderson, 2003a, 2007). Relatively little attention has been given to the notion of organizational learning and its relationship with tourism crisis management. While learning from crises can help in creating preparedness, negligence jeopardizes the organization's survival.

Tourism crisis management has increasingly become a recognized concept among academics and practitioners and evolved as a significant area of study in tourism management (Blackman & Ritchie, 2008; Faulkner, 2001; Santana, 2004). It has been defined as "an ongoing and extensive effort that organizations put in place in an attempt to understand and prevent crises and to effectively manage those that occur, taking into account in each step of their planning and training, activities, the interest of their stakeholders" (Santana, 2004, p. 308). The occurrence of a huge number of crisis events in the tourism industry makes it an area of concern for meticulous managers with a special focus on learning. Many conceptual and empirical studies, however, have highlighted the crucial role of learning in crisis and disaster management as a general discourse (e.g., Blackman & Ritchie, 2008; Elliott & Smith, 1997; Faulkner & Vikulov, 2001; Henderson, 2002; Simon & Pauchant, 2000; Wang, 2008). Results drawn from these studies suggest the significant contribution of learning to effective crisis management. In the case of the tourism industry, little research concentrated on organizational learning in tourism crisis management (Blackman & Ritchie, 2008; Faulkner, 2001; Henderson, 2002). Nevertheless, some research studies have remarked on the importance of organizational learning in the effectiveness of tourism crisis management. Findings from these studies also stress the necessity of learning in managing future crises. For instance, Faulkner and Vikulov (2001) discuss the Australia Day Floods of Katrina in which tourism operators had learned lessons from their previous disasters. Ritchie (2004) also speaks about the concept of single- and double-loop learning. He indicates that managers need to make effective decisions before a crisis affects them. Other researchers (e.g., Anderson, 2006; Henderson, 2003a; Laws & Prideaux, 2005; Laws et al., 2007; Miller & Ritchie, 2003; Pforr & Hosie, 2008; Prideaux, 1999; Santana, 2004) identified the role of learning in effective crisis management and preparedness. They further suggest that learning should be a significant outcome of crisis management. Although these researchers have not proposed any learning mechanisms or processes to effectively learn from crisis situations, their contribution to the subject shed a light for future research.

Theoretical framework

In this study, we adopted Wang's (2008) integrative model of organizational learning in crisis management as a theoretical and analytical framework. In this model, Wang incorporated major learning concepts from Huber (1991) and Schwandt and Marquardts (2000) (knowledge acquisition, knowledge diffusion, knowledge utilization reflection, and organizational memory). She also applied two concepts of the change model – unfreeze and refreeze – that were proposed by Lewin (1951) and the concept of unlearning from Hedberg (1981). Then, she used Mitroff's (1988, 2005) model of crisis management (Signal detection, Probing/preparation, Containment/damage limitation, Business recovery, Learning, and Redesign) to form her discussion. To avoid any unexpected complexity and confusion, the crisis management phases developed by Mitroff (1988–2005) were not graphically depicted in Wang's framework. She numbered all boxes and circles just for easing discussions, and none of them indicate any sequence of the components in the model (Figure 2.1). Wang (2008) noted that many organizations follow the common belief ("It will not happen to us") either because of their inability of discovering the warning signals or their assumption of denial threats. Having such a perspective calls for unlearning as the first step in organizational crisis management (Box 1). Unlearning is the process of "discarding knowledge" (Hedberg, 1981 cited in Huber, 1991, p. 104). It has been referred to as a process of giving up prevailing ideas, thinking outside the box, discarding previous beliefs, and symbolizing changes (Hedberg, 1981; Nystrom & Starbuck, 1984; Wang, 2008). However, the unlearning process is parallel to the unfreezing concept (Box 1) in the framework and indicates double-loop learning (Argyris & Scho, 1996).

Once organizations create a new culture with a new mindset, then organizational learning can be promoted. Having such a mentality assists organizations to discover early warning signals in their environment and be more prepared to face future crises (this indicates steps 1 and 2 in Mitroff's crisis management model: signal detection and preparation). The next steps (Boxes 2-3-4) in Wang's model are knowledge acquisition, knowledge diffusion, and knowledge utilization. In a crisis, organizations search for new knowledge that is appropriate for crisis situations. They gather all required information and share it with members in different departments. Then, they use the knowledge for actions and strategy formation to tackle the problem (Step 3 damage limitation in Mitroff's crisis management) (Wang, 2008). To ensure that organizations make informed decisions, have learned new knowledge, and become more prepared for the next crisis, reflection (Box 5) is imperative and should become a constant, ongoing activity in the crisis management process (Schon, 1984; Schwandt & Marquardt, 2000; Wang, 2008).

Organizational capability to accumulate and retrieve information is equally important (Wang, 2008, Box 6: organizational memory). Organizations usually store a great deal of soft and hard information on a routine basis and the same amounts of knowledge about how undertaking things are stored in the form of Standard Operating

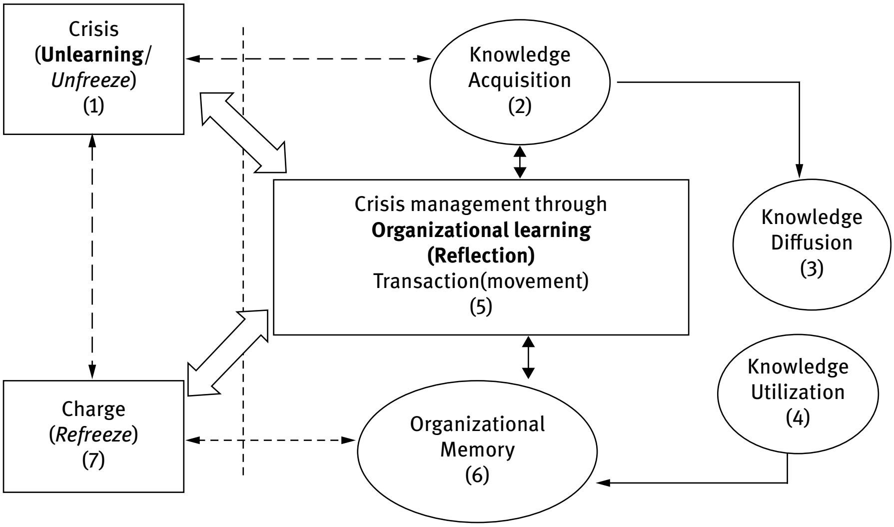

Figure 2.1: An Integrated Model of Organizational Learning for Crisis Management.
Source: Wang (2008)

Procedures (SOP) (Huber, 1991). Nevertheless, a large volume of information may not be stored in organizational memory due to the assumption that certain information may never be used in the future, or sometimes the information is stored but can hardly be retrieved (Huber, 1991). Therefore, while organizations have capabilities to learn from different crises (Mitroff, 2005, Step 5: learning in crisis management), poor or lack of organizational memory may hinder this learning. In the meantime, shortcomings in learning may influence the organization's ability to afford new knowledge that can assist in the redesign and restart of normal business activity (Steps 4 and 6: recovery and redesign stages of crisis management model). Therefore, the crucial role of organizational memory in organizational learning is highlighted (Huber, 1991), and organizations are encouraged to develop mechanisms to enhance organizational memory. Meanwhile, it is also important to recognize the barriers that hinder organizations to learn from crises and taking effective actions to overcome barriers to organizational learning. According to Wang (2008), changes, whether resulting in organizational learning or not, are inevitable in post-crisis (Box 7). These situations are depicted in Wang's model using a long vertical dotted line. Wang (2008) argued that without mindful organizational learning endeavors, a crisis will still unfreeze the current situation (Box 1), compel organizations to react (Box 5), and move into the refreezing stage (Box 7). Under this circumstance, organizations will respond to crises reactively. This condition calls for first-order change, which assists decision-makers to manage current policies and strategies effectively and efficiently (Alas, 2007; Bartunek, 1993). However, this form of change progresses through a chronological step-by-step measurement, guided by a clearly defined objective and regular and logical evaluations of an organization and its environment. The first-order change does not lead to revolution because it lacks the creativity to discover new strategic ideas (Hurst, 1986). This kind of change is not desired or welcomed by organizations that do not take a proactive approach to crisis management.

Nevertheless, with double-loop learning, sufficient preparation, and proactive response, organizations will become more alert to signals (Pearson & Mitroff, 1993) and more active in acquiring knowledge and developing contingency planning. As Wang (2008, p. 437) said, "Such practice before a real crisis may be considered as 'fire drills' to the organization with 'what if' solution" (p. 437). This indicates second-order change and calls for innovative actions to lead the changes (Alas, 2007). Adopting the above practices will enable tourism organizations to become more prepared for future crises, more flexible to change, and more able to effectively manage the crisis by using accumulated knowledge, formulated action plans, and contingency planning (Pearson & Clair, 1998). Finally, to guarantee a positive outcome and long-term development through crisis management, organizations must be actively involved in unlearning (Barnett & Pratt, 2000; Nystrom & Starbuck, 1984), vigorously share knowledge through effective communication (Pearson & Clair, 1998), and develop double-loop or in-depth learning at all levels with all members within the organization.

We apply Wang's framework (2008) to tourism crisis management through organizational learning for these reasons: First, Wang (2008) integrated the important concepts and constructs of organizational learning in crisis management. Because effective organizational learning and effective crisis management practices are intrinsically linked, this research contended that promoting organizational learning before, during, and after crises will most likely put organizations in a better position in detecting crises signals, developing action plans for preventing and handling a crisis, effectively learning from it, and applying new learning to improve future practice in crisis management. Second, unlike other developed models in tourism crisis management treating organizational learning as a separate stage (e.g., Blackman & Ritchie, 2008; Faulkner, 2001; Henderson, 2003b), this model highlights the dominating role and importance of learning at every stage of the tourism crisis management process.

Methodology

The qualitative research paradigm provides the most appropriate methods and techniques for data collection and analysis (Merriam, 2009). While focusing on meaning in the context, it requires a data collection tool that is sensitive to latent meaning when gathering and interpreting information. Merriam (2009) states that although qualitative research acknowledges some features in common, it is differentiated according to its disciplinary base, which qualitative research might draw from, how qualitative research might be designed, and what the intent of the research might be. For this study, we found qualitative research as an appropriate method to examine organizational learning in the context of tourism crisis management.

Sampling and participants

The study sample was selected based on the snowball sampling method. We chose snowball sampling through personal contact to help identify the most relevant and knowledgeable participants who were able to provide information-rich data (Patton, 2002). According to this method, participants are selected through referrals made among people who share or know of others who possess some characteristics that are of research interest (Biernacki & Waldorf, 1981). The sample size for this study was determined by using the criterion of "saturation" as defined by Patton (2007, p. 152): "At the point at which several additional participants fail to respond with new information that leads to the identification of additional themes, the researcher might conclude that the data collection process has become saturated." A total of 25 key industry stakeholders in different tourism sectors from Malaysia participated in this study. They are from five tourism sectors: hotels, airlines, tourist attractions, travel agents and tour operators, and the tourism authorities in Malaysia. The majority of respondents had high positions in their organizations, such as director, general manager, and president, although some were deputy chairman or unit managers.

The size of organizations was diverse, ranging from small size travel agencies to medium and large-sized enterprises, such as five-star international hotels and airlines. In addition, these organizations encompass a myriad of subcultures, which reflects their structural complexity and occupational differentiation (Paraskevas et al., 2013). The leadership styles of these organizations were different, ranging from a traditional autocratic style to democratic, free reign, and the combination of all these styles. As an initial step to finding the first participant, we referred to the Ministry of Tourism in Putrajaya, which is the headquarters and main responsible government organization for tourism in Malaysia. At this stage, we interviewed the person in charge of tourism crisis management and asked their assistance to find the next resourceful person. We were directed towards potential participants from different sectors, such as the hotel association, tour and travel agent association, the state tourism authorities, and the association of tourist attractions and airlines. Participants had a minimum of 5–35 years of experience in different sectors in the travel and tourism industry. Of 25 participants, four were females and the remaining 21 were males.

Data were collected primarily through face-to-face interviews with semi-structured questions in Malaysia (Kuala Lumpur, Putrajaya, Penang, Langkawi, Sabah, and Sarawak). These destinations are popular hubs for tourists and have experienced different crises within their tourism industry (de Sausmarez, 2004; Ghaderi et al., 2012; Lean & Smyth, 2009). Interviews lasted from 30 to 65 minutes and were mainly recorded on tape, although manual notes were made of four interviews at the request of the interviewees. A diverse range of questions considering the effects of crises on the tourism industry, crisis management and response of organizations in pre-crisis, during and post-crisis, organizational learning, adaptation to new changes, preparedness of tourism organizations, and barriers to effective learning were asked.

Data analysis

All the interviews were transcribed verbatim for analysis. Thematic analysis and coding techniques were used to identify the main themes across all the interview transcripts. Braun and Clarke (2006) state that thematic analysis offers an accessible and theoretically flexible approach to analyzing qualitative data. According to this method, transcribed materials are read by the researchers to get immersed in-depth and breadth of the content, and then the interesting features of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006) in a systematic manner across the entire data set are coded. Extensive searching for potential themes was started, and then all data relevant to each potential theme were gathered. At another stage, theme reviewing was made to check whether the identified themes were working with the coded extracts and the entire data set and generating a thematic map of the analysis. Defining and naming themes was another stage to purify the particulars of each theme and the general narrative the analysis tells, creating clear definitions and names for each theme. At the final stage, the results were released relating back to the research questions, literature review, and the research objectives. To guide the analysis, Wang's (2008) model served as the analytical framework for this study.

Research findings and discussion

We gathered a wide range and substantial amount of information from interviews with key industry leaders in Malaysia's tourism sector. This section reports major themes supported by direct quotations from the study participants. It also discusses these themes in relation with the current literature.

Crises as an inevitable event for tourism organizations

Participants were asked to share their perceptions of tourism crises and describe their experiences in managing these events. Almost all the participants indicated that they have experienced at least one crisis in their organizations in various forms. Participants further asserted that crises are inevitable in tourism businesses, and organizations are prone to these uncertainties. Therefore, organizations should prepare themselves to face any crisis. One participant five-star hotel manager stated, ". . . everyone who is working in tourism knows that they work in a very vulnerable industry and they have to prepare themselves for any crisis events." This vulnerability reveals the intrinsic nature of the tourism industry as a people industry; because it deals with the human aspects including safety and security, economic and financial problems, and customer behavior changes. This perspective was supported by almost all the study participants, and it was best summarized by one participant's remark: "We are dealing with people and as we know people are exposed to various threats . . ., so we know that it will happen to us as well."

Nevertheless, when they were asked about crisis management and preparedness plans, of the 25 participants, less than half of them indicated that they have a formal crisis or a disaster management plan to deal with crises, while a majority of them admitted not having such formal plans or guidelines. However, this indicates single-loop learning from previous crises. The notion of single-loop learning asserts that although organizations have experienced crises in the past, they still prefer to apply the strategies that were already known and the ad hoc response rather than having crisis management and preparedness plans. Unlike participants in the hotel and airline sectors, respondents from tour operators and travel agents reported no specific crisis management plans in their organizations. Several hotels and airlines in this study were equipped with crisis management or contingency planning in dealing with uncertainties. The hotels and airlines were assumed more prepared to tackle possible risks through launching crisis or disaster management plans. The lack of crisis management and contingencies in some sectors, such as government organizations and travel agencies, highlights the grave concern of unpreparedness among the tourism industry in general.

Although participants in this study claimed that they had experienced several crisis situations, they also shared many similar sentiments such as the following: "It will not happen to us"; "We are a quite blessed destination"; and "We are a safe destination." These remarks revealed their attitude toward crises and may partially explain why most of the country's tourism industry players are unprepared for crisis events. As a result, it is not surprising to hear the following confession from one participant from a government tourism organization: "I admit that we had not looked into a tourism crisis management plan and no budget has been allocated to it." When asked about how they learn from managing crises, the participants provided remarkably different responses. Among the five sectors included in this study, it appears that organizational learning mostly occurred in two of them – hotels and airlines. Exploring the reasons by which why little learning has occurred among other subset organizations, several points are worth noting. First, unlike hotels and airlines that had learning procedures and guidelines in place due to their susceptible nature to disasters, other subset organizations lacked such merits and skills to record their learning. Second, the study revealed that most organizations with little learning were small-size firms that have not had sufficient resources to think about organizational learning. Third, the tendency towards organizational learning in tourism crisis management in these organizations was mainly single-loop learning rather than double-loop or in-depth learning.

Organizational learning process in tourism crisis management

Using the study's framework, respondents outlined the ways and procedures by which they have learned lessons in crises. The analysis of the responses further revealed that there are mainly six steps in a learning process within the organization. The findings also indicate that knowledge is a crucial input at every stage of tourism crisis management.

Knowledge acquisition

Tourism organizations, regardless of their size and type, strive for new knowledge in crisis situations. They consequentially scan the environment and research to gather appropriate information. They obtain some of their knowledge through direct experiences, such as trial-and-error experimentation and organizational search (Levitt & March, 1988). Tourism organizations interact with their counterparts in searching information, and the information will be transferred to members. They use this knowledge in detecting warning signals as the first step in the crisis management model (Mitroff, 2005, 1988). Our interviews revealed that tourism organizations in Malaysia were attempting to acquire new knowledge when they faced crises. Nevertheless, few could develop skills in acquiring and creating knowledge, and at the same time, few were successful in applying that knowledge to their activities and behavior (Garvin, 1993). While some sectors such as airlines and hotels had standard procedures to gather new knowledge, others such as travel agents, tour operators, government organizations, and tourist attractions failed to have such procedures and gathered new information from time to time. One respondent from the travel agent sector admitted: "To tell you the truth, we do not have the defined procedures for such purposes [knowledge acquisition], we gather what we need to solve the problem from any possible sources." Those organizations that had their own procedures in knowledge acquisition have learned to collect necessary information on the nature of threats that are exposed to them and detect the early warning signals. In the case of airlines, for example, early warning signals could be detected at the airports, before departures. This can be understood from comments given by a respondent in the airline sector: "All security checks from the entry point to the end are in line with signal detection practice to ensure the least possibility of crisis occurrence." This is a pre-crisis situation in which all efforts are being made to detect the potential threats. However, only 10 out of 25 participants in this study practiced knowledge acquisition to signal detection in the pre-crisis situation. The majority of respondents indicate that they did not feel the need to collect information in pre-crisis as there are a variety of signals in the environment to be detected. Obtaining knowledge about these signals needs investment in time and money. One participant from the hotel sector asserted: "We are a small part of this big industry; we don't have time and resources to serve and find threats which we are unsure happening to us." With such reluctance of some stakeholders to allocate resources helping them to identify crisis signals in the environment, it is no doubt that these organizations are likely to be unprepared for and incapable of handling future challenges.

Knowledge diffusion

Information diffusion is a determinant of both the confirmation and prevalence of organizational learning (Huber, 1991). Tourism organizations commonly develop new knowledge by accumulating all information from other organizational departments. In order to prepare every department of an organization, knowledge should not only be obtained but also shared with all organizational members. An interesting result was that an organization will share its knowledge only with its members rather than the whole travel sector. The majority of respondents confirmed that they only shared their knowledge with members in the same profession rather than all industry players. However, they believed that sharing knowledge can facilitate crisis preparation and the promotion of organizational learning. Organizations that shared their knowledge with other sectors seemed to be more prepared for future crises. Of those organizations that shared their information, the majority believed in sharing with other members in the same profession, and the remaining deemed to share within the industry. One study participant from the hotel sector stated, "We at the corporate level share our experiences with each other. We diffuse our information in seminars, meetings, workshops. These empowering gatherings make us to be prepared for any uncertainties." A key consideration about knowledge distribution in the process of crisis management is how fast the distribution channels can diffuse the knowledge among members and how precisely they are in information delivery. Several participants from all sectors complained about the slowness and ineffectiveness of distribution channels in diffusing information. One manager from the tourist attraction sector claimed: "We are unable to use the experience of other colleagues in different sectors because we usually do not have monthly, weekly or quarterly gatherings." However, other participants from hotels were satisfied with the distribution of knowledge within their corporate sector. According to these managers, the hotel sector had their own systems that routinely index and store hard information and share with each other. Nevertheless, organizations sometimes really do not know what information they have and where they have stored it. But with distribution mechanisms, knowledge can be easily retrieved and used for learning purposes. Therefore, as Huber (1991) noted, knowledge distribution leads to more widely based organizational learning. Uniting knowledge from different subunits leads to not only new information but also a new understanding of the crisis and thus organizational preparedness.

Knowledge utilization

Accumulated knowledge does not benefit organizations unless it can be utilized for different purposes. Many tourism organizations apply their knowledge and experiences when a crisis happened to them. They will use this knowledge to tackle the negative impacts as a form of policy and decision making, action plans, and strategies. Our respondents asserted that when there is a crisis they will utilize whatever they have learned to mitigate the negative impacts. The majority of participants proclaimed that they would utilize their knowledge in the form of crisis action plans or strategy development. One manager from the travel agent sector claimed, "We have practical information to share and use, but tourism authorities usually do not care about it." The finding of this study revealed that unlike their claim for acquiring knowledge in crises, tourism stakeholders in Malaysia did not utilize their knowledge during the crises as much as expected. There could be many reasons for such inadequate knowledge utilization. One main reason is the lack of organizational memory to store the knowledge. One respondent from the tour operator sector said: "During crises we really could not remember what information we had . . ., it's perhaps because crises created panics and we were unable to find the right source of information." None of the participants from tourism authorities reported that their organization stored or used knowledge in the case of crises. This is, somehow, due to the non-anticipation of future needs for specific knowledge, membership attrition, specialization, and departmentalization. Unlike tourism authorities in this study, some participants from hotels and airlines seemed to maximize the usage of knowledge in crises. One airline manager said, "The nature of our business will require to utilize maximum knowledge that we have . . . ., our actions should be immediate and without delay to limit the negative impacts." He continued, "When we experienced the SARS in Malaysia, we used our information and got help from the Ministry of health to control the diseases. We established required equipment in airports to check suspected travelers." Knowledge utilization is commonly used in the third stage of the crisis management model, damage limitation, as suggested by Mitroff (1988, 2005). At this stage, the effects of the crisis are felt, and organizations need to make immediate decisions and develop strategies to mitigate the negative impacts.

Reflection

Reflection is commonly understood as a process whereby we cautiously consider the knowledge, beliefs, assumptions, actions, and processes that impact our behavior to understand our experiences (Preskill & Torres, 1999). Three kinds of reflection have been suggested by Mezirow (1991): content reflection, process reflection, and premise reflection. Content reflection focuses on the description or content of a problem, while process reflection concentrates on analyzing the course of actions and strategies that are being used to clear up the problem. The premise reflection centers on the latent assumptions that we had on the problem. In order to understand that an organization has taken the right decisions, lessons learned, and applied appropriate strategies, a critical reflection is imperative, and it should be a constant practice of crisis management. Reflection, as Argyris and Schon (1978) defined, is comparing the espoused theories-in-action and the actual theories-in-use. While the espoused theory is about the justification of a specific pattern of activity, the actual theory-in-use is the actual manifestation of the performance of the given activity. In the case of tourism crisis management in Malaysia, the participants spoke about this matter very cautiously. Most of the interviewed managers (18 out of 25) claimed that they had no reflection in and on actions that were taken. Several barriers might impede the critical reflection in tourism organizations. Preskill and Torres (1999) discuss three possible barriers on reflection, such as "performance pressure," "competency traps," and the absence of a learning structure (Shaw & Perkins, 1991). This study revealed another type of barrier – that is, "relocation of managers and employees." The frequency of relocation of managers in governmental organizations led to reflection negligence. Of those managers that were interviewed, only a few from private companies had done critical reflection on actions and decisions they previously made. This study also showed that reflection barriers in privately managed tourism organizations were minimized as managers paid more attention to crisis prevention. What are important in reflection are the discrepancies between the espoused theory of action and the actual theory-in-use. As Argyris (1976) posited, sometimes leaders tend to obtain little genuine feedback, and others would tend not to violate their values and disturb the accepted structure. Therefore, what the leaders create would be accepted with minimum opposition.

In this study, reflection did not generate significant learning. However, critical reflection involves challenging the established and habitual patterns of organizational culture. In this sense, organizational members will question the values and beliefs predominant in the organization. This situation is described in the literature as double-loop learning. This study showed that few industry managers critically evaluated their actions and thus experienced double-loop learning. As tourism is a dynamic industry and patterns and trends are constantly changing, reflection must become an ongoing activity.

Organizational memory

Many researchers argue that knowledge is embedded in an organization's routines, standard operating procedures, and culture (Argote, 2005; Levitt & March, 1988), while others believe that knowledge is also created in chaotic conditions (Nonaka et al., 1998). However, it does not matter whether the knowledge is created through standard operating procedures (SOPs) or a crisis situation; it should be stored in the organization's memory. Lack of organizational memory not only impedes organizational learning but also affects the knowledge creation capability of organizations, which is necessary for the renewal of tourism crisis management systems. Improving organizational memory capability, conversely, assists crisis-affected organizations to store their learning for future applications. The industry managers claimed that during crises they have attempted to develop procedures, structures, and cultures for organizational memory enhancement, but few were successful. One participant from the hotel sector said, "We always attempt to minimize the employee turnover to keep the knowledge acquired by individuals and encourage a culture of organizational learning rather than individual learning. This helped to expand our organizational memory." The quality of organizational memory can help in unlearning past SOPs, which is needed for exercising double-loop learning. Some managers complained of knowledge loss, which is related to the inability to integrate new knowledge into the organization once the main problem is removed (de Holan & Philips, 2011). This is because organizational memory is difficult to maintain (Racherla & Hu, 2009). One tour operator commented: "Sometimes we cannot find what information we have . . ., and, our system cannot bring new knowledge." However, the proposal that knowledge accumulated by organizations can also deteriorate or decay has become a grave concern of the industry managers in the crisis situations. Sometimes, the industry managers inaccurately believe that they have the required knowledge to make appropriate decisions. They trust in their organizational memory, but when they face the real situation, this memory may not be available to other organizational members in a timely fashion. This challenge is expressed by one manager in the travel agent sector: "Several times we faced severe challenges, but we failed to retrieve the required information to make the right decisions." This indicates that although organizations had sufficient information, they did not have the adequate mechanisms to use it. Huber (1991) argued that the human components of organizational memory are often less than satisfactory, which results from deficiencies of humans as repositories of organizational knowledge.

Crisis and organizational change

Many researchers argue that while crises can create negative impacts, they may serve as a triggering point for positive change and learning (Faulkner, 2001; Ritchie, 2004; Simon & Pauchant, 2000; Wang, 2008). Confronting a crisis may provide a unique opportunity for organizational members to change their behavior, their way of thinking, and even challenge the values and norms of an organization. Sometimes organizations come to the decision that the current structures and procedures are not sufficiently appropriate for a new setting, and hence, they need to be changed (Simon & Pauchant, 2000). There is a paradox point here. While a crisis is usually accompanied by strong feelings of anxiety, tensions, dubiousness, and a sense of loss and confusion that may cause resistance to change, paradoxically, crises can also generate positive change (Bartunek & Moch, 1994; Wang, 2008). For example, as Laws et al. (2007) noted, although the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami created terrible trauma and feelings of anxiety among affected areas, there were great lessons that had been learned for future disaster management and positive change, respectively. This process is intended to continually appraise and learn from the current situation, defining the outlook and planning to reach goals through the implementation of well-developed schemes.

Our interviews suggest that change, either positive or negative, is mandatory, but the positive changes created opportunities for organizations to reappraise and reevaluate their organizational culture, structure, mission, values, and beliefs. One participant from the hotel sector said, "After experiencing any crisis we look into the positive changes in our organization to re-evaluate our decisions and plans . . ." Organizational change will go through a defined process. We found an increasing tendency from the industry players towards new changes in their organizations and movement from a defensive retreat to acceptance that is equal to the unfreezing phase as depicted in Wang's (2008) model. According to the interviewees, the time they needed to adapt to the changes was considerably shorter compared to other businesses. This is because of the intrinsically volatile nature of travel and the tourism industry, which changes every day.

Conclusion

As revealed by this study, the tourism industry in Malaysia has been affected by various regional and global crises. Nevertheless, few organizations have had a written crisis management plan or any contingency planning. The reason why few organizations had a formal crisis management plan can be found in their attitudes towards a reactive response to the crises. Some industry managers did not see the necessity of having a formal plan for crisis management but rather kept unwritten plans. This study further revealed that tourism organizations are concerned about their business continuity, yet they did not reach a common agreement on crisis management in their respective organizations. This dissent resulted from the fragmented and diverse nature of the tourism industry, which includes many both profit and nonprofit organizations in crisis management. For instance, tour operators and travel agent businesses are more flexible than hotels, and at the time of crises when inbound tourism ceases, outbound tourism will be targeted to compensate for losses. Another reason can be that the hospitality and tourism industry is dominated by independent small- and middle-sized enterprises that most often do not possess sufficient resources or tools to create a crisis plan (Racherla & Hu, 2009). Those highly crisis-prone organizations, such as the airlines and hotel chains, have set up their own crisis or disaster management plans, already experienced various crises, and focused on double-loop organizational learning compared to those organizations that are relatively less prone to crises, such as travel agencies and governmental organizations. This is because some organizations, like airlines, require nearly error-free operations all the time; otherwise, they are capable of experiencing crises (Weick & Roberts, 1993).

Moreover, organizational learning from tourism crisis management was largely overlooked. Several reasons can be mentioned, but the lack of learning culture in tourism organizations and undefined procedures of learning in crisis management were significant justifications. In addition, organizational learning occurs when organization members share their insights, knowledge, and mental models (Stata, 1989) with other collaborative networks of organizations and put in place their resources to prepare for future crises. This requires unlearning of previous beliefs primarily as a way to make room for new knowledge. Unlearning or discarding old information for new knowledge was a barrier to double-loop learning in tourism organizations.

Our interviews revealed that organizations engaged primarily in single-loop learning rather than in-depth or double-loop learning. One insight we can draw from this finding is that past learning and rigidity of core belief inhibited new learning in the majority of tourism organizations. However, to develop learning capability, organizations must distinguish between unlearning what they know and trying to learn new knowledge in defining procedures. The industry practitioners can then make more knowledgeable assessments about how to present capabilities realize or inhibit learning and whether barriers to improved performance exist because of what is being learned versus how learning takes place (Dibella, 2011). We think that the industry managers can meld current thinking in practicing organizational learning with the many advances in information technologies and their associated tools. Regarding the level of preparedness among tourism industry players in Malaysia, the finding suggests that the majority of organizations claimed their preparedness for future crises. However, some did not have contingency planning or preparedness programs. This raises a grave concern in the country's tourism industry in a way that these organizations may not be proactive enough in coping with future crises. Therefore, the future direction of tourism crisis planning in Malaysia should be circulated around crisis preparation programs to ensure the sustainability of tourism businesses in the future.

The study also highlighted the importance of the organizational learning process of knowledge acquisition, knowledge diffusion, knowledge utilization, organizational memory, and reflection in managing crises. Despite the importance of these processes in crisis management, surprisingly little research and focus have been given to tourism and the travel industry. It appears that organizational learning is not carried out in a well-managed and defined way, reducing the capability of tourism organizations to create new knowledge to help future crisis management. Incorporating various processes of organizational learning in tourism crisis management, we echoed Wang's (2008) call for the promotion of organizational learning in all crisis management stages rather than only in the final stage of crisis management.

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3 Crisis knowledge in tourism: Types, flows, and governance

Introduction

The 21st century business environment has entered a period of rapid and unexpected change, the like of which the corporate world has never witnessed before.[1] Hitt (1998, p. 299) suggests "we are on the precipice of an epoch" where knowledge, globalization, intense competition, environmental turbulence and uncertainty, rapid and ubiquitous change, and both information and technological revolutions have carved a new competitive landscape. This knowledge economy era, or "the age of intellect" (Carroll & Tansey, 2000, p. 296) is an economy where knowledge is not only a key characteristic of post-industrial societies but also the critical resource "and driver of economic development and success for nations, companies and individuals alike" (Rylander, 2009, p. 1).

The survival of organizations is no longer dependent upon their tangible resources but rather on the management of intangible knowledge capital. Klein (2008) argues that in this new economy the only sustainable advantage is what an organization knows, how it can utilize what it knows and how fast it can learn something new. Weick (2001) goes further by stating that the way knowledge is managed within an organization is key to its resilience, i.e., its ability to withstand turbulence and bounce back from stresses and disruptions but also to develop new capabilities and even create new opportunities in light of adversity. He proposes an "attitude to wisdom" and suggests that to be wise is not to know particular facts but to know without excessive confidence or excessive cautiousness. An investigation of the Global Financial Crisis illustrates where the lack of such "attitude to wisdom," overconfidence, and "superior" or "imperfect" knowledge can lead organizations and, in effect, the global socioeconomic system (Clark, 2011).

The value of knowledge and the importance of knowledge management have also been acknowledged in the tourism management literature. For tourism organizations operating in a period of organizational adaptation, discontinuous change, more frequent crises, and the need to be competitive, knowledge management provides

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a useful conceptual framework and set of approaches (Cooper, 2006). The generation and exploitation of knowledge are viewed as critical for the innovation and development of new tourism products (Hjalager, 2002; Weidenfeld, Williams, & Butler, 2010); for the effective management of hotels (Bouncken & Sungsoo, 2002); for tourism destination management (Xiao & Smith, 2007); to understand how networks of tourism organizations interact to produce tourism services (Cooper, Baggio, & Scott, 2010) and also for effective tourism crisis management (Blackman, Kennedy, & Ritchie, 2011).

In an environment, however, where the tourism industry is increasingly exposed to disruptions, stresses, and crises, tourism academics have developed and presented several valuable frameworks for the management of disasters (Faulkner, 2001; Paraskevas & Arendell, 2007; Ritchie 2004) although more emphasis was put on destination image recovery and recovery marketing (Armstrong & Ritchie, 2008; Beirman, 2003). Surprisingly, in an era when the industry is facing a series of prolonged crises such as climate change, global recession, widespread political instability, etc. with highly complex impacts and needs a framework for the development and governance of crisis knowledge, only a few attempts were made by academics to explore the knowledge aspects of crises and disasters (Blackman & Ritchie, 2008; Blackman et al., 2011).

This chapter aims at narrowing this gap by identifying the types of crisis knowledge tourism organizations employ in the advent of a crisis and by exploring the crisis knowledge management processes and flows within these organizations. It also explores the ways that organizational factors such as leadership, structure, culture, and communication influence these processes and flows.

Knowledge management and crisis

Polanyi (1966) argues that there are two types of knowledge: tacit and explicit. Tacit knowledge is "a non-linguistic, non-numerical form of knowledge that is highly personal and context-specific and deeply rooted in individual experiences, ideas, values and emotions" (Gourlay, 2002, p. 2). Gore and Gore (1999) suggest that tacit knowledge consists of two key components: technical tacit knowledge and cognitive tacit knowledge. First, technical tacit knowledge encapsulates information, expertise, knowledge, and skills that are developed and utilized. Second, cognitive tacit knowledge encompasses implicit perceptions, beliefs, mental models, and values so deeply ingrained in individuals that they become a natural part of what individuals are, think, and do and, more often than not, is taken for granted. As tacit knowledge is acquired by an individual's internalized processes (such as experience, talent, and reflection) it cannot be taught, managed, speedily migrated, or transposed to competing organizations in the same way as explicit knowledge.

Explicit knowledge or encoded knowledge is the knowledge that is made manifest through language, symbols, objects, and artifacts. There are two types of explicit knowledge: a) object-based, which is manifest in the form of patents, technical drawings and blueprints, software code databases, statistical reports, and business plans and b) rule-based, which is expressed as routines, rules, and procedures (Choo, 1998). Knowledge management scholars advocate that explicit knowledge can be disseminated throughout the organization and be made available to large numbers of people more cost-effectively than tacit knowledge. It is more manageable for organizations, insofar as it can be codified, stored in databases and retrieved and exploited on demand, aided by the support of fast and reliable information and communication technologies (Smith, 2001).

Organizations can maximize the benefits of tacit and explicit knowledge if they manage both types in a systematic manner (Hansen, Nohria, & Tierney, 1999). They, therefore, have to develop appropriate strategies to not only manage knowledge flows but also manage knowledge per se (Schulz & Jobe, 2001). Two such strategies are codification, which emphasizes both the collection and organization of knowledge; and personalization, which focuses on human resources and communication processes. Johnson and Lundvall (2001, p.4) define codification as "a process of transforming knowledge into a format that makes it possible for knowledge to be stored and transformed as information." In the case of a personalization strategy, "knowledge is closely tied to the person who developed it and is shared primarily through direct person-to-person contact." (Hansen et al., 1999, p.107). Both definitions emphasize that knowledge is shared by contact with others through, for example, communities of practice, brainstorming sessions, exchange of dialogue between individuals and teams, or via storytelling. Edvarsson (2008) and Stonehouse and Pemberton (1999) state that organizations need to reconfigure their knowledge management structures, to ensure that the right knowledge gets to the right people at the right time.

This is particularly relevant for organizations when a crisis occurs, as relevant knowledge needs to be identified and applied quickly to a particular situation. However, there is little research that has explicitly linked knowledge and crisis management. In part, this is because the crisis management field is a relatively new area of research. Nonetheless, it has received significant attention, especially in the 1980s and the early 1990s when the frequency and magnitude of organizational crises, and the subsequent impacts, increased at an alarming rate. A series of crises and accidents such as Bhopal, Chernobyl, Challenger, Hillsborough, and Lockerbie attracted the interest of researchers from several disciplines resulting in the emergence of a rich, but relatively fragmented, literature. The majority of the crisis management studies published in this period focused on preparation/prevention, containment (damage limitation), and recovery, leaving the area of learning and the management of the resulting knowledge unexplored.

In this early period of crisis management research, two opposing views emerged in the literature known as Normal Accident Theory (Perrow, 1994) and High Reliability Theory (Rochlin, 1996). Normal Accident Theory (NAT) purports that modern organizations are exceedingly complex and consist of a high number of tightly coupled technical and human systems. Normal Accident theorists suggest that crises and disasters are unintentional but also that inevitable failures, or normal accidents, caused by the complexity of these systems lead to potentially destructive situations rapidly escalating beyond control and proliferating throughout the organization before anyone can understand what is happening and be able to intervene. Any crisis learning and knowledge is handicapped by the technical uncertainties and political barriers inherent in the complexity of these organizations (Sagan, 1993).

In contrast, High Reliability Theory (HRT) advocates that organizations can proactively control and reduce the risks of technical operations and avoid failures even in environments rich in the potential for error (Rochlin, 1996). It emphasizes good organizational design and management; safety as a priority; redundancy in both human and material resources; decentralized decision-making for proper and flexible responses to unexpected events; a "culture of reliability" through continuous training and simulation; and the understanding of complex organizational systems utilizing crisis knowledge management processes, including trial and error knowledge generation in the wake of near-miss events and accidents (Sagan, 1993). These two opposing views have given birth to a constructive dialogue that has brought the elements of organizational complexity, leadership, structure, and culture as well as operational and learning processes to the epicenter of crisis management literature. However, the discussion of how to effectively manage the knowledge generated from a crisis either directly or "vicariously" still remains limited (Nathan & Kovoor-Misra, 2002).

With the exception of airlines, hospitality and tourism organizations, in general, diverge substantially from being High Reliability Organizations (HROs). The industry overall is highly fragmented, consisting of a large number of often closely coupled organizations and encompassing a myriad of subcultures that reflect its structural complexity and occupational differentiation. All too often, middle managers' and line employees' objectives and practices do not conform with senior management's commitment to safety and quality, and some professional beliefs and norms clash with HRO norms (e.g., speedy service for higher customer satisfaction as opposed to double-checking of processes to ensure safety).

When examining a crisis, it is useful to consider crisis knowledge from two points of view of the organization: the resource-based view (Kraaijenbrink, Spender, & Groen, 2010) and the knowledge-based view (Nickerson & Zenger, 2004). This is because from the resource-based perspective knowledge can be viewed as one of the many unique resources and capabilities that an organization needs to acquire, deploy and control to increase its resilience to withstand turbulence, deal with crises and recover from them. Therefore, the questions asked in a crisis investigation would revolve around whether the organization had these resources in place including the appropriately defined action, procedures, and policies for knowledge creation and utilization which reflect the cognitivist approach to knowledge underpinning this view (Nickerson & Zenger, 2004).

In contrast, the knowledge-based view focuses on knowledge as the organization's key strategic resource. The knowledge-based view portrays the organization as a set of competencies and repositories of knowledge that, when leveraged, transferred, and subsequently exploited, enables them to effectively create and disseminate knowledge. Underpinned by the constructionist approach to knowledge which asserts that an organization cannot completely control knowledge but can merely facilitate a climate and infrastructure that enables knowledge resources to be managed, coordinated, and utilized (Nickerson & Zenger, 2004), the crisis investigation would look for answers to a different set of questions revolving around organizational leadership, structure, crisis culture and communication (Stonehouse & Pemberton, 1999) as well as the levels of social interaction between the individuals in the organization (Wenger, McDermott, & Snyder, 2002).

Organizational leadership is an important component in devising and maintaining a learning and knowledge culture, where leaders become "designers, teachers and stewards" (Senge, 1992, cited in Stonehouse & Pemberton, 1999, p. 137). Skyrme (2000) advocates that leaders should demonstrate "knowledge leadership" by encouraging the flow of knowledge among organizational members and the challenge of the status quo in organizations. Leaders need to be supportive of knowledge management initiatives, to embed a knowledge culture throughout the organization. Whilst recognizing the importance of creating an organization-wide knowledge culture, Mitroff (2004) also argued for "crisis leadership" which not only reacts to the crisis but also encourages a more proactive culture towards crisis and both forecasts and effectively manages all stages of a crisis. Appropriate crisis leadership is the underlying mindset, vision, and actions that will shape the infrastructure and the crisis strategies. These include flexible delegation of authority during crisis situations; constant training and review of crisis processes; systems of rewards for reporting and discovering errors; and non-resistance when it comes to changes with short- or long-term effects on organizational crisis preparedness (La Porte & Consolini, 1991; Rochlin, 1996).

Crisis management scholars view crisis culture as a subset of organizational culture dealing with the way people in an organization behave, communicate and perceive crises within their work settings (Pauchant & Mitroff, 1992). The crisis culture is partly inherent in the organization's members (shaped by their underlying values, beliefs, and attitudes) but is also influenced by the organization's leadership. In their "onion model" of crisis management, Pauchant and Mitroff (1992) place at its center the "individual," normally the organization's leader, and at the next layer crisis culture as a set of organizational beliefs and rationalizations, pretty much imposed by the individual or individuals in the center onto the rest of the organization, complemented by the relevant infrastructure, crisis plans and mechanisms. The underlying assumptions in this view of crisis culture are first that this culture is an attribute of an organization that can be broken down and described – in terms of artifacts, symbols, values, and unconscious archetypes (Schein, 1985); and second, that management can design strategies and impose rules and norms that can shape behavior within the organization. Senge (1990), on the other hand, encourages organizations to develop an enabling culture by going through a process of metanoia, or organizational catharsis, by unearthing deeply entrenched views and beliefs and changing accustomed ways of viewing and experiencing the world around them. The empowerment of individuals is vital, to encourage experimentation with new approaches to how business is conducted and the development and utilization of knowledge and skills (Stonehouse & Pemberton, 1999).

An organization's structure should also be designed and enabled for learning and knowledge. Flatter organizational structures tend to better assist the coordination and control of knowledge and are more appropriate to effective knowledge management as they aid communication and knowledge transfer (Stonehouse & Pemberton, 1999). This can present several challenges for the tourism industry which is characterized by high fragmentation, geographical dispersal, and diversity of activities favoring hierarchical rather than flat structures. However, with the development of networks of inter-organizational relationships such as alliances, partnerships, clusters, and communities of practice these challenges may be overcome (Cooper et al., 2010).

The way knowledge is stored and communicated is also central to the way an organization capitalizes upon its knowledge assets. Communication among different organizational stakeholder groups facilitates the flow of knowledge into decision-making and thus results in creative responses and the generation of new knowledge and ideas. It is enabled by checklists, decision guides, and procedures, aimed at dealing with a crisis, limiting its potential adverse consequences to the organization's employees, customers, assets, and constituencies, and ensuring the continuity of its mission-critical functions (Fink, 1986).

Given the importance of these dimensions of knowledge management in the effective response of tourism organizations and destinations to a crisis, this paper addresses the following questions: What are the types of knowledge that are utilized in responding to a tourism crisis? What are the appropriate knowledge management strategies and processes that are applied to respond to a tourism crisis? And how do organizational factors (leadership, culture, structure, and communication systems) influence the management of crisis knowledge?

The study

Since there is no clear framework on how crisis knowledge should be managed within an organization, this study adopted a social constructivist approach that explores multiple realities shaped by tangible and intangible mental constructions of executives who have experienced crises in their organizations and were able to discuss and propose ways for handling the "lessons learned" from these crises. We approached 32 tourism executives using a criterion sampling technique with three criteria (corporate level tourism professionals; being in charge or directly involved with decisions related to risk/crisis management; and having experienced at least one crisis incident in their organizations). A total of 21 executives from this sample agreed to participate in the study. The sample included roles as chief executive officer, chief information officer, corporate director of security, director of business resilience, director of communications, director of corporate affairs, director of security, and vice president risk management.

The study used the Critical Incident Technique (Flanagan, 1954) asking the participants to recall the "one" crisis that was so significant for them in (shaping their view of crisis management), that they had to think it over and over again many times in their lives with all its details.

Learning from crisis in practice

The participants identified different forms of crises, including terrorist attacks, food poisonings, and extreme weather phenomena. They also evaluated their "crisis management knowledge" at the time when the crisis hit their organizations as well as of the ways that they had acquired this knowledge and gave examples of different forms of knowledge generation at every single stage of crisis management. In almost every case, the learning was not the result of mere social interaction but also of testing existing knowledge in tabletop exercises and simulations (in the signal detection and prevention/preparedness stages) and of interaction with the dynamic environment of the crisis (containment and recovery stages). The framework illustrated in Figure 3.1 was developed based on the analysis and the discussion of the findings that illustrate the types of crisis knowledge, knowledge management strategies, and processes and the organizational factors that influence the overall governance of crisis knowledge.

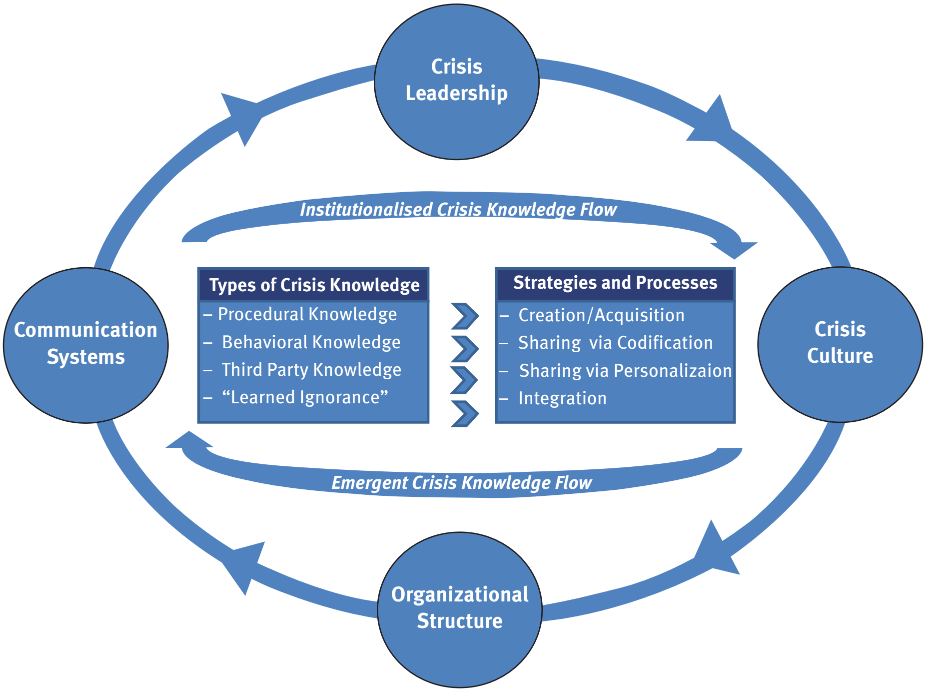

Figure 3.1: A framework for crisis knowledge governance.

Types of crisis knowledge

In the center of the framework in Figure 3.1 lie four types of crisis knowledge revealed by the analysis of the extracts relevant to the knowledge possessed at the time of the crisis. These crisis knowledge types were labeled as procedural, behavioral, third party, and "learned ignorance."

Procedural knowledge was possessed and displayed by respondents in organizations with clearly articulated crisis management plans which were also specific to the crisis they were facing. This knowledge involves steps on "how to" respond to a particular crisis with clearly articulated tasks regarding the crisis itself the operational continuity during the crisis and the media communication. In Choo's (1998) terms this is explicit knowledge that is primarily rule-based, including crisis management routines, rules, and procedures, but can also be object-based including reports, and readings of gauges indicating deviations from acceptable standards. Normally procedural knowledge is also rehearsed in exercises undertaken to ensure alignment with the standards of response. This type of knowledge was favored by organizations in our sample who took a HRT approach to crisis knowledge management, i.e., some hotel groups but more particularly the airlines.

Contrary to the common belief that explicit knowledge is a major source of competitive advantage (Hedlund & Nonaka, 1993), in crisis situations, procedural knowledge alone and strict adherence to standards as prescribed by the crisis management plan may become problematic. In the case of a simultaneous food poisoning in 13 properties of a hotel group due to contamination by the bacterium "vibrio parahaemolyticus" tiger prawns served raw in the hotels' sushi buffet, a well planned and exercised response failed because, by following "religiously" every step of the procedure, the respondents were too slow in responding to the varying levels of crisis in different properties.

Procedural knowledge alone, therefore, runs the risk of becoming inflexible and may lead to the inappropriate level of crisis response altogether. Commenting on "lessons learned" from this crisis, the respondent actually indicated a second type of knowledge required in any crisis situation.

> If there is one lesson to be learned from this crisis, is that we should spend more time in training our managers on how to respond to a crisis, set some general rules, and then trust their judgment, let them do what they think is appropriate. They should be more than capable to deal with situations like this and, if they need support, we will be there for them
>
> (Hotel Group, Chief Executive Officer).

Behavioral knowledge, therefore, is the second type of crisis knowledge shaped both formally through the knowledge of organizational crisis management standards, procedures, and mechanisms and informally through social interactions with peers, customers, suppliers, and partners. Several advocates of behavioral knowledge among the respondents emphasized its superiority over the procedural and often used the term "simple rules" in their discourse.

> You cannot say to the members of your staff 'this is what we want you to do or not do'. You have to say 'this is how we want you to be'. If you give them a solid foundation with a few simple rules, it will be easier to assimilate them into the culture you want to create
>
> (Destination Management Organization, Director of Communications).

Some went a step further advising that sophisticated training aiming at procedural knowledge may not be effective:

> We expect the General Manager to be able to resolve the situation by themselves, in collaboration with the authorities and we provide support and guidance only if requested. Our main role is to provide them with tools that will help them make the right decision. We are trying to give them some simple guidelines and tools to deal with this complex issue. We are not looking for sophisticated training: a line employee or a general manager cannot become a terrorism expert. With the turnover in our industry, this would never be effective
>
> (Hotel Group, Vice President Corporate Safety and Security).

This is a much more complex form of knowledge in that a part of it may be shared by many in the organization, but another part is individual, determined by factors such as the individual's psychology, personal judgment, risk attitude and, belief system. These factors contribute to differences in behavioral knowledge and lead to the individuality of behavior during a crisis. In that sense, it can be both explicit knowledge – codified, according to Johnson and Lundvall (2001), in policies and training about how one should behave in a crisis situation – and tacit (by shaping and replicating "role model" behavior or by filtering model behaviors through a personalization process.

> We train staff in crisis management following the 'One-Two-Three cycle'. Step One of the cycle is 'report anything you feel suspicious, abnormal or presenting a risk for the hotel and its people' to the next level of command. Step Two is 'minimize the risk', by evacuating the premises, restricting access to the risk, etc. Step Three is 'solve the problem' which also involves making sure that the situation is resolved. Resolution will vary depending on the individual but we know that there is not only one correct way
>
> (Hotel Group, Vice President Corporate Safety and Security).

Learned ignorance (from the work of the catholic cardinal Nicolaus Cusanus "De Docta Ignorantia") is a third type of knowledge that emerges in crisis situations. This is the "knowledge of no-knowledge", i.e., the realization that the individual does not possess the knowledge needed to define the crisis or to deal with it. This condition of "knowing what you do not know" correlates with the externalization of the individual's uncertainty from what a respondent described as "known unknowns" and "unknown unknowns." This distinction of uncertainty is akin to what risk scholars call stochastic uncertainty and structural uncertainty (see Helton, 1994; Rowe, 1994). In the former, the probabilities for a range of response outcomes are known, whereas in the latter they are ambiguous. Consequently, learned ignorance evokes two types of action.

The first is an understanding of both what knowledge exists and what knowledge is needed to fill the gap so that the crisis – a "known unknown" – can swiftly be reframed and dealt with. The search for such knowledge can be undertaken within or outside the organization. Several proponents of crisis knowledge repositories emphasized the usefulness of such databases in situations of learned ignorance as they would also offer a repertoire of responses for a particular time and thus make crisis response faster.

> The threat was downplayed in this meeting. Nevertheless, we decided to inform our Internet service provider (ISP) and the police cybercrime unit about it and two members of the team were assigned with the task to explore some off-the-shelf solutions that had recently been developed specifically to fight DoS [Denial of Service] attacks and buy the best one. We felt confident that these steps would protect us (Hotel Group, Chief Information Officer).

The second is speculative action and experimentation due to lack of comprehension of the crisis (reasoning from a position of ignorance facing an "unknown unknown"):

> We realized that this is not an ordinary crisis when the pilot said that all four engines had failed leaving only critical systems on backup electrical power. This is something we had never encountered before and we had to make decisions in the dark. We did not know how the ash cloud could have affected the systems and had to try two or three different things while the aircraft was losing altitude. Several attempts to restart the engines was one of them (Airline, Director of Business Resilience).

Third-party knowledge reflected in expert knowledge that exists outside the organization is the fourth type of crisis knowledge resulting from identified learned ignorance. This type of knowledge may be available for internalization or could remain external and just be used for the resolution of a crisis.

> When we realized that this attack was beyond our capabilities we turned to an IT security specialist. [. . .] The security specialist had a plan on how to build our defense but our infrastructure was not enough for this plan to be executed. In order to protect ourselves from this threat we had to have an infrastructure which was at least equal with the attackers'. For that, we had to involve our ISP and all of us together were able to build a defense network against the attackers (Hotel Group, Chief Information Officer).

It should be pointed out, however, that these four types of crisis knowledge do not have clearly delineated boundaries, since knowledge that may seem procedural may also have behavioral aspects or contain information about third-party knowledge and vice versa. Some will perceive only the procedural aspects of this bundle and others more or all aspects of it.

Crisis knowledge management flows, strategies and processes

Moving to the second box of the framework in Figure 3.1, we listed the ways that respondents indicated that crisis knowledge enters their organizations, the ways it is transferred or shared between constituents and stakeholders, and the way that it is assimilated and becomes part of the organization's identity and existence. The analysis of the responses further showed that there are mainly two flows of knowledge within the organization: the first is the flow of institutionalized crisis knowledge and the second is the flow of emergent crisis knowledge.

Most participants brought examples of how prior knowledge (or lack of it) influenced their decision-making during the critical incidents they experienced. They, therefore, found it imperative that explicit knowledge was created from crises that the organization has experienced itself, knowledge gained from crises that other organizations went through (Nathan & Kovoor-Misra, 2002), and knowledge acquired from expert third parties should be properly documented and stored in the organization's knowledge repositories. The flow of institutionalized crisis knowledge begins from these repositories and is all about the sharing and integration of this knowledge. Most participants associated this flow of knowledge with terms such as "scripts," "frames," "standard operating procedures," "posters," "courses," "ten-minute-trainers," "pocket memos," i.e., what Schulz and Jobe (1998) call codified knowledge being disseminated throughout the organization. However, this codification is appropriate only for certain types of knowledge that can be explicitly described (Johnson & Lundvall, 2001).

When it came to tacit knowledge it became apparent that personalization strategies were favored by participants who talked more about the provision of conditions that enable such dissemination through "molecular structures," "enhancement of social networks," and "scenario planning retreats." These participants emphasized the role of human "knowledge carriers" in both sharing and integration processes, particularly of behavioral knowledge. The Vice President Business Continuity of a hotel group, for example, noted that they created and shared crisis knowledge through the adoption of a "molecular" structure in crisis response. They pull together people with a cross-section of skills from various regions in which the group operates and form a team that would deal with a specific crisis. Once adequate levels of interaction and knowledge creation within this structure are achieved, the individuals are transferred to new areas, thus "cross-pollinating the organization with the newly created knowledge."

The role of social interaction (Wenger et al., 2002) becomes even more important in the second flow of knowledge within the organization, that of emergent crisis knowledge. Such knowledge is created under conditions of real uncertainty (e.g., an actual crisis situation) or a simulated one (e.g., scenario planning or crisis plan testing). Here learned ignorance evokes the shift from "know what and know how" to "know who has the knowledge" (Hotel Group, Vice President Business Continuity). Clearly, this flow is about the creation and acquisition of new knowledge. The knowledge that emerges is a result of a collective effort to reduce uncertainty through rationalization (for "known unknowns") or improvisation and experimentation (for "unknown unknowns").

> It is all about bringing all the "right" people together to create something new from what is already there. They will draw together existing ideas in a unique way, a novel unexpected idea will emerge through conversation between them and they will try it until they find the answer
> (Destination Management Organization,
> Director of Corporate Affairs).

The knowledge created in this flow will enter the institutionalized flow, be codified and personalized in order to complement or replace the knowledge that already exists in the organization, and will continue to be disseminated throughout the organization until new emergent knowledge is institutionalized and makes the existing one obsolete.

Influence of organizational factors on the management of crisis knowledge

Surrounding the types and flows of crisis knowledge and the strategies by which they are acquired, shared, and embedded in the organization are the four interrelated factors identified by Stonehouse and Pemberton (1999) as the antecedents of knowledge management in organizational renewal.

The participants felt that leadership should play a key role in creating and sustaining an organizational environment within which crisis knowledge is "proactively" (emphasized by most of them) created, integrated, shared, and applied. In line with the arguments of Senge (1992), leaders have to make sure that they provide all the means so that the lessons learned (i.e., acquired and codified knowledge) from a crisis are accessed, assimilated, and disseminated throughout the organization. This proactive approach is strongly advocated by Mitroff (2004) when he talks about "crisis leadership" and is a core premise of HRT which seeks to improve reliability in high-risk settings as opposed to the NAT which stresses awareness of unavoidable crises due to the tightly structured and complex nature of the industry.

When elaborated further to explore the specifics of the role, it was found that leadership should have a facilitating and coordinating role through the provision of the right amount of training, knowledge, resources, and support of the regional and local managers and employees by teaching them "how to fish" rather than simply giving them fish. Skyrme (2000) professes that an ideal style to engender this practice is knowledge leadership, as it involves the constant development and innovation of knowledge and individual skills. More importantly, however, leadership has the responsibility to create a blame-free "test-and-learn" environment, a condition also identified by Edvarsson (2008) who argues that organizations need to provide opportunities for individuals to take informed risks. Leaders should not blame a crisis on particular individuals, but instead, use the acquired knowledge to redesign improved crisis management mechanisms.

> Provided that the unsuccessful response is not due to negligence, lack of forethought, or irresponsible risk-taking, there is no reason to start looking for culprits and scapegoats. Instead, we give adequate time for our people to reflect on what went wrong and what should be done or not done next time to prevent the crisis or minimize its damage. By not penalizing action, we do not only encourage initiative, but we also set staff expectations
>
> (Destination Management Organization, Director of Corporate Affairs).

Both HRT and NAT stress the importance of knowledge creation from errors and near misses. However, the proponents of the two perspectives have different views on how feasible this knowledge creation is. The overall goal of these leadership activities is to embed a crisis culture, which would enhance the organization's ability to detect early crisis signals and enable their prevention, improve crisis response and accelerate crisis recovery. Participants described such a culture as one of openness and participation that encourages free two-way communication and sharing of responsibility for decision making and action. These findings are in line with the arguments of HRT advocates such as La Porte and Consolini (1991) and Rochlin (1996) on an enabling crisis culture. The participants did not seem to share NAT scholars (Perrow, 1994; Sagan, 1993) concerns who, although they recognize that organizations can develop crisis knowledge from their failures, tend to be pessimistic about the creation of the required blame-free culture.

These findings also appear to refute Pauchant and Mitroff's (1992) assumption that crisis culture can be imposed by senior management. Rather, they show that crisis culture is an emergent property arising from the continuing negotiations about values, meanings, and priorities between the organizational members and the environment within which they operate.

Some participants warned that an organization-wide crisis culture that demands action "strictly by the book," based upon procedural knowledge, with consequences (reprimand) for people who deviate, should also be avoided. As one participant affirmed, such a culture may make the organization inflexible and its crisis response ineffective:

> We were so pre-occupied with reports and compliance that we, unwillingly, created a culture of fear and not a culture of safety awareness. We should concentrate more on why a mistake was made rather than on who did it. We drowned in papers when we should be responding to a mega-crisis (Hotel Group, Vice President Loss Prevention)

Several participants shared the view that a tight, control-oriented management style often leads to an organization's "inward looking-ness" and isolation from its environment and also to an illusion of "invulnerability." Excessive focus on standards and processes to achieve performance levels of an HRO often comes to the detriment of crisis response. They, therefore, favored non-hierarchical organizational structures and proposed "molecular'" or matrix/network structures, as they provide flexibility and allow "cross-pollination." This finding corroborates Stonehouse & Pemberton's (1999) views who argue that effective knowledge management requires an enabling decentralized structure that empowers employees to learn from previous crises, gives them the flexibility to disseminate knowledge throughout the organization, and the authority to play an active role to help the organization institutionalize learning from crisis situations. Flexible structures also imply loose-coupling (reduction of inevitable crises according to the NAT) and offer the organization "slack", i.e., buffers or redundancies that may mitigate the negative impact of a crisis.

The way knowledge is codified, stored, and shared is central to the way an organization capitalizes upon its knowledge assets. Communication was also identified as an important aspect central to the management of crisis knowledge. The advent of information and communication technologies has paved the way for the encoding, manipulation, and transmission of knowledge throughout the organization.

The participants considered this crucial in response to the crisis. The Vice President Loss Prevention, of a hotel group, commented that “it would be ideal to have ‘abundant and redundant’ communication platforms to increase our effectiveness.” Other participants stated that these platforms should facilitate the sharing of crisis-related information within, as well as across, the organization’s boundaries with the rest of its stakeholders (including competitors).

When elaborated further to identify the communication platforms, the participants pointed out the development of crisis knowledge repositories storing standards, training material, and best practices and of “yellow-pages-like” crisis knowledge directories, with information on “who is an expert in what and how they can be contacted” within the organization (Airline, Director of Business Resilience). Some participants also noted that web technologies have facilitated the development of company intranets and extranets as well as the design of specialized crisis sites and online learning centers (a step up from repositories). One participant (Hotel Group, Senior Vice President Global Risk Management) stated that they are using social media (namely Facebook and Twitter) to engage their staff in the various training modes offered by their Risk and Crisis Learning Centre, thus facilitating the process of crisis knowledge sharing.

Conclusion

Recognizing the importance of knowledge in tourism crisis management (Blackman & Ritchie, 2008; Blackman et al., 2011) our study aimed to identify the types of knowledge and different knowledge management strategies that are being employed by tourism organizations in order to respond to crises they are facing. Informed by the resource- and knowledge-based views of knowledge management, our research identified four types of crisis specific knowledge: procedural, behavioral, third party knowledge, and learned ignorance. This categorization of crisis knowledge goes beyond the generally accepted typology of tacit and explicit knowledge and enables crisis managers to develop specific knowledge exploitation strategies (creation, acquisition, sharing, and integration) for each one of them. A key finding of the study was that procedural knowledge alone, although favored among organizations with a more resource-based view of knowledge management, can become problematic in crisis situations as it does not allow flexibility and may lead to a suboptimal or inappropriate response. It should always be complemented by behavioral knowledge which can be both tacit and explicit and was found by the participants, contrary to the common belief, as superior to the procedural knowledge, when it comes to crises.

The study went further by identifying two distinct flows of crisis knowledge in organizations: institutionalized and emergent. The institutionalized knowledge flow involves the movement of knowledge both within and outside of the organization. Codification and personalization strategies enable the sharing and integration of the different types of crisis knowledge through the institutionalized knowledge flow, embedding it into the organization's crisis response system. The emergent knowledge flow is normally triggered by unexpected crises where the institutionalized knowledge proves inadequate for an effective response, i.e., by what we have identified as learned ignorance. In this knowledge flow, organizations usually create (and sometimes acquire third-party) knowledge through enhanced social interaction of individuals from within and outside the organization, enabling cross-fertilization, experimentation, and generation of the new knowledge which, in turn, will become institutionalized and be disseminated and integrated until it becomes obsolete. Another important enabling condition for this knowledge flow was found to be a "blame-free" environment which is consistent with Mitroff's (2004) assertions on crisis leadership.

Further, the study has shown that four distinct organizational factors, namely organizational leadership and structure, crisis culture, and communication interact with, and impact upon each other influencing the organization's ability to manage crisis knowledge. Crisis leadership plays an important role in the implementation of codification and personalization knowledge management strategies through their explicit support to the crisis management plans and the exploitation of their visionary and proactive leadership skills. However, codification, personalization, creation, integration, and sharing of knowledge would not be possible unless the tourism organization creates a crisis-aware enabling culture that represents key values including openness, sharing, and participation, in line with the HRO theorists. These values can be embedded, and thus the knowledge strategies and processes (creation, sharing through codification and personalization and integration) can be facilitated by adopting a decentralized structure and creating abundant and redundant communication platforms.

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4 COVID-19 impact on the human aspect of organizational culture and learning: The case of the Greek hospitality industry

Introduction

The emergence and spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) have caused several health, social and economic effects worldwide (Nicola et al., 2020). To reduce the further spread of the virus, many countries sealed their borders and banned or drastically restricted the movement of their citizens both inside and outside the country (European Commission, 2020 and World Health Organization, 2020). This unprecedented development created new conditions in a short period of time and caused serious consequences in the hospitality industry (Baum & Hai, 2020; Gössling et al., 2020; Krishnan et al., 2020). Since March 2020, the Greek Government has taken a series of measures- decisions such as the enforcement of the measure of the temporary ban on the operation of the seasonal tourist accommodations as well as the continuous operation ones and the imposition of the measure of temporary restriction of the citizens' movement. These measures have had a major negative impact on the hospitality industry (Hellenic Chamber of Hotels, 2020; Institute of the Greek Tourism Confederation, 2020) as in addition to the suspension of their operation for a certain period of time, the hotels also operated in low occupancy during the summer period (Bellos, 2020). These developments have led the hospitality industry to a new era, which poses multiple challenges both at an academic and business level (Sigala, 2020).

The purpose of this chapter is, through field research using the Delphi method (Loo, 2002), to evaluate the impact that COVID-19 had on specific groups of elements (Individualism versus Teamwork, Communication, and Labor relations) of the human aspect of the organizational culture (Bavik, 2016; Serrat, 2017; Stavrinoudis & Kakarougkas, 2017) of the Greek hospitality industry. At the same time, it examines the strategic decisions that need to be made by hotels' executives at an organizational level, to enhance the positive and reduce the negative elements of the changes brought about by the spread of COVID-19. Special emphasis is placed on strengthening organizational learning which can help towards developing a new framework of organizational rules in the Greek hospitality industry that will lead to more resourceful and empowered organizations (Jaaron & Backhouse, 2017; Koronis & Ponis, 2018).

The research's originality and scientific contribution is twofold. Firstly, although the negative effects of the COVID-19 crisis on the global hospitality industry have been documented in several research papers (Baum & Hai, 2020; Gössling et al., 2020; Institute of the Greek Tourism Confederation, 2020; Krishnan et al., 2020), none has focused on investigating the impact of the COVID-19 on the human aspect of the organizational

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culture of the hotels and the associated learning opportunities. Thus, this research is allowing a knowledge gap to be partially covered by measuring the impact of a health crisis (COVID-19) on specific organizational culture elements of the hospitality industry. Secondly, given the importance of hotels for the Greek economy (Institute of Economic and Industrial Research, 2013; Mylonas & Tzakou-Lambropoulou, 2017), the present research also has a practical utility, as the results will help hotels' executives to make critical strategic decisions, dealing with the negative consequences caused on the human aspect of the organizational culture of their hotels, focusing on opportunities to enhance organizational learning.

Crises as an opportunity for cultural change and learning

Ivanov and Stavrinoudis (2018) and Paraskevas (2006) argued that a crisis stems from an unexpected and negative development/change in the social or organizational environment and requires immediate decisions to be taken. Aliperti et al. (2019) and Afonso-Rodríguez (2017) emphasize that over the last decade crises and catastrophes of all kinds have caused great damage to the global tourism industry, which is proving to be particularly vulnerable. Al-Dahash et al. (2016) underline that the negative effects caused by major crises and disasters, put into question: the day-to-day operation, the basic assumptions, and the existential core of an entire economic sector i.e., that of hotels. Mir et al. (2106) argue that to enhance the survival of crisis-affected organizations it is necessary to create new knowledge which will help these organizations to respond better to the new environment imposed by the crisis. Due to the above, Kamkhaji and Radaelli (2017) and Koronis and Ponis (2018) noted that every crisis can lead to a major threat or an opportunity for change and learning in the sense that it will create a new set of rules and reference framework within which organizations will operate more resourceful and empowered. Following this, Abo-Murad et al. (2019) emphasize that any crisis can be an opportunity for single and double-loop learning (Ghaderi et al., 2015; Jaaron & Backhouse, 2017). For this reason, Ulus and Hatipoglu (2016) argue that, for tourism organizations to respond effectively to the challenges of the economic and social environment, they must focus on the human aspect of the organization and the development of organizational learning.

Organizational culture is a deeply rooted set of values and beliefs that can be manifested in every aspect of an organization and provides patterns for the behavior of its members or the groups they form. Organizational culture develops and is taught to the members of an organization over time, while the internal, the inter-business, and the social environment are important factors of its influence (Driskill, 2019; Schein, 2010; Warrick, 2017). The analysis and synthesis of multiple sources

(Bavik, 2016, Cameron & Quinn, 2011, Deal & Kennedy, 2000, Stavrinoudis & Simos, 2016, Stavrinoudis & Kakarougkas, 2017, Weber & Yedidia Tarba, 2012; Yahyagil, 2015) led to the conclusion that the human aspect of the culture of an organization is determined by three sets of elements, which are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: The groups of elements that define the human aspect of the organizational culture.

Individualism versus teamwork	– Acceptance or non-acceptance of individualism. – Acceptance or non-acceptance of teamwork. – Cooperation versus competition between the members of the organization. – Bonds between members: integration, collaboration and unity. – Participatory decision making. – Cohesion level of Human Resources (HR). – Social behavior.
Communication	– Horizontal communication between the organization's members. – Vertical communication and contact between the organization's members. – Relationships between superiors and subordinates. – Exchange of ideas between the members of an organization (organizational learning). – Employees' communication mode.
Labor relations	– Staff selection methods. – Frequent staff turnover. – Talent management/Empowerment and Organizational learning. – Human resource management practices. – Stressful working environment. – Work–life balance. – Compensation level of organization and industry.

Source: Adapted by the authors

The human aspect of the organizational culture is largely determined by three groups of elements: a) Individualism versus teamwork, b) Communication and c) Labor relations. Regarding the first group of elements, Radojevic et al. (2019) argue that teamwork is more important than individuality in a hotel because it enhances customer satisfaction through the improvement of its operation and the diversification of the product offered (Asonitou & Vitouladiti, 2017). Moreover, Zylfijaj and Pira (2017) and Tsiotras et al. (2016), suggest that teamwork is a prerequisite for the establishment of total quality systems, supports hotel businesses to cope with crises by improving their efficiency and their product delivery. Improving the efficiency and the level of customers' experience depends on the hotel's organizational culture that must be dominated by a spirit of teamwork, cooperation, and employees' participation (Denison and Mishra, 1995). The spirit of teamwork in a hotel is part of its intellectual capital and is enhanced by the effective internal communication of values, vision, mission, and ethics (Metaxas et al., 2019) and can help create new knowledge (Tripathy, 2018). While the spirit of cooperation and employees' participation depends on the degree of hotel management cooperation with frontline employees, that allows them to be actively involved in decision-making processes (Khan et al., 2020). Based on the above, the first research question arises:

Q_1: What impact does COVID-19 have on the group of elements of individualism versus teamwork that defines the human aspect of the organizational culture of hotels?

Regarding the second group of elements, Mohanty and Mohanty (2018) emphasize that communication contributes significantly to the development of teamwork and the effectiveness of team effort. In agreement with this, Metaxas et al. (2019), argue that in times of crisis, open and two-way communication is of value for the successful operation of a hotel. Communication between all stakeholders (internal and external) in times of crisis is particularly important (Abdo et al., 2016), as it contributes to the acquisition and dissemination of knowledge, an element necessary for the development of innovation (Fu, 2017; Hussain et al., 2016). Lahap et al. (2016) focus on internal communication and argue that two-way communication between management and employees is particularly valuable in improving the services provided by a hotel, although this is often overlooked by management as it presupposes the development of organizational learning procedures. The above led to the formation of the second research question:

Q_2: What impact does COVID-19 have on the group of communication elements that defines the human aspect of the organizational culture of hotels?

The group of labor relations elements of the organizational culture is directly related to all human resource management policies (Belias et al., 2017) and is considered crucial, as it determines the degree of staff turnover (Chalkiti and Sigala, 2008) and the flexibility and performance of the hotels (Úbeda-García et al., 2017). Williamson (2017) suggests that the labor relations that prevail in a country's hotel industry depend on the balance of power (bargaining power) between three stakeholders: employees, employers, and the state. In times of crisis, labor relations are adversely affected to the detriment of employees, as their bargaining power is reduced (Harvey, 2014). Yrigoy and Cañada (2019), note that hotel companies often rely on human resource management practices to cope with the negative consequences of a crisis, taking advantage of labor laws, leading to devaluation of labor and the general level of wages. But beyond the devaluation of labor, Cañada (2018) argues that in times of crisis other sectors of labor relations are also negatively affected (collective bargaining agreements, flexible employment forms, outsourcing, increase of working hours, etc.), mainly of vulnerable groups of workers (low-skilled staff, women, etc.). Solar et al. (2016) argue that the deterioration of the abovementioned characteristics of labor relations are central barriers to the creation and transfer of new knowledge. The above led to the formation of the third research question:

Q_3: What impact does COVID-19 have on the group of labor relations elements that defines the human aspect of the organizational culture of hotels?

Methodology

According to McPherson et al. (2018), for data collection in an area or subject where little is known, the Delphi method is the most appropriate. On the one hand, this method is the most appropriate for investigating complex issues (Stitt-Gohdes & Crews, 2004) such as those related to organizational culture and learning (Schmiedel et al., 2013) and on the other hand, it is considered effective in making strategic decisions in tourism organizations (Conlin and Rice, 2019; Konu, 2015).

Several scholars (e.g., Asselin & Harper, 2014; McPherson et al., 2018; Loo, 2002) agree that, to successfully utilize the Delphi method, the following minimum conditions must be met: a) the panel of experts must be composed of at least fifteen members, who must have a high degree of expertise and in-depth knowledge of the subject under consideration and b) the research process must include three or more qualitative and/or quantitative rounds of data collection. These conditions were met during the design and implementation of this research.

The researchers addressed, in three consecutive research rounds, a convenience sample of experts consisting of recognized for their knowledge and experience: a) Academicians and Hotel education professionals and b) Hotels executives. The composition of this sample of experts ensured the reduction of the risk of high refusal/avoidance of participating in the research, which can create bias due to motivational factors of the participants (Podsakoff et al., 2012). It also reduced the bias that can be generated by collecting low-quality data due to the misunderstanding of the research objectives by the research participants (Tourangeau et al., 2000). The communication with the experts was carried out by the combined use of Google Forms and by email. Table 4.2 summarizes the main characteristics of the three research rounds.

The first research round consisted of three open-ended questions that asked participants to suggest up to five keywords per question that they thought best described the groups of elements that define the human aspect of organizational culture and learning of the Greek hotel sector before the COVID-19 crisis. A total of 63 keywords

Table 4.2: The main characteristics of the three research rounds.

Research round	Research period	Sent and completed questionnaires		Objectives	Number of sections or questions	Data analysis
1st	27/05/2020–22/06/2020	55	24	1. Explanation of the main research objective and the questions to the participants. 2. Outline the characteristics of the human aspect of the organizational culture and learning of the Greek hospitality industry before the COVID-19 crisis.	3 sections. 3 open-ended questions.	Measuring the frequency of specific words, phrases or word groups
2nd	29/06/2020–13/07/2020	24	20	1. Presentation of the main findings of the first research round. 2. Collection of quantitative data on the extent to which COVID-19 strengthened or weakened the elements that formed the human aspect of the organizational culture and learning of the Greek hospitality industry before the COVID-19 crisis.	3 sections 33 items in Likert scale format	Descriptive statistics
3rd	24/07/2020–13/08/2020	20	15	1. Presentation of the main findings of the second research round. 2. Collection of quantitative and qualitative data.	3 sections 9 items in Likert scale format. 12 open-ended questions.	Content analysis. Descriptive statistics.

Source: Based on Loo (2002), McPherson et al. (2018), and Stitt-Gohdes and Crews (2004).

were recorded. Out of the 63 keywords, the 33 were selected to be the items of the questionnaire of the second research round, based on their recording frequency. A keyword to be part of the second research questionnaire must have been recorded in a similar semantic way by at least two experts.

The questionnaire of the third research round was based on the results of the second round and asked the participants to a) evaluate per section, whether the findings of the second research round were: a very insignificant or very significant development, a very negative or very positive development, and a major threat or major opportunity for the Greek hospitality industry, b) justify their above assessment, and c) explain what strategic decisions should be taken to reduce the negative and enhance the positive impact of the COVID-19 crisis on the human aspect of organizational culture and learning of the Greek hospitality sector. The Findings section includes only the qualitative results that were found to be recorded in a similar semantic way by at least two experts during the content analysis.

Findings

The impact of the COVID-19 on the group of individualism versus teamwork elements

The first research round suggested that "Intense competition among employees," "Emphasis on individual work," and "Weak bonds between employees/Minimal coherence" were elements that dominated the organizational culture of the Greek hotels before the COVID-19 crisis. During the second research round, the participating experts agreed with the relevant agreement that due to the COVID-19, the Greek hotels are turning to the "Intense reward of a team effort" at the expense of the reward of individual effort, place "Emphasis on teamwork" to the detriment of the individual work and strengthen the "Strong bonds between employees/Strong coherence." The element of "Intense competition among employees" remains stable at the expense of the element "Minimal competition among employees" which has weakened.

Experts in the third research round strongly argued that, although it is too early to conclude, the changes identified in the second research round are significant and positive, because teamwork leads to superior results as it creates companies that become more democratic and participatory. In addition, they agree that the above developments can be an opportunity for change and learning for the Greek hospitality industry, only if there is a change of mentality that will enhance the cooperation between employees-management and hoteliers-academicians. To strengthen the element of teamwork against individualism in the organizational culture and learning of the Greek hotels, experts argue that the following strategic actions should be adapted: recognition of participatory management, greater involvement of employees, of all hierarchical levels, in the hotel's management, recognition of the value of HR, provision of group incentives and reward the team against the individual performance (Table 4.3).

The impact of the COVID-19 on the group of communication elements

The results of the second research round suggest that, due to the COVID-19 crisis, Greek hotels are transformed into companies that, compared to the pre-coronavirus era, rely more on "Free communication and intense exchange of ideas (organizational learning)," "Vertical and horizontal two-way communication," which is characterized by "Intense confidentiality" and "Good relations between superiors-subordinates." The experts consider the above developments important, positive, and an opportunity for organizational culture change and learning for the Greek hospitality industry for the following reasons. Firstly, because they consider communication to be a key element of success and at the same time enhance teamwork which is also considered an important success factor for a hotel enterprise (see results on the impact of the COVID-19 crisis on individualism versus teamwork).

Secondly, because the value and the role of frontline employees will be highlighted and strengthened, an element the participants consider particularly important for the successful operation of a hotel. Finally, they propose the strengthening of the vertical communication and cooperation of the frontline employees with the management through a) processes of encouraging free expression and b) the installation of mechanisms that will record and utilize the generated knowledge through organizational learning procedures. In addition, HR must be further trained, and "teams of excellence" must be created within the hotel organizations to promote innovation, new ideas, and learning (Table 4.4).

The impact of COVID-19 on the group of labor relations elements

The results of the second research round prove that Greek hotels due to the COVID-19 crisis are transformed into companies with: "Strict working environment and intense use of disciplinary measures," "Few employees changes," "Intense provision of on-the-job training," "Qualified personnel with high expertise level" but minimal "Financial-material incentives." At the same time, however, they continue to maintain and further strengthen several characteristics that they had before the COVID-19 crisis, such as the extensive "Seasonal employment," the "Minimum opportunities for employee's development," the "Lack of work-life balance," the "Flexible forms of work" and the "Minimum empowerment of employees and organizational learning."

Table 4.3: The impact of COVID-19 on the group of individualism versus teamwork elements.

	Variables	First research round results (Keywords recording)	Second research round results (1-Intense weakening, 3-Neither weakened / Nor strengthened, 5-Intense strengthening)			
		Recording frequency	**Mean**	**Median**	**Mode**	**Standard deviation**
I1.1	Intense competition among employees	13	3.00	3	4	1.257
I1.2	*Minimal reward for individual effort*	10	2.60	3	3	1.095
I1.3	*Minimal reward for team effort*	10	2.20	2	3	1.056
I1.4	*Weak bonds between employees/ Minimal coherence*	8	2.35	2.5	3	0.988
I1.5	Emphasis on individual work	8	2.95	3	4	1.050
I1.6	*Minimal competition among employees*	6	2.80	3	2	0.951
I1.7	**Intense reward for team effort**	4	3.30	3.5	4	1.342
I1.8	*Intense reward for individual effort*	4	2.85	3	3	1.040
I1.9	**Strong bonds between employees/ Strong coherence**	3	3.50	3.5	3[a]	0.946
I1.10	**Emphasis on teamwork**	3	3.40	4	4	1.142
	Third research round quantitative results					
I1.11	Above Evolution: 1- Very Insignificant, 5- Very Significant		4.23	4	5	0.927
I1.12	Above Evolution: 1- Very Negative, 5- Very Positive		4.31	5	5	0.947
I1.13	Above Evolution: 1- Great Threat, 5- Great Opportunity		4.15	4	4	0.899

(continued)

Table 4.3 (continued)

Variables		First research round results (Keywords recording)	Second research round results (1-Intense weakening, 3-Neither weakened / Nor strengthened, 5-Intense strengthening)			
		Recording frequency	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard deviation
	Third research round qualitative results					**Recording frequency**
Justification of I1.11	Teamwork leads to superior results					8
Justification of I1.12	Teamwork leads to superior results: hotel response to the crisis.					10
	Enterprises are becoming more democratic and participatory.					4
	It is too early to draw conclusions.					2
Justification of I1.13	Teamwork leads to superior results.					4
	It is too early to draw conclusions.					3
	A change of mentality in the hospitality industry is needed.					2
	Collaboration: employees-management and hoteliers-academicians					2
Strategic decisions that reduce the negative and reinforce the positive effects						
Recognition of participatory management value.						3
Greater involvement of employees of all hierarchical levels in the management of hotels.						3

Human resources development and value recognition.	3
Group incentives provision.	2
Reward the performance of the team and not the individual.	2

[a]Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown.
Bold: Marks variables that are strengthened.
Italic: Marks variables that are weakened.

Table 4.4: The impact of the COVID-19 on the group of communication elements.

	Variables	First research round results (Keywords recording)	Second research round results (1- Intense weakening, 3- Neither weakened / Nor strengthened, 5- Intense strengthening)			
		Recording frequency	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard deviation
I2.1	*Limited communication and minimum exchange of information*	15	2.10	2	1	1.210
I2.2	*One-way communication*	10	2.35	2	1	1.348
I2.3	**Vertical communication**	8	3.40	3.5	4	0.940
I2.4	**Intense confidentiality**	7	3.20	3	3	1.196
I2.5	*Minimum Confidentiality*	7	2.50	2.5	3	1.100
I2.6	Good relations between superiors-subordinates	7	3.05	3	3	0.945
I2.7	**Free communication and intense exchange of ideas (organizational learning)**	6	3.55	4	4	1.276
I2.8	**Horizontal communication**	5	3.50	4	4	1.051
I2.9	**Two-way communication**	4	3.85	4	5	1.137
I2.10	*Bad relationships between superiors-subordinates*	4	2.60	3	3	0.995
	Third research round quantitative results					
I2.11	Above Evolution: 1-Very Insignificant, 5-Very Significant		4.08	4	5	1.188
I2.12	Above Evolution: 1-Very Negative, 5-Very Positive		4.38	5	5	0.870
I2.13	Above Evolution: 1-Great Threat, 5-Great Opportunity		4.08	4	4[a]	0.954

	Third research round qualitative results	Recording frequency
Justification of I2.11	Communication: a key element of success in all areas that strengthens teamwork.	8
	Frontline employees: Their role is strengthened. Hotel management must cooperate with them.	3
	It is too early to draw conclusions.	2
Justification of I2.12	Communication: a key element of success in all areas that strengthens teamwork.	10
	Frontline employees: Their role is strengthened. Hotel management must cooperate with them.	3
	It is too early to draw conclusions.	2
Justification of I2.13	Communication: a key element of success in all areas.	6
	Frontline employees: Their role is strengthened. The management and the hotel owners must cooperate with them.	5
	It is too early to draw conclusions.	4
Strategic decisions that reduce the negative and reinforce the positive effects		
Communication of front-line employees and management, Empowerment, procedures for encouraging front-line staff to express themselves freely, installation of mechanisms that will record and utilize the resulting knowledge, vertical communication, strengthening collaboration and shaping an open communication culture.		5
Human resources: Training and learning initiatives, creation of teams and academies (interpreted as: teams of excellence) within enterprises to promote innovation and new ideas.		4
It's too early for strategy development.		2

[a]Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown.
Bold: Marks variables that are strengthened.
Italic: Marks variables that are weakened.

The participants consider that the above developments are important, but negative and pose a threat for positive change and learning to the Greek hospitality industry. They expressed this view as they consider that the current phase of the COVID-19 crisis is a transitional period that creates a new negative employment reality (strengthening of negative working relationship elements and moving hotel enterprises away from the anthropocentric model of management). In addition, they believe that the strengthening of rigor and discipline is due to the imposition of the "health protocols" aiming to reduce the spread of the coronavirus, the observance of which is a particularly demanding task for the managers. The experts argued that the above developments will become an opportunity for organizational learning and will not lead to a drop in employee morale, only if: a) the collective bargaining agreements are renegotiated based on the new reality that the spread of the coronavirus developed and b) hotel enterprises build a strong employer brand through the proper management of HR and the offering of learning and development opportunities. It was argued that although it is too early to draw up a clear strategy, the following strategic decisions need to be made regarding labor relations. It is necessary to recognize the value of HR and organizational learning in the competitiveness of hotels while enhancing the motivation of HR and the anthropocentric elements of the work environment. Emphasis should also be placed on training – knowledge development at the national and intra-company level through the creation of "teams of excellence" but also on the cultivation of employer branding and the attraction of specialized technocrats (Table 4.5).

Conclusions

In line with previous research by Kamkhaji and Radaelli (2017) and Koronis and Ponis (2018), it was found that the negative impact of COVID-19 pandemic created conditions for changing and enhancing organizational learning, as it strongly influenced the human aspect of hotels' organizational culture. Analytically, the results of the research made it clear that teamwork is associated with and supported by open and two-way communication, as demonstrated in previous research (Metaxas et al., 2019; Mohanty & Mohanty, 2018). To cope with the consequences of COVID-19, hotels have strengthened open and two-way communication and teamwork to the detriment of individualism. This change is considered a positive and at the same time important opportunity for organizational change and learning for the hospitality industry because teamwork is more important than individualism in any sector, since it leads to superior results and creates organizations that are more democratic, participatory, and open to opportunities of organizational learning, as shown by multiple previous studies (c.f. Abdo et al., 2016; Fu, 2017; Tripathy, 2018, Tsiotras, et al., 2016).

Table 4.5: The impact of the COVID-19 on the group of labor relations elements.

	Variables	First research round results (Keywords recording)	Second research round results (1- Intense weakening, 3- Neither weakened /Nor strengthened, 5- Intense strengthening)			
		Recording frequency	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard deviation
I3.1	**Seasonal employment**	20	3.35	4	5	1.755
I3.2	*Frequent staff changes*	14	2.85	3	3	1.268
I3.3	*Unskilled staff with lack of know-how*	14	2.55	2	2	1.317
I3.4	**Minimum opportunities for employee's development**	11	3.35	3	3	0.988
I3.5	Minimum provision of on the job training	10	2.10	2	1[a]	1.373
I3.6	**Lack of work–life balance**	7	3.45	4	4	1.191
I3.7	**Flexible forms of work**	6	4.15	5	5	1.137
I3.8	**Minimum empowerment of the employees (small margin of initiative)**	5	3.40	4	4	1.353
I3.9	**Strict working environment and intense use of disciplinary measures**	3	3.75	4	4	1.118
I3.10	**Qualified personnel with high expertise**	2	3.20	3	3	1.322

(continued)

Table 4.5 (continued)

	Variables	**First research round results (Keywords recording)**	**Second research round results (1- Intense weakening, 3- Neither weakened /Nor strengthened, 5- Intense strengthening)**			
		Recording frequency	**Mean**	**Median**	**Mode**	**Standard deviation**
I3.11	*Provision of financial-material incentives*	2	2.10	2	3	0.852
I3.12	**Intense provision of on the job training**	2	3.55	4	4	1.395
I3.13	*Relaxed work environment and minimum use of disciplinary measures*	2	2.00	2	1	1.124
	Third research round quantitative results					
I3.14	Above Evolution: 1-Very Insignificant, 5-Very Significant		4.00	4	3[a]	0.913
I3.15	Above Evolution: 1-Very Negative, 5-Very Positive		2.85	3	2	1.068
I3.16	Above Evolution: 1-Great Threat, 5-Great Opportunity		2.85	3	3	1.281
	Third research round qualitative results					**Recording frequency**
	Justification of I3.14	The crisis creates a new negative work reality that can become permanent: strengthening negative elements of labor relations, moving enterprises away from the anthropocentric model of management that had developed in recent years.				10
		The labor relations remain stable.				2
		Transitional stage-waiting period.				2
		Strengthening rigor and discipline: due to health protocols and demanding work for superiors.				2

Justification of I3.15	The crisis is creating a new negative work reality that may become permanent: strengthening negative aspects of labor relations, lack of recognition of the value of human resources in competitiveness and service delivery, further strengthening of part-time work, burdening employees with more responsibilities without the provision of additional compensation.	11
	Health protocols: enhance rigor and make work boring and less interesting.	2
	Transitional stage- waiting period.	2
Justification of I3.16	The crisis is creating a new negative work reality that may become permanent: the emphasis on reducing labor costs and strengthening the negative elements of labor relations may lead to a decline in employee morale with negative consequences for the enterprises.	10
	Health protocols: enhance rigor and make work boring and less interesting.	2
	Opportunity factors: Renegotiation of collective bargaining agreements based on the conditions created by the pandemic and building a strong employer brand through the proper treatment of the employees.	2
	Transitional stage- waiting period.	2
Strategic decisions that reduce the negative and reinforce the positive effects		
Human resources: recognition of its value in competitiveness terms, strengthening of motivation, emphasis on training at business and national level, strengthening of human-centered elements in the work environment, and creation of academies (interpreted as teams of excellence) within enterprises that promote innovation and learning.		8
Business: Emphasis on employer branding and guidance from technocrats.		2
It’s too early for strategy development.		3

Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown.
Bold: Marks variables that are strengthened.
Italic: Marks variables that are weakened

The researchers were surprised by the fact that the findings concerning teamwork and communication contradict those on labor relations. The impact of COVID-19 on labor relations is significant but negative as it is a threat to positive organizational change and learning for the hospitality industry. This is because hotel enterprises, in their effort to respond to the COVID-19 crisis and the requirements of the imposed health protocols, emphasized the reduction of labor costs while strengthening the negative elements of labor relations. This development can have a multiplier impact on employee morale and learning and consequently, on hotels themselves, a fact that has been documented in previous surveys (Chalkiti & Sigala, 2008; Solar et al., 2016; Úbeda-García et al., 2017).

Following the above, the impact of the COVID-19 is particularly important and has brought about great changes and organizational learning outcomes that are shaping the human aspect of the organizational culture of the hospitality industry, creating conditions that strengthen at the same time two opposing factors, that of "threat" and that of "opportunity." More specifically, the threat factor includes the conditions created and strengthened by COVID-19 for the establishment of a new negative and strict employment reality that is gradually moving hotel enterprises away from the participatory and anthropocentric management model. While the opportunity factor includes the strengthening of the participatory and human-centered management of the hotels, through the strengthening of teamwork and the open and two-way communication and learning between the front-line employees and the management. In the post-COVID-19 era, hotel enterprises whose human aspect of the organizational culture will be strongly influenced by the threat factor are more likely to lose part of their competitiveness. In contrast, hotel enterprises whose human aspect of organizational culture will be strongly influenced by the opportunity factor are more likely to emerge empowered and better adapted to the new framework of rules and reporting in the post-COVID-19 era, having developed organizational learning outcomes, which will enhance their competitiveness. This conclusion is reinforced by the previous studies of Abo-Murad et al. (2019), Ghaderi et al. (2015), Jaaron and Backhouse (2017), and Koronis and Ponis (2018).

To enhance the impact of the opportunity factor and to weaken the impact of the threat factor on the human aspect of the organizational culture of the hospitality industry, it is important the three key stakeholders (employees, employers, and the state) cooperate. Employers in cooperation with the hotel management must recognize the value of HR as a source of knowledge and innovation and strengthen the formation of an organizational culture of cooperation, learning, and partial involvement of employees in hotel decision-making. This can be achieved through a) the establishment of procedures for the empowerment and encouragement of front-line staff to freely express their views and at the same time the establishment of mechanisms that will record and utilize the resulting learning outcomes – knowledge, b) the creation of "groups of excellence" within hotel organizations, which will promote innovation as well as the production of ideas and new knowledge, through organizational learning, and will facilitate their diffusion within the organizations and c) the provision of incentives that will strengthen the will of all the employees to multiply the cooperative relations (horizontally and vertically) in the internal environment of the hotels. Finally, to reduce the negative impact of COVID-19 on the labor relations, the state, the employers, and the employees' bodies must participate in a bona fide and fruitful renegotiation of collective bargaining agreements for them to be better adapted to the new conditions created. Hotel enterprises in their quest for survival during the COVID-19 crisis and future return to profitability must focus on adapting their organizational culture and learning by enhancing their image as good employers and supporting the human factor as their most important competitive advantage in a fluid and uncertain business environment. In conclusion, the impact of COVID-19 disease is particularly strong and negative for hotel organizations and poses great challenges for them. Challenges that constitute organizational learning opportunities that lead to a change in the human aspect of the culture of hotel organizations. Addressing these changes through strategies linked to the opportunity factor can create conditions where the negative effects of the pandemic in the post-COVID-19 era will be the starting point for positive developments and organizational learning.

Scientific and practical contribution

On a scientific level, this chapter covered an international twofold knowledge gap for the hospitality industry. Firstly, it measured the impact of a health crisis (COVID-19 in this case) on the human aspect of the organizational culture. Secondly, it highlighted the value of organizational learning in developing policies that will reduce the negative effects of COVID-19 on the human aspect of organizational culture in the hospitality industry. On a practical level, it proposes the formulation of specific strategic actions which, if implemented by the hotel managers, the impact of COVID-19 on the HR of the hospitality industry will be better addressed. The study of this chapter leads to a scientific and practical understanding of the changes brought about in the human aspect of the organizational culture of the hospitality industry by the spread of COVID-19. At the same time, it makes concrete proposals that explain how these changes can be addressed and from threats to be transformed into opportunities for learning and positive developments.

Limitations and future research

The adoption of the Delphi methodology led to the investigation of the views of a group of experts who have extensive experience in the hospitality industry. However, this constitutes a limitation of the present research, as only the views of academicians and hotel executives have been considered. A future study could investigate the impact of COVID-19 on the human aspect of the organizational culture and organizational learning, based on exploring the views of a representative sample of front-line hotel employees so that there is a reciprocal study and understanding of the phenomenon and its impact.

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Alexandros Paraskevas

5 Learning from a cascading crisis: A framework for crisis learning stewardship

Introduction

Learning from crises has been a central tenet of crisis management recognized already from the early literature and proposed models in the field (e.g., Heath, 1995; Mitroff, 2005; Smith & Sipika, 1993). Ian Mitroff, considered by many as one of the leading scholars in crisis management, was the first to emphasize learning as one of the main crisis management "mechanisms" and, more specifically, "No-Fault Learning." With this term, he was pointing to the development of crisis management-specific organizational learning that involves not only a critical evaluation of the lessons that were learned from a crisis (Pearson & Mitroff, 1993) but also instilling a no-blame culture about the crisis or any response failures in the organization. This learning does not necessarily come from the organization's own experience of a crisis but can also be "vicarious" (Nathan & Kovoor-Misra, 2002). Mitroff (2005) suggested that organizations need "World-class Crisis Learning Centers" (p.20) to study patterns associated with past crises (own and others'), distill critical lessons from them, and ensure that these will shape the organization's crisis planning to reduce the potential for future crises. In later work (2005, p.211), he advised organizations to engage in "no-fault learning" (i.e., not blaming any individuals in the organization for the crisis) except in cases of criminal culpability and legal responsibility but use an objective approach to analyze cause-and-effect and "learn the lessons that every crisis has to teach."

Although these ideas are deeply rooted in crisis management practice over the last 20 years, several studies have shown that learning from crises in many organizations is either poor or does not take place at all (c.f. Elliott, 2009; Smith & Elliott, 2007; Stemn et al., 2018). Some studies (Broekema et al., 2017; Herbane, 2018) point that learning takes place but that some organizations learn from their crises better and faster than others. There is a wider consensus that learning from a crisis can be both complex and challenging since crises often are very unique and unpredictable situations in which complex circumstances of uncertainty and chaos, lack of credible and reliable information, siloed organizational structures and departmental tribalism make it difficult to distill clear crisis lessons (Boin et al., 2017; Paraskevas & Altinay, 2013). However, the factors that drive effective organizational learning from a crisis are still contested in the literature (Deverell, 2009; Drupsteen & Guldenmund, 2014).

This chapter aims to provide some more clarity on these factors by exploring the drivers of learning in Japanese hotel chains from the 2011 Great East Japan

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Earthquake and Tsunami. It starts with a brief review of the organizational learning literature to make the distinction between organizational learning and crisis-induced learning and sets the context of the research by an overview of the crisis under which the organizational learning was distilled and/or implemented. It then discusses the findings of the study and presents a framework of drivers for crisis learning stewardship.

Crisis-induced learning

Organizational learning has been extensively studied over the years offering the opportunity for an abundance of definitions. Some of these definitions take organizational learning as a cognitive process that "leads to an enhancement and/or a shift in representations of the world" (Bootz et al., 2019, p.94) and some others as a behavioral process in which "the members of the organization construct meanings together and change itself is a pattern of endless modifications in day-to-day work and social practices" (Pässilä & Oikarinen, 2014, p.204). There are also definitions that embrace simultaneously both behavioral and cognitive dimensions (many in this book) and, broadly, consider organizational learning as the acquisition or generation of new knowledge, the distribution of this knowledge across the organization, and its interpretation by organizational members into more effective action.

Organizational learning is normally driven by the organization's desire to adapt to its continuously changing environment and to improve its efficiency. Stanford University's Professor James G. Marsh, in his seminal paper on organizational learning published in *Organizational Science* (1991), distinguishes two main motives for organizational learning: exploring new possibilities and exploiting old certainties. Exploration of new possibilities involves experimentation, trial-and-error, the pursuit of innovation, discovery, and new knowledge generation. Exploitation involves the incremental improvement, refinement, and extension of existing processes, capabilities, and knowledge. The learning itself is divided between "implemented lessons" which result in the altering of organizational and individual behavior in current situations, and "distilled lessons" which usually do not result in changed behaviors-only increased cognition for use in the future (Deverell, 2009).

Crisis-induced learning or, more simply, crisis learning is a specific form of organizational learning triggered by a disruptive event or significant threat to the organization and leads to new knowledge and understanding that will shape future actions related to the prevention, mitigation, response to, and recovery from these or similar disruptive events or threats. Boin et al. (2017, p. 128–132) argue that for an organization to effectively facilitate learning from crises, it should enable three types of learning: experience-based, explanation-based, and competence-based.

Experience-based learning comes from exposure to a crisis and the creation of mechanisms for analysis and synthesis that will turn these experiences into lessons. Explanation-based learning is generated by looking to understand cause-and-effect relations in a crisis. Finally, competence-based learning is all about the new skills and techniques that can be developed directly in response to a crisis, through exercises and experimenting procedures.

As the triggers and the source of this learning stem from extraordinary situations, crisis learning has some notable differences from regular organizational learning. One difference is that whilst organizational learning is an ongoing, creative, and lifelong process (Senge, 2006; Kearney & Zuber-Skerritt, 2012) that adapts and transforms in response to the needs and aspirations of people inside and outside the organization over time (e.g., a hotel chain refining its revenue management strategies by trying different forecasting and pricing probabilistic models), crisis learning is acquired "in batches," one crisis at a time (e.g., learning from a data breach or a terrorist attack). Another difference is that crisis learning usually takes place when the pressure to learn is at its greatest and while it is the hardest to achieve (Broekema et al., 2017). Crises are characterized by ambiguity, lack of concrete information, time constraints whilst great values are at stake. Drawing lessons under such circumstances is much more challenging than organizational learning in ordinary and routine circumstances. The difference is further underscored in the immediate post-crisis phase when investigations and the (often politically motivated) debate about the crisis causes and response begin and when the public and media scrutiny instigate discussions about blame and accountability.

Crisis learning has been studied in the tourism and hospitality fields with predominantly exploratory research on lessons learned with regards to causes, consequences, and possible measures that need to be taken to address similar crisis situations in the future. The majority of the hospitality and tourism crisis management literature belongs in this literature stream with significant contributions by scholars such as Joan Henderson, Nicolette De Sausmarez, Bruce Prideaux, Brent W. Ritchie, and David Beirman who set the foundations for crisis management thinking in tourism. In more recent times, there is an abundance of studies on lessons learned from various crises were published, with a surge in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Overall, this stream's contribution is more in the direction of understanding crises and the crisis management cycle rather than in acting by offering concrete policy and crisis management suggestions. When authors in this stream offer something more concrete, this is predominantly a list of broad actions considered as best practice, a crisis communication plan, or a destination image recovery plan. A quite common conclusion in most of these studies is that there is a need for a more strategic approach to crisis management in tourism, without however clearly identifying what exactly was learned and how this learning can be used to prevent or better respond to future crises. A small part of this literature body (c.f., Blackman & Ritchie, 2008; Ghaderi et al., 2014; Paraskevas et al., 2013) pays more attention to the processes of learning from a crisis and sets some groundwork on how this learning can be optimized by establishing the appropriate organizational culture and structure in conjunction with mechanisms for knowledge acquisition, codification, storage, and dissemination. A common denominator in all these studies is crisis leadership, but how this leadership can be manifested in crisis learning is yet to be explored. What follows is an attempt to gain an insight into the factors that drive successful crisis-induced learning in an organization.

Research design and context

Learning from a cascading crisis

A cascading crisis is a low probability/high impact situation stemming from one or more triggers that cause a damaging domino effect of failures within or across systems (Veil, 2013). Hurricane Katrina in 2005, for example, caused unprecedented flooding in New Orleans which resulted in a series of industrial catastrophes and evacuation challenges. These, in turn, caused the destruction of 90% of the essential utility networks and widespread lethal pollution leading to a public health crisis and, at the same time, riots and looting by the people who could not be evacuated thus flaring up racial conflicts which lead to a wider societal crisis in the area.

The study presented in this chapter was conducted in Japan between April and December of 2011 and was part of a wider research project commissioned by an international hotel group that operates several hotels in Japan on behalf of a domestic owning company. The purpose of the study was to identify best practice in responding to a cascading crisis such as the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami which also triggered a nuclear disaster in Fukushima. The response of the Japanese hospitality industry to these crises was remarkable, considering that what happened went beyond any conceivable scope of crisis management planning and, a large part of this response was attributed to the preparedness of management and staff to address adverse situations. Some of the objectives for the study were to find: (1) what crisis learning was implemented; (2) what new learning was generated; and (3) why the crisis learning worked as it did?

In the spirit of unity in the aftermath of a disaster as opposed to everyday competition hotel groups agreed to collaborate and share experiences and practices that would help revive travelers' confidence in Japan. HVS' s Daniel Voellm (2011) reported that in the month that followed the disaster visitation levels have been greatly affected, with more than 500,000 canceled hotel reservations according to the Japan Tourism Agency in Tokyo alone. This chapter includes responses from 27 interviews of hotel general managers (9), department heads (11), and line employees (7) working in typical Japanese hotel groups: APA Hotels, Hankyu Hanshin Hotels, HMI Hotel

Group, New Otani Hotels, Okura Hotels, Prince Hotels, and Toyoko Inns. They all worked in hotels in areas that have been directly and indirectly affected by the cascading crisis, such as the prefectures of Aomori, Chiba, Fukushima, Ibaraki, Iwate, Kanagawa, Miyagi, Tokyo, and Yamagata. Depending on their positions and the location of their hotels the respondents were coded as M for general manager, D for department head, and E for line employee, followed by the prefecture where their hotel was situated. The interviews were conducted in Japanese with the assistance of professional interpreters that were hired for this project and transcribed verbatim. The transcripts were then translated these interpreters in English and analyzed using a thematic analysis approach (Walters, 2016).

The great east Japan earthquake and tsunami

On March 11th, 2011, Japan experienced one of the most devastating earthquakes in its recent history, followed minutes later by a tsunami that caused unbelievable destruction, numerous aftershocks, and a severe emergency situation at a nuclear power plant. The east coast of the country faced three disasters in a matter of hours.

Earthquake: The earthquake occurred at 14:46 and had a magnitude of 9.0–9.1 Mw with an epicenter 72km east of the Tōhoku region. It was felt more than 2,000 kilometers away in Taiwan, Shanghai, and even Beijing and was followed by numerous, strong aftershocks over the following hours and days. It is considered the most powerful earthquake ever recorded in Japan and the fourth most powerful earthquake in the world since records began. Refineries and a gas storage facility in the greater Tokyo area sustained some damages and so did a few buildings in the broader Kantō region. Lessons learned from the 1995 Kobe earthquake resulted in more earthquake-resistant constructions, thus limiting to an extent the damage. The impact of the earthquake was felt more in the northern Tōhoku prefectures of Miyagi and Iwate but any damage in these areas was overshadowed by the devastation that stuck land a few minutes later.

Tsunami: The earthquake triggered a fierce tsunami estimated to have reached heights of up to 40.5 meters (in Miyako – Iwate prefecture), traveling with a speed of 700 km/h (in Sendai – Miyaki prefecture) and inundating 470 square kilometers of coastal land. The power of the tsunami combined with the freezing conditions in the areas it struck resulted in devastation beyond description which left around 20,000 dead, 6000 injured and 2500 people missing. In 2015, almost 230,000 people were still temporarily displaced by this disaster.

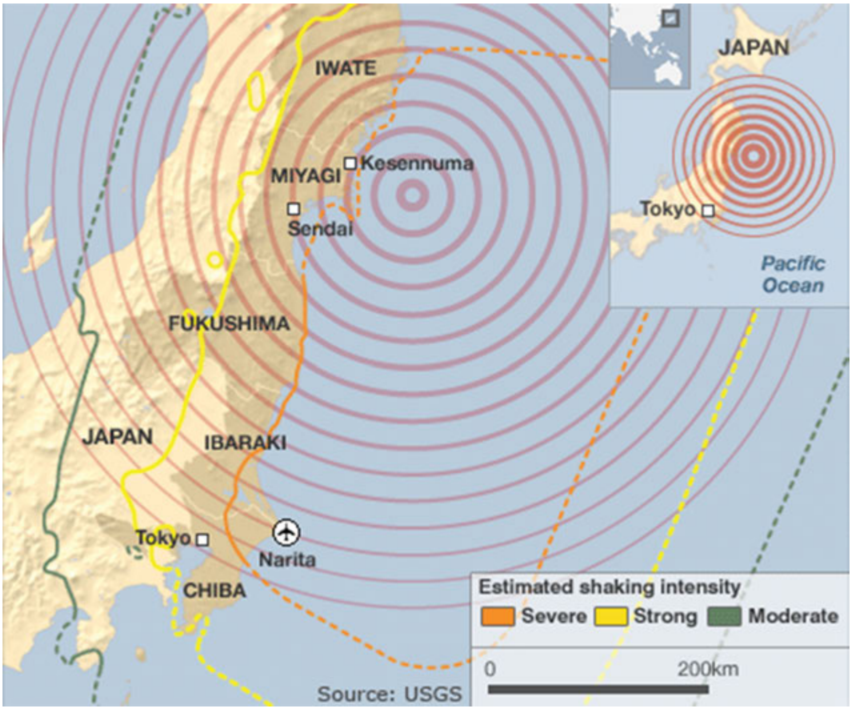

Figure 5.1: Areas affected by the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami.
Source: USGS (2016). M 9.1 - 2011 Great Tohoku Earthquake, Japan (https://earthquake.usgs.gov/earthquakes/eventpage/official20110311054624120_30/executive)

Nuclear accident: The tsunami swept over the seawall of the Fukushima nuclear power plant and flooded the lower parts of the reactors 1–4. The flooding caused the failure of the emergency generators which were powering the reactors' cooling system, leading to nuclear meltdowns in three of them, followed by Hydrogen explosions, and the discharge of radioactive water in Fukushima and the associated evacuation zones by Units 1, 2, and 3, directly threatening the lives of hundreds of thousands of residents in the region. This was the most severe accident since Chernobyl in 1986 and was classified as a Level 7 accident on the International Nuclear Event Scale (INES). In the days after the accident, the Japanese government was forced by the radiation released to the atmosphere to declare an evacuation zone of a 20 km radius around the power plant.

Although this cascading crisis had a devastating impact on the Japanese tourism industry in general with hundreds of thousands of cancellations, staff and management in hotels had to deal with the impact of this crisis in its immediate aftermath, such as: guests and personnel in hotels that were severely damaged had to be evacuated and driven to shelters with safety; guests who remained in hotels had to be moved to safer rooms and perhaps floors (if flooded) and be provided with food and services regardless of power and gas supply cuts; guests who wished to leave the country had to be assisted to reach train and bus stations, ports and airports through areas where all transport systems and infrastructure were severely damaged and sometimes non-existent at all; civilians stranded in cities due to the collapse of transport system had to be accommodated in hotel lobbies and banquet spaces and provided basic services such as blankets, food, and drink; evacuees from the local communities and surrounding areas had to be accommodated in hotels since many evacuation centers were destroyed by the tsunami; shortages of food and water supplies due to the disruption of the supply chains required rationing to guests and employees; hotels near the Fukushima power plant had to consider guest and staff protection from radiation and a safe water supply.

The hotel industry showed, as already mentioned, remarkable resilience and in most cases, hotels continued to serve their guests and care about their employees and their families, receiving excellent comments on social media platforms (Tripadvisor, 2011a; 2011b).

Crisis learning and its drivers

The interviews revealed a broad range of findings on what prior crisis learning was used and what new learning was generated in this cascading crisis. As this chapter focuses on the factors that make crisis learning work, it will only briefly address these two questions.

Lessons implemented and lessons learned

Experience-based learning: As all respondents had received extensive training on dealing with earthquakes and undertaken several evacuation drills, their overall response to the earthquake was highly coordinated and as E3 – Miyagi, and E2 – Iwate suggested a "routine activity." Interestingly, they did not describe their response using the word "rūchin" (routine); they used instead of the word "chorei" which is the daily briefing at the beginning of a shift. Past experiences helped also in addressing the power cuts and gas outages in the following hours and days and the overall preparedness of hotels for such eventuality:

> We asked guests to leave their guestroom door half-open so that our staff can quickly distribute flashlights without having to knock the door at each room" (M4 – Chiba)

> We have our own water supply system as we are connected with a private well and a power generator to compensate for the electricity outages (D2 – Tokyo)

Lessons learned from the Kobe earthquake in 1995 came up in many interviews (e.g., M4 – Chiba, M7 – Kanagawa, D4 – Yamagata, E5 – Aomori) from participants that had experienced "first-hand" this disaster. These included sorting out communication problems (E5 – Aomori identified and used public phones in the hotel's vicinity to communicate with the group's headquarters) and decisions to evacuate and close hotels and ask personnel to stay at home for a few days due to damage in the area surrounding the hotel (M4 – Chiba).

Explanation-based learning: The interviews also highlighted learning from reflection and reasoning about cause-and-effect relationships based more on general knowledge rather than from specific experiences. This learning had predominantly to do with the nuclear dimension of the crisis rather than with any other aspect of the situation:

> We decided to change our menus and remove all dishes that needed boiling as we knew that we would have water shortages and that there was a high risk of contamination in the water supply system (D11 – Ibaraki)

> I instructed my housekeepers to remove all conditioners from the in-room amenities as I knew that conditioner can bind radioactive material in the hair of guests who were exposed to open environments (M7 – Kanagawa)

The knowledge that led to such reasoning and generated explanation-based crisis actions did not originate in any case from formal on-the-job training on how to deal with a nuclear incident. Rather, it came from broader education, even from school, about the effects of radiation – in many cases related to the bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Competence-based learning: The complex nature of this crisis also triggered the development of new skills for some of the participants. This was either the result of having to work in multiple departments for the period of the crisis and learning how to cope with guest and operational needs under distress or from exposure to unprecedented workflows:

> Apart from our hotel guests, we had to accommodate about 2,500 people in our lobby and banquet space. Many of them were stranded commuters but quite a few were local evacuees, apparently to have removed from the nearby [Park in Tokyo]. We never had to deal with such numbers of people before, but we managed to offer them blankets and chairs and food and water from our emergency stocks. The next day we were able to offer to almost 1,200 non-hotel guests breakfast packs with steamed rice, tsukemono (Japanese pickles), natto (fermented soybeans), and tea (D2 – Tokyo)

Interestingly, in almost all interviews local evacuees were referred to in Japanese as "refugees" or "temporary refugees." Effective communication with these large crowds was addressed by setting up large monitors that provided updates on transport information and by having available mobile phone power banks in all “rest spaces” (E3 – Miyagi). Many hotels had to adjust their menus to the ingredients that were available and heightened resourcefulness, and consequently, lessons to be learned, came to the fore to accommodate guests’ dining needs, especially the Japanese who are accustomed to fresh food (D8 -Kanagawa). Hotels that suffered severe damages had to close and transfer their guests to sister or other hotels in regions outside the disaster zone (M8 – Iwate, D1 – Miyagi, D5 – Aomori, D9 – Fukushima).

Drivers of crisis learning

The analysis of the question about what the participants thought helped them learn before, during, and after the crisis revealed five main themes: employee engagement, collective vision, team solidarity, social networks, and crisis learning leadership. This section provides an overview of the first four drivers and the next looks at the fifth.

Employee engagement: The first aspect that was deemed important in the success of crisis learning was the genuine engagement of all those who worked in the hotel with their crisis training. Crisis training was not limited to a few evacuation drills, but it was embedded into their everyday work under the guise of work safety and guest safety. Procedures were constantly reminded in shift briefings and de-briefings (M8 – Iwate, D1 – Miyagi), quarterly tabletop exercises (M7 – Kanagawa), and planned periodic audit reviews (M3 – Tokyo). M5 (Tokyo) emphasized in several parts of the interview the word “genuine” when he characterized employee engagement in training and learning. He attributed this to the Japanese work ethic and the mentality of continuous improvement, known also as “kaizen.” He underscored the professional pride that hotel employees have and the consequent “moral obligation to protect their guests even with their lives” and their understanding that genuine engagement with “life safety [‘bousai’, lit. disaster preparedness] learning makes them every time better in meeting this obligation.”

Talking about the learning process, the front office manager of a hotel in the Miyagi prefecture which was severely impacted by the cascading crisis said:

> As we are located near the coast, we were always considering the advent of an earthquake followed by a tsunami. In the relevant training, our people were able to express their views on the hotel’s [crisis] procedures and inquire into the views of others. In the end, they were not learning the procedures, they were ‘owning’ the procedures (D1 – Miyagi)

Collective vision: Linked with the culture of continuous questioning, improving, co-creating, and eventually owning crisis learning is the creation of a collective vision about the crisis response.

> We all knew what to do as a team but also what was expected from each one of us as individuals (E6 – Ibaraki).

> We learn together, we work together, we protect our guests together. It's like Western dancing! (E3 – Miyagi).

The collective vision creates, in turn, a collective responsibility which is distributed to individuals more as what French and Wettstein (2014) describe as "forward-looking collective responsibility," i.e., a responsibility that motivates to accomplish something good for the community and much less as "backward-looking" which refers to accountability and blame, should the effort fail. Learning motivated by this responsibility was usually learning that was shared among hotel employees and hotels, was accessible by everyone, and was easily embedded in everyday work:

> Our hotel was a designated community evacuation area. However, alongside the community 'refugees' and the rescue teams we had to also host businesses who lost their buildings and even embassies. We were fortunate that our sister hotels in Tokyo had a good experience of the security protocols and standards for such guests and shared them with us (D7 – Kanagawa)

Even in hierarchical societies like the Japanese, collective vision and responsibility ensure that in the time of a crisis, all employees, not just the senior management, have a clear idea of the hotel's crisis response procedures replacing, in a manner of speaking, other forms of control as the driver of consistency in crisis response.

Team solidarity: The collective responsibility to protect guests is naturally extended to the responsibility towards fellow employees whether in the same hotel or other hotels. Therefore, crisis learning has become "learning to save the lives of my colleagues, colleagues that may also one day save my life" (E1 – Fukushima). The general manager of a "no-frills" hotel in Sendai said:

> Although this was not part of our original crisis planning, we felt appropriate to offer the opportunity to colleagues with young children to relocate and work temporarily in hotels outside the danger zone, in Gunma and Saitama, or if they preferred in our hotels in the Chubu and Kansai areas. As the largest part of our staff are women, we gave priority to mothers and arranged for their safe accommodation either within the hotels or in nearby buildings. This has now become a standard operating procedure for our company in crisis situations (M1 – Miyagi)

In the same way that hotels were trying to maintain their business assets' continuity, they also learned to find ways to maintain their human assets' continuity by offering accommodation to managers and employees who had to work long hours to tend for guests and "refugees" (D6 – Tokyo), provide food supplies and bottled water to employee families with children (E2 -Iwate).

Social networks: Another driver for crisis learning was found to be the ability of the hotels in the sample to connect with their wider environment, both business and community, and scan it for knowledge and information that could be used for effective and efficient crisis response. This ability to connect with the environment allowed for crisis response lessons as simple as being able to locate still functioning public telephone booths around the hotel to re-establish communication with the company's headquarters (E5 – Aomori) and as complicated as planning evacuation routes in an area that all critical infrastructure has collapsed:

> We did not have any way to help guests leave the area but thanks to our good relationship with Miyabi Kanko [local bus company], we secured a chartered bus for everyone to safely reach the Omiya rail station in Saitama. With their ground knowledge, we eventually got them on their way home (D10 – Tochigi)

These social networks are usually nurtured over time, and they are based on social relationships and reciprocity:

> We worked out a plan together with [competing hotel brand] to accommodate and evacuate their guests because they had to close their property for repairs, and they arranged food and water supplies for us from their hotels in Hokkaido, Niigata, and Nagano (M9 – Aomori)

But also linking with the local communities and providing a "shelter in a storm" (M3-Tokyo) offered the opportunity to better connect with and understand the needs of the communities around the hotels:

> In the Great Hanshin [Kobe earthquake in 1995] I was still a front desk agent, but I remember vividly how people in the community suffered and what we could offer. This time, I learned that we could go beyond just offering blankets, hot water, and dry food when I had to improvise and organize a banquet room for bed-bound evacuees, just like a temporary hospital, and care for them (M4 – Chiba)

M4, who is now a general manager of a property in the Chiba area, continued to explain that his hotel group revised their crisis management plan to be able to provide such an emergency service more effectively to their local communities in times of a crisis.

Crisis learning stewardship

Mitroff (2005) was one of the early crisis management scholars who talked about crisis leadership, which not only reacts to the crisis but encourages a more proactive culture towards crisis and also forecasts and effectively manages all stages of a crisis. When it comes to crisis learning, the participants of this study indicated in their narratives the important role of their leadership teams in preparing the hotels for the occurrence of expected and unexpected crises, learning how to deal with their implications, and grow from their disruptive experience of crises. This learning leadership process took place through the entire lifecycle of the crisis from the prodromal stage (pre-crisis) to the acute and chronic stages (during the crisis) and then to the recovery stage (post-crisis). The themes that emerged from these narratives involved the strategic centrality of crisis learning in their respective hotel groups, the resources made available for it, the involvement of stakeholders in its design and implementation, the measurement of crisis learning, and the stories and symbolic events that maintain the commitment to crisis learning "alive and continuously renewed" (M5 – Tokyo).

Strategic centrality of crisis learning: Leadership that inspires an inquisitive and learning culture was one of the most cited drivers for crisis learning. In Japan, the concept of continuous improvement is deeply ingrained in every aspect of life and central to all businesses. Business leaders encourage and facilitate discussions that constantly challenging the status quo and looking for ways to improve. At the same time, disaster education is a dimension of learning that starts from the school years and continues in post-school professional life. The respondents emphasized the influence of their top leadership in instilling a strong crisis-learning culture, albeit from different starting points:

> Our company's president [owner] is a [foreigner] who embraced the Japanese culture and even changed his name to be Japanese. He is a strong proponent of all learning, both religious and non-religious, and his philosophy permeates all his businesses. Disaster training [crisis learning] is a core element of the company's training for the protection of our guests and our staff and has his full support from the beginning (M6 – Miyagi)

> [Hotel Group] is known as a company that employs predominantly women and has developed a 'mother' protective personality over the years. Therefore, everything that has to do with learning about safety and disaster response is central to the company's very existence (E6 – Ibaraki)

Resources for crisis learning: An important facilitator for successful crisis learning is that the organization's strategic intent is translated into significant investment in resources. Some participants (D2 -Tokyo, D4 – Yamagata, D9 – Fukushima, E2 – Iwate, E4 – Yamagata) reported regular crisis learning events such as seminars, workshops, full-on evacuation drills, tabletop exercises, and simulations for local management and supervisory staff with the participation of senior (HQ) management staff which should take a significant percentage of their companies' annual budget. M4 (Chiba) noted that the presence of HQ-level managers in events is the best evidence of senior management's commitment to crisis learning. M5 (Tokyo) reported a crisis management team consisting of 30 department heads participating in quarterly crisis exercises and safety audits. D5 (Aomori) talked about bi-annual regional and national crisis management workshops for sharing best practices across the hotel group.

Stakeholder participation in crisis learning: Interestingly, crisis learning is not driven solely by the company's leadership and staff, but it often involves learning from stakeholders such as customers, suppliers, insurers, the government, and the local community. This is a form of dynamic crisis learning which maintains a continuous flow of knowledge and information exchange between all parties (Paraskevas et al., 2013). M5 (Tokyo) said that they have annual reviews of their crisis management plans and safety standards with their key accounts (corporate clients, group business customers) whilst M7 (Kanagawa) and M9 (Aomori) stated that, following the Great Eastern Earthquake, they are involving their suppliers in their business continuity planning. M3 (Tokyo) said that his group is involving the city's disaster prevention organization ("jishu bosai soshiki") in the re-design of their crisis management plan and, similarly, M1 (Ibaraki) reported the collaboration with her local community's association ("chonaikai") in evacuation planning for local residents, guests, and staff members.

Crisis learning measurement: An essential element of "kaizen" is performance monitoring and benchmarking. In the case of crisis management, the participants reported that measurements concern mainly staff and management performance in drills and tabletop exercises (M4 – Chiba, M7 – Kanagawa), person-hours dedicated to seminars and workshops (D2 – Tokyo), guest satisfaction ratings of security and safety (M5-Tokyo) and the number of ideas and suggestions for improvements in crisis response (D10 – Tochigi). Quarterly and annual comparisons are made at property level and then regionally and nationally with best performers for one year becoming the benchmarks for comparison the following year. As such, these measurements and comparisons also serve as surrogate measures for crisis learning and they strengthen the commitment to learning. Collectively, they help the hotel groups monitor how well they are learning and how they can improve their learning processes.

Stories and symbolic events: Another powerful driver for crisis learning that emerged from the participants' responses is the stories on past crises and the symbolic events that commemorate these crises. M4 (Chiba) said that his storytelling of his Kobe earthquake lived experience as a young front office agent always brought tears in the eyes of his team:

> I can always see how these young men and women become committed to learning our crisis response policies when they hear my story. It is upsetting, but it is the best motivational tool. I often use this story also to revive this commitment by reminding them every year or so that our team will never allow such terrible losses in a crisis (M4 – Chiba)

In the same vein, other participants working in Miyagi and Fukushima said that they are going to use their lived experiences of the Great East Japan earthquake in the future to inspire and motivate crisis learning in their hotels.

Apart from the lived stories, disaster stories linked with remembrance events are also powerful motivators for crisis learning. M6 (Miyagi) and D9 (Fukushima) said that the Disaster Prevention Day ("bosai no hi") on September 1st has always been a good opportunity for crisis learning and commitment renewal, whereas D4 (Yamagata) said that his hotel group considers the whole week around September 1st as Disaster Prevention Week ("bosai shukan") and use it for workshops and seminars on crisis response improvement as well as for best practice sharing. Similarly, participants reported that the commemoration of the Hiroshima and Nagasaki bombings (August 6th and 9th) was used as a crisis learning opportunity with company-wide audits, reviews, and training of crisis response procedures dealing with CBRN (Chemical, Biological, Radiological, Nuclear) incidents.

Clearly, leadership is the most important driver of crisis learning; however, these findings show that even in a very hierarchical society such as the Japanese, crisis learning is shifting away from traditional, top-down conceptions of leadership toward more horizontal, collaborative, and collective approaches. It is not a matter of one leader or one leadership team but a collective effort of many that goes beyond one person's career. Rather, it is a set of attitudes, roles, and behaviors that ensures that the organization survives and succeeds not only in the present but also for future generations. It involves a collective orientation that favors both the pooling and the development of the organization's resources to protect the livelihoods of its customers, its staff, and its communities beyond self-interest. It would be therefore better positioned as crisis learning stewardship (Simpkins et al., 2021).

Conclusion

This chapter aimed at providing an insight into the factors that drive successful crisis-induced learning in an organization. These factors are presented in Figure 5.2.

At the heart of this crisis learning stewardship framework are the types of crisis lessons that can be learned from and implemented in a crisis situation. These can be lessons from lived experience, lessons from a vicarious experience, or scientific analysis and lessons based on skills developed from non-crisis situations. To create a conducive environment for crisis learning, the organization must engage all its members, create among them a collective vision of safety and security and a sense of blame-free collective responsibility towards all its stakeholders. This responsibility will be manifested internally in tighter relationships and solidarity among organizational members and externally in the creation of robust social networks with various stakeholders and stakeholder groups. Crisis learning must be central in the organization's strategic intent, visible by all its stakeholders, and evidenced by the investment of financial, human, and time resources to support it. Knowledge and information acquisition and codification should not only involve organizational

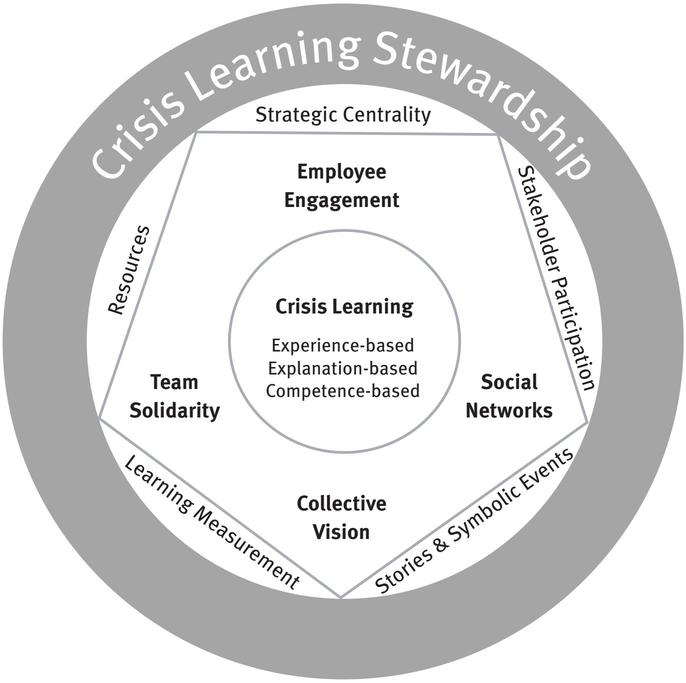

Figure 5.2: A Framework for Crisis Learning Stewardship.

members but also stakeholders such as customers, suppliers, competitors, and civil society. Crisis learning should be periodically measured, compared against set benchmarks, reviewed, and updated. Storytelling and regular symbolic events facilitate the organizational members' commitment to crisis learning and the dissemination of revisions and updates.

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Ron Fisher, Mark Francis, and Claire Haven-Tang

6 An organizational learning model for crisis management in tourism and hospitality

Introduction

When disasters occur, such as the global shutdown of tourism and hospitality due to the COVID-19 pandemic, they are often beyond the control of organizations. The COVID-19 pandemic is a global disaster that has affected tourism and hospitality within and between countries. As a result of the pandemic, many activities in the sector have grounded to a halt worldwide. In order to clarify terms, Faulkner (2001) proposed that the difference between a disaster and a crisis was the extent to which the incident could be attributed to the organization. Disasters tend to be external to, and beyond the control of, the organization. Disasters involve unpredictable, catastrophic change that involves response after the fact (Faulkner, 2001; Prideaux, Laws, & Faulkner, 2003). While the global shutdown of tourism and hospitality is a disaster that is beyond the control of organizations, how businesses respond as they emerge from the pandemic will determine whether a crisis ensues, causing further, self-inflicted damage (Niininen & Gatsou, 2008). Despite their enormity global disasters offer opportunities for businesses to address emerging consumer needs, although recovery is likely to impact differently on different stakeholder groups (Niininen & Gatsou, 2008). Most organizations are not prepared to manage crises (Wang, 2008). Some sectors, such as small-scale tourism businesses are particularly ill-equipped (Cushnahan, 2004). Planning for crisis management should be high on tourism and hospitality agendas and much can be learned from past experiences (Henderson, 2008).

Blackman and Ritchie (2008) recognized the importance of organizational learning in times of crisis in tourism. The need to question existing knowledge through reflection is highlighted as is the involvement of stakeholders. However, the link between how learning can be applied and how it contributes to effective crisis management is not well established and existing efforts are often geared toward improving organizational processes (Wang, 2008). Research is needed into crisis management frameworks not only to prepare organizations for the negative aspects of crises but also to guide their responses (Pforr & Hosie, 2008). Blackman and Ritchie (2008, p.55) noted that organizational learning is neither managed effectively nor conducted critically, which impacts adversely on crisis management.

In tourism and hospitality, there is a feeling that crises are inevitable yet there is a lack of contingency planning in many sectors (Ghaderi, Mat Som, & Henderson, 2012). Paradoxically even crises that have a global impact and affect the sector as a whole will offer opportunities for some enterprises to address emerging consumer

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needs (Niininen & Gatsou, 2008). We agree with this and examples of entrepreneurial activities during the COVID-19 pandemic include Air Asia and the restaurant industry. In an example of embracing an opportunity outside the usual remit of the business Air Asia CEO Tony Fernandes is looking for new ways to generate income after the COVID-19 lockdown left aircraft grounded, and is developing an "all-in-one" app that would be used for food delivery, shopping, payments, entertainment and travel (FMT, 2020). In an example of repositioning, celebrity chef Tom Colicchio spoke of restaurants engaging with online ordering and home delivery (Thompson, 2020). Another example from the food and beverage sector in the global pandemic involved a restaurant using "greenhouses" that allow diners to maintain a safe physical distance from other patrons while service staff uses long wooden planks to ensure they maintain a safe distance (Petter, 2020). Finally in the hotel sector technology changes are changing the guest experience with online bots, the use of robots for meet and greet and room cleaning, and the use of voice recognition technology for bookings and enquiries (Revfine, 2020).

Figure 6.1: Organizational Learning Model.
Source: Developed by the authors

According to Fink (2000), effective crisis management is essential to ensure business survival. In this vein, Boin and McConnell (2007) argued that post-disaster success involves prevention, planning, acute response, recovery, and learning, which suggests an approach based on action learning cycles. In this study, we propose an organizational learning approach based on Argyris and Schön's (1974) action learning model. The organizational learning model is presented in Figure 6.1. The model proposes four stages that tourism and hospitality businesses need to embrace as they move towards organizational learning. Businesses should first determine what opportunities are present in their general and specific environments (Figure 6.1) at times of crisis by undertaking a situational analysis (stage 1). Information from the situational analysis is then used to determine the opportunities and threats in the organization's environment and to a lesser extent the strengths and weaknesses within the organization (stage 2). The information from the previous stages is then synthesized to formulate strategies and tactics (stage 3). The final stage is operationalizing and internalizing outcomes from the preceding stage to achieve organizational learning (stage 4).

In times of crisis, businesses in the sector face turbulent environments that contain a range of challenges but also opportunities. Identifying opportunities while minimizing challenges are critical factors that are fundamental to future business success. However, when faced with a crisis business often fails to take appropriate action due to deficiencies in environmental analysis and subsequent action. Crisis management demands a clear understanding of changed, often previous unencountered, environmental conditions. Finally, outcomes should then be embedded in the collective knowledge of the organization.

In other research Ghaderi et al. (2014) suggested that there is a feeling of inevitability about tourism crises, and businesses in this sector are prone to these uncertainties. Given the specter of vulnerability, businesses should prepare themselves to face any crisis. Ghaderi et al. further argue that the range of people-related issues facing tourism and hospitality businesses, such as safety and security, economic and financial, customer attitudes and behaviors etcetera militate against a simple, stable business environment. The environmental issues appear to be recognized as problematic within the industry, yet few tourism businesses engage in any formal or contingency planning to deal with crises (Ghaderi et al., 2014). The tendency to deal just with the issue arising, while ignoring the underlying causes, indicates a single-loop learning approach (Blackman & Ritchie, 2008; Ghaderi et al., 2014).

Single-loop learning has been likened to a thermostat that can detect a temperature change but is unable to question why this occurred or how it could operate differently (Argyris, 1976b). Single-loop learning is grounded in meeting a self-imposed purpose, a focus on winning not losing, of suppressing negative feelings, and based on rationality (Argyris, 1976a). Examining underlying values and assumptions while exploring alternatives involves double-loop learning, which is fundamental to changing the status quo (Argyris, 1976b). Making people aware of the need for double-loop learning is challenging, as many people are unable to make the change and this inability often is not recognized (Argyris, 1976b, p.638). Awareness is the first step, but this can lead to further inhibition and militate against the desired changes. Argyris and Schön (1974) suggested that people have in their heads theories of action that guide decision-making. However, theories that people espouse are mainly different from theories that they use in action. Argyris (1976b) suggested that people usually do not realize they are not acting in the way they espouse due to (a) a lack of reflection; (b) single-loop learning; and (c) ineffective problem-solving to challenge the status quo. Argyris designated organizations that follow these behaviors as Model 1, which are typified by their engagement with organizational defensive routines and an ability to make only programmed decisions. He further argued that Model 1 theories-in-use are practiced by 95% of people.

For tourism and hospitality to address a crisis, it is necessary to unfreeze Model 1 behaviors, move to Model 2 and refreeze, as advocated by Lewin (1947) and Wang (2008). Model 2 involves making unprogrammed decisions based on: (a) understanding the complexity of real-life; (b) involving stakeholders (including employees) to maintain their interest; (c) openness with stakeholders; (d) supporting decision-makers with appropriate behaviors; (e) internal commitment; (f) moving beyond initial reservations to achieve outcomes; and (g) recognition that societal gains may not result from actions (Argyris, 1976a, 1976b, 1995). Practicing Model 2 behaviors is the foundation for organizational learning. It involves being aware of espoused theories, recognizing theories-in-use, and dealing with inconsistencies between them. Additionally, and very importantly, tourism and hospitality organizations need to realise that Model 2 outcomes cannot be achieved with Model 1 competencies (Argyris, 1976b).

Argyris and Schön (1974) proposed a way to assist the transition to Model 2 based on an action learning model. The steps of the model are (a) Discover – discovering a problem or situation; (b) Invent – proposing a solution including developing a conceptual map; (c) Produce – producing the invention in terms of performing actual behavior; and (d) Generalize – applying learnings to other settings (Argyris, 1976b: 642). To move to Model 2 learning it is necessary to re-learn how to learn at each stage of the action learning model, which is achieved by cycling through the four steps of the model at each stage (Argyris, 1976b: 646).

An action learning model for crisis management

We propose a four-stage action model that maximizes organizational outputs in times of crisis (Figure 6.2). Maximizing organizational outputs involves moving an organization from a Model 1 mindset to Model 2, as discussed above. Our action model is adapted from Argyris and Schön's (1974) organizational learning model, using established analytical tools for the first three stages. The stages of our adapted model are (a) Discover – a situational analysis using an adaptation of Strauss and Corbin's (1998) conditional matrix; (b) Invent – development at the business environment level of prospects identified in the previous stage using Mintzberg's (1990) design school model; (c) Produce – assessment of opportunities against organizational resources and developing initial strategies using Weihrich's (1982) matrix for strategies and tactics based on the situational analysis; and (d) Generalize – embedding the learnings of previous stages into organizational memory as proposed by Argyris (1976a. 1976b). To reiterate, to achieve transformation from Model 1 to Model 2 the organization must continuously "learn to learn" by cycling through the D-I-P-G steps at each stage as one progresses through the model.

In embracing Model 2 learning we first establish a group to function as a learning set. Group membership is drawn from stakeholders, ideally at least four persons but possibly up to 10 depending on organizational constraints (Krueger, 1994). Learning set members should receive training in the purpose of the group, its importance, the need for collaboration, meeting protocols, and the need to create a friendly environment. As stakeholders, learning set members should be made aware of their crucial role in moving the organization from Model 1 to Model 2. Key functions of the learning set are to build on the cognitive learning mechanisms of individuals by identifying and confirming issues, engaging with collaborative enquiry and shared action, and reflecting outcomes at an organizational level (Coghlan & Brannick, 2014). The organizational learning process is driven by the learning set.

Before introducing the organizational learning action model, we discuss an overall approach that guides its use. As we foreshadowed above, people tend to have in mind theories or models of previous actions that they have used in the past, either successfully or unsuccessfully. Often, these act to constrain action through inappropriate application of these theories. As Wittgenstein (2000) suggested, when facing new or different situations we instinctively try to fit the circumstances into existing mental models. Doing this often leads to losing sight of the "disorder of things" (Genova, 1995, p. 58), which in turn results in inappropriate conclusions. Wittgenstein (2000) argued that in thinking about a situation we convince ourselves that there is an existing solution, yet we have not fully understood the issue at hand. Wittgenstein advocates that when faced with a new or changed situation we should first "look and see," as seeing demands consideration of what is open to view. Seeing is grounded in the shared world connecting people and other aspects of the world, an activity that involves differences. Second, and only after we understand the situation, we should think, as thinking tends to focus on existing mental models derived from past experience (Genova, 1995). Finally, we should do or act. Wittgenstein is advocating an experiential, idiosyncratic way of understanding based on look-think-act and linking it with how things do or do not resembles one

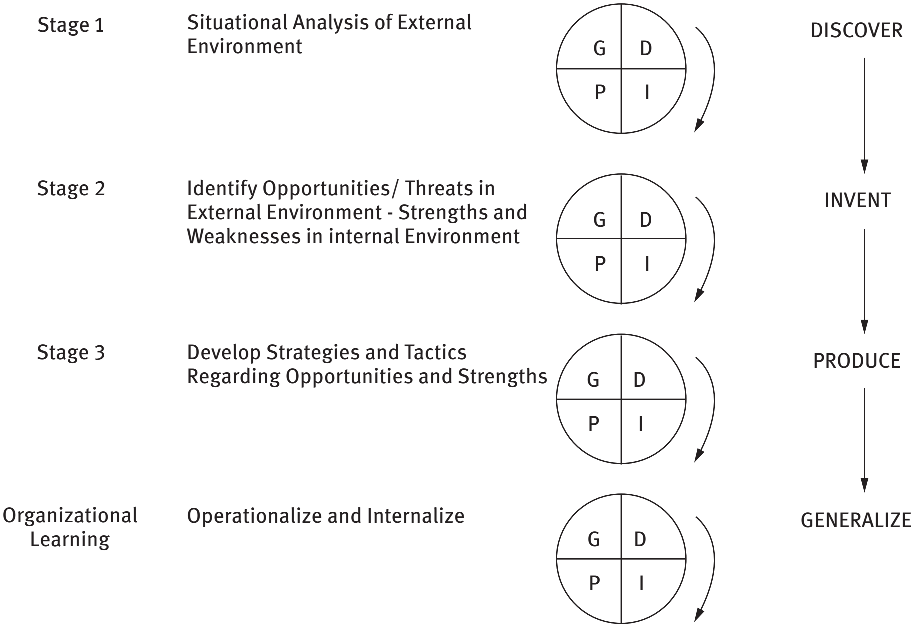

Figure 6.2: Organizational Learning and Transformation Action Model.
Source: Adapted from Argyris and Schön (1974) and Argyris (1976b)

another. This is an approach that guides the organizational learning model, based on exploring differences in the business environment rather than prematurely attempting to align new situations with past experience.

The four-stage action model focuses on identifying and evaluating opportunities in a time of crisis before incorporating learnings into organizational memory. Although the model is adapted from Argyris and Schön's (1974) action learning model a point of difference in our model is the stage at which strategies are developed. In the original model, strategy development occurs in the second stage (Invent), while in our model we maintain a focus on the environment throughout the second stage. The reason for this is a desire to establish the ideal resources or strengths addressing an opportunity would require. A further point of difference occurs in the operation of the TOWS matrix (Weihrich, 1982), which we use to assess gaps in resources and to develop strategies at the third stage of the model.

As an overview of the model, in the first stage business opportunities in the environment are identified together with linkages to other events. In the second stage, opportunities are examined further to establish attendant factors, such as what threats exist (e.g., government policy) and what other factors/resources should be addressed to embrace the opportunity (e.g., specific competencies). In the third stage, the focus changes to the organization to consider whether it is equipped to engage with the opportunities and other linkages, and if not whether it is feasible to acquire the resources. The final stage of the model is the organizational learning stage where opportunities are operationalized and incorporated into organizational memory.

The first stage: Discover

The first stage of the action learning model is the Discover stage, where discovery or diagnosis involves a situational analysis of events in the organization's external environment. The focus of the analysis is on opportunities. These may be opportunities for new prospects or extensions to, or repositioning of, existing business activities. The situational analysis is guided by Strauss and Corbin's (1998, p. 181) conditional matrix, which was originally proposed as a means of stimulating thinking about macro and micro conditions, the relationships between conditions, and their effect on processes. Originally conceptualized as a spiral the matrix cycles through different levels from global, through national, regional, community down to individual conditions. There may be additional levels related to particular circumstances to those shown in our diagram. Often there are connections between the macro and micro-events, and events seldom stand alone. Guided by look-think-act, thus avoiding hasty alignment of situations with existing mental models, the matrix operates by locating an event and establishing: (a) the conditions relating to it; (b) what sequence of events resulting from it; and (c) how these events impact on other events and/or processes. This is a very important part of the analysis that may demand a focus on events outside the usual remit of an organization. In this study, we show an adapted situational analysis, which we present as a funnel ranging from macro to micro-events (Figure 6.3).

As each event in the organization's environment is discovered the learning set cycles through the four steps of the action model. For example, if discovery is that the Himalayas can now be seen from the Punjab region of India for the first time in 30 years, a phenomenon linked to reduced pollution due to lockdown during the global pandemic (Hamas, 2020), the invent stage might be whether tours to the region would be feasible, the Produce stage considering how such tours could occur, followed by what monitoring of the event could occur (the generalize stage). As discussed above, events identified through the operation of the matrix do not occur in isolation, and consideration at each stage of the action cycle should be given to connections between the macro- and micro-events. After the first stage of the action learning model, the learning set should have identified one or more opportunities in the organizational environment, though at this stage no alignment with organizational resources has taken place.

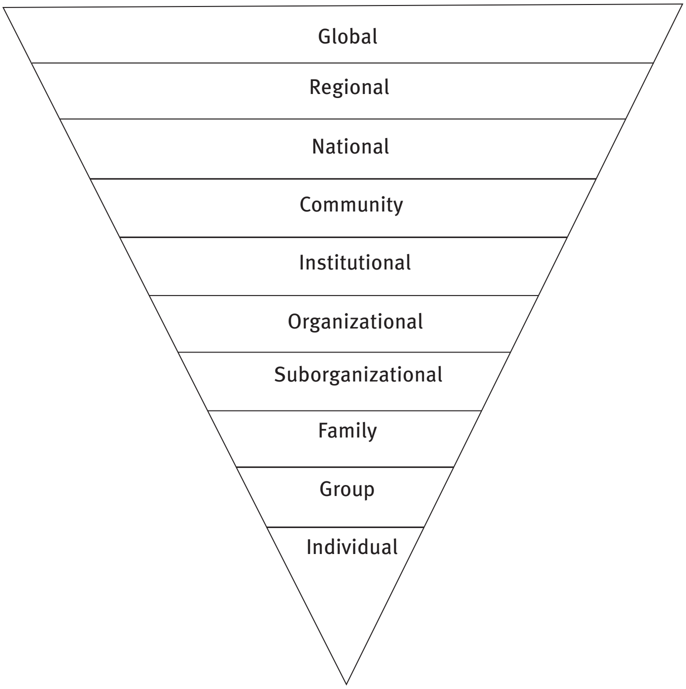

Figure 6.3: Situational Analysis.
Source: Adapted from Strauss and Corbin (1998)

The second stage: Invent

The second stage of the action learning model is the Invent stage, which relates to generating increased knowledge of events identified in the previous stage. At this stage, the learning set will have a detailed list of events for consideration. In the second stage, there is a focus on potential opportunities and how these might unfold for the organization. The learning set should also be thinking about any threats to a successful uptake that exist in the environment (e.g., travel to Punjab may offer an opportunity but be unviable due to government travel restrictions). Other important considerations include an assessment of resources that would be needed, such as finance and capabilities. This is an opportunity to reflect objectively on the resources needed to address a business opportunity.

As with all other stages of the model the action steps are cycled through in conducting this stage of analysis. The steps of the model operate by taking as inputs the opportunities identified in the environmental analysis conducted in the previous stage (Discover), considering a range of strengths (i.e., organizational factors such as finance, competencies) needed to embrace each opportunity (Invent), selecting the appropriate ideal strengths (Produce) and embedding the outcomes into organizational knowledge (Generalize).

In operationalizing the second stage, opportunities identified in the first stage are examined in detail to establish attendant factors, such as what threats exist (e.g., government policy, physical or cultural constraints) and what resources would be needed to be able to embrace the opportunity (e.g., finances, specific competencies). This stage uses SWOT analysis, first mooted in the 1960s and popularized by Mintzberg's (1990) design school analysis, to clarify environmental opportunities and challenges. In addition to opportunities and threats in the environment SWOT analysis also considers "key success factors" (Mintzberg, 1990, p. 174). As previously mentioned, the focus at the second stage of analysis is at the environment level, not the organizational level. We have kept the focus on the environment rather than the organization as at this stage of analysis it is more important to determine what strengths we should have rather than what strengths we actually possess.

Using look-think-act the learning set interrogates the inputs and classifies them as internal (organizational) or external (environmental) issues. Internal issues such as existing strengths and weaknesses are set aside for consideration in the next stage. After the second stage of analysis, the learning set will have interrogated the business environment and developed a set of opportunities, threats, and key success factors, which are the inputs to the next stage of the action model.

The third stage: Produce

The third stage of the action learning model is the Produce stage, where strategies and tactics are produced using the outputs from previous stages of the model. In the previous stage, we used SWOT analysis to list environmental issues. However, SWOT analysis does not provide guidance about an organization's strategy or any insight into tactics to assist strategy implementation (Barney, 2016; Weihrich, 1982). Weihrich (1982) addressed the limitations of SWOT by proposing a matrix that assists strategy formation. In his research, Weihrich used the matrix to match opportunities and threats in the external environment with strengths and weaknesses within the organization. In the adapted matrix (Figure 6.4) the most desirable match is depicted as quadrant 1 where opportunities in the external environment are matched closely with the strengths of the organization, a max/max situation.

The point of departure from Wehrich's matrix is that up to this point we have considered the opportunities identified in the external environment and for each opportunity the strengths that an organization would ideally possess, rather than the strengths that the organization currently has. For each opportunity, the learning set now considers the degree to which the ideal strengths (the outputs of stage 2) are matched with organizational strengths (identified and set aside in stage 2) and where gaps occur. This is a critical part of the analysis as it identifies deficiencies in organizational resources associated with each opportunity under consideration. As in previous stages the learning set cycles through the steps of the overall learning model in considering the development of strategy and tactics in relation to the ideal and actual strengths. The steps of the model operate by taking as inputs the results generated by the previous stage (Discover), considering a range of strategies and tactics to follow based on careful analysis of the degree to which ideal and desired strengths are matched (Invent), selecting a preferred option (Produce) and embedding the outcomes into organizational knowledge (Generalize).

	S	W
O	1 MAX - MAX	2 MAX - MIN
T	3 MIN - MAX	4 MIN - MIN

Figure 6.4: TOWS Matrix.
Source: Adapted from Weihrich (1982)

To assist in operationalizing this stage of the overall model a matrix of ideal strengths versus actual organizational strengths associated with an opportunity (Table 6.1). These are propositional to illustrate the point. The matrix provides support for decision-making at the Invent stage. The strength of the match between actual and desired strengths is indicated by a ranking from 0 – no match to 5 – close match. For each opportunity identified by earlier stages of the action learning model, the learning set can now consider potential opportunities against existing organizational resources. Where the deficiencies are in the capability of existing staff discussions about the development of existing staff or the need to hire new people can be made. Where deficiencies are in other organizational factors, such as capital or land, cost-benefit decisions can also be made. Once each opportunity has been evaluated and costed the learning set can Produce an informed course of action for the organization.

Table 6.1: Ideal versus Actual Strengths.

Organizational Strengths (Actual)	Environmental Strengths (Ideal)				
	1	2	3	4	5
1	4	3	1	0	2
2	1	0	5	3	0
3	0	0	0	0	0
4	0	2	0	2	0
5	0	1	0	0	0
6	0	0	4	0	3

Source: Adapted from Weihrich (1982)

The fourth stage: Generalize

The fourth stage of the action learning model is Generalize, where learnings from previous stages are embedded in organizational memory. This is the "refreeze" stage of the process of enacting change foreshadowed above. As with the previous three stages, the four steps of the action model are cycled through to ensure a focus on "learning to learn" is maintained. The Discover step relates to the opportunities that resulted from the situational analysis, Invent relates to ideal resources needed for the uptake of the opportunities, Produce is the matching of organizational attributes to the ideal resources demanded and the development of strategy. Generalize is the link to the organization as a collective through knowledge acquisition, storage, and delivery.

In order to evaluate the utility of our model, we draw on an insightful article relating to organizational learning in tourism crisis management by Ghaderi et al. (2014). In their article Ghaderi et al. presented six main steps in the organizational learning process: (a) knowledge acquisition; (b) knowledge diffusion; (c) knowledge utilization; (d) reflection; (e) organizational memory; and (f) crisis and organizational change. The current study is evaluated against these steps to indicate the potential uptake of knowledge at the organizational level.

Knowledge acquisition: Despite a need for tourism organizations to acquire new knowledge in times of crisis few have been able to do this. Also, the ability to acquire new knowledge varies across the sector, with airlines and hotels being better placed than others. Ghaderi et al. (2014) gave the example of the airline industry that has established procedures enabling it to obtain early warning of threats in its business environment. However, most tourism and hospitality organizations are less well prepared to deal with a crisis that threatens their businesses. The level of unpreparedness does suggest that most of these organizations are engaged in Model 1 behaviors, where changing the status quo will be challenging. However, following our organizational learning model will lead to the acquisition of new knowledge if the learning processes are established and operated in the ways we have suggested. Acquiring new knowledge must occur before any sustainable change can occur and is fundamental to the operation of our model.

Knowledge diffusion: Once knowledge has been acquired it needs to be shared and distributed. While there is recognition in some sectors of the need for knowledge diffusion, speed of distribution is an issue due to poor information channels. Ghaderi et al. (2014) differentiated between information sharing within organizations and across industry sectors. In our model, we have considered organizational learning at the individual business level. In retrospect, the first two stages of our model could be applied to an industry sector but probably not from the point where strategy/tactics are developed due to the individual nature of resource availability and allocation. Our model provides an opportunity for knowledge diffusion throughout an organization, particularly through the involvement of stakeholders, and thus supports organizational learning.

Knowledge utilization: Ghaderi et al.'s (2014) research suggested that in times of crisis tourism and hospitality organizations use whatever knowledge they have, or can acquire, to mitigate the threats they are facing. However, in times of crisis knowledge is not used optimally, and knowledge is not always ready to hand. Ghaderi et al. concluded this suggests organizational memory is deficient. By using our model organizations will have detailed knowledge relating to their own circumstances that will assist them in addressing specific opportunities. Refreezing detailed knowledge into organizational memory will enable tourism businesses to be better prepared for future crises.

Reflection: The reflection that usually occurs in organizations in the sector tends not to generate significant learning as established patterns of organizational culture are not challenged (Ghaderi et al., 2014,). The gap between espoused theories of action and theories in use is not explored leading to organizational defensive routines, single-loop learning, and Model 1 behaviors (Argyris, 1976b; Ghaderi et al., 2014). In using our adapted organizational learning model, we involve stakeholders in all steps of analysis: the business environment, ideal strengths, strategy development, and identification of gaps in organizational resources to embrace double-loop learning and Model 2 behaviors. Reflection is a key element at each of the stages of the model.

Organizational memory: Organizational Memory is often fragmented, partly formalized through policies and procedures, partly informal in individual memory. Organizational memory is particularly important in times of crisis and its imperfect nature often leads to sub-optimal responses to crises (Ghaderi et al., 2014). The organizational learning model we propose involves making unprogrammed decisions based on steps (a) to (g) outlined earlier in this chapter while progressing through the unfreeze-move-refreeze stages that facilitate organizational memory (Wang, 2008). The steps ensure that a focus on Model 2 behaviors is maintained throughout the operation of the organizational learning model thus facilitating the embedding of outcomes in organizational memory.

Crisis and organizational change: Organizational change in businesses that face a crisis is paradoxical, with initial resistance acting as a trigger for positive change (Ghaderi et al., 2014). Initial resistance is a characteristic of a Model 1 organization in defense of the status quo. Our model provides a framework to guide change while facilitating a move from Model 1 to Model 2 behaviors.

Conclusion

In the main, organizations in the tourism sector are poorly prepared to manage business crises. When facing a crisis, initial reactions tend to focus on how to minimize damage rather than looking for opportunities and how to take advantage of them. A focused review of the literature suggests that most tourism and hospitality organizations practice organizational defensive routines to maintain the status quo. These organizations exhibit what Argyris (1976a and b) would call Model 1 behaviors, manifest by single-loop learning and a failure to recognize and reflect on differences between what they espouse and what they actually do.

Research in the field (e.g., Ghaderi et al., 2014) reflects a growing recognition that organizational learning would enable organizations to be better prepared for the inevitable crises that occur periodically in the industry. While embracing organizational learning, and moving towards Model 2 behaviors, is essential for effective crisis management the radical organizational change involved is often difficult to achieve. To assist the change to and through organizational learning, we present a four-stage action learning model that assists organizations in the sector to identify and evaluate business opportunities before embedding processes and outcomes in organizational memory. The model is adapted from Argyris and Schön (1974) and Argyris (1976) model of organizational learning.

At each stage of the model, the four steps of the action cycle (Discover-Invent-Produce-Generalize) are completed as advocated by Argyris (1976b). This ensures that organizational members continue "learning to learn." The first two stages focus on the environmental level, where opportunities are identified through a situational analysis then further considered in terms of required resources. In stage three organizational attributes are matched against opportunities then strategies and tactics are developed. Stage four is the embedding of knowledge into the collective memory of the organization, the "refreezing" step of the change process.

The proposed action learning model provides practitioners in tourism and hospitality with a framework to assist them in managing crises. The importance of the model is its grounding in previous research thus providing a "learned" and structured approach to dealing with crisis management. As previous research has shown organizations are ill-prepared to deal with crises either in terms of limiting damage or in identifying opportunities.

Using the framework proposed in this research will enable tourism and hospitality organizations to respond to future crises more effectively as they embrace organizational learning. More effective responses are based on a range of factors, including 1) knowledge of the business environment through situational and environmental analyses; 2) a sound understanding of the strategy, tactics, and processes of the organization; 3) shared knowledge of organizational members assisting decision-making; 4) the collective memory of the organization; and 5) adaptive organizational culture. These factors will enable businesses to limit the damage of future crises, recover more quickly from them and provide greater resilience in a challenging environment.

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7 Foresight thinking and organizational learning: Scenario planning as a DMO crisis management tool

Introduction

Tourism is one of the most vulnerable economic sectors to regional and global crises (Ghaderi, Mat Som, & Wang, 2014). In today's dynamic environment, tourism stakeholders are required to be flexible and to have clarity about the direction of global changes and their impact on tourism, hospitality, and destination management (Dwyer, Dragićević, Armenski, Mihalič, & Knežević Cvelbar, 2016). Therefore, the crisis management capabilities of a tourism destination should be of such a quality that an emerging crisis can be resolved quickly and prevented from spreading (Racherla & Hu, 2009). Foresight, linked to long-term strategic planning since the 1970s, is a useful tool for individual and organizational learning that explores possible or desirable futures and potential organizational responses (Baškarada, Shrimpton, & Ng, 2016). It considers a broad range of factors to develop coherent and plausible visions of the future (Fernandez Güell, 2011). In this way, managers and strategists generate substantial new knowledge and understanding just by participating in strategic planning processes that look at crisis and disaster scenarios (Bootz, 2010) and enable their organizations to shift from "crisis-prone" to "crisis-prepared."

This chapter looks at how scenario planning can become such a useful dynamic and forward-looking learning tool for destination management organizations to improve their capacity to effectively respond to crises (Pollard & Hotho, 2006).

Foresight

Preparing for the future is essential at all levels: individual, corporate, territorial, and national. All long-term actions' success depends on properly anticipating their future development and evaluating the consequences for proper decision-making (Rojey, 2014). Understanding change is key to forecasting the future. Drivers of change show what is changing, why, and how (Yeoman & McMahon-Beattie, 2018). Unlike traditional forecasts, foresight makes it possible to understand the complexity, dynamics, and non-linearity of the contemporary world (Postma, Cavagnaro, & Spruyt, 2017). Foresight is a process of learning leading to action (Dufva, Könnölä, & Koivisto, 2015). It is also a deliberate process of knowledge-building about the future of a

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particular unit of analysis or a system of actors, aiming at policy development, strategy formulation, and planning, whether in the public or private sector (Kostin, 2018). Foresight seeks to clarify the best possible choices in an uncertain context, as it is a science of decision support used to prepare future actions (Rojey, 2014). Foresight involves a dynamic and creative process by which managers connect seemingly unrelated events and facts to a meaningful understanding of the changing world's developmental path, thus identifying forward-looking strategic initiatives (Mackay & Burt, 2015). By bringing together the key agents of change and knowledge sources, foresight develops strategic visions and anticipatory intelligence in a given territory (Fernández-Güell & Collado, 2014). Foresight introduces and evaluates different ideas from different perspectives (Koschatzky, 2005) and analyzes trends or potential events that significantly threaten medium and long-term organizational strategy (Borodako, 2014).

Foresight in tourism

Tourism needs to be carefully shaped globally and to the extent possible, regionally and locally, because of its unique and changing nature. Linear projections based on statistical data may not have a chance of success in this rapid change period (Awedyk & Niezgoda, 2016). The future of the planet faces many challenges, from climate change and energy to an aging population. At the same time, the future offers new markets, new tourists, and new tourism developments (Yeoman, 2019). Foresight is a relatively new field of research in tourism (Awedyk, 2016). While long-term tourism forecasts and scenarios are full of uncertainties, the need for techniques contributing to tourism's future preparation has probably never been greater (Scott & Gössling, 2015). Academics and industry stakeholders acknowledge the application and significance of future studies for tourism-related activities (Awedyk & Niezgoda, 2016; Carlisle, Johansen, & Kunc, 2016; Mai & Smith, 2018; Nematpour, Khodadadi, Rezaei, & Makian, 2020; Pongthanaisawan, Wangjiraniran, Chuenwong, & Pimonsree, 2018; Postma et al., 2017; Yeoman, 2019a). Foresight is valuable in addressing the future's major challenges and creating a strategic vision of what tourism would like to be in the future (Scott & Gössling, 2015).

Tourism foresight is a process in which regional tourism stakeholders accumulate participatory knowledge about potential factors and trends affecting the tourism industry at the regional level. This accumulation leads to relevant actions, facilitates the tourism industry's preparation for the future, and benefits tourism companies and society (Borodako, 2014). Since tourism is integrated with other sectors of the economy, it is impossible to consider tourism trends in isolation from the key drivers shaping tomorrow's world (Dwyer, Edwards, Mistilis, Roman, & Scott, 2009). Foresight helps formulate realistic and innovative tourism strategies that accept many stakeholders' views (Fernandez Güell, 2011). Foresight has been applied in various fields of tourism, such as tourism development (Awedyk, 2016), ecotourism (Ribeiro & Nascimento, 2014), urban tourism (Carlisle et al., 2016), hospitality (Oskam & Boswijk, 2016), tourism employment (Solnet et al., 2014), sustainable tourism (Mai & Smith, 2018; Postma et al., 2017), transportation services (Vorster, Ungerer, & Volschenk, 2012), food tourism (Yeoman & McMahon-Beatte, 2016).

Foresight and crisis management

Since unexpected adverse events have devastating effects on tourism-dependent communities and increase their vulnerability to a crisis, crisis management plays a key role for destinations (Liu-Lastres & Cahyanto, 2019; Mg, 2018). It is a prominent challenge for tourism to anticipate and prepare for the threat of natural or man-made crises (Pforr & Hosie, 2008). Crises have a specific duration, taking place in a recognizable time and space, but their impacts may be more lasting (Hall, 2010). As crisis management attempts to predict events that might interrupt critical future actions, managers with a forward-thinking vision are needed. Management includes foresight for future planning, defining realistic visions and objectives for the organization's future, motivating individuals to achieve them (Fener & Cevik, 2015). Crises (whether natural or human-made) have been and continue to be a part of organizational activities and directly or indirectly affect all involved parties, such as communities, visitors, regulators, and promoters (Santana, 2004). These crises include local issues related to violent criminal acts against tourists or problems with marketing/image at the destination, broader issues such as terrorism, political conflict, and natural disasters (Sheehan, Presenza, & Minguzzi, 2007). Tourism is prone to external impacts that need to be addressed through an effective crisis management process (Jia, Shi, Jia, & Li, 2012). It is difficult for managers to consider and monitor such impacts through confusion and ambiguity in emergencies and disasters (Ritchie, 2004).

Crisis management is a practice of crisis prevention and proactive crisis preparedness that minimizes negative impacts (Abo-Murad & Al-Khrabsheh, 2019); it does not always wait for the crisis to occur, but it also means that the destination is ready even before the crisis strikes. Thus, if the crisis happens, the destination is ready to implement the plans and quickly recover to the normal state within a short time (Antony & Jacob, 2019). In crisis leadership and management, there is an embryonic interest in using future thinking and strategic foresight (Ratcliffe & Ratcliffe, 2015). For those destinations with a high share of tourism in their overall economic activity, it is vital to take a strategic perspective on exposure to potential crisis events (Mikulić, Miloš Sprčić, Holiček, & Prebežac, 2018). Therefore, integrating crisis management into tourism strategic planning processes and vice versa enhances organizations' ability to survive and thrive, both in good and crisis times (Mg, 2018).

Through foresight tools, tourist destinations and hospitality businesses try to systematically think about the current decision to prepare future scenarios for improved performance in crises and disasters. They test their future hypotheses to formulate strategies to better anticipate and, ideally, prevent conflict-related crises and disasters and the collapse of tourist destinations (Constantinides, 2013). Foresight is an organization's set of activities to prevent, contain, and overcome crises and learn from them (Nathan, 2004). As a result, crisis management needs to be included in all tourism destinations' comprehensive planning, marketing, and management strategies (Jiang, Ritchie, & Verreynne, 2019). Each stakeholder needs to participate to a significant extent to ensure the achievement of several important actions such as the rebuilding of the destination's image, overcoming of any negative policies resulting from the crisis, short-term restoration, long term reconstruction of damaged tourism facilities and infrastructure, effective management of media coverage, facilitation of travel, and promotion and subsidization of business and consumer regulation (Cró & Martins, 2017).

Foresight and organizational learning

Foresight, which has been linked to long-term strategic planning since the 1970s, explores possible or desirable futures and potential organizational responses. It is an essential tool for individual and organizational learning within companies (Baškarada et al., 2016) that improves organizational learning and strategic decision-making (Kononiuk & Glińska, 2015). Organizational learning focuses on how the organization learns and how this knowledge is used effectively to excel in its performance level (Sheehan, Vargas Sanchez, Presenza, & Abbate, 2015). Organizations use existing knowledge through organizational learning to obtain new skills from internal and external environments (Yoon, Kim, Vonortas, & Han, 2018).

Foresight supports the organization's understanding of future developments (Wiener, 2018). Its techniques and methods enhance organizational flexibility and learning when companies face uncertainty (Haarhaus & Liening, 2020) by increasing their knowledge, which is a precondition for crisis and disaster management (Ghaderi et al., 2014). Foresight improves knowledge sharing, localized learning, and institutional reflexivity. Individual and group opinions need to be communicated to make consensus-building processes possible (Koschatzky, 2005). Regional government authorities should encourage organizational networking to enhance the creation and exchange of knowledge, support learning processes, create an updated knowledge base, and stimulate localized learning (Pino & Ortega, 2018). The foresight process contributes to the learning organization by preparing organizations for the future (Rohrbeck & Schwarz, 2013).

Foresight activity promotes collective forms of learning based on foresight's cognitive characteristics expressed through concepts such as collective change, mobilization, and appropriation (Bootz, Durance, & Monti, 2019). The focus of learning is to understand how a tourism destination works, how to enhance marketing opportunities, how to adapt to changing environments, how to promote collective awareness of risks and economic, social, and environmental impacts, and how to minimize or counter risks (Sheehan, Vargas-Sánchez, Presenza, & Abbate, 2016). DMOs help the industry adapt and respond proactively to change to benefit both industry and tourism consumers. Although, they can do so only if they develop and share appropriate knowledge (Sheehan et al., 2015).

Scenario planning

A tourist destination is a complex and dynamic system because it consists of many elements, including diverse actors and influenced by different internal and external factors. Combining these factors means that future of any destination is unknown. Therefore, tourism destination managers are needed to decide in a complex and uncertain environment (Mai & Smith, 2018). Scenarios provide a basis for examining how current plans could be affected or improved if subjected to a plausible future situation (Portales, 2015). One of the most common foresight methods is scenario planning (Carlisle et al., 2016). It is a forecasting tool used for interpreting information based on a broad body of knowledge and a clear understanding of system drivers and trends identified during the foresight process (Cook, Inayatullah, Burgman, Sutherland, & Wintle, 2014). Scenario planning is also linked to strategic planning, enabling tourism managers and decision-makers to rehearse for the future and be prepared for possible future consequences (Mai & Smith, 2018), including unforeseen crises and disasters. It accelerates organizational learning by involving multiple stakeholders in the learning process (Bokrantz, Skoogh, Berlin, & Stahre, 2017; Rohrbeck & Schwarz, 2013; Butler et al., 2016).

The scenario planning process helps tourism managers understand key factors and uncertainties affecting a phenomenon to discover the joint impact of various uncertainties that appear side by side as equals (Tolkach, Chon, & Xiao, 2016). In addition, tourism and hospitality managers and decision-makers need to consider obtaining a range of possibilities to organize critical situations (Nematpour, Khodadadi, & Rezaei, 2021). This leads them to address environmental uncertainty and complexity, combining the creation of stories and images about the environment and their potential evolution with the plausible scenario that leads to strategic choices and actions (Bouhalleb & Smida, 2019). Despite the element of uncertainty, tourism managers are responsible for ensuring that decisions taken in the context of future threats and opportunities are appropriate (Ramírez & Wilkinson, 2016). Therefore, using scenarios makes it possible to focus on the present, avoid uncertainty, minimize risk, provide alternatives, and create more flexible organizational thinking and predictions (Inayatullah, 2013). Organizations apply scenarios to develop and maintain a high-quality, consistent, and functional future-oriented vision (Burt & Nair, 2020). Scenarios are a useful tool to combine the external perspective with the internal resource and strategic options and support the search for an optimal solution in uncertain environments (Rohrbeck & Schwarz, 2013). They also function as an early warning system for potential threats and opportunities, stimulating organizational and individual learning and expanding the boundaries of perceptions (Bourmistrov, 2020).

Scenario planning is about anticipating the future, especially the uncertainties that the future is likely to bring, including exploring what might happen and developing different scenarios. A scenario describes trends and developments and their potential impacts on companies, institutions, or destinations. It reveals opportunities, risks, and threats and makes it easier to anticipate the possible consequences. Each scenario uses a set of rules and hypotheses, firmly anchored in the destination's realities, to show the possible consequences of particular choices in specific areas (Awedyk & Niezgoda, 2018). Several authors presented scenario-based planning using different approaches to create possible future scenarios for their tourism industry in various regions, such as participatory (Pizzitutti et al., 2017), knowledge integration (Bohensky, Butler, & Mitchell, 2011), and developmental approach (Mai & Smith, 2018). Scenario-based planning has also been applied in various fields related to tourism, such as carbon footprint analysis (Luo, Mou, Wang, Su, & Qin, 2020), crisis management (Limousin, Tixier, Bony-Dandrieux, Chapurlat, & Sauvagnargues, 2016), and resilience planning (Awedyk & Niezgoda, 2018).

Many destinations are not prepared to deal with crises. This negatively affects the destination and the tourists, leaving an unfavorable impression on its integrity (Varghese, 2016). While other actors (such as government agencies) are primarily responsible for responding directly to crises or disaster events, DMOs play an unrecognized role in crisis management that differs from their traditional efforts (i.e., mainly marketing). This applies to the provision of essential information before, during, and after a disaster to all relevant tourism stakeholders (Orchiston & Higham, 2016), which also encourages the DMOs involvement while obtaining a high level of agreement and participation between them (R.-Toubes, Araújo-Vila, & Fraiz-Brea, 2020). As political and societal turbulence is increasing in many parts of the world, it is necessary to maintain the sustainability of tourism and the economy in many destinations with a comprehensive and proactive approach for managing undesirable events (Mikulić et al., 2018). Tourism crisis managers are required to use scenario planning as a helpful tool for managing uncertainty, risk, and opportunity, as it provides a proven framework for understanding future needs and prioritizing short-term actions (Canyon, 2018).

Organizational learning is an important dimension of tourism crisis management. The risk may develop into a crisis without proper management that negatively affects tourism businesses, tourism organizations, and destinations (Liu-Lastres, Kim, &

Ying, 2020). Moreover, foresight in strategic planning contributes to individual and organizational learning (Baškarada et al., 2016). The importance is given to adaptive learning, through which an organization can learn to cope with change (Bhandari, Cooper, & Ruhanen, 2016). For organizations to be successful in the foresight process, it is necessary to develop their ability to think about future aspects (Salim, Muttlaq, & Al-Kharabsheh, 2020). Scenario planning enhances the ability to recognize or understand future situations by raising awareness, enabling strategists to deal with external developments, providing a broad overview of changes in the environment, reducing uncertainty, promoting collective awareness through enhanced conversations as part of the strategic process, and improving the quality of decision-making (Hillmann, Duchek, Meyr, & Guenther, 2018). Organizations adopt scenario planning as an integral part of their strategic planning process (Abuzaid, 2018).

National authorities need to prepare themselves for rapid, coordinated, and sometimes spontaneous action in the eventuality of a crisis or disaster to provide an effective response through strategic planning. Scenario planning offers many learning opportunities to DMOs in this preparation. It facilitates quick responses to new situations (Abuzaid, 2018), enabling these organizations to link long- and medium-term futures with short and medium-term strategic planning (Salim et al., 2020). Scenario planning also helps organizations foster dynamic responses and adapt to environmental changes (Abuzaid, 2018). In this regard, scenario planning interprets information based on a broad knowledge base and a clear understanding of the system's driving forces and trends identified during the foresight process (Cook et al., 2014). It provides a broad overview of changes in the environment, reduces uncertainty, and enhances collective sensemaking (Hillmann et al., 2018).

Scenario planning facilitates cooperation and collaboration between stakeholders within the destination by creating a common language for stakeholders (Varghese, 2016; Buehring & Bishop, 2020). When decision-makers proactively identify upcoming problems and opportunities, they quickly minimize damage or maximize benefits (Cook et al., 2014). As enablers, facilitators, and stimulators of behavioral change throughout the tourism industry, DMOs not only have a clear leadership role within their respective destinations (Bhandari et al., 2016) but can also be adaptive and innovative in managing and promoting learning in changing/turbulent situations (Blackman, Kennedy, & Ritchie, 2011).

Conclusion

Scenario planning and foresight-based approaches to development are suitable tools for DMOs to improve organizational learning and operational performance. However, in today's DMOs environment, using scenario planning and managing changes may not be easy. Planning for possible future scenarios prepares these organizations to act quickly at the right time by creating corresponding strategies. The effective use of strategic foresight, especially scenario planning by DMOs, is linked to organizational learning, including the integration of reflection and action. According to different authors, there is a close link between foresight and learning processes, notably organizational learning (Bootz et al., 2019; Yoon et al., 2018), which enables DMOs to create a vision of their future, based on new data, information, experience, and knowledge, as a prerequisite for dealing with crises and disasters. Foresight thinking helps decision-makers understand the complexity of the future, build resilience, establish guidelines, and then plan and implement policies for DMOs. The foresight technique, consistent with the strategy formulation process, promotes collective learning within an organization, enabling decision-makers to adopt, implement, monitor, and analyze strategies using scenario planning. Since scenario planning involves considering alternative futures while engaging in uncertainty and complexity, it is a useful tool for DMOs to anticipate favorable and unfavorable future situations. For adverse future scenarios, including crises and disasters, scenario planning helps prepare DMOs before such events occur.

DMOs, because of their role in crisis communication and recovery marketing activities on behalf of the tourism industry, are essential for the crisis management of destinations. Being proactive in crisis management is a systematic attempt to detect potential crises, take action to prevent them, avoid emergencies, anticipate the unexpected, and respond when they occur. As such, by systematic and forward-thinking planning, scenario planning is a valuable tool in supporting tourism decision-making and policies, improving the destination's learning process, and strengthening the destination to cope with future crises. Scenario planning extends current knowledge, assumptions, and attitudes about future tourism developments through a learning process that aims at collecting and analyzing information with a forward-looking perspective. It enables managers to assess the impact of various driving forces of change on the destination's tourism activities and evaluate the likely impact of alternative actions. The generated knowledge helps the destination authorities mitigate potential risks and appropriately adapt to changes so that future generations continue to enjoy the destination just like the current ones (Yeoman & McMahon-Beattie, 2019).

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Juan Manuel Tello Contreras

8 Barriers to organizational learning: The case of Mexico and COVID-19

Introduction

Mexico has faced many different natural crises from earthquakes to hurricanes as well as unprecedented health crises like influenza A(H1N1) in 2009 and more recently, COVID-19 disease. This study aims to analyze what barriers prevented Mexico from learning from its successful handling of the A(H1N1) pandemic juxtaposed to that of the COVID-19 pandemic, which has been largely unsuccessful, causing thousands of deaths and unprecedented economic damage to the Mexican economy. The first part of the text presents barriers to learning in the tourism sector. The second part of the text describes the handling of both pandemics, their similarities, and their differences. Finally, the last section shows the specific case of Michoacán, a tourist destination in western Mexico. Results on the impact and barriers that have generated anomalous tourist damage to the destination are also analyzed and presented.

Organizational learning and its barriers

Barriers to organizational learning are seen as those systems and behaviors that prevent or inhibit organizations from adapting to the main decision-making challenges that they face. They can also arise from the processes of identifying and adopting new behaviors and practices in light of successes and failures. These barriers can occur at multiple levels within and between organizations and involve both individual and group processes and behaviors (Fischbacher-Smith & Fischbacher-Smith, 2012). In the context of organizational learning in the tourism sector Ghaderi, Mat, and Wang (2014) presented an integrative model of organizational learning for crisis management as an analytical framework.

The occurrence of a vast number of crisis events in the tourism industry makes it an area of concern for meticulous managers with a particular focus on learning. However, many conceptual and empirical studies have highlighted the crucial role of learning in crisis and disaster management as a general discourse (Smith & Elliott, 2007). There is a growing body of evidence that organizations are resistant to learning from a crisis. To date, the study of crisis management has focused upon crisis causality, prevention, response, and turnaround, with little consideration given to organizational learning from a crisis. To understand how tourism organizations learn from crisis events and apply these lessons for future crisis management, organizational learning in effective tourism crisis management will be explored.

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This section defines essential concepts, such as organizational learning and tourism crises. There are different definitions as to what constitutes a crisis. According to Henderson (2007), a crisis is when an individual or organization is faced with the prospect of fundamental change, usually sudden and unforeseen, which threatens to disrupt and overturn prevailing philosophies and practices. In particular, Aktas and Gunlu (2005) define a tourism crisis as circumstances in which tourists and members of the tourism industry individually or collectively, including destinations, are faced with change, which is potentially destructive for all.

Organizational learning is based on applying knowledge for a purpose and learning from the process and outcome (Saadat & Saadat, 2016). Organizational learning is a product of organizational research. Whenever the expected result differs from the actual result, an individual (or group) will engage in research to understand and resolve this inconsistency. During the research process, individuals will interact with other members of the organization, and learning will take place. Therefore, learning is a direct product of this interaction.

Organizational learning is a crucial source to achieve a competitive advantage in strategic management (Allameh & Moghaddami, 2010). To be effective in competitive markets, organizations need to learn faster and better than their competitors. According to Dawes (2003), organizational learning can be hereditary (alluding to that which has been created by organization founders), experiential (obtained through experience, on purpose, or by chance), and vicarious (meaning gained through second-hand experience, which has been done by the people outside of an organization). Smith and Elliott (2007) distinguish between two primary relationships between crisis (as a phenomenon) and learning (as a process). They argue that the goal of learning is to develop capability around response.

Paraskevas et al. (2013) identify the types of crisis knowledge (procedural, behavioral, third party, and learned ignorance) tourism organizations employ in the advent of a crisis and the crisis knowledge management processes and flows within these organizations. They also explore how organizational factors such as leadership, structure, culture, and communication influence these processes and flows.

Different models identify the following learning barriers: ineffective communication and information difficulties; denial, the centrality of expertise and the disregard of outsiders; rigidity of core beliefs, values, assumptions; reductionist; lack of corporate responsibility (Wang, 2008). This study focuses on describing cultural differences, political barriers, differences in time pressure toleration, insufficient competence levels, lack of leadership, local patriotism, and rigid hierarchical structures as barriers to learning during a tourism crisis. The main characteristics of each of the barriers are described below.

Cultural differences

What are organizations like in Latin America? So little is known about the dynamics of these organizations that it is difficult to describe, understand, and even compare them. In this sense, culture is a fundamental part of any social group. In the tourist industry, organized, coordinated, and directed human groups are identified towards a common objective; thus, the organizations have a culture. Cultural barriers have gained strength because they are linked to the social changes that distinguish the modern world, especially in crises. The role of cultural differences as barriers is a relatively new topic on the researchers' agenda. For the most part, the study is limited to those that academics from developed countries have made in their organizations and, in some cases, in Latin American organizations. The need arises to provide models according to the Latin American reality, with the cultural singularity as a region. The study of organizations through their culture allows us to know their essence, formed by elements that we need to identify to understand organizational life in Latin America (Dávila & Martínez, 1999).

According to Chiavenato (2004), the cohesive element and the one that the vast majority of Mexicans share being part of their culture is solidarity, which, combined with empathy, becomes the ideal duo to generate synergies and achieve competitive advantages based on knowledge and human talent.

Political barriers

Political barriers play a critical role in communication in Mexico. The Government's strategy has been to communicate a message that does not raise concerns about the pandemic; it issues a message describing a scenario of proper crisis control and management. In the case of Mexico, it is essential to mention that in December 2018, a new president came to power with a left-wing social program. Political analysts suggest that the COVID-19 pandemic communication strategy aims to generate a positive message as next year, in Mexico, elections will be held to designate fourteen governors and deputies of the federal congress. There is a dose of politics in pandemic management messages. The Federal Government's communication strategy has been far from: adequate, clear, concise, consistent, and credible. It has been quite the opposite: confusing. In a pandemic, great anxiety among the population is customary; thus, communication strategy is vital in a response plan (Coparmex, 2020). As nothing generates as much confusion and fear among the population as a political leader who questions technical experts in public, this plan should avoid discrepancies and contradictions between authorities to the maximum. In contrast, we have the example of the recommendation of the health official in charge of managing the pandemic in Mexico, that the President does not wear a mask, as in his opinion, it is not necessary.

Since the beginning of the pandemic, there have been no clear messages about the severity of the crisis or the Federal Government's response, abusing technical explanations to obscure the exposure. Health authorities have adopted political criteria in their decisions. When the messages issued by the authorities are confusing and contradictory, excessive fear behaviors can occur among the population that can be as harmful as the virus itself. The loss of government credibility creates an information gap filled with rumors, prejudice, and disorientation. The World Health Organization has called on the Government of Mexico to issue "coherent messages" to combat the pandemic (Coparmex, 2020).

Differences in time pressure tolerance

Due to the characteristics of Mexican culture, serenity is not a virtue that distinguishes the national leader. This situation affects the time to make decisions, which are often hasty, not well reasoned, and above all, without solid foundations that lead decision-makers to commit errors which are therefore reflected in productivity declines and high production, distribution, and dissemination costs. The need to include serenity in the profile that the Mexican leader must possess is mainly due to the continued decision-making that productive and administrative processes involve and needs to be analyzed under calm situations and hard data (Chiavenato, 2004). It is essential to say that serenity increases the follower's confidence in the leader. Knowing the problems that each activity or process takes have been tested for experience, knowledge, and reasoning helps guarantee, that at least in the worst-case scenario, the best option is to be guided by a person who stays calm in times of crisis.

Insufficient competence levels

According to a survey conducted by one of Mexico's most prestigious financial newspapers, most Mexicans surveyed felt that the Government has failed to manage the coronavirus pandemic. Fifty-eight percent of respondents from June 26 to June 27 called the current administration's actions against COVID-19 a failure (El Financiero, 2020).

According to Deutsche Welle (2020), former Mexican Health Minister Julio Frenk sees three fundamental flaws in the competence of government officials' handling the crisis: demonizing experts and science, having the wrong model, and a confusing communication strategy. First, the Mexican Government downplayed the pandemic and wasted valuable time. Frenk said in an interview with Deutsche Welle (2020), "That is why we have such high infection rates among medical staff." Thus, the Sentry Gun model, which is based on mathematical simulation rather than testing, is incorrect. With this model, we are flying blind. Studies suggest that the number of people infected is three times higher. The Government also generated confusion among the population concerning the efficiency of wearing a mask, which López-Gatell has now backed up, but is still rejected by President Andrés Manuel López Obrador. Hence now, as reiterated by Frenk, "that is why people distrust the Government and only go to the hospital when it is too late."

Lack of leadership

During a crisis, communication plays a leading role, as it becomes the cornerstone of containment. Indeed, successful communication can ensure the implementation of an emergency plan with the participation and confidence of the sectors concerned. Conversely, lack of trust in authorities or the media can instead become a serious obstacle to the containment of the crisis. Lastly, in the post-crisis period, the addressing of economic damage becomes a priority. With this in mind, political communication is mainly generated towards the affected area, to regain the trust of visitors and investors and ensure the recovery of resource flows.

Within human capital management systems, Velázquez, Montejano, and Campuzano (2015) highlight the importance of relying on a leadership model that provides the capabilities to facilitate human processes integration of work teams. In this context, it can be seen that Mexican organizations apply foreign leadership models that do not fully respond to the characteristics and culture of Mexicans. Likewise, it is also deemed that a high percentage of organizations apply the authoritarian model for the development of their functions and activities within production processes (Gibson, 2010). On the other hand, there has not been a profile of the Mexican leader that combines an interest in the task and the individual in search of increased productivity and individual well-being. This is relevant in the context of a crisis.

With respect to the member-leader relationship, in Mexico, it has been determined by a strong trend towards authority on the part of the leader with little attention to feedback, and imposition of the activities to be carried out (Velázquez et al., 2015). The structure of the task usually responds to processes that, in a high percentage, are not product planning and reasoning but rather those to solve situations as they appear, which is slow and costly with low rates of productivity and competitiveness. Finally, the power of office, as it has already been noted above, is disproportionate to the leader's part granting him a source of coercive power that forces others to perform tasks more out of fear than conviction, almost eliminating creativity and innovation; leaving organizations at a disadvantage compared to those of developed countries.

Local patriotism

There is distrust of the veracity and accuracy of the COVID-19 contagion and death figures in Mexico. Zuckermann (2020) claims that the Government decided that its priority was not to saturate hospitals to avoid the terrible scenes observed in Italy and Spain. If this was the goal, they have succeeded. Indeed, the health system in Mexico has not been oversaturated. However, it also seems that many people have decided not to go to hospitals. Many have died in their homes. But on the contrary, the government strategy has been a failure to contain infections and prevent deaths (Zuckermann, 2020).

When the COVID crisis is over, it seems that Mexico will be one of the countries with the worst numbers in terms of contagion and deaths in the world. This will not be per official data but rather with calculations made by experts. For example, the abnormal increase in the number of deaths in 2020 compared to official death records of prior years. In this history of failure, health authorities do not listen to or implement the advice of well-renowned international organizations to contain the pandemic (Zuckermann, 2020). For the Government of Mexico, there is an aversion to massive testing of the population and the utilization of technologies to keep a timely track of where the sources of infection are located. What is also not understood is the refusal of authorities to recommend the use of or enforcement of masks by the general population.

Rigid hierarchical structures

There is disinterest in organizations investing in training employees, so there is no company prepared to comply with plans and programs that organizations design and implement; however, hierarchical structures recognize the importance of leadership and its relationship to productivity. The hierarchical structures in Mexico are very rigid, particularly those that have to do with the Government. Under this structure, the leader again acquires a lot of relevance and dominance.

Authors like Dávila and Martínez (1999) mention that Mexican organizations require a rigid but fair structure: one of the most critical items within the profile that the Mexican leader must embody is one that has to do with the power and justice with which he applies a command in the development of his duties. It is important to note that this feature is intimately linked to the culture of the country or region where the organization is established, as well as the organizational culture that prevails in every company.

The definition of power proposed by Gibson (2010) states that in a Mexican organizational environment: power is just the ability to make others do what you want them to. Application of this definition with command through the issuance of orders results in the fertile field for the generation of conflicts. Consequently, decisions made must bring a dose of justice that decreases the proliferation of clashes between team members.

Mexico in the management of pandemics

In the case of Mexico, it is interesting to know the learning barriers to crisis management in tourism. In 2009, Mexico was the source of a new influenza virus, A (H1N1). At the time, Mexico was an example of proper crisis management and control to avoiding a global pandemic. Now, eleven years later, Mexico is an example of what should not be done in crisis management. In this context, questions arise such as: why did Mexico have such different management of the A(H1N1) crisis than COVID-19? What factors impede learning in crisis management?

The COVID-19 epidemic in Mexico has caused incalculable damage to public health, the economy, and people's feelings of safety. It has also severely damaged the image of Mexico. Studying crisis management, as has been the case so far, allows us to identify some problems, failures, successes, and challenges of the Mexican Government in the communication and management of crisis information in the implementation of emergency policies and the capacity for intervention, containment, and recovery.

Management of influenza A(H1N1) in Mexico

In 2009 Mexico suffered from an epidemic called A(H1N1) which paralyzed the country for a time. The disease took the country by surprise; Mexico was the first affected country in the world. Contrary to A(H1N1), with the COVID-19 pandemic, there are references from other countries on how to act and what measures to implement. The 2009 crisis was a shorter one. In early April 2009, there was no certainty as to what the country was facing. Emergency services in the health sector as well as those in general medical consultations began to attend an unusual amount of people mainly due to airway diseases. It was never thought that this could be an epidemic, let alone a pandemic. Against this backdrop, authorities made a situational diagnosis and concluded that this was an intensification of seasonal influenza transmission, so they issued their first recommendations and guidelines for health personnel (Cohen & Martin, 2009).

When the new virus was discovered, Mexican health authorities were terrified, and the Federal Government applied drastic measures that affected the economy. There was a lot of pressure from the business sector, especially tourism. When the virus was seen to have low lethality and to be controllable, then it was possible to ease up on the restrictions that had been in place. Fortunately, the avian virus, which has proven to be more aggressive, did not arrive, and the experience with A (H1N1) left lessons that can serve in the face of future epidemics.

During 2009, Mexican tourist destinations welcomed 11.78 million international tourists, 11.4% lower than the 13.3 million tourists from the previous year. Likewise, the average expenditure generated during the year analyzed was US$ 732 in which the foreign exchange generated in this item amounted to US$ 8.62 trillion. Figures were 3.8% and 14.7%, lower respectively to those registered in 2008 (Sectur, 2009).

In this context of financial crisis and outbreak of influenza, they started different response mechanisms by international tourists who modified their travel decisions based on their income levels, the average transportation to use, and destinations to visit; In short, they altered the magnitude and expenditure structure in the acquisition of tourism goods and services.

Management of COVID-19 in Mexico

Globally, according to WHO (2020), there have been 31.2 million confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 962,613 deaths. Cases reported by region are Americas, 15.6 million cases, South-East Asia 6.2 million, Europe 5.2 million, and Africa 1.1 million cases (WHO, 2020). For Mexico, the figures are not encouraging; the most recent figures reported by the Mexican Ministry of Health (2020) indicate 700,580 confirmed cases and 73,697 deaths. Unfortunately, Mexico ranks among the top five countries with the highest number of COVID-19 deaths. From the beginning of voluntary confinement in Mexico, different business leaders, opposition political parties, along with national and foreign analysts, among others, asked the President to consider tax measures to support both workers who would lose their income and companies that would not operate but would keep their spending (Campos, 2020). The Mexican President's response was resoundingly negative. If companies fail, the owners must take responsibility for the judgment of the President of Mexico. With the apparent failures in pandemic management, the economic consequences will have to be extended much further, and the damage will be prolonged over time. After more than four months without income, the need to establish a solidarity salary for millions of Mexicans who are experiencing a real tragedy was raised. Campos (2020) estimates that at least 16 million Mexicans will fall into extreme poverty because of the lack of income from the pandemic.

The pandemic struck Mexico during a "confusing public policy restructuring." It struck at a time when institutions suffered financially from the need to save and when the previous national health care had been canceled, but not yet replaced by a new system. Whereas the Government of Mexico has imposed a strict austerity program and does not want to spend money on large-scale testing, the President hopes that soon there will be a vaccine that Mexico intends to produce together with Argentina and the AstraZeneca laboratory, or that herd immunity will occur when 70% of the population had been infected. Meanwhile, the federal crisis management officer is blaming Mexicans–those who are overweight, suffer from high blood pressure and/or diabetes due to excessive sugar consumption for the rise in COVID cases, as they exemplify factors that favor the fatal course of the pandemic.

Regarding tourism and hospitality figures, the official Government (Sectur, 2020) anticipated the arrival of international tourists during 2020 to be that of 25.1 million. This sum is equivalent to a decrease of 44.3%, compared to that of 2019. The expenditure of international visitors throughout this year amounts to an estimated loss of US$ 11.2 trillion, which is equivalent to 54.4% less than what was captured in 2019. In other words, in 2020 compared to last year, 20 million tourists from abroad will have stopped coming, and the collection of foreign exchange will be less than US$ 13.4 trillion (Sectur, 2020). In a more segmented way, the arrival of international tourists from North America, the primary source market for Mexico, decreased 98.4% in April and 97.6 in May. However, a gradual recovery is anticipated, with a pause in August and September, to close December with a positive monthly variation of 52%.

Case study: Covid-19 in Michoacan, Mexico

With two World Heritage Sites and four elements inscribed on the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity, Michoacán is one of the most culturally rich Mexican tourist destinations. The two world heritage sites are the capital city of Morelia and the Monarch Butterfly Reserve. Morelia was added to the list of World Heritage cities on December 13th, 1991, particularly, because it has an area of historical monuments that constitutes an original model of urban development of sixteenth-century America. Its reticular stroke combines the urban theories of Renaissance Spain and the experience of Mesoamerica. The Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve, a natural resource, was registered as a World Heritage Site in 2008. The overwintering concentration of the Monarch Butterfly on the property is the most dramatic manifestation of insect migration. Up to a billion Monarch butterflies return annually from breeding areas as far away as Canada, to land in close-packed clusters within 14 overwintering colonies in the Oyamel Fir forests of central Mexico. Witnessing this unique phenomenon is an exceptional experience of nature (UNESCO, 2020).

In addition to the list of World Heritage Sites, Michoacán is also included on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity. The program was established in 2008 when the Convention for the Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage entered into force. Of the the list of eight elements that Mexico safeguards, Michoacán preserves four of them being: 1) La Pirekua, the traditional song of the p'urhépechas; 2) Traditional Mexican Cuisine, community culture, ancestral and living – The Michoacan paradigm; 3) The ritual ceremony of the Flyers-San Pedro Tarímbaro, and 4) The indigenous festivals dedicated to the dead, "Dia de Muertos." The Day of the Dead is one of the most revered and celebrated dates in Mexico. It's a colorful and very spiritual festivity that dates back to pre-Hispanic times.

Methodology

From April 18 to 21, 2020, during the confinement period for the COVID-19 disease, 373 online questionnaires were distributed to companies and tourism service providers (hotels, lodging establishments, restaurants, craftsmen, tour guides, travel agencies, tour operators, and others) in the state of Michoacán, Mexico. The objective of collecting the information is to know the main impacts, barriers and actions carried out by tourism service providers derived from the COVID-19 contingency and to be able to design public policies that mitigate the adverse effects of the pandemic within the tourism sector of Michoacán.

Results

It has been mentioned about the behavior and actions that the Government has taken in managing the pandemic. The public sector is not alien to the importance of learning since, for its full integration into the knowledge society, it is necessary to optimize the processes by which the knowledge available is captured, generated, demanded, and distributed. Organizational learning in the Public Administration makes an essential contribution to achieving its functions, reducing the costs of developing solutions repeatedly, identifying and repeating good practices already identified, and protecting them.

The seven barriers described are part of the cause that generates the results presented below in tourism service providers. The organization's learning capacity is a fundamental variable. This capacity is defined as the dynamic potential for the creation, assimilation, diffusion, and use of knowledge through numerous flows that make possible the formation and evolution of the knowledge stocks that train organizations and their knowledge agents to act intentionally in changing and crisis environments as the COVID-19 pandemic. The lack of an organization's learning capacity, characterized by the lack of dynamic alignment between stocks and knowledge flows, harms the organization's competitiveness, both economically and in other terms.

To be useful, this knowledge or information that leads to action must be disseminated and circulated by means that facilitate access by all organization members, who can use it to solve their problems, providing feedback to the system. Thus, an intelligent Public Administration, which learns, must, on the one hand, generate mechanisms for collecting information from society and the environment in general, but on the other, and more importantly, it must generate ideas that keep it connected to reality of society and in this case of tourism service providers. Public organizations must therefore mobilize knowledge and reward learning to face the challenges of the environment and improve the services offered to citizens, and given the rapid evolution of the environment, they must be able to learn and adapt quickly.

The results on the barriers that prevent properly operating and the adverse effects presented in tourism companies analyzed can be seen in Table 8.1. Thus, the impossibility of opening tourism services establishments is the main barrier to 41% of the businesses analyzed. Lack of official financial support and unclear and contradictory government guidelines are ranked as the second and third main barriers (38%). 29% of the organizations analyzed identified communication barriers as a concern. There is a perception that Latin American culture tends to define its objectives in the short term; in this sense, 30% of the managers consulted think that implement-

Table 8.1: Main results on the barriers and adverse effects that companies in the tourism sector experienced during COVID-19 confinement.

Question	Response	No. of respondents	Response percentage
In your opinion, what are the main barriers that make it difficult for your company to act effectively against COVID-19? Several options could be selected.	– Poor internal communication.	108	29%
	– Implementing the changes takes too long.	112	30%
	– Lack of personnel or technological resources.	115	31%
	– There is no defined policy on working from home.	134	36%
	– Fear of disrupting cash flow.	138	37%
	– Official or government guidelines are unclear or contradictory.	142	38%
	– Lack of financial resources and government support.	142	38%
	– Due to the nature of tourism, there is an impossibility to work remotely.	153	41%
What do you think will be the most likely effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in the next six months? Several options could be selected.	– Personnel and labor shortages.	52	14%
	– Close the company altogether.	127	34%
	– Lack of financing or credits.	142	38%
	– Expect an increase in uncertainty and a lack of information to make business decisions.	149	40%
	– Dismissal of employees or granting of work licenses.	157	42%
	– Expect a decrease in demand for my product or service.	261	70%
	– Expect a decrease in company income.	298	80%

ing changes takes too long to execute. This fact supports the idea of the short-term mentality.

When asked about what the most likely adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic will be in the next six months, the most frequent response (80%) was to expect a decline in the company's revenue. The second highest response (70%) was to expect a decline in demand for the product or service. Also, 42% of the managers interviewed mentioned the possible dismissal of staff and decline in the number of work licenses granted. The increase in uncertainty due to the lack of official information is the main adverse effect for 40% of managers. A worrying fact is that 34% of respondents express that they could definitively close their businesses from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The results obtained from the questionnaire are very similar to the official statements that business associations such as hoteliers have declared: that an estimated 30% of hosting businesses have closed or suspended activities and are uncertain whether they will reopen.

Table 8.2 shows the main results derived from various questions asked to different managers of tourism companies. When asked if their company has a business continuity plan to deal with the COVID-19 contingency, 56% of the respondents mentioned that they are preparing a plan to deal with the pandemic. However, it is striking that 32% did not consider generating an action plan. It is a sign that a high percentage of companies were not prepared to deal with the pandemic, and it is a signal of a lack of learning in the face of the crisis.

As for the second question about what precautions or measures your company has taken to protect the health, well-being, and safety of employees, the decision to suspend activities stands out with 57% of the responses. The second measure with the highest percentage is to inform and provide hygiene products and adopt extraordinary disinfection measures inside the facilities.

Regarding actions that were executed as a result of COVID-19 to promote business continuity and daily operations, financial measures stand out as the most executed measures. Thus, 41% of the companies consulted mentioned that they requested credits or loans from private institutions and the Government. Likewise, 38% of the organizations made adjustments to the wages and salaries of their workers. Regarding other types of actions carried out, 38% issued communications to their clients about their operational situation; additionally, 37% of the organizations modified their promotion and marketing plans. In Mexico, there is a scarce culture in terms of business continuity plans. Few companies in Mexico invest money, resources, and time in developing a business continuity plan. When events such as COVID-19 occur, they push companies to prepare or make accelerated contingency plans; however, in Mexico companies have been slow to develop a plan.

During the confinement period decreed by the Mexican health authorities, almost all service providers had to suspend activities entirely. In this context, service providers were questioned about the activities they carried out during this crisis

Table 8.2: Main results on the questionnaire applied to continuity plans, actions, and measures carried out by tourism sector companies during COVID-19 confinement.

Question	Response	No. of respondents	Response percentage
Does your company have a business continuity plan to deal with the COVID-19 contingency?	– We are preparing a plan derived from the pandemic.	209	56%
	– We have not considered preparing a plan.	119	32%
	– We had a plan in place before the pandemic.	45	12%
What precautions or measures has your company taken as a result of COVID-19 to protect the health, well-being, and safety of your employees? Several options could be selected.	– Cessation of activities.	212	57%
	– Inform and provide hygiene products and adopt extraordinary disinfection measures.	201	54%
	– Carry out health checks on employees.	108	29%
	– We adapted working schedules, travel restrictions, and the promotion of teleworking.	86	23%
	– Offer work licenses without pay.	52	14%
What measures has your company taken as a result of COVID-19 to promote business continuity and daily operations? Several options could be selected.	– Loan or credit application.	153	41%
	– Communicate a statement to my clients.	142	38%
	– Readjustment of wages and salaries.	142	38%
	– Adaptation of the marketing strategy.	138	37%
	– Review or adaptation of my products or services for the year 2020.	134	36%
	– Review of the advertising and promotion budget.	116	31%
	– Renegotiation with suppliers.	112	30%
	– Rename the payment of the rent of the facilities.	108	29%
	– Request for a loan from the partners or shareholders.	75	20%
In case of having interrupted the operation of your company, what type of activities are you carrying out? Several options could be selected.	– Communicate with clients through social networks and online communication.	213	57%
	– Make improvements in the infrastructure of my business.	201	54%
	– Create and improve my products and services.	108	29%
	– Virtual or online training.	86	23%

period. The primary response (57%) was that organizations communicated with their customers using social media and digital media. 54% of the respondents indicated that the companies made improvements to their infrastructure. Only 23% of organizations reportedly undertook online training courses. The latter point suggests a lack of interest in continuous improvement and learning.

According to official figures from the Ministry of Tourism of Michoacán (2020), during the first two months of 2020, Michoacan's tourism performance was better than in 2019. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, from January to August 2020, 2.97 million fewer tourists have visited Michoacán compared to the same period from 2019 (Sectur, 2020). There is a cumulative decrease of 51.6% in tourist arrivals in 2020 compared to that of the first eight months of 2019 (Sectur, 2020). In August 2020, there was an increase of 12.6% compared to July 2020; this figure represents 40,902 additional tourists and visitors in August compared to July. Since June, three consecutive months of growth can be observed in the influx of tourists and visitors. There is a slow but constant reduction in tourist arrivals in the state.

Conclusions

Mexico has suffered many and varied types of crises. The most recent being the COVID-19 pandemic. However, the Federal Government has not been able to manage the crisis due to different learning barriers. Although the strategies applied were successful in the previous A(H1N1) pandemic, the current administration did not implement the protocols and measures recommended by international organizations. This was done primarily for political reasons and because of the incompetence of officials. It is also an example of Mexico's cultural and leadership differences that prevent it from learning from a crisis.

As proposed by Ghaderi et al., (2014) the reason why few organizations had a formal crisis management plan can be found in their attitudes towards a reactive response to the crisis. The tourism organizations in Michoacán are a clear example. At the time of crises when inbound tourism ceases like with the COVID-19 pandemic, tour operators and travel agent businesses are more flexible than hotels. In Mexico, the crisis culture, defined in Paraskevas et al. (2013) as a subset of organizational culture dealing with the way people in an organization behave, communicate and perceive crisis is key as a learning barrier in tourism organizations. The manner in which tourism organizations and firms in Mexico fail to learn lessons from both internal and external sources has been an issue that lies at the core of several barriers.

Blackman and Ritchie (2008) mentioned that the key role of a Destination Management Organization in a crisis is related to two activities: crisis communication with stakeholders or the public and the development and implementation of crisis recovery marketing strategies. In this sense, the presented case indicates a truly deficient communication strategy that serves as a true learning barrier in tourism sector firms.

In the case of Mexican Officials and the tourist companies of Michoacán, they have not made systematic efforts to measure and record the knowledge they have, which is why it is a pending issue on the agenda of the State's modernization and the impact on the results of the tourist company. This is a relevant research topic since the scarcity of studies in this field is notorious, particularly in Latin America. Thus, the present research is relevant, as it seeks empirical evidence on minimal addressed issues about the relationship between organizational learning and the impact on the results in a tourism organization.

In the particular case of Michoacán as a Mexican tourist destination, the adverse effects, and barriers that organizations and tourism service providers presented during the most complicated month of the crisis are empirically shown. This study highlights the importance of barriers to preventing proper crisis management and control, especially in the tourism sector, due to learning deficiencies in organizations.

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9 Institutionalization of organizational learning frameworks in tourism crisis management

Introduction

The global tourism industry is a significant contributor to the global economy. According to World Tourism Organization (2020), international tourist arrivals grew by 4% in 2019 although slower than previous years at 7% (2017) and 6% (2018). This was particularly due to the uncertainties of Brexit, geopolitical and trade tensions, and economic slowdowns. However, all regions recorded a significant increase in arrivals. The Middle East (+8%) led growth, followed by Asia and the Pacific (+5%). International arrivals in Europe and Africa (both +4%) increased in line with the world average, while the Americas saw growth of 2%. 2020 was expected to grow by 3% to 4% based on the trends, however, the unprecedented outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic has placed the industry at a standstill. It is estimated that direct jobs in the tourism industry support other indirect jobs in the globe resulting in more than 284 million jobs (WTTC, 2015). The tourism industry is widely viewed to be the biggest employer in the world. Thus, most governments have made it a priority through various policy adjustments. However, in many tourism destinations, tourism business loss has been occurring due to the crises either ecological, economic, political, or social which have had a negative impact on the industry. The aftermath means tourism firms have to reinvest and regenerate or shut down altogether due to lack of resources. Senge (1994), and later Beesley (2015a), suggested that an organization has to continually transform itself to deal with the challenges and opportunities. This chapter proposes the institutionalization of organizational learning into pillars/functions of tourism management framework in tourism crisis management before, during, and after. It looks at six pillars of a system: services, human resources, information, products and technologies, financing as well as leadership and governance.

Context

Institutionalization in organizational learning is the deliberate incorporation of knowledge at all levels of the organization's system, structure, and procedures to use, with sufficient regularities, in cases of persistence and reusing in the future (Crossan, Lane, & White, 1999; Lawrence, Mauws, Dyck, & Kleysen, 2005; Wiseman,

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2008). To achieve learning, institutional knowledge learned by groups and individuals is exploited, embedded, and recognized as part of the organization, by all institutional Knowledge carriers in this case all pillars or operational functions of an establishment (Thomas, Sussman, & Henderson, 2001). Full cooperation by all sections within the organization is critical in this process to ensure success. This is further exacerbated by the notion that organizational learning is a cyclical process that cannot be detached from work practice. Affirmed that organizational learning can take place within work practices and through on-the-job activities.

Any successful outcome of institutionalized organizational learning is influenced by the environment in which the organization is. Being one of the largest export service industries in the world and the significant role it plays in the economic development agenda of many nations, it is the most vulnerable to the growing number of crises and changes in the external environment. Unfortunately, tourism is still largely ignored in the wider disaster management plans (Mistilis & Sheldon, 2005). The interdependency nature of tourism creates a complexity of the impacts that generate both winners and losers in the industry (Crotts, Higgins-Debiolles, 2020; Ritchie, Volsky, & Zehrer, 2014). As Ritchie (2008) and Cioccio and Michael (2007) noted, despite tourism destinations peculiarly being located in areas considered to be volatile, tourism businesses and destinations thrive amid such threats, but the unfortunate thing is when disaster strikes few businesses show some level of preparedness and competency in handling them.

Therefore, posing extraordinary impacts and challenges to a tourism destination's survival (Gani & Singh, 2019). The collapse of both international and domestic tourism will be experienced (Higgins-Debiolles, 2020). A crisis is precipitated by natural and or man-made disasters that pose significant challenges facing tourism and they appear to be always looming. This changes the thinking and performance of existing organizational structures and procedures designed to deal with the external and internal environment (Stern, 1997). Because of the economic value of tourism, this demands systematic approaches that are more proactive and strategic to overcome crises (Pforr & Hosie, 2008). Significant continuous organizational learning effort is required to counter the far-reaching impacts of crises, uncertainties of the external environment on tourism establishments, and the need for adaptation and survival (Wang, 2008). This can contribute to the maximization and enhancement of capacity in identifying, preparing for, preventing, resolving, and recovering from crises. Proactively preparing for uncertainties requires organization learning processes to be institutionalized firmly in behavior and know-how, which can easily be achieved because of the system nature of organizations. Individuals learn the interpreted and stored knowledge through and in it.

Mindfulness, attention, and devotion to critical learning from crisis calls for the institutionalization of organizational learning into the overall tourism crisis management framework (Ghaderi, Som, & Wang, 2014). Resistance to learning from a crisis is prevalent (Smith & Elliott, 2007). From organizations that have witnessed and experienced crisis and disasters, they are better placed to learn and prepare to handle uncertainties of future crisis and thus becomes a turning point for survival (Blackman & Ritchie, 2008; Ghaderi et al., 2014). It is important to note that, in any organization, regardless of the type of crisis the entire system is affected. Meaning, in any tourism establishment, a well-performing, competent human resource, given available resources; reliable and timely information, equitable access to essential products and services, and good financing can determine the outcome that can affect the delivery of effective, safe, and quality services before, during and after a crisis. This capability will in the long term, either build or destroy a long-standing reputation of an establishment. Cigler (2007, p. 3) defines capability, as "capacity in terms of the financial, technical, effective policy, institutional leadership and human resource capacities that must perform in all stages of routine emergencies."

Building organizational learning around functions

Figure 9.1 below elucidates the overall goal of this chapter which argues that to maintain a high capacity to learn, knowledge acquisition, information distribution, information interpretation, and organizational memory have to be adopted, integrated, and function at the same time in all pillars of a tourism establishment which include services delivery, human resources, technology and products, information, financing, leadership, and governance. By dividing them into manageable functions, this chapter examines how tourism organizations can institutionalize organizational learning in all operations as an opportunity for detection and correction of errors, building, supplementing, and organizing knowledge and routines around their activities (Argyris & Schon, 1978). The actions and responses should happen before (pre-), during, and after (post-) crises. The organizational learning process includes knowledge acquisition, information distribution, information interpretation, and organizational memory. All these functions have to be integrated and built-in around each pillar of the organization for the effectiveness of the initial outcomes which are prerequisites for the final outcome to occur as discussed below.

Service delivery

Service is an important function in the tourism industry that brings together all other functions to meet the needs of the customer. The concept of service revolves around the people, technology, facility, equipment, layout, service processes, and procedures thereby bringing together all pillars within a tourism organization together

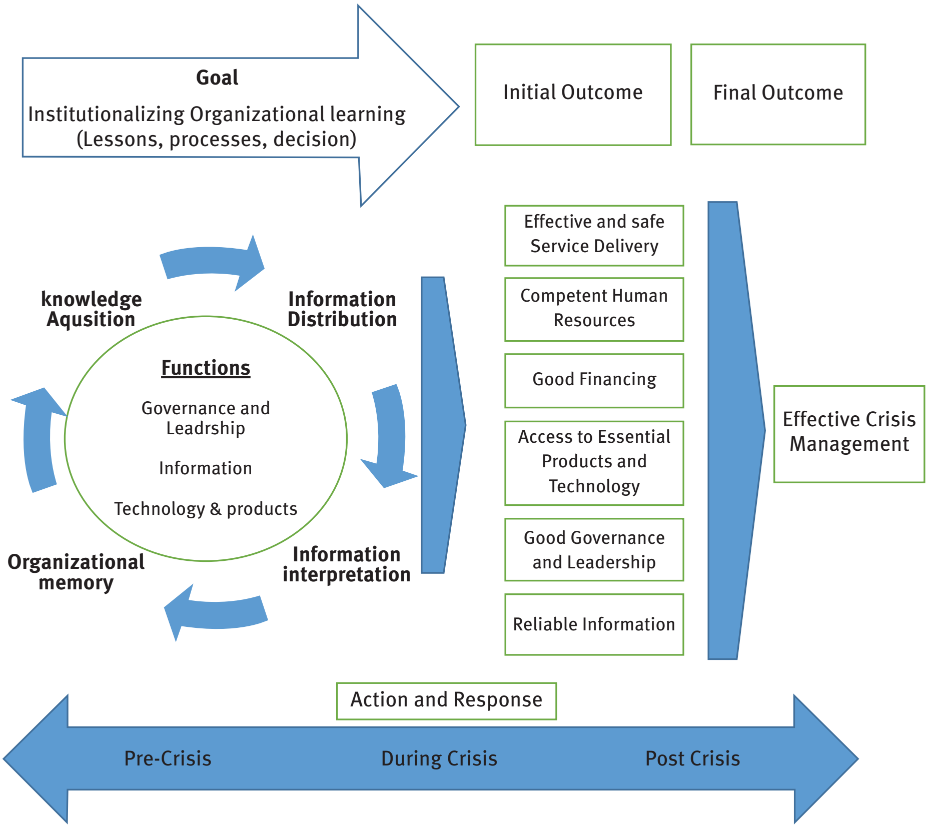

Figure 9.1: Integrated Organizational Learning in Crisis Management.

(Heskett, 1987; Ponsignon, Smart, & Maul, 2011). Tourism is a service industry and has unique characteristics that comprise structured service plans set to ensure hassle-free service delivery to customers (Dimitriou, 2017). Notwithstanding, preparing the tourism industry for crises is not an easy task. Crises can occur internally or externally (Mitroff, Shrivastava, & Udwadia, 1987). The "unexpected" within these plans, enables tourism destinations to have specific control over them (Gani & Singh, 2019). However, the simultaneous production and consumption of tourism products and services is critical to the achievement of the objectives and goals of any service organization.

As a service organization, it is necessary to have long-standing strategic plans to make sure the sustainability of the destination happens. To achieve this, tourism organizations have to continuously transform themselves through organizational learning (Beesley, 2015b) and institutionalizing the learned knowledge in the practice of the entire service process. Fundamentally, services are outputs that are concerned with efficiency, effectiveness, quality, and cost to strengthen and remain competitive.

Consequently, presenting service providers with opportunities to continuously learn and transform that experience into relevant, accessible knowledge is crucial. In the absence of learning, companies, and individuals simply repeat old practices (David, 1993).

First, it is important to keep in mind that to realize the service concept, the service delivery system needs to be supported (Goldstein, Johnstone, Duffy, & Rao, 2002; Ponsignon, Smart, & Maul, 2011). In designing the service concept and its delivery system, measures that allow normalcy from sudden dangers have to be incorporated into the service system (Martens, Feldesz, & Merten, 2015). This requires that the organization have a crisis and disaster portfolio that depicts different scenarios and their required approaches and aligned comprehensive mitigation strategies. How the service will be delivered to the target clients before, during, and after the crisis will be addressed by how the service delivery system has been designed. In other words, prevention and mitigation measures for crises should be part of the system and procedures to protect both the service providers and clients.

Organizational learning should be embedded in this system. To start it off is by continuously searching, researching, and acquiring required knowledge and information, appropriate measures and actors to implement such measures and share with the entire workforce as part of the organizational memory (Ghaderi et al., 2014; Ritchie 2004). In any destination, developing and aligning mitigation strategies to service procedures and processes is crucial (Sausmarez, 2007). In the implementation process, they can be divided into precautionary and avoidance measures (Glaesser, 2003). Precautionary looks at action plans that have been planned and implemented, but keeping in mind that the same plans can be adjusted accordingly. Feedback can be used to prepare for future events. Several issues need to be considered while designing the service delivery system using learned knowledge.

First, is the capacity and capability to respond: Tourism organizations should have an incidents management structure (IMS) that indicates events that could disrupt the service operations. This requires the description of the service activities, likely disruptions, and hazards as well as likely correction action plans. The incidents management structure (IMS) should be compatible with the incidents management system. The incidents management system includes all employees, infrastructure, plans, and policies that ensure an appropriate response to crises. This is all dependent on available resources, revised and up-to-date plans that have been simulated and validated as well as the sharing or distribution and interpretation of the information to all stakeholders. Under normal circumstances, destinations have national guidelines that could be adopted and modified to suit the circumstances.

Tourism establishments should integrate their precautionary and avoidance measure and strategies with the existing systems and processes according to the needs of the destination. Second is service continuity: Like other sectors of the economy such as health, manufacturing, and agriculture, essential service provision must continue. Tourism organizations must identify and know how to maintain certain essential services, equipment, and critical resources vital to safety, security, and the continuity of business operations. It is important to have checklists that will help you be prepared to effectively and efficiently respond to and recover from crises. In order to do this, some key issues have to be addressed and include the assessment of structural, non-structural, and functional safety before, during, and after any crisis incident, the verification of procedures for backing-up of critical resources as well as services that must be provided at all time. Third area of concern is the logistics and operational support functions, because of the location of most tourist destinations, communication is weak, and therefore guidelines, procedures, and protocols for communication of high integrity should exist between responders at all levels and service providers.

Leadership and governance

Leaders enable organizational learning through a different mechanism like dialogue by exhibiting self-awareness, balance, transparency (Mazutis & Slawinski, 2008). Leadership is an important participatory approach in organizational learning which includes knowledge acquisition, information distribution, interpretation, and organizational memory, which managers should understand in terms of techniques and application (Audy & Lederer, 2000). For more productive and effective decision-making in management, there is a need for destination managers with a special focus on organizational learning (Ghaderi et al., 2014). Being a fragmented industry, tourism in the face of crises, the response is difficult to initiate and coordinate (Mistilis & Sheldon, 2005).

The expectation is that prior knowledge from the previous events is assessed, if none is available, the new knowledge is acquired, interpreted, and distributed based on laid down protocols and procedures. Leadership and governance help to create conducive environments for learning readiness in organizations to make quick and appropriate decisions if and when needed. It provides an opportunity for a new culture, new mindset, and organizational learning (Kovoor-Misra & Nathan, 2000; Premeaux & Breaux, 2007; Ghaderi et al., 2014). It is widely known that governments are the main drivers of recovery (WEF, 2019). Governments at all levels; local regional and national have the capability and capacity to help tourism businesses prevent and recover from crisis events and through infrastructural development and improved security, support, and demonstrate confidence in tourism (COMCEC, 2017).

Leadership and good governance mandate that specialized and capable human resources within the organization are identified and trained in areas of crisis and disaster management as well as ensure implementation awareness programs are done to enable all staff and stakeholders are up to date with information regarding potential impacts of both man-made and natural disasters. Managers also have a role to disseminate and disaster mitigation and management information, advice notes, and best practice guidelines as well as maintain contact lists of local and national officials tasked with policy and planning.

When leaders overlook failures in the systems, accountability tends to be at the bottom of the hierarchical ladder. As a result, when errors occur, they disassociate themselves from the negative outcome and even go ahead to deny the existence of the problem (Argyris & Schon, 1996; Drabek, 1994). To cope, holistic management approaches must be adopted, supported by institutionalized organizational learning, adaptation to change, minimizing errors, and incorporation of new information and learning (Takeda & Helms, 2006). The predicament facing policymakers is if or how to respond to the unexpected, for instance in the past, decision making for effective responses was made not based on evidence (Blake & Sinclair, 2003) Competently managed tourism organizations should always be prepared for the unpredictable, unexpected, and potential risks that provide unforeseen problems to the tourism industry (Pforr & Hosie, 2008).

This calls for effective managerial responses. To avoid operational disruptions, leadership and governance are salient. Both are concerned with oversight and ensuring strategic policy frameworks, reduction, and readiness strategies to deal with crises exist (Ritchie, 2008). Taking into consideration that tourism destinations and businesses are mostly located in areas prone to natural disasters, for some time, the tourism industry has been more reactive than proactive. This calls for a change in thinking and approach from a reactive approach to tourism crises management towards proactive planning. The success of any deliberate strategy and efficient destination governance requires the involvement of all strategic partners and stakeholders through Shared roles, responsiveness, and collaboration for successful crises management (Gani & Singh, 2019).

Information

Sufficient information is always available to organizations, but they lack the know-how on how to use it. For any tourism destination to plan, mitigate and recover from any event, it needs information at all levels. Baets (1998) argues that it is not enough to center information systems on technology, it is also vital to include it in all organizational processes and functions. The tourism industry is information-intensive and during a crisis, information needs are compounded even more (Mistilis & Sheldon, 2005). Plans need articulation, failure to which a low level of preparedness could be witnessed (Faulkner & Vikulov, 2001). Communication and information systems management is critical, given that tourism is highly people-oriented, with both tourists, host communities, and human resources, speaking different languages and exhibiting different behaviors compounded by a lack of information about a destination making it difficult to get instructions across (Mistilis & Sheldon, 2005, Ritchie, 2004). Faulkner (2001) notes that because of the challenges faced, information system and infrastructure needs to be centralized for cooperation and coordination. However, it is worth remembering that sometimes this approach noted as a bureaucratic approach can contribute to failure in action because of ignoring outside information (Takedi & Helm, 2006). Boin (2005) asserts that information should be used to identify useful lessons, instead of suppression of information which can be used as ammunition and a way for behavior rationalization and passing blame. Communicating to tourists and employees alike reduces loss in terms of human life and property. Information is an asset to an organization that needs to be delivered in an adequate time and format (Arias & Solana, 2013).

Crises and disasters come in different forms and magnitudes and it affects the amount of information needed. Developing an information and knowledge system for different categories of crises that fit into the strategic efforts of crises management can help a tourism destination limit the severity of the crises. This is a progressive process that requires time and resources to incorporate into a tourism business and destination at large. First, the information system should be based on a portfolio that continuously identifies and updates different types and scenarios of disasters or crises, their cause, and effect, an audit trail of best practices, rules, and routines, and current standard operating procedures. Organizational learning occurs as this information base is increased and updated. Knowing what characterizes the response environment with regards to disasters aid in the development of required capabilities. Secondly, ensuring the flow of information is also critical. Up to date information based on the portfolio should be available to employees and customers and stakeholders in a destination. Information will also play a role in fostering those with limited expertise (Takedi & Helm, 2006). Thirdly, initiating regular simulations, testing drills, and review to ensure the destination is abreast with standard procedures and routines in case of disasters and crises. Ideally, information should include resources for retrieval and storage (Agustan & Kausar, 2019). Tourism businesses should routinely store both soft and hard information on standard operating procedures. Lack of it will hinder learning putting the organization in a precarious position in the event of a crisis in terms of signaling, handling, and application of learned practices.

Organizational learning is dependent on organizational memory and organizational forgetting which will require one to acquire, retain and retrieve for re-use to facilitate current decision making. Its capability to accumulate and retrieve is equally important (Wang 2008). Development of policy and protocols of information collection and processes is important in determining which information is critical, who needs it, and how it can be obtained and/or sourced. This forms part of the destination crisis preparedness system, therefore the creation of a repository is important. Crucial and relevant information should be seen as part of the knowledge and information-sharing structure. Fast and accurate communication and coordination of information flow, enhanced through organizational learning for knowledge purposes are needed as a prerequisite for coping with crisis and disasters (Ghaderi, Som, & Wang, 2014; Hystad & Keller, 2008; Martens, Feldesz, & Merten, 2015).

Technology and products

The one thing that has transcended distance and time is technology. Destinations are increasingly moving towards using technology in organizational learning (Maestro-Schrerer, Rich, Scherer, & Michell-Ninn, 2002). Technology impacts an organization's ability to learn, for example in computer simulations, knowledge repositories of best practices, and computer-mediated communication (e-mail) (Kane & Alavi, 2005). Investing in technology is substantial (Ashworth, Mukhopadhyay, & Argote, 2004). Events related to crisis and their potential effects are likely to be frequent and bigger and especially those exacerbated by natural disasters (Hall, 2010). Depending on the category of tourism-related crisis that is environmental, societal, political, health-related, technological, economic, individual business events such as accidents affecting clients in the public realm and accidents within an individual enterprise (UNWTO, 2011), appropriate and cost-effective products and technologies are essential for the provision of quality services. In the context of tourism, products are defined as equipment and supplies, first aid kits, computers, telephones, and information leaflets critical for day to day running of service operations.

An assessment of the availability of essential products and technologies for emergencies must be determined based on a risk assessment and analysis. Previous crisis incidents, either experienced by the organization or experienced by others, can be the starting point for a list of possible hazards and obstacles that may jeopardize the successful service delivery and for the identification of controls and measures to mitigate them. An inventory process should be in place for maintenance and distribution. "Technological progress and tourism have been going hand in hand for years" (Buhalis & Law, 2008, p. 12). Modern technology has contributed to the changes seen in the tourism industry, from facilities, equipment, service delivery, and even transportation. Technology has more or less made it simple to travel (Sastry & Shushil, 2018). Efficient and effective institutions are users of technology and are likely to become learning organizations (Daniel, Marie-Claude, & Gregory, 2000). An emerging trend is the utilization of technologies to monitor, manage and respond to crises (Pforr & Hosie, 2008). Technology serves as collection points and storage and communication devices. This enhances organizational memory and storage of learned information for current and future applications (Mistilis & Sheldon, 2005). It provides a channel for information to flow throughout the organization (Smoliar, 2003). Lack of organizational memory affects knowledge acquisition and creation necessary for organizational learning, tourism renewal, and crisis management (Ghaderi et al., 2014). To plan, manage and control tourism safety development, the application of geographical information systems (GIS) needs to be considered (Ruda, 2016).

Human resources

Human resources are the cornerstone of any tourism business, they are the ones who deliver services and interact with clients throughout their stay in the destination. They are likely to be the first responders. Crises cannot be stopped by the tourism industry but affected stakeholders who can ensure any crisis e.g., political unrest does not become a tourism crisis (Martens et al., 2015). Recognizing the capacity of human resource capital is critical in preparing vulnerable tourism businesses and enhance the value of knowledge management programs that play a role in the identification, harvesting, archiving, retrieving, and transferring of organizational knowledge is considered important in advancing organizational learning (Delong, 2004). For a crisis management plan to succeed, preparedness is essential. This not only takes engaging the staff to respond to the actual crisis but also encouraging them to learn from crises (Pforr & Hosie, 2008). Learning from effective management of crisis incidents becomes an integral part of the organization's survival. Change in behavior and action should be a result of organizational learning. Within an organization, an action group responsible for mitigation and action strategies and plans development, preparation and dissemination can be a function (Martens et al., 2015).

The nature of the tourism business is that there is a high turnover of human resources, and this makes them lose some organizational memory (Ghaderi et al., 2014). Tourism organizations encourage certain work cultures and behaviors, exacerbated by procedures and routines to maintain a certain historical or aim-oriented image. This can be achieved through continuous organizational learning as opposed to individual learning. Organizational learning should be integrated into all tourism business operations. Capacity building is essential in tourism and hospitality, not only in skills to access jobs at all levels but also skills tailored towards specific needs such as language, technical and social aimed at preparing frontline staff taking care of the needs of tourists in safety and security procedures before, during and after disasters and crisis events (COMCEC, 2017).

As part of organizational learning, crisis preparedness plans are recommended in order to: i) ensure sufficient well trained or qualified staff have skills appropriate for action in the event of a disaster and crisis, ii) define clear roles, responsibilities, and authorities for human resources, iii) identify possible knowledge and skill gaps among staff, iv) plan recruitment selection and training policies v) develop crisis response procedures for all departments, vi) maintain a database of staff trained in crisis management and vii) plan training exercises and drills.

UNWTO (2011) advocates for yearly training of core and new personnel and also stresses the need for crisis management teams who are fully aware of their specific roles and responsibilities under critical circumstances in terms of strategy, resource management, and communication approaches. They must prepare for potential, latent, and acute crises to accordingly act in the event the imaginary crisis becomes a reality (Martens et al., 2015; Sausmarez, 2007). This is done to avoid the easy diversion of tourist flow from a specific destination to others if various tourism operators fall short of skills and capabilities and resources to recover quickly (Gani & Singh, 2019).

Finance

Transparency in financial systems helps the organization to understand the range of resources available. Financing goes beyond setting emergency response reserves but should include preparedness for and the aftermath of crises as well as forms of financing (Lattimer, 2015; COMCEC, 2017). "Evidence is even harder to come by of organization linking learning to the kinds of results that might convince hard-headed business people to risk their money on the learning organizational journey" (Smith & Tosey, 1999, p. 73). Organizations that embrace learning are said to achieve improved performance (Ellinger, Ellinger, Yang, & Howton, 2002). Tourism development is hindered by the unpredictability of crises, this means wherever possible manage a crisis or avert them altogether (Sausmarez, 2007). Having sufficient financial resources to support activities in all stages of disaster and crisis management is critical (Kusumasari, Alam, & Siddiqui, 2010).

Mechanisms of financing and funding management are critical to any tourism organization and therefore systems need to exist to reduce existing and potential risks of disasters through the dedication of funds during budget allocations for emergency management and preparedness planning. This is possible through the processes of organizational learning (Murphy & Gilpin, 2008). Spending plans need to be designed especially in operations like human resources, public awareness, monitoring and evaluations, products and equipment, simulation exercises, and information management. The contingency funds should be easily accessible if and when needed. Tourism businesses are vulnerable and need support in financing working capital and improve liquidity (OECD, 2020). Financial support is essential to the success of knowledge sharing and therefore, investing financially in knowledge and learning as well as in real-time financial data availability in crisis, signals readiness and competence without which companies may lose traction and decrease operational effectiveness (Janus, 2016).

Conclusion

Organizations are amalgamations of different pillars and/or functions that play unique at the same time inseparable critical roles in the success or failure of the organization. Tourism organizations are no exception as they are largely based in vulnerable areas across the world. Programs designed to continuously ensure their existence must abound, therefore requiring them to be set as learning organizations. This enables them to acquire knowledge, distribute information, interpret information and store acquired information through organization memory. Once this has been achieved organizations are expected to institutionalize and integrate them into all functions, activities, and capacities that must perform in all stages of routine emergencies of an organization to enable planning and implementation of appropriate measures in case of any eventuality. It sets precedence for proper decision-making before, during, and after an event and also gives destinations a head start whenever there is an occurrence.

Institutionalizing organizational learning helps to plan how to manage both predictable and unpredictable events and assures sustainability of the tourism business and destination, constantly under threat. The result is the reduction of susceptibility to unwarranted events as well as prevention. Continuous review and evaluation of set programs should not be underestimated as it is the thin line between the success of the set measures and failure to mitigate and its consequences. Crises situations must be understood and this can be done at the destination and organizational levels through knowledge acquisition. Equally important is how this information is distributed and interpreted by all stakeholders and the resulting decisions and finally how it is stored and retrieved from the organization's memory. The initial outcome is effective and safe service delivery, competent human resources, good and proper use of financing, access and proper use to essential products and technologies, good leadership and governance, and access to reliable information which leads to effective management of expected and unexpected events.

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Ivan Sikora

10 Crisis and organizational learning: The hidden links between aviation and hospitality industry

Introduction

The global nature of hospitality and aviation is crucial when addressing the need for emphatic, effective, and efficient crisis management of significant events. Nowadays, the visibility of adverse events is almost immediate worldwide. It projects to the general public, family, and friends of those involved directly or indirectly (e.g. emergency landing on Hudson River US Airways Flight 1549 [National Transportation Safety Board, 2010] or Mumbai Hotel Attacks [Garg, 2010]). Presently, aviation had more chances to deal with adverse events, mainly due to its higher profile and the World's focus on its developments. Regardless of that, the sudden and unexpected nature of the crisis affects organizations in both industries in unpredictable ways offering little or no time to react at the very moment when it happens.

Before the current COVID-19 pandemic's challenge, hospitality and tourism activities contributed 10.4% to global GDP; a share which decreased to 5.5% in 2020 due to ongoing restrictions to mobility. In 2020, 62 million jobs were lost, representing a drop of 18.5%, leaving just 272 million employed across the sector globally, compared to 334 million in 2019 (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2020). On the other hand, aviation's share stood at 3.6% (ATAG & Oxford Economics, 2018, p. 4), nearly 88 million jobs were supported worldwide in aviation and related tourism before Covid-19 hit the industry. Of this, 11.3 million people worked directly in the aviation industry. (ATAG & Oxford Economics, 2018, 2020). All of this makes them very much at the forefront of public interest. In addition to this, there are many hidden links between aviation and hospitality. By nature, both industries are often responsible for people from other parts of the world far away from the company headquarters, hotel, or particular crisis location. Because of that, whenever a crisis happens in one or the other industry, it can not be missed globally. Equally, aviation as well as the hospitality and tourism industry, are intricate systems that involve the collaboration of companies, people and events in multiple subsystems. Moreover, they are similar in their service nature; the number of customers served and people affected directly and indirectly in any crisis and the sensitivity of the bottom line to their crisis management.

Aliperti, Sandholz, Hagenlocher, Rizzi, Frey & Garschagen (2019) state that there is a need for the hospitality industry to take advantage of knowledge about crisis management from parts of the global industry that has been dealing with crises longer. With the similar nature and importance of aviation and hospitality, they

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should have equal or comparable responses to a crisis. Therefore, this chapter aims to identify and elaborate on crisis management elements observed in aviation and their relevance for hospitality. When dealing with a crisis, we will discuss features that serve as "hidden links." A long history of aviation dealing with crises on the global stage makes it a potentially valuable place to look for inspiration and indication of how to design, operate and improve crisis management approach and systems. Explicit and tacit knowledge identification facilitates Knowledge Transfer and learning sharing between the two sectors while organizational learning strategies and methods from the aviation map to comparable characteristics in hospitality.

Civil aviation is a global industry that facilitates traveling, links people and cultures, provides trade connections and is the main contributor to the economy worldwide and the wider air transport sector (ATAG & Oxford Economics, 2018). Being a system of systems, the safety of the system relies on everyone involved in the process of producing the service. The most visible parts of the system are the flying crew and cabin crew. Safety of passengers, cargo and mail carried is the goal of others involved in the process. Aircraft maintenance personnel, Air Traffic Control Officers, and aircraft handling staff perform their duties around and concerning aircraft adding value for the benefit of successful completion of each flight.

High-Reliability Organisations and airlines are just one example of them because they manage a huge amount of energy that is usually under control and used for the benefit of humanity (Rijpma, 1997). Unfortunately, at times even those systems fail, and disaster happens (e.g. Three Mile Island nuclear accident (US Government Printing Office, 1979), Bhopal chemical plant disaster (Broughton, 2005), or Deepwater Horizon Oil Rig Accident (Bp, 2010). Participation in a more extensive civil aviation system makes our inputs in the system just a part of the mix. The system's output combines other inputs and different pathways through other airports, maintenance, or flight operations participants. Hence the crisis can be created without any intention from our side (Leveson, 2011). Therefore, it is not wise to discard the option that any type of crisis might occur in our system.

This book chapter discusses how hospitality can learn from aviation-related experience to surviving and managing crises. We are aware that there are no two similar organizations or industries, but we have specific types whose features define behavior and needs in any given situation. The features related to industry specifics that define knowledge transfer need to involve employees, managers, information management, information technology (Government of New Brunswick, 2010). At the same time, Dixon (2000) acknowledges that on the receiving side, in our case hospitality, we need to assure the similarity of task and context of work. Service industry segments of contemporary economies are growing faster than industrial, agriculture, and other economic segments. Wittmer and Bieger acknowledge that civil aviation ". . . exhibits all the typical characteristics of service industries: the intangibility and perishability of the product and the high importance of personal contact to the customer." (2011, p. 62). The service nature of both aviation and hospitality, confirms this critical premise for effective knowledge transfer. Features that are critical for the hospitality industry's success map well to aviation and the way it creates and delivers its services.

Understanding the concept of crisis

There is human involvement in creating and consuming service on both sides. The globalization of the world economy has driven a need for service industries to distinguish themselves in their respective fields (Wensveen, 2011). Prosumption, initially defined by Toffler (Southerton & Jurgenson, 2014) results in the fact that co-creation and co-producing service experience can not be avoided even in a crisis. Human involvement in the design, creation, and operation of both systems depends on the level of professionalization. Due to its nature, aviation has many very visible highly trained and professional employees holding extensive professional certifications and graduate degrees. At the same time in both industries, the majority of the workforce is more fluctuating with a high level of turnover. It does not get the same level of education or training when joining an equally challenging environment. With less recognizable training standards, qualifications, or career paths, they usually find high labor-intensive and very specialized service industries environment even more challenging. In line with the Redundancy Theory (Frederickson & LaPorte, 2002), human operators are just another fallible element. It has been quoted very often that that human contribution to aviation accidents is more than 66%. Having stated this, we need to acknowledge that the very same human can minimize crisis effects in some cases (Brown et al., 2018).

The British Standards Institution (BSI) states that a crisis is ". . . an inherently abnormal, unstable and complex situation that represents a threat to the strategic objectives, reputation or existence of an organization [society, school]." (2011, p. 1). While different authors agree on crisis development phases, there are few exceptions and differences when referring to crisis management. As a member of the crisis management team handling one of the first HRO industrial accidents in Three Mile Island in Pennsylvania, USA, Fink defined them, as shown in Figure 10.1 (Kamei, 2019). Building on Fink's framework Mitroff (1988) added stages of recovery and learning moving closer to what has proven to be more effective in the end. Affected organizations or communities suffer from a devastating effect, especially when they are not prepared to deal with the crisis. Reasoning like this follows Aliperti et al. (2019), pointing to Faulkner's initial definition of disaster as an event where managers could not apply any control. More than a decade later, the hospitality and tourism industry's specific literature identifies its state of crisis preparedness as reactive.

Faulkner's theory is beneficial because it sheds insight into the difficult problem of managing a crisis. Identifying High-Reliability Theory as a basis for safe operations in High Reliability (or Risk) Industries including aviation, Paraskevas et al. (2013) point that proactive actions offer a better answer to situations where the initial disruption has gone beyond the local capacity to handle it.

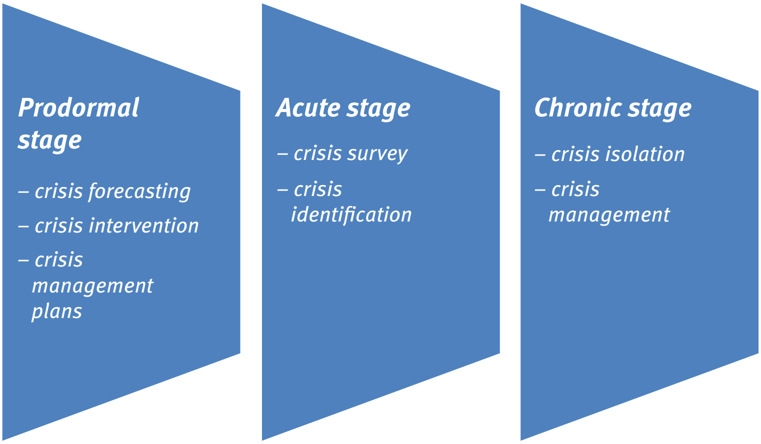

Figure 10.1: Crisis Management.
Source: Adapted from Fink (1986).

Unlike the general reactive approach to finding the causes of problems or crisis, aviation has realized that once the equipment's technical capabilities have become reasonably safe; the research aimed to capture and understand the potential origins of the problem. This discussion is aligned with regulatory requirements in the Safety Management System (SMS) that calls for managing risks ". . . at or below an acceptable level" (ICAO, 2013, pp. 1–2). Aviation statistics demonstrate this process's effectiveness when annual safety reports show a decline in Accident Rates and Onboard Fatalities year to year (see Figure 10.2).

Some authors argue that "published aviation safety statistics and industry practice refer mainly to safety outcome indicators" (Kaspers et al., 2016, p. 9). Nevertheless, in the text that follows, we argue about the theory related to aviation that is supposed to help achieve the best possible outcome despite the industry's high-risk nature. Once this has been done, we present related aviation solutions for which we see a potential application in hospitality crisis management. Identification of those two sets of information is intended to ease decisions where to go before the moment crisis arises and demands the organization's full attention.

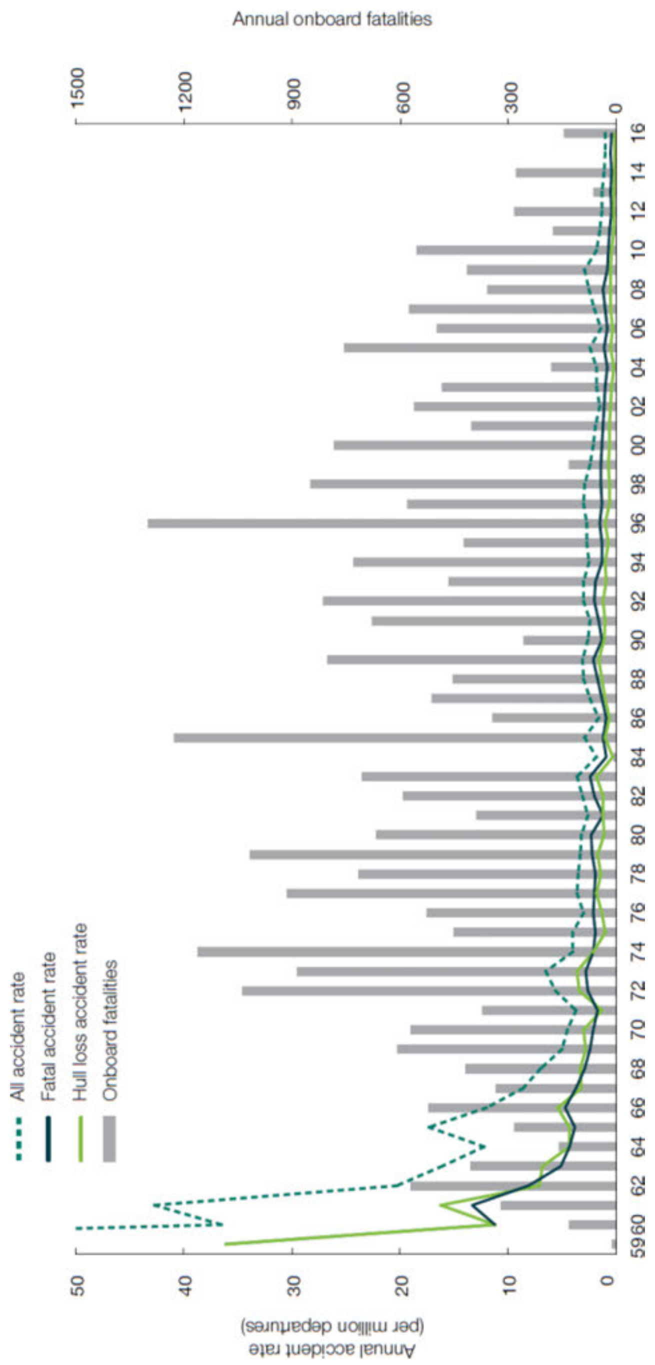

Figure 10.2: Accident Rates and Onboard Fatalities by Year (1959–2016).
Source: Boeing (2017, p. 16).

Crisis and knowledge management in aviation and hospitality

A formal definition of knowledge as

> "the meaningful link that people make in their minds between information and its application in a specific setting"

(Dawes & Lens, 2007) can be adapted when discussing aviation and hospitality crisis knowledge by replacing people with organizations. Although not in the same position concerning perceived risk exposure hospitality and aviation can exchange crisis management knowledge. Understanding the setting where they operate and essential characteristics of organizations involved (e.g., service nature of the product, human involvement in emitting and receiving position, and the workforce structure), as discussed earlier, allows for this knowledge transfer transaction. More precisely and for the sake of managing our discussion related to knowledge transfer, we will adopt a more granular position that knowledge can be further defined as tacit and explicit (Polanyi, 1966). Furthermore, Paraskevas et al. (2013) argue that the unpredictable nature of crisis calls for the more precise definition of crisis knowledge as procedural, behavioral, third party knowledge and "learned ignorance."

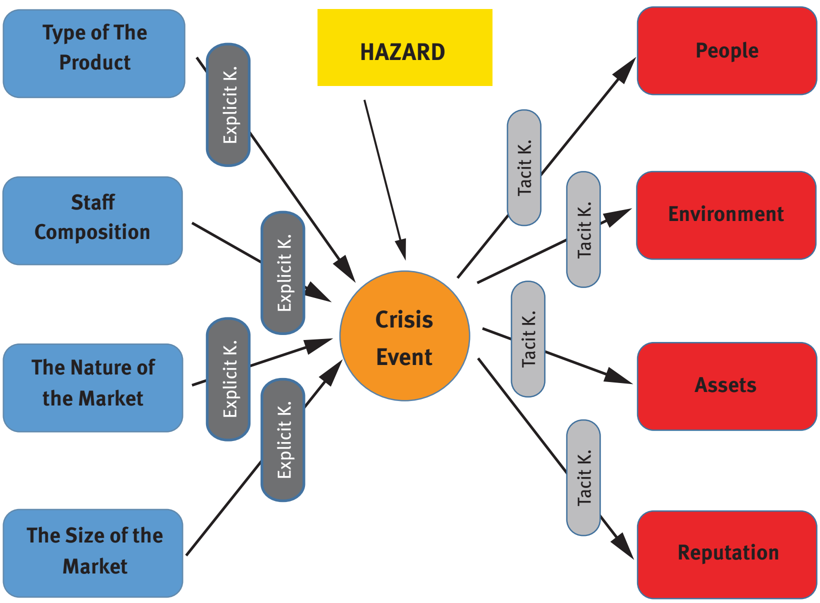

Figure 10.3: Bow-Tie of Crisis Management Knowledge.
Source: Adapted from SKYBRARY (n.d.).

Presenting crisis in a variant of a Bow-Tie diagram (Duijm, 2009), we can distinguish the time before the event and after the event (see Figure 10.3).

A crisis is an event positioned in the middle of the diagram. Progressing from the left side of the diagram we can see several elements that describe the organization (e.g., type of the product, staff description, the nature and the size of the market, speed of the product delivery). When a crisis happens the effect of the crisis projects on the other side in terms of the areas affected by the crisis. From the risk management literature, those can be but are not limited to: people, environment, assets, and reputation. Once the crisis has started, we are unsure how fast and in what direction it will develop.

In aviation, we observe that the most effective efforts in crisis management usually happen at the stage before the crisis called "preparedness and planning" (Ritchie & Jiang, 2019). Therefore in between the organization's characteristics and the crisis we have elements of the explicit knowledge that allows for the proactive minimizing the potential of the crisis to happen and maximizing the response's effectiveness if it happens after all. Stages of "response and recovery" as well as "resolution and reflection" inform our tacit knowledge or "simple rules" and "knowledge of no-knowledge" as Paraskevas et al. (2013) call them. Hence, in between crisis and affected areas, we can position elements of the tacit knowledge originating from previous crises in this particular organization or industry.

Explicit knowledge about the crisis in aviation originates in information about the phenomena in focus. Experience from the crisis in the form of data has been sorted and analyzed to be communicated. That codification effort aims to share the most effective approach and raise organizations' performance in crisis (Wyatt, 2001). Various modes of explicit knowledge exist. These modes include spoken language, graphic displays, tools (processes and guidelines), and numeric tables (Dawes & Lens, 2007). Explicit knowledge is a subject to become outdated over time and needs to be checked and updated if needed. Explicit procedural aviation knowledge related to crisis management and Emergency Planning is contained in government, regulatory, and academic/ scientific material covering related general basis and principles. They serve well the need for the ready-made and immediately available crisis management information applicable to hospitality as argued recently by Ritchie and Jiang (2019).

When discussing potential tacit knowledge transfer, we need to stress that it would be challenging to directly reapply this type of knowledge between two industries. Acknowledging Dixon (2000) that argues about many different ways to transfer knowledge, there is still a benefit in addressing how aviation is acquiring and managing tacit knowledge. That discussion can inform or inspire hospitality practitioners to apply comparable methods in their industry with a due note that each industry, and even organization, will probably have its variant that meets its needs (Government of New Brunswick, 2010).

Corporate governance and compliance should include the development and maintenance of crisis management capability. Essential knowledge that facilitates crisis management in aviation has been developing over many years. Originating from the 1950s when aviation started to be used more often in civilian tasks it has followed reshaping the awareness about the causality of accidents and incidents and the effectiveness of means employed to meet their challenges (see Figure 10.4). Following the shift of thinking in terms of safety, aviation has modified its approach to crisis management.

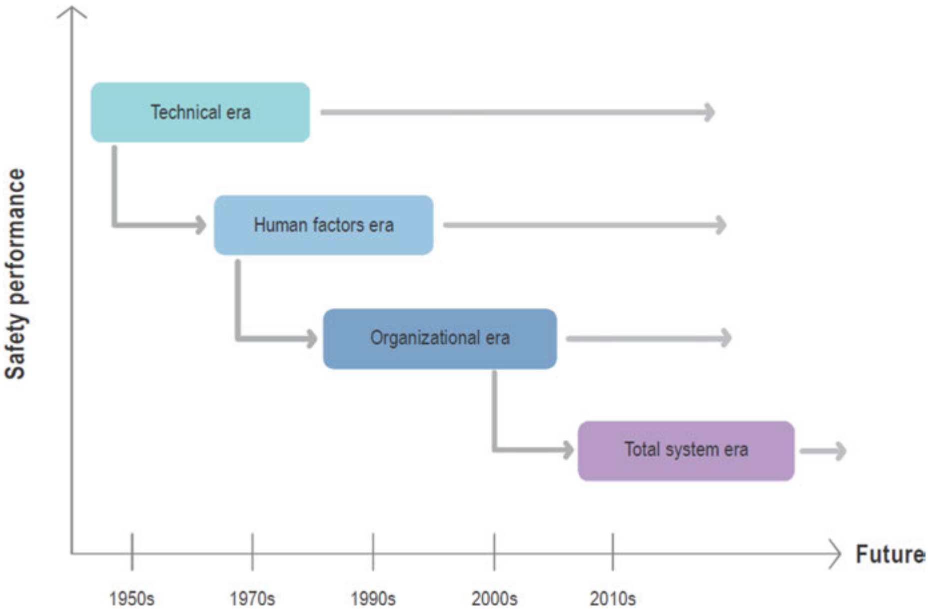

Figure 10.4: Transition of Focus in Aviation Safety.
Source: International Civil Aviation Organization (2012, 2–2).

Human factors

Explicit knowledge

We mentioned previously that both aviation and hospitality are very much reliant on their employees when producing the product they sell, i.e., service. Aviation has been keeping track of the share of Human Factors caused incidents compared to the rest. It varies from 66% to more than 80% depending on which section of aviation we consider and the time considered. It is common knowledge in aviation that most of those human factors events are avoidable when considered in hindsight. Table 10.1 shows a selection of some of the most famous aircraft accidents involving human factors.

Human Factors, as a science, study human capabilities and limitations in the workplace and system's performance. They study the personnel's interaction, the

Table 10.1: Selection of Aviation Human Factors Accidents.

Human Factor Causation	Aircraft Accident
Failure to follow company policy	— British Airways Flight 5390 (Air Accidents Investigation Branch, 1992)
The flight crew distracted by the nose gear indication light	— Eastern Air Lines Flight 401 (National Transportation Safety Board, 1973)
The flight crew recovered the damaged aircraft and landed	— 2003 Baghdad DHL attempted shootdown incident(Aviation Safety Network, 2013)

equipment they use, the written and verbal procedures and rules they follow, and any system's environmental conditions. Human Factors aims to optimize the relationship between the staff and systems to improve safety, efficiency, and well-being. The aviation sector realized very early that human factors are essential for its safety and crisis management. A crisis can be aggravated or alleviated if designers, manufacturers, policymakers, managers, and operational staff consider human factors. These might vary from an elementary knowledge of getting enough sleep or quality food to very detailed fatigue measurements relevant to long-haul flights or night shift work.

Formal documentation relevant to human factors in aviation is generally widely applicable to any other industry that has people working in similar conditions: shifts, long hours, or procedurally prescribed work. That is true regardless of whether we refer to either highly specialized staff such as pilots (Maurino, 2017), maintenance engineers) or groups with less focused and broader education backgrounds (CAA, 2002). Considering human factors can help the hospitality industry prevent and manage crises originating in different human factor-related areas (see Table 10.2).

Tacit Knowledge

A crisis originates in daily operations at different levels in the organization. Mitroff (1988) stated that signals about a crisis could be observed long before it happens. As Paraskevas et al. (2013) argue, this emergent tacit knowledge enables crisis managers to develop specific knowledge exploitation strategies depending on the type of knowledge itself. Similarly, in aviation, we have a requirement to report and record aviation safety relative information. Governments prescribe the minimal set of reportable information as Mandatory Occurrence Reports (MOR) (e.g. Confidential Human Factors Incident Reporting Programme (CHIRP) in the UK (CAA, 2002), Aviation Safety Reporting System (ASRS) in the US (Salmon et al., 2010), or European Co-ordination Centre for Aviation Incident Reporting Systems (ECCAIRS) in European Union (Nisula, 2015).

Table 10.2: Human Factors area of influence.

Human Factors Area	Organisation/Mission Considerations
Human Physiology	Front Desk staff/Pilots & Cabin Crew Maintenance Staff Managerial Staff
Human Psychology	Perception Cognition Memory Social Interaction
Work Place Design	Stress Fatigue Workload Sleep Ergonomics
Environmental Conditions	Temperature Noise Outdoor/Indoor

Some organizations require even more extensive reporting in the form of, e.g., Air Safety Reports, Ground Occurrence Reports, or Cabin Safety Reports. As Dixon (2000) argues, cultivating and rewarding regular reports helps foster learning culture and makes the knowledge management effort successful, and this individual's knowledge is embedded in organizational routines or procedures. This tacit knowledge can be captured at different levels. In aviation, it is done by pilots, aircraft maintenance engineers, cabin crew, and anyone else when an available channel for the reporting exists (paper or electronic). Once captured, as Senge (1992) argued, leaders of the organization have only to provide means to disseminate lessons learned.

Latent conditions

Explicit knowledge

It is very difficult to expect that we will ever remove all human error in systems that rely on their human operators. Authors in aviation have formalized this burden in a term called latent factors (Reason, 2016). When an operator at the so-called "sharp-end" of the organization (e.g., pilots or air traffic controls officers in the case of aviation) makes a mistake that mistake is visible immediately or very soon after and is called a human (active) error. On the contrary, if an engine designer or manager created a faulty procedure defining the context of work for staff or misses to check calculations done by their colleague, this mistake stays dormant to the moment when it resurfaces and creates a problem.

These latent conditions, usually introduced unconsciously with good intentions and based on the best available information, may have been present for years without causing an accident. Later on, after not a definite amount of time combined with, or causing, active failures, they produce an accident. The Accident Causation Model, often called the Swiss Cheese model, in Figure 10.5, is a graphic depiction of this accident causation understanding. The same logic can be applied in hospitality for the front desk or hotel kitchen staff. Slices of the cheese are not necessarily related to aviation. They can be substituted with corresponding hospitality areas for the model to help to prepare for and to help manage a possible crisis when this need arises.

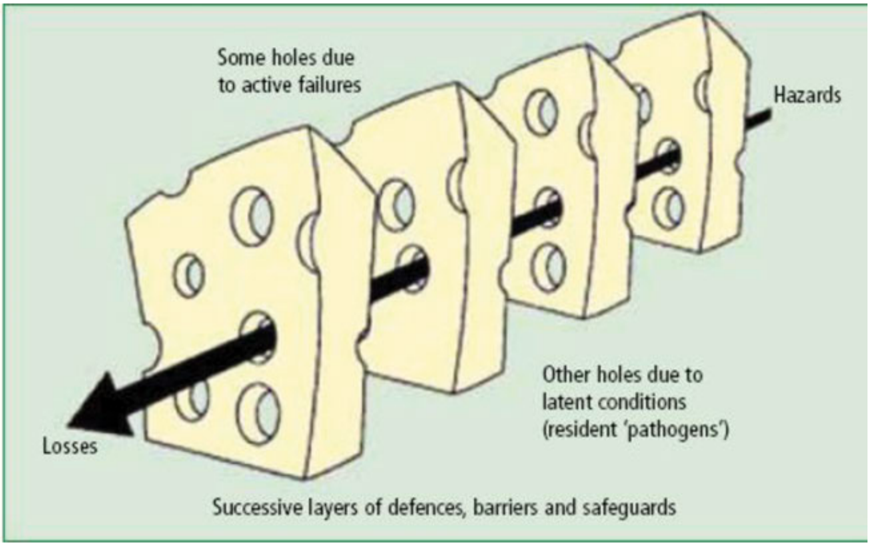

Figure 10.5: "Swiss Cheese" Model of James Reason.
Source: Shields (2011).

The latent conditions exist because of issues such as poor: design, gaps in supervision, undetected defects or maintenance failures, unworkable procedures, inadequate training, or conflicting goals and objectives. Table 10.3 presents a selection of some of the significant aviation accidents related to Latent Factors causation.

Tacit knowledge

The nature of aviation with fast-developing technology and systems defines the nature of the industry's knowledge management demands. The threshold of the 20th century

Table 10.3: Aviation Accidents and Crisis Related to Latent Conditions.

Latent Conditions Causation	Aircraft Accident
Faulty Maintenance Procedure Applied	— Japan Airlines Flight 123 (Aircraft Accident Investigation Commission Ministry of Transport, 1987)
Missed Structural Repair Completion	— Aloha Airlines Flight 243 (National Transportation Safety Board, 1989)
Faulty Maintenance Procedure Applied	— China Airlines Flight CI611 (Aviation Safety Council, 2002)

has commanded a new approach to understand accident causation. Initiatives from the late 1990s have given aviation a mandate to adapt and move in the SMS direction (ICAO, 2013). Industry initiatives such as Aviation Risk Management Solutions (ARMS) have originated in aviation to facilitate the harnessing of operationally generated organizational tacit knowledge for the benefit of the industry as a whole (ARMS Working Group, 2010). Along the lines of the single and double loop, organizational learning approach for the benefit of crisis and safety management (Blackman et al., 2011) ARMS established two phases approach when considering any safety event. The working group has introduced Event Risk Classification (ERC) as a single, and Safety Issue Risk Assessment (SIRA) as a double-loop extension of the process.

Regardless of the size of the organization, an ARMS approach allows for smaller organizations to manage the influx of useful safety, and we would argue crisis, data. Acknowledging the difference between the immediate threats and potential signals of crisis coming this approach is in line with Ritchie And Jiang (2019) about learning from past experiences and based on what has come close to be an accident. SIRA as a knowledge transfer tool moves organizational learning before the resolution phase where it has been discussed to happen in the hospitality industry at the moment most often allowing for future changes in safety or crisis management.

Safety management system

Explicit knowledge

Aviation progression from awareness of human (active) errors through human factors (latent) considerations has evolved and lead to the introduction of the view that safety has to be managed by addressing organizational factors. Accidents and disasters from Table 10.4 represent a selection of cases where seemingly unrelated causes have developed to significant disasters due to inefficient safety management.

Table 10.4: Safety Management Trigger Events.

Safety Management Causation	Aircraft Accident
Inability to learn from past incidents and confusing operating procedures	— Three Mile Island accident (US. Government Printing Office, 1979)
Groupthink defining the action	— Space Shuttle Challenger disaster (National Transportation Safety Board, 2003)
Seemingly unrelated aircraft fault resulting in the accident	— Air Ontario Flight 1363 in Dryden, ON, Canada (Moshansky, 1992)

Therefore, in the early 1990s, the SMS approach has been mandated by the International Civil Aviation Organisation (ICAO). The transition from a prescriptive understanding of safety to a collaborative performance-based one has not been easy. The period of the first few years has been challenging for all: regulators as well as organisations. Formal requirements and stipulations for SMS originated in separate ICAO documents initially. Building on the applicable content ICAO published Safety Management Manual (SMM) Doc 9859 initially (ICAO, 2012) that after several revisions have served as a basis for ICAO Annex 19 covering SMS knowledge and guidance (ICAO, 2013).

The four pillars of the SMS defined in SMM were transferred to the Annex also. They correspond to Total Quality Management's phases of the "Plan-Do-Act-Check" circle from the late 1980s (Swuste et al., 2020).SMS pillars are Safety Policy and Objectives, Safety Risk Management, Safety Assurance, and Safety Promotion. When we consider knowledge about either safety or crisis SMS structure, and intended function corresponds to a functional and practical knowledge management system (Government of New Brunswick, 2010). Even more than that, the organization's ability to manage crisis knowledge as discussed by Paraskevas et al. (2013) is related to organizational factors such as organizational leadership and structure, crisis culture, and communication. If one replaces crisis with safety, we have an almost perfect fit to before mentioned pillars that aviation has in its SMS (see Figure 10.6).

Tacit knowledge

The aviation sector has had its share of reactive organizations and approach that corresponded to what Beeton (2001) stated when claiming that hospitality risk

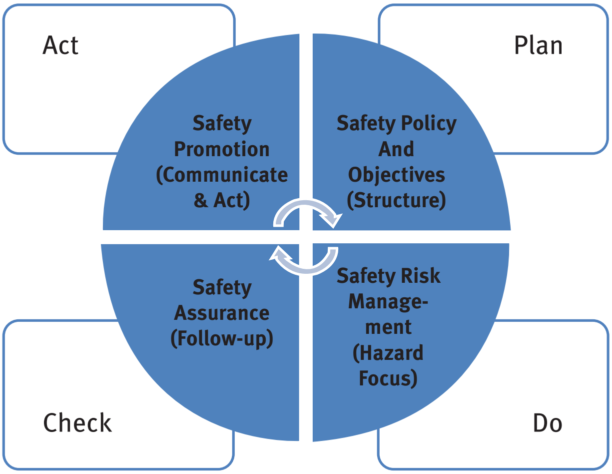

Figure 10.6: Safety Management and Total Quality Management Connection.
Source: Adapted from Li & Guldenmund (2018, p. 109)

management is usually reactive after a severe incident or accident. Learning from the crisis recovery stage mentioned by Aliperti et al. (2019) matches what authors in HRO literature would call "a bureaucratic" (Parker et al., 2006, p. 554) organization. Classifying organizations in this way do not relate to either size or origin of the organization at all. What is more important for a proactive nature of an organization, compared to the features just mentioned, is its resilience-building drive that encompasses: constant learning, flexibility, adaptation, and evaluation (Brown et al., 2018).

Proactive behavior in aviation safety, and crisis management, starts with a clear leadership (indicated in the Safety Policy of SMS). Safety Risk Management and Safety Assurance enable the inclusion of different stakeholders in the organization and a broader level (e.g. country or even global aviation industry in the form of State Safety Programme (ICAO, 2013) or Global Strategy for Aviation Safety). This knowledge movement within and between organizations using Safety Promotion enables sharing applicable types of safety knowledge building even more solid SMS. A shared sense of purpose called very often "safety culture" (Parker, Lawrie, & Hudson, 2006, p. 552) in the safety field, nurtures a proactive attitude identifying "what could possibly be" instead of just "what is" or where it is coming from (Paraskevas & Altinay, 2013, p. 168).

Safety-II

The progression of safety thinking, presented in Figure 10.4 above, identified a systemic approach as the latest iteration in the effort to match the nature of the aviation system with methods that suit current times. SM approach through centralized control, called "Safety-I," aimed to centrally determine what is safe and communicate it to the employees. Opposite to this approach, we observe recent efforts to promote and apply "Safety-II" to empower employees and organizations to safely adapt to situations and conditions as they develop (Provan et al., 2020). Effort in creating and cultivating resilience skills through "Safety-II" has not stopped at aviation only. Other organizations take positive advantage of their employees also (e.g. Son et al. [2019] mentioned this could be observed in the Emergency Department in health care also).

If that is the case for the fast-paced environment of an operating theatre, an aircraft cockpit, or Air Traffic Operator's console why not take advantage of it in situations such as a high paced kitchen (Health and Safety Executive, 2006) or equally demanding front desk of a busy hotel (not necessarily five stars rated). The reality of human operators, faced with a myriad of systems and variability of tasks in either aviation or hospitality is a fertile ground to reach out for "Safety-II" and its promise to "ensure that as many things as possible go right" (Shorrock et al., 2018). They also stress that while we have had a significant focus on the human (active) error, we are reconsidering humans' role as a quality addition to systems' flexibility and resilience. While (Brown et al., 2018) acknowledge that resilience-building is an ongoing process it is important to stress that aviation's explicit knowledge presented here can serve as a starting point or an inspiration to think of, reuse if possible, or to build similar documents that can serve hospitality well when thinking of crisis management.

Conclusions

Although rare, crises have been more frequent in aviation, resulting in the proficiency of dealing with them. Answering the call for more comprehensive crisis management in hospitality recently, this chapter aimed to identify and elaborate on elements observed in aviation and their relevance for hospitality organizations based on non-apparent, i.e., hidden, links. Aviation and hospitality are two seemingly non-comparable industries. Aviation is more technology-intensive, high-risk, and essential for the global economy's everyday functioning. On the other hand, hospitality is dependant on nature and its provision, non-essential but nice to have for a healthy and balanced personal lifestyle, and generally less financially challenged than aviation. Nevertheless, when a crisis strikes, several critical similar features reveal themselves. Catering for many people away from their natural habitat and high visibility in the global media requires emphatic, effective, and efficient handling of the crisis in both industries.

Heavy reliance on human involvement, relative rarity and the speed of crises development, and varying sizes of organizations are hidden links that inspired us to look into Organisational Learning practices in aviation and their potential for application in hospitality. Some identified aviation content offers a remedy and a boost to answer a perceived lack of comparable material and methods in hospitality. Explicit Human Factors knowledge; the awareness of related Latent Conditions; Safety Management System; and recent "Safety-II" notions can inspire hospitality practitioners when answering challenges related to either workforce or the workplace. Tacit knowledge creation methods and practices (e.g., reporting systems, collecting relevant incidents' data) demonstrate a proactive approach in building awareness and responses to potentially new and emerging types of crises. Finally, codification, transformation, and preservation of tacit to more widely useful explicit knowledge through a model such as SIRA in ARMS offer ways to enable knowledge creation and transfer within aviation and hospitality alike. We argue that tacit knowledge is essential to tip the crisis outcome scales in any organization positively. That is precisely the final hidden link between our two industries when discussing crisis management. In both aviation and hospitality, explicit knowledge allows organizations to operate normally and occasionally in abnormal times. However, tacit knowledge saves the day at all times.

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Mehmet Ertas and Burçin Kırlar-Can

11 Crisis management and organizational learning: The case of Denizli's hotels

Introduction

Tourism is one of the industries that are most vulnerable and sensitive to crises (Ghaderi, Som, & Wang, 2014; Santana, 2004; Sönmez, Apostolopoulos, & Tarlow, 1999). It is severely affected by uncontrollable crisis-causing events, such as wars, political instability, terrorist attacks, economic recession, natural disasters, or epidemics (Blackman & Ritchie, 2008; Kim, Chun, & Lee, 2005; Ritchie, 2004; Sönmez et al., 1999; Wang, 2008). In particular, security-related issues cause sudden changes in tourists' perceptions and preferences, decreased tourism demand and revenue, shifts in tourism markets, reduced labor force and investments, and weakened financial structures for all stakeholders (Gurtner, 2016; Walters, Wallin, & Hartley, 2019). Between 2015 and 2017, Turkey faced several terrorist attacks and political turmoil with severe outcomes for its tourism industry, including a coup attempt, border conflicts, and diplomatic crises. In 2016, the number of inbound tourists decreased by 30% while revenues fell by 40% (MCT, Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2017a); arrivals and hotel occupancy rates dropped by 40%, and overnight stays fell by 35% (MCT, 2017b).

The intensity, inevitability, and damage from crises make it essential to learn how to cope. Although organizations that have experienced crises can prepare for future crises more easily, their learning capability depends on organizational culture and intention to learn from crises (Ghaderi et al., 2014). Moreover, as learning from a crisis is complicated, many organizations fail to learn from crises since they misread the causes, fail to keep up with changing conditions, and cannot develop organizational learning memory. As a result, they repeat the same mistakes and suffer from every crisis (Antonacopoulou & Sheaffer, 2014; Blackman & Ritchie, 2008; Broekema, Van Kleef, & Steen, 2017). Therefore, hotels need to learn from crises and develop crisis management strategies to cope to either prevent or reduce catastrophic consequences.

Organizational learning and crisis management are both inherently dependent on and connected. By concentrating on what hotels have learned from recent crises, this chapter investigates several Turkish hotels' crisis management strategies and methods and levels of organizational learning ways and levels of hotels following crises. It adopts a case study approach focusing on hotels in Denizli, which is a metropolitan city in Turkey located near the famous tourist attraction of Pamukkale. The first section of the chapter reviews the literature on crisis management and organizational learning in the hotel industry. The second section presents the methodology, specifically data collection, and analysis. The third section presents the findings from

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the analysis, including the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on hotels. The final section relates the findings to the literature and evaluates the study's contribution.

Crisis management in the hotel industry

Crises are often unprecedented, requiring quick decision-making and effective communication. Although a crisis can be overcome to a certain extent through good management, strategies should be able to tackle unexpected events (Faulkner, 2001). Furthermore, destination management units and managers of tourism enterprises should understand crisis-causing events and develop strategies that can mitigate or prevent the negative impacts of crises. Effective management during a crisis or disaster is essential for the tourism industry since it is particularly damaged by political, economic, social, or technological factors (Ritchie, 2004). Santana (2004, p. 308) defines crisis management as:

> an ongoing and extensive effort that organizations put in place in an attempt to understand and prevent crises and to effectively manage those that occur, taking into account in each and every step of their planning and training, activities, the interest of their stakeholders.

Crisis management is explained as the response of organizations to crises, such as political instability, natural disasters, terrorism, refugee crises, or disease outbreaks, particularly through developing strategies to deal with unexpected or unpredictable events (Morakabati, Page, & Fletcher, 2017). Sönmez et al. (1999) propose a four-step crisis management guide for tourism professionals: 1) Preparation for crisis management – crisis management planning or action planning should be done within the framework of general tourism, marketing, and management strategies; 2) Crisis management task force – crisis management strategies should be developed before any crisis with local government officials, local travel and tourism industry professionals, and community leaders; 3) Crisis management guidebook – guidelines should be created before any crisis to minimize its negative impacts by detailing how each organization or employee will act; 4) Partnering with law enforcement officials – tourism industry professionals and law enforcement, particularly security forces, should cooperate to support tourism.

Although developing appropriate strategies for crises can reduce the damage, catastrophic events may even threaten the survival of the organization or destination (Ghaderi et al., 2014). Thus, crisis management in the hotel industry requires proactive screening and planning to ensure that the implementation of strategies is continually improved and that the effectiveness of these strategies is evaluated (Sönmez et al., 1999). Organizations can also learn from crises to gain the ability to make policy changes, adapt and improve ineffective strategies (Blackman & Ritchie, 2008). In short, organizational learning is crucial for hotels to cope with a crisis (Antonacopoulou & Sheaffer, 2014; Elliott & Macpherson, 2010; Hanaysha, 2016; Wang, 2008).

Organizational learning

Organizational learning is defined as the degree of production, dissemination, and storage of information about the organization itself (King, Chung, & Haney, 2008). It is a complex process of learning new information and changing behaviors that enables the enterprise to gain a competitive advantage and improve its performance (Broekema et al., 2017; Hung & Chou, 2013). According to another definition, organizational learning is an organizational process that enables the acquisition, access, and review of organizational memory, both intentionally and unintentionally, to guide organizational action (Robey, Boudreau, & Rose, 2000).

Robey et al. (2000) identify five basic features of organizational learning: 1) It is an organizational process that can occur at various levels of social analysis, such as an individual, group, or inter-organizational network; 2) It is a process rather than a configuration of structural components; 3) It is both intentional and unintentional; 4) It is a general term that implies that information can be stored in various ways, both human and artificial; 5) The knowledge gained from organizational learning guides organizational action, allowing the organization to widen its repertoire of action.

Organizational learning is also defined in terms of processes and behaviors; hence, a learning organization is perceived as a supportive entity (Hanaysha, 2016). Another important function of organizational learning is absorptive capacity, which requires learning ability and improves problem-solving skills. Learning ability is the capacity to copy knowledge (for imitation) whereas problem-solving skills provide the capacity to create new knowledge (for innovation) (Kim, 1998). In general, organizational learning is the institution's ability to acquire, disseminate and use the information to adapt to a changing external environment (Loon-Hoe & McShane, 2010).

Argyris and Schön (1977) distinguish two levels of organizational learning. The first level is single-loop learning, comprising methods and routines that vary without questioning the organization's general operational structures and basic driving values. Conversely, the second level of learning, double-loop learning, involves questioning the logic behind actions to transform the organization's logic or governing variables. Robey et al. (2000), who also consider organizational learning as a process with observable results, propose two approaches to measure learning. The first is the outcome approach, which aims to measure the results of organizational actions and gradually extract learning from outcome changes. It is the most common application of deriving learning curves. The second is the process approach, in which the learning process is both defined and intentionally manipulated to examine how alternative processes change outcomes. However, since the learning process itself cannot be directly observed, a complete estimation is impossible.

Crossan, Lane, and White (1999) explain the sub-dimensions of the organizational learning process with four I's: intuiting, interpreting, integrating, and institutionalizing. These four sub-learning processes also take place at three levels: individual, group, and organizational. These three learning levels define the structure in which organizational learning takes place. Whereas intuiting and interpreting occurs at the individual level, interpreting and integrating occur at the group level, and integrating and institutionalizing occur at the organizational level.

Organizational learning in the hotel industry

Organizational learning provides significant opportunities for enterprises to cope with crises. Since modern crises are often unpredictable, organizational learning can provide the best recommendations for maintaining or even improving performance during crisis periods (Hanaysha, 2016). Learning from a crisis involves "determining the causes of a crisis, assessing the strengths and weaknesses of the responses to it and undertaking remedial action based on this understanding" (Boin, Stern, Hart, & Sundelius, 2016, p. 15).

Through positive and negative feedback on an enterprise's performance, organizational learning enables it to learn the necessary lessons and change beliefs and practices in the aftermath of a crisis. Organizational executives commonly implement practices like drawing lessons for the future after the crisis and develop action plans based on crisis experiences (Wang, 2008). Crises are generally thought to stimulate learning, especially those that pose external threats to the status quo, which are commonly evaluated together. In cases where such complicated political and institutional problems do not arise and all interested parties are motivated to ensure that such troubles are never repeated, learning is accepted as "a golden concept" (Boin et al., 2005). Moreover, learning from a crisis and developing essential crisis strategies is vital to overcome possible future crises with the least damage (Blackman & Ritchie, 2008).

Tourism is particularly vulnerable to and severely affected by crises (Ghaderi et al., 2014; Santana, 2004; Sönmez et al., 1999). Therefore, organizational learning is an essential function of tourism crisis management (Ghaderi et al., 2014; Liu-Lastres, Kim, & Ying, 2019). In particular, the hotel industry can use information obtained with organizational learning during a crisis to reduce the impacts of future crises (Blackman & Ritchie, 2008). Besides, given the rapidly changing environment and increasing consumer needs, hotels require continuous learning to maintain their competitive advantage and survive. Therefore, continuous learning is always needed in hotels, both for managers and employees (Fu, 2017).

Given the potential damage from crises, hotels should have crisis management plans that are updated in line with the lessons learned from previous crises and make clear the various causes and solutions (Çiftçi, Küçükaltan, & Menteş, 2017). By learning lessons and developing coping strategies, hotels can overcome future crises with minimal damage (Blackman & Ritchie, 2008).

Hotels need to make a special effort to encourage their employees to participate in organizational learning through the organizational culture and all available technological tools (Alonso-Almedia, Celemin-Pedroche, Rubio-Andrada, & Rodriguez-Anton, 2016). In addition to encouraging employees to learn continuously, hotels should adopt a corporate culture by learning, strengthening work skills, training and education, improving communication, and changing the organization. Hotels should innovate more than their competitors, adapt to changes in their surroundings, and create a competitive advantage by helping their employees learn from each other (Fu, 2017).

Hotels implement crisis management practices to minimize the effects of crises. These practices are also the most important strategies that hotels learn from previous crises. Israeli, Mohsin, and Kumar (2011) identify four crisis management practices of hotels: human resources, marketing, maintenance, and government assistance. Human resources practices include reducing the number of employees and wages or increasing working hours (Israeli et al., 2011; Israeli & Reichel, 2003; Kim et al., 2005); marketing practices consist of developing new products and services, decreasing the prices of products and services, finding alternative markets or decreasing prices for the domestic tourism market (Ang, Leong, & Kotler, 2000; Beirman, 2002; Fleisher & Buccola, 2002; Israeli et al., 2011); maintenance practices cover cutting spending and costs, balancing financial structures through lower building and system expenses, postponing new investments, or extending credit and payment plans (Evans & Elphick, 2005; Lo, Cheung & Law 2006; Okumuş & Karamustafa, 2005; Tse, So, & Sin 2006); government assistance practices include tax reductions and postponements (Israeli et al., 2011).

Organizational learning from crises: The case of hotels in Denizli, Turkey

The exploratory study reported here provides insights into the methods and levels of organizational learning in hotels after crises. It adopts a qualitative design to enable a deeper understanding of the research topic. Semi-structured, in-depth interviews were conducted to collect data in January 2020 in Denizli. The city, located in the Aegean region of southwestern Turkey, is surrounded by tourism destinations, such as Kuşadası, Bodrum, and Antalya. Denizli is particularly renowned for the cultural and natural heritage site of Hierapolis/Pamukkale, which was included in

UNESCO's World Heritage List. Face-to-face interviews were conducted by both researchers with 12 hoteliers, including hotel managers, department managers, and supervisors from 10 hotels in Denizli. The participants quoted here are given pseudonyms from P1 to P12 along with their gender while * indicates the hotel's star rating. Table 11.1 shows an overview of the participants.

Table 11.1: Profile of participants.

N.	Gender	Working position	Years working in the hotel	Years of operation of the hotel	Type of hotel	Interview duration (min.)
1	Male	Hotel manager	1	20+	3*	27
2	Male	Hotel manager	3	4	4*	30
3	Male	Hotel manager	5	5	3*	31
4	Male	Sales & marketing manager	5	5	3*	31
5	Female	Sales & marketing supervisor	1	10+	5*	32
6	Male	Owner	24	24	3*	29
7	Male	Sales & marketing manager	5	31	5*	35
8	Male	Front office manager	3	3	4*	26
9	Male	Assistant general manager	7	27	5*	39
10	Female	Guest relations supervisor	2	27	5*	39
11	Female	Guest relations supervisor	1	5	5*	26
12	Male	Sales & marketing manager	10+	10+	5*	66

The research and interview questions were based on the crisis management and organizational learning literature (Blackman & Ritchie, 2008; Boin et al., 2016; Hanaysha, 2016; Ghaderi et al., 2014; Wang, 2008). The study addressed the following questions:
– What have the hotels learned from the crisis in the tourism industry?
– What new strategies have hotels learned from the crisis in the tourism industry?
– Which strategies have the hotels used to cope with the crisis in the tourism industry?
– What have been the precautions that hotels have taken against a future crisis?
– Do hotels have strategies to minimize the potential for future crises?

After the COVID-19 pandemic spread to Turkey in the middle of March 2020, additional data were collected to investigate the impacts of the crisis and reveal the current status of analyzed hotels. Although most of the hotels had suspended their operations in line with national measures, short interviews were conducted with four hoteliers who were asked about the status of their operation, tourism demand, employees, measures taken so far during the pandemic, and their predictions about the hotel's survival and tourism industry.

Qualitative content analysis was used to interpret the data. After open coding the first interview texts manually, categories and sub-categories were outlined to draft a code list (Corbin & Strauss, 2008; Merriam, 2009). Both researchers conducted the coding procedure separately before comparing the identified categories and sub-categories. These were then revised and re-organized along with further analysis until 90% compatibility was achieved (Peer control: multiple coding) (Miles & Huberman, 1994). In the second stage of the coding procedure, axial coding was used to reveal patterns among the main and sub-categories. The findings were then visualized and participant statements were quoted while interpreting the data. Table 11.2 exemplifies the coding procedure for analyzing the data.

Table 11.2: Example coding scheme.

Theme	Category	Sub-category	Quotation
Impacts of crises	Decrease in demand/ revenue	Decrease in occupancy rates	The occupancy rate of the hotel, for instance, has dropped from 80 percent to 15–20. [P8, Male, 4*]
Coping with crises	Budget planning	Reducing expenses	We try to reduce all kinds of expenses. We try to lower electricity, gas, etc. [P1, Male, 3*]
Learning from crises	Managerial issues	Improving leading skills	It has psychological effects on you, for sure, you learn something, you learn to be strong. [P7, Male, 5*]

Crises affecting Denizli's hotels

The crises that Denizli hoteliers remember as most severely affecting their hotels operating in are listed below:

- Economic crises: rises in exchange rates, hyperinflation (increases in product and service prices)
- Security-related crises: the 2016 coup attempt, terror attacks (particularly in İstanbul, Ankara, and the southeast region)
- Political crises: domestic turmoil (demonstrations), diplomatic tensions (shooting down of a Russian military jet), political moves (Turkey's Syria-oriented operations)
- Temporary crisis: earthquake (in Denizli)

These events have had a cumulative effect on Turkey's economy and its tourism industry. Thus, economic crises came first to the hoteliers' minds, particularly rising inflation rates. These increased the costs of the hotels' products and services due to rising exchange rates, which damaged the hotels' finances. Although this crisis brought more foreign tourists to the region, it depressed the domestic tourism market.

Various political and security-related crises in 2015–2016 reduced arrivals by 40%, and hotel occupancy rates and overnight stays by 35% (MCT, 2017b). The most significant event, which affected Denizli hotels, was the 2016 coup attempt. Bombings in Istanbul and Ankara, political tensions with the Russian Federation, border conflicts with Syria, and terrorist attacks in southeast Turkey also affected these hotels.

Impacts of crises

Because tourism is one of the most vulnerable industries to national and international crises, hotels have inevitably suffered (Figure 11.1) and faced difficulties during and after each crisis.

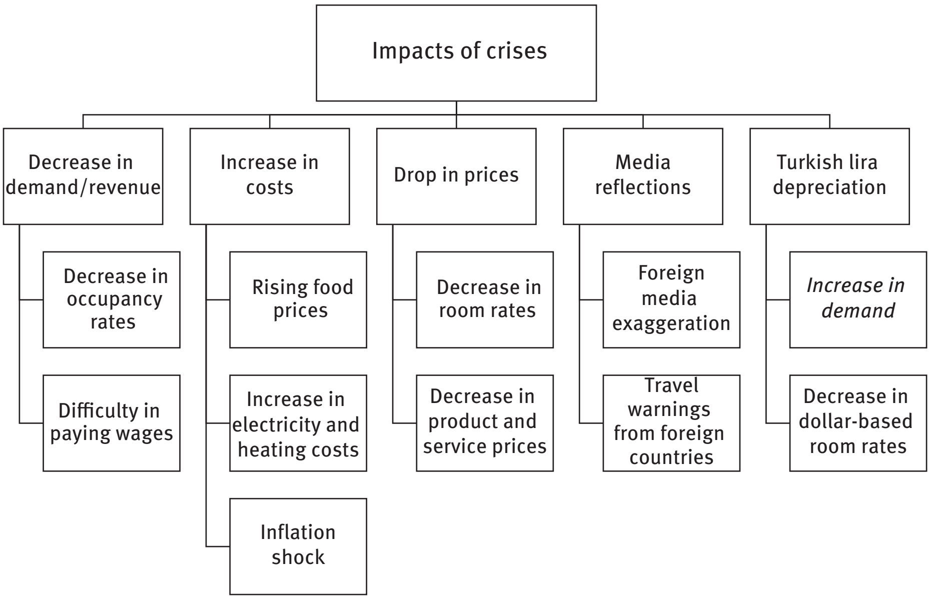

Figure 11.1: Impacts of crises on Denizli hotels.

According to the interviewees, decreased revenues, increased costs, and reduced prices due to lower demand strained the hotels during crises. Hotels relying on the foreign tourism market were more severely affected, particularly after the domestic security crises in Turkey. The country's "insecure image" in foreign media and state travel warnings about Turkey also discouraged arrivals, which in turn reduced occupancy rates:

> At the time of the coup, Japan issued (a travel warning). As far as I know, the Emperor of Japan announced, "do not go to Turkey," (and then) tourists immediately stopped coming.
> [P7, Male, 5*]

In these circumstances, the hotels either delayed or could not pay their employees' wages while several hotels had to suspend operations for a period. Another major issue affecting the hotels during crises was increased costs. In particular, inflation raised prices for products, services, electricity, and gas, which led to financial difficulties:

> Due to the economic situation of the country, all costs increased, such as gas costs, electricity costs, etc. [P4, Male, 3*]

In contrast, the number of foreign tourists increased because the depreciation of the Turkish lira against foreign currencies reduced dollar-based room rates:

> Tourists can get a package tour, which they can normally buy for 50–60 dollars, for 20–30 dollars per day. When you look at our currency situation, these rates are ridiculous for them.
> [P3, Male, 3*]

Coping with crises

Hotels adopted several strategies to cope with and minimize the negative impacts of crises (Figure 11.2). Employee wages constituted the largest cost for hotels whose revenue was declining due to decreased demand. Therefore, hotels first reduced human resource costs to deal with crises, mainly through requiring unpaid or annual leave or dismissal:

> We mostly gave annual leave, but many hotels fell to less than half (the workforce).
> [P6, Male, 3*]

Hotels also tried to cut other costs as soon as the crises began. They closed floors or blocks that were not used during the off-season, reduced the usage of electricity, heating, water, and consumables (e.g., stationery and office supplies), offered fewer or more cost-effective breakfast products, and postponed building maintenance and new investments:

> If there is a crisis, we stop the investment. We leave the investment and just focus on our business. [P10, Female, 5*]

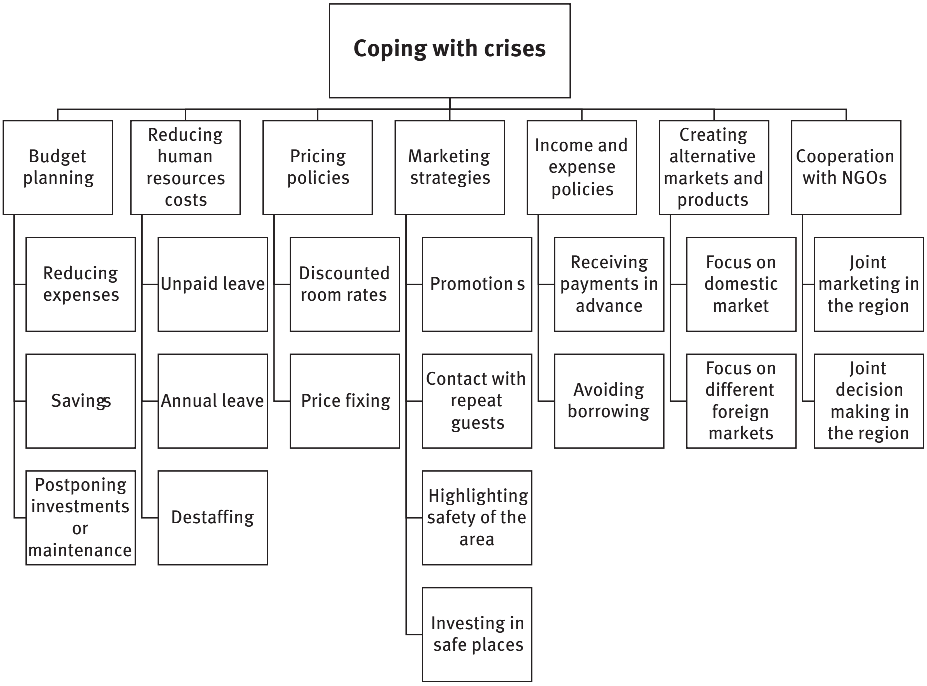

Figure 11.2: Denizli Hotels' crisis coping strategies.

The hotels also implemented new pricing policies and marketing strategies. Given decreasing demand, the discounted product and service prices endeavored to increase sales through participating in meetings and fairs, or conducted advertising and promotional activities, including accommodation campaigns like "Stay 3 nights, pay 2 nights." They also targeted repeat guests and adjusted room rates to undercut their competitors.

During crises, when there is no or decreased demand from foreign tourists due to security issues, enterprises turn to the domestic tourism market. By creating alternative routes or tourism products, Denizli's hotels tried to increase tourist mobility and extend overnight stays. For instance, hotels in the Pamukkale-Karahayıt region conducted joint marketing campaigns for Turkey's domestic market, which successfully attracted more local tourists to the region through the marketing activities under the slogan "Thermal is good for [health]."

Among the new routes and destinations that Turkish travel agencies created for the domestic market was a tour of the Denizli region called the "Pamukkale-Salda Lake-Lavender Gardens" trip. This new route helped Denizli's hotels recover and even attracted foreign tourists. Furthermore, realizing that their target customers were reluctant to travel during any crisis, the hoteliers shifted to alternative markets:

> Security, for sure, affected the Western market. As a result of the death of that market, travel agencies started to look for new markets. The China market has appeared a lot here; the Arab market flowed into the country automatically, due to political proximity, and the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia owing to cheapness. [P6, Male, 3*]

Marketing strategies particularly focused on tourist markets with lower security perceptions by emphasizing the "safety of the region." While there was intense demand before 2015 for Pamukkale, particularly from Europe and Japan, demand from these markets decreased following adverse events in Turkey. Kozak, Crotts, and Law (2007) report that tourists change their travel preferences according to potential risk threats, depending on their risk perceptions. In recent years, European and Japanese tourists to the Pamukkale region have been replaced by travelers from Far Eastern countries, such as Taiwan, Thailand, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Korea, Middle Eastern countries, and, since 2018, South American countries, such as Mexico, Argentina, and Brazil. Finally, European tourists from France and Germany have also begun returning to the region since 2019.

With the return of foreign tourists to the region after each crisis, hotel occupancy rates in Denizli rose by several hundred percent. The hotels took advantage of seeking new markets and shifting to the domestic market, which finally helped the region to overcome the security crisis, at least until the COVID-19 pandemic. This conforms to the recommendation of Israeli and Reichel (2003) that hotels should focus on developing new products and services through marketing activities, target different markets, reduce product and service prices, and offer special deals.

Learning from crises

The knowledge that Denizli hotels gained from crises was multidimensional (Figure 11.3), and mostly based on previous experiences and outcomes from previous crises. First, the hoteliers became more aware of the reality of a constant crisis condition due to the fragile structure of tourism. Moreover, since Turkey is associated with crises due to its geopolitical location, events in nearby geographies can endanger tourism destinations inside Turkey because of the multiplier effect:

> Whenever a political situation is experienced in the world, tourism in our country is also affected. [P7, Male, 5*]

Despite the nature of crisis-related issues, there is a lack of institutional crisis management consciousness in Denizli hotels. The hoteliers acknowledged that it is vital to be prepared for a crisis, yet Turkey's tourism industry cannot take any measures because of a belief that crises are unpredictable. Consequently, hoteliers mostly learn from each crisis rather than being proactive or preventive. However, since there are clear effects of crises, hotels can use the memory of their intuitive reactions to earlier crises as a learning mechanism.

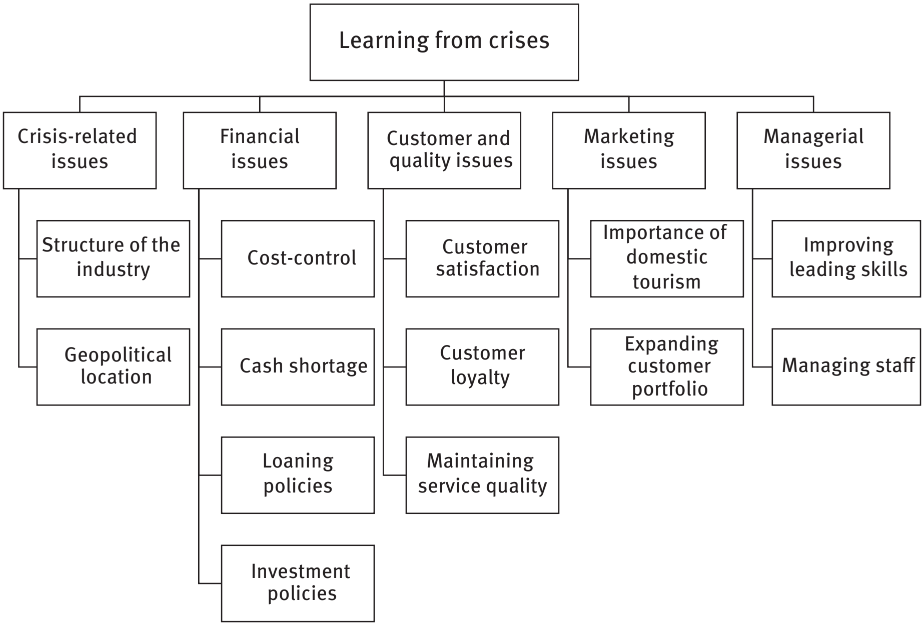

Figure 11.3: Learning from crises.

The main point that hotels learned from previous crises is financial. The interviewees explained that cash shortages experienced during the crisis cause problems since hotels need sufficient cash flow to pay suppliers and employees. They, therefore, agreed that a strong financial structure is needed initially to weather the crisis and minimize damage as they will have difficulty earning income for an indefinite time. In particular, city hotels adopted a cash sale policy with their customers and suppliers during the crisis. A few hotel managers recommended transferring part of the income generated during high seasons to other industries. They assume that the enterprise can survive from the profits from these other industries whenever tourism is impacted during a crisis. This will also help to overcome cash shortages by using the profits from different industries.

The hoteliers also reported preparing themselves for future crises by analyzing other hotels in the region. For instance, hotels operating with credit had suffered most during earlier crises. Thus, they concluded that it is safer to work with the hotel's equity rather than take loans, if possible:

> Hotels that do not have strong funding and work with credit have no chance to survive in crises. [P9, Male, 5*]

In the aftermath of crises, most strategies implemented to cope with the negative outcomes became opportunities for the hotels and ultimately learning outcomes for the hoteliers. In particular, the alternative markets that replaced the dominant foreign tourist market that does not travel during a crisis significantly boosted demand for the region and increased hotel occupancy rates. Similarly, security-related events in Turkey had little or no impact on the domestic tourism market, which helped revive the region after the crisis:

> Since no tourists are coming from the foreign market, we immediately shifted to the domestic market. [P4, Male, 3*]

Along with this shift in tourist markets, the tourist profile visiting Denizli also changed. Due to the depreciation of the Turkish lira against foreign currencies, hoteliers mostly complained that it attracted lower-income foreign tourists. However, they also learned that when the crisis-causing condition is political or security-related, especially foreign tourists with high-security perceptions stop visiting Turkey. Therefore, hotels refocused on repeat guests who were accustomed to the region. Accordingly, they targeted loyal customers during a crisis by emphasizing the region's safety and arranging special campaigns. Finally, because customer satisfaction is crucial, the hotels intend to maintain service quality and satisfy their customers to attract more tourists through word-of-mouth communication:

> Guest comments are good advertisements. If you satisfy the guest, the guests advertise better to their environment. [P2, Male, 4*]

Although it seems to be limited to individual-level learning, another key improvement after crises was new managerial skills to handle a crisis and manage the labor force under challenging conditions:

> You learn to deal with staff in bad times. After that bad time, you learn to get out and continue as before. [P6, Male, 3*]

Since Turkey is familiar with crises, its hotels should be well prepared (Ghaderi et al., 2014) with institutional procedures to cope with crises. However, Denizli's hotels cannot manage crises strategically. Employees in Denizli's hotels change jobs frequently due to the tourism industry's challenging working conditions. This high turnover makes it difficult to establish an organizational culture and spread individual learning to the organizational level. Although the knowledge that experienced employees and executives share from earlier crises allows group learning in these organizations, it is not always enough to change the behavior and structure of the entire organization because organizational learning is a continuous process (Fu, 2017).

Finally, fluctuations in Turkey's general economy can sometimes prevent the hotel industry from being financially cautious, which may explain why Denizli hotels are caught unprepared for crises. In addition, decision-makers in these hotels, whether owners or managers that are unacquainted with tourism and the hotel industry, do not adopt organizational learning as a core belief but act quickly and instinctively.

COVID-19 in Turkey: Impacts on Denizli's hotels

Although the effects on Turkey's tourism industry of economic, political, and security crises had dissipated by the end of 2019, this positive change was suddenly reversed when the COVID-19 pandemic spread across Turkey during 2020. After Turkey's first coronavirus case was detected on March 10, 2020, the government quickly took various measures as the number of cases grew. Regarding tourism, by the end of March, all flights to Turkey had been stopped. In addition, domestic flights were restricted, then certain destinations required travel permission before quarantine regulations were imposed on weekends. Domestic bus companies first had to reduce passenger capacity to 50% before both mass and individual intercity travel was restricted except when essential. The government also introduced curfews for people with chronic diseases and those over 65 or under 20. However, business trips were not banned to enable business life to continue. The government also provided economic support packages for individuals and organizations who had to stop working, became unemployed, or could not leave their homes. Turkey's hotels also benefited from interest rate reductions, credit deferral, or "furlough" (short-term working funds).

The pandemic severely affected most hotels in Denizli as they had to stop their operations. Consequently, they could not maintain their labor force and either gave unpaid leave or dismissed recent recruits. Without foreign tourists, hotels in the Pamukkale-Karahayıt region jointly decided to shut down early in the crisis. City hotels then followed once intercity travel and the transport was restricted. Although one medium-sized hotel continued operations with all its employees, it was unclear how long it would operate due to the uncertain conditions. Hotels that stopped their operations claimed furlough payments from the government's short-time working funds to cover two-thirds of their employees' wages. Finally, although the interviewees predicted that operations would restart within about three months, Pamukkale-Karahayıt hotels have had to abandon the 2020 summer season as well.

Conclusions

Hotels operating in Denizli appear to have accepted and experienced the implementation of organizational learning within the framework of crisis management. The crises during 2015–2016 improved organizational learning in these hotels, most importantly through the measures they implemented to minimize the negative effects of crises. By 2017, when the crisis environment had disappeared, tourist arrivals had returned to pre-crisis levels. The strategies adopted for organizational learning during the crisis enabled these enterprises to overcome the crises.

By covering several crises, this chapter makes a significant contribution to the crisis management and organizational learning literature. Hotels operating in Denizli implemented many crisis management strategies to cope and minimize their losses. However, considering the hotels' methods and levels of organizational learning in terms of the outcome approach (Robey et al., 2000), Denizli's hotels only developed single-loop learning (Argyris & Schön, 1997) from all the crises. That is, their learning process involved only basic strategies to urgently and reflexively respond to each crisis' immediate effects. The hoteliers mainly learned experience-based lessons, as defined by Boin et al. (2005), derived from their coping strategies during each crisis. While these hoteliers interiorized their successful actions for future crises, this knowledge was not institutionalized within their organizations after each crisis. Organizational learning is a dynamic process (Crossan et al., 1999), yet these hoteliers mostly coped intuitively, with an insufficient post-crisis structure, as suggested by Broekema et al. (2017).

The crises had different effects on Denizli's city hotels and tourist hotels. Business travel is fundamentally distinct from leisure travel since business guests do not pay for their travel costs, including flights, accommodation, or food and beverage, as their companies cover such expenses (Rezaei, Shahijan, Valaei, Rahimi & Ismail, 2018). This is probably quite similar to hotels elsewhere in Turkey. Because city hotels concentrate on business tourism, they host domestic guests more. Moreover, business travelers have no choice but to travel to their scheduled destination (Kucukusta, Heung, & Hui, 2014), so organizational learning proceeds differently in this market. In contrast, Pamukkale-Karahayıt hotels mainly host foreign tourists traveling for cultural purposes alongside domestic tourists engaging in thermal tourism on special days and holidays. In short, different types of crises affect different types of tourist groups at different times.

Tourism enterprises have learned that security crises mostly affect foreign tourists whereas economic crises affect the local market regarding organizational learning. Therefore, while city hotels were affected more by the economic crisis, hotels in the Pamukkale-Karahayıt region were affected more by the security crisis. During economic crises, domestic tourists travel less due to reduced purchasing power, although business travel continues. On the other hand, Turkish people with travel plans participate in domestic tourism rather than travel abroad due to the high exchange rates and travel expenses. Therefore, domestic market activities in Turkey have increased over time. Furthermore, the depreciation of the Turkish lira as a result of the economic crisis has increased Turkey's attractiveness and enabled foreign tourists to return. However, as political crises, particularly security crises, affect foreign tourists more, terrorist attacks, the attempted coup, cross-country tensions, and diplomatic crises have severely reduced foreign demand.

Differences in strategies between small hotels and large/chain hotels during and after crises lead to differences in organizational learning. As large/chain hotels have more opportunities, they prioritize promotion and marketing more than small hotels do. Because large hotels have different management units from small hotels, they learn differently from crises. Chain hotels, particularly international chains, are more likely to continue learning from crises and see it as an important component of company development (Alonso-Almedia et al., 2016). During a crisis, large hotels can postpone investments or transfer spending to promotional and marketing activities. In contrast, since small hotels are unlikely to be making new investments, they cannot postpone or transfer such spending to other items, which means they must manage a crisis differently. Organizational learning from crises also depends on the type of hotel (Ghaderi et al., 2014). According to Alonso-Almedia et al. (2016), hotels targeting business customers are more likely to learn from crises than other types of hotels.

Organizational learning improves an enterprise's performance by taking the necessary lessons from each crisis. However, because of urgency, lessons often cannot be institutionalized within the organization during a crisis (Broekema et al., 2017). Instead, organizational learning occurs after the crisis. The organizational learning approach of hotels in Denizli is mostly similar to the "learning from the crisis" type defined by Smith and Elliot (2007). Accumulation of information is vital in crises and this was the first time for Denizli's hotels to learn from crises. Examples of such learning to minimize damage during the crisis include trying to decrease costs, avoiding activities that add costs, and delaying investments. Thus, hotels' success depends on their learning levels, knowledge, and memories. During crises, they implement those practices they consider successful based on organizational memories. However, as tourism can face a crisis at any time, it is essential for hotels to "learn for a crisis."

An important finding from this study is that Denizli's hotels are not proactive, with neither preparations nor strategies for potential crises. It is therefore unclear whether they can improve their organizational memory as the interviewed hoteliers mostly referred to individual learning from crises. It is uncertain if they can transmit and socialize their knowledge within organizational groups so that their experiences become a consistent organizational principle. As Ghaderi et al. (2014) note, the vast majority of tourism organizations in Malaysia lack written crisis management plans or emergency plans. However, as the sudden COVID-19 pandemic shows us, without a strategic approach, most hotels are more seriously affected by crises.

An organization's ability to use knowledge strongly depends on widely adopting organizational learning processes, particularly for developing crisis management plans (Antunes & Pinherio, 2020). However, most hotels obtain knowledge through trial-and-error experimentation or adopt makeshift crisis management policies. Çiftçi et al. (2017) address the necessity of crisis management plans for hotels. While preparing these plans, managers must consider each potential crisis' specific causes and solutions while preparing the plan in line with the lessons learned from previous crises. Similarly, this study suggests that hotels should take essential lessons from previous crises to prepare for the future to overcome crises with the least damage. Hotels should involve their labor force while developing such an emergency plan. Each employee, whether low or high level, should play a role in managing a crisis to enhance group learning and establish an organizational culture. This will establish an organizational learning mechanism that functions independently from individuals. In conclusion, every hotel should have the policy to respond to potential crises with strategies emphasizing that crises first endanger the hotel's financing structure.

Beyond the present study, longitudinal research would help understand the dynamics of organizational learning in the hotel industry. After the COVID-19 pandemic reached Turkey in March 2020, hotels had to suspend their activities, so the sample for this study could not be increased. Instead, this chapter only evaluated some limited and immediate impacts of the pandemic on hotels. Further studies are needed to understand and measure its deeper impacts.

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12 Revisiting tourism crisis management practice: Learning from COVID-19 in Spain

Introduction

Since the publication of the seminal work by Faulkner (2001), various models have studied how to deal with crises (Heath, 1998; Ritchie, 2004; Wilks & Moore, 2004). There has been ample consensus regarding approaching crisis management from a strategic perspective, emphasizing crisis preparation and planning (Burnett, 1998; Paraskevas & Arendell, 2007) with a proactive/anticipatory focus. Indeed, crises are often unpredictable when it comes to where, when, and how they occur, but it is no less true that planning lays the foundation for a faster, coordinated, and effective response (Fink, 2002). The interest in providing more elements of strategic content is aimed at providing crises managers with a higher responsiveness capacity (Rodríguez-Toubes & Fraiz Brea, 2012), although, as stated by Ritchie and Jiang (2019, p. 2), "existing tourism crisis and disaster frameworks have not been suitably tested despite their long existence."

Among them, perhaps the most intuitive one is the 4Rs model by Wilks and Moore (2004), which incorporates the phases of reduction, readiness, response, and recovery with actions such as policies for monitoring and surveillance, planning, procedures for emergency responses, communication and audits (Jordana, Frieta, & Agbaba, 2020).

Organizations located in tourism destinations that have suffered previous crises have accumulated experiences that should help them to cope with future crises. As long as a process of suitable learning has taken place, they can nurture the knowledge base necessary for the development of the above-mentioned phases.

In this line, this chapter analyses the extent to which the models used up to now, particularly Faulkner's model, are applicable, bearing in mind the peculiarities to be considered and the variables to be introduced from the perspective of organizational learning. Specifically, three elements are studied: 1) the identification of the potential risk factors (risk scenarios and impacts); 2) the indicators or alarm signals and their monitoring; and 3) the preparation to respond to an unprecedented crisis that has cut off tourism activity worldwide.

This study has focuses on Spain and the COVID-19 pandemic. The importance of tourism in this country is outstanding, and the sector has significant experience in crisis management in areas such as terrorism, crime, and disasters, such as fires and oil spills. However, unlike other countries in Asia, Africa, and South America, the impact of epidemics is rare and until now has hardly been deemed a risk factor. Despite being one of the most affected countries in the world, the aim of this work is not focused on showing the situation of the tourism sector in Spain as a result of the crisis

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caused by the new coronavirus disease. Rather, the focus is on developing conceptual proposals about crisis management in a context in which a revisitation of the established models is required.

Viruses, pandemics, and tourism

The SARS-CoV2 virus's impact on tourism is unparalleled, being Spain one of the most affected countries worldwide in terms of its population (the updated number of confirmed cases, deaths, and other indicators can be consulted at https://coronavirus.jhu.edu/map.html or https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/). It is not the first time that a virus has affected society and, by extension, the tourism sector. In the first 20 years of the 21st century, different types of viruses–Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS-CoV), Swine Flu or Influenza A (H1N1), Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS-CoV), Ébola, Zika–have been responsible for a large number of deaths. They have fundamentally affected countries in Asia, South America, and Africa.

The aforementioned epidemics initially caused sanitary problems in addition to having social and economic repercussions that affected the tourism sector and changed the behavior of international travel. Numerous academic papers and specialized journals have dealt with this matter (Irvine & Anderson, 2005; Johnson Tew, Lu, Tolomiczenko, & Gellatly, 2008; Joo et al., 2019; McKercher & Chon, 2004; Pine & McKercher, 2004). The analysis of the management of the crisis caused by these disasters in the various territories represents a key source of information for an accurate and realistic interpretation of the strategies to be developed to drive the recovery of the sector. For example, the SARS crisis in 2003 evidenced the lack of experience and coordination of governments in managing this type of transnational health crisis, with an initial lack of response, late overreaction, and strong exposure and media attraction (McKercher & Chon, 2004).

The current situation in many Western (particularly European) countries seems to replicate that crisis but on much greater magnitudes. A lesson learned was the need for international collaboration and coordination among the ministries of tourism to develop effective responses. It became clear that initiatives promoting common strategies, together with agreements for cross-border movements, reduce the level of uncertainty for operators and offer an image of confidence and security to travelers.

Experience and learning in the Spanish tourism sector

Tourism is one of the pillars of the Spanish economy, which in 2018 contributed 147,946 million euros, 12.3% of GDP, and 2.62 million jobs, which represented 12.7% of total employment (National Institute of Statistics, 2019). The COVID-19 pandemic has impacted the tourism industry with particular severity. Tens of thousands of businesses of the various subsectors (transport, accommodation, catering, leisure, and entertainment) were forced to stop their activities for several months, with catastrophic impacts expected in the short and medium terms after a slow-paced and uncertain recovery. Besides, the cross-cutting nature of the tourism industry means that other related sectors are also suffering harshly from the pandemic impact.

In Spain, the tourism sector has already faced stressful situations caused by unforeseen events in the past. Many companies and other organizations have had to deal with other crises apart from the last financial crisis that started in 2008, although these crises lacked the characteristics of the current one. The main ones have been caused by fires, spills in coastal areas, terrorism or floods (Rodríguez-Toubes, 2010; Rodríguez-Toubes & Fraiz Brea, 2011; Toubes, Gössling, Hall, & Scott, 2017). The effects of climate change also present a threat to tourist destinations; in more vulnerable territories, they are already being noticed.

Organizational learning in crisis management

Organizational learning in the tourism domain has been quite neglected, and few managers have established mechanisms to develop in-depth learning as a result of crisis management (Deverell, 2009; Ghaderi, Som, & Wang, 2014; Smith & Elliott, 2007). In addition, in this area, there are barriers to the learning process, many of which are associated with the organizational culture, rigidities, and ineffective communications (Smith & Elliott, 2007).

Two main workstreams connect learning and crises. One refers to building resilience (Weick & Sutcliffe, 2001), whereas the other concerns learning as part of crisis preparedness (Carmeli & Schaubroeck, 2008; Mitroff, Pauchant, & Shrivastava, 2006). Both perspectives adopt a fundamentally cognitive approach to learning, that is, the relationship between crises and learning is based on the assumption that a better understanding of the causes of crises and the opportunity to learn from them can prevent their recurrence in the future (Antonacopoulou & Sheaffer, 2014). However, practice is the key: crisis management capacity is developed with the training provided by the succession of recurring exercises (van Laere & Lindblom, 2019). It is essential to understand the learning that takes place during a crisis. In this sense, the learning in crisis approach (Antonacopoulou & Sheaffer, 2014) focuses on the learning practices and practical judgments that inform how daily operations are performed.

The categorization of organizational learning that has probably had the most influence is the one developed by Argyris and Schön (1996), which distinguishes between single-loop and double-loop learning. Single-loop learning is achieved when members of the organization detect and correct the defects identified in it without inquiring into its premises and basic rules. However, in times of drastic changes, scrutiny should be undertaken to question the status quo of the organization. These double-loop learning investigations can conclude the need to carry out a restructuring of strategies and organizational assumptions, discarding old ways of doing (objectives, rules, and working procedures) and adopting new ones. Even triple-loop learning has been mentioned; this refers to a company's ability to learn how to learn.

Operationalizing and measuring these concepts is not easy. To do so, the identification of specific indicators of learning and their relationship to organizational performance is needed (Goh, Elliott, & Quon, 2012). In this work, an approach at the conceptual level is carried out, taking as a reference frame the panorama that the degree of understanding and data availability make up in a given domain, as presented in Table 12.1.

Table 12.1: In search of knowledge – how competent and conscious we are.

	Understanding	**Lack of understanding**
Data availability	Known knowns 1 I know what I know	Known unknowns 3 I know what I don't know
Data unavailability	Unknown knowns 2 I don't know what I know	Unknown unknowns 4 I don't know what I don't know

Source: Authors.

Any organization will aspire to increase its space of understanding and data availability. In this case, we relate organizations' learning to the three elements of crisis management practice that need to be updated: risk factors, warning signs, and experience.

There is a high level of uncertainty in the potential risk factors and related indicators or warning signals: we know what can happen, but we don't know the corresponding intensity, the probability, and when it will happen (known unknowns – Position 3 in the matrix). However, experience has also been incorporated into the organization and should be used, although sometimes it represents pieces of the knowledge that we have and that we are not aware we have (unknown knowns – Position 2 in the matrix). In addition to these two categories (Fortis, Maon, Frooman, & Reiner, 2018), Position 1 in the matrix is attributable to organizations that have been able to make explicit the tacit knowledge accumulated in previous crises. This knowledge is accessible and capable of being shared; in other words, learning is passed from people to the organization, unlike in Position 2. Unfortunately, the cases of zero organizational learning from serious crises are not anecdotal (Vargas-Sánchez, 2018); thus, Position 4 is the most dangerous of all and can easily lead to baseless and reckless decisions.

An understanding of organizational learning in its different aspects can help answer three questions that organizations are currently facing in the new scenario created by the COVID-19 crisis:

a) How can the organization better diagnose potential risk factors?
b) How can the organization more accurately identify and monitor warning signs?
c) How can the organization better prepare for the future?

In the following sections, we review how these questions can affect the models that usually serve as a guide for crisis management in tourism. Specifically, the analysis is carried out based on Faulkner's model, recognized by Ritchie (2004) as the first tourism disaster management framework. The first two issues are related to risk assessment and are therefore included in the first phase of that model (Pre-event). The third question is related to the experience and knowledge transfer in the organization, so we understand that it has a strong link to the review phase of the disaster contingency plans.

Mitroff (2006) proposes five crisis management mechanisms: signal detection, preparation/prevention, containment/damage limitation, recovery, and learning. Signal detection and preparation/prevention are proactive types of crisis management, and these are the mechanisms or phases, that we will focus on in this section. The learning phase points to the interactive aspect of crisis management. It can arise either as part of a crisis management plan in the absence of crisis or as a result of the experience of the crisis (Elsubbaugh, Fildes & Rose, 2004). The other two phases, containment/damage limitation, and recovery are reactive activities carried out after a crisis has happened. A proper analysis of these two phases would require time to assimilate the effects of the current crisis. The containment/damage phase is aimed at limiting the damage to an area, restricting the crisis, or encapsulating it in a territory, which is very difficult to achieve effectively during a crisis. The recovery phase requires a minimum service plan and procedures for carrying it out, designating those who will be responsible, and providing the necessary resources to be used in the recovery period (Pearson & Mitroff, 1993).

Identification of risk factors

The assessment of potential disasters and their probability of occurrence are among the principal ingredients of the disaster management strategies included in Faulkner's model. To encourage proactive crisis management, Vargas-Sanchez (2018) proposes, first, the correct identification of potential risk factors that could cause a crisis in the tourism sector, which requires performing a prioritization of such factors, taking into account their levels of impact and the urgency in the response they require. In the same vein, Robertson, Kean, Moore Gurtner, Holcombe, and Wilks (2006) propose a preliminary analysis aimed at identifying the main sources of risk for tourism operators and organizations. This involves the study of likelihood and the consequences of risk factors by building a matrix of qualitative analysis that combines impacts and the level of probability. Once the sources of risk have been identified, it is necessary to improve the understanding of the level of threat and its expected outcomes so that organizations can decide what the main challenges, to be addressed with priority, are.

Burnett (1998) classifies the typology of crises according to four variables: the threat level (low versus high), response options (many versus few), time pressure (intense versus minimal), and degree of control (low versus high). An organization is faced with the highest degree of potential crisis when time pressure is intense, the degree of control is low, the threat level is high and the response options are limited (we could say that this has been the case of the pandemic caused by the SARS-CoV 2). This classification allows the diagnosis of complex situations in a simplified manner, unifying in a single tool the set of challenges or threats that should be addressed, providing a basis for the establishment of priorities, helping with the deployment of administrative and financial resources, and easing the implementation of strategic planning (Burnett, 1998).

Senior managers can make better diagnoses of potential risk factors by asking stakeholders to identify the most important challenges to achieve the organizational objectives and discussing collectively possible avenues to face them (Burnett, 1998). In this sense, relating both the probability of risk and the magnitude of the impact with the mission and objectives of the organization contributes to dimensioning the existing degree of threat. This approach, which helps with fostering a culture of engagement, is a key element of organizational double-loop learning and facilitates the organization's adaptation to an environment of constant change.

In fact, in the past, the risk that epidemics have posed for tourism could be deemed high in certain zones of Asia, Africa, and South America; however, the probability of impact caused by a pandemic was exceptional in Spain. The new scenario puts this risk factor in the range of possible and even probable ones in the future, with very severe potential consequences as we have seen. In this assessment, the risk for the tourism industry as a whole is considered. Taking as a reference what happened on October 6, 2014, with the Ebola virus, a massive contagion would have had dramatic consequences for tourism in Spain; however, the local infection of a single person (a nurse who cared for an infected repatriated person) had a small effect in the short term: for example, the listing of the Iberia airline fell 8.3% in 10 days but recovered its value in just over one month.

Early warning signals

Although Faulkner (2001, p. 145) specifically notes that "systems for communicating warnings are also important," however, he does not provide in his model objective indicators or clear identification of the parameters to be established. Even though early warning signals are often unclear, systems that provide alerts and information related to the current pandemic in Spain have shown their limitations. There was no early detection in February when the first clear signs were already being given in Asian countries. Until February 25th, the detection protocol was applied only to travelers from Wuhan (China), and when its application was expanded, the surveillance systems were overwhelmed. There were changes in the criteria in the information systems, both in the format and in the accounting of data. This caused the series to be interrupted, which made reusing them difficult (Llaneras, 2020). These erratic and confusing figures, even for scientists, have prevented from following the historical track of the pandemic, which has created uncertainties in citizens and managers of public administrations (Dombey & Burn-Murdoch, 2020).

Some leaders and media claim that the COVID-19 crisis was unexpected and surprised everyone without sufficient preparation. In this regard, the Spanish Institute for Strategic Studies, of the Ministry of Defense, had been warning in various reports about the risk of pandemics' proliferation in the short and medium terms. This was highlighted, for example, in the document "Panorama of Geopolitical Trends. Horizon 2040," issued in December 2018, and in a more recent one dated in February 2020, entitled "Pandemic Emergencies in a Globalized World: Security Threats." In the latter, it is stated that "population movements due to voluntary or forced migrations as a consequence of armed conflicts, or caused by tourism, are more intense than ever, with the potential transport of pathogens" (p. 12). Likewise, in the document "National Security Strategy 2017," the following paragraph can be found: "Spain, a country that receives more than 75 million tourists a year [a volume that continued to grow in subsequent years], with ports and airports that are among the busiest in the world, a climate that increasingly favors the spread of disease vectors, with an aging population and a polarized geopolitical situation, is not without threats and challenges associated with both natural and intentional infectious diseases" (p. 74). There was therefore a basis for taking this threat seriously and for having at least started the preparation for it with some contingency plan (a plan in which the tourism sector should be an active part) without leaving it to the adventure of improvisation.

In this area, as a consequence, the tourism industry needs to be proactive to threats of this nature and needs to promote an organizational culture with the ability to incorporate new knowledge, work processes, and warning systems that better anticipate these risks (Goh, Quon, & Cousins, 2007). Nevertheless, it is clear that tourism operators cannot deal with this kind of risk on their own, but in close collaboration with public authorities.

Within the unavoidable uncertainty, some indicators that have functioned as alarm signals have been, among others, the behavior of stock prices; the decisions made by major tour operators and multinationals; and travel recommendations for and restrictions on the main tourist-sending and tourist-receiving countries, respectively.

As for the stock quotes, on February 3rd, the Shanghai Stock Exchange fell 7.7%, the biggest drop in five years. Variations in prices of this magnitude in countries of the size and influence of China anticipate declines (or crises) in other countries of the world, with repercussions at the economic and social levels.

Tour operators and multinationals, considering their privileged strategic positions when it comes to monitoring and evaluating changes in the market, act as agents or risk brokers (Cavlek, 2002). For instance, a significant number of large multinationals announced their resignation to participate in the Mobile World Congress scheduled in Barcelona from February 24th–27th, 2020, due to the risk associated with COVID-19 (LG on February 4th, Amazon on February 8th). This occurred when there were five cases diagnosed in Spain (only one on the peninsula). Apart from humanitarian factors, these companies consider the financial responsibility risk that they must assume in the event of the contagion (or death) of their employees, and they also consider that they could be accused of misbehavior and recklessness.

Finally, the impact of the attitudes of some governments in countries with high tourist numbers could also provide a clue regarding how events could evolve. Thus, on February 2nd, 2020, the US government proclaimed a ban on entry into the country of foreigners who had traveled to China within the past 14 days.

The three indicators mentioned above, known publicly in early February, served as early warnings and gave governments and organizations in the tourism sector important information for making decisions within a certain time margin. However, these indicators were not addressed or interpreted in due form. Given the high rate of contagion, taking measures in advance, even if only for a few days, is the difference between a small and controllable number of infections and a huge and uncontrollable number of infected people, with the latter having the potential to tarnish the image of a destination.

Preparing for the future

Single-loop managerial responses, which focus on identifying and correcting organizational defects, “need to be supplemented by a more fundamental, double-loop response which challenges our traditional beliefs about the nature and objectives of strategic management” (Richardson, 1994, p. 78). Double-loop learning is presented as a new form of knowledge in which there is a paradigm shift in how to organize and manage the strategy of the organizations involved in the crisis (Richardson, 1994).

After a crisis, it is necessary to open a period of reflection and feedback in companies and other organizations to integrate what has been learned. This point is particularly pertinent about the longer-term disaster preparedness of a destination (Faulkner, 2001, p. 146). However, there are antecedents of crises in which there was not a period of constructive dialogue and reflection, but the opposite instead. For example, during the foot and mouth disease crisis that affected the UK in 2001, deep divisions were generated within the territory that led to the worsening of relations between rural and urban areas (Miller & Ritchie, 2003).

The integration and transfer of knowledge gained from experience are key dimensions of organizational learning. In this field, we can identify two types of actions that would allow the company to be better prepared for an uncertain future and to enrich the review phase of the tourism disaster management planning process presented by Faulkner (2001):

- Knowledge transfer at the firm level, to avoid information silos and integrate past experiences into the stock of knowledge that can be shared with its members (Jerez-Gómez et al., 2005; Goh et al., 2007).
- Establishment of systems of networking to enable and ease learning from the knowledge and experience of other organizations, that is, systems that allow learning from successful practices at other organizations (Goh et al., 2007). The tourism sector consists mostly of Small and Medium-sized Enterprises (SMEs), so its resilience is based on a complex set of networks (Scott & Laws, 2005).

The protagonists of a crisis are the best placed to reflect on the circumstances and errors that caused the problems and to introduce a shift in its approach. The process of reflection on the experience of a crisis should lead to proposing a solution; if it is finally implemented, the proposed solution leads to a new experience and a new round of solutions (Kolb, 1984). This double-loop learning requires a paradigm shift so that, as a result of experience, the emergence of new knowledge occurs, and ultimately, a new understanding is derived. This approach connects with the idea of the knowledge-creating company proposed by Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995), with their model of knowledge types (tacit and explicit) and stages (socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization).

From crisis management to resilience management?

Although the importance of a proactive approach in crisis management has been widely addressed (Ritchie & Jiang, 2019), new disaster scenarios have led to the need to improve risk assessment protocols and the establishment of early warning signals. Instant access to global information allows us to know events and impacts in real-time from anywhere in the world. Globalization has made it economically worthwhile to monitor crises that come from contexts outside the organization and happen with little or no warning (de Sausmarez, 2007). The indicators presented in this work have the capacity to enhancing the potential effectiveness of crisis management strategies, especially at the pre-event and resolution phases (Blackman & Ritchie, 2008).

Although organizational learning is referred to in Faulkner's model, in our opinion greater focus on knowledge management could improve disaster plans and responses. Tourism products are predominantly immaterial and often depend on perceptions, making the nature of markets, services, and operations in this sector more susceptible to a crisis (United Nations International Strategy for Disaster Reduction [UNISDR], 2015). However, the reconstruction of immateriality is possible even in times of non-activity. Precisely, one strategy for gaining resilience is to cultivate the intangible (reputation, talent, image).

The concept of resilience offers a broader perspective of crisis management to understand how the systems face various levels of adversity (Hall, 2010; Hall, Prayag, & Amore, 2017; Lew, 2014; Prayag, 2018). Resilience refers to the ability to respond to changes (Holling, 1973) and includes learning on the part of individuals, businesses, governments, and other stakeholders after an unforeseen event. Learning enables systems to respond, recover and adapt successfully to new conditions (Cutter, 2016). This is a fundamentally endogenous process that favors the high level of internal self-organization that, in turn, presents resilient systems (Prayag, 2018; Walker, Hollin, Carpenter, & Kinzig, 2004).

Therefore, organizational learning is essential for facilitating the change to new scenarios, and consequently, the disaster management practice should evolve and be strengthened by incorporating this perspective of resilience. A tourism economy as powerful as the Spanish one has revealed the need to increase its resilience through a more diversified client base and a more flexible administrative-legal framework. The complexity of the challenge that companies and destinations must manage requires endogenizing the factors of the environment, assuming that solutions are contingent, as they cannot be isolated from the specific characteristics of such an environment.

Conclusion

What happened in Spain cannot be understood if particularities such as the political-administrative landscape of the State (highly decentralized at the regional level, in the so-called autonomous communities), as well as the representation and weight of the tourism sector in dialogues with public administrations and other social agents, are omitted. The first feature has shown advantages (easier adaptation to local circumstances) and disadvantages (political disputes, remarkable difficulties of coordination, and citizens' confusion). The second one has shown to be insufficient for lobbying more effectively.

Within this landscape, in August 2020, the highest hotel occupancy rates were in the northern communities, the so-called "Green Spain," closely linked to rural and nature tourism; 70.6% in Cantabria and 68.2% in Asturias (INE, 2020). In the traditional international tourist destinations, the drop in overnight stays in August compared to 2019 was drastic: 85.6% in the Balearic Islands, 79.9% in the Canary Islands, and 88.1% in Catalonia. The virus unevenly affected the autonomous communities, and some of them decided to disassociate their image from that of Spain – as a destination especially affected by the pandemic – by launching their own tourism brand campaign, in addition to the centralized one. Particularly revealing of the lack of coordination has been the process of creating tourist safety seals during the crisis. In May, the Institute for Spanish Tourism Quality (ICTE) launched the "Safe Tourism Certified" in conjunction with business associations from the tourism subsectors and the Spanish Federation of Municipalities and Provinces (FEMP). Later on, several autonomous communities issued their own "safe tourism" or "trust tourism" certifications, and various initiatives were also developed at the local level. Social agents, such as the Spanish Confederation of Hotels and Tourist Accommodation (CEHAT), obtained their own certifications and, finally, at the end of June, the central government's Secretary of State for Tourism launched the emblem "Responsible Tourism." Another example is the launching of holiday voucher schemes in various regions to stimulate tourism activity in their communities, with a lack of coordination at the State level.

This crisis has reinforced the importance of coordination and centralization of data for efficient decentralized management. These factors are variables to introduce and watch in any model aimed at intervening in the management of this type of situation. The vulnerability of individuals (as consumers of tourism services) and companies (as providers of such services) to the impact of the crises can be mitigated by implementing management strategies and strengthening organizational resilience. Organizational learning allows for establishing the necessary channels for this transformation and for planning more robust (resilient) scenarios for future pandemics. For tourism firms, the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic is a propitious context for implementing learning tools and adopting strategic approaches (Shaw, Hall, Edwards, & Baker, 2007) that promote changes in their business models and basic organizational assumptions (double-loop learning). Some learning tools in the context of the pandemic could include: (i) contingency planning to retain the knowledge and skills of staff in key roles, for example, by providing incentives and rewards for innovative and useful ideas; (ii) building an open and supportive working environment, e. g. encouraging employees to express their opinions, make suggestions or question the way things are done; (iii) encouraging teamwork, knowledge sharing about each other's roles, and networking between departments and teams (Goh et al., 2012).

In the context of the Spanish tourism industry, the profound changes expected require openness to new ideas and contributions stimulated by a governance approach that reinforces its bottom-up dimension and the links between public/private actors and knowledge agents. This is a central idea for double-loop learning, which requires a climate of openness that welcomes the arrival of new ideas and points of view, both from internal and external stakeholders. Openness to new ideas allows the constant renewal, expansion, and improvement of knowledge, encourages experimentation, and involves finding new ways to do the job and freedom to take risks (Jerez-Gómez et al., 2005).

The new scenario is an opportunity to target measures aimed at facilitating the recovery of tourism via a solution of optimization, instead of maximization. That is, the target is not focusing exclusively on increased tourist arrivals, but to integrate the diverse stakeholders, particularly the local community, into tourism development (Gössling, Scott, & Hall, 2021; Gössling et al., 2016), in line with the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations' 2030 Agenda. It is time to articulate a recovery that takes into account new ways of understanding travel and tourism, as well as to investigate the possibility of transformation towards the regenerative paradigm (Ateljevic, 2020). According to this paradigm, post-pandemic tourism must be more equitable. This commitment to equity consists of making specific changes in decisions and practices that question the consumerist model that has contributed to the massive growth of tourism and, instead, benefits a system that promotes sustainable and equitable growth (Benjamin, Dillette, & Alderman, 2020). In short, the paradigm of regenerative tourism articulates recovery with a new sustainable and inclusive perspective on travel and tourism.

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13 Crisis communication and organizational learning: A case study of the 2010 New York city bed bug crisis

Introduction

Tourism and hospitality organizations are vulnerable to crises, ranging from natural disasters such as hurricanes and earthquakes, terrorist attacks to health epidemics such as the COVID-19 outbreak. The onset of a crisis can disrupt the regular operation of tourism and hospitality organizations, post threats to the safety and well-being of tourists, employees, and residents, as well as lead to service failures, financial loss, and reputational damages. Managing a tourism crisis requires organizational efforts covering different phases, such as pre-crisis, during the crisis, and post-crisis. Crisis communication lies at the center of tourism crisis management models (Liu et al., 2015; Mair et al., 2016). Crisis response, which refers to how organizations react after a crisis occurs, is particularly important in crisis communication (Coombs, 2007; Hall, 2010). These measures are highly visible, which affects the public's evaluation of the organization and is essential in recovering marketing (Coombs, 2013).

Organizational learning is an important function that usually takes place at the post-crisis stage but has been largely overlooked in hospitality and tourism studies (Antonacopoulou & Sheaffer, 2014; Wang, 2008; Liu-Lastres et al., 2020). Popova-Nowak and Cseh (2015, p. 300) define organizational learning as "a learning process within organizations that involves the interaction of multiple levels of analysis (individual, group, organizational, and inter-organizational)." Organizational learning and crisis management are highly intertwined. Crises oftentimes act as environmental factors that can trigger organizational learning (Fiol & Lyles, 1985). As Faulkner (2001, p. 137) points out, "crisis and disasters have transformational connotations, with each such event having potential positive (e.g., a stimulus to innovation, recognition of new market), as well as negative outcomes". Therefore, crisis management offers tourism and hospitality organizations a unique opportunity to apply the learning-in-practice philosophy, which is not only consistent with the traditional approaches of organizational learning (i.e., single-, double-loop learning) but also allows additional knowledge to be generated in management efforts (Antonacopoulou & Sheaffer, 2014; Popova-Nowak & Cseh, 2015).

The purpose of the current study was to provide insights into organizational learning and crisis management based on an empirical evaluation of hospitality and tourism organizations' crisis communication efforts. This study emphasized improving crisis response practices through organizational learning. Additionally, social media is becoming one of the primary channels for tourism and hospitality organizations to

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respond to people's concerns on alarming issues (Liu et al., 2015). Thus, focusing on New York City hotels' crisis responses on social media regarding the 2010 bed bug epidemic, this study examined hotels' response behavior, analyzed the content of managerial responses, and compared their practices with theoretical guidelines. The findings of this study provide insights into organizational learning in terms of how to develop theory-driven crisis responses, which is essential and should be embedded in future crisis management planning and practices.

The 2010 bed bug crisis in New York city

This study focused on the bed bug crisis in New York City (NYC), paying specific attention to the lodging industry. NYC is a desired destination in the United States with the country's third-largest hotel market. The Internet has developed into an important distribution channel for NYC hotels; between 2012 and 2016, the number of rooms available online has increased by 22% (Office of New York State, 2017). Dependency on the Internet has expanded, making it worthwhile and necessary for hotels to continue a positive presence online, pursuing communication with tourists. The presence of the Internet (e.g., websites, online travel agencies, social media) as a primary source of information is crucial for crisis communication to tourists as well as a powerful tool to mobilize relief efforts and accelerate service recovery during crisis times (Liu et al., 2015). Hotel rooms are one of the most frequent locations reported for bed bug encounters; in 2010, the highest level of infestation in NYC was recorded at 13,140-bed bug-related complaints, with over 700 confirmed cases (Liu-Lastres et al., 2020). The number of bed bug complaints and violations declined three years later in 2013, permitting the city to return to normalcy. However, numerous significant adverse effects, including economic losses, liability issues, guest complaints, and bad publicity, occurred following the bed bug encounters.

Furthermore, 11% of US hotel room reviews on TripAdvisor in 2010 protested the bed bug infestation negatively affecting their reputations via eWOM. The alarming number of negative reviews had devastating aftermath for NYC hotels as bed bug infestations were closely associated with them by the public and citizen journalism (Liu et al., 2015). Out of this hotel tragedy came the opportunity of growth and knowledge for crisis management, communication skills, enhancement of organizations, and crisis coping methods (Paraskevas & Quek, 2019). Crisis communication regarding emerging health issues, analyzed by hotels' responses to social media, visibly shows the implications of understanding the industry's crisis communication practices. Thus, evaluating relevant practices offers significant implications for creating, retaining, and transferring knowledge within the industry.

Organizational learning and crisis communication in tourism and hospitality

Early definitions of organizational learning are mainly about error detection and correction. Contemporary scholars suggest that organizational learning is about how organizations "build, supplement, and organize knowledge and routines around their activities and within their cultures and adapt and develop organizational efficiency by improving the use of the broad skills of their workforces" (Dodgson, 1993, p.377). Organizational learning can be achieved through various levels, such as individual learning, group learning, organizational/business learning (i.e., leadership), and inter-organizational learnings (Popova-Nowak & Cseh, 2015). At a practical level, organizational learning can be accomplished through learning from previous experiences, new knowledge, organizational change, and problem-solving (Antonacopoulou & Sheaffer, 2014; Wang, 2008).

Without proper management, the onset of an unforeseen incident (i.e., natural disaster, health epidemic, terrorist attack) can directly transfer into an organizational crisis for most tourism and hospitality organizations. Managing a tourism crisis requires multiple steps, including risk reduction, increasing readiness, providing effective crisis response, and accelerating crisis recovery (Liu et al., 2015). Among all these steps, crisis response occupies the central position (Coombs, 2007, 2013; Dobson, 2008). The response phase, which typically occurs during a crisis, involves internal communication and external communication. Internal communication deals with two aspects: (1) communication among the staff on the property and (2) communication with guests. External communication mainly involves how hotels respond to this issue in the eyes of the public. Crisis responses reflect how hotel properties handle negative incidents and determine how the public thinks about the situation, the hotel, and even the destination (Coombs, 2007; Liu-Lastres et al., 2020).

Another important stage of tourism crisis management is recovery, which refers to the phase where hotels bounce back from the negative impacts brought by a crisis event. This is also the critical stage for organizational learning in terms of creating strategic and effective crisis responses and enhancing management efforts. Several studies in the past have underscored the capability of crisis events serving as turning points for tourism and hospitality business, as many organizations are allowed to review their crisis management experiences, learn from their lessons, and optimize their management procedures for the future (Blackman & Ritchie, 2008; Ghaderi et al., 2014; Popova-Nowak & Cseh, 2015). Additionally, although it is widely recognized that organizational learning is essential in improving organizational performance, Ali et al. (2020) notice a lack of empirical investigations in the context of hospitality and tourism. Similarly, very few studies have connected organizational learning with crisis communication and offer theory-driven empirical suggestions for improving organizations' ability to effectively responding to various crises through organizational learning.

Situational crisis communication theory

This study is guided by the Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT), one of the most universally used theories within crisis communication research (Kim et al., 2009). The SCCT is directed at providing instructions, based on an attribution approach and a situational approach, for organizations to establish effective crisis responses (Coombs, 2007). The attribution approach is concerned with how individuals explain the behavior and events from a casual judgment. In contrast, the situational approach indicates a crisis response ought to consistently match the crisis situation and considers situational factors (Coombs, 2007). It is anticipated that these messages can assist organizations in protecting their reputations assets in addition to achieving other desirable outcomes from the communication process following the outbreak of a crisis (Coombs, 2013).

Additionally, the SCCT has identified three types of crises: 1) the victim cluster, 2) the accidental cluster, and 3) the preventable cluster. The victim cluster refers to an organization with the slightest responsibility for a crisis unrelated to a previous crisis. The accidental cluster refers to an organization that holds moderate responsibility for a crisis and a smattering of previous related crises. The preventable cluster refers to an organization that is predominantly responsible for the crisis. Each crisis circumstance should be handled by distinct response strategies.

Likewise, the SCCT proposed sundry guidelines complementary with crisis response; as shown in Table 13.1, the SCCT suggests that an effective crisis response should include three types of information: 1) instructing information, involving safety information for the public, 2) adjusting information, addressing the facts and sympathetic information, and 3) reputational management, protecting an organization and their connection with the public.

Secondly, reputational management, as shown in Table 13.1, covers four types of strategies: 1) denial, separating the crisis from an organization, 2) diminishing, separating an organization from the crisis, 3) rebuilding, enhancing an organization's image, and 4) bolstering, promote an organization's benefit to the public reducing the negative impacts of a crisis.

Thirdly, depending on the crisis, the SCCT advocates the reputational management strategy combined with different information. According to Coombs (2007, 2014), instant strategic responses and combinations can alter the public's perception of an organization lessening its negative association with a crisis. The SCCT has been used in several tourism studies to evaluate the effectiveness of tourism organizations' crisis responses. To illustrate, Liu et al. (2015) utilized SCCT to dissect the effectiveness of hotels' responses to a bed bug issue on social media. Similarly, based on a case study approach, Liu and Pennington-Gray (2015) utilized the SCCT to analyze cruise lines' responses to norovirus outbreaks. Collaboratively, these study findings have exhibited the practical utility of SCCT as a guiding structure to evaluate the capability of organizations' crisis responses.

Table 13.1: An Overview of SCCT Guidelines.

Strategy	Definition	Content
Instructing Information	Basic information about the crisis and how to protect individuals during the crisis	Basic information about the crisis What to do to protect oneself during the crisis
Adjusting Information	Information that aims to help the audience to cope with the crisis psychologically	Factual information about what happened Corrective actions: information that explains what measures have been undertaken to correct the situation and to prevent its occurrence in the future Controllability: information that addresses the fact that the situation is under control. Expressions of concern and sympathy.
Reputation Management	Strategies of crisis responses	Denial Posture: aims to remove the connection between the crisis and the organization Diminishment: aims to reduce the responsibility of the organization toward the crisis Rebuilding: aims to improve the organization's reputation and provide apology and compensation. Bolstering: aims to rebuild positive relations between the organization and the audiences.

Source: Based on Coombs (2007, 2014).

The NYC hotels' response to the 2010 bed bug crisis on TripAdvisor

This study used a case study approach, examining NYC hotels' response behavior on TripAdvisor regarding the 2010 bed bug epidemic. SCCT was employed as the guiding theoretical framework and the following two research questions were addressed:
- How did hotels respond to bed bug-related reviews on TripAdvisor?
- Are hotels' crisis responses consistent with the SCCT guidelines?

The dataset was built by searching the TripAdvisor website using keywords such as "bed bug(s)" and "bedbug(s)" for the period between 2002 and 2013. The final sample included 136 management responses, and each management response serves as a unit of analysis. The data analytical process is divided into three steps. Firstly, descriptive analyses were conducted to provide a general description of the hotels' response behavior. Secondly, guided by the SCCT, this study developed a coding scheme and counted the frequency of each theme (Table 13.2). Two trained coders coded the data, and inter-coder reliability was found to be acceptable for statistical analysis (Krippendorff's alpha > .838).

Table 13.2: Coding Scheme and Frequency of Themes.

Themes	Definitions	Frequency (%)	Example
Instructing information	Basic information about the bed bug situation	70 (51%)	The resurgence of bed bugs in the United States over the last five years is a widely recognized problem.
Adjusting information	An expressed sympathetic attitude and corrective measures	77 (57%)	XXX (Hotel) mandates an aggressive pest control policy. I am most distressed that you encountered insects in your guest room.
Reputational Management Strategies			
Denial	The responsibility for the incident was denied.	50 (37%)	This room was checked on the day it was reported by the pest control company and nothing was found in this room and we were given a clean bill of health by the pesticide company.
Diminishing	The connection between the hotel and the incident was lessened.	35 (26%)	Due to the anonymity of these reviews, we will not be able to identify the exact location of this room, however, I am confident that any concerns are reported to our management team.
Rebuilding	Attempts were made to rebuild the organization's reputation	47 (35%)	This guest was provided a total of six complimentary nights and all of their belongings were laundry and dry-cleaned by the hotel.
Bolstering	Attempts were made to remind the audience of the organization's previous good	113 (83%)	Safety and security are our first and foremost concerns. We never had a single case that confirmed the existence of bed bugs.
Enhancing	Follow-up information about the issue.	87 (64%)	We will reach out privately to obtain additional details of your experience.

Lastly, this study followed the practices of Stepchenkova et al. (2015) and conducted a co-occurrence analysis to examine what specific strategies were used simultaneously by hotel managers. A previous study (Liu et al., 2015) suggests that hotel guests tend to attribute the responsibility of bed bug encounters in hotel rooms to the hotel property. According to the SCCT, an ideal response to this scenario should include (1) instructing information, (2) adjusting information, and (3) the reputation management strategies of Rebuilding and Bolstering. To test to what extent hotels' managerial responses are consistent with the SCCT guidelines, this study conducted a co-occurrence analysis. Co-occurrence analysis aims to test a hypothesis that the actual and expected probability of any random two strategies co-occur are statistically different at the significant level of 0.001, 0.01, and 0.05, respectively. A large and positive z-score indicates a positive statistical link between the two strategies, suggesting that hotel managers tend to use the two strategies at the same time.

The first objective of this study was to examine the general trend of the hotels' response behavior addressing bed bug concerns on TripAdvisor. The gamma index was calculated to test the relationship between the response rate and the year. As shown in Table 13.3, there is a significant change in the response rate over the years ($\Upsilon = .929$, $p < .01$). Particularly, we notice that most hotels did not become responsive

Table 13.3: The Overall Trend of Hotel Managerial Responses on TripAdvisor.

Year	No. of Managerial Response (N = 136)		Response Rate
	N	%	%
2002	0	0	0
2003	0	0	0
2004	0	0	0
2005	0	0	0
2006	0	0	0
2007	2	1.47	1.1
2008	6	4.41	14.63
2009	2	1.47	6.07
2010	21	15.44	19.27
2011	28	20.59	17.72
2012	50	36.76	44.25
2013	29	21.32	54.72
$\Upsilon = 0.929$ ($p < 0.01$)			

until 2010 when the bed bug infestation has been declared a major tourism crisis in NYC (Liu-Lastres et al., 2020). This finding implies that most NYC hotels are likely to adopt a single-loop learning style in their current tourism crisis communication practices, which is largely based on single events and reactive in nature. This can be seen as a major shortcoming since Blackman and Ritchie (2008) stress the importance of using double-loop learning and learning-in-practices approaches in organizational learning regarding tourism crisis communication. As they explicate, in addition to creating a standard format to respond to certain issues, organizations should emphasize the causes of the problem and transfer such understanding to organizational knowledge for future use (Blackman & Ritchie, 2008).

The second objective of this study was to investigate the content of hotels' response strategies and evaluate the appropriateness of these strategies. As reported earlier (see Table 13.2), all informational elements (i.e., instructing information, adjusting information, reputation management strategies) were present in the sample. This study noticed that Bolstering (n = 113, 83.09%), Enhancing (n = 87, 64.0%) and Adjusted Information (n = 77, 56.62%) are the most used strategies within the sample. Adjusting information is mainly about corrective measures and displaying a sympathetic attitude toward the customers. Both Bolstering and Enhancing are reputation management strategies. Specifically, the Bolstering gestures constantly remind the audiences about the previous good performance of the organization, and therefore, to regain their trust and protect the organization's reputation. Enhancing is to provide follow-up information and to display a responsible attitude in the situation.

When compared to the SCCT guidelines, it becomes apparent that although the strategies of Adjusting and Bolstering were properly addressed, there has been a lack of attention displayed to Instructing information and Rebuilding within the sample. Instructing information is an essential element in base crisis response. Park (2017) points out that the inclusion of base responses not only satisfies the primary audiences' inquiry for public safety information but also creates impressions where the organization prioritizes public safety and cares for their customers and others. Page (2020) further suggests that preferably, instructing information should be disseminated during a crisis, informing the public how to act, and adjusting information should be delivered following the onset of a crisis, assisting people in coping with the situation psychotically. Based on the comparison, the results here indicate that there is a lack of strategic planning in NYC hotels' crisis response practices.

Additionally, this study calculated the probability of co-occurrence of different crisis response elements, and the results are presented in Figure 13.1. The strategies are presented by circles, and the relationships are presented through connecting lines. The shaded circles indicate the three most frequently used strategies. Lines are presented when the value of actual co-occurrence between the pairwise relationships among strategies are statistically different from the value of expected co-occurrence. Additionally, a solid line suggests that at a significant level of .001, the two connected strategies are positively associated. A dashed line indicates that at a significant level of .01, the two connected strategies are positively associated. A thin solid line suggests that at a significant level of .05, the two connected strategies are positively associated.

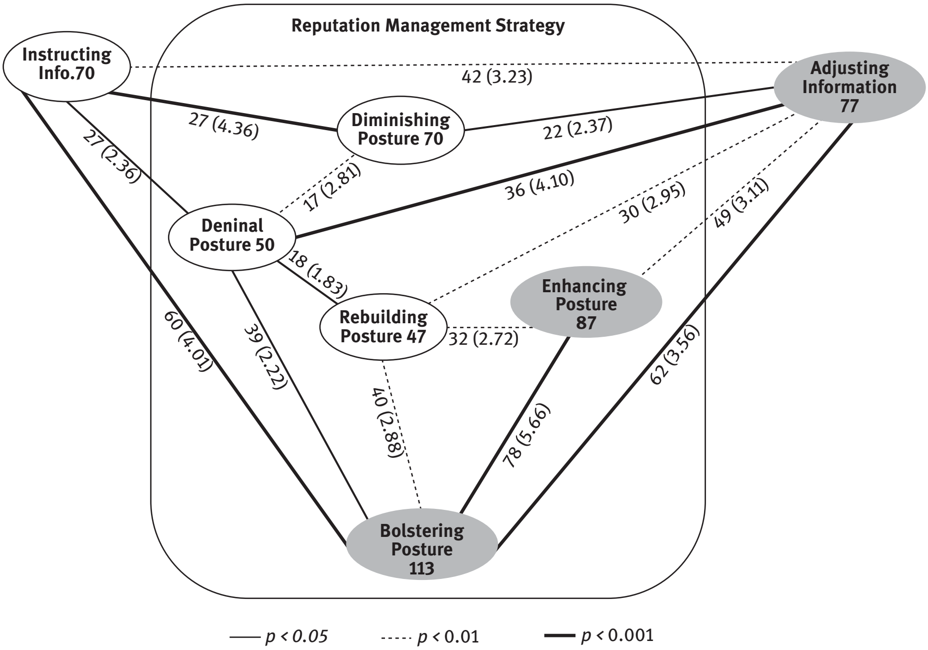

Figure 13.1: Co-occurrence Analysis Results.

The primary results showed that each strategy is organically connected to one another. There is no stand-alone strategy. Regarding the Instructing information, the results showed that there exists a strong positive relationship between instructing information and the diminishing posture (n = 27, z-score = 4.36, p < .001). This suggests that hotel managers mainly used factual information to defend the hotel property and lessen the connection between the hotel and the bed bug issue. Adjusting information is another fundamental element within tourism crisis responses, and it is positively related to all reputational management strategies as well as instructing information. This is encouraging because the findings here suggest that most hotels incorporated all the necessary components in their managerial responses, which is consistent with the central assumption of SCCT.

When it comes to the actual reputation management strategies, the bolstering posture is found positively related with instructing information (n= 62, z-score = 3.56, p < .001) and adjusting information (n = 62, z-score = 3.56, p < .001). This indicates that hotel managers tend to use these strategies at the same time in their response. This aligns well with previous studies (Coombs, 2007; Liu et al., 2015), suggesting that a combination of instructing information, adjusting information, and bolstering posture is the most appropriate message for the current situation. We also found that the enhancing posture is positively related to the bolstering posture but unrelated to the instructing information and adjusting information. This is disappointing because the enhancing posture has been considered as a secondary crisis response strategy, which should be used as supplementary to the primary responses rather than replacements (Coombs, 2007, 2013). The effectiveness of using a reputation management strategy alone has been questionable in the crisis communication literature.

Lastly, it is noticed that although the diminishing posture is positively related to the denial posture, there are no relationships between the diminishing posture and the bolstering posture. There is no relationship between the enhancing posture and the diminishing posture, either. As mentioned, a reputation management strategy alone would not be as effective as presenting all three essential elements (i.e., instructing information, adjusting information, and reputation management strategy). Also, strategies featuring a diminishing posture are not the perfect response in the current situation since hotel guests tend to attribute the responsibility of the incident to the property.

Conclusion and implications

Nowadays, tourism and hospitality organizations are vulnerable to various crises. Thus, how to improve tourism and hospitality organizations' ability to create effective crisis response through organizational learning has become a topic of strategic significances (Liu-Lastres et al., 2020). Guided by the SCCT, this study examined and evaluated NYC hotels' response to emerging bed bug concerns on TripAdvisor. Overall speaking, the results reflect a learning curve, where NYC hotels have been steadily improved their crisis response measures, changing from being silent, denial to employing different reputation management strategies in their timely responses. Despite the development over the years, the findings suggest that most hotels' current practices are still far away from perfect, which is mainly reflected through the content of their management responses. The most obvious mistakes include neglecting base crisis responses (i.e., Instructing information) and the misuse of reputational management strategies. It is also apparent that most NYC hotels in the sample tend to be reactive, which did not prioritize crisis communication and failed to incorporate it into their organizational culture. Based on the major findings, this study offers insights into improving crisis communication practices through organizational learning in the section below.

Move towards a learning-in-practice paradigm in tourism crisis communication

The onset of a major crisis, to a large extent, opens a special time of window for most organizations to re-evaluate their management efforts and improve their practices. It is also a critical moment where organizations can review, reflect, and revive. The findings of this study show that although NYC hotels are becoming more responsive over time, the learning curve takes a relatively long time. Furthermore, the majority of the managerial response in the sample did not incorporate the most appropriate informational elements, suggesting that there is an urgent need for the properties in the sample to improve their crisis communication practices. Blackman and Ritchie (2008) suggest that tourism and hospitality organizations should treat learning as a primary outcome of crisis management. To achieve this objective, tourism organizations and businesses should not be afraid of challenging existing mental models. Instead, they should carefully review past crises, assess the impact of alternatives, and continuously improve their crisis management practices preparing for future complications (Ali et al., 2020; Wang 2008). More importantly, managers and organizations need to move beyond merely focusing on error correction; they need to embrace a "learning-in-practice" paradigm, which requires constant review and reflection on their standardized protocols.

Featuring the learning aspect in tourism crisis management also requires a proactive approach. To become proactive in tourism crisis management, practitioners need to pay attention to two aspects. The first one is risk reduction. There is a constant need to monitor emerging risk issues (Paraskevas & Quek, 2019). Identifying potential risk elements and employing risk-reduction plans beforehand is one of the best strategies in tourism crisis communication. Also, having an appropriate interpretation of the environment and an accurate assessment of risks can help hotels better position themselves during a crisis and adjust their strategies to cope with the evolving situation. Once an incident occurs, hotel properties need to stay engaged. Actively participating in conversations with stakeholders and the public not only can deliver the most accurate and needed information, but also can maintain a positive image in public by displaying a concerning and sympathetic attitude. This emotional connection can be one of the most potent weapons in protecting an organization's reputation during crisis times.

Create effective crisis communication messages

Another shortcoming that is evident in this study involves NYC hotels' inability of creating appropriate managerial responses on TripAdvisor. According to the findings of previous studies (Liu et al., 2015; Liu-Lastres et al., 2020), most incidents that occurred on hotel properties are perceived as preventable clusters. Coombs (2014) suggested that the most appropriate strategies to address this situation should involve the postures of rebuilding and diminishing. The goal of utilizing these strategies is to (1) lessen the connection between the organization and the crisis, and (2) switch public focus off the crisis by taking positive actions.

Thus, in the current case, hotel practitioners need to present three types of information elements in their message: (1) instructing information, (2) adjusting information, and (3) the postures of rebuilding and diminishing. In terms of instructing information, hotels should clarify the situation by stating what happened and what they have done to manage the situation (e.g., emergency measures). Safety information on how to protect oneself should also be included. Regarding the adjusting information, hotel managers need to (1) display a sympathetic attitude (e.g., showing concerns over the victims) and (2) specify the corrective actions by stating what changes will be made in the future to avoid the re-occurrence of a similar event. Lastly, concerning the reputation management strategies, hotels should make sure (1) that they apologize for the situation and that (2) they offer compensations (e.g., refund, credit for future stays, and other special arrangements). Hotel properties can also remind the public of their previous positive performance and address the fact that safety and security are one of their most important priorities.

As important as it is to have a proactive attitude and a useful message template, hotels should always have a strategic, coordinated, and rehearsed crisis communication plan in place. One of the advantages of having such a program is that it helps the major decision-makers to interpret the underlying dynamics beforehand and, therefore, have enough time to come up with strategies to address any arising crisis. The abovementioned aspects (i.e., a proactive attitude and an effective crisis communication message) are essential parts of this plan. The goal of the plan is to minimize the negative consequences brought by an unexpected crisis event as well as to call attention to the positive steps taken to ensure hotel safety.

Build a resilient and learning organization

Continuous improvement is necessary for tourism and hospitality organizations to strive to better themselves in uncertain times. Through knowledge acquiring and transferring, past crisis management and communication experiences can greatly contribute to building a resilient and learning organization (Ghaderi et al., 2014). It is imperative to have this goal and direction embedded in organizational culture and raise awareness among all employees. After all, organizational learning is a collaborative process where employees of all levels should actively participate in and have the practical knowledge generated, transferred, and applied. Also, to facilitate this process, organizational support is very much needed, entailing investments in both equipment and employee training. To successfully manage crises in the future and produce effective crisis responses, tourism and hospitality organizations should remember that organization learning should be addressed in all crisis management stages, ranging from pre-, during- and post-crisis. It takes strong determination and continuous efforts to establish an organization that is proactive, responsible, and resilient.

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14 Tourism supply chain knowledge management in the pandemic era

Introduction

In a world characterized by rapid development, constant change, fierce competition, and in such a turbulent and unstable environment, the leveraging on knowledge and knowledge management has become a key success factor (Obeidat, Al-Suradi, & Tarhini, 2016). Knowledge management is also critical for managerial decision making, product development, and innovation, problem-solving, organizational learning, and effective crisis management (Paraskevas, Altinay, McLean, & Cooper, 2013; Blackman, Kennedy, & Ritchie, 2011). While the value and management of knowledge have been acknowledged in the tourism and hospitality literature, limited attention has been given to the role and significance of knowledge management in tourism crisis and disaster management (Paraskevas, et al., 2013; Blackman & Ritchie, 2008). For example, few empirical studies are available to explain how different knowledge management strategies such as knowledge acquisition, knowledge distribution, knowledge utilization, and knowledge saving works in crises and improves tourism crisis management practices (Ghaderi, Mat Som, & Wang, 2014; Blackman et al., 2011). Furthermore, it is even more important to understand how knowledge management applies in tourism supply chains, knowing that tourism suppliers within the chain have different knowledge capacities to develop effective knowledge strategies in crisis management (Schoenherr, Griffit, & Chandra, 2014; Paraskevas et al., 2013). For example, while some suppliers might have well-established procedures for managing knowledge such as the airlines, chain hotels, international tour operators, etc.; others lack such know-how and therefore fail to exercise sufficient learning, and consequently this affects the performance of the whole supply chain (Blackman & Ritchie, 2008; Paraskevas & Quek, 2019; Wang & Ritchie, 2010). This inequality in knowledge management in the Tourism Supply Chain (TSC) has created an imbalance in knowledge power and makes tourism as a whole system vulnerable in times of crisis management (Paraskevas, et al., 2013; Ghaderi et al., 2014).

The previous literature has focused on knowledge management and organizational learning from crises at various organizational levels (Paraskevas & Quek, 2019; Paraskevas, et al., 2013), destination levels (Ghaderi et al., 2014; Ghaderi et al., 2012; Blackman & Ritchie, 2008; Anderson, 2006), or at a business-sector level (Melián-Alzola, Fernández-Monroy, & Hidalgo-Peñate, 2020; Rousaki & Alcott, 2006). Nonetheless, the application of knowledge management at the TSC level, especially among downstream suppliers such as local tour operators, small-sized

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accommodations, tour guides, catering service providers, local transport companies, and the like have largely been neglected in the crisis management field. Previous investigations have provided insights into how individual businesses or tourist destinations (focusing on only specific enterprises) use knowledge management strategies and how learning helps in crisis management (See for example, Blackman & Ritchie, 2008; Paraskevas et al., 2013; Ghaderi et al., 2014). Previously, the imbalance of knowledge power among TSC members has not been discussed, knowing how the imbalance in knowledge management and application makes the supply chain prone to crises and its crisis management performance unsuccessful. Drawing insights from organizational knowledge management and crisis management theories, we investigate how TSCs use knowledge management strategies in tourism crisis management. COVID-19 is considered as a crisis which has significantly affected and disrupted the activity of all suppliers in the TSCs, bearing in mind the specific nature and characteristics of each supply sector and the complex interactions among numerous stakeholders in the chain, all of which have different objectives and operating systems (Zhang et al., 2009).

This study is important in several ways. First, despite the significant importance of knowledge management strategies in crisis management and resilience of tourism firms, the issue has received less attention from both academics and practitioners alike (Ghaderi et al., 2014; Paraskevas & Quek, 2019). Second, although small and medium-sized suppliers play a significant role in the tourism supply chain and its crisis management, these sectors have largely been neglected and their role in crisis management and the recovery of destinations has been downgraded. Finally, we argue that the imbalance between knowledge powers of different stakeholders affects TSC crisis management performance. In the current study, we argue that there is a need to bring these issues to the forefront of TSC's crisis management.

Crisis management and tourism supply chain

Due to its fragile structure, tourism is one of the most vulnerable industries to various crises and disasters (Faulkner, 2001; Ghaderi et al., 2012; Hall, 2010; Paraskevas & Quek, 2019; Pennington-Gray, 2018; Ritchie, 2004; Ritchie & Campiranon, 2014). The occurrence of abundant crises in various tourism destinations, and the harmful effects of these events on tourism suppliers have intensified the need to pay greater attention to crisis and disaster management (Henderson, 2007). Nevertheless, crisis management in tourism has received more attention at the organizational, business, or destination levels (Faulkner, 2001; Henderson, 2007; Ghaderi et al., 2012; Wang & Ritchie, 2015; Rittichainuwat, 2013), but the supply chain level has been relatively neglected (Fung & Fung, 2014). Despite this, the role of supply chain members in crisis management and organizational learning is crucial, and neglecting various supplier roles reduces the efficiency and performance of the whole tourism system. A systematic approach to the tourism industry reveals that every member of the chain has a crucial role to play in crisis management, and ignoring them, even if they might play a minor role renders the crisis management cycle inefficient (Ghaderi et al., 2014).

While most crisis management models in tourism have played close attention to the important role of tourism stakeholders, and generally they refer to the participation of all stakeholders (see, for example, Faulkner, 2001; Santana, 2004), none of these models specifies the role and extent of participation of various stakeholders of the supply chain in a crisis management exercise. For example, local communities, tour guides, vendors, tourists, etc. are all part of the downstream supply chain, and their presence in tourism supply chain crisis management has largely been neglected. In addition, their voices are most often unheard due to the imbalance in power and governance (Ford, Wang, & Vestal, 2012; Adiyia et al., 2015). This, however, contradicts the view that effective supply chain crisis management contains coordination and collaboration with numerous stakeholders, including multifaceted value chain partners that include suppliers, intermediaries, third-party service providers, and downstream customers (Khan & Zsidisin, 2012). While previous studies have acknowledged the necessity and full engagement of all industry players in tourism crisis management (Faulkner, 2001; Ghaderi et al, 2014; Rittichainuwat, 2013), this has not occurred in practice, and more scientific research is required to bring this issue to the forefront of tourism crisis management research.

Knowledge management in the tourism supply chain

Knowledge and information management refers to, “the creation of knowledge repositories, the improvement of knowledge acquisition; the enhancement of the knowledge environment; and the management of knowledge as an asset. It enables groups to share and re-use information resources and have the power to make decisions faster and less expensively” (Mistilis & Sheldon, 2006, p. 5). Leveraging knowledge management is a competitive key prerequisite for today’s turbulent and unstable business environment (Corso, Dogan, Mogre, & Perego, 2010; Paraskeva et al., 2013). The move from a single firm to a supply chain leads to increased attention on inter-organizational knowledge sharing and management (Samuel et al., 2011; Boland et al., 2007).

Generally speaking, knowledge can be categorized into two main components: (1) technical tacit knowledge which denotes information, expertise, knowledge, and skills that are developed and utilized over time, and (2) cognitive tacit knowledge that involves implicit perceptions, beliefs, mental models and values so deeply-rooted in individuals that they become a natural part of what individuals are, think and do (Gore & Gore, 1999). Tacit or intuitive knowledge refers to the knowledge, skills, and capabilities an individual attains through experience that cannot be formalized and is hard-to-conceptualize (Curry & Kirwan, 2014; Schoenherr, Griffith, & Chandra, 2014). It has an important cognitive dimension that includes mental models, core beliefs, and perspectives. It develops interactively over time through shared experience, and the inherent "know-how" is reflected in individual skills that result from learning-by-exercise (Mooradian 2005; Schoenhrr et al., 2014). As tacit knowledge is acquired by an individual's internalized processes (such as experience, talent, and reflection) it cannot be taught, managed, speedily transferred, or transposed to competing organizations in the same way as explicit knowledge (Badaracco & Badaracco, 1991).

On the contrary, explicit knowledge, or encoded knowledge that is transferable (Blackler, 1995), is the knowledge that is made manifest through different learning tools such as language, symbols, portrayals, etc. (Choo, 1998). This type of knowledge can also be categorized into (a) object-based knowledge which is manifest in the form of patents, technical drawings and blueprints, software code databases, statistical reports, and business plans, and (b) rule-based knowledge which is displayed as routines, rules, and procedures (Choo, 1998).

Given the complicated nature of knowledge and the heterogeneity of tourism businesses with different capabilities, knowledge management within a tourism supply chain is one of the most important issues that managers are faced with in times of crises or disasters (Pyo & Bouncken, 2003; Orchiston, & Higham, 2016). Scholars argue that while both explicit and tacit knowledge that is created among supply chain members is important, explicit knowledge is more common among members because it can be disseminated throughout the organization and be made available to large numbers of people more cost-effectively than tacit knowledge (Paraskevas et al., 2013).

When dealing with a crisis or disaster, two typically general perspectives can be considered (1) the knowledge-based view (KBV) (Grant, 1996) and (2) the resource-based view (RBV) (Kogut & Zander, 1996; Nickerson & Zenger, 2004). KBV stands on the position that organizations should be analyzed that are based on their knowledge resources which are strategically fundamental to them (Schoenherr et al., 2014). From this perspective, tourism suppliers in the chain should have a set of knowledge competencies and repositories that assists them to efficiently generate and distribute knowledge throughout their chains. This knowledge and information sharing facilitates business recovery and helps to greatly reduce the adverse effects of the crisis.

From the RBV view, knowledge is regarded as one of the many strategic and unique assets and competencies that businesses in the supply chain need to attain, deploy and manage to escalate their elasticity to withstand instability, deal with crises and disasters, and rebound from them (Schoenherr et al., 2016). It has also the potential to be a source of competitive advantage for an organization and can lead to superior long-term performance.

Considering the tourism supply chain management framework, this organizational level view of resources has been extended to involve external players such as wider service providers, suppliers, and buyers. Therefore, it can be argued that knowledge created through the interaction and communication of specific chain fellows has the potential to advance the interface between collaborators via better assimilation, which enables more efficient and effective supply chain processes (Schoenherr et al, 2016). Thus, the enquiries that are asked in a crisis investigation would be directed at whether the organizations in the supply chain had these resources available including the properly defined actions, procedures, and policies for knowledge formation and application which reflect the cognitivist approach to knowledge that is underpinning this view (Von Krogh, 1998).

Research design

For this study, 29 members of the tourism supply chain were interviewed in Iran in 2020 during the outbreak of COVID-19. Respondents were senior managers and supervisors of different tourism and hospitality firms (from small and medium-sized businesses to large-scale corporates) as well as several individual activists such as tour guides, transportation providers, and local authorities. Semi-structured interviews focusing on snowball and purposive sampling tools were conducted via Skype, Zoom, and WhatsApp in Tehran, although respondents were scattered throughout the entire country.

Of the 29 respondents, five were working in the accommodation sector, three in Airlines, five in travel and tour operation companies, and four as travel agents. In addition, three individual tour guides, two transport providers, three tourist attraction managers, two local tourism authority managers, and two restaurant and catering managers also participated in the study. Interviews were conducted in the Persian language and then materials were translated into English for interpretation. Each interview lasted between 35 and 76 minutes, of which 21 were tape-recorded with previous permission. Eight respondents declined permission to record their voices and as a result, notes were taken during the interview sessions.

The interview protocol contained seven open-ended questions focusing on the impact of COVID-19 on tourism supply chains, their knowledge management strategies, crisis management practices, organizational learning, and recovery pathways. Data were subject to thematic analysis using computer-aided software (Atlas.ti version 8). All interview materials were transcribed verbatim, and data were read up to three times to allow the researchers to become immersed in the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006;

Ghaderi et al., 2018). Interview materials were then imported into Atlas.ti qualitative software for analysis. Open coding and quick coding were performed, and several main and sub-themes were identified which are discussed in the following sections.

Findings and discussion

Crisis management within tourism supply chains

Crisis management at the tourism supply chain level was found to be increasingly important for several reasons. First, the number of crises that occurred had increased dramatically and had had a severe impact on the activities of tourism industry suppliers (Ghaderi et al., 2021). Second, due to the heterogeneity and complexity of tourism suppliers/organizations, as well as the special features of tourism services that these organizations provide, they must operate as a chain or network to survive (Zhang et al., 2009). Third, a lack of equal competencies and capabilities of organizations has made them more vulnerable to external threats (Evans, Stonehouse, & Campbell, 2012), and finally, the ripple effects of someone's actions affect the activities of others. Therefore, there is a need for a wider crisis management framework at the supply chain level rather than at the individual or destination level. Several study respondents pointed to the significance of having a crisis management system at the supply chain level where the role of all players is considered. To support this claim one respondent from the hospitality sector stated, "tourism crisis management is successful when the role of all actors [upstream and downstream] in the supply chain is considered, otherwise the effects will increase and return to the normal will be greatly delayed."

In supply chain crisis management, the very important role of coordination and coherence between chain members, their empathy, and effective cooperation to achieve better crisis management is emphasized. However, our respondents also believed that the most important reason for the lack of success in managing COVID-19 was the absence of cooperation and empathy between tourism supply chain members. One respondent from the tour operation sector explained this when he stated, "In managing this crisis [COVID-19], the chain members were not really sympathetic, they did not cooperate effectively, and this made our challenge much bigger."

Supply chain knowledge types

In response to our inquiry explaining what kinds of knowledge management strategies are/can be developed in response to the COVID-19 crisis, tacit and explicit knowledge was found to be two of the main broad taxonomies of knowledge in supply chains that can be used in crisis situations (Paraskevas, et al., 2013; Schoenherr et al., 2014). Drawing on this insight, we further explained how tacit and explicit knowledge within the tourism supply chain can contribute to COVID-19 crisis management. However, our respondents explained that applying such knowledge at the onset of the crisis [COVID] was difficult due to several reasons, including the supply chain centralized structure, the lack of crisis management culture, and the fragmented nature of the tourism supply chain. For example, one respondent from the travel agent sector stated:

> Although it was very essential, organizations and members of the supply chain are not willing to share their collaborative experiences with other members, especially members outside their business, due to the lack of continuous cooperation and empathy, centralized decision making and lack of know-how to transfer such pieces of experience.

Further investigations revealed that there is a need to apply tacit knowledge, mechanisms of combination, internalization, socialization, and externalization which might be developed (Kahn et al., 2006). According to this process, informants must first consolidate and combine the individual tacit knowledge that is manifested in the form of beliefs, particular experiences, mental models, and patterns. The internalization process should reconfigure knowledge as a form of, "inter-organizational networks that connect knowledge owners for sharing knowledge" (Wang, 2009, p. 448). Socialization refers to smooth knowledge exchange by inspiring socialization through the proper application of space (Hansen et al., 1999). As Davenport et al. (1998) stated, socialization, such as through direct contact, is critical since it accounts for a significant proportion of the transferred knowledge.

Tourism supply chain knowledge management in crisis situations

The study respondents were asked how tourism organizations within a supply chain manage knowledge and knowledge flows to develop effective responses to crises? Based on Huber's (1991) classification of knowledge management, we categorized these findings into the following sections:

Knowledge acquisition

As previously discussed, suppliers in the chain did not have equal capabilities in knowledge management (Paraskevas et al., 2013; Zhang et al., 2009). This impedes them from obtaining explicit knowledge during the time of COVID-19. The study respondents explained that the severity of the irreversible effects of the crisis in general and the lack of transparent and reliable information sources on the other hand, prevented the access of members of the tourism supply chain to acquire sufficient and reliable knowledge, especially for downstream members. One respondent (a tour guide) pointed to the lack of effective strategies of most members in knowledge management. He reported:

> Unfortunately, most chain member organizations do not have a clear mechanism for acquiring and upgrading knowledge to identify environmental risks and manage a crisis.

Much knowledge can be acquired in the signal detection phase of crisis management, before the outset of crises (Ghaderi et al., 2014; Paraskevas et al., 2013; Wang, 2008). For this reason, chain members must constantly scan the environment for various threats, thereby obtaining useful information to prepare the organization to deal with any potential risks (Mitroff, 2005). As it can be understood from the viewpoints of the study respondents, tourism supply chain members failed to detect the early warning signals associated with the pandemic in early January or beyond and this hindered them to be prepared for it. One respondent from the airlines' sector stated:

> Even when all the airlines in the world stopped flying to China and the center of the Corona outbreak, Wuhan, Iran's Mahan Airlines flew continuously, and this caused the virus to spread widely in the country, they failed to detect this threat.

Respondents explained that failure to obtain this information was due to a lack of belief in the existence and impact of the pandemic, with airlines as the front line of the tourism supply chain that created serious damage to the entire supply chain. This lack of attention contradicts the belief that airlines should have standard procedures to gather new knowledge (Ghaderi et al., 2014). Some respondents from the downstream of the supply chain admitted that they did not have access to the knowledge which was available to the upstream chain members such as hotels, airlines, tour operators that criticized the knowledge sharing strategies of different business sectors.

Nevertheless, many respondents confirmed that they had received little knowledge during the crisis when the lockdown happened, and chain members shared their experiences by arranging webinars where there was an opportunity to gain knowledge. One respondent (a tour operator company) stated: "After the closure of businesses, there was an opportunity to conduct webinars using technology and information technology so that members could increase their knowledge."

Knowledge distribution (sharing)

To prepare suppliers for possible risks and crises, knowledge should be distributed not only among members but also among other business sectors. Knowledge diffusion facilitates crisis preparation and management (Ghaderi et al., 2014). Tourism organizations commonly develop new knowledge by accumulating all the information from other suppliers. To prepare every sector, knowledge should not only be attained but also shared among all chain members. The knowledge-based attitude represents a supply chain as a set of competencies and repositories of knowledge that permits them to effectively generate and distribute knowledge (Paraskevas et al., 2013).

Nonaka and Takeuchi (1995) explained that knowledge dissemination has four stages: socialization, externalization, combination, and internalization. The initial phase of knowledge distribution, which is called socialization takes place when individuals share their tacit knowledge with partnering organizations and suppliers through informal and formal meetings. In this process, experiences can be shared, through "learning-by-doing" (Samuel et al., 2011), observation, imitation, and sharing experiences. However, respondents argued that such regular meetings were rare before, and even during the COVID pandemic, and that interactions and sharing experiences did not occur between chain members. One informant said:

> One of the most important weaknesses of the tourism supply chain is its leadership, which the system does not have capabilities to coordinate among different tourism business sectors.

Externalization takes place through the examination of different practices. It is the process of turning tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge through coding and encoding experiences and insight in a way that can be used by others. Through the socialization process, people can improve possible business contacts as a part of the supply chain operations. This then can be stretched by further information interactions to understand the knowledge needs of each other and finally move through the process of official documentation (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995).

The combination means combining different parts of knowledge and presenting it in a new way. It happens in supply chain management while exchanging knowledge among a network of organizations through formal communication mediums such as meetings, conversations, and digital communications. It transforms explicit knowledge into more formal exchanges of explicit knowledge among the various supply chain members such as partnering companies, consumers, and government agencies. Information is reconfigured by sorting, combining, and categorizing. In this process, a new knowledge system can be developed.

Internalization of knowledge means that supply chain members transfer explicit knowledge into tacit knowledge through a procedure of learning by doing, or the implementation of knowledge in a supply chain through a systematic approach of developing a suitable implementation framework. This result is an efficient problem-solving technique in supply chain management.

Knowledge can be effectively shared through appropriate interactions with other chain members. For example, group practice, brainstorming sessions, the exchange of dialogue between individuals and teams, or via storytelling (Edvarsson, 2008). Stonehouse and Pemberton (1999) stated that organizations need to reconfigure their knowledge management structures to ensure that the right knowledge gets to the right people at the right time. This is particularly relevant for organizations when a crisis occurs, as relevant knowledge needs to be identified and applied quickly to a particular situation.

A key consideration about knowledge circulation in the process of crisis management is how fast the distribution channels can disseminate the knowledge among members and how precisely they are at information delivery. The study participants commonly believed that the knowledge distribution channels were ineffective in disseminating required information to its members, despite the availability of modern technologies and the abundance of social media. A respondent from the restaurant and catering management sector supported this finding:

> I am surprised if it was 20 years ago, I would not blame anyone, but with all the information communication technology tools and the existence of a large number of social media, I say it is not difficult to update members with proper knowledge dissemination.

Knowledge utilization

Collective knowledge does not benefit supply chain members unless it can be used at different levels. We asked the respondents to discuss how they utilized the attained knowledge in managing the COVID-19 crisis. It was widely believed that knowledge usage is essential at different stages of supply chain crisis management. Many tourism organizations apply their knowledge and experiences when a crisis happens to them. Looking from the lens of resource-based knowledge management, the capability of a supply chain to use and lever the knowledge is strongly dependent on its human resources, which are effective regarding who creates, shares, and uses knowledge (Ipe, 2003). However, the supply chain members argued that their knowledge utilization was limited due to human resource redundancy at the early stage of the crisis. One respondent explained, “With the dismissal of human resources in different parts of the supply chain and the lack of knowledge of management procedures in most chain organizations, little knowledge was used in crisis management.” Respondents believed that the use of knowledge is only possible when individual members can share their knowledge and can create new knowledge from the knowledge of others.

Knowledge utilization is frequently utilized in the third stage of the crisis management framework, where damage limitation was recommended (Mitroff, 2005). At this stage, the impact of the crisis is felt, and organizations need to make instantaneous decisions and develop appropriate strategies to alleviate the negative impact (Ghaderi et al., 2014).

Knowledge storing (Memory)

An efficient and agile supply chain has a strong and high-capacity memory to store appropriate knowledge, without which crisis management is unproductive. Knowledge is generated through standard operating procedures (SOPs) or in a real crisis and should be stored in the chain's long-term memory. Lack of such memory not only hampers mindful learning but also affects the knowledge creation competence of the suppliers, which is necessary for the renewal of tourism crisis management systems (Ghaderi et al., 2014). However, it is challenging to store very large quantities of unstructured or heterogonous data from various data collectors in the service supply chains (Zhong et al., 2016). One respondent from local authority argued:

> The tourism industry is a collection of multiple actors with different visions, missions, goals, and functions. Not everyone has the same organizational capacity to store information and knowledge, and surprisingly even the chain leadership [Ministry of Tourism] lacks such capabilities.

While many scholars argue that knowledge is embedded in an organization's routines, standard operating procedures, and organizational culture (Argote, 2005; Levitt & March, 1988), others believe that knowledge is also created in chaotic and complex conditions (Nonaka, Reinmoeller, & Senoo, 1998). Improving the organizational memory capability, conversely, assists crisis-affected organizations to store their learning for future applications.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to understand how knowledge management strategies have been applied during the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic among tourism supply chain members in Iran. Semi-structured interviews with 29 practitioners from various chain sectors revealed that the knowledge management strategies have not been adequately and equally applied among tourism supply chain members; particularly, the downstream members that had much less access to knowledge and information about the pandemic. Similarly, supply chain members confirmed that the knowledge management system was impractical to acquire, disseminate, utilize and store knowledge for the effective management of the crisis. This inefficiency was due to a lack of transparency in informing the supply chain members by responsible authorities to different business sectors. It also highlights the absence of organizational learning among chain members in dealing with crises and disasters (Ghaderi, King, & Hall, 2021). In addition, the results of this study determined that organizations associated with the tourism supply chain do not have an appropriate mechanism for managing knowledge and organizational learning and are thus, vulnerable to any type of crisis. This implies that those organizations of different types regardless of their size should strive to develop a learning culture and knowledge management strategies to effectively deal with crises and disasters. In particular, strategies that are related to tacit and explicit knowledge (Schoenherr et al., 2014) should be developed, and the capability of human resources to process different types of knowledge should be acknowledged. The results of this study also indicated that during the coronavirus pandemic, connections between different parts of the tourism supply chain were fragmented and due to the lack of business activity, the relationship between businesses became very minimal. This led to a lack of knowledge gain and distribution of organizational learning. Therefore, tourism supply chain stakeholders are advised to provide very strong mechanisms for communication and cooperation between different sectors in times of crisis to achieve faster recovery and create limited damage to the downstream parts of the supply chain.

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15 Conclusion

Organizational learning is a conceptually rich construct that helps the understanding of a wide range of organizational situations, among which, effective preparation, response, and recovery from a crisis or a disaster. While a common definition of the concept is still lacking, in this book we defined crisis-induced learning or, more simply, crisis learning as a specific form of organizational learning triggered by a disruptive event or significant threat to the organization and leads to new knowledge and understanding that will shape future actions related to the prevention, mitigation, response to, and recovery from these or similar disruptive events or threats. Such knowledge can maintain organizational continuity or trigger changes, improve effectiveness or diminish it, empower organizational members or limit their initiatives.

A few researchers in hospitality and tourism have used organizational learning to understand how organizations in this sector make decisions, develop strategies, and try to find ways to improve performance and, in this book in particular, how they have distilled lessons they have learned from various crises they have faced, how they have codified, stored and institutionalized them and how they have used them to more effectively address future threats and crises. We have also seen in this book that the crisis learning construct is shaped by and shapes not only the culture of an organization but also the socialization, sense-making, and power relations in the workplace. However, there is still a significant paucity of research on crisis learning in tourism and a need for further and deeper studies of challenges and issues that are grounded in the unique characteristics and vulnerabilities of this sector. This concluding chapter examines some of these issues in relation to the extant literature on crisis learning in hospitality and tourism.

To date, most hospitality and tourism scholars that conceptualized organizational learning from a crisis have relied on a limited set of theories such as Argyris and Schön's (1978) single and double-loop learning, Huber's (1991) information processing model, March's (1991) exploration-exploitation framework, and Senge's (1990) learning organization. These theories are largely considered functionalist in the sense that they seek organizational change and effectiveness from crisis lessons rather than an understanding and a possible change of power and agency within the organization for more effective learning or changes in sense-making and identity. Therefore, a good starting point would be for future research to embrace other paradigms by moving away from the current functionalist approaches of crisis learning towards other theoretical paradigms that have shaped the organizational learning field over time such as the community-of-practice-based approach (Lave & Wenger, 1991), social network theory (Zhao & Anand, 2013), and critical theory (Fenwick, 2003). While empirical studies on crisis learning in hospitality and tourism are limited, this book has identified and explored several areas in which further research is needed.

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While the functionalist theories of organizational learning have shaped much of the writing on crisis learning in hospitality and tourism, the extant literature has not yet empirically addressed one of the most critical questions within this paradigm: what learning are we seeking to obtain from crises? Most studies look at learning predominantly in terms of single-/double-loop learning and at the resolution stage of the crisis lifecycle (Blackman & Ritchie, 2008; Ghaderi, Mat Som, & Wang, Chapter 2 in this volume; Pforr & Hosie, 2008). However, crisis learning involves both learning from past crisis responses (intercrisis learning) and learning before and during a crisis (intracrisis learning) (Moynihan, 2009). Mitroff's (2004) crisis management model has significant potential to inform studies on crisis learning partly shifting the focus away from the crisis lifecycle (pre-, during, post-crisis) and dealing with specific stages of crisis management such as signal detection, prevention, and preparedness, damage limitation and crisis recovery.

Another functionalist research question concerns the sources of this crisis learning. Scholars talk broadly about emergent and institutionalized crisis knowledge Paraskevas, Altinay, McLean, & Cooper, Chapter 3 in this volume) and risk intelligence (Paraskevas & Quek, 2019; Prayag et al., 2020) but they have not yet looked at where they can look for the information and data that can be transformed into knowledge and intelligence and how they can evaluate their authority and accuracy. Given the relatively recent phenomenon of misinformation and "fake news" (Fedeli, 2019; Williams et al., 2020), researchers could also study the possible effects of misinformation on the overall organizational learning from a crisis.

Several tourism scholars (Brouder, 2020; Prideaux et al., 2020; Tsao & Ni, 2016) have viewed crises and the learning from them as a catalyst not only for change but for overhauling transformation (see also Vargas-Sánchez & Rodríguez-Toubes, Chapter 12 in this volume). The largest part of this literature argues for forms of double-loop learning that challenge tourism authorities to rethink their assumptions about visitors, policies, and tourism destination planning. Researchers can follow this traditional paradigm and use double-loop learning to understand how hospitality and tourism organizations adopt mental models and practices that emphasize radical change. But they can move away from it and look at cases where tourism destinations and their key stakeholders not only amended their crisis plans based on their own and others' crisis experiences (single-loop) or changed their fundamental assumptions and principles in crisis management (double-loop), but also reevaluated their culture, structures, and principles as well as their organizational vision and even operational models (triple-loop learning in Tosey et al., 2012).

A further functionalist question relates to exploring the mechanisms of crisis learning within a hospitality and tourism organization. King (2009) proposes a knowledge and organizational learning process cycle model which consists of several steps that highlight all aspects of an organization's learning and knowledge base. Using this model, scholars can examine in better depth the mechanisms for the creation, acquisition, and refinement of crisis learning) as well as its storage, transfer, sharing, and utilization (Sikora, Chapter 10 in this volume). They can also develop methodologies (such as scenario planning in Makian & Nematpour, Chapter 7 in this volume) and systems to support these mechanisms (Fisher, Francis, & Haven-Tang, Chapter 6 in this volume) and motivate organizational members to become part of them with the goal of crisis detection, prevention response, and recovery improvement. Another direction of research within this question would be the role of artifacts and symbols as well as the effects of storytelling on organizational learning from crises (Paraskevas, Chapter 5 in this volume).

Scholars typically regard organizational learning as a collective process of knowledge generation through shared mental models in which all organizational members take part (Huber, 1991; Senge, 1990). However, the highly differentiated structures that characterize most hospitality and tourism organizations can easily disconnect organizational functions from each other, create departmental boundaries and facilitate a siloed organizational learning culture. Moreover, as normally crisis response is a top-down function with response teams acting based on central command guidance (Zhai et al., 2019), crisis learning is also expected to be generated and diffused in the same way. Huber (1991) argues that information distribution can be enhanced through structures that foster horizontal collaboration across functional areas. Researchers in hospitality and tourism can explore what these horizontal crisis management structures can be and how they can overcome any barriers to learning (see Tello-Conteras, Chapter 8 in this volume) and forge new mental models within the organization that may foster learning for more effective crisis management.

And while the functionalist approach to organizational learning holds that the path towards crisis management improvement is through horizontal as well as vertical structures and shared mental models, the interpretive paradigm suggests that social networks and practice-based knowledge or communities of practice (COP) can enable organizations to harness and share learning (Brown & Duguid, 1991; Wenger, 1998). Cooper (2018) contends that a networked tourism destination can generate practice-based knowledge as it shares many characteristics with a COP but notes that the key difference is that COPs are purposeful and not just a set of relationships. He argues that COPs represent a group of organizations with shared history, ideas, and ways of working characterized by trust and collaboration and it is this trust that is central to effective knowledge transfer. Crisis situations force the collaboration between organizations and the formation of “recovery constellations” and, therefore, the development of relational trust is a given (Kalkman & de Waard, 2017). Researchers can investigate how crisis learning and response/recovery improvement is managed by these constellations within tourism destinations and the norms and informal standards that maintain this trust and facilitate or inhibit this learning. Of particular interest in this COP context, would also be an examination from a critical paradigm perspective of how crisis learning is shaped by the interests of powerful groups inside and external to the tourism destination. Critical theory researchers can seek to understand how divergent interests are represented and negotiated in the crisis learning processes associated with response improvement and recovery efforts. They may also wish to explore who gets to set the agenda and how power dynamics and politics (Saito & Ruhanen, 2017) determine which organizations or individuals get to shape what the tourism destination learns from a crisis.

Another question concerns how organizations can harness the information and knowledge that emerge at ‘ground level’ so that they can distill learning that will improve crisis response effectiveness across the entire organization. One way to address this question is for researchers to investigate the multi-level dynamics of crisis learning in hospitality and tourism organizations (individual, group, organizational) by using Crossan et al.’s (1999) 4I framework. The investigation would start at the individual level with the process of “intuiting” (experiencing crisis signals and patterns) and “interpreting” (articulating crisis insights and constructing prevention and damage containment plans). At the group level, the investigation would look at how organizational members continue to interpret but also how they “integrate” their learning (i.e., action their shared meanings). Lastly, how “integrating” extends to the organizational level where the crisis learning from the preceding levels becomes “institutionalized” (see Rop, Chapter 9 in this volume) in the form of organizational context through crisis policies and crisis response procedures.

In seeking to explore organizational learning from crises in hospitality and tourism, the contributors of this book identified several themes that were central in the research agenda for the topic. It is hoped that their contributions advanced the understanding of these themes and that this discussion can provide the foundations for future research efforts.

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