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ABSTRACT
This study establishes how tourism and hospitality businesses in Vietnam developed organizational resilience to survive the first wave of the Covid-19 crises. With employees acknowledged as a critical dimension in tourism and hospitality services, the study focused on how human resources (HR) practices were adopted to develop organizational resilience during the crisis. In-depth interviews were conducted with 20 tourism and hospitality managers during Vietnam's lockdown. The findings reveal valuable HR resilience-building practices that these businesses implemented before, during and after the lockdown. The results contribute to our understanding of how HR practices can sustain the tourism workforce and enhance organizational resilience in the face of a global pandemic.

1. Introduction

Covid-19 has created a global economic meltdown in tourism and hospitality. International tourist arrivals fell by 22% in the first quarter of 2020 (compared with 2019 figures) and the annual decline for the full year is predicted to be between 60% and 80% (UNWTO, 2020). Travel restrictions in many countries and the introduction of social distancing measures to contain the virus, also forced tourism and hospitality businesses to shut down placing over 100 million jobs at risk (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2020). To put this in perspective, the impact of the crisis has already been estimated to be five times that of the Global Financial Crisis of 2008 (OECD, 2020). Such crises highlight the need for businesses to develop resilience capacity to cope with immediate challenges and survive in the longer term. How organizations build resilience in crises has featured extensively in recent webinars where scholars agree that addressing this question is critical for organizations to learn to cope with unexpected challenges (Resilience Destinations, 2020). However, organizational resilience linked to crises in tourism and hospitality has not yet been wide studied (Orchiston et al., 2016).

Among the management practices discussed in various scholarly fora, is the critical role of human resource management (HRM) in crisis situations. Over the past two decades, HRM has gone beyond its traditional function in the management of labour to a more strategic role that views employees as assets who contribute to business sustainability and strengthen organizations, especially during prolonged downturns (Avey et al., 2008; Bustinza et al., 2019; Naznin & Hussain, 2016; Pfeffer, 1995). Despite the significance of human capital in building organizational resilience in crises or disasters, however, (Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011; Nilakant et al., 2014) the link between organizations' HRM and

resilience capacity has not been well examined within the tourism literature (Brown et al., 2017; Hall et al., 2017). This study explores resilience in tourism and hospitality businesses during the Covid-19 pandemic in Vietnam where the management of the first wave of the virus is considered a model for the rest of the world (Marques, 2020). The study examines specific human resource practices adopted to develop organizational resilience capacity during crises and contributes to the body of knowledge on crisis management by enhancing our understanding of organizational resilience. The study provides an informed perspective that supports investment in human resources (HR) policies that facilitate resilience capabilities during a crisis. A process-based framework of HR resilience practices applicable to future crises is also presented.

2. Literature review

2.1. Organizational resilience

Defined as 'a firm's ability to effectively absorb, develop situation-specific responses to, and ultimately engage in transformative activities to capitalize on disruptive surprises that potentially threaten organization survival' (Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011, p. 244), organizational resilience has emerged as a contemporary issue in business (Biggs et al., 2012; Dahles & Susilowati, 2015; Orchiston et al., 2016; Prayag et al., 2020). Within the tourism literature, organizational resilience has been presented as an organization's ability to cope with unexpected change and adapt to unprecedented threats to the business environment (Biggs et al., 2012). Organizational resilience has been studied from a resource-based approach that includes fundamental resources such as finance, human capital, networks and core values (Biggs et al., 2015). Dahles and Susilowati (2015) presented an alternative perspective, however, proposing that business resilience is demonstrated by an organization's capacity to wait for a return to the previous state of perceived normality, as well as the ability to innovate and grow in the face of disturbance.

Businesses have primarily relied on cost reduction and innovative operational adjustments where ' … three strategies – survival, adaption and innovation – existed side-by-side' (Dahles & Susilowati, 2015, p. 47). However, the dimensions of resource-based organizational resilience can also be explored from a capital-based approach (Brown et al., 2018). Brown et al. (2017, p. 365) provide an example from a hotel management perspective explaining the approach as ' … a dynamic condition describing the capacity of a hotel, together with its stakeholders (staff, guests and the local community), to assess, innovate, adapt, and overcome possible disruptions'. Their typology includes six types of capital: economic, social, physical, human, natural and cultural. Capital that can be drawn upon to build organizational resilience can be grouped into three critical resources. These are people, processes and partnerships (Foster & Dye, 2005; Hall et al., 2017). Of these, it can be argued that human capital represents the core to creating inter-relationships between the other factors that contribute to the development of organizational resilience (Hall et al., 2017; Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011). While human capital strategies in developing resilience have been of interest to scholars in the field of management (Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011; Nilakant et al., 2014), organizational resilience developed through HR practices has yet to permeate the literature on crisis management within tourism and hospitality.

2.2. HRM in crises

In the context of crises, HRM can provide organizations with two significant contributions: (i) operational capabilities to manage crises and (ii) interventions to facilitate collective and individual organizational performance that improve crisis responses (Hillyard, 2000; Wang et al., 2009). Previous studies have noted the prevalence of cost reduction measures in response to recession such as layoffs, payroll cuts, recruitment freezes, reductions in training, rigorous performance management or downsizing, rather than maintaining the whole system (Israeli et al., 2011;

Mohrman & Worley, 2009; Santana et al., 2017; Teague & Roche, 2014). In other cases, organizations sought to reinforce their capabilities rather than adopting cost reduction measures alone (Teague & Roche, 2014). Research focused on the impact of the 2008 financial crisis on the hotel sector in Madrid, for example, found that hotels that increased marketing and promotion to attract more guests fared better than those that focused on cost-cutting measures (Del Mar Alonso-Almeida & Bremser, 2013).

Multiple recessions have also drawn attention to a high-commitment model in HR practices, which reflects the importance of enhancing the morale and commitment of the workforce (Cascio, 2009; Roche et al., 2011). Teague and Roche (2014) identify two categories of HR practices employed during crises: technical and behavioural. Technical refers to practices relevant to cost and headcount reduction, while behavioural consists of practices that facilitate employee motivation and commitment. Building on this theoretical foundation, our research focuses on creating a set of HR practices that enable tourism and hospitality organizations to develop resilience capabilities to overcome crises. Our research is positioned within the COVID-19 research agenda proposed by Zenker and Kock (2020) based on the complexity of the situation. Time will tell whether other aspects of their six elements: destination image; change in tourism behaviour; change in resident behaviour; change in the tourism industry and long-term and indirect effects; will have an impact on future tourism in Vietnam.

3. Research methodology

Due to its exploratory nature, a qualitative approach was adopted for this study. Qualitative research was also appropriate to examine, at a deep level, the impact of experiences, behaviour and individual interactions on business operations (Myers, 2019). In-depth, semi-structured interviews were chosen to explore the HR practices employed by business managers in Vietnam during the lockdown to cope, adapt, and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Three cities in Central Vietnam, were selected as research sites: Hue, Danang and Hoi An. These cities were chosen because they are heavily reliant on tourism to support their economies. Hue and Hoi An are UNESCO World Cultural Heritage cities renowned for hosting both international and domestic tourists. Danang is a busy transport hub supported by a large airport with frequent, direct international flight connections. As such, it is a gateway to Central Vietnam and a large number of resorts and hotels are located along its coastline (Hildebrandt & Isaac, 2015).

In order to gain reliable information on the HR practices employed during the lockdown, managerial personnel, such as, General Managers and Human Resource Managers were approached and interviewed. To obtain maximum variation and depth of information, a combination of purposive, snowball, and quota sampling techniques were employed. The researchers sought a variety of informants' views across the tourism and hospitality sectors by including travel agencies, accommodation venues and food and beverage outlets. In Vietnam, many local travel agents are responsible for developing the itineraries for inbound international tourist groups and thus operate locally and internationally (O'Mahony, 2020).

A semi-structured approach was used to guide the interviews as it allows key questions to be asked of all respondents, while ensuring the flexibility to follow up on emerging topics and themes and to adapt to informants' perspectives, for example, their specific positions or sectors (Patton, 2015). The interview guide was developed from a review of relevant literature in HRM and in crisis management. The main focus was on the impact of COVID-19 on informants' businesses as well as the HR practices that were adopted, followed by their assessment of the significance and effectiveness of these practices. The interview guide was prepared in English and subsequently translated into Vietnamese and back-translated to validate its quality (Tyupa, 2011).

Table 1. Profile of informants, business sector and experience.

Informant no.	Gender	Age group	Position	Experience in the current position	Experience in the T&H industry	Sector	Number of employees	Business ownership
1	Female	30–40	General Manager	2 years	13 years	Accommodation	97	Joint-stock company
2	Male	30–40	HR Manager	7 years	15 years	Accommodation	300	Private company
3	Male	30–40	General Manager	3 years	5 years	Accommodation	55	Private company
4	Female	30–40	HR manager	7 years	10 years	Accommodation	110	Private company
5	Male	30–40	General manager	2 years	3 years	Accommodation	29	Private company
6	Male	40–50	Branch manager	2 years	15 years	Travel agency	90	State-owned company
7	Male	40–50	CEO	7 years	20 years	Travel agency	80	Joint-stock company
8	Male	30–40	General Manager	3 years	12 years	Travel agency	20	Private company
9	Male	30–40	General Manager	10 years	12 years	Restaurant	40	Private company
10	Male	40–50	General Manager	5 years	More than 20 years	Travel Agency	30	Private company
11	Female	25–30	HR manager	5 years	5 years	Accommodation	24	Private company
12	Female	30–40	General Manager	7 years	7 years	Accommodation	20	Private company
13	Male	30–40	General Manager	6 years	6 years	Accommodation	80	Private company
14	Male	30–40	Founder/ owner	19 years	19 years	Restaurant	350	Private company
15	Female	30–40	Branch deputy manager	1 years	8 years	Travel agency	20	State-owned company
16	Male	40–50	Deputy manager	6 years	45 years	Travel agency + Hotel + Restaurant	500	Joint-stock company since 2013
17	Female	30–40	Founder/ Owner	3 years	3 years	Accommodation	88	Private company
18	Female	30–40	Founder/ Owner	5 years	5 years	Accommodation	30	Private company
19	Male	40–50	Branch deputy manager	12 years	20 years	Travel agency	30	Private company
20	Male	30–40	Owner	9 years	14 years	Restaurant	18	Private company

Data were collected in May and June 2020. The interviews were carried out in Vietnamese, on a one-to-one basis. Each interview was between 30 and 60 minutes duration and was audio recorded. Table 1 presents a profile of the 20 managerial personnel who were interviewed for this study.

Interviews were transcribed and translated into English by the bilingual researchers. Thematic analysis was used to identify themes and patterns within the data using the interview guide to develop the initial coding structure, while allowing new themes and subthemes to emerge (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The identified themes and subthemes were reviewed, defined, crosschecked, reflected on, and discussed among the research team to reach consensus about the findings and to develop a framework for interpretation (Lester et al., 2020). A summary and discussion of the major themes and sub-themes is presented in the next section.

4. Findings

4.1. Contextual overview of the impact of COVID-19 on tourism and hospitality in Vietnam

Vietnam recognized COVID-19 as a serious threat with the first confirmed case of a tourist from Wuhan in January (BBC, 2020). The national emergency plan was immediately enacted, including closing borders and schools, imposing travel restrictions and suspending all international flights. A nationwide lockdown commenced on 1 April, when there were about 200 confirmed cases (Vietnam Ministry of Health, 2020). These measures were initially considered extreme (BBC, 2020), however, they helped the country to successfully control the virus during that period. By 25 June 2020, a total of 352 COVID-19 cases had been confirmed, with 329 recovered and no reported deaths (Vietnam Ministry of Health, 2020).

While the number of COVID-19 cases was low, the impact on the Vietnamese tourism and hospitality industry was devastating, due to border closures, travel restrictions and the lockdown. There was a recorded 98% fall in visitors in April, compared with 2019 (Reuters, 2020) and the Vietnam National Administration of Tourism estimated a loss of around US$5.9–7.7 billion over the three months from February to April (The World and Vietnam, 2020). Our informants identified significant negative impacts on their businesses based on the progress of the virus and the government's reactions to it. For example, in January and February there was a sharp increase in cancellations and a steady decline in hotel occupancy. By March occupancy rates and bookings were almost zero and in April, due to the lockdown, most businesses had to close. The major impact was on finance as revenue dried up while fixed costs were still being incurred (Informants 8, 9 and 13). While the main concern within the accommodation sector was revenue, travel agents responsible for incoming tourist groups were more worried about their supply chain. Some informants believed that they would be highly impacted by consumer demand and interest, and that they would have to rethink and restructure their business models to attract new markets (Informants 7 and 8).

After 22 days of lockdown, most of the locked-down services, such as attractions, public transportation, hotels, flights and restaurants were allowed to reopen, albeit with various safety measures in place (VNAT, 2020). With the global spread of the pandemic and a ban on international arrivals, Vietnam focused on stimulating domestic tourism launching the 'Vietnamese People Travel in Vietnam' programme. The aim of this campaign was to introduce quality tourism products and travel packages at reasonable prices (Reuters, 2020). As a result, many of our informants saw an increase in bookings and occupancy in May and June, with some reporting 70–80% occupancy on weekends (Informants 3 and 5). This was a positive sign of recovery for the tourism and hospitality industry and lessons learned and experiences that led to this improvement are discussed below.

4.2. Resilience HR practices

To focus the discussion, we established a specific timeframe for the crisis centring on the lockdown (Hall, 2010; Ioannides & Gyimóthy, 2020). We concentrated on three main lockdown phases: (i) before the lockdown, (ii) during the lockdown and (iii) after the lockdown. In the discussion that follows we highlight the links between theory and practice to illustrate how tourism and hospitality operators' responses to the crisis during these three lockdown phases, although seemingly intuitive, conformed to current best practice.

4.2.1. Before the lockdown
4.2.1.1. Health and safety. The focus before the lockdown was on the personal protective equipment reported to lower infection risk and allow employees to provide services safely (California State Government, 2020). The provision of hand-sanitizer, protective gloves, and medical face masks was common as informants sought to prevent the spread of Covid-19 when guests were still in their properties. Seeing these measures in place also gave confidence to guests. Flexible

work schedules, partly working-from-home and partly within the workplace, was another prevention measure. This was designed to protect employees and secure the organization's workforce because it allowed a proportion of the workforce to be protected at any one time. Health-related issues among employees were viewed as an increased business risk. As one informant explained:

> At the time of the Coronavirus outbreak, although the social-distancing restrictions had not yet applied, the management board considered the safety plan for the company. There are two shifts: half of employees worked at home and another half still worked at the company. If there is an infectious case, 50% of employees will be isolated. The remaining can keep running the company. (Informant #6)

Informants also minimized human-to-human contact and provided other support such as employee accommodation. One example that helped employees working at a resort hotel to look after their physical health was:

> When a coronavirus infection case was found in my resort, I facilitate about 50 employees to self-isolate in an area away from the infected area in the resort. I also asked them to implement safe protective measures. All employees stay and use all facilities for free in the resort. (Informant #4)

4.2.1.2. Positive psychology.
In addition to physical health employees' mental health must be considered. Positive psychology, which emphasizes employee wellbeing, is a central pillar in organizational resilience (Hall et al., 2017; Khan et al., 2019). Resilience-oriented conversations allow managers to understand employees' psychological state including anxiety, depression, and fear while demonstrating that management care about employees wellbeing (Cooper et al., 2013). Employees are also empowered to provide feedback about alterations to the business that can contribute to managing the crisis from their operational perspectives. In this study, frequent communication and interactions between management and employees was a key element that provided mutual benefits for businesses and their employees as reported by the following informants:

> When the outbreak started and some infected cases appeared in Hoi An, receptionists and house-keeping staff were scared of direct contact with guests. The department heads had conversations to encourage these employees to overcome their stress. (Informant #4)

> My hotel also encourages employees to provide suggestions to handle difficult situations in the epidemic, and to present their ideas about working time to department heads. (Informant #3)

Co-operation was also found to build resilience allowing managers to express solidarity with employees. Informants noted that assisting employees in their work roles gave them confidence when facing unpredictable risks. Sharing values and trust between managers and employees also facilitates the development of positively oriented human resource strengths (Luthans et al., 2007). One manager took this working relationship further by accompanying staff who showed guests to their rooms stating that:

> I also come into every room of the hotel and directly take part in welcoming guests with employees; therefore, they are more confident in their work. (Informant #3)

Most informants asserted that psychological wellbeing can be enhanced by providing additional indirect employee benefits to workers. For example, health insurance is considered to be a key monetary benefit that promotes employee resilience (Khan et al., 2019). Seeking ways to avoid terminating employment through workforce adjustment by lowering working hours, introducing changes to the duration of shifts and encouraging employees to take accrued leave, also has positive psychological benefits. These practices have been found to lower costs and reduce the fear of losing jobs arising from uncertainty (International Labour Organization, 2020a). Informants in our study implemented many of these practices to maintain employees' positive psychological disposition. Examples include:

> Insurance is a 'luxury' expense under the current financial pressure, but we try to pay employee's health insurance to reassure employees that if something happens, they can still get free medical care. (Informant #1)

> I try to maintain the employees' income and never have a policy of firing employees. When the income is dramatically reduced, I apply leave rotation, on one hand, to save variable costs (i.e. electricity and water expense) and on another hand, to reduce the spread of negative thoughts. (Informant #6)

4.2.2. During the lockdown

To survive when a crisis becomes more severe, firms frequently implement extreme actions. In our study three main pillars: economic capital enhancing, deep social capital enhancing and diffused power and accountability; were introduced.

4.2.2.1. Economic capital enhancing practices.
Most informants emphasized the importance of varied cost-cutting initiatives to mitigate financial stress including cutting payroll, bonuses and benefits, reducing the use of temporary staff, cutting training expenditure, mandating employees to take paid leave, placing employees on unpaid leave and freezing recruitment to avoid layoffs. Layoffs have a detrimental impact on staff morale and commitment and are considered to breach a psychological contract between the workers and employers (Arshad & Sparrow, 2010). During the lockdown our informants reported that:

> We started to reduce benefits and bonuses to cut costs from April. However, the situation got worse and we had to ask employees to take all their annual leave and ask for volunteers to take unpaid leave. (Informant #6)

> When the lockdown continued, first we laid off some temporary workers. We also tried to stop all external training plans. Then our hotel had to close and all employees had to take unpaid leave. (Informant #3)

Of those informants who reported implementing a redundancy policy, most were from SMEs because this sector experienced the most volatility when the crisis struck. Larger firms were more resistant to cutting headcount because they understood that losing skilled workers would incur high costs to achieve the quality levels expected by their guests (Brundage & Koziel, 2010). One informant captured the views of many stating that:

> At first, we do not really fire people. They voluntarily left because we did not offer enough working time. In April when the lockdown was implemented, we had to layoff all the employees in groups 2, 3 (low-skilled employees). Cutting headcount is not what we wanted to do, it is just what we needed to do to bounce back. (Informant #13)

However, seven informants specifically reported retaining employees. These were informants numbered 1, 2, 6, 7, 14, 15, 16 in the informant profile in Table 1. Four of these were travel agencies (#6,7,15 and 16), two (#1 and 2) were engaged in accommodation and one (#14) was a restaurateur. All were mainly state-owned companies or joint-stock companies as opposed to private SMEs.

4.2.2.2. Social-capital enhancing practices.
Social capital has a profound impact on employee's affective commitment (Parzefall & Kuppelwieser, 2012) by easing mental health problems during a crisis (Christodoulou & Christodoulou, 2013) and helping employees and organizations to remain strong. Social capital practices are enhanced through interactions between employees, including in training and generally working together (Leana III & Van Buren, 1999).

Many, informants revealed that their organizations maintained their normal patterns of training during the economic downturn because it contributed to enhanced employee interactions and well-being. Training and development also nurtures hope, optimistism and feelings of being valued, which in turn enhances employee resilience (Khan et al., 2019). Our interviews highlighted a shift from external training to internal training, which reduced costs while improving employees' skills and organizational capability. In-house training can also identify talented staff for future development. Informants reported that internal training helped to develop an ongoing learning culture and enhance adaptive capacity. For example, informants stated that:

> We don't know how long Covid will last, but we do know it will end. Then it will be time for the hotel to recover, so training and talent detection is a long-term strategy that can help us prepare ourselves to be ready to go back at once. (Informant #1)

> We have used the lockdown time to do internal training for our employees. We apply new technologies, new models to our work, with young staff supporting older staff. (Informant #6)

Informants also introduced stress management initiatives to help employees remain positive during the lockdown period:

> Our corporation organizes online mental health and stress management training courses to help employees cope with the stresses they face, such as risk of illness. (Informant #2)

These types of supportive training programmes have been identified within the literature as contributors to the development of organizational resilience (Bardoel et al., 2014).

Informants advised that their organizations attempted to protect job security because employees tend to expect job security in exchange for commitment in a reciprocal interplay in which employees require employers to honour an unspoken promise of job security. Downsizing breaches this psychological contract and can undermine the social capital that is built up over long periods and ultimately harm the organization (Leana III & Van Buren, 1999). Informants in this study asserted that they attempted to retain all employees to support their mental health and productivity.

> In some other hotels, they layed off 50% of employees. But here, we do not do that. Although the number of working hours is not as high, but what employees acquire here is the stability. If we fire some employees, the remaining ones would not feel safe about their job and would not do well in their job. The importance here is to make employees feel secure. (Informant #4)

A supportive culture associated with employee wellfare also promotes the development of resilience (Khan et al., 2019). A sharing culture was developed within the majority of businesses in our study from the beginning of the pandemic and throughout the lockdown. Informants promoted sharing and increased motivation and encouraged employees to contribute to the community as a way of engendering the spirit of 'sharing good and bad times together'. For example:

> We seem to be brothers and sisters in a family, so that we always support employees with work and non-work problems. We always ask employees about the financial situation of their family during and after Covid 19. When we have our first revenue after Covid 19, we started to share them to our employee without thinking of our part. (Informant #10)

> We sent our staff to do charity work to make them understand the spirit of sharing not only within our organizations but also with the community. (Informant #14)

4.2.2.3. Diffused power and accountability. Soft practices such as, diffused power and accountability that involve employee participation in decision-making can enhance resilience (Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011). Our informants also emphasized the importance of creating an empowering environment in which decision-making is shared and employee participation is encouraged:

> Speaking of personnel, I understand that we have to be responsible for them. That is why when making important decisions such as closure or opening time of the business, our employees are allowed to participate. (Informant #14)

Several informants also highlighted the significant need to ensure employees received accurate and clear information so they could learn, respond to and, where necessary, change their behaviour. Communication and information sharing is also central to building trust among employees and it influences how they respond to challenges (Kamoche, 2003). In our study communication was found to maintain employee engagement and commitment. For example:

> Although the situation is very complicated, our hotel still tries to communicate with staff regularly about the business situation, as well as our decisions and what we will do next. Even when some workers take unpaid leave or if headcount is cut, we commit with them that we will call them first when we need people. (Informant #3)

> I think it is the responsibility of the manager to explain the situation to employees, to make them understand why we need to do those practices and motivate them to contribute to minimizing income reduction. (Informant #6)

4.2.3. After the first lockdown

The first sign of relief from Covid 19 in Vietnam was when the social distancing rule was lifted. Although international borders remained closed, the tourism and hospitality industry entered a recovery phase, when domestic tourism was encouraged. Many businesses chose to maintain practices applied before and during the lockdown as well as broad resource network-enhancing practices, such as talent management, job redeployment and performance management.

4.2.3.1. Broad resource network. Resource network-enhancing aims to enhance relationships with supply chain members and develop strategic alliances to secure the resources required to support adaptive initiatives (Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011). The practice is based on the notion that resilient individuals or employees are those who are capable of forging relationships with others to leverage other strategic capabilities (Werner & Smith, 2001), Many tourism and hospitality businesses concentrated on diversifying and adjusting supply networks to reduce risks and improve business continuity. Some managers in our study saw this as employee focused, while others proposed that a broader external network could be a catalyst for recovery in a co-operative approach. For example:

> My ex-employees will be later my potential partners who could help my company leverage other strategic capabilities. (Informant #10)

and

> It is very important to broaden the resource network with other strategic partners and stakeholders to together find out solutions for recovery after the crisis. It is better to cooperate and coordinate rather than go alone. (Informant #12)

4.2.3.2. Talent management. Talent management is a corporate strategy that helps develop a competitive advantage (Phillips & Edwards, 2009). In the recovery phase, informants reported concerns about retaining the workforce and attracting qualified staff because their best employees were seeking career opportunities in industries that were not as affected by Covid. Measures to retain employees are important to bounce back after a crisis. Informants advised:

> I proposed a plan of alternative voluntary leave for employees. By doing so, I could save a huge amount of money to pay good employees and keep them in the company. (Informant #1)

> Employers should show clearly their strong wishes of retaining talented employees based on a reasonable payment. (Informant #8)

4.2.3.3. Job redeployment. In the post-lockdown period, responsible restructuring based on redeployment, relocation and retention is advocated (Cascio, 2009). With more hotels and restaurants re-opening and the emphasis on domestic tourism, managers sought to rehire employees. However, they selected the best employees who could multi-task so that smaller numbers of guests could be served by fewer employees. Informants noted:

> I rehired some of my previous employees who best fit with job requirements and organizational culture. They are usually good performers who were highly motivated before and during the crisis. (Informant #3)

> The crisis is a chance for employees to train themselves with multi tasks so that they could perform responsibilities of the others and adapt easily to turbulence, helping organizations recover quickly. (Informant #13)

> Downsizing caused by the crisis gives a chance for enterprises to select the good performers so that they could run efficiently later in the period of recovery. (Informant #11)

4.2.3.4. Performance management. Performance management is important after a crisis when businesses need to exceed the expectations of their customers and win back their business (Augunis, 2013). Our informants viewed performance management as essential to delivering the service quality required to underpin business recovery. Informants also found that frequent appraisals motivate the learning and sharing employees need to enable the business to recover.

> I always conduct rigorous performance appraisals in order to ensure the highest levels of service quality to impress the increasing number of guests coming to my hotel. (Informant #4)

> I recognized the importance of performance management because without it, employees will work with a superficial attitude. They can work more carefully with their full commitment if their employers carry out a formal performance appraisal and motivate them to do their best. (Informant #1)

4.3. Factors affecting organizational resilience HR practices

The final theme that emerged in our study were factors influencing resilience through HR practices. Our informants not only shared their resilience practices, but also revealed various factors that affected their decisions. Four factors emerged: financial constraints, organizational culture, leadership and the business visionl and mission.

4.3.1. Financial constraints

A healthy financial position and access to finance are essential for businesses to survive and succeed when there are significant reductions in revenue (Gössling et al., 2020). This was the most difficult challenge noted by our informants:

> There are several problems, but the first one is finance. (Informant #8)

> The largest impact is definitely liquidity, we can expect zero profit. So, the financial crisis is the most important issue of our business. (Informant #6)

In this study, it was critical for private SMEs with limited access to finance. Their first reaction was to reduce costs by temporarily laying off staff and cutting working hours. Several informants advised:

> We are trying to cut all the unnecessary costs as well as negotiate to reduce loan interest and sell other assets to reduce the interest. In general, we are trying to cut the cost as much as possible. (Informant #5)

> Regarding policies for sustaining, on one hand, we review all of our spending, on the other hand, we are trying to reduce the cost, where labor cost is the largest. Hence, we have to reallocate jobs in order to reduce this labor cost to half. (Informant #7)

Others tried to retain employees using various practices that were determined by organizational culture, leadership, and vision. These less tangible aspects are highly relevant to resilience (Seville et al., 2008).

As the virus progressed, however, the government provided a package of incentives to businesses including tax breaks, deferment of tax payments and postponing land rental fees. These measures supported around 98 percent of businesses at a cost to the government of US$974 million (Vietnam Briefing, 2020). Banks were also encouraged to reduce interest rates for enterprises that were significantly impacted by Covid-19. For example, the State bank of Vietnam (SBV) cut interest rates and other credit institutions restructured repayment periods and reduced loan interest allowing businesses to borrow money with zero interest rates to pay employees' salaries for three months (VN Express, 2020). Hospitality businesses were also allowed to delay contributions to employee pensions, death benefit funds and union fees and were provided with a reduction in the price of electricity (Grant Thornton, 2020).

In Vietnam the more than 22.1 million workers, or 40.8% of total labour force work are in low-skilled, low wage jobs (ILO, 2020b). Financial support was also provided to this group under A government resolution including:

(i) VND 1,800,000 (about USD 70) per month for employees working under labour contracts who had to suspend their contracts or take unpaid leave for a period of one month or more.

(ii) VND 1,000,000 (about USD 43) per month for employees whose labour contracts were terminated and who are not eligible for unemployment insurance, and for employees working without a labour contract who lose their jobs.

(iii) VND 250,000 ($10.7) per month for poor and near-poor households and VND 500,000 ($21.5) per month for those with a record of meritorious service to the nation.

(iv) VND1,000,000 per month for household businesses with revenues below VND 100 million ($4,300) a year that had to suspend operations from April 1 due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

4.3.2. Organizational culture. Many informants indicated that decisions about the policies to adopt during the pandemic were influenced by existing organizational culture and described a people-orientated culture as essential. In people-orientated cultures, individuals are the central focus (Mullins, 2016). In some businesses there were no layoffs despite financial difficulties because informants asserted that employee welfare was central to decision-making as evidenced in the following:

> This is our culture and it has been since the beginning of our business, the culture of focusing on people and respecting people. (Informant #1)

> A business can only be strong when they have a strong workforce with strong spirit and commitment. […] If a business cannot sacrifice its benefits for its employees' welfare, it cannot build a strong organization. (Informant #14)

Many informants also acknowledged the essential role of employees in delivering good service and increasing profitability (Fulford & Enz, 1995). They felt that by caring for their employees at this difficult time, they would increase loyalty and commitment. People-oriented values have been found to be the best predictors of employee commitment (Ortega-Parra & Ángel Sastre-Castillo, 2013). Informants understood this stating that:

> With the support for current employees during this difficult time, they will be more loyal and committed to the organization. (Informant #4)

> The heart of service is the human resource. If we don't invest in people, we cannot succeed. (Informant #1)

Shared values also guide the behaviour of employees and are culturally specific (Webster & White, 2010). Vietnam has a high collective culture, where strong relationships between individuals are cultivated and people look after other members of society (Hofstede Insights, 2020). In return, they seek loyalty (Quang & Vuong, 2002), which explains why managers and employees shared their duties and responsibilities during the crisis.

In our study one informant advised that:

> Some of my employees were willing to take unpaid leave in order to share the financial burden with the business. This touching action is rooted in our culture. We were together when we succeed, and so no one is left out in difficulties. (Informant #6)

4.3.3. Leadership. Employee-oriented sharing and ethical values also guided informants' decisions regarding resilience HR practices. Many informants indicated that the first thing they worried about was the welfare of their employees.

> In my head, the first questions always are 'Do we have enough money to pay our employees?', 'How many can cope with the current situation?', 'How many will have to quit the job?' [..] All the debts will have to be postponed so that we have enough budget for a three-month salary. (Informant #6)

> Terminating contracts, in terms of legal aspect, it is not difficult, especially in the current crisis. Yet regarding humanity, we are not comfortable making this decision. (Informant #1)

This demonstrates ethical behaviour and concern for subordinates, two significant aspects of leadership that are particularly appropriate in service organizations (Ehrhart, 2004; Mullins, 2016).

4.3.4. Business vision and mission. The final factor influencing resilience HR practices is the business vision and mission. During the crisis, business survival was prioritized, and informants revealed that the long-term strategies that significantly contributed to resilience were in line with their business vision. Amid the current crisis, informants long-term vision and mission guided the resilience strategies they introduced. For example:

> When COVID-19 started to develop, the industry in general and our business in particular has three missions: to minimize the damage, to survive and to thrive and develop afterwards. (Informant #7)

Many considered the focus on HR as the key to success especially within higher quality hospitality businesses. Managers in these entities indicated their HR vision involved keeping and developing a highly skilled and committed workforce. They felt that, maintaining the current workforce was essential to the development of the business, despite the burden of labour costs. Examples include:

> Our resort requires high service quality and thus highly skilled staff. And it is not easy to find highly qualified people, especially in peak season. (Informant #4)

> The most important element to differentiate and create the soul of our business is our employees. If we cannot ensure loyalty, pride and commitment among employees, we cannot provide good service quality to meet the customers' expectations. (Informant #1)

In contrast, some businesses were more willing to let employees go because highly skilled and committed employees were not their focus. These were lower-ranked hotels and restaurants employing low-skilled employees to deliver limited services.

> Our target market is package tours and medium spending groups who only stay one night at our hotel. So, we don't need highly skilled, experienced and loyal employees. We only need medium skilled employees who could provide standard services to the basic demands of our guests. (Informant #13)

5. Discussion and conclusion

This study sought to provide insights into the strategies employed to develop organizational resilience through the lens of strategic human resource practices in a developing country. The study focused on two main themes: organizational resilience HR practices and the factors affecting resilience HR practices. The discussion includes associated sub-themes that were found to be effective and these lessons learned provide both theoretical and managerial contributions.

5.1. Theoretical contributions

Several theoretical contributions broaden the literature in organizational resilience and specifically within the tourism and hospitality context. First, the study explores organizational resilience in a global health crisis, focusing on the lockdown, which has been applied in most countries. Although the timing of lockdowns differs across countries and regions, most experienced three main stages: before, during and after the lockdown event. While the focus of previous studies in tourism and hospitality has centred on the resources, strategies and capabilities of businesses in a crisis (Biggs et al., 2015 Brown et al., 2018; Dahles & Susilowati, 2015;), this study presents a process-based approach to consider stages in the development of organizational resilience. We have found that, across the three stages of the crisis, organizational resilience can include offensive and defensive responses. Defensive responses include health and safety, emergency and positive psychology, which were measures taken before-lockdown stage and were designed to protect HR as well as businesses. Offensive responses are measures, such as, broad resource network enhancing, talent management, job redeployment and performance management that are designed to assist hospitality and tourism

businesses to recover after the lockdown. Notably, HR practices used during the lockdown (e.g. economic capital enhancing, diffused power and accountability enhancing and social-capital enhancing) are considered both offensive and defensive responses which enable firms to withstand the crisis and then adapt to change for the development of organizational resilience.

Second, when crises such as Covid-19 confront businesses, they must move beyond routine procedures because organizational resilience can only be developed by deploying adaptive strategies to survive and recover (Brown et al., 2017). By examining the important role of HR in developing resilience capacity among tourism and hospitality businesses (Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011), this study expands previous studies by presenting a comprehensive set of HR practices that can be deployed to achieve resilience capacity. These practices are applicable across various crisis stages. In particular, HR practices that enhance health and safety (e.g. safe working environment, flexible work-arrangements and emergency response) and positive psychology (e.g. communication, cooperation, employee benefits, workforce adjustment) were found to support and motivate the workforce. These are critical when sudden changes or threats occur within an organization. In the next crisis stage, the focus should be expanded to include economic capital resilience. This can involve cost cutting, retrenchment programmes, training, peer-to-peer support and social interaction. In the recovery phase, HR practices include broad resource network practices, job redeployment and performance management to enhance the adaptive capability of businesses during recovery. While acknowledging the work of other scholars within general HR management (Branicki et al., 2019; Khan et al., 2019; Lengnick-Hall et al., 2011; Mendy, 2019), the findings of our study provide additional insights into the linkages between HRM and crisis management with a specific focus on organizational resilience in the tourism and hospitality sector.

Lastly, the study explored four crucial factors: financial constraints, organizational culture, leadership and business vision and mission, which help to explain how and why the lockdown in Vietnam contributed to the development of resilience. The short-term strategies employed, for example, revealed that these businesses, while trying to cope with the negative impacts of COVID-19, did not overlook the fact that their businesses will need to continue to be competitive, to develop and to come out of this crisis stronger. Indeed, our study found that, contrary to previous studies where there has been a prevalence of cost reduction measures including layoffs, payroll cuts, recruitment freezes, reductions in training, rigorous performance management or downsizing, there was an attempt to maintain the whole system and to enhance the morale and commitment of the workforce. This bodes well for an eventual full recovery from the pandemic.

Figure 1 presents a framework of resilience HR practices in a crisis as a visual display of the theoretical contributions of this study.

5.2. Managerial contributions

As Covid-19 continues its global disruption, businesses face multiple obstacles and challenges. By exploring the lockdown in a developing country during the crisis, this study provides practical implications regarding HR crisis management practices at both individual and organizational levels. It shows how managers and staff reacted to the crisis and the potential risks corresponding to each stage of the crisis. It also presents practical information based on scenarios for each stage of the crisis including before, during and after the lockdown.

In terms of resilience HR practices, managers should determine which priorities to concentrate on to enhance employee and organizational resilience in each stage of a crisis. The proposed framework of organization resilience HR practices also provides practical guidelines for businesses to develop action plans to respond to the current or future crises. Notably, entrepreneurs should be aware of the interaction of resilience stages implying that measures businesses adopted to achieve coping capability significantly affect the adaptive capability of businesses in the recovery phase. Finally, the study emphasized the importance of internal business management factors such as leadership, organizational culture, vision and financial support, highlighting that managers must find a balance
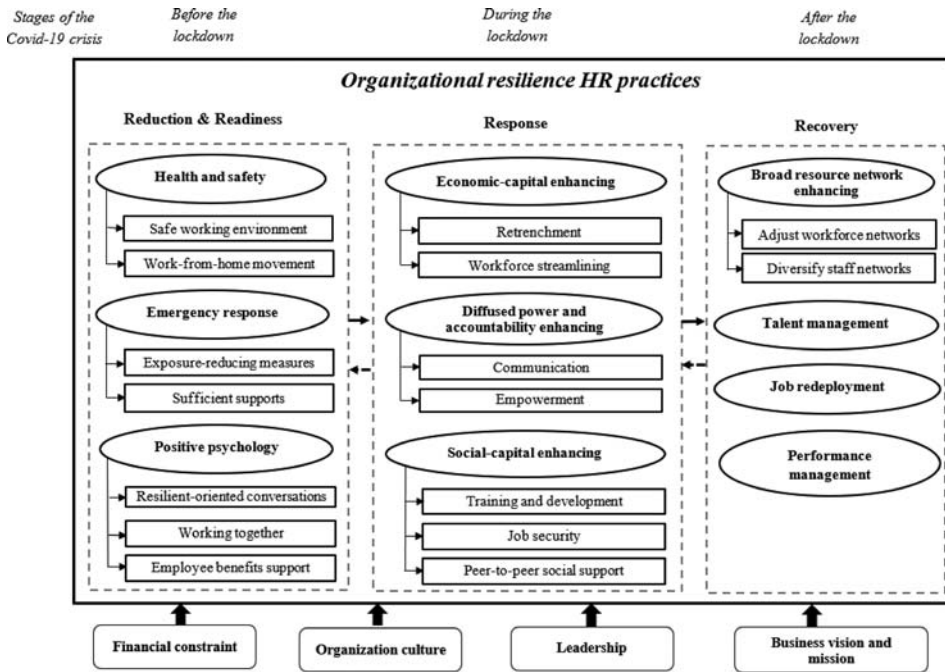
Figure 1. Proposed framework of resilience HR practices in a crisis.

between what is possible and what is practical during a crisis. It is also hoped that these resilience HR practices will sustain these businesses during the current second wave of COVID-19 infections.

5.3. Limitations and future research

The study involved the collection of data from travel agents, accommodation providers and restaurants, however, samples of each were not equal across the three sectors. Consequently, the researchers were unable to compare organizational resilience between sectors. Further research could expand the interviews by choosing more representatives from each sector and also include other sectors, such as, transport and tourist attractions in order to understand the different levels of resilience as well as how resilience HR practices work among different but interrelated businesses. Exploring resilience HR practices at the macro level, such as, governmental policies could also be valuable and could provide a more holistic picture of organizational resilience in a wider business eco-system. Further quantitative research to empirically validate the applicability as well as the value of resilience HR practices with a large sample in both developing and developed countries would also have theoretical and operational benefits.

Disclosure statement

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