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## Research Article

### Accommodation Industry its Strategic Business Practices that Survive in Times of Crisis

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#### ABSTRACT

This study examined the accommodation industry: its strategic business practices that survive in times of crisis of Dipolog City Zamboanga del Norte. The qualitative case study methodology employed to obtain an in-depth investigation of the real-time experiences of the research participants. The study anchored on Fred R. David's (2021) five strategic business management practices: leadership, people, operations, marketing, and financial performance. The study revealed that accommodations industry practicing democratic forms of leadership, hiring of employees based on skills, providing motivations to their employees, operating their business by giving customer satisfaction, advertising their products and services, and ensuring that they attain financial stability. Despite the size of these enterprises, they still carried out sustainability practices that revolve around social, economic, and environmental practices that corporate social responsibility. The study also found out that accommodation industry challenges imposed by external and internal factors. In order to survive the challenges, Accommodation Industry employed business-level strategies to develop competitive advantage in the market. It therefore recommended that accommodation industry develop and strengthen their strategic practices taking into consideration their corporate social responsibility.

**Keywords:** *Accommodation industry, Financial performance, Leadership, Marketing, Operation, People, Strategic business practices, Survive in time of crisis, Sustainability*

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#### Introduction

Accommodation is a necessity for both international and domestic travelers. A government that is committed to developing tourism in the state will usually considers lowering

taxes and increasing incentives for hotels or businesses that provide lodging in tourist destinations. This can encourage the construction of new hotels or resorts in the area, thereby fueling the growth of the tourism industry. To

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provide a positive traveler experience, hotels must have well-defined quality standards for operations as well as safety, hygiene, and health policies (Karade & Ibarra-michel, 2020). Accommodation has a major effect on a traveler's overall experience of a place. It is a significant component of a traveler's expenditure. As a result, the role of accommodation manager is essential in the hotel/tourism industry. Human resources, budget, and inventory are the primary concerns of the accommodation manager. It is his/her responsibility to train the staff and ensure that the hotel's quality standards for hygiene, health, and safety are met. The manager is also responsible for the infrastructure's upkeep (Suhaeni & Sosianika, 2018).

Strategic business practices have been identified as an organization's long-term growth goal, as well as the implementation of various courses of action and the allocation of resources required to achieve these goals (Hargis et al., 2021). As a result, top management must focus on responsibilities. It must also develop a strategy for the internal and external environments in which the company operates. According to Onyango (2019), strategies are important for businesses because they serve as a plan of action or a series of decisions that help entrepreneurs achieve specific business goals.

According to Slack and Betts (2020), it is essential to be committed to the company's decision to become sustainable and to persuade others of its merits. Furthermore, managers at all levels of an organization use their intuition and judgment to evaluate strategic management (Abrahamson, 2019). Data exchanged between businesses, and some organizations will thrive and flourish today because they led by brilliant minds (Osterwalder et al., 2021).

Furthermore, strategic business practices are long-term directions that the company takes in order to gain a competitive advantage in a changing business climate and to maximize resources and core expertise in order to meet stakeholder expectations (Kerpen et al., 2019). These strategic reactions create opportunities for the company to adapt to the numerous challenges within its operational environment (Lum & Lum, 2020). As a result, the business strategy considers both the long and short term. It establishes the direction of the

company by developing a vision. It then evaluates what needs to be done to complete the mission.

The pandemic's unprecedented global shock undeniably amplifies the impact of inequality and targets the most vulnerable in an operation. As a result of the crisis, there has been a massive dislocation between small businesses and businesses (Baloyi & Ozumba, 2022). It is difficult to predict how long one will live and to be prepared for all possible outcomes. If the crisis persists, entrepreneurs will need to rethink their business strategy in order to reduce variable expenses (Hadi, 2020). To achieve this goal, small and medium-sized businesses should employ strategic management. The preceding method of continuous planning is the primary pillar of corporate sustainability, ensuring improved SME results on a regular basis and expanding existing awareness of business operations, particularly during difficult times. This is frequently documented in the organization's written plans (Saif et al., 2021).

### **Significance of the Study**

- Boost accommodation industry business practices in the locality
- Generate income for Local Government Units.
- Help locality generate jobs

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study looked into the Accommodation Industry its Strategic Business Practices that Survive in Times of Crisis in the Province of Zamboanga del Norte specifically to

1. Identify the strategic business practices among accommodation industry
2. To identify the crisis encounter by the accommodation industry
3. Describe survival strategy
4. To identify business practices that they employed during those times

### **Literature Review**

Strategic business practices have been identified as an organization's long-term growth goal, as well as the implementation of various courses of action and the allocation of resources required to achieve these goals (Hargis et al., 2021). As a result, top management

must focus on responsibilities. It must also develop a strategy for the internal and external environments in which the company operates. According to Onyango (2019), strategies are important for businesses because they serve as a plan of action or a series of decisions that help entrepreneurs achieve specific business goals.

Strategic business practices afford business organizations various benefits. Amoako-Gyampah and Boye (2021) declared that one of the benefits is that management can gain insights into their day-to-day activities, take advantage of longer-term opportunities, and manage risks. This means that strategic management, which is focused on combining insight and logic into decision-making, helps business organizations to achieve effectiveness, mobilize resources, and direct efforts and behaviours. Decisions, whether at a personal or organizational level, need to be enforced.

Furthermore, strategic business practices are long-term directions that the company takes in order to gain a competitive advantage in a changing business climate and to maximize resources and core expertise in order to meet stakeholder expectations (Kerten et al., 2019). These strategic reactions create opportunities for the company to adapt to the numerous challenges within its operational environment (Lum & Lum, 2020). As a result, the business strategy considers both the long and short term. It establishes the direction of the company by developing a vision. It then evaluates what needs to be done to complete the mission.

## **Theoretical Framework**

The primary objective of this study is to look into the strategic business practices of accommodation industry that survived in times of crisis. The research was based on Strategic Business Management, which is based on Fred R. David's (2021) five strategic business management practices and activities: leadership, people, operations, marketing, and financial performance. It explains that a business practice is an art and science that involves developing, executing, and analyzing cross-functional decisions that allow industries to achieve their objectives. He emphasized that the concepts have an impact on all strategic decisions.

According to David (2021), leadership is defined as a company's management's ability to set and achieve challenging goals, take quick and decisive action when necessary, outperform the competition, and encourage others to do the same. People are the company's most valuable asset in carrying out the strategies, plans, and processes that make a business successful. Operations are the tasks that businesses perform on a regular basis in order to maximize their company's value and profit. Marketing is the process by which a company encourages people to buy or sell a product or service. Financial performance is a comprehensive evaluation of a company's overall position in areas such as assets, liabilities, and equity.

A great business leader is someone who can motivate their team while also adhering to best practices in business management. Leadership is a component of business development that is used to create and strategize business methods. It can be defined as a process by which leaders can offer order, direction, guidance, or influence others' work in selecting and achieving the goals set (Anderson, 2019). Employees must be shown how to perform their tasks more efficiently and effectively by business leaders. They should also be able to provide employees with the assistance they require to grow and develop (Dubrin, 2018; Wong, 2018).

Employees are the company's most valuable asset. They are the foundation of organizational change; plans that rely solely on processes and structures will fail (Hoffman, 2018). Companies must constantly assess and improve management and leadership skills in order to intensify employee employment, increase productivity, and develop the business (Ayyagari et al., 2018). Employees with a high level of commitment are more likely to contribute to a company's success; they commit to carrying out every activity that aids the organization in achieving its goals (Kotane & Kuzmina-Merlino, 2018).

Operations differ depending on the type of business, industry, and size. An operation is a process that is significant because of its impact on the organization's productivity and efficiency. A section dedicated to operations is often included in business plans so that the company's founders understand the systems,

equipment, people, and processes required to run the organization (Ferreira et al., 2018). Employees and owners in a small business should both understand how the business operates and how various processes affect day-to-day tasks.

**Marketing.** A company's success or failure is determined by how its owner markets it. Marketing is a technique for creating and sustaining demand, as well as for preserving relevance, prestige, and competitiveness. Without it, the company will most likely go out of business due to a lack of revenue. According to Chosniel et al. (2019), an entrepreneur should know how to market their products or services, as marketing is the most important aspect of all businesses. A smart, business-minded person will always create the brand first in order to increase the sales of goods or services.

**Revenue Growth.** Managing the financial aspect is important to the achievement of any good business. According to Kuzmina-Merlino (2018), the issue of developing a single financial indicators system in the context of business performance evaluation arises for the recognition and assessment of the significance and role of financial indicators that are intended for the successful solution of the companies' financial management problems. As a result, in her research, she identified the following financial metrics as significant indicators: liquidity, profitability, and solvency. Liquidity refers to a company's ability to convert assets.

## Methodology

The study will utilize descriptive qualitative research methodology it aims to explore the strategic business practices of the accommodation industry that survived during times of crisis. It used qualitative case study research methodology to conduct an in-depth investigation of a real-time phenomenon within an

organization. A standard interview guide question was adapted from Bourletidis titled "SME Survival in time of Crisis" as well as Turcotte "SME Sustainability Challenges". A descriptive multiple case analysis and cross-data analysis to identify commonalities and differences in the events, activities, and processes that accommodation industry owners encounter or identify. The following inclusion and exclusion criteria used to choose the target research participants: they had to have at least five employees and assets worth between P1million and P15million. They must fall under the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) category, classified as accommodations, and be located not more than five kilometers from the city area.

## Results and Discussion

Since the city serves as the provincial business center, the majority of businesses are in the accommodation industry. Due to the twin cities' proximity to popular tourist destinations like the Dakak Park and Beach resort and the longest boulevard in the area, a substantial number of individuals travel here for both work and pleasure. It is the reason of the growing demand for accommodation in urban areas.

The city's economy significantly influenced by tourism. Consumer satisfaction and leisure-related businesses and services are definitely in demand today. SMEs in accommodation industry claims that it "offers relaxation services for weary travelers and guests, as well as those who want to stay in a peaceful environment. Originally, the place was a rice field; we converted it to a lodging business. Tourist accommodation is an option because it is a low-maintenance industry that requires little supervision".

Identify the strategic business practices among accommodation industry.

*Table 1. Accommodations' Strategic Business Practices*

Strategic Business Practices	Categories	Themes
Developing a sense of belongingness	Team- Building	Democratic Leadership
Networking and connection utilization		
Allowing employees to express/share their ideas	Empowering Employees	
Being open-minded to employees' ideas		
Taking the ideas and opinions of employees		

Strategic Business Practices	Categories	Themes
Respecting/Soliciting employees' ideas/knowledge		
Trusting their employees		
Hiring college graduate employees	Hard Skills	Employee Skills
Recruiting good and skilled workers		
Employing workers with good communication skills	Soft Skills	
Giving timely payment of salary as mandated by DOLE		
Allowing the employees to take leave of absence with pay	Extrinsic Motivations	Employee Motivation
Offering free lunch and snacks		
Granting them Christmas bonus		
Developing a sense of belongingness	Intrinsic Motivation	
Empowering employees		
Welcoming the guests regardless of their different time and date of arrival	Customer Service	Customer Satisfaction
Attending to the needs of clients		
Providing excellent service		
Maintaining satisfaction to customers		
Discounting the price	Freebies	
Maximizing Resources	Profit Maximization	Financial Stability
Scheduling in the purchase of supplies in bulks	Cost Minimization	
Cutting of cost expenses		
Minimizing expenses		

Table 1 presents the strategic business practices among accommodation industry. All of the managers and owners in the accommodation industry used democratic leadership techniques, which include being receptive to employee opinions and respecting, trusting, and encouraging employees to share their thoughts. Due to the variations in their operations, they adopted various leadership styles based on the attitudes and commitment of their workforce.

Experts concur that workers who have more control over their work schedules, locations, and methods put in more effort and are happier in their careers. Empowered workers are more devoted, committed, and perhaps even more productive. Giving employees the means to successfully manage or lead their own tasks, advance their own aims, and advance their own careers has innumerable advantages. Employee empowerment can boost confidence in management, inspire workers, encourage creativity, and enhance employee retention, all of which improve the bottom line. When given the chance to highlight their skills, employees will do their best work and feel more fulfilled at

the end of the day (Smith, 2018). Good leadership is reflected in empowered personnel.

Employee Skills/abilities are developed and enhanced through training, repetition, and practice. Hard skills are required because they increase worker efficiency and productivity, which in turn increases worker happiness. Employees must also apply other abilities, such as soft skills that increase customer pleasure, as hard skills alone do not convert into commercial success, (Smith, 2018)

If workers possess the essential hard skills, they can do their duties more successfully and efficiently. Employers who hire people with hard skills will experience higher production, decreased absenteeism rates, and more employee satisfaction (Sharma & Taneja, 2018). In any company organization, employee abilities are important for a number of reasons. Giving staff the tools they need increases productivity because it makes workers happier.

Employee motivation is the level of dedication, enthusiasm, and vitality that employees consistently bring to their work. Without it, organizations endure lower levels of output and productivity and are more likely to miss crucial

targets (Sharma & Taneja, 2018). Both external and internal motivations were used to inspire the study's participants. Extrinsically, the hospitality sector provided paid time off, punctual salary payments required by the Department of Labor and Employment, a Christmas bonus, and complimentary lunch and snacks. These procedures may have further effects on workers' productivity.

Different methods used by the accommodation sector to satisfy customers. The organization's goal of customer pleasure met by providing excellent service and freebies. Regardless of the time or day they arrived, guests greeted their needs to meet; they received outstanding service, customer happiness maintained, and product differentiation used. The creation of lasting relationships is the aim of customer service. Customer satisfaction is essential because it sets a business apart from its rivals. People may become devoted to a company, its goods, and its services as a result in the future. According to Willian and Brygrave's (2019) research, 77 percent of customers stated they were more loyal to companies who offered top-notch

customer service. In the long term, offering excellent customer service aids in relationship development and the establishment of a genuine partnership. Yu made similar findings and Bell in 2007, who discovered that over 70% of respondents, would spend more money with a business that offers superior customer service. According to Ghose et al. (2020), 24% of happy customers will patronize a company two years or longer following a good customer service experience.

Financial stability attained by maximizing profits and reducing costs. Minimizing costs, planning to buy supplies in bulk, reducing expenditures, and utilizing resources are common methods in the hospitality sector. Profit maximization concept has an indirect impact on economic and social well-being, according to Urban and Naidoo (2018). A company uses its resources efficiently when it is profitable, which results in payments for capital, fixed assets, labor, and administration. In this way, economic and social benefit is accomplished (Urban, B., & Naidoo, R., 2018).

Table 2. Crisis Encounter by Accommodations' Industry

Crisis Encounter by Accommodations Industry	Categories	Themes	
Having difficulties with government regulations	Regulatory Compliance	External Factors	
Experiencing economic shutdown			
Having transportation inaccessibility	Resources Management		
Rising of business competitors	Market Saturation		
Escalating stiff competition	Customer Pressure		
Dealing with rude and demanding clients	Financial Loss	Internal Factors	
Encountering low sales/income			
Confronting financial crisis			
Suffering loss and damage of materials	Employee Problem		
Detecting employee theft and tardiness			
Undergoing employee turnover			

Table 2 presents the different crisis encounter by the accommodation industry. During this crisis, the hotel business had a financial collapse and low sales. Both internal and external factors contributed to these difficulties. External variables these brought on by customer pressure, market saturation, resource management, and regulatory compliance. Internal variables. These relate to anything that owned by

the company and is either tangible or intangible. These elements identified, and they categorized as the company's strengths and weaknesses.

SMEs in the hospitality sector are the first and most significant victims of an economic downturn. Due to their low resources and reliance on high-interest bank loans, they maybe particularly affected by economic downturns.

The demise of SMEs is not implied by this. According to Ackah & Vuvor (2018), in order for a company to be successful on a global scale, it must be able to resolve financial issues, provide adequate resources, and properly manage its cash flows so that it can easily access global capital outlay flows.

Increasing competition, the capacity to adapt to quickly shifting market demand, technological change, capacity constraints relating to knowledge, innovation, and creativity, as well as a lack of resources, are all challenges

for SMEs to grow like finance, technology, skilled labor, market access, and market information, according to Wong (2019). However, for many SMEs, their potential is largely untapped because of issues associated to their small scale, such as a lack of resources. A hindrance to the growth of SME's is the inadequate use of information technology for sales. It is likely that governments will not give SMEs the close mentoring support they need to be taught how to use technology in their enterprises (Yoshino 2020).

*Table 3. Accommodation Industry Survival Strategy*

Accommodation Industry Survival Strategy	Categories	Themes
Innovating the Freebies and Services	Differentiation	Survival Strategy
Utilizing networking	Growth Strategy	
Staying focused	Cost Leadership	
Having skilled workers		
Working as team		
Displaying good leadership		
Stretching supplies		
Planning properly	Planning	
Asking for advice		
Taking Risk		

Table 3 presents the Survival strategy of accommodation industry. Accommodation industry employs differentiation strategy in their business operation; expansion strategy, cost leadership, and planning were among the methods used by the accommodation business to survive. It also demonstrates that the respondents sought assistance from business professionals and maintained their focus in order to survive by developing offerings and ser-

vices, cooperating as a team under the direction of an effective leader, and conducting enough planning. A survival strategy established by organizations to provide customers something special, distinctive, and different from what their rivals might deliver in the market. A management will often do this by assessing the company's strengths and limitations, the demands of its clients, and the total value it can provide (Kamal-Chaou, 2019).

*Table 4. Accommodation Industry Business Practices Employed during Crisis*

Accommodations Industry Business Practices Employed during Crisis	Categories	Themes
Making a quick response to a problem	Medium range forecasting	Competitive Advantage
Preparing an alternative plan	Proactive Management	
Keeping up with the latest trends		
Forecasting the future demand and trend		
Building Support System		
Purchasing in bulk	Cost Minimization	
Making employees feel valued	Employee Engagement	

Table 4 present the Medium-term forecasting, proactive management, cost reduction, and staff involvement were the main components of these preventative actions among the accommodation industry it can be concluded that SMEs in accommodations industry utilized various crisis management strategies. On the most recent trend, they stayed informed. They kept continual contact going while they planned and prepared in advance. In every commercial operation, it is important that always prepare for any situation; prevention is always preferable to treatment.

Evaluation of the strategic tactics used by the hospitality industry. The best strategic business practices for leadership include cultivating a sense of community, respecting and soliciting employee opinions and knowledge, and trusting employees with their operations. They also include utilizing networking and connections, being open to employee ideas, and being respectful of and soliciting employee opinions. Six of the practices from the list of those found in this study used as strategic practices on humans. They include employing workers with good communication skills, paying salaries on time in accordance with DOLE regulations, allowing employees to take paid leaves of absence, providing free lunches and snacks, and giving employees Christmas bonuses that encourage improvement and teamwork in the workplace.

The best-performing business arranges bulk supply purchases and reduces costs in order to maximize financial performance. Through these procedures, the company's income maximized and costs reduced, increasing owners' profits. This helped their business thrive in the marketplace. Its several procedures ensured that it did everything possible to assist the outside community. Through its many sponsored/given activities/incentives, it also made sure that their personnel and the environment well taken care.

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