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Abstract

The global tourism and hospitality industry has benefitted from years of consecutive growth over recent times. However, the health crisis of Covid-19 in 2020 wiped trillions in USD off the industry’s economy taking it back to 1990 levels. Travel restrictions have been implemented across 100% of the world’s destinations at some point since the start of the pandemic, leaving many tourism organisations fighting for economic survival. The impacts to both the demand (travellers) and supply (hotels) to tourism destinations and organisations has resulted in loss of revenue and jobs globally, impacting individuals, families, tourism organisations and countries. With little or no tourism demand, the hospitality industry has been one of the biggest sectors impacted by Covid-19, with hotels bearing the brunt of the economic impacts. This paper looks to discuss if the economic impacts of crises in hotels can be limited by implementing certain strategies or crisis management techniques (CMTs).

The paper contributes to the tourism and hospitality industry’s knowledge of crises and the impacts on 4-star hotels specifically, comparing two destinations in Europe, London and Stockholm, to identify if CMTs can be implemented to limit the economic impacts for future crises. This in turn will allow hotel senior managers (HSMs) to implement CMTs to reduce the economic impacts of crises in their hotels. Research is gathered from academic sources, media outlets and primary sources, offering a holistic analysis of Covid-19’s economic impacts in hotels, looking past just financial impacts but wider. A cross comparison of city hotels looks to assess differences in CMTs, gathering primary research and data from HSMs who are in the middle of the crisis and its impacts. Results determine that crises impact destinations differently and thus CMTs will alter depending upon the crisis impacts to a specific hotel or destination. However, there are many strategies that can be implemented to reduce the economic impacts, with the empirical results alluding to many successful CMTs, although these must be relevant and specific to the crisis, hotel and destination.

Declaration

I, Gary Waller, hereby declare that this dissertation is my contribution for the master’s programme in City Tourism at Södertörn University. I can confirm that the work submitted is my own, with the appropriate acknowledgements and references to the text where applicable.

Yours faithfully,

Gary Waller
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Appendix 1
List of abbreviations

ADR – Average daily rate
CMT – Crisis management technique
F&B – Food and beverage
GDP – Gross domestic product
HSM – Hotel senior manager
LOS – Length of stay
MICE – Meetings, incentives, conference and exhibitions
RevPAR – Revenue per available room
SOP – Standard operating procedure
WHO – World Health Organisation
1. Introduction

The introduction chapter states the background of the chosen subject, tourism and hotels impacted by Covid-19 on chosen destinations, London and Stockholm. The problem statement and aim of the paper is then raised, resulting in the papers objectives and research gap being identified. Research questions are then provided indicating a resulting answer to be achieved.

1.1 Background of study

Tourism is one of the biggest industries in the world with contributions to the world economy of approx. 10% GDP (WTTC, 2021). Prior to 2020, the tourism industry had seen 10 consecutive years of increased international tourist arrivals, with 2019 accounting for 1.5billion tourists globally (UNWTO, 2021a). In 2019 tourism employed millions globally contributing to roughly 10% of jobs worldwide (WTTC, 2021). It is one of the world’s major economic sectors and is the third-largest export category (after fuels and chemicals) and in 2019 accounted for 7% of global trade (UNWTO, 2020a). However all this was about to change, as on 30th January 2020 the WHO declared the Covid-19 outbreak a global health emergency, and with that the tourism and hospitality industry descended into one of its greatest ever crises that would operationally, commercially and financially cripple the industry. Due to the vast spread of the deadly Covid-19 infection, tourism was brought to a near standstill with flight cancellations, city lockdowns and global travel restrictions creating uncertainty for tourists and businesses alike. By the 20th April 2020 100% of global travel destinations had introduced travel restrictions (UNWTO, 2021a), as stated in figure 1, outlining the crisis timeline and what would be the worst year in tourism’s history (UNWTO, 2021b). The global restrictions would impact hotels greatly (UNWTO, 2020c) as the size and scope of the hospitality industry means that in an open system hotels have the ability to be largely affected by a crisis (Morton, 2006).

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Figure 1 - Covid-19 timeline. Source: UNWTO, 2020d, pp. 7

Covid-19’s impact would result in the year 2020 ending in 1 billion fewer international travellers, a 74% decrease from 2019 (UNWTO, 2021b) setting the tourism industry back to 1990 levels. Previous to the Covid-19 crisis, the largest decrease in international tourist arrivals was 4% in the year of the global financial crisis in 2009 (UNWTO, 2021b). It was predicted in
December 2020 that the global decline in tourism would result in an estimated “economic loss of over $2 trillion in global GDP, more than 2% of the world’s GDP in 2019” (UNWTO, 2020c), however recent results have suggested the global travel and tourism sector actually lost $4.5 trillion in 2020 due to Covid-19 (WTTC, 2021), demonstrating the unexpected and unpredictable virus on the world. Similarly, the forecasting of tourist arrivals saw “a 6 March 2020 press release from UNWTO estimate the pandemic would cause international tourist arrivals to decline 1-3% (compared to 2019) rather than the forecasted 3-4% growth. Three weeks later, on 26 March, a press release updated this assessment to a 20-30% loss in international arrivals” (Gössling et al, 2020, pp. 7). Subsequently the tourism industry’s global GDP contribution in 2020 would be almost halved from the 2019 levels of 10.4%, down to 5.5% (WTTC, 2021). Similarly the loss in industry jobs followed this decline, with 334 million jobs in 2019, approx. 1 in 10 jobs globally, declining in 2020 to 272 million, approx. 1 in 11 jobs globally (WTTC, 2021), plunging most countries globally into a recession (BBC, 2021).

At the start of 2021, demand for international travel remained weak due to new outbreaks of the virus reintroducing restrictions across destinations, thus tourism organisations such as hotels would continue to be heavily impacted by the loss of travellers. Global travel destinations implemented further restrictions to travel including mandatory testing, quarantining and vaccine passports on top of the lockdowns, all reducing the customer’s ability to travel. Although destinations were implementing measures based on their country’s infection rates, subsequent multiplier effects reduced travellers to mainly domestic guests. A year on from the WHO’s global health emergency announcement, 32% of destinations worldwide showed complete boarder closures, with another 34% showing partial closures, with expectations of international tourist arrivals set to be down 85% in the first quarter of 2021 over the same period of 2019 (UNWTO, 2020b). The magnitude of global impacts on international tourist arrivals is shown in figure 2 by continent arrivals for 2020 from 2019.

![Figure 2 - 2020 January – December. International tourist arrivals. Source: UNWTO, 2021a, pp. 5](image-url)
With predictions that international travel will not be expected to recover to pre Covid-19 levels until 2024 (UNWTO, 2021b), many tourism organisations fear for their survival. Unless actions can be taken to relieve the ailing tourism demand, many tourism organisations such as hotels are likely to economically suffer for many years. Although the tourism industry has been affected by crises before (SARS, 9/11 terrorist attacks and the Global financial crisis to name a few), there has been nothing of Covid-19’s magnitude. Figure 3 highlights the length in months it took for international tourist arrivals to recover from previous crises, showing that the travel industry has greatly been impacted previously by crises, with all destinations recovering. However the question remains, is there anything tourism organisations, such as hotels, can do to limit the economic impacts of crises or recover quicker?

![Impact of three previous crises on world arrivals](image)

**World - Cumulative change in international arrivals (million), by months**

Figure 3 - The recovery of lost arrivals was the fastest after SARS (11 months). Forecast in May 2020. Source: UNWTO, 2020d, pp. 36.

With the vast reduction in international travel, hotels were subsequently greatly affected. According to STR in a UNWTO (2020e) report the global hotel industry was marginally impacted in January 2020 by Covid-19, mainly in Asia with a decline in RevPAR of 9.6%. However by March 2020 large declines in RevPAR were recorded globally, with Asia (-67.8%) and Europe (-61.7%) being impacted the heaviest. Within the space of a month the Covid-19 crisis had transformed destinations of over-tourism to no tourism. Many large European cities, such as London and Stockholm, rely heavily on international tourism and thus as a consequence of travel restrictions were heavily impacted, never more so than in hotels.

In the UK in 2020, unnecessary travel was discouraged first on 16th March with the Foreign & Commonwealth office later advising against all essential overseas travel on 17th March, before the first national lockdown on 23rd March (Gov.uk, 2020), restricting domestic and international travel. Restrictions were gradually relaxed with the implementation of quarantine free travel corridors in July, shown in figure 4, allowing for small amounts of international travel. These travel corridors would become suspended on 18th January 2021 after the 2nd and 3rd lockdowns in November 2020 and January 2021. The restrictions over the year would have
an impact on hotel revenue, where travel and tourism businesses saw the largest decline than any industry, falling to just 26% of their turnover in May from February levels (ONS, 2021). Employment in the hospitality industry was subsequently affected declining 21.5% in the 3 months to June 2020 vs the same months in 2019, with the UK Big Hospitality (2021) stating close to 30,000 jobs had been lost in the UK hospitality sector alone in 2020.

London is regarded as a top destination for tourists across the world catering to 19.7 million visitors in 2019 (CityofLondon, 2020), however Covid-19’s impact reduced this drastically reflected in figure 4 showing weekly air passenger arrivals into the UK sharply falling mid-February as a result of the impending global restrictions. After the first lockdown, the ONS (2021) stated domestic and international air passenger traffic fell to less than 2% of February 2020 levels in April 2020. Figure 4 shows the gradual incline of weekly air passengers from July 2020, a result of the travel corridors and relaxed restrictions imposed, with the ONS (2021) further stating air passengers peaked to 36.7% in August before declining again due to increased restrictions. Figure 4 coincides with table 1 showing the monthly hotel occupancy levels, ADR and RevPAR in 2020 compared to 2019 in London, with PWC (2020a) reporting hotel average occupancy at just 28% for 2020 vs 83% in 2019. London’s hotel occupancy levels shown in table 1 are directly correlated to figure 4 whereby air passengers and hotel occupancy in 2020 sharply decline from March 2020. Of the cities and regions throughout the UK, the ONS (2021) stated London saw the largest fall in room occupancy than any other region in the UK, supporting that the loss of international tourism has been most severely felt in London. The timeline of the UK events stated above is also reflected in the statistics in table 1 and ultimately can suggest having an influence on how hotel strategies will react to recover.

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<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>71.3% (-0.9%)</td>
<td>£133.31 (+1.5%)</td>
<td>£95.10 (+0.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>76.0% (-1.8%)</td>
<td>£133.39 (+1.2%)</td>
<td>£101.59 (+0.9%)</td>
</tr>
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</table>

Figure 4 - Weekly air passenger arrivals to the UK, Jan-Jul 2019 vs Jan-Jul 2020. Source: Gov.uk, 2020
Conversely to the UK’s reaction to Covid-19, Sweden used a more liberal approach (Pierre, 2020) largely maintaining an open society, with governments recommending advice rather than enforcing restrictions on society. This in turn largely benefitted hotels, as the ability to domestically travel enabled tourism organisations to still operate. However, the city of Stockholm in Sweden was still largely impacted by Covid-19 due to the restrictions on international travel globally, evident in the overnight stays in Stockholm for 2020 compared to 2019, shown in table 2. Similarly to London, Stockholm was stated as the hardest hit region within its country (Stockholm Business Region, 2020) due to its large proportion of international visitors, with arrivals from large target markets such as Great Britain and USA decreasing 78% and Germany 87% (Stockholm Business Region, 2021). However domestic markets were also impacted largely. In February 2020, China’s decline of -58% in international tourists was by far the largest market with the next closet decline from Switzerland (-16%), however overall the month of February 2020 grew by almost 6% vs February 2019 (Stockholm Business Region, 2020), showing a similar trend to London.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stockholm County Month</th>
<th>2019</th>
<th>2020</th>
<th>Change</th>
<th>% change</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>January</td>
<td>829820</td>
<td>844432</td>
<td>14612</td>
<td>1.76%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>February</td>
<td>846723</td>
<td>895189</td>
<td>48466</td>
<td>5.72%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>March</td>
<td>1000891</td>
<td>464849</td>
<td>-536042</td>
<td>-53.56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>April</td>
<td>999768</td>
<td>204986</td>
<td>-794782</td>
<td>-79.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May</td>
<td>1303370</td>
<td>264183</td>
<td>-1039187</td>
<td>-79.73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>June</td>
<td>1290803</td>
<td>323043</td>
<td>-967760</td>
<td>-74.97%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>July</td>
<td>1439567</td>
<td>533654</td>
<td>-905913</td>
<td>-62.93%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>August</td>
<td>1533179</td>
<td>543670</td>
<td>-989509</td>
<td>-64.54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>September</td>
<td>1204239</td>
<td>532893</td>
<td>-671346</td>
<td>-55.75%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>October</td>
<td>1202834</td>
<td>634033</td>
<td>-568801</td>
<td>-47.29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>November</td>
<td>1109372</td>
<td>376026</td>
<td>-733346</td>
<td>-66.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>December</td>
<td>923197</td>
<td>339391</td>
<td>-583806</td>
<td>-63.24%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td>13,683,763</td>
<td>5,956,349</td>
<td>-7,727414</td>
<td>-56.8% (average)</td>
</tr>
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Table 2 shows a decrease of 7.7 million guest nights compared to 2019, corresponding to roughly a 56% decrease, “however in percentage terms, the decline is more severe for foreign overnight stays than domestic” (Stockholm Business Region, 2021, pp. 1), suggesting countries that do not have domestic travel restrictions largely benefitted more from overnight accommodation travellers. The huge disparities in overnight stay statistics in Stockholm in 2020 from previous years is highlighted in figure 5 demonstrating the impact of Covid-19 in 2020 vs 2019 and 2018. Similarly to the London hotel occupancy statistics, summer months in 2020 perform better than others due to relaxed restrictions, however with the mutations of the virus in November onwards figures start to decline, showing a correlation between the two cities. Although tables 1 and 2 differ in their analytical metrics, they provide a comparative overview of the impacts to hotels, allowing for greater analysis into the wider economic impacts highlighting similar trends in occupancy percentage decline and thus can assume a similar trend in percentage decline in Stockholm’s ADR and RevPAR compared to London.

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Figure 5 - Stockholm overnight stays by month, 2018, 2019 and 2020. Source: Stockholm Business Region, 2021

1.2 Problem statement
Research shows that hotels in London and Stockholm have been more severely affected vs other regions in their countries, questioning if this was a cause of CMTs or traveller demand? If the latter, can HSMs implement CMTs to increase a hotel’s performance, or will CMTs not influence traveller demand in crises? The global success of the tourism industry has meant tourism research is now widely covered in economics in the last 50 years with tourism’s remarkable growth (Song et al, 2012). However due to the rapid evolution of the industry, research is constantly adapting to the industry’s growth and with that the industry’s challenges, such as the economic impacts of crises. The current and ongoing impacts from Covid-19 has proved that crises have the ability to cause greater devastation to the travel and tourism industry than previous studies have indicated (Škare et al, 2021).

As “it takes time for travellers to return to their old mobility even after the crisis has ended. People are affected by the environment of fear, anxiety, and insecurity for a long time” (Uğur
suggesting long lasting impacts of crises on tourists. It therefore may take time for travellers to regain trust back in the tourism industry to pre-crisis levels, further limiting hotels’ chance of recovery. With changes in the virus impacting hotels through new restrictions, hotels must therefore find innovative ways to increase their chances of survival in the long run (Tushman & O’Reilly, 1996).

With the uncertainty of Covid-19’s duration, magnitude and impact nationally and globally, understanding if, when and how to implement measures to counteract the crisis can be difficult due to the lack of previous research. Researchers Kourentzes et al (2021) state that “the main reasons why forecasts during this pandemic are inaccurate are the lack of historical data, which is a requirement in forecasting models, and a lack of understanding of the uncertainties involved during such pandemics” (pp. 2). This suggests that forecasting models from previous crises may not be adaptable to resolve current crisis challenges. Whilst there are continuing and emerging academic articles analysing the impacts of Covid-19, few specify and thus broadly depict the pandemics impacts, resulting in a quick or non-thorough review of the industry and its sub-industries such as the hospitality industry, therefore resulting in scarce information for HSMs to draw upon for crisis support. As crises are typically unforeseen (Baum & Hai, 2020) this cements the necessity of research into the economic impacts on hotels by crises, to ensure that HSMs are better prepared for when a crisis is imminent with contingency plans in place (Laws et al, 2007) to limit or eliminate the crisis’ economic impacts.

Škare et al (2021) study resulted that the impacts of Covid-19 on the travel and tourism industry are incomparable with previous crises impacts, therefore conducting research into implementing CMTs to limit economic impacts is key. As previous pandemics have largely been domestic the impacts have been different to a global crisis. Previous studies by Kuo et al (2008) have shown that tourism demand has differed depending upon the crisis, with SARS impacting tourism demand in Asia however the Avian flu not despite the high fatality rate. Škare et al (2021) suggest that new empirical models to research the impacts on pandemics must therefore be developed, as although previous pandemics (SARS, 2002; H1N1, 2009) have shown inbound tourists arrivals recover almost immediately after pandemic alerts were lifted, this will not be the case for Covid-19.

It is therefore evident that firstly, different crises can have different impacts, and secondly, that destinations are impacted differently by crises, thus hotels will also be. Similarly to destinations being impacted differently by crises, Arbelo et al (2021) research also suggests that hotels’ profit situations differ depending upon their resources to manage a crisis. Their research suggests that how a hotel is impacted in a crisis will depend upon how long that hotel takes to recover and implement recovery strategies, as the worse the hotel performs in a crisis the longer they will take to recover. This therefore implies crises affect hotels differently; externally through loss of travellers and demand, but also internally through the different CMTs of dealing with a crisis, with Arbelo et al (2021) stating “each hotel has its own profit frontier that depends on its individual resources and capabilities. The proximity of each hotel to this frontier (inefficiency) will depend on the ability of its managers to efficiently manage those resources and capabilities” (pp. 83). Therefore if success strategies can be shown from previous CMTs
in previous crises this will reduce the reliance on individual management techniques to effectively manage a hotel through a crisis, reducing the risks of inept CMTs but also helping to build sustainable and industry wide consistent models for hotels to adhere to for future crises.

It is therefore essential that the large gap in research be filled into crisis’ economic impacts on hotels, allowing hotels and governments to gather information to reduce future potential impacts. Although crisis research has been evolving, a gap still persists that fails to research within a current crisis, identifying how hotels, specifically in two locations, have been impacted economically, not just in revenue terms but wider through strategies, staffing, restrictions, costs and opportunity costs. Davahli et al. (2020) research highlights 50 articles that have studied aspects of Covid-19 on the hospitality industry, highlighting 5 papers measuring the economic impacts, all choosing destinations as subjects with most using models to understand the economic impacts. Whilst there was positivity in measuring the impacts during the crisis, as many articles measure the impacts after a crisis albeit too little too late, none of the articles identified impacts based on feedback from primary research within the heart of a current crisis. Seraphin et al. (2018) further emphasise the necessity of researching crisis impacts during a crisis arguing that recovery strategies must be created whilst in a crisis, therefore feedback provided at the time of a crisis will be valuable to understand and replicate within another crisis.

Analysis and understanding the economic impacts from crisis literature within hotels is therefore essential, as Ritchie (2004) also acknowledges that little research and studies have been conducted on the effects of crises in the tourism industry vs other subjects. This paper helps to fill that gap on hotels specifically within tourism, analysing CMTs within crises. Page et al. (2011) agree that destination policy makers and researchers will benefit from identifying impacts, addressing strategies and formulating appropriate policies to minimise the economic impacts, further emphasised by Bundy et al. (2017) who identify opportunities, renewal and growth from successful crisis management. Ritchie (2009) also further identifies the need for information gathering to understand the potential greater risks during crises, allowing organisations to manage strategies efficiently to minimise or assess risks or impacts felt by crises. However as “empirical studies on the impact of pandemic outbreaks on the tourism industry are widely missing in the literature” (Škare et al., 2021, pp. 1) research is scarce, thus this paper also aims to support that research gap by comparing hotels in two large cities with results from primary research. As Yu and Aviso (2020) suggest that “beyond natural hazards and man-made disasters, the world is unprepared to handle epidemic outbreaks such as the COVID-19 outbreak” (pp. 1), this paper aims to be proactive to provide opportunities for development and growth for hotels through understanding previous crises impacts, with a view to benefitting future HSM’s strategies and global tourism organisations being better prepared.

1.3 Research objective

The research proposes to review up to a specific time, 2020, at specific destinations, London and Stockholm, to understand first-hand, from HSMs, the impacts felt by a specific crisis, Covid-19. The research will help to support an area of crisis management that is dominated by theoretical analysis without understanding in real time the impacts certain crises and CMTs have on hotels. This paper aims to contribute to tourism and hospitality research into crisis
impacts and in particular analyses the economic impacts to hotels in specific cities, identifying impacts to hotels first-hand through primary research in the form of a questionnaire with results from HSMs. This paper therefore aims to contribute to the research required to understand the Covid-19 impacts on a specific section of the tourism industry, hotels, through the eyes of the HSMs that are directly involved and impacted by the crisis.

By exploring the impacts of the Covid-19 outbreak globally, but more specifically hotels in 2 geographical locations, feedback from empirical results will identify previous, current and future CMTs used by HSMs with the aim of utilising successful techniques to limit the economic impacts of future crises, whilst also averting HSM from adopting the lesser successful techniques. It is the paper’s aim to support the travel, tourism and hospitality industry through CMTs and strategies from HSM, providing a comparison between two destinations offering a comparison in CMTs used to either a positive or negative result helping to understand if hotels can identify certain CMTs to limit the economic impacts of crises.

1.4 Research questions
1. Can hotels implement CMTs to reduce the economic impacts of crises?
2. Should hotels implement CMTs into their core business foundations?

1.5 Delimitation
The paper researches and analyses the crisis of Covid-19 and the economic impacts on hotels within two specific destinations, London and Stockholm, however also refers to previous crises in tourism. Research is conducted within a specific timeframe due to the ongoing crisis and its impacts, therefore allowing the author and participants to focus on a specific time within the crisis. The main topics surrounding the paper are crises and the economic impacts on hotels, to understand if impacts can be limited through implementing CMTs. The respondents are senior employees in hotels in large cities, offering their valuable experience in roles that are able to influence a hotel’s strategy and CMTs, with cities chosen due to the high tourism footfall.

1.6 Disposition of dissertation
The research paper consists of 6 chapters, outlined in order as; introduction, introducing the reader to the researcher’s topic, aims and research questions to understand the problem statement and therefore key areas of research analysed and discussed in the paper. Secondly the literature review presents research surrounding tourism and crises, specifically Covid-19, alluding to previous economic impacts from crises with a view to establishing knowledge in the subject. Third in the methodology, the author states the research methods used to determine and support the data collection methods chosen and applied to the paper. Fourth, the empirical results present the findings from the data collection outlining the participants demographics and the results from the questionnaire distributed. The analysis and discussion from the findings are then presented in chapter 5, showing the key topics and themes with support from participant quotes showing the holistic economic impacts from the Covid-19 crisis. Finally, the conclusion supports the researchers aim with a conclusive analysis of the previous chapters, determining the findings to answer the research questions and assess the economic impacts.
2. Literature review

2.1 Crises and relevance in tourism and hotels

2.1.1 The management of crises in tourism

A crisis is defined by Selbst (1978) in Faulkner (2001, pp. 136) as “any action or failure to act that interferes with an (organisation's) ongoing functions, the acceptable attainment of its objectives, its viability or survival, or that has a detrimental personal effect as perceived by the majority of its employees, clients or constituents”. Selbst’s definition of ‘any.. failure to act’ implies the crisis can be also within the organisation. Faulkner (2001) furthers this and suggests that a crisis is self-inflicted by inept management structures and practices or a failure to adapt to change, arguing that the management of a crisis is essential to an organisation’s success. However crises are all different, with Rodriguez-Anton and Alonso-Almeida (2020) highlighting that pandemics have a longer recovery time than economic crises as a result of longer periods of crisis, thus success strategies from previous crises can be different and possibly only be implemented by hotels in similar crisis types. Nonetheless “there are a growing number of crises that impact upon tourism, and organisations need to think more strategically and proactively about the impact of potential crises” (Ritchie, 2009, pp. 57) further supporting a claim for the authors assignment. Kash and Darling (1998, pp. 180) further state that “proactive planning helps managers to control and resolve a crisis. Ignoring the possibility of a crisis, on the other hand, could lead to a crisis taking a life of its own” therefore arguing the greater the crisis management involvement the more successful and less economically impacted a hotel can be, supporting Selbst (1978) earlier definition of a crisis supporting that “the importance of pandemic planning is plain” (Keogh-Brown et al, 2010, pg 453).

2.1.2 Previous crises in tourism

Bundy et al (2017) research suggests that the impacts of crises can be managed prior to occurring based on the greater the communication between internal and external stakeholders, resulting with a reduction of impacts. However, they state it is dependent upon the type of crisis being experienced as to how communication is adopted, emphasising that all crises are different in their impacts and thus the same CMTs cannot be implemented across all crises. Previous examples of crisis management can be taken from the Swine flu pandemic, where the UNWTO in 2009 outlined three key areas in which action could be taken to revive ailing tourism demand internationally; “resilience (in retaining and enhancing existing demand), stimulus (reviewing such policies as those governing taxation and visas to remove barriers to tourism), and the investment in the green economy (aiming to strengthen sustainable development)” (Page et al, 2011, pp. 143). However this example would not be successfully implemented in today’s pandemic (Covid-19), with restrictions to travel and lockdowns across many countries reducing travel demand by up to 76% in UK for example (VisitBritain, 2021), again reiterating that implementing CMTs must be specific to the crisis and previous CMTs cannot simply be implemented to avert a new crisis. Thus, CMTs must be specific to the crisis.

As the 2003 SARS outbreak was triggered by a coronavirus, comparisons into the impacts and CMTs implemented can be similar with Covid-19, often referred to as SARS-CoV-2 (WHO,
2020a), however on a different scale. Hung et al (2018) research states that during the SARS crisis in Hong Kong “hygiene guidelines had been issued to all licensed hotels to encourage enhanced cleansing and improvement of hygiene” (pp. 4), a similar strategy the UK NHS implemented releasing hygiene guidance for the hospitality industry (NHS, 2020) for Covid-19. This demonstrates that there can be CMTs of which hotels can learn from past experiences with crisis handling, however this reiterates that the crisis must be similar. Similar measures such as quarantining hotel guests to reduce the spread of infection was implemented in 2003 with SARS (Hung et al, 2018) and to date with Covid-19 (Altuntaş & Gok, 2020), both of which subsequently affected hotels economically demonstrating that some economic impacts due to crises cannot be averted with similar CMTs. Similar recovery strategies post SARS also saw Chinese and Hong Kong hotels offer cost saving incentives for consumers to return with enhancements in health and hygiene (Chien & Law, 2003). This also saw the purposeful reduction in sales of accommodation to reduce the number of guests a hotel was occupying at one time (Henderson & Ng, 2004) in order to attract international visitors again through safety and security commitments. Likewise, initiatives in Toronto saw closed wings of hotels and discounted packages to encourage potential travellers (Tew et al, 2008). All of these strategies have the ability to be implemented in Covid-19’s crisis due to the nature of the crisis (health).

Other previous crises have seen collaboration a key feature in CMTs, with a coordinated response after the 9/11 attacks from the USA hospitality industry with enhanced communication between airports and local governments pushing to reopen tourism safely for visitors to feel safe in flying again (Stafford et al, 2002). This also saw marketing strategies designed to target the right new consumer segments into staying (Taylor & Enz, 2002). Post the global financial crisis Alonso-Almeida and Bremser (2013) identified that Spanish hotels offered added value and flexibility to the customer with proactive strategies to identify new markets such as domestic tourism, a similar strategy implemented post 9/11. These crises and the CMTs implemented to re-boost tourism demonstrate the different impacts hotels had faced. Subsequently the reaction to the crisis was a direct result of the crisis, shown in that SARS was a health pandemic thus the hotel implemented health and hygiene measures to provide confidence to the guest again. Similarly, with 9/11 affecting tourist’s confidence in travelling a collaborative marketing push between airports and local governments reignited tourists confidence, also seen post the financial crisis with hotels offering added value to customers rather than reducing rates at the hotels own expense through loss of sales. The new initiatives implemented are a cause of success due to the collaborative effort between organisations, a fundamental function stated by Randhawa et al (2016), with the recoveries highlighting a correlation between the type of crisis and the recovery strategy implemented by a hotel.

McKinsey’s (2020) research further identifies differences in the recovery of crises, suggesting that budget hotels are faster to recover from economic crises as these hotels can stay open at lower occupancy rates with less operating costs, whereas luxury hotels have the slowest return. This suggests that hotel impacts differ in their status and location outlined in figure 6 showing the economic effects previous crises have had on London and regional hotels in the UK, highlighting the difference in economic impacts on RevPAR based on the crisis. This supports that no crisis is the same and that planning and preparation may be more difficult than expected,
evident with “the magnitude of the consequences of Covid-19 is not comparable to previous crises” (Uğur & Akiyik, 2020, pp. 11).


2.1.3 Managing crises in hotels

Hotels can be a critical component in the evolution of crises (Hung, et al, 2018) and therefore one must recognise “that travel and tourism is both a contributor to disease spread and its economic consequences” (Gössling et al, 2020, pp. 5) as hotels can often be the centre of a crisis due to the large footfall of interacting travellers (Hung et al, 2018). This reiterates tourism’s close relationship with crises and further emphasises the need for CMTs to be studied and implemented into hotels as a strategic and integrated approach to crisis managements can help limit the potential impact of crises (Ritchie, 2009) to reduce mass devastation economically, environmentally and socially, locally and globally (Burkle, 2006).

As “there have been several warnings that pandemics posed a major threat to society and tourism” (Gössling et al, 2020, pp. 3), epitomised by the Chaos Theory (Faulkner, 2001) where tourism originations are crises waiting to happen, it can be suggested that impact planning of a crisis on the hospitality industry is essential (Baum & Hai, 2020), but also hotels should already be prepared for crises with future economic impacts minimised with contingency plans already in place. However, crisis unawareness was evident in the PWC (2020a) UK Hotel 2020 forecast with no mention of a crisis as a possible threat prior to 2020, highlighting difficulties in forecasting crises and thus implementing CMTs. Although, with Lee and Harrald (1999, pp. 184) stating that “natural disasters can disrupt the supply and distribution chains for even the best prepared businesses”, this can discount theories of preparedness and pre-crisis strategy implementation for hotels. Uğur and Akiyik (2020) further strengthen the argument suggesting that it is not clear when crises will occur, thus preparing and planning for such can be difficult, costly, time consuming and possibly insignificant. It then raises the argument if greater CMTs reduce crisis impacts (Faulkner, 2001; Kash & Darling, 1998) due to a greater effect on
handling crises that do arise (Heath, 1998), or if the impacts of crises are unavoidable (Lee & Harrald, 1999; Uğur & Akiyik, 2020), reiterating the support for research into the current handling of crises, its economic impacts and hotel CMT implementation.

2.2 The impacts of a crisis - Covid-19

2.2.1 Covid-19 impacts on hotels and tourism

As we have discussed, crises are different with different impacts, with the tourism sector easily affected by global crises (Uğur & Akiyik, 2020). On 30th January 2020 the WHO declared the novel coronavirus outbreak (Covid-19) a public health emergency of international concern (WHO, 2020a) and “with the announcement of the COVID-19 case as a pandemic, travellers decided to cancel trips immediately” (Uğur & Akiyik, 2020, pp. 11). At the time of the WHO’s (2020a) announcement 7834 cases had been confirmed with 170 deaths (WHO, 2020b). Fast forward almost a year and “globally, as of 4:48 PM CET, 02 February 2021 there have been 102,942,987 confirmed cases of COVID-19, including 2,232,233 deaths received by WHO from national authorities” (WHO, 2021). The total deaths relating to SARS were 813 (WHO, 2003) with the total deaths related to Swine flu 18,499 (WHO, 2010). This emphasises the magnitude of Covid-19’s impact globally, nevermore so where “tourism is one of the sectors most affected by the Covid-19 pandemic, impacting economies, livelihoods, public services and opportunities on all continents” (UNWTO, 2020a).

Although it is not possible to predict the full economic extent of the Covid-19 outbreak as the pandemic is still ongoing at the time of writing, we do know that it is significantly more than SARS. Covid-19’s impact has created unprecedented damage to the hospitality industry (Gursoy & Chi, 2020) with the UNWTO (2020b) not expecting international tourism to recover to 2019 levels until 2024, thus directly impacting hotels revenue globally as within the tourism industry hotels derive almost all of their revenue from travellers (Barrows, et al, 2012). As “the recovery in occupancy is likely to take longer than recovery from the 2008 Global Financial Crisis” (PWC, 2020a, pp. 1) hotels are likely to adapt CMTs to their current market conditions for recovery. UNWTO (2020c) experts consider travel restrictions and slow virus containment the biggest barriers to the recovery of international tourism, suggesting that external factors outside of the hotel’s powers limit the recovery, supporting Lee and Harrald (1999) and Uğur and Akiyik (2020) arguments. Theories from the UNWTO (2020c) suggest that domestic tourism is therefore due to recover faster than international tourism, with suggestions that younger travellers are more resilient to travel crises, therefore opening an opportunity of market segments for hotels to target. The UNWTO’s theories showcase the different impacts on destinations, market segments and tourists, suggesting hotels alter their CMT recoveries differently according to the impact.

With destinations being impacted differently, CMT are likely to differ. This was evident in Uğur and Akiyik’s (2020) earlier TripAdvisor research on consumer behaviour identifying the UK government frightening potential travellers away from the UK, as mentions of “the herd immunity perspective frightened some of the travellers, and they considered delaying or cancelling their travel plans to the UK region and London with concern for contamination”
showcasing that different CMTs can have different outcomes. Tourists' safety concerns however were not only identified in the UK, with the UK named 5th on the extracted named entities list behind Asian countries and Italy, where the Covid-19 virus surged in cases at the time. Uğur and Akiyik’s (2020) research also showed ‘CANCEL’ as one of the most frequently words used on TripAdvisor forums between 1st January and 3rd March 2020 with also phrases such as “‘safe to travel, travel plan, travel restriction, travel ban, cancel my trip and cancel our trip’ referring to COVID-19 concerns” (pp. 7). London was the 2nd highest city named, behind Wuhan where the outbreak of the virus began. The research signifies a change in consumer behaviour for searches relating to reactions due to the Covid-19 crisis and demonstrates a direct link to tourist behaviour and CMTs.

2.2.2 Covid-19 impacts on travel
It is evident that since the start of the Covid-19 crisis tourism has changed. Many airlines now require facemasks be worn on flights, with many destinations requesting proof of negative Covid-19 tests pre and upon arrival. As a result, seeing health hazards and containment measures from border controls to mask wearing as mandatory has likely impacted tourist’s perception of safe travel. Similarly concerns about catching Covid-19, restrictions to travel, fewer activities or attractions to see and do, fewer areas to enjoy and tourist’s thoughts on if it is responsible to travel will all have an overwhelming effect on where and if tourists will also decide to travel. With a tourist destination’s key focus the ability to offer safety and security to its visitors (Amir et al, 2015; Volo, 2007), ensuring customers feel confident in booking and staying is vital. The fear of crises affects both the supply (closure of hotels and restaurants) and demand (restrictions on travel and tourists fear of travel) with Uğur and Akiyik (2020, pp. 1) stating “epidemics and pandemics are two of the most frightening news for travelers or planners”, thus implementing measures to combat this fear and reassuring guests is a fundamental goal, with traveller concerns at the heart of recovery.

To attract tourists during a crisis, we must then look at tourist’s willingness to take risks. Research by Williams and Baláž (2013) showed young people, men and experienced travellers were more inclined to take risks when travelling, signifying a target audience should destinations and hotels look to attract a certain target segment in a hugely downward market. It can be the success of these travellers that can ultimately improve tourism, through e-word-of-mouth and review sites alike, but only if travel options are available to them. Altig et al (2020) research showed huge disparity pre and during Covid-19 crisis in business sales where “elevated uncertainty generally makes firms and consumers cautious” (Altig et al, 2020, pp. 10), coinciding with the decline with tourism. They emphasise that a strong economic recovery would require a surge in activity, however uncertainty itself discourages this. This reaffirms the necessity of hotels and tourism destinations to implement CMTs that address consumer’s fears regarding travel, as “high levels of uncertainty do not bode well for a rapid economic recovery” (Altig et al, 2020, pp. 10). Page et al (2011) support this and highlight that once the perceived threat of SARS diminished in Asia, tourism began to recover, demonstrating that safety and security are of high priority to travellers when choosing destinations, with tourists fear directly impacting travel. Therefore its evident risk and fear can be influenced.
2.2.3 Covid-19 impacts on destination image
A destination’s image to visitors is vital in attracting them (Andersson & Abbasian, 2018) upon which crises directly affect this. In order to attract visitors, destinations must show attractiveness and efficient management, creating visitor quality (Shapira, 2007) in amongst a competitive market between other destinations, never more so than in congested city hotels in amongst a crisis. Valeri’s (2020) research during the Covid-19 crisis showed a positive relationship between destination image and visit intention, where crises have impacted visitor numbers due to negative destination images in a crisis. Kuo et al (2008) suggest that tourism organisations and governments must collaborate to rejuvenate a city’s image, restoring it past its former glory to ensure long lasting negative images due to crises are not sustained. Ritchie supports this (2009) further suggesting it is the perception of a risk to a crisis that often has the most impact on a destination, therefore a hotels inability to maintain attractiveness will likely have an impact on their revenue. Research by Matiza (2020) also showed tourist’s key travel influences when choosing to travel to a destination in 2020 was safety and security relating to health and hygiene due to the Covid-19 crisis, whereas pre Covid-19 crisis Nejati and Mohammed’s (2014) earlier research states value and uniqueness of a destination as the main influence to travel. This further demonstrates that tourist’s needs and desires alter during crises, thus hotels and destinations must alter their CMTs to stay attractive in downward markets.

2.3 External influences on tourism in crises
2.3.1 The media’s impact on tourism in crises
As we have discussed, tourism organisations must re-encourage visitors to travel in order to reduce the negative economic impacts of crises. Page et al (2011) suggest that the media fuels the reduction in tourism demand discouraging tourists from visiting, furthered where “tourism researchers have increasingly engaged with the notion of trust, partly because of the growth of online activities” (Williams & Baláž, 2020, pp. 1). This is similarly echoed by Škare et al (2021) who state the media attention and association hysteria are a determine factor of crises impacts. Akyildirim et al (2020) suggest crises in the tourism industry have had subsequent negative economic impacts to companies often through the misinformation surrounding a crisis, where their research suggests a significant impact to a company and industry upon the information, or misinformation flow through social media. Ritchie (2009) furthers this and suggests “the media can encourage the flow and the intensity of a crisis or even help turn an incident or issue into a crisis due to negative media coverage” (pp. 175). Social media now has a greater impact on traveller influence vs SARS and 9/11 crises due to its popularity and usage, therefore it can unsettle travellers far greater than previous crises, thus affecting the economic activity in destinations and hotels. However, it can also be used positively to influence tourists. Thus the media’s ability to influence tourists is key in reducing the economic impacts felt by tourism organisations in a crisis, especially within destinations and their travel image. Richards (2004) acknowledges that the modern media has the ability to turn the public more emotional and vulnerable to manipulation during global crises, suggesting potential tourists are influenced by the media, especially with 24-hour coverage. Fan et al (2018) also suggest that the intensity of media coverage to profit from crises may lead populations to overreact to mild pandemics thus impacting travel demand and further supports that consumer
behaviours are strongly linked to the media and social media alike. Scott et al (2008) echo this summarising WTO’s phase model of a tourism crisis in their research, where after an incident occurs the media describes and often exaggerates it upon which tourists leave the area, evident in Uğur and Akiyik’s (2020) research in chapter 2.2.1.

2.3.2 Government impacts on tourism in crises

Crises are often unforeseen and thus tourism organisations impacts are sudden. Typically with no vaccines or preventions to many immediate crises, governments must act to prevent crises worsening by implementing measures at times to the detriment of industries. Trust, communication and collaboration between the hospitality sector and governments is vital as “the low demand in the hospitality industry due to wrong quarantine decisions might significantly reduce the number of clients in practice” (Altuntaş & Gok, 2020, pp. 2). A collaborative effort to recover from a crisis is also suggested by Scott et al (2008), where all stakeholders must work together to avoid confusion in CMTs and thus enabling the tourism organisation to recover quicker from a crisis. Implications to quarantining guests also highlights a hotels vulnerability to external regulations, suggesting that rules, policies and thus consequences are often out of the hotels power. This suggests that hotels do not have the ability to influence their own revenue or CMTs and ultimately must succumb to external interventions, disregarding previous theories (Bundy et al, 2017; Heath, 1998; Kash & Darling, 1998; Ritchie, 2009) of effective CMT limiting a hotels economic impact of a crisis.

With the Covid-19 crisis affecting destinations differently, governments across the global have implemented CMTs that arguably best fit their nation. Sweden’s strategy of no lockdowns and limited restrictions on domestic travel, restaurants and workforces resulted in Stockholm’s tourist arrival statistics being less affected by Covid-19 than other cities (ForwardKeys, 2020). Conversely the UK has been in 3 lockdowns from the start of the pandemic to February 2021 with closures to businesses, hotels and restaurants to name a few, thus hitting the economy hard receding 9.9% in 2020 (BBC, 2021), the largest ever recent times. This signifies that whilst the crisis may be the same influenza, Covid-19, differences in CMTs can affect economies differently. However, final results on economic performances of a country remains to be finalised with the continuing mutation of the Covid-19 virus, subsequently continuing to enforce restrictions and thus impacting hotels economically. These restrictions have differed between UK and Sweden hotels, where many hotels in the UK temporarily closed vs Sweden’s hotels open, largely due to visitor demand, suggesting that restrictions during a pandemic directly affect the hospitality industry (Altuntaş & Gok, 2020). Although, the UK is set to introduce a 14-day mandatory quarantine in hotels from February 2021 for travellers from high Covid-19 areas (Gov.uk, 2021), positively economically benefitting hotels, showcasing that strategies are continually evolving for better or worse.

2.4 Financial impacts of crises to economies, hotels and tourism

Crises can greatly affect economies, demonstrated in figure 6 showing the impacts of crises on London and regional RevPAR in relation to GDP. In 2020, the UK economy decreased by 20.4% in Q2 from Q1 as a result of the pandemic and measures taken to try and limit the spread
of the virus (ONS, 2020a) such as travel restrictions and lockdowns impacting businesses, with closures in hospitality majorly affected. However, ONS (2020b) reported Q3 in 2020 grew by a record 15.5% as a result of the continued easing of lockdown restrictions at that time, thus demonstrating a direct correlation to restrictions and economic performance. Monthly GDP in November 2020 was 8.5% below the level of February 2020 as a result of the UK going back into lockdown, having fallen by 2.6% compared with October 2020 with a large majority of the fall “driven by the accommodation and food and beverage services” (ONS, 2021). “The three largest falls in monthly GDP, since records began have all occurred in 2020: 18.8% April 2020; 7.3% March 2020; 2.6% November 2020” (ONS, 2021). Therefore, based on the huge disparities in growth between Q2 and Q3 in 2020 due to the government easing of restrictions, what can be confirmed is that government interventions to restrict the level of business activity directly impacted the economy, therefore supporting that Covid-19 has a direct link to a decrease in business performance. Conversely Sweden’s economy was predicted to decrease by ‘just’ 2.9% for 2020 (Government.se, 2020), a huge disparity between the UK’s, thus demonstrating that different CMTs can have different economic impacts.

Tourism supports almost 10% of the UK’s jobs, contributed 9% to GDP in 2019 (VisitBritain, 2020) and is seen as a major contributor to the UK economy. However due to the Covid-19 crisis, 2020 figures are drastically down. For example overseas residents spent £218 million on their visits to the UK in Q2 2020; 97% less than in Q2 2019 (ONS, 2021) with many of these customers business travellers. PWC (2020a) suggests that the London hospitality sector is likely to recover slower due to lack of business and international travel as “the overall RevPAR is forecasted to fall significantly in 2020 to £28.72, £100 less than in 2019. In the long-term it’s unlikely that occupancy, ADR and RevPAR will return to 2019 levels until at least 2023” (PWC, 2020b). This significant impact is troubling as Reuters (2021) suggests it will take more than two years for Britain’s economy to recover to its pre-Covid-19 level, with the decline in economic activity also resulting in a decline of hotel and restaurant share prices (Yu & Aviso, 2020), encompassing a multiplier effect.

Indirect economic activity is therefore also affected, as with a reduction in guests, less money is spent in the hotel on F&B, meetings and events and spa’s, etc. Further afield this can be linked to Leontief’s (1936) input-output models that suggests intertwined industries can subsequently be affected through an economic impact from one industry to another. More recently studies by Archer (1982) refer to the ‘multiplier’ effect whereby tourism expenditures circulate throughout an economy further benefiting other industries. Similarly this is covered by Yu and Aviso (2020) with tourism supporting global supply chains of companies, and also furthered by Song et al (2012) acknowledging that tourism studies are multi and interdisciplinary, hence further research on these will benefit tourism studies and wider. Škare et al (2021) also suggest huge multiplier effects impacted global destinations during Covid-19, not just domestically as previous pandemics, but internationally through a lack of international travel with restrictions both in the hotels location but also internationally at the tourist’s location. This signifies that whilst crises can affect a hotel economically, its impacts are felt far greater as even great CMTs implemented by a hotel may be insufficient due to the travellers country not implementing CMTs. Song et al (2012) further address a statistical accounting
framework, a TSA model, which largely analyses only the direct economic impacts upon robust economic activity. Song et al (2012) argues for this to be adjusted to integrate a holistic analysis as the TSA model underestimates the total impact tourism has on an economy. With tourism a large contributor to jobs and revenue across the world economy, this can be important to further study with the resulting job losses, cost control and reduction in hotel revenues reducing the on-spend within the economy. McKinsey (2020) also states there is a direct relationship to RevPAR and the unemployment rate in hotels, emphasising that reducing the economic impacts of a crisis positively impacts RevPAR, thus positively impacts employment and thus the economy (Carree & Thurik, 2010).

2.5 Crisis effects on hotel CMTs
2.5.1 Current effects on hotel CMTs

As hotel rooms are perishable items, income lost will be unable to be recovered from that day, therefore limiting the economic impacts is a priority for hotels. In order to limit this, suggestions have been made for domestic tourism to be targeted in UK hotels where “the only significant market now, and into 2021, will be UK domestic tourism” (PWC, 2020a, pp. 1) supporting Keown-McMullan’s (1997) suggestion that tourism organisation will undergo significant change even with successful CMTs. PWC’s theory can also be supported where Bronner and de Hoog (2012) and Eugenio-Martin and Compos-Sorias (2014) highlight tourists have responded to a crisis by reducing their travel budget or distance travelled and further suggested in Page et al (2011) where tourism organisation’s responses to the decline in tourist arrivals post SARS was to promote domestic tourism. However, this theory will depend upon the certain crisis and location, as most recently the different restrictions for Covid-19 have impacted hotels’ ability to accommodate guests, from full lockdowns to restrictions of overseas travellers. Therefore, key customer source markets must be looked at, outlining the number of tourists from a destination the hotels receive with the travel restrictions placed on pandemics (Page et al, 2011; Ritchie, 2009), where different CMTs for different tourists can be altered. This further suggests that tourism organisations must become flexible and open to new innovative ideas (Sigala, 2020) in order to maintain a competitive advantage and limit the impacts of crises, thus supports Nepal’s (2020) suggestions whereby pandemics allow us to reset tourism and revise it for the better.

Although hotels may have been greatly impacted economically, improvements to hygiene, health and technology have benefitted hotels supported by Ritchie (2009) who states “crises are often seen as turning points and provide opportunities as well as threats” (pp. 209). Ritchie (2009) further states another “positive outcome from a crisis can be the generation and sharing of knowledge associated with a tourism crisis” (pp. 226), suggesting improvements in collaboration by employees and stakeholders for customer safety throughout the hotel must be a combined effort (Hung et al, 2018) reflecting that a hotels strategy to counteracting a crisis must be consistent and apparent for all to be successful. This was evident in the “reported eight cases associated with managing a COVID-19 outbreak in a hotel in Tenerife, Spain. They highlighted that the collaboration and communication between the Public Health authorities and the hotel management were vital for controlling the COVID-19 pandemic” (Altuntaş &
Gok, 2020, pp. 2), an example of a transferable strategy to a future crisis, also shown in the USA post 9/11 (Stafford et al, 2002).

2.5.2 Future effects on CMTs
Resolution or restoration for a hotel can be complicated with different effects of crises (Ritchie, 2009), as after a crisis normality can never be restored. The hotel must be flexible to learn and adapt to the changing world to implement CMTs and contingency plans ensuring future impacts by crises are minimal. PWC (2020a) supports a flexible business strategy to reduce risk and maximise revenue for 2021, suggesting “those businesses that have been quick to adapt their business models and diversify their offering have been more resilient to the challenges being faced. Those businesses that have flexed their offering have created new opportunities for revenue and will ultimately be in a stronger position to weather the storm” (PWC, 2020c).

In order to reduce the impacts by crises to hotels revenue, investment must be made (NHS, 2020) to ensure health and safety standards are improved, possibly with enhancements in technology as an assisting tool (Škare et al, 2021), showcasing that hotel operations must adapt with a crisis to evolve. This suggests hotels will need to invest in safety and security for the guests wellbeing, initially impacting a hotels profit, however “regular hygiene surveillance at hotel facilities, and developing coordination mechanism for impending epidemics on the use of screening, swift reporting and isolation of infected persons may help mitigate the impact of future events” (Hung et al, 2018, pp. 1) to the hotels benefit. Therefore, it can be argued that businesses are constantly changing, developing, improving and evolving to be successful, with examples from Butler’s (1980) tourist area life cycle, hence suggestions to business improvements to further protect hotels from crises and economic impacts should be no surprise.

2.5.3 Re-evaluating hotel strategies
“Since the 1960s, the pursuit of economic growth has been a dominant ideology for industrialized countries” (Andriotis, 2018, pp. 14) with Kallis et al (2014) suggesting that “growth is uneconomic and unjust, that it is ecologically unsustainable and that it will never be enough” (pp. 6) arguing that a hotel’s strategy to maximise revenue by maximising occupancy is economically unsustainable. Andriotis (2018) theory on degrowth in tourism offers a suggestion that enables tourism organisations to continue to thrive without the mass output to the damage of economies by proposing a reduction in travel to an appropriate output relevant to the input. This model has the ability to benefit hotels who desire to maximise occupancy to maximise revenue, thus becoming heavily impacted economically by Covid-19 due to travel restrictions. Implementing degrowth theory can see a hotel maintain its revenue, by increasing rates, whilst also reducing customers. Andriotis (2018) degrowth theory can be directly transferred to the Covid-19 crisis, as less tourist travel reduces further spread of the virus, resulting in hotels investing less pre and post a crisis to combat it, whilst also reducing employee and customer health risks. A reduction in hotel guests can also lead to greater customer satisfaction with more interaction between staff and customers due to increased free time, thereby possibly increasing the calibre of that hotel and thus tourists more included to spend more. By implementing Andriotis’ (2018) degrowth theory, hotels will maintain staffing
levels through sustainable strategies that retain employees through inter-departmental work spaces, thus staff being flexible in their working conditions, a theory earlier suggested by Sigala (2020) where tourism organisations must be flexible to withstand the impacts of crises.

Another theory sees Song et al (2012) acknowledge that “while neoclassical economics has contributed the most to the development of tourism economics, alternative schools of thought have also emerged in advancing our understanding of tourism from different perspectives” (pp. 1653). This suggests that neoclassical theories must be re-evaluated in hotels, as recent crises often result in hotels becoming heavily economically impacted. An original neoclassical theory from Myrdal (1969) suggests that greater economic household output results in economic growth, however Demaria et al (2013) have argued that this is outdated and must be readdressed especially in times of crises. The neo-classical theory is delicately poised in amongst a crisis in that lesser the output of household income the lesser the growth, according to Myrdal. To readdress Myrdal’s theory, tourists must then start to travel, and as we have discussed that involves trust. However, Williams and Baláž, (2020) state “the starting point in economics is the limitations of neoclassical approaches which assume that behaviour is driven by self-interest maximization, a conceptualization that allows no rationale for trust” (pp. 4) or similarly travel restrictions. A neoclassical economic theory stated by Song et al (2012) argues that tourism demand usually assumes a multi-stage budgeting process, however similar to Myrdal’s theory this must be re-evaluated as with the current crisis there is little or no travel demand. Of that demand there are certain demographics that are more likely to travel than others according to the UNWTO (2020c) and Williams and Balaz (2013), therefore Bronner and de Hoog (2012) and Eugenio- Martin and Compos-Sorias (2014) theories must also be readdressed.

2.6 Summary
The literature assessed discusses CMTs as essential (Bundy et al, 2017; Faulkner, 2001; Kash & Darling, 1998; Ritchie, 2009), however CMTs must be managed and implemented correctly to be successful and across all stakeholders (Page et al, 2011; Rodriguez-Anton & Alonso-Almeida, 2020). This raises discussions as to whether crisis impacts can be reduced through greater CMT, thus offering hotels the ability to reduce economic impacts in future scenarios. However HSMs cannot use all CMTs from previous crises, unless they are of a similar nature, emphasised by Faulkner (2001, pp. 137) where “good management can avoid crises to some degree, but must equally incorporate strategies for coping with the unexpected event over which the organisation has little control”. Therefore “players in the tourism sector must conduct accurate risk analysis and develop appropriate crisis management policies to survive” (Uğur & Akiyik, 2020, pp. 11), acknowledging that strategies must be flexible (PWC, 2020c; Sigala, 2020) and carefully, thoroughly and properly created and adapted in order for them to be successful. Whilst tourism and hotels are often largely affected by crises, either internally by inept management (Faulkner, 2001) or externally by factors such as media and government interventions, it depends upon the crisis itself as to how the hotel will react to manage and recover from the crisis, with examples from previous crises showcasing how recovery strategies differed depending upon the crisis.
3. Methodology

The following chapter discusses and presents the research methods and approaches utilised to establish, form and analyse the data and results. Data is gathered from 28 HSMs of primary research with questionnaires emailed, with the author gathering responses for a qualitative study using thematic analysis to understand the economic impacts of crises in hotels.

3.1 Research method approaches

Certain research methods can present different solutions for data collection and analysis depending upon the aim and results required by an author (Bryman, 2016; Hammersley, 1992; Liburd, 2012). The quality and quantity of data supports an author’s theories and conclusions, with the right method pivotal in successfully presenting the data. However vast theories behind the science of data collection question how and why data is collected, analysed and interpreted (Slevitch, 2011), helping to understand an author’s method towards research aims and results. This suggests there are many ways to conduct research, with the theory of science identifying and justifying the methods behind a research topic (Lakatos, 1976; March & Smith, 1995).

Lakatos’ (1968) theory supports research progression as research and theories evolve over time, with critical rationalism, where knowledge is objective (Popper, 1971; Sassower & Laor, 2019) accommodating scientific revolutions. This is significant to this assignment whereby rather than finalising a right or wrong answer to the researchers aim, the assignment looks to develop suggestions for hoteliers to limit the economic impacts of crises, not to completely eliminate them. As its unlikely the exact same crisis will repeat in the future, answers provided by respondents support Patton (2002, pp. 93) that knowledge is “relative rather than absolute”, especially as people can make rational decisions. Critical realism then allows the author to distinguish between the event and what caused it (Bhaskar, 1978), vital in understanding the economic impact of a specific crisis to a hotel, distinguishing if an economic impact was due to the crisis itself, or the behavioural reaction to a crisis (Morton, 2006). It is within this gap, between the crisis and the economic impact on a hotel, that we seek the knowledge, looking past Quine’s (1990) physicalism theory where nothing happens that doesn’t leave physical trails, thereby allowing for analysis into CMTs (from behavioural questioning) to understand the greater impacts. Acknowledging this, self-reflection is conducted to ensure non-bias methods are chosen (Bryman, 2012) that best fit the assignment allowing the author to be scientifically objective (Freeman, 2014), essential in inductive assignments. To offer objectivism, a review of different research methods is offered below with definitions.

3.1.1 Comparing strengths and weaknesses of qualitative and quantitative methods

“To study human beings, psychologists have commonly followed either a quantitative or qualitative approach” (Gelo et al, 2008, pp. 267), with qualitative data in evaluation very common (Patton, 2002; Thomas, 2006) especially within tourism and hospitality (Slevitch, 2011). Qualitative research is a “strategy that usually emphasizes words rather than quantification in the collection and analysis of data” (Bryman, 2012, pp. 380), typically used
to gain an understanding on human behaviours (Silverman, 2010). This asks why, what, which, where and how questions and is done in various ways (Gelo et al, 2008; Silverman, 2013). The strengths of using qualitative research present vast and often in-depth data and knowledge from respondents (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), allowing the researcher to gather data outside established research. Furthermore, the product of qualitative research is richly descriptive offering greater interaction with the data (Merriam, 2009). However, Vaivio (2008) argues that this approach can be a “messy and time-consuming affair” (pp. 64), also questioning the data collected as it can be moulded to fit the researchers requirements (Hammersley, 1992) resulting in the data not being a true reflection of feedback.

Data results analysed may also be influenced by a researcher’s previous knowledge of a subject, whereby authors are interested in topics of relevance to their work (Merriam, 2009). Bryman (2012) states that qualitative research as a strategy is “broadly inductivist, constructionist, and interpretivist, but qualitative researchers do not always subscribe to all three of these features” (pp. 380). Therefore, the best use of a qualitative research method is to support the development of a new theory, where the author looks to offer a new idea from their research (Merriam, 2009). Different types of qualitative analysis are available within research including; thematic – discovering reoccurring patterns and themes; content – qualifying content in a systemic and replicable manner; discourse – analysis of talk and language to find hidden messages; and grounded theory – generating theory from research and data analysis (Bryman, 2012).

Conversely, a quantitative research method approach entails “the collection of numerical data as exhibiting a view of the relationship between theory and research as deductive” (Bryman, 2012, pp. 160). Its strengths are its ability to offer statistics and whole data (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015) offering a fixed view, perfect for gathering large data for scalability through graphs and charts (Merriam, 2009). However Michell (1999) highlights its heavy reliance on measuring data in a quantitative way, meaning that data must be collected with a means to be analysed in a specific way, often limiting the researcher’s theoretical interpretation to mainly figures looking past the real reason behind the data (Toomela, 2008). Thus, the main issue lays within the inability to decode and interpret the data without a clear understanding of what information is encoded (Gelo et al, 2008). Bryman (2012) also notes that there are concerns for its reliability and validity, reemphasising the difficulty in analysing and interpreting data for conclusive results, thus offering more generalised theories. Therefore, the best use of a quantitative research method is where the author looks to confirm an existing theory typically in statistical or numerical data (Silverman, 2013) on a large scale.

3.1.2 Similarities and differences of qualitative and quantitative methods
Similarities in both research methods show an approach to gathering vast data, adapting the results to research literature and conclusions to support a case for the authors research (Bryman, 2016). Although Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) suggest that qualitative research questions are exploratory whilst quantitative research questions are confirmatory. Gelo et al (2008) argue that the gathering of quantitative data allows the author to predict results, whereas qualitative approaches study the unpredictability of behaviours. These approaches are key to identify as it
predetermines how the author will structure the aim of their paper, either choosing to support an existing theory from a quantitative approach or look to offer a new theory from a qualitative approach (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003). These diverse approaches then both offer similarities and differences in “philosophical foundations, methodological assumptions, and research methods” (Gelo et al, 2008, pp. 278) for authors to acquire and adopt to their chosen research topics, with Mack et al (2005) suggesting the main key difference is the flexibility.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Point of Comparison</th>
<th>Qualitative Research</th>
<th>Quantitative Research</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus of research</td>
<td>Quality (nature, essence)</td>
<td>Quantity (how much, how many)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Philosophical roots</td>
<td>Phenomenology, symbolic interactionism, constructivism</td>
<td>Positivism, logical empiricism, realism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Associated phrases</td>
<td>Fieldwork, ethnographic, naturalistic, grounded, constructivist</td>
<td>Experimental, empirical, statistical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Goal of investigation</td>
<td>Understanding, description, discovery, meaning, hypothesis generating</td>
<td>Prediction, control, description, confirmation, hypothesis testing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design characteristics</td>
<td>Flexible, evolving, emergent</td>
<td>Predetermined, structured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample</td>
<td>Small, nonrandom, purposeful, theoretical</td>
<td>Large, random, representative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data collection</td>
<td>Researcher as primary instrument, interviews, observations, documents</td>
<td>Inanimate instruments scales, tests, surveys, questionnaires, computers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Primary mode of analysis</td>
<td>Inductive, constant</td>
<td>Deductive, statistical</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Findings</td>
<td>Comprehensive, holistic, Precise, numerical expansive, richly descriptive</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 7 - Characteristics of qualitative and quantitative research. Source: Merriam, 2009, pp.18

Figure 7 shows the different points of comparison the research entails, demonstrating the similarities and differences between qualitative and quantitative research methods depending on the phase. However, Merriam (2009) argues it should be used as an aid to understand the differences in supporting research, rather than a full set of rules as there are many definitions and research scenarios. See Mack et al (2005, pp. 3), Gelo (2008, pp. 274) or Bryman (2012, pp. 408) for a further understanding of comparative tables demonstrating a variety of views.

### 3.1.3 Mixed method approach

Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) suggest a transition over the last 30 years in research, where traditional (quantitively orientated) research now involves revolutionary (qualitative orientated) research theories due to the growing interest, as most of the information on human behaviours is complex and occurs in text rather than figures (Bernard, 2013). A mixed method approach combines qualitative and quantitative research methods where both can support each other, highlighting relationships or inconsistencies from the data (Saunders et al, 2018). Gelo et al (2008) suggest that this offers a more comprehensive analysis of data, whereby future researchers will look past purely one form of research method to establish a theory. However, Noblitt and Hare (1988) and Rosenberg (1988) suggest that as the methods are so different they would destroy the foundations of each approach and therefore confuse the data, believing that
the methods must be kept separate in the analysis and conclusions to strengthen each result (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005) and not offer partial results (Greene & Caracelli, 1997).

3.1.4 Primary and secondary data research
Primary data analysis sees the “researchers who were responsible for collecting the data conduct the analysis” (Bryman, 2012, pp. 13) and offers greater control over research that is specific to the researchers aims and objectives. Although it can be time consuming, the data is rewarding through relevancy and accuracy to the authors work (Bell, 2014), also offering trustworthy and dependable data. Thus, utilising this should benefit researchers who wish to generate new theories with new data. Secondary data analysis “occurs when someone else analyses such data” (Bryman, 2012, pp. 13) and is cost and time effective, allowing the author to gather already sourced and used data. However, the data can possibly then be not so reliable, relevant or specific enough to the researcher’s topic or research aim (Bell, 2014). Thus, utilising this should benefit researchers with a short time frame with little resources to complete a large research objective in a vast field already researched and analysed well.

3.1.5 Sample selection method
Sampling varies in accordance with the type of method research (Bryman, 2012), where qualitative research focuses on purposive sampling almost exclusively (Gelo et al, 2008; Mack et al, 2005), placing the research questions at the heart of the sampling considerations, typically to gather in depth data about a specific subject or topic allowing the research questions to be answered with relevancy. Conversely quantitative research focuses on probability sampling, selecting participants at random and thus eliminating any bias feedback (Bryman, 2012). Whilst there can be a sample selection of the participants for research, sampling can also exist in the content i.e which areas, destinations, travellers for example to target, described by Bryman (2012, pp. 417) where “the sampling of areas and then participants is a common strategy in qualitative research”. Generic purposive sampling, also known as convenience sampling, a form of purposive sampling, identifies criteria in relation to the research topic or aim (Gelo et al, 2005), providing a relevant and trustworthy source of information, something that Bryman (2012) states as common when contexts are being sampled.

3.2 Selected research method
As the purpose of the study is to determine and analyse the CMTs of HSMs to understand if the economic impacts of crises on hotels can be limited, specific research methods described below were chosen and utilised by the author that best fit the papers aim.

3.2.1 Qualitative research gathered
A qualitative method was chosen to gather data for many of the benefits stated above including but not limited to its ability to analyse data in depth (Silverman, 2013), allowing for feedback from questioning directly relating to the researchers aim (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). More specifically to this paper, a qualitative method allowed the author to gather and investigate in depth responses (Bryman, 2016) limiting any bias in self-reflection or improvements from the respondent’s handling of the crisis themselves (Patton, 2002). Greater transparency in the
answers from constructed questions also allowed for a more thorough and direct response in relation to the particular crisis. Qualitative research added depth and understanding to important issues that were raised, which the respondents may not have fully reflected on prior to the questionnaire. Conversely if quantitative research had been used by the author this would have limited the ability to decode and understand the behavioural feedback (Gelo et al, 2008) of why and how techniques were implemented, thus eliminating the ability to offer suggestions for future improvements to limit the economic impacts of crises in hotels.

The strengths of quantitative data analysis outlined above would have allowed analysis into the numerical financial economic impacts caused by the crisis. However, given the sensitivity of financial data of hotels this was understandably not provided by respondents and similarly the reason as to why a mixed method approach was not utilised. This coincides with the negatives of using quantitative methods, as statistics and figures are typically fixed, therefore the author can only retrieve the data or not, limiting the researcher (Bryman, 2012). Whereas a qualitative method allows the author to receive data from behavioural and management techniques, supporting the aim of the research paper to understand HSM’s CMTs, offering credibility with consistent and reliable data (Thomas, 2006), greatly linking with the research questions.

3.2.2 Inductive vs deductive approaches
An inductive approach was utilised, where no existing preconceptions or ideas form a base for the research (Bryman, 2012; Joffe & Yardley, 2004), strengthening the authors primary research by eliminating bias (Bryman, 2016). An inductive approach fits well with qualitative research as it offers “an inductive view of the relationship between theory and research, whereby the former is generated out of the latter” (Bryman, 2012, pp. 380), also supported where “inductive themes, drawn from the data, are often useful in new areas of research” (Joffe & Yardley, 2004, pp. 57). Therefore, the inductive approach offers the development of new ideas and theories providing “an easily used and systematic set of procedures for analysing qualitative data that can produce reliable and valid findings” (Thomas, 2006, pp. 237). An inductive approach allowed the questionnaire to be constructed to the topic, rather than influenced by previous academic work on similar topics, strengthening the respondent’s relevancy to the research aim. However, weaknesses in this approach can argue that the entirely inductive method is non-existent due to an author’s knowledge on the topics industry (Joffe & Yardley, 2004). Conversely a deductive approach utilises a previous theory upon which an author will look to confirm or reject (Gelo et al, 2008). A deductive approach, mainly used in quantitative methods (Bryman, 2016), would have given the author fewer research options prior to the data review, with little academic research to review and analyse due to Covid-19’s emergence affecting the world on a vast scale like never before (Uğur & Akiyik, 2020).

3.2.3 Primary research
Due to the scarce current research into the authors topic, primary research was undertaken. Due to the researcher’s topic ongoing, the desire to receive real time relevant responses meant primary research was the best research option to use. With the sensitivity of economic data in crises and the economic impacts, secondary data support is typically unavailable for an
economic impact analysis (Lacher & Nepal, 2010; Toppa et al, 2011) therefore primary data collection from questionnaires was essential (Southwick et al, 2009). Although this approach can provide vast information where other methods are not applicable, “the results should be used with caution due to sampling biases” (Song et al, 2012, pp. 1666).

3.3 Data collection methods
Along with a qualitative research method being chosen, a questionnaire was sent out via email to HSMs gathering data on the economic impacts their hotels had faced in a crisis. The authors research methods, techniques and decisions for the data collection methods are outlined below.

3.3.1 Data collection procedure
3.3.1.1 Research aim
Establishing the research aim is key to identifying the relevant data collection methods, retrieving data and choosing the right techniques for analysis (Merriam, 2009). As there was little previous data on the researcher’s topic, sample participants, size and data collection methods were best utilised to understand why HSMs strategised in a specific way in amongst a crisis. The results support hotels in limiting their economic impacts from future crises, whilst also offering hotels and governments more critical information in an under-researched area.

3.3.1.2 Sample selection
Upon identifying a research aim and topic, qualitative research often then begins with identifying the population to target (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) relevant to their field of study to ensure results are in accordance with the researchers aim (Polit & Beck, 2010). A random selection of participants, where the inclusion of a population occurs by chance (Bryman, 2016) was chosen due to its ability to offer data from large populations, eliminating any human judgement that may incur bias feedback (Bryman, 2016). This is supported where “the best strategy for achieving a representative sample is to use probability (random) methods of sampling” (Polit & Beck, 2010, pp. 1452). Participants were chosen at random, with the sample selected consisting of targeting HSMs, meeting the authors relevant eligibility (Polit & Beck, 2010) ensuring that respondents had authority to make key strategic decisions regarding CMTs.

The paper can be considered a case study, focusing on 4-star hotels within two cities. Hotel’s CMTs from HSM’s results are compared from their respective destinations, therefore hotels and CMTs are the main case of study. Destinations also offer a comparison of the CMTs used to further understand CMTs in hotels, encompassing a triangulation of study involving at least two data sources (analysing the impacts of CMTs in hotels and the study of hotels and tourism in London and Stockholm) to strengthen the findings of a third (Thurmond, 2001). Veal (2011) highlights that the units of analysis are key to understand to keep the analysis relevant, however it must be noted the study does not analyse all 4-star hotels in the case cities.

Sampling had elements of generic purposive sampling where the researcher “establishes criteria concerning the kinds of cases needed to address the research questions” (Bryman, 2012, pp. 422) as the author decided to target 4-star hotels and HSMs. Choosing this method
minimised the variations in the data, where consistency and reliable relevant results could be extracted offering a fair review of hotels and employees in similar establishments. Polit and Beck (2010) acknowledge this is common stating “random sampling seldom results in random samples” (pp. 1453) as the author must select a target audience based on their topic. Data collected from 4-star hotels reduced inconsistent results as McKinsey (2020) research states that crisis’ impacts differ depending upon the calibre of hotel. Therefore 4-star hotels offer a median range with a vast sample size accommodating a multitude of guests from leisure to business at an affordable price. Research into the different cities offered comparisons in results for analysis, to conclude whether a location was impacted differently with differing CMTs.

Targeting the participants involved looking on travel engine sites for 4-star hotels, in particular Booking.com due to its vast search options, filtering to 4-star hotels in either London or Stockholm. Upon identifying a hotel at random, LinkedIn was used to search for the hotel’s General Manager, Hotel Manager, CEO or COO. The author then searched the hotel website for an email address, upon which an introductory email with the questionnaire attached was sent. The author identified a better response rate when contacting old students of Södertörn University in HSM positions, possibly as result of a mutual connection to the university.

3.3.1.3 Establishing the questionnaire
A pilot questionnaire was constructed with an academic researcher and lecturer, offering feedback on improvements to strengthen the questionnaire, showcasing that preparation is important in qualitative research methods (Silverman, 2013). The questionnaire provided an insight into the research topic to ensure respondents were aware of the researchers aim, to gather information on the CMTs HSMs had used during a crisis, whilst also understanding the economic impacts. The researcher and university supervisor’s contact details were provided to offer additional support to the respondents if required. Clarification of the participants confidential answers was highlighted ensuring trust was developed where the respondents felt secure to answer truthfully. Respondents details such as name, age, hotel, gender and years working in the industry were requested confirming identity and relevancy. The questionnaire was written and distributed in English as it is seen as a global language (Jenkins, 2007) and is often used in Sweden, shown in appendix 1. Questionnaires were sent by 1st November 2020 and received by 31st March 2021 to ensure the author had appropriate time to analyse the data.

12 open ended and semi-structured questions endorsed the topic of relevance to be discussed (Kallio et al, 2016) permitting the respondents to elaborate where relevant (Merriam, 2009), emphasising on important topics, strategies or tasks that had impacted the hotel. This structure allows for flexible, rich and detailed formation of data gathering (Kallio et al, 2016) to offer a foundation for questions, strengthening consistency in all respondent’s answers for analysis (Bryman, 2016; Thomas, 2006). Semi-structured interviews loosely directed the respondents (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006; Robson, 2002) to think about management and strategy implementation in crises, particularly in the current Covid-19 crisis, encouraging elaboration and individualism within respondent’s answers ensuring differentiation in results (Fontana & Frey, 2005). Topic questions on ‘what’ offers the respondents to discuss economic impacts,
‘why’ questions highlighted behavioural techniques, ‘when’ questions offered previous impacts discussions or CMTs used, and ‘how’ questions offered future or past insights.

3.3.1.4 Questionnaire distribution
Open-ended questionnaires were sent as an attachment in an email to 28 HSMs. Open-ended questions allowed for novel and unexpected findings to emerge (Bryman, 2012), thus reducing the authors ability to influence answers. Questionnaires were emailed to HSMs ensuring answers received were from high authorities of responsibility where strategies are constructed. Due to Covid-19, questionnaires were emailed rather than face to face interviews as guidance from the Swedish government recommended social interaction be kept to a minimum (Government.se, 2021). Kvale’s (2007) suggestion that conversation based qualitative research is only suitable as a qualitative tool must thereby be reassessed, whereby lockdowns and restrictions constrained the authors ability to meet face to face. Questionnaires were emailed to individuals to offer individualism, transparency and non-biased feedback, reducing the inaccuracy of answers (Sim & Waterfield, 2019). Questionnaires were emailed ensuring respondents felt secure to answer honestly and not bound to time constraints or pressures from peers. However, questionnaires sent may have presented negatives with experience sampling (Bernard, 2013) where respondents complete the questionnaires at different times, therefore personal feelings or experiences may impact the results depending upon the time in the crisis where Hannam and Knox (2005, pp. 27) state “importantly, the connotation of specific words can vary significantly between moments in time, discourses and researchers”. This can also be seen as a negative to qualitative research where quantitative research would possibly not have had this behavioural drawback, however Bernard (2013) highlights no data is free from error.

3.3.1.5 Gathering responses
Respondents were asked to send the questionnaires back via email ensuring efficiency and consistency. If a selected participant had not answered, a follow up email 2 weeks later was sent, upon which if no reply a follow up call 2 weeks later was made to convince the participant. A total of 132 participants were emailed, upon which 28 successfully replied with a completed questionnaire. Collected questionnaires were saved to a laptop for review, upon which a spreadsheet was also made to track the participants targeted ensuring efficiency, as Bernard (2013) highlights database management is crucial to gather, structure and order the data in a workable solution, otherwise the data is obsolete if it cannot be regenerated to the authors work.

3.3.2 Limitations
Due to the Covid-19 crisis, questionnaires were sent via email, limiting the ability to develop the respondents answers further as no follow up questions were initiated. Should there have been no crisis at the time of research, face to face interviews would have possibly been used encouraging replies and thus further in-depth analysis (Habermas, 1987), however with greater time spent interviewing due to the number of respondents. Therefore, the author can argue that due to the crisis a larger population of participants was achieved as the questionnaire was able to be distributed easier and wider than face to face interviews. A comparison of two destinations also meant hotels’ destinations were likely at different times within the evolving crises, thus
CMTs may be discussed more in depth based on the immediate impact at that time to the specific hotel, however this is reduced where the author states a certain date rate.

3.3.3 Delimitation and data tools used

There were small cases of delimitation as qualitative research does not typically delimit data too much due to the not so specific questions (Bryman, 2012). The author targeted HSMs only for reasons previously highlighted, specifically focusing on 4-star hotels due to the array of participants with the tourist’s purchasing power of 4-star hotels high, thus able to accommodate more general guests offering a varied chance of an economic impact, with the hotels varying in size. Limited data tools were required as questionnaires were constructed and sent on a laptop with replies coming via email, with data gathering conducted and managed on a laptop.

3.4 Data analysis methods

Upon collecting the data from 28 HSMs, different methods of analysis were identified and utilised to determine results and conclusions, which are discussed below.

3.4.1 Thematic analysis

Data analysis brings “order, structure and interpretation to the mass of collected data” (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, pp. 150) allowing for the search of general statements among categories and relationships identifying content. Thematic analysis “is a method for identifying, analysing, and interpreting patterns of meaning (‘themes’) within qualitative data” (Clarke & Braun, 2017, pp. 297). “A theme refers to a specific pattern found in the data one is interested in” (Joffe & Yardley, 2004, pp. 57). Thematic analysis brings clarity amongst the data to the researchers as the analysis proceeds the data generation (Marshall & Rossman, 1999), supporting an inductive approach whereby a theory is not presented prior to the research, allowing for new theories to be generated whilst also reducing bias (Bryman, 2012). This was one of the many reasons as to why thematic analysis was chosen by the author when analysing the data. Due to the new crisis being under-researched, particularly in the researcher’s topic, thematic analysis also complements the inductive approach in identifying underlying meanings in text (Clarke & Braun, 2017), resulting in a greater understand of the text. Along with being able to identify patterns and trends discovering certain themes or topics of relevance or inconsistency, thematic analysis also offers flexibility in questioning and data collection (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Thematic analysis then allows themes to be generated from discovering patterns and trends presenting the ability for the data to be categorised and structured, also enabling the author to structure a comprehensive review of the data (Bryman, 2016).

3.4.2 Thematic analysis procedure

The analysis procedure starts by gathering and reviewing participant results several times allowing the author to develop a wider understanding of the results (Nowell et al, 2017). Familiarisation with the data is crucial in understanding the data and therefore reviewing it to ensure its validity (Braun & Clarke, 2021). Gathering and reviewing data must be prior to identifying themes or codes as gradually the more the data is read the more understanding, identities and themes will emerge (Terry et al, 2017). Upon re-reviewing the data several times,
quotes from respondents strengthen the patterns and trends highlighting key features with a connection to the earlier researched literature. Marshall and Rossman (1999) state that it is important here not to commit to codes or themes too quickly as this may limit or dilute other possible codes. All results are reviewed from each questionnaire and cross referenced with all questionnaires from both destinations reflecting various stages of analysis offering for greater results (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Answers are cross referenced with respondent’s details to identify trends or patterns subject to destination type and experiences and if these had an impact on CMTs. Reoccurring themes and dominating patterns are then reviewed and coded into categories condensing material, highlighting key themes grouping together topics for discussion, with Bernard (2013) suggesting that coding establishes connections and allows for comparisons where generalisations can be formed. The most relevant quotations are used to highlight common patterns. Themes are then reviewed and defined, upon which analysis and conclusions are then drawn in tables (Clarke & Braun, 2017; Maguire & Delahunt, 2017).

3.4.3 Alternative methods of analysis
There are other analysis techniques researchers can use to analyse data. Similar to thematic analysis, grounded theory also allows the interpretation of data for review from theories and patterns through coding, mainly from qualitative research methods (Birks & Mills, 2011). Grounded theory however does not suggest that authors engage with academic literature prior to research for fear of influence, with Glaser (2005) describing grounded theory as a “general inductive method possessed by no discipline or theoretical perspective or data type” (pp. 141). Therefore, grounded theory was not used as due to the author undertaking a masters degree in tourism and 10+ years hotel experience this was unavoidable, thus results would not truly be grounded in the data. Due to the inability to offer follow up questions, content analysis was not used as thematic analysis “pays greater attention to the qualitative aspects of the material analysed” (Joffe & Yardley, 2004, pp. 56), thus better utilised in identifying patterns and trends within text. Discourse analysis was also not chosen as it focuses on language practice (Sims-Schouten et al, 2007) and thus difficult to analyse in digital questionnaire form. However, Braun and Clarke (2021) acknowledge that content and discourse analysis types vary widely.

3.4.4 Saturation
Data saturation refers to the point at which no new information can be deemed necessary for the authors value, therefore research is stopped (Malterud et al, 2016). Data saturation ensures responses are not overwhelming for the author to analyse (Patton, 2002), diluting the core essence of the respondent’s main discussion points. Questionnaire responses by 31st March 2021 offered the participants a deadline to ensure punctual attention whilst also providing the author with ample time to review the responses. Time restrictions also enables the author to discuss a certain point in time of an evolving crisis, thereby reducing the requirements of constant updates to a fast-moving crisis, allowing the author to focus on specific strategies and practises at the specific time of a crisis. The number of responses was deemed sufficient given the decision to target 4-star HSMs, across two cities in amongst a crisis that limited face to face interaction. Questions offered vast amounts of data to be reviewed, with in total 336 separate individual question responses analysed (12 questions x 28 respondents). Bernard (2013)
importantly emphasises that too much information or too many questions can overload and dilute the information shared, therefore making it more difficult to review and pick up key themes or patterns, where the focus and aim of the paper is lost to non-specific responses.

3.5 Ethical considerations

“Ensuring validity and reliability in qualitative research involves conducting the investigation in an ethical manner” (Merriam, 2009, pp. 209). Diener and Crandall (1978) break this into four main areas; harm to the participants, a lack of informed consent, an invasion of privacy and deception. These 4 typically overlap (Bryman, 2012) however must be clearly acknowledged for research to occur safely. During the assignment respondent details are not disclosed, stated in appendix 1, therefore participants are aware prior to submission offering confidence in their answering allowing greater data to be retrieved (Norris, 1993). The author was aware that sensitive information might be provided, therefore the questionnaire states responses are confidential, reducing deception (Bryman, 2012). Due to the Covid-19 crisis, the author was aware that some hotels may be experiencing difficulties and therefore ensured that a respectful approach when requesting questionnaires was adhered to. Likewise hotels may have had other priorities to address than answering a questionnaire. It should be made aware that the author compared his country of residence and country of citizenship, therefore it was essential that an objective and non-bias approach was taken. The author fully followed the Eu GDPR and UK data protection law with participants contact details kept confidential.

3.6 Reliability and validity

The most prominent criteria’s for evaluating research are reliability (Bryman, 2016) and validity (Hammersley, 1992). Feedback was deemed sufficient from 28 HSMs, 15 from London and 13 from Stockholm. The seniority in their roles ensures answers provided are from decision makers with influence in strategy. Reflexive reporting allows the author to review the data several times, ensuring any prenotions to the results are eliminated (Loubere, 2017) ensuring an impartial analysis is adhered to offering greater reliability in results. Results are cross examined with theory to support ideas and views made by the author. Due to the type of questioning, answers were not able to be influenced by the author, nor were they interfered with. As the results were analysed during the ongoing crisis, developments are likely to occur and this data may become outdated for a specific hotel as CMTs change, however this is reduced where the author chooses a date range to analyse. Although respondents were aware the year 2020 was being analysed from the questionnaire title and questions, feedback in 2021 may have impacted results, however only marginally. External validity however may be impacted as the results reflect a response at a specific time of the crisis and therefore may not be able to be replicated (LeCompte & Goetz, 1982). Due to Covid-19, interviews were conducted via email, limiting the authors chance of developing answers or responding to feedback gathered. Although this was largely unpersonal, it was time and cost effective and arguably allowed the author to gather greater responses. Although the data is received from reputable sources, it can possibly be bias as the answers will mainly want to show their hotel in good esteem and not self-critical. As the crisis is ongoing at the time of writing and analysis, results are not yet finalised as to if and how the CMTs were successful or not.
4. Empirical results

The empirical results chapter presents findings from the questionnaire, shown in appendix 1, distributed to 28 HSM’s. Results are collected with the respondent’s demographics highlighted in table 3, showing their hotel location, length of hotel experience, gender and age. To make the empirical results more comprehensible for the reader subheadings of key question topics have been constructed.

Of the 28 HSMs that contributed to the research 15 were from London hotels and 13 from Stockholm hotels, thus limiting any bias towards a destination. The similar number of responses from destinations allow the author to fairly and evenly compare data not favouring a specific city, as results show the cities had been impacted differently in terms of visitor arrivals and thus possibly could have impacted the questionnaire results if a city was largely affected over the other. Due to the seniority of the participants, the average length of hotel experience was high at 22.8 years of service in the hospitality industry. These results offer a more comprehensible understanding of the hospitality industry due to the participants years of experience in it, arguably allowing for greater results from enhanced data. Similarly, the average age was high at 44 years old. Of the 28 participants, 18 were male and 10 female.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subject</th>
<th>Location</th>
<th>Length of hotel experience</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Age</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
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<td>M</td>
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<td>London</td>
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</table>
4.1 Economic impacts
Responses from all 28 HSMs stated they had been hugely economically impacted during the pandemic, referring to question 1, with all hotels indicating revenue as the biggest topic impacted. Responses highlighted huge decreases in revenue ranging from 50-85% in Stockholm to 70-90% in London respectively. Occupancy similarly followed this pattern with decreases across all hotels for the majority of 2020 correlated with tables 1 and 2 with very similar decreases in monthly occupancy percentages, thus is can be suggested Stockholm’s percentage change in ADR and RevPAR would also follow a similar trend to London. Respondents also stated that due to the decrease in occupancy there therefore was a loss of staff due to insufficient travel demands. The decrease in occupancy ultimately affected hotel room rates, correlated to table 1’s ADR, which decreased due to the competition between competitor hotels to attract business in a downward market, thus impacting overall hotel revenue. Results demonstrated a direct link between a loss of revenue and loss of staff, with a hotel stating that;

“the impact has been huge. Revenues have decreased by 95% and resulted in the group going from 1000 people in March 2020 to 125 currently (November 2020)”  (Subject 24)

There were variations in monthly occupancies between the individual cities, with hotels in London majority of the time in lockdowns however benefitting more from relaxed travel restrictions in summer months and thus seeing a peak in occupancy. Participants in London hotels stated that due to ‘travel corridors’ with the Middle East in summer many hotels picked up much needed revenue. Conversely occupancy in Stockholm hotels remained relatively similar throughout the year following a similar trend to 2019, albeit largely decreased in occupancy. Most hotels suggested they were largely impacted economically in March and April 2020 due to the last-minute cancellations they were unable to prepare for, and as a result incurred financial impacts of not being able to replace these bookings. Hotels in London were further economically impacted during the pandemic due to the change in guest type, with virtually no tourists for leisure in London, with these being replaced by key workers however on a much smaller scale. Hotels in both destinations stated that the leisure markets previously had large on-spend in hotels and thus further revenue was impacted, not just rooms. All hotels referred to a limit in which income could therefore be generated as restrictions in both destinations reduced the capacity to accommodate MICE business and F&B sales.

4.2 Strategy adaptations
Adaptations to strategy was apparent in all hotels, confirmed in answers from question 2, with all hotels confirming that strategy had been altered due to the economic impacts of the pandemic. The intentional adaptions to strategy was a direct result of a loss of revenue and thus new revenue generation strategies were implemented by targeting new business segments such as long stay guests or day rental rooms, highlighted by a hotel stating the;
“pandemic changed the target group and sales strategy immediately for hotel”. (Subject 23)

Unintentional adaptions to strategy such as improving hygiene standards were a result of the reactions to restrictions, demonstrating that hotels in both destinations followed government guidelines. Hotels in both destinations then reacted to restrictions adapting strategy, highlighted by one hotel stating;

“F&B wise we adapted by offering an extensive in room dining options making it safe for the guests and colleagues alike”. (Subject 9)

Restrictions to conference capacities in both destinations saw staffing measures change, directly impacting revenue. Consequently, rather than being a face to face hotel, strategies changed to offer a different type of service, one at a distance. Hotels inadvertently then altered guest interaction, as with less guests some staff members were able to spend greater time with guests albeit at a distance, with some hotels even stating an increase in positive reviews and feedback as a result. Greater time available throughout the hotel also allowed hotels to improve their technology, operations and staff training. Hotel sales strategies adapted to the current markets, with London hotels targeting key workers due to the restrictions on domestic travel limiting the targeting of domestic guests. Hotels in Stockholm benefitted from lesser restrictions with domestic markets marginally affected, however were also impacted by restrictions on international travel. Hotels were therefore quick to adapt to their target audience with a strong emphasis on new busines development, with one hotel highlighting;

“really put everything into finding and getting the business through the door and making sure we did not close again”. (Subject 23)

Strategy adaptations to staff training increased the skills in which staff members possessed, with hotels focusing on training multiskilled sets that saw essential staff members becoming skilled in various departments. This ultimately benefitted cost control, something that many hotels had highlighted as being a reason for the strategy changes with one hotel stating;

“the strategy is all about cash flow and savings”. (Subject 26)

Many hotels stated that they acted quickly in changing their strategy to ensure impacts were limited. Examples included making room rates clearer and flexible online to stay attractive to customers to maximise revenue, with other hotels also emphasising greater communication and focus on hotel cleanliness and hygiene with a hotel stating;

“cleaning has been a huge part of the adapted strategy and heavily enforced”. (Subject 11)

4.3 Results from adapted strategies
Question 3 highlighted that adaptations to strategy resulted in the development of new sources of revenue for hotels, showing that whilst business was available to be captured at the time of
the crisis, it perhaps previously was not targeted due to the hotels focus on different target segments, demonstrated where a hotel stated the strategy change;

“allowed us to steal a few groups at the lower end of the pricing scale”. (Subject 3)

Although all hotels alluded to a change in strategy altering the results the hotels would typically receive pre crisis, no hotel deemed the change in strategy as sufficient enough to cover the losses incurred due to the crisis reducing travel demand hugely, where a hotel stated there was;

“not much we could do to counteract loss of international travellers”. (Subject 18)

Many HSMs stated that due to the low levels of customer demand and thus increase in competition for business, the ability to be flexible in the strategy supported the adaptation of strategy. However clear strategy changes from many hotels highlighted the need to cover costs rather than to grow the revenue with a hotel stating;

“overall main goal is to get enough revenue to cover payroll and bills”. (Subject 8).

4.4 Challenges in attracting tourists back

Question 4 highlighted that due to the impacts of restrictions across the world all hotels saw a reduction in guest demand, with hotel strategies altered to cater to guests available to accommodate. All hotels found attracting tourists back a challenge, as many believed influencing tourist demand to sufficient levels was out of the hotels power due to the international restrictions to travel. This limited the amount and type of guests a hotel could accommodate, further impacting revenue opportunities, highlighted by a hotel who stated;

“you are in the hands of other countries and their pandemic situation which leads to lock down of countries, fear of travelling, travelling bans. If the rest of world, Europe and mainly the US do not travel – or are not allowed to travel – then it doesn’t matter what I do as a stand alone hotel in another country”. (Subject 14)

Hotels also believed that as the crisis was ongoing, the question remains as ‘what IS the biggest challenge in attracting tourists back?’, suggesting there are still many challenges. Of the guests that were able to be influenced to travel, which mainly involved domestic tourists, communicating the safety and security of the hotel to entice guests back was a key challenge to overcome. This was achieved by getting the necessary documents and certificates showcasing the hotel as safe and hygienic, with many hotels stating that online communication was increased offering confidence to the customer to firstly book but also commit to staying with them, alluded to by a hotel stating a key challenge was;

“getting the word out that we are open and we are safe”. (Subject 11)
Reducing fear of travel for customers was deemed as a big and ongoing challenge for hotels, many of whom were adamant that it would long continue to be a challenge and something that would need to be incorporated into the main business strategy, with a hotel stating:

“we expect tourists to ask questions around hotel cleanliness and flexibility in rates with so much uncertainty. Therefore we expect as much communication with our guests as possible to reassure them with rates visible and clearly explained”. (Subject 3)

4.5 Differing guest types

Responses to question 5 showed huge differences in the types of guests accommodated from previous years from all hotels. However guest type depended upon the city and time of year, with London accommodating mainly business travellers from key workers due to the domestic restrictions of “essential travel only” (Gov.uk, 2020), with a hotel in London stating;

“yes we hardly get any leisure stays it is all key workers, only when the tier’s were level 2 we had a small leisure pick up, i.e. Christmas for a couple of weeks.” (Subject 9).

Conversely hotels in Stockholm did not see as much of a decline in business guests due to the lack of restrictions on domestic travel. However similarly to London, overseas leisure guests were greatly reduced due to the global travel restrictions. Although, Stockholm hotels did mention that they were still benefitting from leisure guests, albeit at a reduced rate due to the market competition, many hotels signified a change in guest demands, with a hotel stating;

“the leisure travellers – almost only Swedes – are more prone to try get a cheaper price for their stay than before”. (Subject 14)

Both destinations signified a huge decline in MICE delegates due to restrictions on the events industry and international travel. Both destinations stated a huge reduction in accommodating both business and leisure groups. Hotels stated that the lack of groups and MICE business made it difficult for hotels to plan strategies to increase revenue, as it was largely now centred on rooms revenue.

4.6 Difference in guest nationality

The difference in business and leisure travellers was also comparable in answers to question 6, referring to the type of nationality stay statistics in hotels. All HSMs highlighted the majority of their guests were domestic however London hotels also saw a small increase of international travellers in summer months due to the travel corridors, shown by a London hotel stating;

“its clear to see the only nationalities are either UK or Middle East (due to the corridor that exists at present)”’. (Subject 10)

Similarly in Stockholm hotels the majority of guests accommodated were also domestic, a change from the typical Nordic, UK and USA markets, with a hotel highlighting;
“throughout the period there has been almost 100% Swedish guests. Normally it is perhaps 60% Swedish and 40% International (mostly from Nordic countries)”.

(Subject 15)

4.7 Customer trends
The results from question 7 differed depending upon the destination due to the difference in restrictions. Both cities stated a difference in interaction with the guests than pre pandemic, with the social behaviours of guests in both destinations also noticeable. Feedback from HSMs in Stockholm hotels showed that guests were spending more time out of the hotel, thus less interaction with staff. However hotels in London stated that the behaviours of guests altered depending upon what tier of lockdown they were in signifying that the changing restrictions affected the behaviours of guests and thus how the hotel adapted strategies, with a hotel stating;

“it has changed depending on the Tier system we are in. In Tier 3, 4 and Lockdown F&B can only be Room Service. So that has limited guests to dining in their rooms more so being out less as they can’t eat anywhere except to get takeaways. In Tier 2 there is a little less interaction but more because it is quiet, less staff. However we have seen a lot of more positive comments from guests naming staff. I think a large reason is that staff actually have time to talk to people and interact because we are not as busy. So almost allowed more interaction”. (Subject 2)

The increase in interaction saw new measures introduced to protect both staff and guests with barriers, sanitizers and encouraging the use of technology across both destinations, helping to provide the hotels with a clean and safe image. The majority of hotels mentioned changes in the hotel strategy when servicing guests, demonstrating a change in hotels behaviour towards staff as well. Some examples included boxed breakfast being serviced to guests, table service only and strict measures of distance. Although these measures were influenced by the hotel to ultimately ensure its revenue is maximised by providing confidence to the guests, many hotels stated they were unable to influence the last-minute cancellations of bookings, the shorter lead time of bookings and price sensitivity of customers, thus impacting revenue.

4.8 Future strategies
Question 8 showed that all hotels in both destinations stated cost control was the primary objective for the strategy changes due to the economic impact of the crisis, mainly reducing staffing through initiating furlough schemes or redundancies, highlighting a cautious approach to future strategies due to the possibility of a future crisis, stated by a hotel;

“we will also proceed with very strict hiring of new staff in order not to have too many employees if something would happen again”. (Subject 16)

The uncertainty of the crisis reduced the hotels ability to plan too far ahead for future scenarios, instead choosing to focus on the immediate short-term solutions to problems. These short-term solutions included staying loyal to current guests whilst developing new business in order to gain as much revenue as possible. Preparedness in safety and security in the hotel was a key theme amongst all hotels, preparing for when government restrictions are lifted and travel
resumes. Key focuses demonstrated the desire to continuously adapt the business and strategy if necessary to meet the demand, highlighted by a hotel who stated future scenarios will include;

“crisis management techniques so we’re ready for something like this again”. (Subject 18)

4.9 Crisis support
Feedback to question 9 showed support was evidentially present from governments intervening to due to the decrease in hotel revenues. This was stated in both London and Stockholm hotels, with monetary support from their governments mainly through the furlough scheme supporting cash flow. Governments then intervened offering hotels the opportunity to place staff members on temporary leave whilst still entitling them to a salary, upon which the government would contribute the majority of pay. However, hotels were still required to contribute to the salary, upon which costs were still incurred with a hotel stating;

“the government supported with the furlough scheme but as there was still costs involved it did not ultimately save anyone’s employment”. (Subject 2)

Hotels in both cities stated governments also contributed to a reduction in taxes and business rates, also supporting a hotels cash flow, however similarly with the furlough schemes hotels still incurred costs whilst receiving little revenue. Many hotels highlighted that outside of the monetary support from governments there was little communication, making it difficult to plan and execute strategies to support themselves. Statements from hotels suggested that the lack of communication in a constant changing crisis eliminated the ability to develop appropriate plans or strategies with sufficient time. Many of the schemes were also open for criticism and were not deemed as specific enough to the hotel’s own situations, with many staff members frustrated at the lack of power they had over their own revenue. This included last minute changes to rules and regulations in London, where at Christmas many restaurants were closed at short notice, thus incurring large costs. Criticism had also been directed at the governments from both cities with some hotels stating that although the government acted quickly in supporting the hospitality industry, this did not go far enough in an industry that contributes greatly to the country’s economy. A few Stockholm hotels also stated that the support from the government was often delayed and a time-consuming difficult process to apply for. Although many hotels referred to the appreciation of the support form governments, hotels were indecisive as to whether it was sufficient enough due to the hotels still taking on huge financial losses, uncertainty for the future opportunities and inadequate communication reducing the hotels ability to support themselves. However many hotels were aware of the magnitude of the crisis and thus understandable of the economic external pressures, with a hotel stating;

“in a world wide pandemic it fair to say that nothing is really sufficient.” (Subject 28)

Regular communication between staff members was highlighted as key to the successful implementation of new strategies. Effective communication and support from head office and senior managers ensured staff members were kept as safe as possible to do their jobs, with
many hotels referring to safety equipment such as PPE and hand sanitizers being distributed by their head office or owners. The majority of hotels highlighted great support from staff members allowed the hotel to be flexible in their business operations due to the constant updates of rules and restrictions. A hotel stated that;

“the staff has been very supportive and flexible which has helped a lot – flexible to change days to work and schedules, they do alternate chores to be able to cut some working hours–they understand the gravity of the situation.” (Subject 19)

4.10 Change in hotel results
Question 10 presented differing results vs previous years depending upon the hotel’s city. Unsurprisingly occupancy and rate decreased in all hotels, with the booking lead times also drastically reduced making it difficult to implement strategies that would maximise revenue. Surprisingly the average LOS in some hotels increased with a hotel stating that;

“LOS (length of stay) has increased as a lot of people staying are key workers so travelling and staying for the week and going home on the Friday.” (Subject 24)

Strategies were therefore implemented to meet demand for a greater LOS with examples of packages offering discounts and enhancements in London hotels, with Stockholm hotels targeting different business segments in long stay guests which also had an impact on LOS. Additional strategies implemented saw new room types and rate strategies created adjusting to the demand in the market with examples such as day let rooms and non-refundable rates offering consumers alternatives. Many of the rooms booked were stated as standard rooms, with no hotel suggesting they had seen an increase in a specific category of room type booked, however due to the low occupancy, hotels were also able to complimentary upgrade guests.

Due to the much-publicised crisis, the majority of hotels stated that they had expected occupancy and rate to decrease especially due to the travel restrictions globally. However, many hotels stated that such a large decrease in their rate or revenue could not have been expected. Conversely LOS and room type consumed were more predictable due to the strategies implemented by hotels resulting in the LOS increasing, showing positive signs of successful strategy implementation in crises, something that the hotels were aiming to achieve and thus aware of. The restrictions to travel ultimately increased hotel competition thus many hotels also decreased their rates to stay attractive with one hotel stating;

“all the hotels are fighting for a market that has been decreasing in volume”. (Subject 21)

4.11 Actions to counteract profit shortfall
Question 11 presented the main actions stated by hotels to counteract the shortfall in profit, with cost controlling, new sales initiatives, planning and preparation the key actions stated. However the majority of hotels across both cities highlighted that they felt there was little they could do to influence travel and thus revenue due to restrictions, other than be prepared to accommodate guests for when travel resumes, with a hotel stating there is;
“not much we can do except make sure that we come back as lean as possible and operationally 200% ready to make sure that we can recover as quickly as possible.” (Subject 23)

This would be achieved by ensuring operationally the hotel is clean with procedures in place to safeguard staff and guests, whilst also ensuring rates and information are clear and available online for guests to book quickly and easily. Preparation will also involve promotion to communicate to guests in social media, newsletters, their websites and 3rd party channels, highlighting that communication is essential across many channels. Training staff for the new normal with regards to guest interaction, behaviours, safety and security was highlighted, with hotels stating that staff will also be cross trained to be more flexible throughout different departments ensuring staff do not need to be vastly hired for different roles, thus reducing costs.

Due to the uncertainty of the crisis, many of the hotels reiterated that cost control was a high priority, ensuring that costs are kept to a minimum to be less economically impacted by the crisis. Although this mainly involves reducing staffing, restricting investment and prioritising essential costs only was also addressed with a hotel stating;

“more need to have than nice to have for a long time. You learn to prioritize”. (Subject 18)

Hotels stated strategies would be adapted to meet consumer demand, with an example of a hotel closing floors in their hotels not in use. In addition to cost saving, hotels also referred to new business development as a priority, offering the flexibility to try new ideas with occupancy low and rates favourable, leading to new potential business strategies, with a hotel stating there;

“will be strategies and delving into new markets in order to drive the revenue”. (Subject 10)

4.12 Pre pandemic hotel risks
The greatest risks mentioned by hotels prior to the Covid-19 crisis from question 12 was other hotel competition, terrorism, staffing/recruiting and their own hotel appearance/features. No hotel mentioned the risk of a crisis or pandemic. A hotel highlighted that challenges were already apparent in many hotels prior to the crisis and stated that prior to the crisis;

“the greatest risk was staffing. Recruitment was impossible across all levels of the business and it is only going to get worse with Brexit. This is going to still be a major issue except we don’t have the income to even increase salaries”. (Subject 3)

Competitor hotels presented challenges to hotels to produce revenue in saturated markets with low demand, whilst other challenges such as staffing and recruiting posed a risk to the hotels ability to serve guests, a risk that can be further exaggerated post pandemic due to the low cash flow and reluctance of hotels to invest in order to cost save. External threats were also mentioned by some hotels, such as terrorism, saturated markets, recessions and uncertain world situations such as climate change or exchange rates.
5. Analysis and discussion

The following chapter analyses key topics identified from the empirical results using thematic analysis and theory from the literature review. Key codes from the empirical results were highlighted based on the feedback repetition and categorised into themes shown in table 4 in no particular order. The analysis is categorised into the 5 most referred to themes by respondents. The main themes represented in the empirical results were general impacts, strategy implementation, internal hotel impacts, external challenges and crisis management.

5.1 Identified themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>General impacts</th>
<th>Strategy implementation</th>
<th>Internal hotel impacts</th>
<th>External challenges</th>
<th>Crisis management</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decrease in rate and occupancy and thus revenue</td>
<td>• Hotels flexibility and adaptability to crises</td>
<td>• Difficulties in strategy</td>
<td>• Restrictions determining hotel performance</td>
<td>• Implementing new SOP’s to meet guidelines</td>
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<td>Loss of staff, either temporarily or permanently</td>
<td>• Hotel planning for the immediate future</td>
<td>• Change in hospitality service type</td>
<td>• Future travel uncertainty affecting demand</td>
<td>• Adopting recovery techniques</td>
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<tr>
<td>Decrease in travel and tourist demand</td>
<td>• Specific impacts to hotels = specific CMTs</td>
<td>• Guest changes in behaviour</td>
<td>• Instability in support and guidance</td>
<td>• Planning and preparation key to future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Decrease in opportunity costs eg. tourist on-spend</td>
<td>• Restrictions to hotels making it difficult to plan</td>
<td>• Staffing difficulties</td>
<td>• Influence on hotel’s ability to accommodate guests</td>
<td>• No mention of crisis as a threat prior to Covid-19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in leisure, groups, MICE business</td>
<td>• Lack of preparation prior to crisis</td>
<td>• Communication and collaboration</td>
<td>• Traveller confidence and trust in safety</td>
<td>• Uncertainty for future</td>
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Table 4 - Themes generated from key codes. Source: Illustration by author
5.2 General impacts

The general impacts on hotels by crises refers to the overview of the Covid-19 impacts. General impacts look past monetary, taking into considering the whole hotel thus providing a holistic view and proved to be a main topic for discussion from respondents.

As previously presented the economic impacts of the Covid-19 crisis are global and ever present in the results. The decreases in hotel revenue are directly a result of the decreases in hotel occupancy due to guest demand and can be directly comparable to the arrival and hotel statistics for both destinations shown in tables 1 and 2. Impacts were highlighted as vast and detrimental to the hotels performance stated by;

“we have closed temporarily due to lockdowns, lack of tourists and thus business”. (Subject 2)

The variance between the cities decreases in occupancy demonstrates that cities are impacted differently in crises, similarly with the impacts to the different city’s GDP decreases, shown in chapter 2.4. The economic impacts, both nationally in the form of GDP but specifically hotel revenue, coincide with the travel restrictions, with many London hotels also referring to periods in time in which they were closed heavily impacting revenue. Travel restrictions from April 2020 onwards, demonstrated in figure 1, show the start of the huge decrease in arrival statistics due to the crisis, coinciding with tables 1 and 2, demonstrating a global impact. Statistics and participant feedback showed January and February arrivals are not greatly impacted until March and beyond when Europe restricts travel internationally and nationally, coinciding with tables 1 and 2, emphasising that hotels were hugely impacted by external factors outside of their control in both locations. However the easing of restrictions in London hotels in the summer months supported an increase in revenue due to the higher occupancy demand, with many hotels expressing an increase in revenue vs prior months that had travel restrictions. The increase in occupancy was due to the relaxed travel restrictions implemented by the UK government that saw ‘travel corridors’ created to increase tourism. This directly demonstrates that government travel restrictions had an effect on hotel revenue through travel demand.

Hotels across both destinations stated March and April the worst hit months as the last-minute room cancellations left little time for hotels to develop strategies to replace these rooms, whilst all the time also incurring high unexpected costs. As a result of the crisis, shorter lead times of booking also made for difficult staffing and hotel cost control. This demonstrates that whilst hotels can plan strategies for success, an unexpected sudden crisis can have huge impacts and alterations to strategy, whereby hotels cannot plan for unforeseen crises no matter of the location or HSM’s demographic factors, supporting that crisis are difficult to plan for (Uğur & Akiyik, 2020). It can be suggested then that planning is essential in crisis management, supporting Baum and Hai (2020), either in an expected or unexpected crisis, as a lack of crisis management can possibly cause the crisis to have a greater impact, demonstrated by the last minute cancellations hotels incurred in March and April greatly affecting costs and thus revenue. Therefore hotels will want to avoid a parallel crisis, a financial one, by ensuring they
introduce proactive planning to resolve a current crisis, and should CMTs prove successful in averting a financial crisis, this will confirm that CMTs can be implemented pre crises.

Feedback stated staffing would be reduced to decrease costs due to the crisis impacting revenue. However, many hotels suggested that staff be trained to be multi-skilled in different departments thus offering flexibility, helping to reduce costs further by not overemploying. These suggestions coincide with Andriotis’s (2018) degrowth theory that enables hotels to employ fewer staff members allowing them to work inter-departmentally through being multi-skilled, thus reducing staff, redundancies and re-hiring costs. This suggests that staff and hotels must be flexible to stay competitive and limit the economic impacts of crises no matter the location. This connects the participants feedback to Sigala’s (2020) earlier theory, also further emphasised by PWC (2020a) where hotels must be flexible in their business strategy to reduce risks. Hung et al (2018) and Randhawa et al (2016) suggestions that collaboration is key to the success of new ideas is therefore plausible as staff and hotels must be aligned for improvements to be made, demonstrated in the staff and hotel collaboration on new successful initiatives, suggesting that whilst demographic factors may not influence collaboration, man-management and engagement certainly will. Therefore the HSMs greater years of experience could possibly positively influence this, however it is not conclusive as this will depend upon the personnel.

Results showed that the crisis impacted various segments in all hotels, from leisure to business guests and in-turn meetings, events and groups delegates, signifying a similarity to Leontief’s (1936) study that other organisations can be indirectly affected by crises. This suggests that there are few tactics hotels can implement to reduce indirect economic impacts. The impacts to the many different segments within a hotel show limits to the type of revenue hotels could successfully target, which mainly was rooms revenue from domestic leisure and business guests in Stockholm, and domestic business guests in London, thus impacting revenue by reducing occupancy and guest type. Leontief’s (1936) study is supported by a hotel stating;

“the reduction in the leisure market also saw less on-spend in the hotel”. (Subject 4)

Rate was also impacted due to the lack of groups and MICE business that would typically see large room bookings many months out, allowing a hotel to better manage their strategy with a greater understanding of consumer travel demands and thus offering the best available rates to customers to maximise revenue. Due to the lack of demand, all hotels stated they competed for business, thus reducing rates further and thus impacting revenue, with a hotel stating;

“pricedrops from hotels even a bit far away made us lower our rates in 2020”. (Subject 16)

Hotels were required to adapt depending upon the hotels individual impact from the crisis, contractionary to the UNWTO’s (2020c) suggestion and Williams and Balaz (2013) study that younger and experienced travellers are more resilient to travel in crises and thus hotels could target these guests. Due to the vast restriction, very few hotels were able to target a specific segment to maximise revenue, with one hotel stating;
“I think it has been more of take what you can get and not really a thought on what that is or trying to get certain pieces of business”. (Subject 1)

This demonstrates that strategies and crisis recovery will differ from previous crises depending upon the hotel and impact situation. This can also suggest that demographic factors were not influential in the success or generation of revenue, as reduced demand offered symmetry in hotel strategies to get as much general business as possible to maintain trading, regardless of the hotels desires to target a specific segment.

5.3 Strategy implementation

Strategy implementation proved a dominating theme from all hotel responses, alluding to how, if and when the hotel will overcome the crisis, focusing on previous, current and future strategies. The strategy implementation analysis from respondents offers an overview of previous, current and future strategies and the hotels’ management of impacts from the crisis.

All hotels in both destinations signified alterations, adaptations and changes to strategy during the Covid-19 crisis. Hotels stated they saw new markets and revenue streams open from new strategies implemented, suggested by PWC (2020c), highlighted with one hotel stating; 

“F&B delivery and room service has been a huge success for us as we are getting more spend then before and this helps with total revenue”. (Subject 11)

Another hotel emphasised that the UK government ‘eat out to help out’ scheme worked so well they had planned to introduce it to the hotel strategy post pandemic. These new initiatives highlight that crises can offer hotels the ability to improve, as suggested by Nepal (2020) that crises allow hotels to reset tourism for the better, if hotels allow it to. However, this depends upon the crisis itself and its impacts as both strategies above were stated from London hotels due to the restrictions allowing the initiatives to thrive. It can be doubtful that such success will work in an environment where customers are allowed back into restaurants to dine, with the example of no Stockholm hotels alluding to successful new F&B initiatives, thus these strategies were location specific and initially a result of external factors, restrictions by governments. It is evident hotels adapted their strategies to the external regulations outside of their control, showcased in the adaptations of hotel F&B strategies, but also evident in many Stockholm hotels who targeted new long stay guests. A hotel summarised this well stating;

“the impact of not having any other revenue, just rooms, caused the business to change the strategy”. (Subject 8)

This signifies hotels will adapt to strategies within the restrictions, with the different adaptations and new initiatives demonstrating that hotels will develop acute risk analysis depending upon the current market situations and crisis impacts (Page et al, 2011) such as restrictions and consumer demands, and as such develop appropriate initiatives to reduce the economic impacts of crises. Hotels demonstrated that there are other areas for targeting revenue
sources that may have been overlooked prior to the crisis, showcasing that hotels can be flexible in their strategy depending upon the results they wish to achieve. All hotels had demonstrated a flexible business approach that positively impacted results, either greatly or marginally. However flexibility only arose if it was essential to use with short term strategies, suggesting that hotels typically wish to operate within their structured strategies, possibly due to the brand standards they must adhere to. Many hotels were quick to identify that adaptations to strategy altered the dynamic of how a hotel operates coinciding with Keown-McMullan’s (1997) earlier suggestion. As a result, many new SOPs were introduced to ensure staff were well trained in dealing with guests, service and hotel standards, adjusting to meet the needs of the guests to the current situation. This demonstrated a cost saving focus to the business whilst also ensuring staff delivered on the core elements of the hotel, signified by a hotel stating that;

“All staff had to be multiskilled and just in when needed”. (Subject 10)

To maintain the high levels of service, it was evident that many hotels regarded collaboration and communication as vital internally but also now more so externally online in order to effectively communicate to guests and potential customers, a tactic previously highlighted by the USA hospitality industry post 9/11 attacks and suggested by Ritchie (2009). The greater communication would then allow the hotel to greater plan CMTs more effectively due to improved forecasting techniques and customer engagement. A hotel alluded to this stating;

“We employed a social media company to help bring the hotel alive and be constant and relevant and always posting to keep engagement showing we are open”. (Subject 25)

This coincides with Shapira’s (2007) suggestion that tourism organisations must show attractiveness and efficient management in order to attract visitors in a competitive market within a crisis, confirming that tourists needs and desires alter during crises, thus hotels must alter their strategies. The statement above demonstrates that hotels adapted their marketing techniques to deliver service from their traditional methods to stay competitive to maximise revenue, whilst also reducing the perception of risks to potential travellers, something that Ritchie (2009) highlighted as key, but also increasing the perception of safety and security earlier suggested by Matiza (2020). Although the statements are from participants of lower than the average age, it is not believed that this is a reflection of inept online or social media management from HSMs above the average age of 44 years, as the crisis caused a shift in the industries key core essence, in being a service industry, highlighted where a hotel stated that;

“Much of what has been discussed has been online and not very typical of the hospitality industry being a face to face. Our presence has all been online until we can open”. (Subject 3)

Of the segments that were travelling, the difference in the type of business traveller in both destinations demonstrates that companies will still continue to travel if they must. Feedback suggested the type of traveller is different with senior managers still travelling within the restrictions with middle management not, showing that companies are reluctant to spend on travel, however certain guest types will coinciding with Williams and Baláž (2013), albeit from
a different consumer segment. Differences in the leisure guests have meant that hotels have had to adapt to the demands and restrictions, with a hotel stating;

“nationalities have been depending on the home restrictions to every country so like a rollercoaster for all the nationalities”. (Subject 21)

This emphasises difficulties for hotels to plan strategies that attract the according travellers as restrictions eliminate even attractive and planned CMTs, suggesting that Lee and Harrald’s (1999) statement can be true. Similarly, the change in in-house guests, from international to domestic, changed the hotels approach to strategy within service. Changes in guest type can then have an impact, either positively or negatively, depending upon how the hotel reacts, as hotels can adapt menus to cater to domestic market desires to increase sales. This signifies that crisis planning can have positive impacts if correctly implemented, however hotels must be flexible in their business approaches to the changing customers suggested by Sigala (2020). Examples of change were evident in London, with hotels stating that due to the travel corridor with the Middle East, many saw an increase in requests for Halal food, thus hotels added these items to their menus. Hotels in both locations adapted their strategies to cater to the needs of guests in-house and desires of potential guests. Neither location appeared to be impacted internally greater than the other, with no specific demographic factors influencing results. Changes in CMTs were highlighted with the hotel example below stating;

“not having tourists from Europe and USA, the hotel had to re-think our F&B offer, prices and daily offers to suit the less wealthy clientele”. (Subject 8)

Many hotels in London stated an increase in the average LOS from business guests, however most Stockholm hotels remained relatively consistent suggesting that adaptations to strategies can be a result of demand. Hotels in London stated they created packages to attract guests they knew were available to travel (for example key workers), offering discounts off F&B and complimentary upgrades, previously seen from previous crisis in Taylor and Enz (2002). These strategies may have not been typically available for the hotels to implement in previous years, possibly due to the high level of occupancy or demand, showing that new opportunities, innovation and business development can arise from crises if hotels are willing to be flexible. This was highlighted by PWC (2020c) earlier as those that are more flexible and adaptable were likely be in a stronger position and in turn supports Ritchie (2009) theory where crises can be seen as the turning points for tourism organisations.

Although many hotels expected a decrease in rate and occupancy, this was in amongst the pandemic and suggests that prior to the crisis a decrease was not expected. However, no hotel stated they expected such a huge decrease in rate and occupancy showing that crisis planning and management is difficult as forecasting is often unforeseen due to the unknown length and magnitude of a crisis. This suggests the different impacts are reflective of PWC’s (2020a) research that states destinations have been affected differently due to the Covid-19 crisis, as also demonstrated in figure 6. McKinsey’s (2020) research displays a direct relationship to RevPAR and the unemployment rate in hotels, coinciding with responses in question 1 where
subject 5 states the 95% decrease in revenue has subsequently meant staff going from 1000 employees to 125. Whilst the research suggests that some lessons can be learnt from previous impacts of crises, it also highlights that prior to the crisis a hotel would not have expected such decreases, therefore it shows the unpredictability of the crisis and that planning and preparation for the decrease in rate and revenue was not apparent. However, respondents feedback suggested the LOS and room type consumed were more predictable due to the hotel implementing such CMTs. It can therefore be suggested that results are more expected in CMTs formed by the hotel, emphasising a hotels desire to maintain control over their CMTs.

Prior to the Covid-19 crisis, risks stated by all hotels highlighted threats that were in front of them only, with no mention of a crisis as a potential risk pre pandemic, especially one of this magnitude. Therefore, it is clear no planning or preparation was implemented into a hotels business strategy for the current crisis, as earlier stated by PWC (2020a), which ultimately affected revenue due to the inability to counteract the crisis’ impacts. However it can be argued as to what extent CMTs would have been successfully implemented if the crisis had been foreseen, as a huge reduction in international travel and restrictions, largely out of the hotels power, would have still greatly economically impacted hotels and thus can question theories of effective crisis management limiting the economic impacts by crises (Bundy et al, 2017; Heath, 1998; Kash & Darling, 1998; Ritchie, 2009). Therefore, it can be argued that planning and preparation for a crisis of this magnitude would have only provided damage limitation.

5.4 Internal hotel impacts

The hotel’s impacts internally highlight the impacts to strategy, business segments, staffing and opportunity costs from the crisis, analysing the challenges hotels may have faced.

To maximise opportunity potentials, planning was essential during the crisis, supporting Baum and Hai’s (2020) suggestion, to ensure attractive rates were available and bookable online. With a minimal amount of group sales, hotels became over reliant on the limited amount of transient travellers thus creating greater economic risks due to last minute cancellations. Hotels in both destinations stated limited MICE or groups business made it more difficult to implement long term strategies, as typically these segments would book further out with stricter terms and conditions thus reducing the economic risks to a hotel. The resulting opportunity costs were then high, as by subtracting these segments, hotels had to make up much of this business through ad hoc transient guests, involving greater work with a hotel stating;

“it’s harder to sell 100 individual rooms than to sell 1 large group of 100 rooms”. (Subject 5)

Whilst the amount of transient rooms sold can be similar to a group, the work is often greater and thus at a greater economic impact due to increased staff hours. As hotels reduced staffing to minimise costs, they inadvertently provided another challenge, as a reduction in staff resulted in a reduced ability to target new business and thus revenue potential.
However, although restrictions prohibited the interaction of people on a vast scale, interestingly hotels in London were aware that guests had more time to interact with staff members, allowing for the true nature of hospitality to thrive in a positive manner. Some hotels saw increases in guest satisfaction, positive feedback and increases in hotel ratings, highlighting that Andriotis (2018) degrowth theory had inadvertently been implemented into the hotel, whereby less guests allowed for a greater service through enhanced time spent with the hotel staff members. These improvements are likely to have a positive impact for the hotel, with greater hotel ratings and reviews benefitting a hotel's image. Hotels were quick to capture the eagerness for social interaction from guests for their own success highlighting that positive outcomes can arise from crises, as earlier suggested by Bundy et al (2017) where opportunities, renewal and growth can stem from successful CMTs. The difference in hotels interaction between staff members and guests depended upon the city, with guests in London hotels seeming to interact more with staff members, whereas Stockholm hotel guests spent more time outside of the hotel. This is possibly due to the restrictions on the public, as Stockholm has not been under lockdown and imposed limited restrictions to the public, therefore social interaction is more available. However guests in London were limited to who they can interact with and thus taking the opportunity for social interaction where possible, with a London hotel stating:

“I think people are keen to have social interaction and we have noticed it more”. (Subject 1)

Greater communication was seen to be an effective tool in supporting staff members and guests ensuring all stayed within the correct guidelines providing confidence and reassurance to both. High communication was stated throughout the hotel allowing for adaptability and flexibility to government updates. Examples in London hotels saw the success of the ‘eat out to help out’ restaurant scheme, with the greater communication between governments and hotels ensuring restaurants were ready to open and take advantage of the changes in regulations. Similarly, Stockholm hotels were quick to adapt to the changes of the amended opening times to restaurants limiting the operating hours, referring to great support and communication between suppliers to deliver food and staff members to work at late notice as key in the success of the scheme. Many hotels stated flexibility and support internally from staff, owners and landlords were greatly appreciated allowing the hotels to adapt and alter their CMTs easier, suggesting that a collaborative team provides greater support and efficiency as suggested by Randhawa et al (2016). This collaborative effort was also highlighted externally in the support from suppliers and coincides with Bundy et al (2017) earlier suggestion that greater collaboration and communication between internal and external stakeholders results in the reduction of impacts, being able to deal more effectively with a crisis, summarised where a hotel stated;

“The staff and suppliers have been amazing and the people who have worked have really pulled together to do what they can to support the business and keep the lights on.” (Subject 15)

5.5 External challenges

External challenges that economically impacted hotels refer to factors out of the hotels power greatly affecting the hotels potential to develop revenue and manage the impacts of the crisis.
As the crisis was ongoing at the time of writing, hotels were aware of persisting challenges in attracting tourists. With little demand due to travel restrictions, hotels were limited to who they could accommodate with external barriers impacting hotel ability to influence travellers both domestically and internationally. This shows that whilst hotels can design and implement new strategies to overcome challenges, they may be limited to who and what they can influence due to external factors, as earlier alluded to by the UNWTO (2020) where factors outside of the hotels power limit recovery such as travel restrictions and slow virus containment. Whilst there may be new CMTs for hotels to adopt, until the demand is accessible the hotels will not be able to generate revenue to the pre pandemic levels. Likewise, the constant changing of restrictions made it hard to plan, therefore deciding if, how and who to target is vital in limiting the economic impacts. It is also apparent that whilst hotels may implement CMTs to attract guests, external factors can eliminate that strategy at a cost to the hotel with a hotel stating;

“with the constant changing of the Tier’s in England, we often have to open & close the outlets which is distributive as well as costly”. (Subject 9)

The majority of hotels stated guest occupancy during the crisis was almost 100% domestic, in line with UNWTO (2020c) and PWC’s (2020a) theory that domestic tourism will be the key market driver during the Covid-19 crisis. Feedback suggested that travel restrictions from certain destinations reduced the ability to accommodate those guests, more so in London hotels due to restrictions internationally and domestically, signifying feedback varied depending upon the location. The difference in feedback is an example of McKinsey’s (2020) research that showed hotels were impacted differently from a crisis based on their location. The difference in impacts are also dependent upon the crisis, suggested by Rodriguez-Anton and Alonso-Almeida (2020), another factor that will limit the ability of hotels to copy CMTs from one crisis to another. Whilst the majority of the restrictions were global, London benefitted from a small window of Middle East leisure guests in summer due to ‘travel corridors’ being opened by the UK government. Similarly, Stockholm benefitted from domestic travel due to a lack of domestic restrictions. This demonstrates hotels implemented CMTs targeting segments that were allowed to travel, a similar strategy implemented in Asian hotels post SARS (Page et al, 2011). The difference in types of guests being accommodated between the different cities was a direct result of the restrictions imposed, therefore hotels that quickly adapted their strategy to the type of guests that they were able to accommodate were more financially successful in this aspect, something also suggested by PWC (2020a), with a London hotel stating they will target;

“more key workers business as these travellers are not limited to work”. (Subject 9)

Due to the impact from the crisis, hotels stated governments struggled to provide sufficient support outside of the furlough scheme and reduction in business rates demonstrating that support was also required outside of monetary solutions that allowed the hotels to support themselves. Suggestions saw the introduction of the furlough scheme ultimately delayed the crisis rather than eliminate it, as the uncertainty of the crisis extended the scheme many times, upon which hotels still incurred huge costs in paying taxes and holiday contributions to staff.
Feedback also suggests that although the hotels were in need of support from governments, many required the tools to accommodate guests first and foremost, with a hotel stating:

“we need our guests in order to stay open in long-term perspective”. (Subject 14)

This shows hotels felt guests should have been the primary objective for governments to support, allowing the hotels to support themselves. It’s evident therefore that during a crisis guests are still perceived as the heart of a hotel and in order for hotels to survive in crises CMTs must be developed allowing for guests to book and feel comfortable in the hotel providing confidence and safety to the customer. As many segments were restricted, hotels relied mainly on rooms revenue with many hotels highlighting the importance of loyalty both to and from the guest. Further frustrations from hotels also included the little communication from governments on industry progress and how to maintain business levels stated by a hotel;

“the bigger impact going forward is the lack of clarity which now just makes future planning impossible. There is no guidance of what future support for hospitality looks like”. (Subject 4)

This suggests that the inept or mismanagement of a crisis can possibly lead to a greater crisis, earlier suggested by Faulkner (2001), as without guests or clarity hotels will not be able to generate revenue. Hotels were quick to reduce the impacts from the lack of government communication by implementing CMTs to engage with customers over social media and their own website. This supports that the media’s influence in a crisis is important (Richards, 2004) with social media interaction key in reducing the risk perception to tourists thus encouraging tourists to travel again, increasing the chances of recovery as economic recovery surges from activity as previously suggested by Alti et al (2020). The lack of clarity from governments was evidently a crisis within a crisis, as this limited hotel control and planning in their own unique situations, resulting in many hotels feeling helpless as to what they could implement strategies for with hotels suggesting they were just waiting for the doors to be allowed to open. Due to the suggested insufficient communication, hotels stated they found it difficult to plan actions or strategies for the long term, with even examples showing that if they acted on the governments advice they could be open to losses that were out of their control due to the constant changing of restrictions, highlighted by a hotel when referring to strategy who stated;

“do you go early and risk carrying a lot of cost with no defined date. Or do you wait as long as possible and run the risk of not be able to fully operate when business returns”. (Subject 24)

Feedback suggests in order for hotels to recover quicker the collaborative communication between governments and hotels must be improved, suggested earlier by Kuo et al (2018), Page et al (2011) and Rodriguez-Anton and Alonso-Almeida (2020). Collaborative communication must be implemented across all stakeholders for it to be successful, not just to improve revenue, but also long-term strategies that impact tourist perceptions of a destination ensuring further crisis are not developed, such as visitor loss in confidence. Therefore, hotel frustration in the lack of government communication is understandable as the lack of CMTs may result in an additional crisis, a financial one. Kash and Darling (1998) state that by ignoring a crisis this
can possibly have greater negative impacts leading to a crisis of its own, and as Rodriguez-Anton and Alonso-Almeida (2020) have stated the recovery time between crises are different, signifying that crises can be independent of one another and must be managed as so.

Challenges prior to the crisis were apparent from participant’s feedback showing that hotels can often have many challenges at the same time. However arguably all other risks mentioned by hotels would not have equalled to the economic impact of Covid-19, demonstrating the crisis was largely unexpected and thus difficult to plan for. A hotel reiterated the magnitude of the Covid-19 crisis and its impacts on the hospitality industry due to the uncertainty by stating;

“it is safe to say that Covid 19 has been the biggest question mark ever in a SWOT analysis. So far...” (Subject 20)

5.6 Crisis management

Crisis management refers to the implementation of techniques hotels may or may not have used to handle the economic impacts of the Covid-19 crisis, highlighted and discussed below.

The adoptions in operational measures may have contributed to the increase in interaction between staff members and guests, reassuring guests of improved safety measures, however only within hotels where this was communicated effectively with new SOP’s. Restrictions to eating times in Stockholm restaurants meant guests were bound to specific times altering the hotels typical operational hours, however guests in London hotels spent more time in the hotel and thus became familiar with the measures in place thus increasing interaction. With Volo (2007) and Amir et al (2015) signifying that safety and security to visitors are a key means for tourists to travel, the increased hotel measures reduced tourists negative perceptions of risk and contamination from the virus, a risk that Uğur and Akiyik’s (2020) earlier research showed as contributing the to the decline in tourists. Altig et al (2020) suggestion that uncertainty does not help economic recovery therefore ensures hotels must remove risk and uncertainty in the consumers mind, replacing it with safety and security, as previously seen in Asia post the SARS crisis to revive tourism. Expected recruitment challenges by hotels also meant that any CMTs to reduce the economic risks for future scenarios would be difficult with a London hotel stating;

“loss of revenue equalled loss of staff, of which a lot have gone back home (overseas) thus it will be hard to recruit these”. (Subject 2)

However this is possibly a result of Breixit, again suggesting that there can be additional crises for hotels to manage together. It is therefore key hotels do not succumb to Faulkner’s (2001) theory that inept management worsens crises or creates additional crises, but rather hotels must adopt the approach of Ritchie (2009) whereby a strategic and integrated approach to crisis management reduces the hotels chance of being greatly economically impacted by a crisis. Changes in the hotels mentality to now include CMTs in business plans signifies firstly that hotels originally had not planned for these scenarios in their previous business strategy. Secondly, the acceptance that strategies and plans may have to change in the future readresses
the impact Covid-19 on the hospitality industry, thus future scenarios are likely to include proactive CMTs, earlier suggested by Ritchie (2009). This was evident in the hotels cautious approach to hiring staff, demonstrating that hotels may already be implementing CMTs to ensure economic impacts by crises are reduced. Many of the hotels stated they foresee the crisis to continue allowing them to plan greater and effective strategies than at the start of the crisis, demonstrating that some experiences in crises can help to manage future strategies.

Many hotels acknowledged that competition for business was high due to little consumer demand with hotels prepared to adjust rates in order to accommodate guests where possible. This in turn shows hotels were willing to adapt from their normal customer segments demonstrating an ability and desire to be flexible to the current situation, earlier alluded to by Ritchie (2009) and Page et al (2011). Hotels were however also aware of the impacts such strategy implementation may have on their long-term business models, with one hotel stating:

“to lower your rates too much will make it extremely hard to get back to anything like a normal rate, so we work with different promotions instead in different periods”. (Subject 18)

There are also previous examples from the financial crisis of hotels offering customers added benefits to entice bookings showing that some CMTs can be copied to avoid future crises, thus suggesting hotels are implementing CMTs for future strategies not just current strategies. Other similar examples saw Chien and Law (2003) earlier highlight hotels post SARS enhancing their health and safety to reassure guests, providing confidence back to bookers.

Cost controlling was a key feature highlighted by hotels, however this may have further impacts as new initiatives are likely to be minimised due to reduced workforces, thus reducing the ability for the hotel to recover. Unless hotels have many staff members on furlough, then any quick recovery from the travel industry is likely to be delayed, as hotels may be unable to reemploy staff at short notice. However, hotels can implement cost saving strategies that require little or no workforce, with an example of hotels closing unsold floors to save costs in Toronto (Tew et al, 2008), emphasising that certain CMTs can be used from previous crises. Hotels will be able to benefit should they be able to adapt quickly to a market recovery, therefore it is essential that hotels ensure they kept up to date with government updates. Planning and preparation were also highlighted as essential to recovery with many hotels confirming that in order to maximise revenue they must be ready for when travel returns, demonstrating the awareness of crisis management in amongst a current crisis, with a hotel stating:

“we are making sure we are ready to resell the rooms once opened and being attractive online through clear communication and competitive rates”. (Subject 3)

However, no hotels referred to any crisis planning prior to Covid-19, suggesting that whilst hotels may be aware of CMTs now within the crisis, they were unaware before, also shown where PWC (2020a) research states no hotel mentions a crisis as a possible threat prior to Covid-19. This demonstrates that the HSMs length of hotel experience had no impact on the ability to implement greater CMTs.
6. Conclusion

The paper concludes with the knowledge contribution, offering a summary discussion of the literature, empirical results received and analysis, and how they can be applied to hotels within a crisis. Recommendations are then derived based on the results gathered. Finally, further research will be suggested in order to establish if the economic impacts of hotels can be limited.

6.1 Knowledge contribution

As we have discussed throughout the paper, Covid-19 is a new virus and brings with it much uncertainty, with tourism and hospitality in London and Stockholm being hugely impacted along with the rest of the world. However evidentially from previous crises there is a proven resilience in tourism’s recovery. The papers aim to understand first-hand the economic impacts of Covid-19 in hotels represented a desire to support the hospitality industry’s research into limiting the economic impacts of Covid-19, by understanding from HSMs what CMTs were used and therefore if hotels can limit the economic impacts from crises. Drawing from literature and participant’s feedback, the paper gathers a holistic view of the economic impacts, looking past just the revenue of a hotel but also understanding the multiplier effects crises have, drawing attention to strategies, costs and opportunity costs (to name a few) that have been impacted.

Results from empirical analysis showed hotels are able and willing to adopt CMTs within a crisis, however it must be suggested that this was a result of the crisis rather than the hotels desire. As demonstrated, crises can be economically devastating, however they can also be seen as turning points for positive improvements (Bundy et al, 2017; Nepal, 2020) in; hotels strategy (by targeting new source markets), products (through improvements in health and hygiene standards) and service (in training and development). This was earlier alluded to with Chinese, Hong Kong and Toronto hotels reducing occupancy rates to re-boost international travel post SARS, and as we have discussed SARS and Covid-19 are both coronaviruses, further emphasising that specific CMTs can be relevant to recycle given the type of crisis. Hotels must also choose to be flexible out of their traditional revenue streams, thus if a crisis occurs risk can be spread out as they will have more revenue streams to identify with.

Findings from the empirical results and analysis showed newly adopted CMTs are a result of restrictions imposed and crisis impacts, thus emphasises that hotels will adopt new strategies if necessary, regardless of the hotel location and HSM’s demographic factors. Recovery strategies differ depending upon the crisis impacts and therefore how the hotel will react to restrictions imposed, as shown by the differing strategies implemented in London and Stockholm hotels, suggesting that CMTs are implemented to the current demand and situations, demonstrating that whilst some initiatives may be successful for one hotel, they may not be for another. Although adaptions to strategy may have been more present in London hotels due to greater restrictions, examples such as improvements in health and hygiene, targeting different customer segments and reducing costs are all relevant and transferable CMTs that can be adapted to another health pandemic, however not all, such as a terror related crisis. Further examples from the literature review coincide with the empirical results and analysis, in areas
such as planning being seen as essential (Kash & Darling, 1998; Keogh-Brown et al, 2010) with contingency plans in place that ensures continuous communication with all stakeholders (Bundy, et al, 2017; Hung et al, 2018; Ritchie, 2009), further cementing that hotels should be implementing CMTs into their core business foundations. However, it is also evident from the literature review, empirical results and analysis that planning is difficult in a rapidly evolving crisis, therefore CMT implementation must involve careful planning with precision.

Although industries, cities and hotels are impacted differently by crises, there is a correlation between the city’s arrivals statistics. However, this is due to external restrictions on worldwide travel and not a correlation in CMT’s. The empirical results also show similarities in CMTs that can be transferred regionally and globally. Therefore, external impacts created a surplus to tourism demand so large that no CMT could be created to regain the travellers lost. CMTs therefore allowed hotels to limit the economic impacts, of which there are successful examples. As a result, hotels are able to implement CMTs to reduce the economic impacts of crises, however it will depend upon the crisis and the impacts to the hotel if that CMT is successful. Hotels were not able to influence international travellers, therefore any CMT implemented for the short term will have little results until restrictions are lifted, signifying hotels can succumb to external factors out of their control. Domestically hotels have the ability to implement strategies to attract such guests, if the hotels are willing to adapt, however this will depend upon the crisis and the impact as domestic tourism was not largely available during the UK lockdowns. Therefore, domestic tourism can be a driver, however it cannot be solely relied on and hotels must implement further CMTs and contingency plans.

The literature, empirical results and analysis all emphasise tourism as a constant evolving industry with new needs and desires by tourists to constantly understand and cater to. Suggested in the literature, there is a need for tourism organisations to evolve their strategies to meet these desires (Chien & Law, 2003; Page et al, 2011), correlating with participant feedback highlighting impacts from Covid-19 altered customer desires, along with the constant changing of rules and regulations making it difficult to implement CMTs for the long term. This is also apparent in previous crises and therefore suggests that it is largely possible for hotels to draw upon previous crises to understand certain CMTs that are transferable to limit future economic impacts from crises. However similarly to implementing CMTs these previous crises must be similar to the current crisis as for example implementing health and hygiene CMTs into hotel rooms will not limit the impacts of a terror crisis. As destinations and hotels were also affected differently, signified in tables 1 and 2, this shows that implementing CMTs from one crisis to another may be possible but is hard due to the differing locations. It is clear the differences in managing crises brings alternative results, as shown in the destinations different restrictions, and thus affects economies differently (large as countries, or small such as in hotels).

6.2 Recommendations
6.2.1 Crisis cube
Results have shown that crises are not one dimensional but are constantly changing, impacting industries, destinations and hotels differently thus the differing internal departments also.
Therefore, similarly to CMTs being implemented successfully based on the crisis’ specific impacts to a location or hotel, this must also be applied to the different departments within a hotel with prevention methods implemented to limit the impact of a crisis. The author introduces a recommendation in the form of a crisis cube, shown in figure 8. The crisis cube demonstrates the different restrictions to travel of a crisis (x axis) on a specific department within a hotel and the timeline of a crisis in annual quarters (y axis) allowing for seasonal trends. The quadrants signify the different CMTs implemented based on the crisis impacts and recovery strategies at that time. As we have highlighted crises evolve rapidly and it is therefore essential a hotel is not fixated to one structured strategy as results and conclusions have shown that hotels must be flexible within their CMTs to reduce the economic impacts of crises.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>International travel</th>
<th>Domestic travel</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>No restrictions</th>
<th>Quarter</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Target available segments. Furlough staff.</td>
<td>Leisure groups impacted. Target available guests.</td>
<td>Increase marketing to show hotel is open.</td>
<td>Increase promotions to leisure guests</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Focus on completing admin tasks.</td>
<td>Leisure individual travel impacted. Input summer promotions online.</td>
<td>Ensure rates and room options available online.</td>
<td>Target new business groups</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborate with gov and owners for cost saving initiatives.</td>
<td>Leisure /most business travel impacted. Reduce staff.</td>
<td>Determine room rates based on demand. Target business guests</td>
<td>Target new business accounts.</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target new segments. F&amp;B impacted from non Christmas diners</td>
<td>Target key workers and input Christmas F&amp;B offers for in-house dining.</td>
<td>Target business and leisure group travel</td>
<td>Market Christmas packages. Market Christmas shopping experiences</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 8 – Crisis cube: Crisis impacts scenario/ restriction. Source: Illustrator by author

The crisis cube shown is representative of one department within a hotel, (figure 8 illustrated is an example for a sales and marketing department), with each department managing their own crisis cube and their CMTs. The different quadrants allow the department to write in the boxes corresponding to the travel restrictions, crisis impacts and recovery strategies at that time of the year. For example, a London hotel’s sales and marketing team would write impacts and recovery strategies to their department the crisis had at that time. Therefore, if the UK restricted domestic travel in Q4 the hotel department would write all business that has been affected and thus what CMTs were implemented, such as target those that were allowed to travel. Other departments cubes may see housekeeping reducing staff during all travel restrictions to save costs, with food & beverage departments working with suppliers for international travel restrictions with mainly domestic guests staying thus menus can be altered to the desired taste.

The crisis cube must be constantly updated allowing hotels to retrace CMTs implemented in a specific time within a crisis impacts, allowing the hotel to understand what impacts the crisis had at that time and thus what measures the hotel can take to limit any risks or impacts from
previous crises to their current crisis. As hotel departments write the crisis impacts and what CTM they implemented, this will provide hotels with an opportunity to understand previous impacts and readress any successful or unsuccessful techniques implemented. Each department will create their own crisis cube, thus collating all department’s cubes together will create a 3-D crisis cube, holistically giving an overview of the crisis impacts. The inter-departmental sharing and reviewing of the crisis cubes allows hotels to better plan for future crises through enhancing communication and collaboration, previously highlighted key in the success of new strategies and ideas within hotels (Bundy et al, 2017; Randhawa et al, 2016).

6.2.2 Degrowth in hotels
Destinations impacted by crises are likely to be less economically impacted by a crisis the less reliant they are on tourism, or in the case of hotels the related segments. Hotels who are heavily economically impacted by crises due to their large tourism footfall often then require the greater CMTs to recover. The authors recommendation is for hotels to develop sustainable CMTs focusing on the quality of tourists rather than quantity, supporting Andriotis’ (2018) theory. This does not entail the destination adopting negative growth policies, but rather policies that are sustainable across socio-cultural, environmental and economic factors. Much of this can be applied to a hotel’s strategy of aiming at 100% occupancy often resulting in greater output. This in turn bares an overreliance on travellers and therefore economically a greater impact of a crisis should there be travel restrictions. Andriotis’ (2018) suggestion that economic crises inadvertently support the degrowth model can therefore be relevant to the empirical results through less tourist arrivals but greater improvements in customer service and health and hygiene factors, supporting Nepal’s (2020) theory that crises allow tourism to rest it for the better. By hotels aiming to be 70-80% occupied, and aiming at sustainable target markets, this in turn improves the hotels chances on limiting crises economic impacts by accommodating sustainable segments, producing less environmental waste and better cost control.

6.3 Further research
As the Covid-19 crisis is still ongoing at the time of writing many of the CMTs implemented have short term results. Therefore further research will need to be conducted post Covid-19 to see final results, impacts, changes in strategy and tourism demand to understand the success strategies that can be implemented to limit future economic impacts. Further research should also be conducted across different continents as “epidemic outbreaks vary significantly between the type of disease outbreak and across world regions” (Škare et al, 2021, pp 2). This further research will determine firstly if results from the author’s empirical analysis differ from other continents, determining if there are alternative links between location and crisis impacts. Secondly to identify additional CMTs (if any) thus contributing further to the tourism and hospitality industry’s knowledge. The time in which the research was conducted within the crisis may have also had an impact on the results. Therefore, research should also be undertaken in preparation for another crisis, upon which researchers will be ready across different hotels and destinations to gather results and share these globally with a view to reducing the economic impacts of that crisis, ensuring CMTs are implemented globally in sync to offer greater potential to industry success in limiting global crises and the economic impacts.
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Appendix 1


Thank you for choosing to be a part of my research into the economic impacts into hotels in London and Stockholm. My hope is that with your information it will provide a greater understanding of possible risk measures hotels can undertake to reduce the economic impacts of future scenarios.

The survey consists of 12 questions aimed at understanding how your hotel was economically impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic. Please try to explain and justify your answers as all questions require it and return to the sender via email by *. All responses are private and used in a confidential matter and totally anonymous in the research and under no circumstances will your identities be revealed. My supervisor is Associate professor Saeid Abbasian if you have further questions (saeid.abbasian@sh.se), +46703214688. +46+86085125

Best regards and thank you in advance

Gary Waller
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Survey

Name:
Hotel name:
Age:
Gender:
Years working in the industry:

1. How has your hotel been affected economically during the pandemic?

2. How did your hotel adapt its strategy during the pandemic?

3. What results did this achieve?
4. What did you find was the most challenging part in attracting tourists back to your hotel?

5. Have you experienced a difference in business or leisure travellers during 2020?

6. Have you experienced a difference in nationality stay statistics vs 2019? Please share monthly or quarterly nationality stay statistics if possible.

7. What customer trends or behaviours altered, such as more dine in-house guests, more guest time spent in the hotel, more guest time spent in their room, less guest interaction with staff?

8. What will be the plans or strategies implemented for future scenarios to reduce your economic risk?

9. How were you supported from the government, company or staff during the restrictions provided?

9a. Was it sufficient?
10. Was there a difference in rate, length of stay or room type consumed 2020 vs 2019?

10a. Was this expected?

11. What will your hotel be doing to counteract the shortfall in profit going forward?

12. What were your hotels greatest risks pre pandemic?