



The socio-economic impacts of covid-19 on hoteliers in Nairobi

Submitted by

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A research project submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Bachelor of Science in Hospitality management.

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September 2020

DECLARATION

This is my ORIGINAL work and has not been presented for a degree in any other university.

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ABSTRACT

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the world's economy was shut down almost overnight . The pandemic has confronted the hospitality industry with an unprecedented challenge. This study aims at assessing the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 on hoteliers in Nairobi. For this study, the selected data collection method is use of questionnaires and interviews to my target population that are high star rated hoteliers in Nairobi. In order to fully deliver this information, random sampling is the most effective research design. The sample size selected for this study is a group of 250 individuals randomly selected from different hotels and encouraged to fill in the questionnaire as required and some were met for interviews where the method was applicable upholding all the new normal measures to curb the spread of the COVID-19 disease. Data analysis will be done by use of mean or average, where all findings are added together and divided by the number of subjects present for the study. The significance of this study is to shade light on the diverse effects of the pandemic on different groups of people but more importantly hoteliers. This is because the hospitality and tourism industry was the hardest hit. At the end of the study, one will be able to know the effects of the pandemic and how they can be curbed or handled for better living. The findings of this study clearly displayed the impacts of the COVID-19 on hoteliers to have affected the national economy at large in two broad ways, that is: the employment rate and the effective labour force. Also, the hoteliers in Nairobi have also face tremendous negative effects from the pandemic. Therefore, the researcher recommended re-opening the economy whilst advocating for the observation of the new normal measures and sensitizing hoteliers on matters concerning the disease all round. To ensure socioeconomic recovery within a reasonable period, the government should put in place plans and resources that do not continue to weigh disproportionately on people in the hotel and tourism industry. Since most hoteliers are living below or just above the poverty line, reduced earnings from sluggish economic activities and job losses as a result of confinement measures by the government have to be balanced against consideration of the daily needs of hoteliers as representatives of the vulnerable, as well as now-looming food insecurity across the country.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background Information

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the world's economy was shut down almost overnight (Gursoy & Chi, 2020). The pandemic has confronted the hospitality industry with an unprecedented challenge. Friday 13th March came just as any other day would but little did we know that it was going to be an almost life changer for each and every individual. This was the day Kenya reported its first COVID-19 case, from a woman coming into the country via London. First identified in Hubei province, China, capital Wuhan, there has been since December 2019 an ongoing epidemic of atypical pneumonia (COVID-19) caused by the zoonotic novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) (Zhao et al., 2020). As of 8th April 2020, there have been over 1.4 million clinically and/or laboratory confirmed cases of COVID-19 with over 70,000 deaths worldwide. This is the first coronavirus pandemic.

Strategies to flatten the COVID-19 curve such as community lockdowns, social distancing, stay-at-home orders, travel and mobility restrictions have resulted in temporary closure of many hospitality businesses and significantly decreased the demand for businesses that were allowed to continue to operate (Gursoy & Chi, 2020). Almost all restaurants were asked to limit their operations to only take-outs. Restrictions placed on travel and stay-at-home orders issued by the authorities led to sharp decline in hotel occupancies and revenues. However, the reopening process has slowly begun and authorities have started to ease restrictions, for example, allow dine-in restaurants to reopen at a reduced capacity with strict social distancing guidelines, and gradually reduce restrictions on domestic and international travel.

The spread of COVID-19 and large-scale travel restrictions continue to wreak havoc on the global tourism and hospitality industry. According to an open letter from Gloria Guevara, President and CEO of the World Travel & Tourism Council, "50 million jobs globally are at risk" because of the pandemic. The letter further indicates that the travel and tourism sector is "already facing collapse" and is "in a fight for survival" due to the COVID-19 global health crisis (Gursoy & Chi, 2020). Hotels are especially susceptible to reduced tourism and travel along with a slowdown in economic

activity (Gursoy & Chi, 2020). As events across the globe continue to be cancelled or postponed and hotel occupancy rates plummet, the COVID-19 pandemic has inflicted severe blows on hoteliers worldwide. For example, in February 2020, revenue-peravailable-room (Gursoy & Chi, 2020) at Marriott hotels fell by nearly 90% in Greater China and declined by 25% in other parts of the Asia-Pacific region compared with the same period last year (Gursoy & Chi, 2020). It is predicted that RevPAR in the U.S., Europe, and Asia will continue to decline as leisure and business travel is delayed or cancelled due to fear of COVID-19 (Courtney, 2020).

1.2. Problem Statement

In December 2019, the infectious disease coronavirus (COVID-19) discovered in Wuhan, China. The coronavirus spread within a few months over the world. The World Health Organization (WHO) declared the coronavirus (COVID-19) a pandemic, which is defined as “occurring over a wide geographic area and affecting an exceptionally high proportion of the population” (Nadri & Zubair, 2020). The coronavirus disease could affect almost every human being with mild or severe symptoms. However, it does not hit everyone equally, there are differences in risk groups based on age and health status. Besides that, certain groups are also more marginalized when it comes to for example being able to access resources such as testing and medical care. The pandemic has highlighted the vulnerabilities of people in a society.

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Society. Unfortunately, statistical data, like reduction in revenue, often translates into social problems and the crisis in the tourism industry is not also an exception. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council, (Katsadze & Milojevic, 2019) almost one million jobs are lost daily in the travel and tourism industry during the hardest period of the pandemic (late March and April). They estimate that up to 75 million jobs are at immediate risk, depending on the period of the pandemic and international lockdown (Katsadze & Milojevic, 2019).

At the same time, closing hotels not only endangers the wellbeing of employees but also prevents the industry from creating welfare for other stakeholders like their customers, local communities, and others. In response, we see many cases from all over the world when different hotels try to find different solutions when instead of closing their doors, they continue creating benefits for their various stakeholders. In this research, we will dig into such stories from hotels and will try to find their socially sustainable strategic solutions.

Overall, the functioning of global supply chains has been disrupted, affecting companies across the globe. Millions of people could lose their jobs over the coming months. In addition, every day we hear worrying news about more companies shutting down operations, revising estimates, or announcing layoffs. Consumers have also changed their consumption patterns, resulting in shortages of many goods in supermarkets around the world. Global financial markets have registered sharp falls, and volatility is at levels similar, or above, the financial crisis of 2008/9.

In the middle of all this turbulence, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has developed some new estimates for growth in 2020 (Nicola et al., 2020)(Feb 2020). In its revised estimates, the IMF expects China to slow down by 0.4 percentage points, as well as a slowdown of global growth by 0.1 percentage points. The OECD also revised their estimates in early March. It forecasted global economic growth falling to 2.4% for the whole year, compared to 2.9 % in 2019(Nicola et al., 2020). I believe both estimates will be proven wrong and will likely be revised down in the coming months.

1.3. General Objective

To assess the socio-economic impacts of COVID-19 on hoteliers in Nairobi

1.4. Specific Objectives

- i. To determine the social impact of COVID-19 on hoteliers in Nairobi
- ii. To evaluate the impact of COVID-19 on employment and job security on hoteliers in Nairobi
- iii. To assess the perception of hoteliers on safety at the work place

1.5. Research Questions

- i. What are the social impacts of COVID-19 on hoteliers in Nairobi?
- ii. How has COVID-19 impacted employment and job security on hoteliers in Nairobi?
- iii. What is the perception of hoteliers on safety at the workplace?

1.6. Justification

This global pandemic once again highlights the importance of research, stable research infrastructure and funding for public health emergency (PHE)/disaster preparedness, response, and resiliency. The stakes in this worldwide pandemic have never been higher as lives are lost, economies falter, and life has radically changed. Ultimate COVID-19 mitigation and crisis resolution is dependent on high-quality research aligned with top priority societal goals that yields trustworthy data and actionable information. (Weiner et al., 2020) While the highest priority goals are treatment and prevention, biomedical research also provides data critical to manage and restore economic and social welfare.

Scientific and technological knowledge and resources have never been greater and have been leveraged globally to perform COVID-19 research at warp speed. The number of studies related to COVID-19 increases daily, the scope and magnitude of engagement is stunning, and the extent of global collaboration unprecedented. (Weiner et al., 2020) On January 5, 2020, just weeks after the first cases of illness were reported, the genetic sequence, which identified the pathogen as a novel coronavirus, SARS-CoV-2, was released, providing information essential for identifying and developing treatments, vaccines, and diagnostics.

Conducting this study answers questions such as, what is this virus, who is it affecting, how are we coping with the new normal and what does the future hold with this new giant.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.Theoretical Review

2.1.1. Social cohesion theory

Social cohesion theory involves building shared values and communities of interpretation, reducing disparities in wealth and income, and generally enabling people to have a sense that they are engaged in a common enterprise, facing shared challenges, and that they are members of the same community (Fonseca et al., 2019). Major research in social cohesion starts with Le Bon with the theory of collective behaviour and contagion (Fonseca et al., 2019). He distinguishes different types of crowds/communities, and that these have a multiplicity of characteristics, opinions and beliefs that impact the individuals in a crowd. In 1897, Durkheim defined social cohesion as a characteristic of society that shows the interdependence in between individuals of that society (Fonseca et al., 2019) and coins to social cohesion.

Social cohesion differs across nations worldwide, especially in times of this pandemic. Each region or country plays its own role in defining the measures that should be taken in order to prevent spreading the coronavirus(Nadri & Zubair, 2020).

Social cohesion differs across nations worldwide, especially in times of pandemic. Each country plays its own role in defining the measures that should be taken in order to prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

The pandemic has raised many serious questions, questions that go far beyond the current exceptional situation, including questions about our system as such. I am thinking of the economic consequences of the COVID-19 crisis that are still unforeseeable. On the one hand, enormous political and financial efforts seek to prevent drastic collapses(Nadri & Zubair, 2020). These are rapid measures, which must take effect very rapidly to alleviate social distortions. At the same time, in this period in which a lot has been called into question anyway, the much more fundamental, long-term question is whether we will be able to continue with business as usual. Or whether we shouldn't make a more vigorous attempt to tackle the sustainable transformation of many sectors of the industry such as mobility, energy, supply chains.

2.1.2. Conspiracy theory

Conspiracy theories, defined as explanatory beliefs about a group of actors that collude in secret to reach malevolent goals (Bierwiazzonek et al., 2020), tend to gain momentum during societal crises such as natural disasters, war or pandemics (Bierwiazzonek et al., 2020). In January 2020, the journal *Nature* published an Editor's note cautioning against the theory that the virus leaked from a biolab in Wuhan (Bierwiazzonek et al., 2020). Later into the outbreak, this “accidental leakage” theory became prominent and found support among politicians including the US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo and the US President Donald Trump, whose allegations resulted in international tensions. Other conspiracy theories presented COVID- 19 as deliberately bioengineered, a biological weapon, or a population control scheme.

2.2. Empirical Review

COVID 19 has been a pressing matter for the past 9 months specifically in the country but has given a bigger and longer wave on the world at large. There has been a number of waves if we are narrowing down to Kenya as a country which has been hit by 2 waves so far, one that was just at the beginning and things were a bit steady, and the second wave that hit after the nation decided to open its borders for business. Studying the socio-economic impacts of this pandemic will shine a light on how to defeat it and or deal with it and walk free from it in the long run. It will assist in knowing how to cope with this current situation as well as living with it in the event that the pandemic is not eliminated like in the case of Ebola and HIV, as may would call iyt, living with the new norm.

2.2.1. Restrictions on rights to visit family and friends

Restrictions on rights to visit friends and family A key market for tourism in all countries and internationally as well is visitation to friends and family, an important right that crosses cultures and countries. This right was immediately under challenge at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic as authorities in China curtailed movement during the lunar holidays early in 2020. This was followed by successive measures in other countries, encouraged and enforced to differing degrees.

The International Labour Organisation's (Baum, 2020) aspiration of the right to decent work for all (Baum, 2020) has been challenged by the consequences of COVID-19 induced economic upheaval which has led to widespread retrenchment of tourism workers, often with little or no compensation. ILO highlighted the global impact of COVID-19 on work and employment opportunities, particularly for those in the informal sectors of the Global South (Baum, 2020). Many of these workers are currently denied their right to work as a result of the collapse of the international tourism industry.

Globally, a substantial number of employees work in notional self-employment in the gig economy where social protection and employment rights for workers is limited or non-existent. Similar concerns relate to the vulnerability of migrant workers, both in terms of catching the virus (in Singapore, for example) and their employment rights (Baum, 2020). News reports include anecdotal examples of high-profile companies in tourism who have acted without apparent concern for the rights of individuals to work. Tourism work is precarious at the best of times (Baum, 2020) and the current crisis has demonstrated this with far greater rapidity than in other sectors. Whether the lost workers will return to serve tourists after the crisis remains to be seen.

2.2.2. Confinement to places of residence and penalties for non-compliance

Emergency powers and legislation in many countries and states were enacted which effectively places citizens in lockdown within their own homes, further restricting opportunity for travel, even within immediate localities. These powers were also enforced through financial and further punitive sanctions. This was accompanied by the enforced closure of most hospitality businesses. In the UK, concern was expressed by civil liberties groups about police using drones to target those visiting beauty spots and setting up checkpoints to prevent entry to national parks. This requirement to demonstrate right to movement was enforced in diverse ways in different countries, for example through Impact of COVID-19 2401 documentation in France and through a health app in China. Such measures could represent a challenge to interpretations of privacy and, potentially, human rights and would be resisted in other jurisdictions (Baum, 2020) The lack of personal mobility beyond the home (for tourism purposes, for example) has other consequences. There was evidence, during COVID-19 lockdowns, that domestic abuse and violence increased, with victims literally having few routes of escape. There was also some evidence that, once

lockdowns are eased (as was the case in Hubei Province, China), that the number of couples filing for divorce increased as well.

2.2.3. Border closure and travel containment

Our expectations of the right to unfettered mobility across national borders has been severely challenged by government responses to COVID-19 although it is arguable that moves in this direction had already started prior to the pandemic, as an example, President Trump's 'wall' along the Mexican border (Baum, 2020). National borders in Europe and North America have, effectively, been closed to most travellers including leisure, business and pilgrimage tourists. In some instances, this involved reinstating borders which were removed many years ago, for example within the Schengen area in Europe. Many countries, including Australia, China and New Zealand, closed their borders completely to non-nationals and non-residents. Similarly, countries such as Vietnam withdrew Visa on Arrival schemes while others, for example Singapore, removed the right to transit through airports.

In part as a consequence of the closure of national borders, opportunities to travel were reduced or totally eliminated by governments and transport providers. For example, (Baum, 2020) the Scottish Government barred all but residents and essential workers from using island ferry services. Many airlines reduced both domestic and international services to a skeleton of recent provision and, in other instances, ceased service altogether. Rail and bus service providers, likewise, reduced their services in response both to a decline in demand and to government strictures against non-essential travel. As a consequence, transport operators, notably airlines, face critical financial pressures and many of them may not come through the crisis in a state able to operate services as before. Governments are stepping in to nationalise or renationalise airline assets in order to protect their longer-term futures.

2.2.4. Employee layoffs and job losses

Firms, under heavy circumstances caused by the virus, have been forced to lay-off a large number of workers in an effort to survive and remain financially feasible, which could significantly increase unemployment in the economy (Barua, 2020). This is likely as firms will face slump in

business volume and revenues and increases in costs, which may push many firms not being able to service their wage payments and debts. Wage payment could be a bigger problem particularly for small businesses, who generally have lower financial cushion to fight downturns and thus are able to sustain as long as they are able to run profitably.

2.2.5. Individual (guest) safety

Preliminary findings of a longitudinal study conducted by the editorial team of the Journal of Hospitality Marketing & Management suggest that reopening the sit-down restaurants and easing travel restrictions will not bring customers back immediately (Gursoy & Chi, 2020). A large portion of individuals (Gursoy & Chi, 2020)(over 50%) are not willing to dine in at a restaurant immediately. The same is true for staying at hotels.

Most customers (Gursoy & Chi, 2020)(over 50%) are not willing to travel to a destination and stay at a hotel any time soon. Only around a quarter of the customers have already dined in a restaurant and only around one-third are willing to travel to a destination and stay at a hotel in the next few months (Gursoy & Chi, 2020). These findings suggest that customers in general still do not feel comfortable to dine in at a sit down restaurant, travel to a destination and stay at a hotel. Since the breakeven point in the hospitality industry is relatively high due to high operating costs, the survival of many hospitality businesses heavily depends on increasing the demand for their services and products. Thus, figuring out what will make customers return is essential and this requires intensive research efforts. The industry and the academia are in urgent need of behavioral and operational hospitality marketing and management research to guide the hospitality operations in the time of COVID-19 pandemic.

2.2.6. Curfews and lockdowns.

What are the consequences of COVID-19- induced restrictions for our mobility, on our capacity to travel at will, (Baum, 2020)and what, speculatively, might the future hold in terms of our rights to partake in commercial hospitality and to be tourists? The pandemic has confronted the hospitality industry with an unprecedented challenge. Strategies to flatten the COVID-19 curve such as community lockdowns, social distancing, stay-at-home orders, travel and mobility restrictions have resulted in temporary closure of many hospitality businesses and significantly

decreased the demand for businesses that were allowed to continue to operate (Gursoy & Chi, 2020).

2.3. Conceptual framework

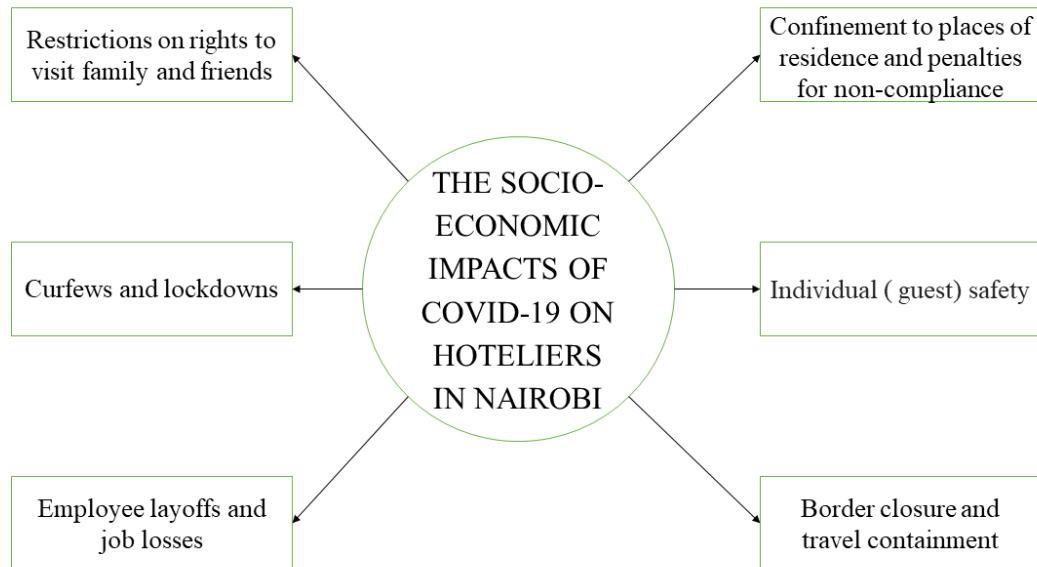


Figure 1:A Conceptual Framework on The Socioeconomic Impacts of COVID-19 on Hoteliers in Nairobi.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1. Type of research method

The uses the conceptual framework to examine the health emergency crisis, in this case, the socio-economic impacts of covid-19 pandemic on hoteliers in Nairobi while evaluating the effectiveness of coping strategies. The study uses a descriptive survey design, using both qualitative and quantitative forms of data. Primary data collection methods entail the use of questionnaires, interview schedules and observation. Secondary data is collected from both electronic and non-electronic repositories. This specific study is lined to collect and project findings directly from affected parties in order to deliver raw and qualitative information. This method seeks to answer questions such and where, when, why and who is affected.

3.2. Targeted population

The targeted population for this study as indicated in the title is all individuals in the hotel and hospitality business (hoteliers). The hotel industry in Nairobi is diverse ranging from five star to as low as two, to, three-star hotels, in this study however, we look more into 40 high-rated star hotels as they stand as the most affected due to this pandemic compared to lower rated hotels. Choosing to work with this population is because compared to other hotels with lower ratings, these high rated star hotels were most hit because of the type of clientele they receive inclusive of, but not limited to: international visitors as well as high end local guests. As a way to collect relevant data and statistics, questionnaires and interviews are the best ways as it enables receiving of data directly from the affected groups. Through internet sharing via various platforms, the questionnaires will be shared to the target population, this is in respect to the current situation where physical meet ups are discouraged though not banned.

3.3. Data collection methods

The best way to obtain primary data is through interview guides and questionnaires. The questionnaire had open-ended questions for the purpose of capturing relevant and important information from respondents for the clarity of the study. Emails were also used as a way to collect primary data from selected respondents. The questionnaires were tested for reliability and validity

before use. In order to ensure validity, any ambiguous questions were adjusted to make it easier for the respondents to understand and give the correct answer.

3.4. Sampling design

In this study, it is advisable to use random sampling, this is a sampling design where the individuals in the study are chosen randomly and entirely by chance and each individual has the same probability as all the others.

3.5. Data analysis

The principal data analysis that was used in this study was the content analysis of qualitative data. It was also supplemented with interpretive phenomenological analysis. The interviews plus opinionated data collected from questionnaires resulted in qualitative data that necessitated the use of the two data analysis techniques as the viable methods to analyze the data. The information obtained from the analysis of qualitative data was represented using pie charts, percentages and bar graphs.

Qualitative content analysis method of data analysis is one of the most common methods to analyze qualitative data. It is used to analyze documented information in the form of texts, media, or even physical items. When to use this method depends on the research questions. Content analysis is usually used to analyze responses from interviewees. Interpretive phenomenological analysis (IPA) is an approach to psychological qualitative research with an idiographic focus, which means that it aims to offer insights into how a given person, in a given context, makes sense of a given phenomenon. Usually, these phenomena relate to experiences of some personal significance, such as a major life event, or the development of an important relationship. Since the study incorporated sampled responses from the target populations, the two methods in conjunction, worked perfectly to analyze the data over the stated period with ease. The data collected also was inclusive of personal experience of living under the prevailing circumstances in the age of the pandemic.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the data analysis, results, and interpretation of the research findings. To achieve the objective of the study, content analysis and interpretive phenomenological analysis methods were used to analyse the data. Pie charts and bar graphs were used to represent the findings on the impacts of covid-19 on hoteliers in Nairobi using the data collected from the target population.

The study sought to determine the socio-economic impacts of covid-19 on hoteliers in Nairobi Kenya. In this study a total of 6 periods starting from April to October in the year 2020, was used (Nicola et al., 2020). The references included electronic journals and survey of branch network of the hotel and hospitality industry and economic surveys carried out by Kenya National Bureau of statistics.

4.2 Response Rate

The study targeted a sample size of 30 out of 40 identified and licenced hotels operating in Nairobi, making a response rate of 75%. This response rate was satisfactory to make conclusions for the study. Weisberg, Krosnick & Bowen (1996) recommended a response rate of 70%. According to Mugenda & Mugenda (2003), a response rate of 50 percent is adequate for analysis and reporting; a rate of 60 percent is good and a response rate of 70 percent and over is excellent (Table 1.). Based on the assertion, the response rate was considered to be adequate.

Table 1: Response Rate

Response Rate	Frequency	Percentage
Response	30	75%
Unresponse	10	0.25%

Total	40	100.00%
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Source: Research Findings

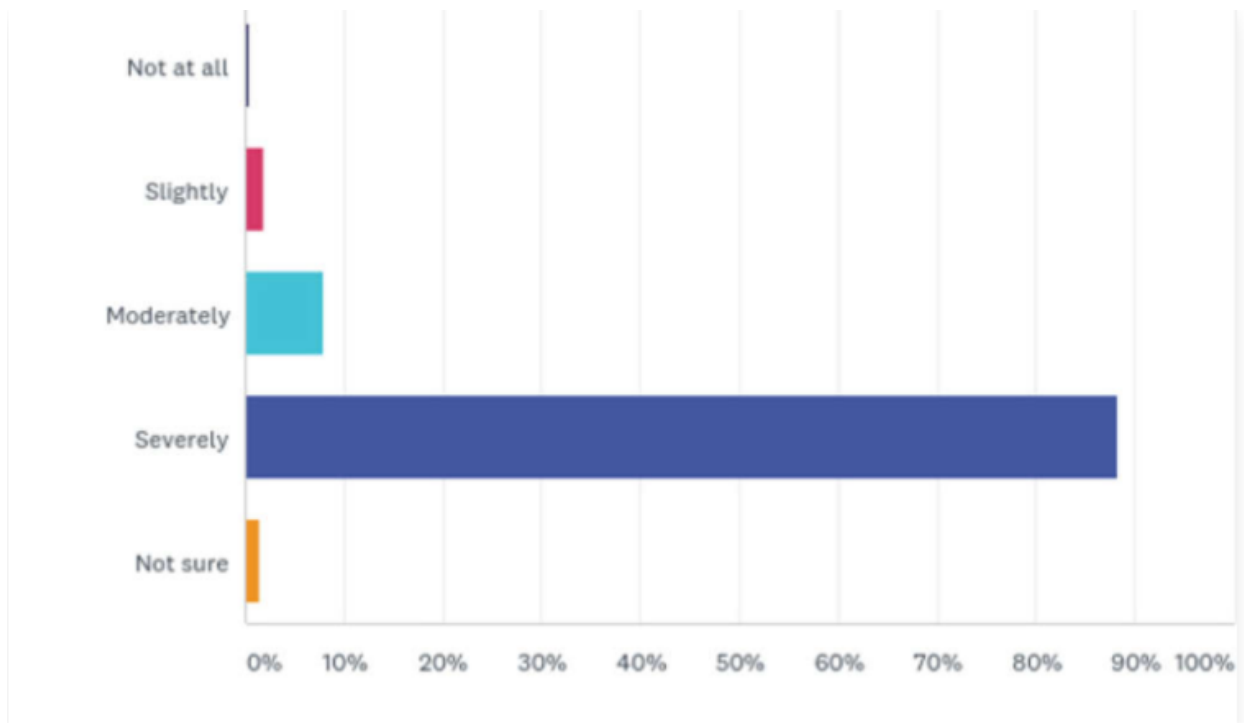
4.3 Descriptive Statistics

4.3.1 Social impact of COVID-19 on hoteliers in Nairobi

Majority of the respondents said that the restriction of their movement and that of their prospective clients, had grossly interfered with their day to day activities. Not surprising, 41% of the respondents specifically identified financial loss as a major consequence of the Covid-19 measures. Some respondents (7%) felt their expenses were higher as a result of the restrictions. Though not in significant numbers, it is noteworthy that some hoteliers reported feeling stressed and having to incur additional expenses due to price hikes of some essential commodities, and the continuous presence of children at home owing to school closures. Reduced family incomes – whether due to job loss, a stop in remittance payments, or a multitude of other COVID-19-related factors – will continue to put human capital at risk. With less money, families will be forced to make trade-offs and sacrifice that could harm health and learning outcomes for a generation.

On the findings of the extent at which individual hoteliers have been socially impacted by the pandemic, the figures were presented in a graph(1.0) as shown:

Fig 1.0: Social impacts on individual hotel businesses in Nairobi.

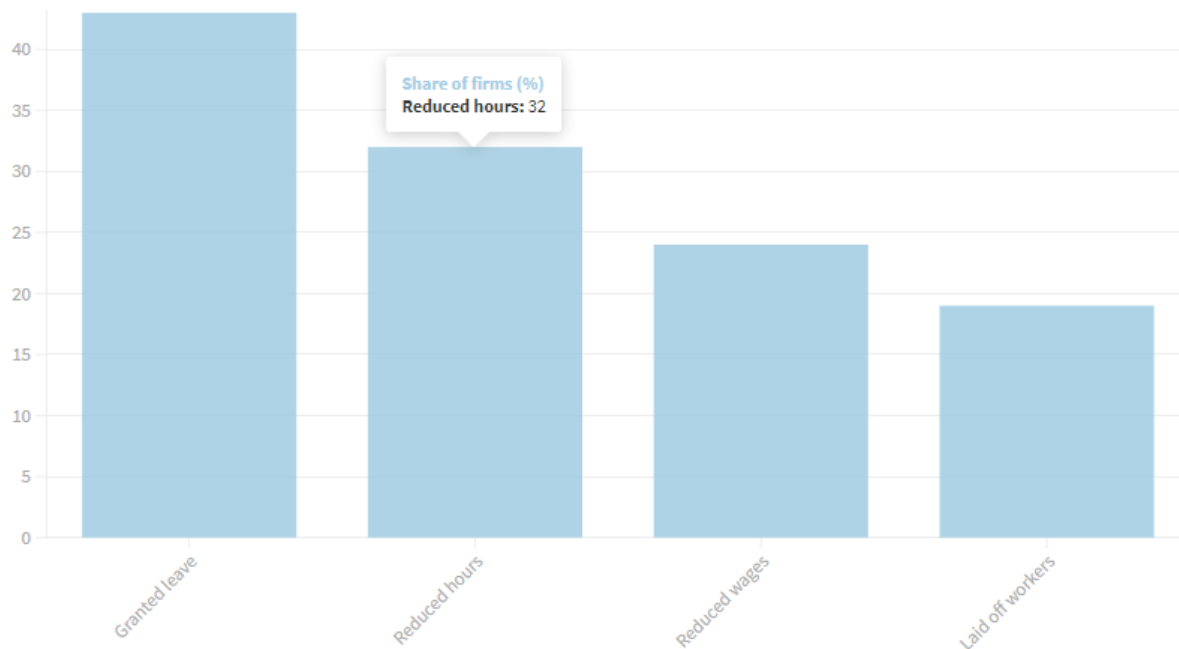


4.3.2 Impact of COVID-19 on employment and job security on hoteliers in Nairobi

A survey report on the ‘socio-economic Impact of Covid-19 on Households’ released by the Kenya National Treasury Office, in May 2020, revealed that most of the household breadwinners work in jobs that are vulnerable to disruption, especially in the service and manufacturing industries, its in this category that hoteliers count. Due to the various measures introduced by the government of Kenya on what standards a hotel had to meet for it to remain in operation, any hoteliers opted to close down completely. For example, the temperature guns, several handwashing stations and large capacity rooms to maintain and keep social distance between clients, was too expensive to adapt. Many employees lost their jobs due to closure or shortlisting of workers by many hotels for them to remain afloat. A substantial group of employees also opted to resign from work in fear of contracting the deadly virus. About 70% of the target population who responded said they were not taking in new employees, thus the chances of hoteliers securing jobs in Nairobi were very low.

The same data warned, however, that the firms’ sales have dropped by half amid the crisis, forcing companies to reduce hours and wages, and most businesses – especially micro and small firms in low-income countries – are struggling to access public support. As represented in the figure below:

Fig 1.1



Source: research findings • Note: Columns show the share of hotels that reported making each adjustment in the 30 days prior to the survey.

4.3.3 The perception of hoteliers on safety at the work place.

The workplace environment is the most critical factor in keeping an employee satisfied in today’s business world. Today’s workplace is different, diverse and constantly changing. Therefore, physical environment affects how employees in an organization interact, perform tasks, and be lead. Covid-19 has affected physical environment as an aspect of the work environment which has directly affected the human sense and subtly changed interpersonal interactions and thus productivity. Ambient features in office environments, such as lighting, temperature, existence of windows, free air movement suggest that these elements of the physical environment influence employees’ attitude, behaviours, satisfaction, performance and productivity. However, this is no longer the case in the current world as only limited number of employees can share a room and facilities such as air conditioners are no longer accepted in the hotel industry. Most hoteliers lack the protective gear recommended by WHO, thus have the fear of contracting the virus in their line of duty. About 67% of the sampled population showed inadequate knowledge on actions to take in case of a suspected case amongst them or their clients.

According to the directive from WHO, if staff develop COVID-19 symptoms while at work, such as fever, dry cough or tiredness, they should immediately stop working, put on a medical mask

and isolate in a suitable room while medical services are notified. Disposable tissues and an appropriate waste bin with a lid should be available in the designated isolation area while waiting for medical assessment or transfer to an assessment facility.

If staff develop symptoms while at home, they should stay at home and seek medical attention, following instructions from a health worker that will include a period of time for self-isolation away from others, including family members, according to local guidance. The staff member should inform the management accordingly.

Most respondents, however, stated that this was not well absorbed by them. Some said that the symptoms mentioned in the guidelines were similar to those of common flue, which is true, and therefore even those who showed the symptoms but were just suffering from common flu had to follow suit. The cost of quarantine posed a challenge to individual hoteliers and also to their families in cases where the victim hoteliers were the sole breadwinners.

4.4 Interpretation of the findings

Measures imposed by the government of Kenya to mitigate the spread of Covid-19 in the hotel industry are resulting in job losses, both for casual workers in the informal hotel sector and daily-wage earners in the formal sector, both of which employ a high proportion of the middle-class citizens.

Due to curfews and limited movement of people, many roles have become redundant, resulting in job losses or unpaid leave. Workers who already live in poverty and cannot afford to have precautionary savings consequently face a high risk of falling into poverty and might experience even greater challenges in regaining their livelihoods after the pandemic.

A survey conducted by the Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS) in May 2020 indicates that the labour participation rate in the country at large has fallen significantly as a result of the pandemic. Data from the World Bank shows that in 2019 Kenya had a labour-force participation rate of 75%; this rate fell to just 56.8% in April 2020. According to the KNBS survey, the percentage of the population in active employment, whether informal or formal, has fallen to 65.3% of men and 48.8% of women.

The reduction has been caused by job losses in both the informal and formal sectors. The virus has disrupted the flow of revenues and limited the supply and demand for goods and services, pushing employers to use different coping mechanisms to stay afloat. Employers have been forced to downsize the workforce, give unpaid leave or make temporary layoffs. From the findings the impacts of covid-19 to hoteliers in Nairobi extends to affect the national social economic status.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the discussion of key data findings, conclusion drawn from the findings highlighted and recommendations made there-to. The conclusions and recommendations drawn were focused on addressing the researcher's objective, which was to investigate the social-economic impacts of covid-19 on hoteliers in Nairobi.

5.2 Discussion

The pandemic slowdown has deeply impacted businesses and jobs. Around the world, companies – especially micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in the developing world – are under intense strain, with more than half either in arrears or likely to fall into arrears shortly. To understand the pressure that COVID-19 is having on firms' performance as well as the adjustments they are having to make, the World Bank and partners have been conducting rapid COVID-19 Business Pulse Surveys in partnership with client governments.

These offer a glimmer of good news. Responses collected between May and August showed that many of these firms were retaining staff, hoping to keep them on board as they ride out the downturn. More than a third of companies have increased the use of digital technology to adapt to the crisis. The same data warned, however, that the firms' sales have dropped by half amid the crisis, forcing companies to reduce hours and wages, and most businesses – especially micro and small firms in low-income countries – are struggling to access public support.

The socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 epidemic operates through two distinct channels. First are the direct and indirect effects of the sickness, which results from when an income-earner in the household falls ill, the ratio of active members to dependents falls. The effects may be compounded by lost earnings and taking care of the ill family member, or funeral costs upon death. Ill-health and limited resilience capacities can create multiplier effects. One study of eleven (11) countries in Sub-Saharan Africa and South and Southeast Asia found that in the absence of health insurance or other forms of universal health coverage, responses to health shocks by people in

poverty or near the poverty line commonly included distress sales of assets and taking out loans from informal moneylenders, sometimes at exploitative rates. Thus, the coronavirus will be another source of impoverishment and reinforce existing factors, in turn limiting the ability of vulnerable households to escape from – and stay out of – poverty. Second are aversion behaviour effects resulting from the fear of catching the virus, which in turn leads to a fear of association with others and reduces labour force participation, closes places of employment, disrupts transportation, motivates some governments to close borders and restrict entry of citizens from affected countries, and motivates private decision makers to disrupt trade, travel, and commerce by cancelling scheduled commercial flights and reducing shipping and cargo services.

aversion behaviour is through three sources: Governments impose bans on certain types of activities, as when the Government of China orders factories to shut down or Italy closes most shops throughout the country or the Kenya Judiciary's suspension of court hearings across the country starting Monday, March 16, 2020 for two weeks in order to allow for further consultations and to design appropriate measures to prevent the spread of the coronavirus which will have an adverse effect on the justice system. Firms and institutions (including schools and private companies) take proactive measures to avoid infection. Business closures -- whether through government bans or business decisions -- result in lost wages for workers in many cases, especially in the informal economy where there is no paid leave. After the confirmation of the first case on 13 March 2020, Kenya introduced various restrictions such as the entry of foreigners from countries that have confirmed coronavirus cases, working at home and closing of learning institutions. Other restrictions have since been placed by 47 individual governors in their respective counties. Barely a few days into the restrictions, small-scale traders in Nairobi were already filling the effects of coronavirus-induced hardships. Traders who were interviewed by the Standard Newspaper showed their frustration with the restrictions:

The objective of the study was to investigate the social-economic impacts of covid-19 on hoteliers in Nairobi Kenya, evaluate the effect of the pandemic on employment and job security on the same population and assess the perception of hoteliers on safety at their place of work. Both qualitative content analysis and interpretive phenomenological analysis methods were employed to analyse the data obtained through primary and secondary means to deduce the extent to which hoteliers within Nairobi have been affected under social-economic basis by the covid-19 pandemic. In data

analysis and presentation of results findings the impacts were found to have affected the employment rate as well as the effective labour force nationally.

5.3 Conclusion and recommendations

5.3.1. Conclusion

The socio-economic impact of the COVID-19 epidemic on hoteliers in Nairobi can be concluded to be severe according to the findings of this study.

- The pandemic has also impacted the employment and job security of hoteliers in Nairobi in a great deal as more than 50% of the sample population stated to be taking in no employees, but rather are giving forced unpaid leaves to their working employees and some have been laid off from employment. Some opt not to work in the hotel industry anymore to reduce social interactions with the public for their own safety and that of their families who they live with.

Approximately 89% of the respondents showed to question their safety in their place of work. Their perception of their safety is that they are not safe as some of the safety measures appear out of reach for then eg, maintaining social distance along the streets of Nairobi is something next to impossibility if not impossible. Also, in their locomotive means most of the employees rely on the public transport sector to and from their places of work, it's quite unfortunate that some of the means aren't taking the laid safety measures such as maintaining social distance. Since they have to run against time to get home before the curfew hours, they have to board the vehicles in or out of will.

5.3.2 Recommendation

To ensure socioeconomic recovery within a reasonable period, the government should put in place plans and resources that do not continue to weigh disproportionately on people living in poverty.

Re-opening the economy whilst also taking care of health concerns

5.4 Limitations of the Study

One of the critical concerns was the credibility, accuracy, validity and dependability of the data. Secondary data being information that has previously been collected by persons may be subject to errors, being out of date and even creative accounting from hotel management, especially the periodic reports. This study used secondary data obtained from the financial statements electronic journals and websites belonging to the target hotels where they were available.

An important concern was ability to find study participants, solicit quick and useful feedback during the research study. Hotel executives were either unavailable or too busy, others even refused to give consent to access critical and private information or respond fully to the researcher's questions. The researcher also lacked adequate support and proficient guidance from research experts to proofread and to give opinion on conclusions from the study. However, some people agreed to help on the condition that it was for academic purposes so the researcher had to do a lot of convincing.

The cost of doing the entire research was also a challenge. Completing the entire research incurred a lot of cost from printing and binding charges, transport fees to various insurance companies to gather data, internet cost among others. Future researchers will need to prepare financially in order to complete the research studies.

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