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ROSEN RESEARCH REVIEW

SUMMER 2021



**Rosen College of
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**Rosen College of
Hospitality Management**

UNIVERSITY OF CENTRAL FLORIDA

We can see the silver linings and it's time to charge on!



What an incredible, unbelievable 15 months it has been since the world ground to a halt, international travel became unheard of and hospitality, travel and tourism were transformed into socially distanced staycations and nature road trips. With rapidly developed vaccines, the globe is starting to reawaken. However, things have changed. We must adapt to the new challenges and procedures that COVID-19 has brought us. Gone are the days of spontaneous travel. We are now in an era of careful planning, researching safety practices and rethinking our destinations. And speaking of research we have new insights to share with you.

We invite you to read the summer 2021 issue of the Rosen Research Review. As with our past issues of the magazine, we have 10 great articles to share with you. The research presented in this magazine was conducted before and during the pandemic. In one article, we will take a look at understanding the impact of COVID-19 intervention policies on the hospitality labor market. Many in the field of hospitality have had their jobs re-imagined due to COVID-19, with the introduction of more contactless services and Artificial Intelligence. Also in the research that has a COVID-19 focus, is an article taking a look at the empowering role of hospitable telemedicine experience. On the staff side, our researchers have investigated managers from "Hell" in the hospitality industry: How do hospitality employees profile bad managers? As we all get back to business it is essential that we demonstrate the best facets of the hospitality industry, being caring and empathetic to our guests, staff and leadership teams. If COVID-19 has taught us anything, it's that human connections and contact are extremely important.

Our commitment to research and information sharing was recognized once again in 2021 with a top spot for UCF Rosen College of Hospitality Management in the ShanghaiRanking. UCF Rosen College was named the nation's best, and number two in the world in the ShanghaiRanking for the second year in a row. The ranking is a listing of 500 top universities in the world, and a mark of excellence in the field of research. The college also placed among the top five in the CEOWorld magazine rankings of colleges and universities who teach hospitality and tourism. We are honored by these rankings. Our commitment to presenting relevant research that our industry partners may use to enhance their business practices is evident month after month, year after year, and even during the global pandemic.

Summer is here and with it warm days, sunshine, thunderstorms and even sometimes tropical weather like hurricanes. When the weather clears we often see the sun emerging from behind the clouds, offering us that silver lining, and sometimes if we're especially lucky, a rainbow. This issue of the Rosen Research Review comes after a pandemic storm; it's a research silver-lining.

Whether you read the magazine online or in hardcopy, we hope that you enjoy it and share each new issue with your colleagues.



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Editor: Dr. Robertico Croes





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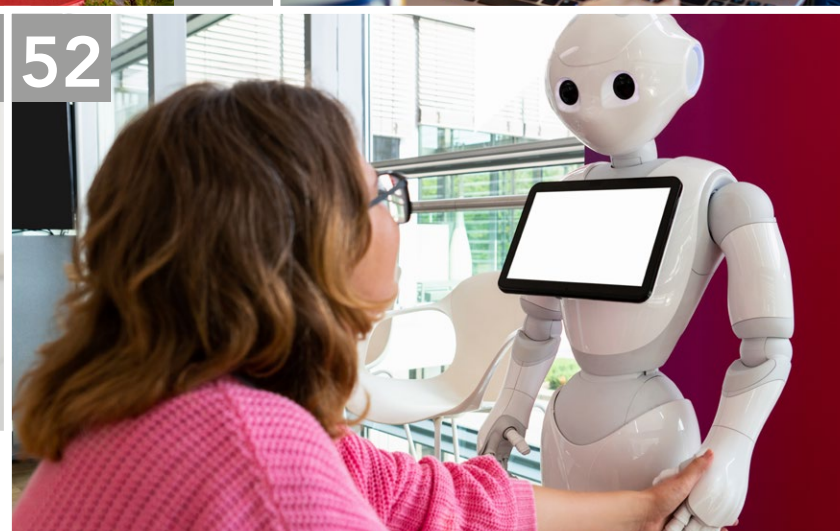
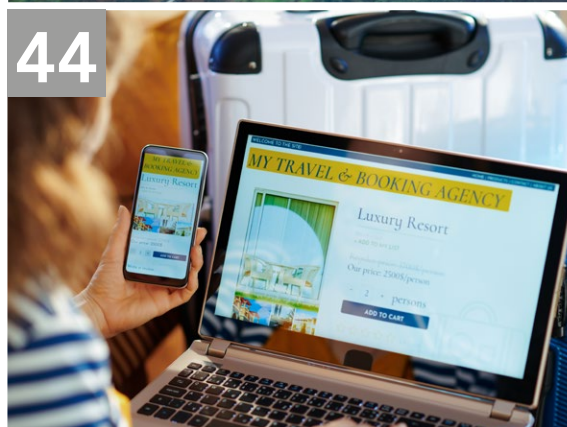
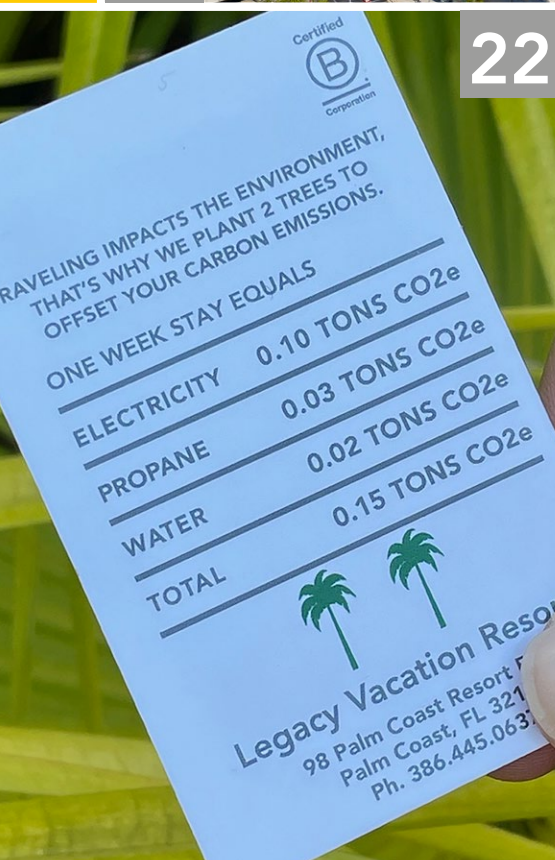
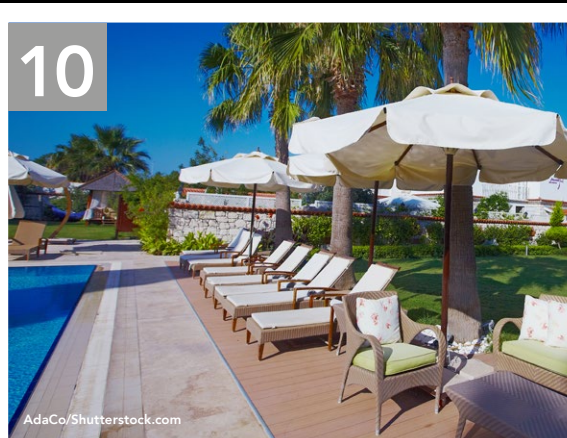
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RRR ISSUE 04



14



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CONTENTS

18

Drazen Zigic/Shutterstock.com



34

LenaKing/Shutterstock.com



36



06 COVID-19: a 'perfect storm':
For the hospitality sector

10 Rising from the ashes of
COVID-19 will need a sharp
focus on the numbers

14 Assessing telemedicine
outcomes with hospitality
principles

18 Going 'above and beyond'
in stressful customer
interactions

22 Sustainability and
hospitality: People, planet
and prosperity

26 Tourism competitiveness
and human development

30 Valuing the negative
impacts of harmful algae
blooms

34 From bloom to bust: Harmful
algae blooms and their
impacts on the waterfront
economy

36 Rosen Library and STARS:
Shining a light on the past

39 Dick Pope Sr. Institute
for Tourism Studies

40 Households' net wealth as
a determinant of tourism
demand cycles

44 The power of e-commerce in
the hotel industry

48 Managers from "Hell" in the
hospitality industry

52 How could robots improve
the customer experience at
a theme park?

56 Preparing the hospitality
and tourism workforce for
the future of work



56

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COVID-19: A 'PERFECT STORM'

For the hospitality sector

Fear of infection, strict stay-at-home-orders (SAHOs), and mandated business closures have all combined to severely disrupt supply and demand for many businesses. As a result, COVID-19 devastated the hospitality industry in a way unlike any other. Dr. Arthur Huang of the Rosen College of Hospitality Management and his colleagues assessed the effects of state and local intervention policies on the hospitality industry through the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Since the celebration of the third millennium, and less than a quarter of the way through the twenty-first century, the world has experienced the ravaging effects that viral diseases can have on the economy and health of the human population multiple times.

Examples include SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) in 2003 (800 deaths worldwide), followed by Swine Flu (H1N1) in 2009 (various estimates from 150,000 to 575,000 deaths), Ebola in 2013 (12,000 deaths from only 29,000 cases), and MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome) in 2015 (900 deaths from 2500 cases, but re-emerging periodically).

Then, of course, the most globally deadly and disruptive: COVID-19, appearing first in China in late 2019. The numbers for the most recent pre-COVID event, MERS, taken to South Korea from the Middle East by a single traveler, are much lower than might have been expected; 38 deaths from 186 cases in the initial epidemic in South Korea.

So, what did South Korea do to limit the effects of such a potentially deadly disease as MERS? Among the most effective measures was the rapid response of the South Korean government, introducing

quarantine measures and restricting travel. While many lives were undoubtedly saved and the epidemic limited to a couple of months, the economic cost was estimated at around \$2.6 billion. Fortunately, South Korea was not highly dependent on tourism's contribution to its economy (accounting for about 5% of GDP in 2015), and therefore the economic damage was contained.

But for the U.S., almost any disruption that severely affects the hospitality industry would be more economically devastating, as the sector accounts for some 20% of GDP and employs about 30% of the U.S. labor force (as reported for 2017). In early 2020, as COVID-19 continued to spread, it appeared that the disease may have devastating effects worldwide.

EFFECTS ON HOSPITALITY

For Dr. Arthur Huang and his associates, a critical issue for the hospitality industry's survival would be how it responded to the many initiatives that national and state governments deployed to fight the virus.

In his study, Dr. Huang focused on one of the critical measures of the industry: the non-salaried labor market. The research considers three distinct phases: before the stay-at-home policies, after the stay-

at-home policies, and the release of the imposed restrictions.

Finally, Dr. Huang and the research team identify practical and managerial insights that may be valuable in the recovery of this vital sector.

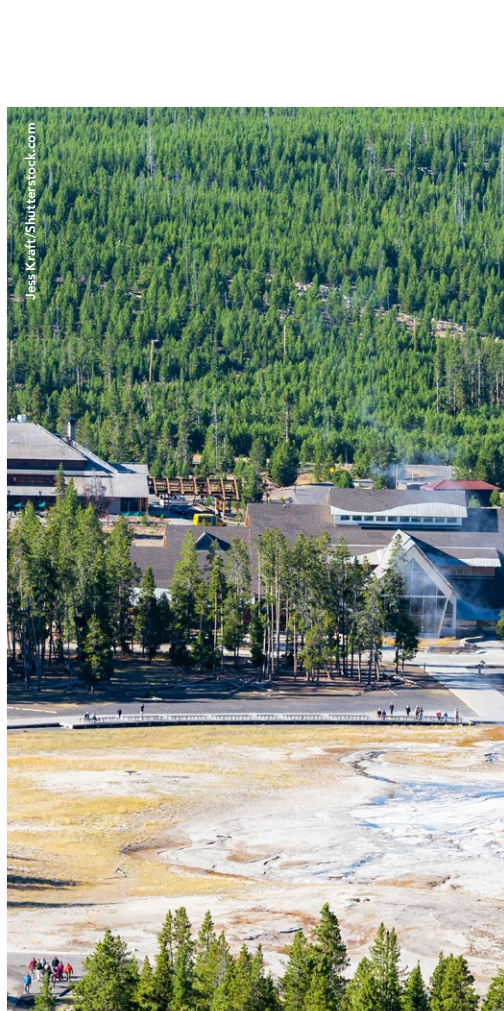
RESISTANCE, RESILIENCE, AND REOPENING AMID THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Hospitality has three essential ingredients for success: people want to go out, they are permitted to go out, and there are hospitality services available that they can enjoy. COVID-19's emergence and rapid global diffusion quickly interrupted all three aspects required for success.

However, while the hospitality and tourism industry could not make a case for being essential, it is a sector capable of rapid recovery once restrictions are lifted and the market returns.

Dr. Huang's report describes this as 'resistance' and 'resilience.' While there





There were wide disparities between states in terms of lockdown measures.

could be no resistance to temporary business closure in the face of a pandemic driven by close human contact, there could be hope that, as in previous closures (such as with SARS and MERS), the industry would show considerable resilience in its ability to recover from such closures quickly.

Dr. Huang cautions against presuming a similar resilient recovery will be seen after a pandemic as profound in its impact as

in dealing with the onset of a threat. To a certain extent, states must be responsible for developing their own plans to reopen businesses as the pandemic is tamed.

These challenges are fundamental and complex; size is one major issue. The state planners in California, for example, must safeguard a population of approximately 39.5 million people, while Wyoming has just 577,000. Adopting extreme one-size-

policies on small businesses in the hospitality sector, Dr. Huang and his colleagues combined anonymized, pan-U.S., non-salaried employment data (from the HomeBase payroll and time tracking service used by many businesses employing less than ten people) with data on COVID-19 cases and deaths, and state-level intervention policies, from March to June 2020.

Nationally, the impact on non-salaried employment, working hours, and the number of business closures were in the range of a 15-30% reduction. Again, all sectors within hospitality were at the higher end, with leisure the worst hit, at close to 30%, followed by food and drink.

Among the non-salaried workforce, there was a high correlation between the number of COVID-19 cases and the negative impact on jobs.

STATE-LEVEL DISPARITY

However, there was considerable variation by state, which is also true for the positive impacts of reopening businesses. The report

PUBLIC CONFIDENCE WILL BE AN ESSENTIAL COMPONENT IN THE RATE OF RECOVERY OF BUSINESS REVENUES.

COVID-19 or any possible future pandemic that might have an even greater human and economic cost. Instead, he argues that pre-emptive policies and actions should be 'refined' to reduce the catastrophic effects of a novel disease. By refined, Dr. Huang is referring to the heterogeneous nature of the U.S., with each state having its own unique challenges that must be considered

fits-all state policies regarding SAHOs, or compulsory business closures, for example, may have effectively reduced the spread of the virus, but not necessarily at the most efficient cost to the economies of each state.

STUDYING THE IMPACT OF INTERVENTION POLICIES

To understand the impact of intervention



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DR. HUANG CAUTIONS AGAINST PRESUMING A SIMILAR RESILIENT RECOVERY WILL BE SEEN AFTER A PANDEMIC AS PROFOUND IN ITS IMPACT AS COVID-19.

also highlights that the rate at which the labor market was negatively affected by introducing intervention policies was not necessarily correlated to the positive impact when the guidelines were lifted.



New Hampshire, Hawaii, and South Dakota experienced the highest drop (over 50%) in working hours for the food and drink industry. But when the interventions were lifted, and businesses could reopen, the most positive impact was seen in Delaware, Wyoming, and Montana, with an over 40% increase in working hours.

IMPLICATIONS FOR REOPENING HOSPITALITY BUSINESSES

Once supply-side interventions such as SAHOs and business closure mandates have been lifted, there must be positive stimulation for market demand.

Public confidence will be an essential component in the recovery rate of business revenues, and the demand will increase the labor hours needed. The report describes how business managers may need to reassess priorities, citing the possibility of giving clear signals of sanitation and infection control significantly higher attention than venue aesthetics, for example.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The observations from this study were made possible by the HomeBase data, but that data was only gathered from the small-to-medium-sized companies which use HomeBase's services. Therefore, data from larger companies and other sectors may not tell the same story.

Similarly, the disparity in the results across the country suggests there are other significant factors involved that were not included in the analysis. For example, the degree to which companies had a digital presence (e.g., Uber Eats) could mitigate the impact on labor hours.

There is evidence that areas with higher social capital have been able to weather the pandemic with a lower human and economic cost; this has been attributed to greater trust and compassion for neighbors and a willingness to voluntarily social distance.

For the high-end hospitality sector, managers should reflect on the findings of Cherry et al. (2020), cited in the researcher's paper, which suggest that the decline in consumer spending during the pandemic was greater in the higher-income areas. Does this mean hospitality businesses need to hit a reset button on all of their strategies? As with all major events, to an extent, only time will tell, but an exploration of purchase intent could be an excellent place to start.

RESEARCHERS IN FOCUS

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Dr. Arthur Huang and colleagues have studied the impacts of COVID-19 intervention policies at state and local levels.

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PERSONAL RESPONSE

How hard is it to predict the long-term effects of the pandemic on consumer behavior and the hospitality labor market in the absence of any direct domestic comparisons?

Various factors can affect the long-term effects of the pandemic on consumer behavior. Careful policies and management practices need to be implemented. On the one hand, extreme intervention policies such as stay-at-home orders can take a toll on small hospitality and tourism businesses. On the other hand, companies need to be proactive in following COVID-19 safety guidelines to reduce COVID-19 transmission and regain consumers' trust.

Dr. Arthur Huang



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RISING FROM THE ASHES OF COVID-19 WILL NEED A SHARP FOCUS ON THE NUMBERS

If there is one sector that cannot move 'online', it is accommodation, and SLEs (small lodging establishments) have taken a merciless beating from COVID-19. Typically family-owned and managed, they have relatively high capital costs and overheads which means that even when revenues stop coming in, those liabilities still have to be met. This study by Dr. Manuel Rivera, Dr. Murat Kizildag, and Dr. Robertico Croes, of the Rosen College of Hospitality Management, shows how a detailed break-even analysis can inform a business's strategy for survival within the important SLE sector.

The human and economic debris left when the COVID-19 pandemic is finally brought under control will be picked over by a vast array of investigators in the coming years. Some will be looking to allocate blame for failed strategies and initiatives, while others will be looking for insights that could mitigate the effects of future novel pathogens.

The authors of a recent report from Rosen College of Hospitality Management—Dr. Manuel Rivera, Dr. Murat Kizildag, and Dr. Robertico Croes—have focused on the equally important challenge of helping the most damaged sectors in our economy find the resilience to both recover from COVID-19 and withstand the next seismic shock.

Many businesses have found a way to generate some revenue. Some restaurants turned their focus to take-out, either facilitated by the rapidly growing delivery services or by setting up their own distribution or innovative drive-thru solutions. At the first easing of restrictions, those in the right climate and with the right

facilities could focus on their al-fresco offers, with customers reassured by the reduced transmissibility of the virus in the open air.

There has been no such innovation for accommodation, however. With lodgings, people either come and stay or they do not. So, without a doubt, the accommodation

sector has been one of the worst hit of the hospitality and service industries.

NO REST FOR ACCOMMODATION

Often, when we think about the accommodation sector of the hospitality industry, we tend to picture the big chain hotels. Ranging from the budget brands that appear in nearly all big

	10 OR LESS ROOMS	11-20 ROOMS	21-30 ROOMS	MORE THAN 30 ROOMS	TOTAL
# PROPERTIES					
Properties by category	28	29	15	27	99
NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES					
Salary Employees (Avg. #)	1.81	1.52	1.77	1.90	2.21
Hourly Employees (Avg. #)	7.63	2.04	5.86	10.25	15.68
LEGACY PROPERTIES					
Avg. # of years in operation	17.24	17.61	17.71	20.94	18.19
TYPE OF OWNERSHIP					
Family Owned	100%	91%	67%	89%	91%
Other type of ownership	0%	9%	33%	11%	9%

Table 1. Sample Characteristics. Data from Rivera et al 2021.

Table 2. Breakeven (BE) Calibration for Operational Performance. Notes: (1) Property types are sorted based on the room nights available. (2) BE_Units is rounded up/down (\approx) to the nearest integer due to a unit of measurement for room nights. Data from Rivera et al 2021.

PROXIES	PROPERTY TYPE				Σ_{xi} (n = 99)	μ_x	\bar{x}_{xi}	σ_{xi}
	10 or Less (n = 28)	11–20 (n = 29)	21–30 (n = 15)	30 or More (n = 27)				
BE_Room Nights (\approx)	946	2168	4023	8209	15,346	6139	3096	3178
BE_Occ. %	41.24%	43.88%	44.81%	48.58%	–	44.63%	44.35%	3.04%
CMRw (room)	42.73%	44.04%	36.50%	39.37%	–	40.66%	41.05%	3.40%
BE_ \$ (TR room)	\$180,974.62	\$410,421.31	\$737,962.79	\$1,363,728.30	\$2,693,087.02	\$673,271.75	\$574,192.05	\$513,926.71
BE_ADR	\$191.26	\$189.31	\$183.41	\$166.13	\$730.12	\$182.53	\$186.36	\$11.43



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only exacerbate the trauma faced by the smallest operations.

One problem for support intervention and future recovery strategies, identified by Dr. Rivera and his colleagues, is that the SLE sector is relatively 'ignored', especially where industry data collection is concerned. The influential Smith Travel Research (STR) index, for example, does not track any data for establishments with less than 20 rooms.

This lack of background data is not only a factor in assessing the priority and degree of support during the lockdown phase of the pandemic. It also severely affects how these businesses can best prepare themselves for a post-pandemic

towns, to the iconic venues that are part of our cultural history, such as the Waldorf Astoria or the Fontainebleau in Miami Beach, Florida.

There is another more niche player in the sector, however, that has suffered perhaps the worst economic impact of all business categories: the independent small lodging establishments (SLEs).

SLEs tend to share some unique characteristics that mean they cannot be understood simply as 'scaled down' big hotels. The typical SLE is single person- or family-owned, and very often owner-managed, utilizing family labor sometimes enhanced with locally sourced hourly paid labor. Many cater primarily for tourists, with catering restricted to breakfast only, and a focus on location, comfort and high levels of host-guest interaction and personal service. The latter is a unique 'brand asset' that often keeps patrons coming back year on year.

However, SLEs are also noted within the sector for having disproportionately high fixed assets compared to other forms of accommodation,

higher fixed costs, and a much higher sensitivity to 'seismic' shocks—whether local, national, or global, such as COVID-19. Taking away the SLE's revenue, as has happened with the pandemic, may be accompanied by a small mitigating reduction in variable cost, but those high fixed costs must still be met.

The authors also note the impact of uncoordinated and varying policies of pandemic intervention by federal, state, and local jurisdictions, leading to comprehensive disruption of entire supply-chains serving hotel establishments. Such uncertainties—in terms of restrictions, support, and future supplies—

THE LODGING INDUSTRY WAS ONE OF THE HARDEST-HIT BY THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC AS BOTH DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL TRAVEL WERE RESTRICTED TO CONTAIN THE SPREAD OF THE CORONAVIRUS.

world, a world in which the re-emerging market may be reassessing its priorities—looking for more visible sanitation, hygiene, and safety standards to complement the comfort and friendly-host elements of the package.

SECTOR INSIGHTS

The researchers sought to develop an understanding of the operational and financial dynamics of the SLE segment through an analysis of the membership of the Superior Small Lodgings (SSL) of Florida, USA.

SSL comprises 170 independent 'innkeepers' who generally fit the descriptions of SLEs

outlined above. The study identified four different categories of establishment defined by capacity: 10 rooms or less (28 SLEs), 11–20 rooms (29), 21–29 rooms (15), and 30 or more rooms (27). Of these, 90% are family owned, they have existed on average for over 17 years, and average 2 salaried and 15 hourly paid employees.

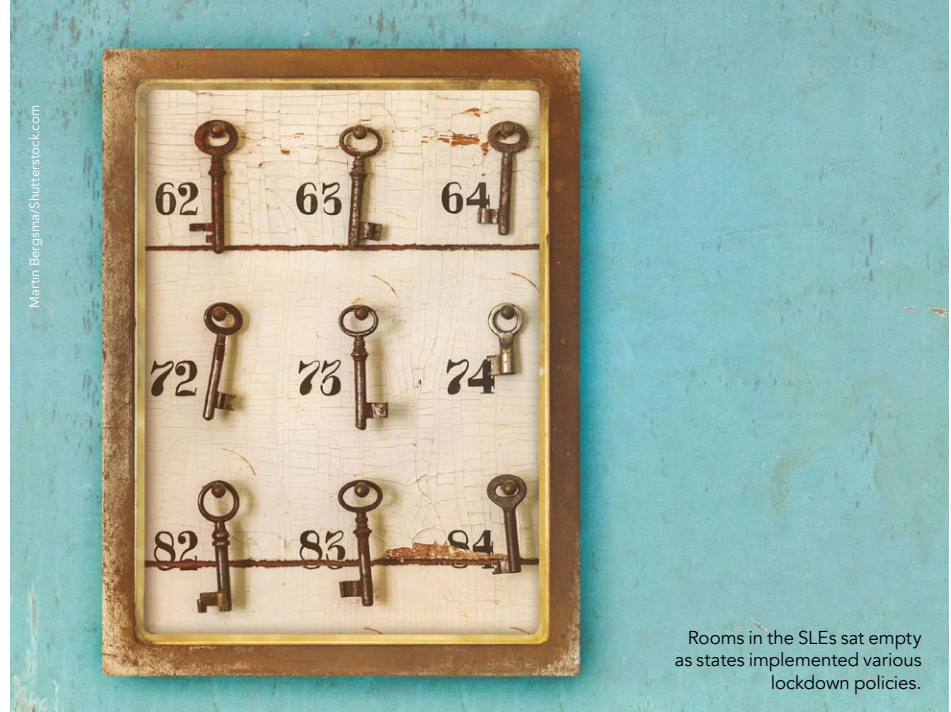
The study collected financial data, based on a 15-question online survey, to assess the impact of the initial Florida shut-down period. From the 170-establishment population, a useable sample of 99 completed surveys provided a representative sample of Florida SLEs.

A BREAKEVEN CALIBRATION ANALYSIS (BCA) MODEL

Resilience in the face of seismic shock—as in the case of a mandated shut-down—and the ability of a business to bounce forward, is dependent on many factors. These include the determination of the owner(s), meeting any changed expectations of the market, and using promotion to encourage demand.

This study did not just consider resilience in the face of the COVID-19 shock, however, but also how these businesses can be better prepared and more resilient in the face of future shocks. The focus was on the budgeting and financial management of the business, i.e., how profit is generated from such revenues as are available.

The authors created a breakeven calibration model that allows an individual business or category to ‘stress test’ in order to understand their shock sensitivity from a financial perspective. Initially the four categories of establishment by room numbers, detailed above, were



Rooms in the SLEs sat empty as states implemented various lockdown policies.

the total revenue required to achieve financial breakeven through room sales. The final factor was the average daily room rate (ADR) that is generated at breakeven.

The two changing parameters of ‘rooms sold’ and ‘ADR’ were then tested to see how sensitive business profits are when there are drastic changes to those parameters.

RESULTS

Although the four SLE sub-groups are located in a similar coastal location and share many market characteristics, their resilience to external shocks varied against some criteria, when assessed through the breakeven calibration analysis model.

For example, the 21–29 room sub-group showed the most vulnerability to the pandemic and will face greater challenges during the recovery phase.

Generally, in the SLE sector, it was found that there was little differentiation, with few additional services—such as food and beverages (beyond the standard breakfast), fitness centers, or saunas, for example—that might encourage competition within the sector or attract a more demanding guest.

The authors also report that there is little engagement with modern hospitality management tools, such as yield management or marketing platforms that could help develop their markets and lower transaction costs.

IMPLICATIONS

The study yielded numerous important insights. If SLEs are to develop financial management skills to ensure they are operating optimally and are better able to withstand future shocks, then the BCA model will be a useful tool to assist them.

However, they may not be able to achieve that individually. Instead, there could be an initiative from bodies like the Superior Small Lodgings (SSL) group that could facilitate such development for all its members. Additionally, destination management organizations (DMOs) could provide similar support for the improvement of resilience for their local SLEs.

Finally, Rivera, Kizildag and Croes encourage further research to better understand the heterogenous nature and needs of these small sub-sectors of hospitality to facilitate their survival, resilience, and future growth.

BUDGETING DURING A PANDEMIC IS ONE OF THE GREATEST FINANCIAL HURDLES THAT BUSINESSES FACE.

characterized by number of employees (salaried and hourly paid), years of operational experience, and type of ownership (family or other).

This was then correlated with operational data based on: room nights available, occupancy rates, profit margin contribution per sale, and

Overall, the four sub-groups maintained their ADR levels in the pre-pandemic period, suggesting that the strong relationship between guest and host, together with the location and service benefits, creates an inelastic price niche. This would have predicted good profit margins but for the intervention of COVID-19.

RESEARCHERS IN FOCUS

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Dr. Manuel Rivera, Dr. Murat Kizildag, and Dr. Robertico Croes assess the effects of the pandemic on small lodging establishments.

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PERSONAL RESPONSE

The study identified the 21–29 room sub-group as the most vulnerable of the SLEs. What characteristics do you think account for this apparent weakness?

■ This study identified the 21–29 room sub-group as the most vulnerable SLEs. This is mostly because these establishments might be severely affected by the shut-down since the number of room nights to be sold are the second highest with almost the same levels of ADRs vs. other groups in SLE portfolios. The overhead and overall operational costs associated with room sales and revenues for this segment are high enough to shrink the contribution margin, and eventually yield high sales volumes to achieve the breakeven points vs. lower sales volumes with almost the same ADR levels needed to breakeven. ■



SLEs show little engagement with modern hospitality tools.

Dr. Manuel Rivera



Dr. Rivera's industry experience expands to companies such as Aramark, Chartwells, Pizza Hut, Starbucks, Java City, Pollo Tropical, Subway, Burger King, McDonalds and Sbarro.

He also had the opportunity of working with institutions such as Florida International University, Saint Thomas University, Nova Southeastern University, Florida Memorial College, the Miami Dolphins Training Center, and the Kovens Convention Center.

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ASSESSING TELEMEDICINE OUTCOMES WITH HOSPITALITY PRINCIPLES

Hospitality as a concept has relevance across many industries of service provision, including the health care sector. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a major impact on the way in which patients access health care from their service providers. In this study, Dr. Wei Wei and Dr. Yun Ying (Susan) Zhong build a predictive model outlining the most important factors in enabling patients to experience positive emotional outcomes during telemedicine encounters.

Hospitality is a term which encompasses notions of warmth, friendliness, and comfort extended to others, across many different contexts and settings. Although the study of hospitality has traditionally been associated with a limited number of industries, attention has turned in recent years to the role of hospitality within other industries, including health care settings. It has been proposed that extending practices of hospitality to the health care environment could potentially influence health outcomes for patients receiving medical care. This extension of the notion of hospitality into other settings introduces a new concept of hospitality as an organizational culture or philosophy, with an emphasis placed upon providing exceptional service levels that satisfy all stakeholders.

HOSPITALITY IN HEALTH CARE

Dr. Wei and Dr. Zhong, of Rosen College, note that the notion of hospitality is newly relevant for recipients and providers of health care services within the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The pandemic has disrupted the ordinary provision of health care services and required a change in the processes through which people would usually access and receive health care. It has

also heightened the anxiety within health care systems for both providers and users. This has meant the concept of hospitality—with its focus upon offering comfort to others—has particular significance for participants within the health care industry.

TELEMEDICINE

One of the key social developments related to minimizing risk through the pandemic has been the rapid transition to a digital world of work, education, entertainment, and personal service provision. Specifically, within the health care industry, the push towards digital telemedicine was accelerated by fears of contracting and transmitting the COVID-19 virus in health care settings. This resulted in the rapid adoption of telemedicine as a first line of health care provision, particularly in situations where it was appropriate to conduct consultations using digital video platforms.

Dr. Wei and Dr. Zhong point out that although telemedicine had been practiced prior to the pandemic—in circumstances where patients could not physically access a health care clinic—the pandemic significantly extended the role of telemedicine as an alternative service. It aimed to reduce the exposure of vulnerable people requiring health care services. While



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The concept of a warm welcome is second nature in service contexts but can be useful in other industries.



In this regard, the researchers defined two objectives for their research: firstly, to investigate how the patient's experience with telemedicine (both the technology and the clinician) impacted their sense of perceived competency and control (i.e., empowerment); and secondly, to study the influence of empowerment on the emotional outcomes of patients, in relation to factors such as anxiety and isolation reduction.

MODELLING HOSPITALITY IN TELEMEDICINE

Dr. Wei and Dr. Zhong built a model for their research drawing on four predictive factors of empowerment derived from the technology acceptance model (TAM), a theory which has been widely adopted to assess how users come to accept new technologies. These four factors were hypothesized to be important

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The COVID-19 pandemic has seen an increase in the provision and use of telemedicine.

there has been extensive research conducted on telemedicine, Dr. Wei and Dr. Zhong point out that there are two identifiable gaps within existing research.

Firstly, much of the extant research has focused on the technological aspects of telemedicine, such as technology adoption, rather than on how hospitable the doctor is within the telemedicine service. Secondly, the telemedicine research has focused on assessing clinical outcomes and customer satisfaction, rather than assessing emotional outcomes relating to the patient-doctor interaction. Given the broader context of emotional distress brought about by the pandemic, the importance of emotional outcomes in telemedicine consultations is an important area for research. Dr. Wei and Dr. Zhong therefore researched people's affective outcomes as a reflection of hospitable interactions, while also focusing on the role of hospitable services in telemedicine health care settings.

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EMPOWERMENT THEORY

One of the key impacts of the pandemic according to Dr. Wei and Dr. Zhong is that it has deprived people of a sense of control, while leaving people feeling less empowered



The technology acceptance model helps to assess how users come to accept new technologies.

than they ordinarily would. This has notably been the case given quarantine and social isolation requirements through the pandemic, which have also made it difficult for people requiring medical consultations to access these services in person. In undertaking their research on the role of hospitality in telemedicine, the research team thus decided to incorporate empowerment theory. This theory was chosen to better understand how telemedicine as a process empowers users to overcome some of the emotional challenges imposed by the pandemic.

in influencing the empowerment of patients utilizing telemedicine. These factors included: perceived usefulness of telemedicine; perceived ease of use; convenience in relation to time and place when using the technology; and technical adequacy, referring to the audio clarity and the image resolution within the telemedicine system.

It was hypothesized that these factors would impact patients' perceived competence and perceived control. It was further hypothesized that the reliability, responsiveness, assurance,



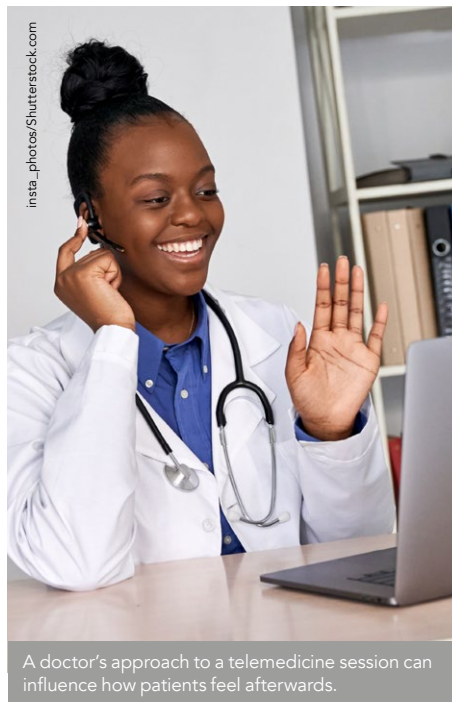
During the pandemic, many people have felt isolated and experienced anxiety.

and empathy shown by the doctor during the telemedicine consultation would impact positively on the patients' perceived competence and perceived control. Extending the hypotheses evaluated in the study further, the researchers tested whether the perceived competence and perceived control gained by a patient during the telemedicine consultation impacted positively on both isolation reduction and anxiety reduction.

METHODOLOGY

For the research study, evaluations were made of patient–clinician interactions within video–audio-based telemedicine using quantitative research methodologies, including an online questionnaire. Research participants were recruited through Amazon Mechanical Turk. Research examining data quality obtained through this platform has previously shown the data quality to be as reliable as that of other online platforms. The research was conducted over a three-day period targeting participants who had made use of video–audio telemedicine consultations in the preceding three months. A total of 499 responses were collected and out of these, 409 responses were considered usable for the purposes of the study. About half of the research participants held a four-year bachelor's degree and about half were in the 26-to-40-year age range. Slightly more than half of the respondents were male and 62% were Caucasian.

To test the impact of the human–technology and human–human interaction in relation to



A doctor's approach to a telemedicine session can influence how patients feel afterwards.

the empowerment of users of telemedicine, the researchers analyzed the data using a variety of 'regression analyses' statistical techniques. These helped to refine the models the researchers used, and to ensure the factors they assessed were able to actively explain variations in perceived competency and perceived control.

The model utilized to assess the impact of the human–technology interactions, using the four factors—perceived technology usefulness, ease of use, convenience, and

adequacy—was statistically significant, even though all the hypotheses relating to this model were not supported. Through the analyses, the model was refined and the factor relating to 'technical adequacy' was excluded. This three-factor model predicted 55% of perceived control, with perceived usefulness carrying the strongest weight, followed by convenience and ease of use.

The model to assess the impact of human–human interaction on empowerment was also analyzed using multiple regression analysis statistical techniques. This model was adjusted to exclude 'assurance' as a factor. The results indicated that the model was statistically significant, and the factors used successfully explained about 43% of the variance, with 'reliability' the strongest factor followed by 'empathy' and 'responsiveness'.

TELEMEDICINE OUTCOMES

The results of the study show that perceived competence and perceived control are significant predictors of both isolation reduction and anxiety reduction. The results further suggest that telemedicine technology empowers patients by providing them with a sense of control and competence in managing their health, through the difficulties of the pandemic. An analysis of the results also suggests that patients are pragmatic in their approach to this technology, with most respondents rating perceived usefulness, convenience, and technical adequacy as making the greatest difference to their sense of competence and control.

These research findings are highly valuable in providing objective scientific evidence to guide service providers and users of telemedicine in countering the stress involved in accessing health care through a pandemic. The results also affirm the importance of hospitality factors in the emotional outcomes of users of telemedicine, in relation to the patients' perceived competence and control. Patients' emotional outcomes and sense of empowerment were impacted by the doctor's understanding of the patient's needs, communication of reliable diagnostic information, empathy for the patient's concerns and feelings, and ability to respond in a timely manner.

RESEARCHERS IN FOCUS

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Dr. Wei and Dr. Zhong assess the outcomes of telemedicine during the COVID-19 pandemic, by applying the principles of hospitality.

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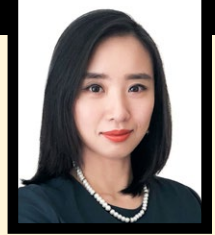
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PERSONAL RESPONSE

Do the hospitality factors identified as important in this research study for positive telemedicine outcomes also apply to traditional in-person healthcare service interactions?

“ I believe they do, especially during the current pandemic situation and in the post-COVID era. The COVID-19 pandemic has posed unprecedented challenges for people all over the world. Patients are more eager than ever to seek humane help provided by health care organizations. The doctor–patient relationship, including how trustworthy and responsive the doctor is and how sympathetic they are toward patients’ feelings and opinions, can make patients feel more empowered and less isolated and anxious. There is thus a huge potential for health care institutions to partner with hospitality professionals to offer training and innovative programs. ”

Dr. Wei Wei



Dr. Wei is an associate professor at the Rosen College. Dr. Wei’s research interests include consumer behavior and psychology with a focus on consumer-to-consumer interactions, consumer engagement behavior, and consumer experience with emerging technologies. Dr. Wei received her Ph.D. degree and Master’s degree in Hospitality and Tourism Management from Purdue University, U.S.A. She also received her Bachelor of Science degree in Tourism Management from Northwest University, China.

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GOING 'ABOVE AND BEYOND'

In stressful customer interactions



Rosen College researchers Dr. Xiaoxiao Fu and Dr. Yucheng Wang, along with a collaborator, have undertaken vital research to identify critical factors which heighten employee stress within the hospitality industry. Their research focuses specifically on the stresses associated with 'boundary-spanning' roles, where an employee is required to meet the expectations of both the organization and the customer. The research team go beyond previous attempts at understanding stress, utilizing motivational and emotional theories to shed new light on the nuances of hospitality stress. They also identify stress-protective factors that managers can leverage to reduce the negative impact of stress and motivate employees to go 'above and beyond' in their customer service.

Great customer service lies at the heart of a successful hospitality business. But how do we equip managers and employees with the knowledge required to understand and influence positive customer interactions? How can managers encourage employees to go the extra mile in meeting the expectations of customers, particularly employees who are positioned in roles with high demands? How does stress impact an employee's customer service and job-related behaviors, especially in relation to boundary-spanning roles?

EMPLOYEE STRESS IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

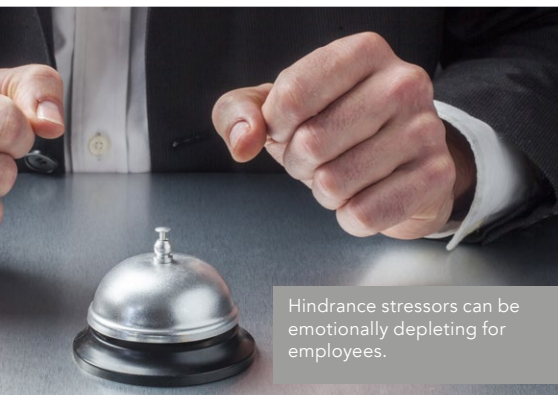
Dr. Xiaoxiao Fu, Dr. Yucheng Wang and their collaborator believe these research questions are vital in achieving service excellence within the hospitality industry. The researchers explain that "boundary-spanning" behaviors are those job-related behaviors that involve interactions between an internal employee who represents the organization and a person external to the organization. This specific point of interaction carries with it the potential for high stress encounters, as the employee is

required to respond in a way that mediates between the interests of both the company and the customer.

Successful boundary-spanning behavior for an employee within these positions requires responsiveness, courtesy, and flexibility; understanding customer requirements and expectations; dealing with complaints; influencing people within the organization to respond to customer complaints; and representing the organization positively, as an ambassador, while interacting with the customer.



There are numerous workplace stresses associated with 'boundary-spanning' roles.



Hindrance stressors can be emotionally depleting for employees.

In some instances, the customer's and the organization's expectations may be in conflict, which can in turn trigger "role conflict" for an employee. Dr. Fu and Dr. Wang say that role conflict can be classified as a "hindrance stressor" in the work environment, as it entails a demand or circumstance that inhibits the employee in achieving their goals. This stress may be heightened in situations where the employee does not have clarity in relation to expectations about how they should respond. This "role ambiguity", or confusion about how to respond and meet

expectations, can add to the already present occupational stress known to be associated with the hospitality industry, commonly resulting from long and irregular hours, and high workloads.

Extensive research on the negative impact of hindrance stressors within the work environment has shown that these kinds of stressors can be emotionally depleting for employees and negatively impact on work performance and engagement. By closely studying these hindrance stressors, the research team have shed vital light on possible routes towards mitigating the emotionally and motivationally detrimental impact of workplace stress.

EMOTIONS AND PERFORMANCE

Transactional stress theory proposes that negative stress arises when a person feels that they do not have the resources to meet the demands being made upon them. Good stress, on the other hand, arises at a level that challenges the employee but within a context where the employee

environment may be deemed positive emotions (such as enjoyment or interest), or negative emotions, such as anger or distress. These emotions in turn impact an employee's interactions with customers.

For this reason, frontline employees are often encouraged to display positive emotions when interacting with customers. Understanding the motivational factors that are likely to encourage employees to display positive emotions requires an understanding of motivational behavior. Intrinsic motivation theory links an individual's performance and motivation to their inner states in relation to individual personal goals and growth orientation. Intrinsic motivation has been linked to positive emotions, passion, and goal achievement. Prior research has also shown that intrinsic motivation can protect against stress and that the best frontline employees are often intrinsically motivated.

MODELLING PATHWAYS OF EXCELLENT PERFORMANCE

Dr. Fu and Dr. Wang developed an intricate

CHALLENGING STRESS, AT THE RIGHT LEVEL, CAN IMPACT POSITIVELY ON EMPLOYEES AND RESULT IN IMPROVED PERFORMANCE.

perceives themselves to be able to deal with the work demand. Challenging stress, at the right level, can impact positively on employees and result in improved performance. The researchers say there has not been an extensive amount of research conducted in relation to frontline employees within the hospitality industry. It is therefore important to assess whether the stress these employees face could be viewed as 'good stress', and whether this motivates and energizes an employee to deliver excellent service.

The researchers utilize affective events theory to propose that events within the work environment trigger internal feelings that directly influence an employee's workplace behaviors (broadly speaking, this may have an adverse effect on their engagement and performance). The emotions triggered by the work

model that would explain the influence of stress on the behaviors of frontline employees within boundary-spanning jobs. The research team wanted to understand how hindrance stressors, such as role conflict and role ambiguity, impact these behaviors, and whether there might be buffering or protective factors that could reduce this negative stress.

They therefore built a conceptual model, drawing on prior research, with key factors including role conflict, role ambiguity, and intrinsic motivation as important influences on boundary-spanning behaviors. They hypothesized that role conflict negatively influences emotions and positively influences negative emotions. They also hypothesized pathways of influence (both positive and negative) for role ambiguity on emotions, meaning uncertainty about a role would have a direct impact on employee emotion.



The model incorporated predictions about the influence that emotions (positive and negative) would have on boundary-spanning behaviors. In addition, they importantly hypothesized that heightened intrinsic motivation would reduce role conflict, role ambiguity, and negative emotions, and that intrinsic motivation would ultimately enhance positive emotions.

TESTING THE MODEL

To test the model, the researchers designed an online questionnaire which incorporated items from existing assessments of intrinsic motivation, role conflict, role ambiguity, emotions, and boundary-spanning behavior.

questionnaires were considered usable and included in the data analysis. The demographic composition of the study included a more or less equal split across male and female genders. Most had worked in their current position for three years or less and just over half of the respondents were aged between 25 and 34. A variety of roles were represented amongst the participants, including waiter/waitress, bartender, front desk clerks and receptionists, concierge, housekeepers, cashiers, supervisors, and duty managers.

The questionnaire data was analyzed using descriptive statistical techniques

stressors were also predictive of negative emotions for employees, and these negative emotions in turn had a negative impact on boundary-spanning behaviors. By contrast, when employees were experiencing positive emotions, this positively influenced boundary-spanning behaviors. The research also demonstrated that intrinsic motivation has an important buffering effect in relation to role conflict, role ambiguity, and negative emotions, and that intrinsic motivation enhances positive emotions. This research suggests that employees who have higher levels of intrinsic motivation seem better able to cope with difficulties within their roles, while still going beyond expectations to meet customer needs.

INTRINSIC MOTIVATION HAS AN IMPORTANT BUFFERING EFFECT IN RELATION TO ROLE CONFLICT, ROLE AMBIGUITY, AND NEGATIVE EMOTIONS.

They collected data using the Amazon Mechanical Turk platform (which has been shown to yield reliable samples for research studies). They tested out their questionnaire in a pilot study to assess the questionnaire items and dimensions for internal consistency and to confirm the validity of the measurement scales. This enabled them to refine the questionnaire before launching the main study.

A total of 680 participants completed the questionnaire, from which 557

and confirmatory factor analysis to verify the constructs and structural relationships of the factors included in the model. The scales were also statistically assessed for reliability and validity, and structural question modelling was applied to test the model.

The data analysis confirmed all the predictive relationships which the research team had hypothesized within the model. Hindrance stressors, specifically role conflict and role ambiguity, had a negative influence on the employee's positive emotions. These

This research has important implications for understanding the impact of emotions on employee functioning within the hospitality industry. The findings of this study can be used by management to design the work environment in a way that reduces negative stress, by reducing role ambiguity and role conflict. Providing training to employees on emotional regulation and management could also better equip employees in boundary-spanning roles to manage the inherent role stress. In addition, focusing on intrinsic motivation as a key attribute when interviewing and selecting employees for hospitality jobs, may help support employee resilience in boundary-spanning roles. In this way, Dr. Xiaoxiao Fu and Dr. Yucheng Wang assert that managers can empower employees to go above and beyond in delivering excellent service to customers.

RESEARCHERS IN FOCUS

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Dr. Xiaoxiao Fu and Dr. Youcheng Wang have researched factors which create stress in boundary-spanning hospitality roles.

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PERSONAL RESPONSE

How could managers reduce role conflict for hospitality employees in boundary-spanning roles?

// To help reduce role conflict for hospitality employees in boundary-spanning roles, hospitality organizations should aim to reduce stressors in the work environment. A well designed organizational structure and effective management intervention would be helpful to this end. Explicit job descriptions, effective supervisor-subordinate communication and employee feedback loops are all valid for helping buffer high-contact employees' role-related stress. Managers can also guide their employees to manage emotions at work. The greater effect of positive emotion indicates its ability to induce desirable employee behaviors, such as helping a colleague in need and/or keeping up with organizational goals. For example, role play training exposes employees to unexpected service encounters which may involve hindrance stressors and require emotional processing. //

Managers can empower employees.



Dr. Xiaoxiao Fu



Dr. Xiaoxiao Fu holds a Ph.D. degree in Tourism Management from Purdue University, a Master's degree in Marketing Science from Johns Hopkins University, and a Bachelor of Arts degree from China's Peking University. Prior to her academic appointments, Dr. Fu possessed several years of industry experience in market research and marketing communications.

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SUSTAINABILITY AND HOSPITALITY

People, planet and prosperity

An interview with Jared Meyers, Chairman, Legacy Vacation Resorts, a Certified B Corporation, by Alan Fyall.

WHEN DID YOU FIRST REALIZE THE POWER OF SUSTAINABILITY AS A FORCE FOR GOOD IN BUSINESS AND THE ROLE IT COULD PLAY IN IMPROVING THE HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM INDUSTRY?

As far back as I can remember, I've always thought of the concept of "givers" and "takers" in life but about ten years ago I really began to appreciate how one can live more harmoniously with the wider environment and start to address the imbalance between profit and power on the one hand, and a more holistic view to society and living on the other. The family business environment I grew up in showed me how singular focused decisions left collateral damage to other stakeholders. I learned of an industry rampant with greenwashing and quickly realized that there was more to sustainability than reduced towel washing and limiting the usage of plastic straws! Although tangible examples of sustainable practices, I've always viewed sustainability more holistically with it representing a move from shareholder primacy to stakeholder capitalism. I thus came to the conclusion that the power of business could be used to make a much more positive impact on

society in general and especially in hospitality and tourism than had previously been the case. As a veteran in the industry, I wished to be at the forefront of this movement; it being an agenda I believe in passionately.

WHAT OR WHO WERE THOSE EARLY INFLUENCERS THAT MADE SUCH A POSITIVE IMPACT ON YOU TO ENSURE SUSTAINABILITY WAS CENTRAL TO YOUR APPROACH TO BUSINESS?

I am a strong believer in lifelong learning so have been influenced by many people over the years. However, the influence on my life of the readings of Tao Te Ching is significant with the spiritual and interconnected views on life helping to shape how I see the world and how I can contribute to it being a better place. This learning impacted my view on the apparent endless pursuit of "more" with the realization that sensible and more equitable forms of growth were possible. More recent influence has come from Elon Musk who has proved that you can build a very successful business around solving a massive worldwide problem. Musk's ambition was not to sell more cars, but to accelerate the world's transition to sustainable energy. This is how

I like to think of my businesses; improving society through addressing problems that are real. Yvon Chouinard, founder of Patagonia, has been another strong influence in that he demonstrated how successful you can be with pure intentions. Patagonia is, for me and many others, the gold standard as to how business can (should) be done and how you can always strive to be better.

CLIMATE CHANGE HAS BEEN A TOPIC OF POLITICAL DEBATE IN FLORIDA FOR A NUMBER OF YEARS NOW. WHAT CLIMATE IMPACTS ARE YOU HAVING TO DEAL WITH AS A RESORT OWNER AND HOW SERIOUSLY DO YOU THINK THE INDUSTRY IS ACTING TO MITIGATE IMPACTS AND ADAPT TO CHANGE?

As an owner and operator of vacation resorts across four states, the impacts of climate change are very real. It is definitely warmer than before with this impacting when and for how long people stay outside. When the weather is too hot it limits choices for those on vacation. Similarly, in recent years we have experienced serious flooding, the increasing costs of hurricanes, and the environmental



Legacy Vacation Resorts is the only Certified B Corporation resort hospitality company in Florida to date.

damage caused by red tide in Florida and its negative economic impact on large parts of the hospitality and tourism industry. In Colorado and Nevada, the negative impacts are caused by extreme dry heat, droughts and wildfires with serious impacts on the quality of air we breathe posing problems for those on vacation. In the winter months the changing climate is contributing to a shortening of the ski season so it is not just the summer months where the challenges of climate change are real.

YOU ARE A FIRM ADVOCATE FOR CERTIFIED B CORPORATIONS. CAN YOU EXPLAIN WHAT THEY ARE, HOW THEY CONTRIBUTE TO BUSINESS SUCCESS, AND HOW THEY COMPLEMENT YOUR PASSION FOR SUSTAINABLE HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM?

Certified B Corporations fit perfectly with my view on how businesses should be run so I am a passionate believer in combining their “for profit with positive impact” orientation on the community and environment; this includes such important agendas as racial justice, climate action, free trade certification, and a more holistic means to conduct business. Contributing to charities, making a donation

or two are all good but B Corporations are committed to inclusive, equitable, and regenerative economic systems with the daily actions and thought processes of B Corporations leading to a better world.

LEGACY VACATION RESORTS IS THE ONLY CERTIFIED B CORPORATION RESORT HOSPITALITY COMPANY IN FLORIDA TO DATE. WHY DO YOU THINK THIS IS AND HOW DO YOU SEE THINGS CHANGING IN THE FUTURE? TO WHAT EXTENT DO YOU THINK CHANGE WILL BE DRIVEN BY NEWER, MORE SOCIALLY AND ENVIRONMENTALLY AWARE YOUNGER MARKETS?

When I first became aware of Certified B Corporations, I was shocked and disappointed that there were only 17 in Florida with none being in the hotel industry. This lack of awareness and engagement is not unique to the hospitality industry, however, in that it is evident across all industries. I’m not convinced

B Corporations are committed to inclusive, equitable, and regenerative economic systems.



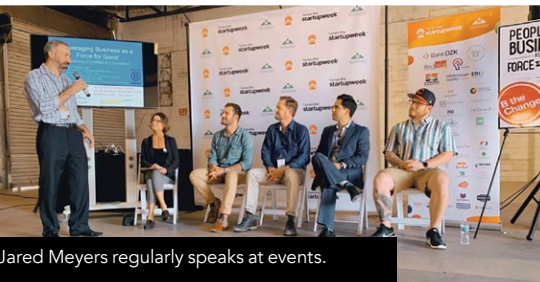
Toiletry dispensers reduce plastic waste.



A carbon bill showing the impact of a week's stay.

that this is solely a people problem as much as it is a system-wide problem with education of consumers and workers contributing to positive change. This is one of the reasons why we launched “Florida For Good” as a means to raise awareness and levels of engagement. The younger generation is clearly grasping the need for change, they see it with their values changing and for many, change can’t come fast enough. Despite Florida being the third most populous state in the country, people are largely unaware of what business really can do to change the world for the better. Hopefully “Florida For Good” and the younger generation can change things in the future.

Thought Leader



Jared Meyers regularly speaks at events.



Meyers is a firm advocate for Certified B Corps.



Conscious Capitalism encourages businesses to harness the power of capitalism for good.

WHAT HAVE BEEN YOUR BIGGEST CHALLENGES TO DATE IN IMPLEMENTING MORE SUSTAINABLE AND EQUITABLE APPROACHES TO BUSINESS?

The biggest high-level challenge remains the fact that so many people still believe in the outdated concept of profit maximization as the only way to proceed. The single pursuit of profit is wrong in that profit maximization at all costs represents a "source code" error. A better, more conscious form of capitalism is possible, one that provides greater equity and sharing, one that is more regenerative and inclusive, and one that can combine profit and positive impact.

A second challenge is the short-term nature of most businesses with the quarterly mindset frequently serving as a barrier to longer-term change and positive impact. Responsible behavior is challenging in such short-term timescales with government having a unique role to play in creating the conditions to incentivize longer-term good behavior.

The third challenge is our current scenario of what seem like constant crises with the industry seemingly in constant survival mode. Although understandable in a way, waiting for the right moment to change will not lead to change as another crisis will appear in the meantime. Businesses need to learn to be more resilient and be better prepared for the next crisis: as there will be one. As

bad as COVID-19 has been, it has exposed weaknesses in the industry and allowed us to see what we need to fortify in our foundation and what system changes are needed. The industry really does have an opportunity to learn from its past mistakes.

WHAT CAN STATE LEGISLATURES AND TOURISTS THEMSELVES DO TO ENCOURAGE THE HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM INDUSTRY TO BE A SUSTAINABLE FORCE FOR GOOD?

Although there is not much evidence to date of change, daily efforts to stimulate change at the state level suggest that change is possible with actions at the city and county levels showing real signs of progress. Evidence of sustainability action plans is good with scope to get more businesses on board in the future. A common set of metrics on a common scorecard that everyone can use would be useful as it will hopefully incentivise good, sustainable behaviors. The future really lies with more community forms of tourism where the benefits experienced by the local community are very clear, be they economic and/or non-economic. In addition, the benefits need to be shared more equitably; this being an area where government really can make a positive contribution.

COVID-19 HAS SERVED AS A MAJOR DISRUPTOR TO THE HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM INDUSTRY GLOBALLY OVER THE PAST 18 MONTHS. HOW



DO YOU THINK THE INDUSTRY MAY CHANGE FOR THE BETTER ONCE THE PANDEMIC EVENTUALLY PASSES?

The extent to which COVID-19 really will change the industry for the better remains to be seen. Who are we? How do we operate? How should we rebuild? These are all current and important questions. Returning to what we had before is not really an option, or it shouldn't be. We as an industry need to cope better if another pandemic comes along. The industry's weaknesses have been exposed with the impacts predictable. As an industry we need to be far more resilient next time with the entire system needing to be more adaptive. For example, at Legacy Vacation Resorts we feel strongly about paying a living wage. When COVID-19 struck, we had this advanced income program that we use to help our employees when they're in financial need. It's not a program that we designed from scratch, rather it is one that we learned about from Rhino Foods, the company that makes cookie dough for Ben & Jerry's Ice Cream. The program provides loaned funds to employees for emergency expenditures which is then repaid via automatic payroll deductions, thus building the borrower's credit score. Once the loan is paid off, the payroll deduction is continued and rolled into a savings account. In essence, they become invested employees throughout the whole process. To conclude, disruption has clearly occurred on a great



At a recent event.

scale. The future direction of the hospitality industry is in our hands.

WHAT ROLE DO YOU THINK EDUCATION CAN PLAY IN SHAPING THE "TOURISTS OF TOMORROW" AND ENSURING THAT FLORIDA IN PARTICULAR RETAINS A WORLD-LEADING INDUSTRY THAT IS MORE SUSTAINABLE AND EQUITABLE FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS?

Long term, education is the single most important contributor to change. The current generation is our future generation so we need new ideas and new ways to communicate the interconnectedness of the industry and how we can enhance its shared prosperity. Young people understand the need for change, they are our future business leaders and will bring with them their new values and understandings of our future world. The young generation are also future consumers so the way in which they spend their money will shape the future direction of businesses,

Disruption has clearly occurred on a great scale. The future direction of the hospitality industry is in our hands.

with their spend directly related to their values. The launch of Climate First Bank, the nation's first climate-focused bank which opened June 1, 2021, is a great example of a bank whose values are to come from its commitment to people, the planet and prosperity. To date, most banks use customers' dollars to invest in fossil fuels and other industries that are harming our planet. What people don't realize is almost every student is going to become an impact investor just by putting money into a bank in the future. Hence, when they think more holistically about our economy, they realize that there's all these individual decisions that they make that can promote a better future for the world ... and for our world of hospitality and tourism!



This interview was conducted by **Dr. Alan Fyall**, Visit Orlando Endowed Chair of Tourism Marketing and Associate Dean Academic Affairs, Rosen College of Hospitality Management, University of Central Florida.



Jared Meyers

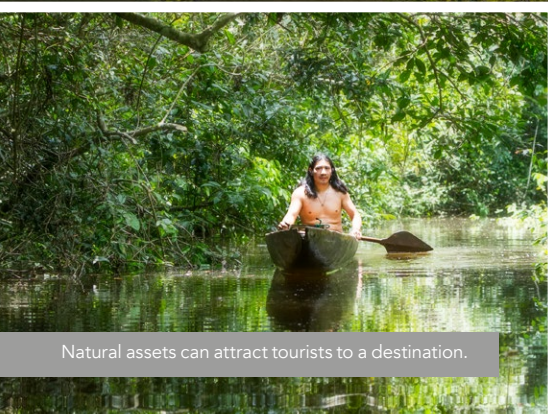
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Jared Meyers is a values-driven professional utilizing his time, resources and abilities to improve social, environmental and economic issues through Certified B Corporations and the Business for Good movement. Meyers owns two successful Florida-based B Corps, Legacy Vacation Resorts (LVR) and Salt Palm Development (SPD), and is also a Founding Director for Climate First Bank. Meyers co-founded the For Good Movement, a nonprofit that oversees Florida For Good and B Tourism. Florida For Good serves as a connector between B Corps, Conscious Capitalism, 1% for the Planet and like-minded organizations/networks. B Tourism serves a global network of Certified B Corporation travel and tourism companies as well as other conscious travel organizations taking collective action for the betterment of society and the health of our planet. The platform serves as a resource for the regenerative travel movement and to help travelers enjoy a vacation experience that understands interdependence and interconnectedness.

TOURISM COMPETITIVENESS

And human development



Natural assets can attract tourists to a destination.

What motivates tourists to choose one destination over another and how does tourism impact those who live in tourist areas? As more parts of the world begin to reopen after the devastating health, social, and economic impacts they have suffered due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the time is right to consider the link between tourism competitiveness and human development. New research led by Rosen College's Associate Dean Dr. Robertico Croes, Dr. Jorge Ridderstaat and Dr. Valeriya Shapoval presents a new theory and typology.

In its annual statistics for 2019—the year before the start of the global COVID-19 pandemic—the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) reported that tourism had experienced a tenth year of continued growth. With 1.5 billion international tourist arrivals worldwide, tourism contributed an estimated \$9 trillion a year

to the global economy and was one of the world's largest industries.

Fast forward to 2021, and tourism is one of the industries most affected by the global pandemic. The UNWTO now reports that international tourist arrivals fell by 72% between January and October 2020, due to countries' efforts to contain the virus, travel restrictions, and low traveller confidence. The loss of global revenues is estimated to be around \$1 trillion—ten times that experienced after the 2009 global economic crisis—and this has hit developing countries dependent on tourism particularly hard.

As the world prepares to rebuild its tourist economy, new research by Rosen College's Associate Dean, Dr. Robertico Croes, together with colleagues Dr. Jorge Ridderstaat and Dr. Valeriya Shapoval, is timely. Published in the prestigious international journal *Annals of Tourism Research*, their study "Extending tourism competitiveness to human development" looks at the links between tourism competitiveness and human development and presents a new "Tourism Competitiveness Theory Hypothesis" and typology model.

Taking a case study approach, the research focuses on 10 South American countries.

Ecuador

TOURISM COMPETITIVENESS

The initial literature review conducted by the Rosen College researchers reveals that tourism competitiveness has multiple definitions. They identify two main approaches: one which "focuses on internal attributes and abilities, aiming at enhancing residents' well-being" and another which "links tourism to market position revealed in larger numbers of tourist arrivals." Put simply, one approach prioritises the social, while the other is concerned with the economic.

The two approaches appear mutually exclusive and may have different outcomes. For example, the market approach may imply the pursuit of "monopolistic objectives" and "hamper the goal of well-being", whereas the internally focused approach "centres on productivity to enhance well-being and to pay higher wages."

Tourism competitiveness has many inputs and is a "multidimensional concept determined by economic, political, ecological and cultural variables." As a result, tourism competitiveness is inherently hard to measure and not all the variables carry the same weight. For example, a

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, tourism was one of the world's largest industries.



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be a catalyst for economic and social development, not least through the provision of employment. This is especially important in developing regions, where the UNWTO estimates that up to 40% of jobs are generated by tourism. However, as the researchers explain, human development is about more than income: it is also about capability and whether people have the resources to be able to choose from the opportunities available.

The Human Development Index (HDI) launched by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in 1990 studies data from 189 countries, allowing for the measurement of human development between countries and over time. The UN's approach shifts attention from inputs, such as incomes and possessions, to outcomes, such as the ability to live a good life. Various indicators are used to quantify how countries perform on each dimension. For example, in addition to economic measures and GDP, the HDI

productivity;" "resource and asset control which references product quality and derived memorable experiences;" "relativity, which is the ability to attract tourists over competing destinations;" and "dynamic processes, which implies that the product constantly evolves by building capabilities."

Dr. Croes, Dr. Ridderstaat and Dr. Shapoval argue that tourism competitiveness is conceptually linked to human development in a mutually beneficial way. The Tourism Competitiveness Theory Hypothesis they propose reflects the reciprocal nature of the relationship.

CASE STUDY APPROACH

The study examines two main questions to test the theory: what is the conceptual connection between tourism competitiveness and human development, and does the connection explain differences in tourism competitiveness over time? Taking a case study approach, the research focuses

TOURISM COMPETITIVENESS HAS MANY INPUTS AND IS A MULTIDIMENSIONAL CONCEPT DETERMINED BY ECONOMIC, POLITICAL, ECOLOGICAL AND CULTURAL VARIABLES.

considers literacy rates, life expectancy, and expected years of schooling.

The Rosen College researchers argue that the HDI approach is particularly helpful regarding tourism competitiveness. This is not least because tourism competitiveness provides the material resources to support human development by increasing people's choices and opportunities to realize healthy, fulfilling lives.

THE HYPOTHESIS

The study redefines tourism competitiveness as "the reconfiguration of resources, assets, and services toward a product that increases satisfying and memorable tourist experiences."

The hypothesis developed by the researchers proposes that tourism competitiveness has four characteristics: "long-term performance moored in

on 10 South American countries: Argentina, Bolivia, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Ecuador, Paraguay, Peru, Uruguay, and Venezuela.

As the researchers note, while the countries may have some regional affinities, they vary in terms of area, population, economy, per capita income, income inequality and tourism exports. In addition, though tourism represents one-third of the region's exports, "tourism output is modest and regional competition small". For example, South America's total revenue from tourism in 2018 was US \$30 billion compared to a revenue of US \$32 billion in the Caribbean.

Despite this, South America has significant tourist potential. For example, it possesses no fewer than 76 UNESCO world heritage sites and the Amazon rainforest is one of the most biodiverse environments in the world. The region has also in recent years demonstrated sustained economic growth

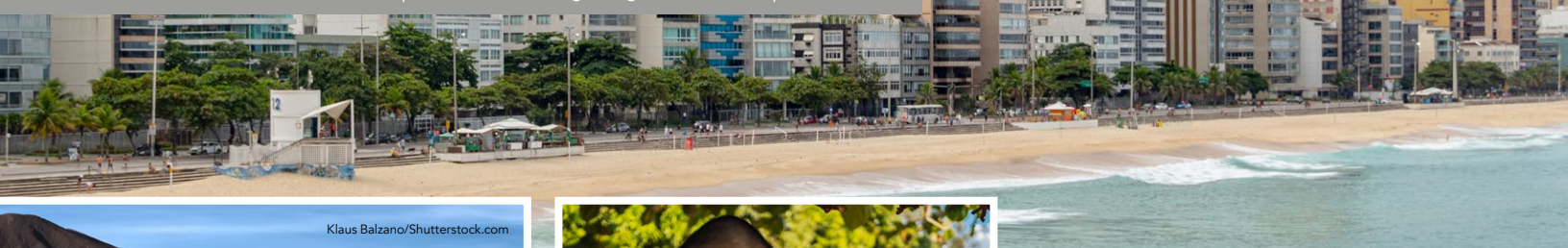
country's rich cultural heritage does not automatically result in the enhanced well-being of indigenous communities.

Dr. Croes, Dr. Ridderstaat and Dr. Shapoval argue that there are two main premises behind the tourism competitiveness construct. The first is that the tourism product relies on instrumental activities that have costs and benefits and result in revenue. The second is that the tourism product is built on a framework of limited, costly and depletable resources.

HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

It is widely recognised that tourism can

Brazil remained stable in human development while becoming stronger in tourism competitiveness.



Human development in Bolivia remained stable.



Argentina's tourism competitiveness has declined.

destination" between 1998–2006 to being a "vicious destination" more recently. Other countries showed less dramatic shifts, with Argentina regressing from a "virtuous destination" in the first part of the study to a "human development lopsided" destination in recent years. Bolivia and Colombia also regressed in tourism competitiveness, though human development remained stable. Only Brazil remained stable in human development while becoming stronger in tourism competitiveness.

TOURISM COMPETITIVENESS PROVIDES MATERIAL RESOURCES TO SUPPORT HUMAN DEVELOPMENT BY EXPANDING CHOICES AND OPPORTUNITIES TO REALIZE A HEALTHY, FULFILLING LIFE.

and reductions in income inequality, though a quarter of the population remains poor.

Using data covering the period 1998–2014 from various sources—including the World Economic Forum, United Nations and World Bank—the researchers conducted an in-depth analysis using sophisticated statistical techniques to compare tourism performance and identify patterns across the 10 sample countries.

The researchers then designed a typology model identifying four distinct country behaviours, highlighting the way tourism competitiveness and human development are linked. The types identified are "virtuous," meaning good tourism competitiveness enhances human development, which further boosts tourism competitiveness in turn; "vicious," meaning weak tourism competitiveness hampers human development, which weakens tourism competitiveness yet further; "tourism competitiveness lopsided," meaning strong tourism competitiveness is combined with weak human development; and "human

development lopsided," meaning strong human development coupled with weak tourism competitiveness.

FINDINGS

The majority of the 10 countries were found to be either in the "human development lopsided" or "vicious" destination categories. According to the researchers, these findings suggest that in these destinations tourism competitiveness has been relatively depressed, or the countries have not made tourism development a priority.

Another pattern identified in the research was that few countries stayed in the same category over time. The exceptions were Ecuador, which stayed in the "virtuous" quadrant, and Chile, Paraguay and Uruguay, which stayed in the "human development lopsided" category for the whole research period.

The study found that most countries moved from one category to another, regressing or progressing through time. For example, Venezuela regressed from being a "virtuous

WIDER IMPLICATIONS

This latest research from Rosen College researchers brings the competitiveness and capabilities concepts together in the formulation of a new Tourism Competitiveness Theory Hypothesis. The study finds: "Tourism growth resulting from arrivals and receipts seems to expand capabilities directly, suggesting that as average receipts increase, the population seems to have higher commands of resources (health and education), which in turn enhances tourism performance."

The research suggests further that while human development significantly affects tourism competitiveness, tourism competitiveness only partially affects human development. The report recommends that countries should strive to deepen the links between tourism and human development and recognise that they are mutually reinforcing and interdependent.

Though focused on South America, the study's recommendations are of wider global interest. In particular, it suggests that national tourism strategies should seek to promote more arrivals and higher tourism revenues, in order to benefit household as well as government revenues. In addition, strategies should be less concerned with the amount of government revenue raised, and more concerned with how revenues are used to benefit human development, particularly health.

RESEARCHERS IN FOCUS

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Dr. Robertico Croes, Dr. Jorge Ridderstaat and Dr. Valeriya Shapoval outline a new theory to assess the relationship between tourism competitiveness and human development.

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PERSONAL RESPONSE

Though it focused on pre-pandemic statistics, in highlighting the link between tourism competitiveness and human development your research is particularly timely as countries seek to rebuild their economies. What is the most important finding from your research that might help them?

“The pandemic pressed poverty to unprecedented levels in Latin America and developing countries, reversing years of human development progress. Tourism development can provide resources to stimulate human development, but the critical task is how governments prioritize and are able in making use of those resources to expand opportunities and choices for people to lead the lives that they value in a sustainable way.”



Dr. Robertico Croes



Dr. Robertico Croes is Associate Dean of Research & Administration, Director of the Dick Pope Sr. Institute for Tourism Studies, and Professor at the Rosen College. He recently published his fourth book, titled *Tourism Management in Warm-water Island Destinations*, and his fifth book, *Small Island and Small Destination Tourism*, is forthcoming in December 2021.

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Dr. Jorge Ridderstaat is currently an Assistant Professor at the University of Central Florida, specifically at the Rosen College of Hospitality Management. Previously, Dr. Ridderstaat worked for some 20 years at the Central Bank of Aruba (CBA), first as an economist at the Economic Policy Unit, and in the last eight years as the Manager of the Research Department. In the latter function, he directed and guided the Research Department with the mission to support the policies of the CBA.

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Dr. Valeriya Shapoval



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VALUING THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF HARMFUL ALGAE BLOOMS

Ecological disturbances can impact several ecosystem services, including cultural services such as outdoor recreation opportunities. In Florida, one ecological disturbance that is negatively impacting recreation is the occurrence of harmful algae blooms. In recent work, Dr. Sergio Alvarez at UCF Rosen College of Hospitality Management has assessed the impact that harmful algae blooms have on human wellbeing by using random utility models to estimate changes in the value of recreation in coastal ecosystems resulting from these blooms. The results indicate that harmful algae blooms, which reduced boating access between June and September 2018, may have resulted in losses of up to \$3 million in Lee County alone.

Clean water is important for coastal communities. Not only does it have a direct impact on health and the environment, but it is also critical for tourism and driving local economies. In recent years, warmer temperatures and nutrient pollution have led to an increase in the frequency and severity of eutrophication—a process where a water body becomes overgrown with microscopic plant life as a result of excess nutrients—and harmful algae blooms (HABs). Both eutrophication and HABs are harming tourism and social wellbeing in numerous waterfront communities.

Coastal areas are incredibly diverse and provide a whole suite of ecosystem services that are important at the environmental, economic, social, cultural, and recreational levels for many stakeholders and economic sectors. This includes fisheries, marine transportation and ports, and tourism. Aside from providing a wide range of services, coastal ecosystems also contribute to social wellbeing.

RECREATIONAL WATERWAYS

In Florida, one important ecosystem service that coastal ecosystems provide is the recreational use of waterways and, in particular, services related to recreational boating.

Recreational boating is a vital cultural service and a valuable component of ecosystem services more generally in Florida. For example, in 2017, of the 12 million registered recreational boats in the United States, nearly 1 million of them were registered in Florida. HABs lead to site closures which can have negative impacts on recreational boating and the local economy.

Dr. Sergio Alvarez is a natural resource economist at UCF Rosen College of Hospitality Management. His research examines how natural resources and the environment contribute to human wellbeing by focusing on ecosystem services such as food, recreation, and protection from natural and man-made hazards. In a recently published article, Dr.

Alvarez and colleagues used a random utility model of recreational boating choices to simulate changes in the value of cultural ecosystem services provided by recreation as a result of HABs in coastal areas in Lee County, Florida. This research provides a valuable insight into the impact that ecological disturbances are having on recreational areas and local economies.

THE IMPACT OF HARMFUL ALGAE BLOOMS IN LEE COUNTY

HABs in Lee County are well understood and originate in the nutrient-rich waters of Lake Okeechobee. From there, they



The frequency and severity of harmful algae blooms are only expected to increase in the future.



Harmful algae blooms can kill large numbers of fish and other sea life.

Recreational boating is a valuable component of ecosystem services in Florida.



Recreational boating is a vital cultural service.

are transported via lake discharges to the Caloosahatchee River, where they then travel to the Gulf of Mexico. Once the blooms transition into saltwater, the bacteria's cell membranes become compromised, resulting in the death of the cells and the release of cyanotoxins into the water. As a result of this, the blooms that are observed in the Caloosahatchee River tend to dissipate as the river reaches the saltwater of the Gulf of Mexico.

The frequency and severity of these blooms are only expected to increase in the future which could have devastating impacts on Florida's tourism industry. Examples of this have already been observed. For example, in 2018 a significant cyanobacteria bloom

emerged in Lake Okeechobee, which spread to both the southeast and southwest coasts of Florida via the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee Rivers, respectively. This significantly impacted local economies and also had negative impacts on both public health and the environment. While the nature of HABs is well understood in Lee County, there is a notable absence of research quantifying the impact of these blooms on tourism and local economies. This study fills an important gap in this research at a time when the frequency of these blooms is only expected to increase.

RANDOM UTILITY MODELS

Dr. Alvarez and colleagues used a random utility model (RUM) of recreational boating

choices. They sought to assess how cultural ecosystem services related to recreation might be impacted by prolonged ecological disturbances caused by HABs. RUMs aim to model the choices of individuals from a set of alternatives and can be based on satisfaction or utility. In this type of study, utility refers to the perceived value associated with a particular good or service; this enables the researchers to relate individual preferences to economic costs in order to assign a financial value. In this work, the RUM was used to compute the value of changing site characteristics and this information was then used to estimate the value of access for available recreational boating sites in Lee County.

First, the researchers needed to understand boat users' choice in selecting areas for recreation. Available boat ramps for accessing waterways in Lee County were identified. Also, the researchers mapped the on-the-water destination sites that are used recreationally. Once identified, the location of the ramps with respect to other ramps was considered and some were aggregated as a single ramp if they

CLEAN WATER IS THE THREAD THAT TIES WATERFRONT COMMUNITIES TOGETHER, DRIVES THEIR ECONOMIES, PROVIDES QUALITY OF LIFE FOR RESIDENTS, AND A POSITIVE EXPERIENCE FOR VISITORS.

were particularly close together, as these would likely be affected similarly by HABs. In addition, the researchers calculated travel costs to each ramp which took into consideration parameters such as the driving time, launch fee, and bridge fee.

While it is assumed that a boater will choose a combination of a launch ramp and on-the-water destination, several factors could impact this choice and these needed to be taken into consideration. For example, the cost of traveling to the ramp and boating to the desired destination, as well as how the boaters view the quality of the recreation site, are all factors that should be considered. The researchers used this information to compute a daily cost in U.S. dollars for each ramp which was then used to estimate welfare losses should the ramp be closed due to HABs.

HABS LEAD TO LARGE ECONOMIC LOSSES

The research by Dr. Alvarez and colleagues demonstrates the impact that ecological disturbances can have on social wellbeing. As predicted, the results from this study demonstrate that the more popular ramps in Lee County have higher per choice occasion values, which means that the estimated values of these sites were higher than those that were less popular. Boaters were more likely to favor areas that had marine protected zones



LOSSES TO RECREATIONAL BOATING RESULTING FROM THE 2018 BLOOMS IN LEE COUNTY ARE ESTIMATED AT \$3.5 MILLION (2018 DOLLARS).

or conservation areas over those with artificial reefs or manatee zones, which were less likely to be chosen as on-the-water destinations. Boaters also preferred areas with deeper water

that were away from navigation aids as well as areas that were close to a ramp. Boaters were also more likely to choose areas that had low travel costs. However, when taking all this into consideration, all sites within Lee County had similar values per trip to the site.

Using this information, the researchers were able to predict the losses caused by HABs under several scenarios by predicting which ramps would be closed as HABs spread and how this would impact boat users' access. This model was used to estimate the losses that are likely to have occurred during the prolonged period of ecological disturbances caused by HABs in 2018. Using the information from the models, it can be estimated that reduced boating access due to HABs in 2018 may have caused losses of up to \$3 million in Lee County alone. While this is a significant loss to local communities, Dr. Alvarez and colleagues point out that this estimate only takes into account the loss of some ecosystem services arising from HABs and does not provide a complete picture. In reality, the losses are likely to be much higher as this estimate only looks at losses experienced by recreational boaters and not all users of the waterways.

Fisheries, marine transportation and ports are also affected by harmful algae blooms.



RESEARCHERS IN FOCUS

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Dr. Sergio Alvarez and colleagues have assessed the social and economic impacts of harmful algae blooms in Lee County, Florida.

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PERSONAL RESPONSE

How can this information be used by policy analysts to reduce the impact that harmful algae blooms have on boating access?

“ The economic loss estimate we developed in this study provides a metric of how much society loses as a result of HABs, and therefore indicates how much government agencies can justify spending to prevent, control or mitigate harmful algae blooms. For instance, this analysis indicates that government agencies could spend up to \$3 million to prevent, control, or mitigate HABs in Lee County alone, and these expenses would be justified from a cost-benefit perspective. ”

Dr. Sergio Alvarez



Dr. Sergio Alvarez is an Assistant Professor at the Rosen College of Hospitality Management and the Sustainable Coastal Systems Cluster at the University of Central Florida. He is an economist researching how natural resources and the environment contribute to human wellbeing through the provision of ecosystem services such as food, recreation, and protection from natural and man-made hazards.

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FROM BLOOM TO BUST

Harmful algae blooms and their impacts on the waterfront economy

The true costs of harmful algae blooms (HABs) and the mechanics that determine their socio-economic impacts are for the most part unknown. Florida's 2017–2019 red tide (*Karenia brevis*) bloom is a historical case study of the ever-growing threats to coastal welfare posed by HABs. A new research project at Rosen College of Hospitality Management has this at its heart. The central objective of the project is the identification of direct, indirect, and induced socio-economic impacts caused by the 2017–2019 *K. brevis* bloom in Florida.



Clean water is the thread that ties waterfront communities together, drives their economies, and provides a high quality of life for residents and an unforgettable experience for visitors. However, as human activities threaten the world's waterways in multiple ways, HAB events pose increasing biological and socio-economic risks. Nutrient runoff from streets, lawns, septic tanks, and farms flows into waterways and leads to eutrophication. In addition, climate change is leading to warmer water temperatures in the ocean and in other waterbodies. Independently, each of these factors is known to foster the growth of microorganisms that cause HABs. Together, they can provide highly suitable conditions for the occurrence of HABs, raising the prospect for a future where HAB events are more frequent and intense.

While shocks like hurricanes receive more attention, the "slow violence" of stressor events such as HABs may hold the answer to building resilient waterfront economies. The state of Florida has recently experienced several HABs, most notably outbreaks of red tide (*Karenia brevis*) and cyanobacteria (*Microcystis* spp., and *Anabaena* spp.), with recent *K. brevis* blooms lasting from October 2017 through February 2019. HABs have become a widespread environmental,

economic, and public health problem along numerous waterfront communities in Florida that are now having to live with massive fish kills and respiratory irritation caused by toxins released by the harmful algae.

While Florida's coastal communities have proven resilient to HABs in the past, these latest blooms appear to be larger, last longer,

and have more devastating impacts than previous events. In addition, HABs have become more frequent in recent years and threaten to become a chronic issue for many communities, not only in Florida, but across the world. Not surprisingly, the spread of these blooms has affected the tourism industry, which has a substantial impact on Florida's economy, since the 118.5 million people who visit Florida

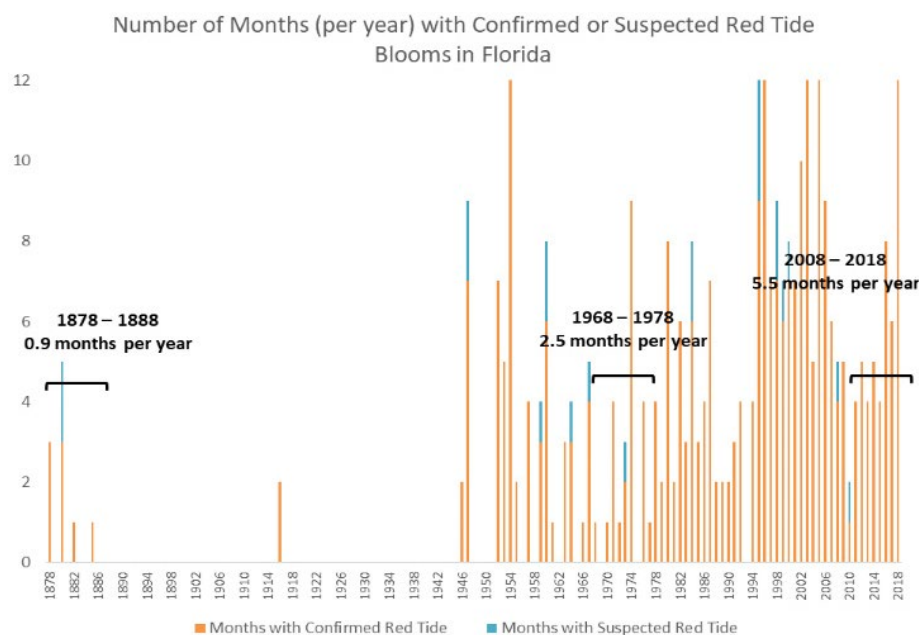


Figure 1. The number of months with documented *K. brevis* blooms in Florida has increased notably since record-keeping began in 1878. In the decade between 2008 and 2018, there were an average 5.5 months per year with reported blooms. Data published by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.



each year provide an infusion of \$111.7 billion to the state's economy.

These effects have been dramatic and while HABs are becoming more frequent and of longer duration, the economic impacts of these events have been under-studied, making it difficult to determine the true costs of HABs. Paradoxically, as public awareness of ongoing HAB events has increased—notably resulting in a beneficial push for intervention to prevent, mitigate, or eliminate bloom impacts—ultimately, this awareness may also induce changes in consumer behavior that risk the socio-economic wellbeing of the region. Thus, Gulf communities must find a balance to raise awareness, preparedness, and response to hazards without shocking their economies.

The 2017–2019 *K. brevis* HABs provided a worrisome picture of what this problem may look like in the future. In that time period, an unprecedented bloom of *K. brevis* moved into West Florida's beaches and waterways, significantly impacting local economies, public health, and the environment. The bloom was so severe that the Governor declared a state of

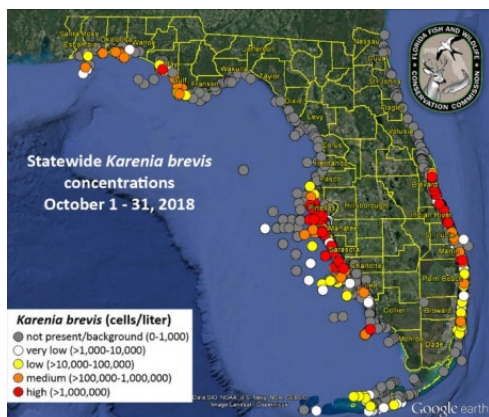


Figure 2. Snapshot of environmental monitoring for *K. brevis* during October 2018, at the peak of the 2017–2019 Florida red tide bloom. This historic bloom expanded beyond the traditional *K. brevis* range (Florida panhandle and Southwest Florida) and even reached multiple counties in Florida's Atlantic coast. Source: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.

emergency in Charlotte, Collier, Hillsborough, Lee, Manatee, Pinellas and Sarasota Counties to allow for additional state resources for response.

In this research project, the impact of this HAB is being evaluated at a county level to identify how consumption patterns change in counties when they are affected by HABs, relative to counties that are unaffected or marginally affected. Overall, through this research, a

quantitative framework will be developed to estimate the cost of the 2017–2019 red tide HAB. In addition, the project is also analyzing social media posts to explore how information flows may be playing a role in amplifying the economic impacts of red tide.

POLICY AND MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

The research will provide insights that may shape public and decision-maker opinions, and thus lead to policy changes and/or management improvements that are necessary to alleviate the burden on communities affected by HABs. Specifically, the findings of this research will inform discussions on the overall economic costs of the red tide blooms and hence the potential benefits of reducing the incidence and severity of these blooms. Specifically, the research findings will provide information that can be employed as one side of a benefit–cost equation when evaluating policies or programs to combat the effects of red tide blooms. Currently there is little information of this type available. Thus, this new information about the costs of red tide blooms may help answer questions such as, how much should society spend in ensuring these events are prevented or mitigated in the future? Similarly, by providing information on what economic sectors are most impacted by the red tide blooms, the findings may inform the targeting of strategies and policies to support these sectors and prevent bankruptcies or layoffs. Furthermore, by identifying the economic sectors that suffer the heaviest impacts from the red tide blooms, this information may also inform future research on the impacts to the workforce in these sectors.

In situations where HAB prevention and mitigation are not possible, the findings of this research will provide pathway models which impacted sectors and stakeholders can use as blueprints for socio-economic mitigation. To gain control of the narrative around *K. brevis* HABs, stakeholders can look to these pathways as frameworks for deploying information about the HAB that raises awareness without magnifying economic losses. Three main Product Milestones (M) will make up the output portfolio from this project:

M1 - econHABs Database: The initial phase of this project will result in the development of the three-part econHABs Panel Database. The Panel Database will include an assembled panel of gross sales for more than 80 economic

sectors across Florida's 67 counties, different types of HAB indicators or indices, indices for other hazards that may result in systematic variation in consumer behavior (such as tropical cyclones), and macro-economic indices (such as unemployment and consumer sentiment).

M2 - Model Results: The evaluation framework consisting of panel data regression models and simulation of these results with input–output modeling will provide reliable estimates of the direct, indirect, and induced economic losses caused by *K. brevis* blooms. These will be used to provide an assessment of the aggregated economic loss associated with the 2017–2019 *Karenia brevis* blooms in Florida for the following sectors: tourism, including hospitality and service; public health and related expenditures; and commercial fisheries.

M3 - Outreach and Education Materials: There are a number of potential end-users and stakeholders that this project seeks to reach. First, the research team will target policy and decision-makers in multiple organizations across all levels of government and civil society through publication in relevant magazines, speaking opportunities in multiple venues (such as the Governor's annual conference on tourism), and audiences or meetings with elected officials or supporting staff. The research team is also targeting the general public as an end-user, and to reach them the team will develop an interactive website that will include a GIS StoryMap and informational webpages that support K-12 teachers who are interested in bringing the topic of HABs into their classroom. The research community is the third stakeholder group, and to reach them the research team will develop an open-access research website where all data and results, as well as any publications resulting from this research, will be curated and made available to the public.

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ROSEN LIBRARY AND STARS: SHINING A LIGHT ON THE PAST

And illuminating the future of Hospitality & Tourism Industry Research

The Rosen College Library's print and electronic collections are rich and tailored to the college's unique programs and degrees, but that's just the start of what makes it unique. From access to materials both old and new, to reference support for researchers, to partnerships with industry organizations, to conducive spaces for work and study, the Rosen College Library is an integral part of the Rosen College's research mission and success.

A treasure trove of resources awaits the intrepid researcher who treks into the Universal Orlando Foundation Library, better known as the Rosen College Library. Located on the Rosen College of Hospitality Management's resort-style campus, in the heart of hospitality in Orlando, Florida, the library offers both hard copy and digital resources connected to Rosen College's vast research findings over the past two decades. Within the beautiful 9,000 square-foot facility are books, magazines, journals, videos, computers, comfortable seating, group study rooms, and individual research spaces. Skilled staff and librarians are also on hand to assist guests. The library, a branch within the larger University of Central Florida (UCF) Libraries system, not only provides resources in support of the ongoing research process—it also archives and facilitates access to research once it is produced. UCF has 13 colleges and Rosen College has a specific library for its disciplines.

Take for example the *Rosen Research Review* (RRR) magazine that you're reading now. The library archives past issues of RRR in its STARS institutional repository: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/rosen-research-review/>. What is STARS? The acronym stands for **S**howcase of **T**ext, **A**rchives, **R**esearch & **S**cholarship. It exists to publicize, disseminate, and provide ready access to works by, for, and about the University of Central Florida (UCF).

The STARS digital repository is administered by the UCF Libraries Digital Initiatives unit, including Interim Head of Technology Solutions & Digital Initiatives, Lee Dotson; Digital Collections Projects Coordinator, Kerri Bottorff; and Digital Production Coordinator, Page Curry. The Rosen College librarians have partnered with Ms. Dotson's unit to create digital collections containing both retrospectively scanned materials and born-digital materials. To date, Rosen College digital materials in STARS have been downloaded over 89,000 times, including over 28,000 just in the past year!

In STARS, researchers can freely access hospitality and tourism materials such as:

- Dick Pope Sr. Institute for Tourism Studies: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/dickpope-pubs> This collection of research consists of recent studies commissioned by public and private entities, especially along economic, environmental, quality-of-life, and sociological dimensions that impact the hospitality and tourism industry. The Institute, founded in 1979 and associated with the beginnings of UCF's hospitality program, utilizes the research and writing skills of many Rosen College faculty members.
- Rosen College Student Theses and Dissertations: https://stars.library.ucf.edu/studentscholar_rosen/ This collection houses the products of students who have successfully completed their undergraduate Honors, Master's, and Ph.D. degrees at Rosen. In these pages you'll find unique research from some of the future educators and leaders of the hospitality industry!
- Rosen College Faculty Scholarship and Creative Works: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/rosenscholar/> This collection highlights



The workspaces in the library are popular with students and faculty alike.



The Rosen College Library is much more than just a repository for books.

some recent Rosen College faculty member's scholarly articles. Short citations are usually supplemented by links to the original article or, in some cases, to the full text of the article.

- Harrison "Buzz" Price Papers: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/buzzprice/> This collection contains selected reports from one of the leading consultants for themed attractions and entertainment venues. Collections such as this one are made available through a partnership with UCF's Special Collections & University Archives department.

STARS also offers access to many other scholarly materials and collections. Take some time to explore STARS (<https://stars.library.ucf.edu>) and see what there is to enhance your life-long learning!

The Rosen College Library (<https://library.ucf.edu/rosen>) is not just an archive. Before the research creation process even begins, the Rosen College Library offers research assistance and access to specialized resources such as:

- Hospitality databases: <https://guides.ucf.edu/hospitalitydatabases>

[edu/hospitalitydatabases](https://guides.ucf.edu/hospitalitydatabases)

- Hospitality Research Guides: <https://guides.ucf.edu/rosen/guides>

The Guides, created and maintained by Rosen College Librarians Tim Bottorff and Judy Kuhns, can be accessed 24 hours a day, seven days a week, no matter where you are around the globe. They are good starting points on many topics and feature many free resources, in addition to some subscription-based collections for UCF researchers. The Rosen College Library also offers access to all of the UCF Libraries' (<https://library.ucf.edu>) online materials, including more than 400 databases with research articles, newspapers, data, and other information; a digital plethora of over 900,000 full-length ebooks; and more than 50,000 electronic journal and magazine subscriptions.

The staff at the Rosen College Library is well-trained and knowledgeable. They can assist researchers and industry partners in finding information on all facets of the hospitality industry, provide guidance on copyright and other scholarly concerns, and offer advice on research projects. The Rosen College librarians also provide dozens of library instruction sessions in hospitality classes each year, aimed at ensuring that Rosen College graduates enter the industry with excellent research, critical thinking, and communication skills.

The Rosen College Library's print, electronic, and video collections are rich and tailored to the college's unique programs and degrees. From hospitality management to restaurant management, lodging management to theme park and attractions management, event management to entertainment management, senior living management and tourism technology and analytics, if you're

seeking knowledge of the industry, you'll find it in the Rosen College Library!

For example, the Rosen College Library is a depository for United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) materials, a designation held by only six libraries in the United States. The UNWTO publications provide statistics and research on travel and tourism on a global scale. The Rosen College Library also partners with or purchases specialized materials from numerous local and national hospitality industry organizations, such as the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA), American Resort Development Association (ARDA), National Restaurant Association, U.S. Travel Association, Visit Florida, Visit Orlando, and many others.

The Rosen College Library collection is always growing and evolving. When the Rosen College added the unique Entertainment Management degree, the Rosen College Library acquired many new materials relating to the hospitality side of industries such as film, music, publishing, and theater. The Rosen College librarians also recently added a wealth of materials that will support the Rosen College's new Senior Living Management Bachelor's Degree program, launched in fall 2020.

Libraries have evolved beyond places to house hard copy books and images. They provide comfortable spaces for research and scholarly conversations, and they are vast repositories of resources that can expand the mind, boost business gains, and provide access to valuable historical data that impacts the future of the hospitality and tourism industry. The Rosen College Library aims to continue this evolution through its unique position in support for the teaching and research missions of the world-renowned Rosen College of Hospitality Management.



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ROSEN COLLEGE HOSTS FIVE IMPORTANT JOURNALS IN THE HOSPITALITY & TOURISM FIELD:

International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management communicates the latest developments and thinking on the management of hospitality and tourism businesses worldwide.

<http://emeraldgroupublishing.com/products/journals/journals.htm?id=ijchm>

Editor-in-Chief: Dr. Fevzi Okumus

Associate Editor: Dr. Marissa Orlowski

Assistant Editor: Dr. Mehmet Altin



Journal of Destination Marketing & Management seeks to develop a theoretical understanding of destination marketing and management by harnessing knowledge drawn from the full breadth of disciplinary approaches to the study of destinations.

www.journals.elsevier.com/journal-of-destination-marketing-and-management

Co-Editors: Dr. Alan Fyall, Dr. Brian Garrod and Dr. Youcheng Wang



Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights aims to enhance the ongoing conversation among hospitality and tourism practitioners, academics and professionals.

<http://emeraldgroupublishing.com/products/journals/journals.htm?id=jhti>



Journal of Themed Experience and Attractions Studies is the first scholarly journal dedicated to research, scholarship and pedagogy in the academic disciplines relevant to the planning, design, operation, and analysis of themed experience and attractions.

<https://stars.library.ucf.edu/jteas/>

Editor-in-Chief: Dr. Ady Milman



International Journal of Hospitality Management discusses major trends and developments in a variety of disciplines as they apply to the hospitality industry.

www.journals.elsevier.com/international-journal-of-hospitality-management

Editor-in-Chief: Dr. Manuel Rivera
Managing Editor: Dr. Valeriya Shapoval



DICK POPE SR. INSTITUTE FOR TOURISM STUDIES



The Dick Pope Sr. Institute for Tourism Studies is based at the University of Central Florida.

In 1979, the University of Central Florida established the Dick Pope Sr. Institute for Tourism Studies (DPI), after receiving \$25,000 from the Florida Public Relations Association (FPRA), Orange Blossom Chapter. The name honors the late Dick Pope Sr., the former owner of Cypress Gardens, one of Florida's first modern-day attractions, and the first commercial tourist entrepreneur in Florida.

The Institute was established for the purpose of (1) conducting proprietary and public domain research, (2) promulgating information to the public at large about the contributions of the hospitality and tourism industry, especially along economic, sociological, environmental, and quality-of-life dimensions, and (3) carrying out credit and non-credit educational activities.

Since 2005, DPI has secured over \$1.4 million in contracts and grants for research purposes.

Its extensive client list includes:

- categorical sampling*
- destination management organizations*
- convention and visitor bureaus*
- hotels*
- hospitals*
- vacation homes*
- restaurants*
- theme parks*

DPI has also played a significant role in facilitating over \$4 million in non-credit educational programs with international partners. UCF's Rosen College doctoral students are extraordinarily essential to the Institute's ability to meet its objectives and its commitments. In addition, contracts and grants funded through DPI have been an invaluable source of external funds to support graduate assistantships for the doctoral students.

APPLIED INNOVATIVE RESEARCH

The Dick Pope Sr. Institute for Tourism Studies is the intelligent choice for private and public domain hospitality research, both domestically and abroad. We have conducted research for organizations in countries as widespread as Australia, Canada, Japan, New Zealand, South Africa, Ecuador, Aruba and South Korea.

IMPROVING THE QUALITY OF TOURISM

We are dedicated to increasing the benefits of tourism through research, public awareness and education. We invite you to visit the Dick Pope Sr. Institute for Tourism Studies digital collection to access our portfolio of research, publications, and white paper series. You may access the digital collection via this link: <https://stars.library.ucf.edu/dickpopeinstitute/>



Doctoral students from UCF's Rosen College contribute to the research at DPI.



Rosen College of Hospitality Management, is among the top five hospitality and tourism colleges.

In 1983, the Institute's advisory board successfully lobbied the Florida University System's Board of Regents and created the Hospitality Management undergraduate degree program at UCF. Its successor, UCF Rosen College of Hospitality Management, is among the top five hospitality and tourism colleges in the world with five undergraduate degrees, a master's degree and a Ph.D. program in hospitality management.

HOUSEHOLDS' NET WEALTH AS A DETERMINANT OF TOURISM DEMAND CYCLES

Dr. Jorge Ridderstaat from Rosen College of Hospitality Management introduces the concept of net financial wealth as a determinant of tourism demand. His investigation provides theoretical propositions for policymakers by studying how cycles of household net finances affect tourism demand. He focuses on three destinations: Aruba, Barbados, and Jamaica. The findings reveal that the influence of net financial wealth on tourism demand is context-based and is specific to households, cycles, and countries, across both time and probability dimensions.

Tourism accounts for around 10% of the world's gross domestic product (GDP) and approximately 10% of total global employment, making it an important source of economic activity. Understanding tourism demand is vital if tourism-related businesses are to succeed. Anticipating this demand requires a knowledge of the factors driving tourist activity. Arrivals and expenditure are often used as measures of tourism demand. Moreover, income has been deemed a crucial determinant, with a higher income in the tourists' country of origin leading to a higher demand for travel and tourism.

Dr. Jorge Ridderstaat from Rosen College of Hospitality Management has carried out an extensive review of the use of income as an indicator for tourist demand. His investigation has revealed that the relationship between income and consumption does not always hold and can be distorted by fluctuations in consumers' wealth, while applied proxies are not always useful. In response to these shortcomings, Dr. Ridderstaat investigates the effect of cycles of US households' net

financial position on US tourism demand and proposes net financial wealth as a key determinant of tourism demand.

TOURISM DEMAND CYCLES

During periods of economic uncertainty, households may save more of their income and reduce expenditure on non-essential goods and services. Likewise, tourists will tend to sacrifice leisure travel and holiday closer to home. Alternatively, they may forgo secondary holidays so that they can have their main vacation. These dynamics in tourism demand are short-run changes, with contraction periods when tourism demand underperforms its long-term trend and expansion periods when it overperforms. Contraction periods can bring about stalled tourist arrivals, macroeconomic imbalances, declining room capacity, and the offer of incentives to invest in new tourism development. Monitoring these tourist demand cycles is critical to planning and developing appropriate management strategies and avoiding these risks.

INCOME AS INDICATOR

Income has traditionally been considered a

key determinant of tourism demand, with researchers preferring to use approximations of national income (in terms of per capita income and the real GDP) rather than personal income proxies. Temporary fluctuations in the economy's performance, producing deviations from the long-term growth trend—known as business cycles—have also been used as indicators of tourism demand.

Approximating national income, however, has its limitations. Firstly, national accounting methodology is used to assess the economic development of nations. The latter is not always based on observed values and can include estimates. Secondly, consumers' income sources such as job creation and wage developments may not align with the GDP. This disconnect with the GDP can distort results determined from the relationship between business cycles and tourism demand. Thirdly, the annual and quarterly publishing of the GDP makes it difficult to assess more frequent (e.g., monthly) short-term effects of business cycles.

Dr. Ridderstaat explains how using income as an indicator of tourism demand can be



Dr. Ridderstaat examines how households' net wealth impacts their likelihood to travel.



Barbados has three large markets: the UK, US, and Canada.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN INCOME AND CONSUMPTION DOES NOT ALWAYS HOLD AND CAN BE DISTORTED BY FLUCTUATIONS IN CONSUMERS' WEALTH.

deceiving, as the relationship between income and consumption does not always work because of their connection with a third factor: wealth. Tourism literature rarely recognizes the effect of wealth on tourism demand. Those who do only consider gross wealth and ignore the effects of consumers' liabilities on tourism demand. They also assume that tourists are homogenous, in that one size fits all and ignore the possibility of consumers making different decisions.

NET FINANCIAL WEALTH

Net wealth is the difference between a household's assets, such as a house or savings account, and liabilities, such as mortgages or credit card loans. It is used to describe a household's financial position. Financial wealth is one reason why income and consumption are not necessarily connected. Increased consumption can result from running down on assets or increasing debt. Similarly, consumption can be reduced by saving more and adding to assets.

During uncertain economic periods, households tend to increase their saving rate as there is a greater risk of job

loss. They will often curtail and defer expenditure on non-essential goods and services until the economy improves. These variations in consumers' wealth can distort the connection between income and tourism demand. The latter suggests that households' net financial wealth developments may be a better indicator of tourism demand than income.

METHODOLOGY

Based on their income, three types of households are considered in this study: the bottom-third income earners, referred to as the Commoners; the middle-third income earners, the Intermediates; and the top-third income earners, the Capstoners. Compared to their situation a year earlier, the households perceive that either they are now better off, denoted as 'Waxed'; their financial state is the same and denoted as 'Allied'; or they are now worse off, denoted as 'Waned'.

These income classifications and perceptions of financial wealth produce nine different types of households: Waxed Capstoners, Allied Capstoners, Waned Capstoners,

Waxed Intermediates, Allied Intermediates, Waned Intermediates, Waxed Commoners, Allied Commoners and Waned Commoners. To examine the effect of cycles of US households' net financial position on the flows of US tourism demand, this study determines the likelihood and time horizon of these nine households to travel to Aruba, Barbados, and Jamaica.

DESTINATIONS

Dr. Ridderstaat selected the destinations using the Structured Focused Comparison case-study approach. The three islands are similar because they are all Small Island Developing States with specific social, economic, and environmental vulnerabilities. They are also tourism-dependent destinations located in the Caribbean. Their differences include the islands' travel distance from the United States, with Jamaica geographically closest (560 miles), followed by Aruba (1,130 miles) and Barbados (1,596 miles). The islands also differ in terms of their exchange rate systems. Both Aruba and Barbados have a fixed exchange rate system, while Jamaica's is flexible. Aruba and Jamaica cater mainly



to the US market, while Barbados has three large markets: the UK, US, and Canada.

DATA COLLECTION

Monthly observations were collected for the 23 years from January 1996–December 2018. Data for the nine households were collected using the Surveys of Consumers conducted by the University of Michigan. The survey sample represented all American households, excluding Alaska and Hawaii. Tourism demand data for the three islands

run cycle equilibrium relationship between tourism demand and those of the nine different households. He used combinatorial regression to measure the relationship between variables and determine whether the households' financial position cycles affect tourism demand cycles. Finally, he applied a logistic regression approach—a form of regression with a binary dependent variable—to the tourism demand cycles with the expansion phases coded as one and the contraction phases coded as zero. Using this

contraction stage. Interestingly, neither Allied nor Waned Capstoners affected the expansion stage of the US tourism demand cycle for any of the destinations. They may prefer other destinations, or wealth effects may not alter their tourism consumption. The results are also country-specific, which may well reflect the unique characteristics of the islands.

Dr. Ridderstaat notes that these contextual conditions echo the heterogeneity in consumers' decisions, indicating that a one-size-fits-all approach to understanding the effect of wealth position perceptions on US tourism demand cycles may not be possible for these destinations. A circumstantial approach may be required instead.

IMPLICATIONS

Dr. Ridderstaat's research reveals that the influence of net financial wealth on tourism demand is context-based and specific to households, cycles, and countries, across both time and probability dimensions. Context matters for policymaking. The goal should be to prolong expansion periods of tourism demand, thus shortening the contraction periods. He recommends that policymakers steer US tourism demand for their destination by targeting households based on their probabilities and reaction periods. Destinations should, therefore, follow a diagnostic approach based on what works for them rather than automatically pursuing best practice approaches such as targeting high-income tourists.

THE GOAL SHOULD BE TO PROLONG EXPANSION PERIODS OF TOURISM DEMAND, THUS SHORTENING THE CONTRACTION PERIODS.

came from the socioeconomic data collected by their central banks.

ANALYSIS

Dr. Ridderstaat used the unobserved components model (UCM) to decompose the time series into trend, seasonal, cyclical, and irregular components. He standardized the resulting cycles and completed a statistical method called a unit root test to avoid spurious or regression results.

Then he tested for co-integration to establish any correlation between the time series and determine if there was a long-

logistic regression approach, he determined the influence of the household financial positions on tourism demand and estimated the probability of each of the nine household groups affecting tourism demand cycles.

FINDINGS

Dr. Ridderstaat found that the results differed between periods of expansion and contraction in tourism demand cycles. Furthermore, only particular households influenced the US tourism demand cycle for the destinations. Five of the nine households could become tourists in the expansion stage, while six of the nine households could become tourists in the

RESEARCHERS IN FOCUS

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Dr. Jorge Ridderstaat assesses net financial wealth as a determinant of tourism demand.

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PERSONAL RESPONSE

Why do you think that net financial wealth has not been considered as an indicator of tourism demand prior to your research?

// I think it has to do with two factors: (1) lack of knowledge that this indicator exists, and (2) researchers are not critical enough and often follow the standard way of using income as an indicator. Researchers may not always be aware that such an indicator exists, and to give them some credit, it may also be possible that such an indicator may likely not be available for all countries in the world. However, researchers often may not be critical enough and may choose the road of least resistance by just using conventional methods. //

Dr. Jorge Ridderstaat



Dr. Jorge Ridderstaat is currently an Assistant Professor at the University of Central Florida, specifically at the Rosen College of Hospitality Management.

Previously, Dr. Ridderstaat worked for some 20 years at the Central Bank of Aruba (CBA), first as an economist at the Economic Policy Unit, and in the last eight years as the Manager of the Research Department. In the latter function, he directed and guided the Research Department with the mission to support the policies of the CBA.

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THE POWER OF E-COMMERCE

In the hotel industry

With continuous developments in information technology leading to increasingly sophisticated and fickle customers, the hotel industry is under pressure to invest in e-commerce capabilities. But is it a worthwhile investment or are loyalty programs enough to drive profitable repeat visits? Dr. Nan Hua, Dr. Wei Wei, and Dr. Ahmet Ozturk from the Rosen College of Hospitality Management, University of Central Florida, investigate the synergy between e-commerce, customer loyalty programs, and hotel operating performance.

Over the last few decades, there have been momentous shifts in the way the hotel industry conducts its business, largely because of developments in information technology (IT). The industry saw the advent of computerised network systems and digital distribution channels in the 1960s, which led to a heavy reliance upon travel agencies. Today, it must embrace a digital landscape of branded websites, booking engines, online travel agents, social media, and multiple device use.

Customers today are better informed and more sophisticated in their needs than ever before, and they may expect and demand online transaction methods. In the highly competitive hotel industry, the effective use of e-commerce—where transactions and other activities take place entirely via the internet—is widely considered to be a key competence required for growth and an important way to gain sustainable advantage over competitors.

Many hotels are therefore integrating more IT capability into their core business offerings, aiming not only to enhance customer satisfaction, but also to increase operational efficiency through streamlining

processes. As well as establishing a transactional medium, e-commerce can reinforce online engagement with customers, communicate product offerings, and provide a customer service platform.

LOYAL CUSTOMERS ARE PROFITABLE CUSTOMERS

But whilst IT capability can enhance customer engagement, it can also make it easier for clientele to switch to an alternative hospitality supplier. Additionally, there are significant costs associated with attracting new customers, including commission paid to online travel agencies; this means breaking even for each individual customer takes longer as a result. Loyal customers are therefore more profitable customers, and this profitability grows alongside the longevity of the customer's relationship with the company.

Accordingly, many hotels offer loyalty programs in order to encourage the patronage of their existing customers through targeted, customised offers and rewards, and by effectively inducing switching costs, thereby discouraging disloyalty. Such schemes have been found to be beneficial and more effective than other sales and marketing methods in establishing and maintaining a loyal clientele base.

For example, a study conducted in 2018 by Dr. Nan Hua and Dr. Wei Wei from the Rosen College of Hospitality Management found that loyalty programs significantly improved hotel operations and performance. The study found that four key performance indicators—the percentage of available rooms occupied, the average daily rate, the revenue per available room, and the gross operating profit—were significantly and positively impacted by implementing loyalty schemes, and that investment in them is therefore a sensible expenditure for hotels.

ALLOCATING RESOURCES EFFECTIVELY

Although e-commerce and loyalty programs are separate entities, they are interdependent and mutually supportive, given that loyalty programs generate valuable information about customers that is embedded in IT resources such as databases and various systems. E-commerce activities can exploit these databases not only to target specific customers with bespoke product and service offers, but also more strategically to help hotels understand potential trends, and refine target markets. Therefore, Dr. Hua and Dr. Wei, together with colleague Dr. Ahmet Ozturk, have now turned their attention to the synergy between e-commerce and loyalty schemes, and whether investing in the former

E-commerce can make it easier for customers to switch to an alternative supplier.

More and more potential guests expect an online booking service.

Many hotels offer loyalty programs to encourage the patronage of their existing customers.

IN A COMPETITIVE ENVIRONMENT, THE NEED FOR HOTELS TO UNDERSTAND HOW E-COMMERCE AND CUSTOMER LOYALTY PROGRAMS INTERACT HAS BECOME VITAL.

enhances the impact of the latter on hotel operating performance.

Whilst studies investigating e-commerce in the hotel industry have been conducted previously, none have looked specifically at the interactions between e-commerce, loyalty programs, and operating performance, and there is a lack of empirical data in this area. In a fiercely competitive environment and often with limited financial resources available, the need for hotels to understand how the three interact has become even more vital if they are to be able to allocate resources effectively.

With this in mind, Dr. Hua, Dr. Wei, and Dr. Ozturk proposed the following hypothesis for their study: 'e-commerce expenses moderate the relationship between hotel

Online reviews have become ubiquitous.

Loyal customers are more profitable customers.



The findings have important implications for strategic decision making in the hotel industry.

THERE IS A SIGNIFICANT VALUE-ADDED SYNERGY BETWEEN E-COMMERCE INVESTMENT AND LOYALTY PROGRAMS.

loyalty programs and hotel operating performance.’ In other words, investing in e-commerce can directly affect the relationship between the loyalty program and the broader functioning of the hotel.

MODELLING THE SYNERGY

Building on a model previously developed by Dr. Hua et al in 2015, which examined the relationship between e-commerce expenses and hotel performance, the study was based on a sample of 1,569 hotels from the year 2006 to 2015, resulting in a total of 15,690 observations. The updated model was tested using seven components: rooms revenue, loyalty program expenses, expenses incurred for websites and IT related initiatives (e-commerce),

total franchise fees, franchise royalties, marketing and advertising, and other marketing expenses.

The research included variables which have been shown to be significant contextual determinants that influence hotel operating performance. The six variables were: rooms, franchise expense, franchise royalties, marketing and advertising expense, other marketing expenses and hotel type. A sensitivity test concerning hotel types was also conducted to determine whether the results the team obtained were robust for the hotel type variable.

The model produced a positive estimate result which showed that investing in

e-commerce positively moderated the relationship between hotel loyalty programs and operating performance by increasing the revenue from hotel rooms. This was found to be true even after hotel types were controlled for. For even further insight, the model was also tested by property type, and results showed that the impact of e-commerce is most prominent for hotels in suburban and airport locations.

IMPLICATIONS FOR DECISION MAKING

The team’s findings illustrate that there is a significant value-added synergy between e-commerce investment and the impact of loyalty programs. More investment in e-commerce leads to more impactful loyalty programs and hence more revenue generated from rooms. The team surmised that the customer database resulting from loyalty programs is a likely key to this synergy. Together with its use in targeting customers with rewards and offers, it can also reduce overall marketing costs by providing insight into marketing strategies, as well as providing insight into areas that could be targeted for specialized advertising campaigns.

The findings have important implications for strategic decision making in the hotel industry. By demonstrating that increased investment in e-commerce capabilities impacts positively on revenue, owners and managers can plan their annual budget accordingly. This applies especially to hotels located close to airports or in suburban areas, for whom the results were notably pronounced, showing that taking advantage of e-commerce could improve the performance of these hotels in particular. As the results of the study were found to be robust across property types, they are relevant and valuable for smaller as well as larger hotels. They show that smaller establishments with limited resources can achieve the same synergy with proper resource allocation, indicating that e-commerce activities can provide a cheap and effective means of competing with larger corporations. All types of property within the hotel industry can benefit from the research carried out by the team at Rosen College and their findings can be used to adjust resource allocation strategies to improve performance.

RESEARCHERS IN FOCUS

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Dr. Nan Hua, Dr. Wei Wei, and Dr. Ahmet Ozturk investigate whether the impact of customer loyalty on financial performance depends on e-commerce investment in the hospitality industry.

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PERSONAL RESPONSE

How important is it to consider the changing nature of the hotel market, as well as developments in IT, when interpreting the results of this study?

// Loyalty programs have been proven effective and efficient in attracting and retaining repeat business, which is considered critical to hotel financial performance. This study not only echoes and confirms the positive financial impact of expenditures on loyalty programs but also shows that IT investments can improve financial impacts of loyalty programs despite the evolving nature of hotel businesses and quick advancements of IT over time. //



Dr. Nan Hua



Dr. Hua is a professor in hospitality financial management and serves as the chair for the Department of Hospitality Services at Rosen College. His research focuses on Performance Analysis, Information Technology Impacts, and Intangible Assets analysis.

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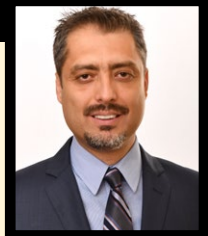


Dr. Wei joined the Rosen College as an Assistant Professor in August 2014. Dr. Wei received her Ph.D. degree and Master's degree in Hospitality and Tourism Management from Purdue University, U.S.A. She also received her Bachelor of Science degree in Tourism Management from Northwest University, China.

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Dr. Ahmet Ozturk



Dr. Ozturk joined the Rosen College of Hospitality Management as an Assistant Professor in August 2011. He holds a Ph.D. in Hospitality Administration with Hospitality Information Systems concentration from Oklahoma State University, Stillwater Oklahoma.

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MANAGERS FROM HELL IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

The majority of employees are disaffected with their work and not engaged in their place of employment. This is a surprising but statistically validated fact revealed in a Gallup poll, and it has prompted Rosen College researchers to investigate how far it applies to hospitality. In what is thought to be the first study to look at the problem in the industry, research by Dr. Fevzi Okumus and his two former Ph.D. students reveal what hospitality employees have to say about “managers from Hell,” and what this means for the sector.

Most people come across a bad boss at least once in their working lives—someone who saps their motivation and stifles their initiative. The result, to misquote Timothy Leary, is that many employees turn up, but fail to tune in to their job, no doubt wishing they could drop out of it altogether.

A ground-breaking study by Rosen College’s Dr. Fevzi Okumus and his former Ph.D. students argues that businesses fail to recognize the size and potential impact of this problem, at their peril. A recent Gallup poll, for example, found that only a third of employees felt actively engaged in their place of employment. Half felt unengaged, and the remainder felt actively disengaged.

Aside from the impact on employee wellbeing and the cost of recruiting and on-boarding replacements for leavers, disaffection leads to lost productivity and performance. Perhaps more surprisingly, business management professionals believe that it is not companies that people want to leave, but line managers. “Managers from Hell” are found in every industry, but in hospitality—an industry that is known for its high turnover of staff and lack of training—they are particularly toxic.

Dr. Okumus’s research asked frontline employees to profile bad managers. Published in the *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, the study yields important insights into how managers should, and should not, behave if they are to actively engage employees in the business.

THE RESEARCH

Dr. Okumus’s study explored the characteristics of bad managers from the perspective of subordinate employees, rather than upper management. The aim was to discover whether managers fostered a working environment that met employee expectations.

Taking a qualitative approach, researchers adopted a grounded theory research design. In this way, the theories developed by the study were based on the data gathered rather than pre-existing assumptions. The employees studied were frontline workers from a variety of hospitality sectors and roles, who had worked in hospitality for at least a year. All graduates from a university in the south eastern United States, employees self-selected by responding to a general invitation to give an online interview, in private and in their own time.

The respondents’ demographic profile was representative of the hospitality industry, being around one-third male and two-thirds female. Most respondents had a degree or some form of college education. Around 28% earned under \$20,000 a year and 42% earned between \$20,000 and \$40,000. One-



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Disaffection leads to lost productivity and performance.

manager's attributes and behaviours. In addition, employees were asked why they thought the person they described had become a bad manager, again giving details. The questions were open-ended and researchers did not give examples of what might be considered bad management.

Employees' responses to each question were analyzed and coded independently of each other to detect patterns. Categories of responses were grouped into sub-categories and themes. Researchers then analyzed the data to identify links between bad manager causes and bad manager characteristics.

BAD MANAGER CHARACTERISTICS

The research identified six characteristics of bad managers in the hospitality

and having poor decision-making and delegation skills. Sub-themes were also identified for each characteristic.

Unprofessional managers were reported to have problems with work/life spill-over. For example, they often arrived late for work even though they reprimanded employees who were similarly late for their shift. They also displayed favoritism, created drama, and interacted inappropriately with staff.

Poor operational and technical skills were associated with managing at a distance, a lack of core skills, and poor ability in project management. Some employees described managers who avoided frontline public interaction. Others spoke about either hands-off or micro-management. Many reported managers' inability to create a fair work schedule.

Poor leadership skills were identified as poor mentorship, poor employee development, a lack of altruism, and being a poor source of inspiration. Many employees reported a lack of training. One employee described a manager, saying: "I worked for her for 3.5 years and she never conducted a single evaluation with me."

Less frequently mentioned characteristics included managers with an autocratic management style. This was associated with poor interpersonal skills and a dictatorial outlook, as well as a lack of respect and passion for their job. While some were unapproachable and failed to give feedback, others would listen but not respond or take action.

Unethical behaviour included requiring employees to be dishonest and a failure in fiduciary duties contributing to a lack of trust. A surprising number of interviewees reported thievery by bad managers, for example taking food and beverages without paying, even though they would forbid staff from doing the same.

Managers' poor decision and delegation skills were also cited. One interviewee said: "He would tell us vaguely what he wanted and left us on our own. When something was not done the way he wanted he would become angry with us, which was frustrating because he never gave particulars."



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The study explored the characteristics of bad managers from the perspective of subordinate employees, rather than upper management.

third had worked in hospitality for less than two years, 36% for between three and five years, and 30% for six years or more.

The study looked at responses from 72 people who were asked to describe the worst manager they had known and explain their judgement, giving examples of the

industry. Including both soft skills (such as interpersonal communication) and hard skills (such as technical know-how), the most common were that bad managers are unprofessional, have poor operational and technical skills, as well as poor leadership skills. Others included an autocratic management style, being unethical,

ONLY A THIRD OF EMPLOYEES FELT ACTIVELY ENGAGED IN THEIR PLACE OF EMPLOYMENT. HALF FELT UNENGAGED, AND THE REMAINDER FELT ACTIVELY DISENGAGED.



Unprofessional managers were reported to have problems with work/life spill-over.

BAD MANAGER CAUSES

The interviews also identified four themes related to the root causes thought to be responsible for bad managers. The most commonly cited by employees were lack of qualifications for the specific role, and company culture and structure. Other themes included personal characteristics and length of tenure and complacency. Sub-themes were also identified for each characteristic.

Lack of qualifications was associated with lack of management experience, nepotism,

Factors regarding managers' personal characteristics included "misfit" personalities, personal life spill-over, essential character, and lack of drive. For example, interviewees described introverted managers who were uncomfortable managing a large workforce, as well as managers who conducted personal business at work and were dissatisfied with their own role.

Managers' length of tenure and being too comfortable in their position were associated with promotion based on seniority rather than

constructs such as abusive supervision and toxic leadership, this study reveals that in the hospitality sector there is an additional absence of managerial competence in both hard skills and soft skills.

This study's findings have practical implications which organizational policies and procedures need to address. The report states: "One of the causes of high turnover, low motivation, high psychological distress, and high burnout attributed to the hospitality industry could be attributed to an employee's bad manager ... If an organization can identify a bad manager in the workplace, preventative measures could be implemented that curtail the negative consequences of bad management."

Companies are therefore recommended to work towards reducing bad management qualities as well as to foster good management behaviors. The report makes three specific recommendations. First, that companies should consider the impact of organizational culture and structure on managers, and then prioritize managers' training and development. In addition, university and college courses in hospitality should include the characteristics and root causes of bad managers within their curricula.

UNIVERSITY AND COLLEGE COURSES IN HOSPITALITY SHOULD INCLUDE THE CHARACTERISTICS AND ROOT CAUSES OF BAD MANAGERS WITHIN THEIR CURRICULA.

and a lack of formal training. For example, one interviewee said that she personally liked her manager but her management ability was insufficient. Many said managers obtained their position through friends or family relationships and promoted favorites themselves.

Company culture and structure were said by many employees to lead to managers finding leadership stressful. Other factors noted included lack of accountability and developmental support. Employees cited managers who were set unrealistic goals by their superiors, as well as managers who were under pressure to "make the numbers look good."

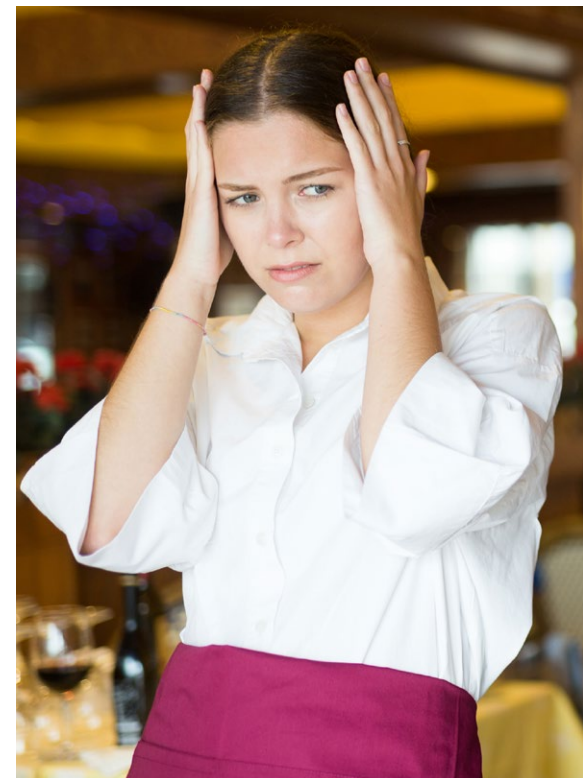
ability, and a sense that too much job security is debilitating. As one employee wrote of her manager: "She works in a department she is comfortable in, so she has no incentive to think of new things or think outside the box."

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study has important implications for the hospitality industry. The first of its kind in the sector, it helps to redress the balance of the other reports which focus on good management practice.

The results suggest similarities to, and differences from, the general management literature. While academics have addressed

As the study concludes: "The current study argues that future hospitality managers need to be proficient at promoting good management competencies while simultaneously suppressing any of the disliked management competencies identified in this study."



RESEARCHERS IN FOCUS

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Dr. Fevzi Okumus and his two former Ph.D. students surveyed hospitality employees to better understand the causes and characteristics of poor managers.

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PERSONAL RESPONSE

This is fascinating and important research for the hospitality industry. As well as reading your report, and based on your own experience, what single piece of advice would you give to someone in their first managerial role in hospitality?

Our research identified six characteristics of bad managers and four themes related to the root causes of bad managers. Hospitality and tourism managers can self-evaluate themselves to identify how they can become better managers. Hospitality and tourism organizations should provide specific and ongoing training programs to help their managers improve their management skills. Such efforts can reduce labor turnover and enhance employee engagement and performance.

Dr. Fevzi Okumus



Dr. Fevzi Okumus is the CFHLA Preeminent Chair Professor within the Hospitality Services Department at the University of Central Florida's Rosen

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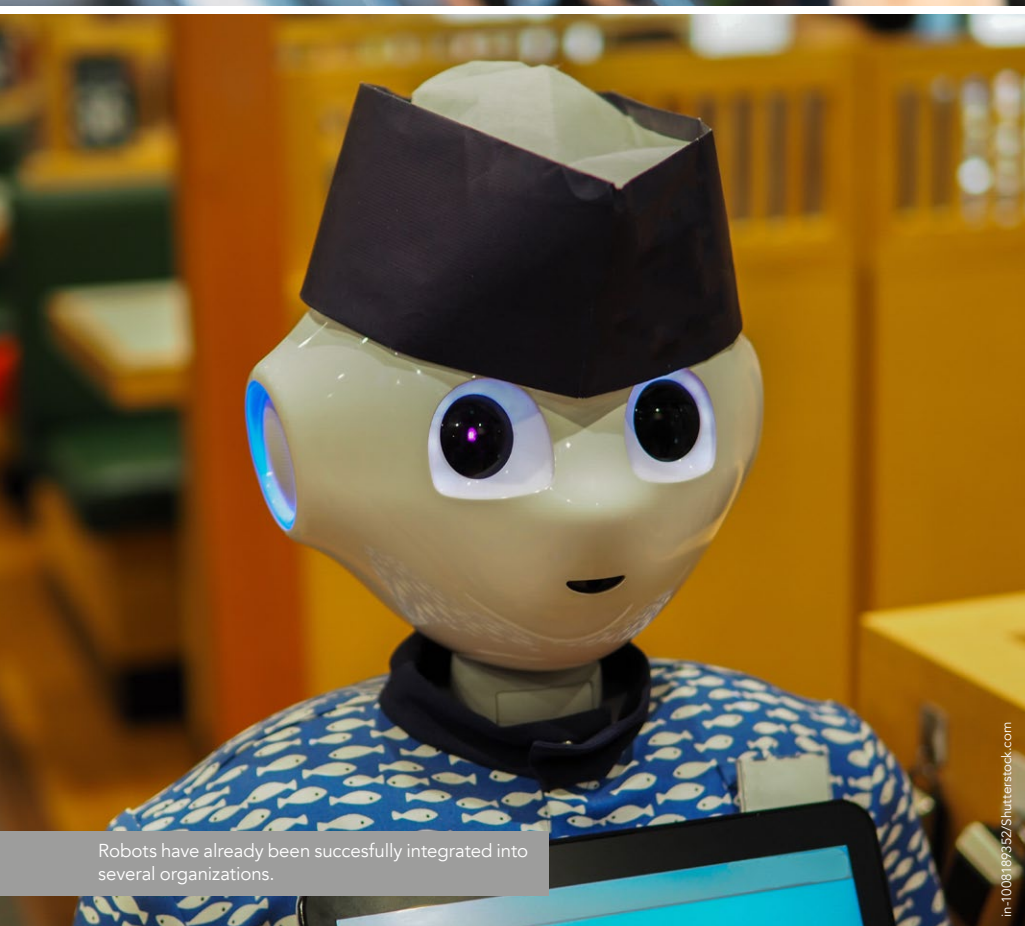
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Mint moloressum fuga. Item
iliquae. Peratur, sinulpa

HOW COULD ROBOTS IMPROVE THE CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE AT A THEME PARK?



Robots have already been successfully integrated into several organizations.

in-1008189352/Shutterstock.com



Technological gadgets, such as robots, are now being successfully used to improve hospitality organizations. Robots can be used to interact with guests, provide front desk services, or even carry out chores such as room service. These robots are a cost-effective way to improve guests' experiences, and therefore have been adopted by numerous hotels, airports, and various attractions. The Henn-na Hotel in Japan (which translates to "weird hotel") is entirely staffed by robots!

The benefits of using robots in hospitality organizations have been debated, however. On the one hand, robots do not get bored or tired, they do not need breaks or holidays, and they do not require a salary. They can also process tasks faster than humans, and often with more accuracy. Robots can also work in dangerous or hostile environments and can carry out tasks that humans cannot or will not do. On the other hand, robots cannot act beyond their programmed parameters or adapt to unexpected situations. Consumers may also prefer the "human touch" in their customer service.

Technology is moving fast, and accordingly, robots are being successfully integrated into several hospitality organizations to improve customer experiences. Theme parks could benefit from robots, to provide efficient and cost-effective services. Yet, there is a lack of research investigating customer perceptions of robots in theme parks. Dr. Ady Milman, Dr. Asli Tasci, and Dr. Tingting Zhang, from UCF Rosen College of Hospitality Management, conducted the first investigation into how certain robotic qualities influence customer's perceptions of and loyalty to the theme park. Their research could inform the future integration of robot technology into theme parks.



Providing information such as directions is one of the areas where robots could prove useful.

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ROBOTICS IN THEME PARKS

Whilst there has been a wealth of research on the benefits of robots in the hospitality industry generally, research on the usefulness of service robots in theme parks is only in its infancy. Many theme parks have already begun to adopt different technologies to enhance consumer experiences, for example, mobile apps, virtual reality, and social media networks. Some initial findings suggest that robots reduce operational and labor costs, and enhance efficiency, services, and consumer experience in theme parks.

Several studies have found that customers expect theme parks to keep up with technological trends, and this includes the use of service robots. Yet, there has been very little research to inform the introduction of service robots to theme parks. For example, investigating how service robots influence customer behaviors in theme parks—such as their loyalty to the theme park—has yet to be studied. Also in need of further study is how customers perceive the physical qualities of a service robot, such as human-likeness, apparent intelligence, and sensory capabilities

(can the robot see and hear?). As well as this, what functions do customers want to be provided by the service robots, such as customer information, directions, processing payments, controlling crowds, or taking food and drinks orders?

AIMS OF THE STUDY

Researchers from Rosen College of Hospitality Management—Dr. Ady Milman, Dr. Asli Tasci, and Dr. Tingting Zhang—therefore set out to conduct the first study to understand how certain qualities and perceptions of robots in theme parks affect customer behaviors.

Specifically, the researchers set out to understand how certain robotic qualities (e.g., how human-like it is) influence perceptions of the robot's functions (e.g., does it perform tasks faster than humans?). For instance, if the robot is less human-

whether the robot is human-, cartoon-, anime-, or animal-like.

FINDINGS

Using questionnaires completed by 385 theme park visitors, the three colleagues found that several robot qualities, such as their human orientation and safety qualities, were associated with the perceived functionality of the robot. This may be because robots are frequently used for safety purposes in airports, shopping malls, offices and other public spaces, so participants may be familiar with the association between robotic safety qualities and their functionality.

Qualities of human orientation had a consistent influence on perceived robotic functionalities, regardless of whether the robot was designed to be cartoon-, anime-, animal-, or human-like. Therefore, the

DISNEY HAS BEEN HARNESSING THE BENEFITS OF ROBOTS FOR CUSTOMER SERVICE FOR SEVERAL YEARS.

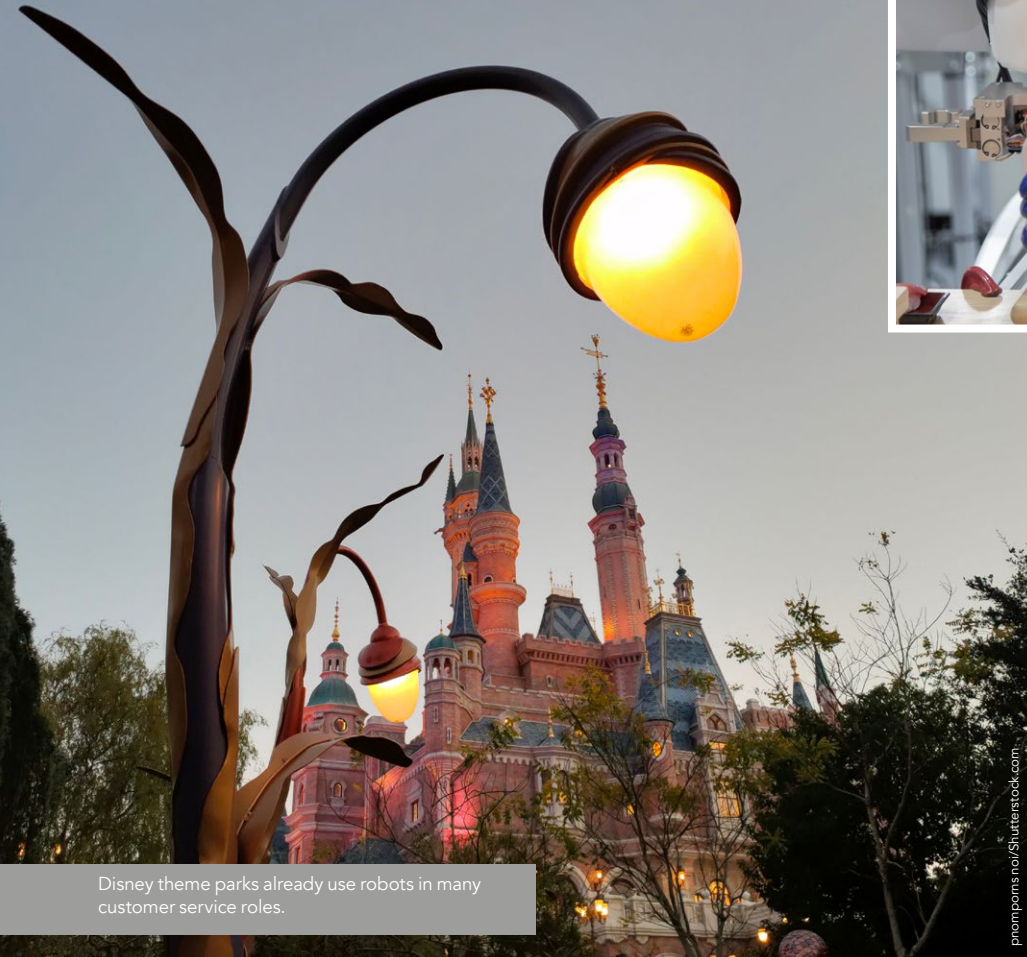
like, it might be perceived to have more capabilities. In addition, the research team investigated whether perceptions of the robot's functions influenced customer loyalty. For example, are customers more likely to show loyalty to the business if they perceive the robot to have certain functions? Finally, the researchers tested whether perceptions of robotic functions, and customer loyalty, are influenced by the robot's physical qualities, for example,

researchers conclude that human-likeness is an important component of visitor's overall experience in theme parks. The research also showed that emotional and co-creation qualities—involving the collaborative involvement of both robot and customer—were not associated with the perceived functionality of the robot, suggesting that robots could not replace the human aspect of exhibiting emotions or creating co-experiences in theme parks.



Qualities of human orientation had a consistent influence on perceived robotic functionalities.

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Disney theme parks already use robots in many customer service roles.

prompoms no/Shutterstock.com

The team also found that the greater the perceived robotic function, the higher the customer loyalty. However, the strength of this association changed depending on the physical qualities of the robot. So, the association between perceived robot function and customer loyalty was stronger when the robot was human-like, compared to animal-like. This suggests that using more

The research of the Rosen College colleagues is the first of its kind to confirm that certain robotic qualities influence the way robots are perceived, in terms of their functionality. Furthermore, the perceived functionality of the robots influences customer loyalty. Robots with more human-like qualities may be perceived as providing higher performance than other robot types,

guests would welcome interaction with robots, and some theme parks have already started to take note of this. Disney, for example, has been harnessing the benefits of robots for customer service for several years. They have introduced robots who may be able to replace the costumed mascots, to assist in their theme park entertainment, to perform stunts, control crowds, and to interact with children.

In the future, human-like robots could also be used to create and co-produce the theme park experience by undertaking a variety of tasks such as greeting guests at the entrance gate and attractions, storytelling, providing information, loading guests on rides, performing in a variety of shows and parades, or selling food, beverages, and merchandise. They could also be used to solve operational issues such as: parking, ticketing, and park admission; capacity and queue management; provision of information; food service production, delivery and selling, and more.

In products and services where the speed of service delivery matters the most, robots can enhance the consumer experience. Robots' fast service delivery of products and services may also allow guests to have a better appreciation of the hospitable human touch in other aspects of products and services. In this way, they may provide a more wholesome visitor experience and potentially lead to greater customer loyalty.

Following their reopening after the COVID-19 pandemic, many theme parks may be assisted by robots in various functional safety tasks, for example, temperature screening, personal-space enforcement, touchless ticketing, and cleaning and sanitation of rides. This means that the role of robots in theme parks will probably be enhanced significantly, and this research will be critical in informing the integration of robotics into the theme park industry.

FOLLOWING THE REOPENING OF THEME PARKS AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC, ROBOTS MAY ASSIST MANY THEME PARKS IN VARIOUS FUNCTIONAL SAFETY TASKS.

human-like robots will be more effective for customer loyalty.

Customer loyalty provides great benefits to companies, by lowering the marketing costs to familiar customers, who tend to buy more, pay more, and recommend the product or brand to others. Theme parks would therefore benefit from being aware of how to improve customer loyalty through the careful use of robotics.

and may improve customer loyalty. The findings also showed that the design of the robot, in terms of whether it is more cartoon-, animal-, anime- or human-like influences the way the robot is perceived, and this, in turn, influences customer loyalty to the theme park.

IMPLICATIONS

The study's findings are in line with the recent reports suggesting that theme park

RESEARCHERS IN FOCUS

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Rosen College researchers, Dr. Ady Milman, Dr. Asli Tasci, and Dr. Tingting Zhang, investigate customer perceptions of robots in theme parks.

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PERSONAL RESPONSE

Do you imagine your findings would vary significantly across various hospitality contexts – for example, might robots in the restaurant industry be perceived markedly differently to robots in theme parks?

/// The findings will apply to other sectors in the tourism and hospitality industry, with slight variations according to the experiential consumption contexts. These may include transportation systems like airlines and rail travel, accommodation facilities, food services, meetings and events, and other tourist attractions. ///



Dr. Ady Milman



Dr. Ady Milman is a Professor at Rosen College of Hospitality Management at the University of Central Florida. Following his career as a travel agent, he earned a Bachelor's degree in Political Science at the University of Tel-Aviv, a Master's degree in Tourism Planning and Development from the University of Surrey in England, and a Ph.D. in Business Administration from the University of Massachusetts at Amherst.

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Dr. Tingting Zhang



Dr. Tingting Zhang's primary research goals are directed toward understanding customer engagement in the hospitality and tourism industries with a special focus on technology usage and adoption (such as virtual reality, social media, mobile apps, and online communities, etc.). Dr. Zhang's research dissertation explores the service innovation strategies that engage Generation Y consumers, an emerging and powerful cohort in the market, to co-create through mobile technologies.

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Rosen Research Grants | Arthur Huang

PREPARING THE HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM WORKFORCE FOR THE FUTURE OF WORK

The economic restructuring necessitated by the Covid-19 pandemic has ignited a fundamental transformation of the US workforce driven by powerful digital technologies. No sector has been hit harder than the hospitality and tourism industry (H&T), and no industry has more to gain from reinvention. H&T employs about 32% of the US labor force; however, workers' wages, benefits, and career support are among the lowest of all industries. Moreover, research shows that numerous jobs in H&T are susceptible to automation due to advancements in artificial intelligence (AI). The fears related to job loss resulting from applying advanced technology, such as AI, are rising, and the H&T workforce requires significantly higher levels of research support to advance the workers' skills and careers.

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION GRANT

Aiming to develop methods and models for H&T workers to succeed in the future of work, Dr. Arthur Huang serves as the primary investigator for a team of UCF professors that successfully obtained a \$977,566 grant (award no.: 1937833) from the National Science Foundation in 2019. This is the largest US Federal grant received by the Rosen College. The multidisciplinary team

consists of the following professors: Drs. Arthur Huang (Rosen College of Hospitality Management and College of Engineering and Computer Science), Nan Hua (Rosen College of Hospitality Management), Zhishan Guo (College of Engineering and Computer Science), and Sevil Sonmez (College of Business). The project is titled "Prepare the US Labor Force for Future Jobs in the Hotel and Restaurant Industry: A Hybrid Framework and Multi-Stakeholder Approach". This project aims to develop predictive models to understand occupational outlook and work reorganization under the influence of emergent technologies and the COVID-19 pandemic. Ultimately, the project will provide critically needed data on the evolutionary paths of jobs, trends of job tasks, skills and tools necessary, and workers' adaptation capabilities

in the hotel and restaurant industry, which are significantly under-represented in the public labor databases. The grant is also being used to support undergraduate, graduate, and Ph.D. students who develop new research directions. Three papers recently published by Dr. Huang and the research team revolve around 1) how COVID-19 affected the H&T workforce, 2) resilience-building strategies for the H&T workforce, and 3) H&T career transitions.

1) THE H&T LABOR MARKET AMID THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

In this paper, a time-series analysis was used to examine high-frequency labor market data from small H&T businesses in the U.S. to investigate the effects of the states' legal mandates and intervention policies throughout the U.S. It found that low-preparation jobs in leisure and



Increasingly, hospitality and tourism workers will require IT skills.

hospitality are most impacted and slowest to recover. In the swiftly changing environments, hospitality and tourism businesses that pivoted into new concepts or adopted new technologies are more likely to survive. However, such new adaptations may lead to fewer low-skilled jobs, combined job duties, and demand for higher-level skills. The pandemic has highlighted growing issues in workplace safety, skill gaps, and career preparation in the hospitality industry. Two recommendations are developed to support workers and businesses: (1) increasing and streamlining the



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H&T workers require significantly higher levels of career support to enhance their future employment opportunities

training of transferable soft skills for hospitality workers, and (2) implementing flexible work arrangements that respond to the changing hospitality labor market.

2) RESILIENCE-BUILDING STRATEGIES FOR H&T DURING AND AFTER COVID-19

This study provides insight into strategies, success factors, and resources that may successfully help service firms respond to and create opportunities out of crises. The paper examines five resilience-building strategies and their sub-strategies with practical examples for service firms. 1) *Market orientation* highlights the critical role of market intelligence collection and dissemination in response to changing market demands during and after a crisis. 2) *Supply chain optimization* focuses on the agility and resilience of procurement

and distribution systems and the visibility in supply chains, which may help service firms to respond promptly and adaptively to supply chain disruptions caused by a crisis. 3) *Strategic corporate reorganization* emphasizes the importance of seeking partnerships to strengthen one's market position during and after a crisis. 4) *Innovation* underlines the role of product/service, process, marketing, and organizational innovation in firms' growth after a crisis. 5) *Business model transformation* discusses how firms may gain a competitive advantage by addressing an identified market demand with new technology during and after a crisis. The success factors related to the various approaches include organizational structure, leadership style, communication among employees, interaction with stakeholders, knowledge management, technology utilization, and flexible processes. Technological resources are among the main building blocks of resilience and should be cultivated by technical capabilities.

3) CAREER TRANSITIONS AND EMPLOYEE-EMPLOYER RELATIONSHIPS IN H&T

Dr Huang demonstrated in this paper that an employee sharing model (ESM) is a viable approach to improve labor market flexibility and provide immediate employment to H&T workers. Multi-stakeholder collaborations between employers, employees, governments, and education institutions are needed to facilitate the process. As external shocks, such as COVID-19, may cast long-term impacts on the labor market, a contextualized ESM that fits local market conditions can provide a promising solution to the increasingly dynamic H&T labor market conditions. Moreover, H&T workers require significantly higher levels of career support to enhance their future employment opportunities, especially as the labor market swiftly changes and adopts more advanced technological solutions. Allowing employees to develop the skills they need to enhance their career flexibility will increase their resilience at an individual level; however, the levels of education and support in H&T are disproportionately low when compared against other industries. There is a need to assist

employees in identifying which skills are most valuable to develop and demonstrate how career transitions may be feasible at the level of individual competency instead of traditional credential-related achievements, such as degrees, which come at a high cost in terms of time and money. Identifying the transferable skills to strengthen the career transition vectors is a research area that requires further exploration. Dr. Huang's research will focus on developing avenues for H&T workers to reskill and upskill to enhance their career flexibility and agility.

Dr. Arthur Huang

Assistant Professor
Rosen College
of Hospitality
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University of Central
Florida.



Dr. Arthur Huang is an Assistant Professor affiliated with the Rosen College of Hospitality Management and College of Engineering and Computer Science. With an interdisciplinary background in engineering, social science, and public policy, Dr. Huang received his Ph.D. in Transportation Systems and an M.A. in Urban and Regional Planning from the University of Minnesota and an M.S. in computer engineering from Tsinghua University, China. His research interests include urban computing, human behavior, big data analytics in tourism management, sustainability, and the future of work.

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NO SECTOR HAS BEEN HIT HARDER
[BY COVID-19] THAN THE HOSPITALITY
AND TOURISM INDUSTRY.

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