UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

# THE IMPACT OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT ON BRAND REPUTATION AND BRAND POSITIONING TOWARDS THE PERFORMANCE OF UPSCALE HOTELS IN THE POST-COVID-19 ERA

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# THE IMPACT OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT ON BRAND REPUTATION AND BRAND POSITIONING TOWARDS THE PERFORMANCE OF UPSCALE HOTELS IN THE POST-COVID-19 ERA

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Thesis submitted in fulfilment
of the requirements for the degree of
**Doctor of Philosohopy**
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I, hereby, acknowledge that I have been supplied with the Academic Rules and Regulations for Post Graduate, Universiti Teknologi MARA, regulating the conduct of my study and research.

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# ABSTRACT

Since the pandemic, the hotel industry has been one of the sectors hardest hit. Quarantine, physical distancing, and travel restrictions have caused substantial problems for the hotel industry. To capitalize on the anticipated post-COVID-19 travel boom, hotel operators must swiftly promote their new protocol products and services in response to shifting customer behavior and new norm requirements. It is, therefore, essential to investigate crisis management in terms of how hotel brands can adapt to new norms. This study empirically investigates crisis response brands created by hotels in Indonesia to help them survive the COVID-19 outbreak.

Consequently, this study aims to investigate the effect of crisis management on brand performance as influenced by brand reputation and positioning. Crisis management was assessed by signal detection, preparation and prevention, recovery, and learning process as grounded in situational crisis communication theory (SCCT), adding to the body of the crisis management literature. Evaluation of the brand in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic can be an effective method for managing brand reputation, brand positioning, and brand performance. A quantitative cross-sectional survey was adopted to understand crisis management and brand better. The sample for this study consisted of 341 hotel managers from the Indonesian Hotel General Manager Association members participated in this study. The results were analyzed using the Structure Equation Modelling (SEM) via AMOS (version 23.0). Findings showed that crisis management has no direct significant influence on brand performance. This research confirms that the mediating influence of brand reputation and brand positioning will positively influence crisis management and brand performance. This study extends current crisis management and brand performance research, especially in the hotel industry. In light of this finding, hotel managers should not ignore or be ignorant of crisis mitigation and brand management, particularly in terms of brand reputation, brand positioning, and brand performance.

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# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

**Abbreviations**

| | |
|---|---|
| BPS | The Central Bureau of Statistics (Statistics Indonesia) |
| IHGMA | Indonesian Hotel General Manager Association |
| PHRI | Indonesian Hotel and Restaurant Association (PHRI) |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Product |

# CHAPTER 1
# INTRODUCTION

## 1.1 Preamble

Beginning a research journey necessitates a solid commitment to meeting the institution's requirements. The present study considered how COVID-19 has changed the hospitality industry due to various issues surrounding the industry. This study aimed to examine the crisis response brands developed by hotel managers in Indonesia to assist them in surviving the COVID-19 outbreak. In addition, research objectives were outlined to provide findings grounded in the structural framework. The key terms used during COVID-19 were listed to provide pertinent inputs for the problem formulation and significance of the study.

## 1.2 Research Background

Since Since COVID-19 hit China toward the end of 2019, a new episode unfolded, where the unprecedented crisis occurred almost everywhere (Li et al., 2020). In 2020, nearly all nations, including the ASEAN region, were affected by COVID-19 (World Health Organization, 2020). COVID-19 cases in ASEAN nations are depicted in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1
COVID-19 Statistics as of April 05, 2022

| Country | Confirmed | Deaths |
|---|---:|---:|
| Vietnam | 9,867,045 | 42,642 |
| Indonesia | 6,021,642 | 155,349 |
| Malaysia | 4,246,467 | 35,099 |
| Thailand | 3,736,487 | 25,515 |
| Philippines | 3.679.761 | 59,365 |
| Singapore | 1,109,744 | 1,276 |
| Myanmar | 611,875 | 19,433 |
| Laos | 184,598 | 682 |
| Brunei | 136,374 | 213 |
| Cambodia | 135,782 | 3,054 |

Source: Shira (2022)

From the table, Indonesia recorded the highest death toll, followed by the

Philippines and Vietnam. As the number of infected cases increased, Indonesia closed its borders to Chinese tourists, and annual arrivals in March dropped by more than 97 percent (Suroyo & Rizki, 2020). Similar to other ASEAN nations, the Indonesian government has implemented policies that limit personal contact and increase the physical distance to prevent the spread of the virus (Bulin & Tenie, 2020; Davahli et al., 2020; Ivanov et al., 2020; Pinzaru et al., 2020; Saraceno, 2021; Wen et al., 2021). Due to the closure of the border for international travelers, the implementation of social distancing, and the increase in work from home, the economy was disrupted, resulting in a 1.1 percent increase in Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and contributing to the recession in 2020 (Wuryandani, 2020). The Indonesian economy entered a crisis in the second quarter of 2020 compared to the second quarter of 2019 (y-o-y), which experienced a growth contraction of 5.3 percent but then returned to a positive correction in the third quarter (BPS-Statistics Indonesia, 2020).

Consequently, virus prevention through closure affected the supply chain and completely derailed the global economy, resulting in a decline in demand and significant revenue losses (Bachman, 2020), especially in the travel, tourism, and hospitality industries (Dwiedienawati et al., 2021; Kaushal & Srivastava, 2021a; Khraim & Afaishat, 2021; Lai & Wong, 2020; Purba et al., 2021; Setiati & Azwar, 2020; Webster et al., 2020). As Tongare (2021) reported, the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdowns have caused significant disruptions for individuals, communities, brands, and businesses. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic has caused distortions in any global industry, including tourism and hospitality, and become a potential crisis played a crucial role in preventing unnecessary effects during and after the crisis (Aldao et al., 2021; Baum et al., 2020; Breier et al., 2021; Khraim & Afaishat, 2021; Lai & Wong, 2020). Sohrabi et al. (2020) stated that the infection resulted in a significant human crisis, which included financial disruption, movement restrictions, the cessation of production, and a sharp decline in several industry segments. Several researchers added that the potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on global consumer traits, purchasing patterns, global interconnectedness, psychographic behavior, and other marketing activities merits intensive research (Cambefort, 2020; Kintler & Remenova, 2020; Zwanka & Buff, 2021).

Similarly to other nations, the COVID-19 pandemic wreaked havoc on the tourism and hotel industries in Indonesia, resulting in Rp 179.76 trillion ($12.1 billion) in revenue losses across the hotel, restaurant, leisure, aviation, and other sub-tourism industries, or 54 percent loss in revenue (Purba et al., 2021). In addition, according to a report by McKinsey (2020), Indonesia's tourism industry has slowed due to the COVID-19 crisis, with foreign arrivals decreasing by 75% between 2019 and 2020. Similarly, the Indonesian Hotel and Restaurant Association reported that the losses in the hotel sector due to COVID-19 had reached IDR 30 trillion (Rosana, 2020; Wahyudi, 2020). In line with the above notion, the impact of COVID-19 affected room occupancy rates and the number of rooms in almost all-star hotels in Indonesia, which are among the world's most prestigious international brands (BPS-Statistics Indonesia, 2022; McKinsey & Company, 2022). Undoubtedly, consumer perceptions of recommendations for tightening areas, working from home, and fear of contagion have influenced the hotel industry's performance (Bulin & Tenie, 2020; Muhyiddin & Nugroho, 2021; Nugraheni et al., 2022).

Table 1.2
Hotel Growth Statistics for Indonesia

| **Number of Hotel Rooms** | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| 5 star | 48.081 | 48.251 | 45.839 | 47.859 |
| 4 star | 117.744 | 113.723 | 112.854 | 112.494 |
| 3 star | 125.149 | 125.870 | 122.186 | 125.620 |
| Non-star | 287.172 | 326.672 | 261.288 | 294.001 |
| **Average Room Occupancy Rate** | | | | |
| | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
| Room Occupancy | 59.39% | 34.28% | 36.21% | 47.80% |

Source: Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy of the Republic of Indonesia, (2023)

Looking at the table above, during COVID-19, the number of hotel rooms decreased the most in 2020 and 2021 by 17.42 percent, while the room occupancy rate for classified hotels in Indonesia was approximately 34.2 percent in 2020 to 36.2 percent in 2021, but behind compared to 2019, a significant 65.1 percent decrease. Furthermore, due to the pandemic, the number of hotels (national and international brand names) and comparable establishments in Indonesia decreased from 2,443 in 2019 to 2,332 in 2020 (Statistica, 2023). There was a significant decline in tourism between 2020 and 2021 due to the negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, although there was an increase in 2023.

According to the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy of the Republic of

Indonesia (2023), hotel brands that operate in Indonesia include Accor, Archipelago, Marriott, Hilton, Hyatt, IHG, Wyndham, and Shangri-La, as well as national brands Artotel, Santika, Inti Whiz International, Metropolitan Golden Management, Dafam Hotels, and Azana Hotels. Throughout the pandemic, these brands have encountered several obstacles, including low occupancy rates (Choirisa, 2022; Lai & Wong, 2020; Webster et al., 2020; Wu et al., 2020), health and safety protocols (Berry et al., 2020; Gursoy et al., 2020; Hidayat & Riyadi, 2021), travel restrictions (Hoang et al., 2021; Lai & Wong, 2020, 2020; Schürhoff, 2021), and shifting consumer preferences (Anas et al., 2022; Hermanto et al., 2021). Despite loosening restrictions and increased activities, Jakarta's average hotel occupancy has not returned to pre-pandemic levels as of June 2023, as reported in Jakarta (Kompas, 2023). Some researchers argue that the spread of COVID-19 has decreased hotel guests' motivation to travel and stay due to a barrage of information and fake news that causes more anxiety, fear, panic, and psychological trauma than before (Anastasiadou et al., 2020; Jian et al., 2020; Waller & Abbasian, 2022).

For instance, behavioral changes in movement accelerated before the outbreak as new habits and expectations emerged (Deloitte, 2020b; Scott & Gössling, 2021). They posited that consumers might slowly return to old habits and crowds, but the hospitality industry should not anticipate a swift pre-pandemic level. For this reason, COVID-19 has disrupted the hotel industry and prompted significant changes to offerings and operations to meet new standards (Kim & Han, 2022). Additionally, during the pandemic, many are unsure of the risk of booking a hotel room (Dubin, 2021). Gustavsson and Larsson (2020) mentioned that COVID-19 has a massive impact on the hospitality industry, requiring quick adaptation to deal with the prolonged impact. Additionally, the pandemic has resulted in a primary concern for service safety and the transformation of service operations into a new practice mode for increased separability and decreased contact (Margherita & Heikkilä, 2021; Wen et al., 2021).

Therefore, the hotel industry must prioritize innovation to have a greater chance of surviving a crisis (Adam & Alarifi, 2021; Ramalingam, 2020). As mentioned by Fener and Cevik (2015), hotels are required to initiate the process of indication, which necessitates the collection and evaluation of the crisis's impact, which then triggers the implementation of the necessary measures and enforcement to mitigate losses. However, a crisis is an abrupt and unexpected event that can seriously affect a brand's reputation and financial assets (Coombs, 2007a; Huang et al., 2008).

Several hotel brands were severely damaged during and after the pandemic, resulting in a sharp decline in brand recognition values in the uncertain future, even though a company's brand is one of the most crucial factors in its ability to maintain, expand, and develop its domestic and international markets (Tien, 2022a). In addition, hotels can enhance and maintain their brand performance during the COVID-19 pandemic by establishing or strengthening their brands' reputations in the digital era to improve the customer experience and build contactless services (Anser et al., 2020; Dimitrios et al., 2020; Jiang & Wen, 2020; Shin & Kang, 2020), brand positioning to help a business differentiate itself from competitors (Lima & Santos, 2022; Olsen et al., 2022; Singh, Crisafulli, Quamina, et al., 2020; Tongare, 2021), and brand performance (Rezkalla, 2021; Salem et al., 2021; Saraceno, 2021) during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, there is a lack of empirical studies on how consumers' emotions and cognitive perceptions of COVID-19 influence their hotel consumption behaviors because the pandemic is ongoing (Jian et al., 2020).

In response, Edelman (2020) reported that during the COVID-19 pandemic, hotel guests turn to the brands they trust, making brand reputation a more important metric for a hospitality organization's success during this crisis when brand positioning is changing due to the pandemic (Payton, 2021; Van Leeuwen Boomkamp & Vermolen, 2021). According to Coombs's (2007) theory, how a brand responds to a specific crisis influences how consumers perceive that brand. To increase their market share, hotel practitioners need precise information about which hotel brand attributes are important to potential customers (Kim & Han, 2022; Spoerr, 2021).

However, the study aims to achieve this objective through crisis management and brand management theoretical lenses. This initiative leads to the importance of a brand in the survival and sustainability of a business. There is some evidence from the COVID-19 crisis that suggests hotel managers must build and maintain a strong brand (Hasanah et al., 2021; Islam & Hussain, 2022; Pongsakornrungsilp et al., 2021; Taleghani, 2022). In addition, by adopting the right strategies, brands can mitigate the impact of the pandemic on their operations and continue to serve their customers (Hewett & Lemon, 2019; Lombardi et al., 2021; Nawaz et al., 2020; Pongsakornrungsilp et al., 2021). Senior executives should be taught to anticipate crises, which requires them to collaborate with key stakeholders to determine the best course of action (Aljuhmani & Emeagwali, 2017). Therefore, this paper examines how hotel managers can mitigate their brand as a corrective measure to mitigate the effects of a crisis.

## 1.3 Problem Statement

The prolonged crises and disasters have changed the hospitality and tourism industry's outlook, but there is a mismatch between the industry perspective and academic initiative to offer a crisis management solution during the COVID-19 pandemic (Leta & Chan, 2021; Miceli et al., 2021). The COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent lockdowns have caused substantial disruption for individuals, brands, and companies (Morris, 2020; Tien, 2022b). Several researchers revealed that brand with a strong connection between hotel operators and customers would help mitigate the effects of the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic (Fahmy et al., 2020; Knowles et al., 2020; Singh, Crisafulli, & Quamina, 2020).

Previous studies also questioned how crises affect the hotel industry and how the industry adapts to change through innovative techniques (Baghi & Gabrielli, 2021; Bodeklint et al., 2017). Regarding brand crisis-related research, Dutta & Pulligs (2011) conceptualise two types of corporate crisis: performance-related and values-related. Performance-related crises affect expected functional brand benefits, whereas values-related crises affect symbolic and psychological brand benefits, such as brand reputation and positioning (Baghi & Gabrielli, 2021). In contrast, Iyer et al. (2019) stated that the non-significant relationships between price-based positioning, undifferentiation strategy, and brand performance could be attributed to the fact that small firms were excluded from the sample.

Due to a lack of research, Indonesian hotels' internal dimension of crisis management has remained largely unexplored (Hadi & Indradewa, 2019). One is the internal dimension of crisis management, specifically miscommunication during the implementation of services during a pandemic. This is also in line with the findings of Jung and Seock (2016), who found that when a prominent hotel receives more attention, the likelihood of more damage occurring increases a lack of quality and service during a crisis. Hotels must keep customers informed and engaged across multiple channels to build powerful brands with simple, consistent messages that reflect their values and mission (Grilec et al., 2020).

However, if the crisis impacts the brand, it will endure short- and long-term losses (Hansen et al., 2018), and the public will remember the brand that helped them build a positive reputation (Atkinson et al., 2021; Gerritsen et al., 2021). A crisis occurs when an issue with a company or organization becomes widely known and draws negative attention; this can hurt impact the company's reputation and ability to continue operations. To emphasize, Dwiedienawati et al. (2021) expressed that companies must have an effective crisis management team to protect their brand reputation from surviving the crisis.

Following the performance of crisis management in the hotel industry, the abilities of its members, as well as their situational assessment, communication, and teamwork, are crucial (Jankelová et al., 2021). This is further supported by Baghi and Gabrielli (2021), who asserted that the framework for evaluating performance is crucial in a crisis management team. However, no brand performance application can assess the impact of crisis management (Mikušová & Horváthová, 2019).

Apart from that, how research should be conducted in crisis management is up to academic researchers to determine (Baum et al., 2020; Deloitte, 2020b; Yan et al., 2022). In the issues related to crisis management's effect on brands, Bodeklint et al. (2017), one of the researchers whose findings were adopted by the author, discovered that crisis management reduces the negative impact of a crisis over time rather than having an immediate effect on brand reputation. For a brand to maintain its reputation, it must be able to integrate the diverse perspectives of its stakeholders into a cohesive whole (Walsh et al., 2009). As a business, a hotel's brand reputation is one of the most crucial metrics to monitor (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2002; Foroudi, 2018; Gonring, 2008; Reid, 2002).

In addition, O'Neill and Xiao (2006) argue that, along with net operating income and revenue per available room, a property's brand reputation is one of the essential factors in its financial success. As a result of the relationship between brand reputation and financial facets, the role of employees in reputation management should be profoundly analyzed (Esenyel, 2020). Nevertheless, Smaiziene and Jucevicius (2009) show that brand reputation consists solely of stakeholders' holistic evaluation of a company's processes and outcomes in light of their expectations.

From a contractual perspective, there are numerous failures on the part of hotel managers in repositioning their brands for success during the COVID-19 pandemic due to a shift in consumer behavior (Aji et al., 2020; Hall et al., 2021; He & Harris, 2020). Nevertheless, brand positioning can substantially impact consumers' purchasing decisions (Adina et al., 2015; Ke et al., 2020). Several findings indicate that brand managers may select between two fundamentally distinct brand positioning strategies

(Olsen et al., 2022). Consequently, brands must pay particular attention to their brand positioning strategy during COVID-19 in light of these challenging circumstances.

For this reason above, some consumers' heightened awareness of brand positioning during the COVID-19 pandemic may significantly impact market share volatility, even for the most dominant brands (Venkatakrishnan, 2020). However, to stay competitive with the high cost of health technologies, hotel managers must also consider cost rationalization in brand positioning, especially for a new hotel with a tight budget (Dabbous et al., 2020). Furthermore, the effect of crisis management on brand positioning in the four-five-star hotel segment is still lacking, as only limited studies had been conducted in this segment previously (Iyer et al., 2019; Saqib, 2021; Tongare, 2021). However, very few contributions have been observed concerning the mediating role of brand reputation (Joshi & Yadav, 2018) and brand positioning (Iyer et al., 2019; Lima & Santos, 2022; K. N. Liu & Hu, 2021; Shahid, 2019).

After a thorough deliberation in the previous paragraphs and to bridge the gap, this opportunity-based study investigates the relationship between crisis management's impact on brand performance mediated by brand reputation and brand positioning during the COVID-19 pandemic in the context of hotel studies due to the unavailability of the empirical findings. It is essential to realize that studies within this area had viewed crisis management and studied the crisis from an internal organizational perspective, so it addressed different internal components, such as the organizational culture and strategies (Bundy et al., 2017; Tawaha, 2021). In light of this, Verlegh et al. (2021) proposed that management should consider the correlation between increased levels of fear and anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic and increased brand relevance for consumers.

## 1.4 Research Objectives

The occurrence of the COVID-19 pandemic has become one of the factors influencing the present study's direction. During the COVID-19 pandemic, there have been numerous failures on the part of hotel managers in repositioning their brands for success during the COVID-19 pandemic due to a shift in consumer behavior (Aji et al., 2020; Hall et al., 2021; He & Harris, 2020). Brands must have crisis management strategies to respond to crises effectively (Alonso-Almeida & Bremser, 2013; Khraim & Afaishat, 2021; Ratten, 2020). It is crucial to investigate the effect of crisis management measurements and their impact on brand reputation and positioning, ultimately leading to brand performance. Nevertheless, the study of Zimon and Tarighi (2021) indicates that there is no impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on firms' financial performance. However, Guragai and Hutchison (2020) claimed that the financial performance of a firm improves after the firm discontinues its operations.

Thus, to support the objectives and direction of this study, the following research questions have been formulated:

a) To investigate the effect of crisis management initiatives on the brand performance of up-scale hotels in the post-COVID-19 era.
b) To examine the effect of crisis management initiatives on brand reputation and brand positioning of up-scale hotels in the post-COVID-19 era.
c) To examine the effects of brand reputation and positioning on brand performance in an up-scale hotel brand.
d) To investigate the mediating effect of brand reputation and brand positioning in the crisis management –brand performance framework.

## 1.5 Research Question

COVID-19 has emerged as the most popular topic in 2020 and perhaps in the future. It is almost impossible to ignore the impact of COVID-19 on the research study. The brand crisis has long been recognized, but the current crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic may pose an acute threat to the companies' ability to maintain business sustainability. With the lack of research conducted to understand the initiative in the hotel industry, this study will answer the following questions:

a) What is the effect of crisis management initiatives on the brand performance of up-scale hotels in the post-COVID-19 era?
b) What is the effect of crisis management initiatives on the brand reputation and positioning of up-scale hotels in the post-COVID-19 era?
c) What effect do brand reputation and positioning have on brand performance in an up-scale hotel brand?
d) What are the mediating effect of brand reputation and brand positioning in the crisis management – brand performance framework?

## 1.6 Study Framework and Hypotheses

The initial idea for the study is based on the conceptual framework by Mitroff (1988) and Bodeklint et al. (2017), which proposed that the crisis management framework affects  brand perceptions.  The proposed study framework (Figure 1.1) was developed from the literature concerning the hospitality industry. It consists of crisis management as an independent variable, brand reputation, and brand positioning as mediating variables, and brand performance as a dependent variable. This research aims to examine the impact of crisis management in terms of its influence on brand reputation, brand positioning, and brand performance responses. The hypotheses were formulated to guide the present study in achieving its objective. This entails defining the research domain and clearly stating what the researcher is studying, including the factors that fall within the accepted range of research (Simon & Goes, 2013).

According to Akanle et al. (2020), the study's scope refers to the parameters within which it will operate. The scope of the study focused on the dimensionality of crisis management caused by the COVID-19 pandemic on brand reputation, positioning, and performance from the Hotel General Manager's perception. In addition, gain a comprehensive understanding of the various facets of crisis response and how Hotel General Manager's relate to the maintenance and management of hotel brands during a crisis. Thus, the study's limitations are issues and obstacles encountered by the researchers during the study that may influence or impact the results and interpretations of those results (Price & Murnan, 2004). In addition, only 4 and 5-star hotels in Indonesia were used in data collection because these two types of star hotels are considered important to consider the specific attributes and services of different hotels in each category.

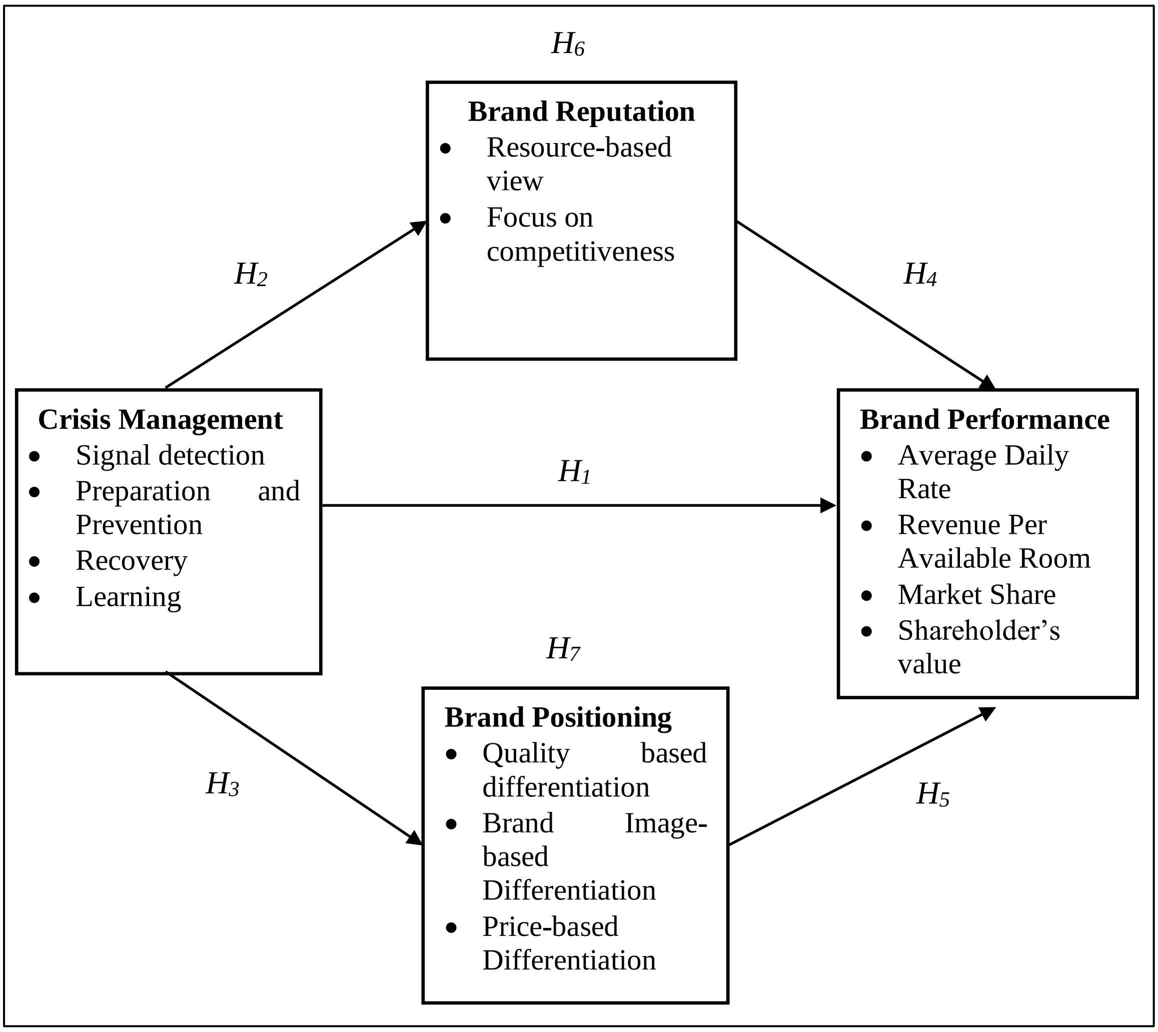



Figure 1.1 Conceptual Framework of Crisis Management and Brand Performance Relationship

Source**: Crisis Management** (Mitroff et al.,1987; Alkhawlani et al., 2016; Coombs, 2007; Faulkner, 2001; Liu et al., 2015); **Brand Reputation** (Foroudi, 2020; Greyser, 2009; Ritter & Pedersen, 2020; Schürhoff, 2021; Smaiziene & Jucevicius, 2009); **Brand Positioning** (Beal & Lockamy, 1999; Iyer et al., 2019; Kintler & Remenova, 2020; Mirzai et al., 2016; Morgan & Rego, 2009; Zehir et al., 2015); **Brand Performance** (Carvell et al., 2016; Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Iyer et al., 2019; O'Neill & Carlbäck, 2011)

From the theoretical framework, seven hypotheses were formulated based on the multiple findings from previous studies. The hypotheses are as follows:

*$H_1$: Crisis management has a significant effect on the up-scale hotel brand's performance during the post-COVID-19 pandemic.*

*$H_2$: Crisis management has a significant effect on the up-scale hotel brand's reputation during the post-COVID-19 pandemic.*

*$H_3$: Crisis management has a significant effect on the up-scale hotel brand's positioning during the post-COVID-19 pandemic.*

*$H_4$: The brand reputation of the up-scale hotel has a significant effect on its brand performance during the post-COVID-19 pandemic.*

*$H_5$: The brand positioning of the up-scale hotel has a significant effect on its brand performance during the post-COVID-19 pandemic.*

*$H_6$: The brand reputation of the up-scale hotel mediates the relationship between crisis management and brand performance during the post-COVID-19 pandemic.*

*$H_7$: The brand positioning of the up-scale hotel mediates the relationship between crisis management and brand performance during the post-COVID-19 pandemic.*

## 1.7 Significance of Study

The results and findings of this study are anticipated to have both theoretical and practical significance and be of interest to academics and industry professionals, as well as hotel owners and managers who serve as service providers and customer intermediaries. While research into the effects, assessments, and responses to crises has received more attention, research into hotel crises from various perspectives and contexts is still possible.

### 1.7.1 Academic Perspectives

Despite the growing interest in crisis management, brand reputation, brand positioning, and brand performance, there has been very little academic research on hotel industry recovery in the post-COVID-19 period. First, from a scholarly point of view, a more theoretical and analytical approach to crisis management and brand reputation (Paper & Deren, 2013), brand positioning (Serezliev, 2020), and brand performance (Clauss et al., 2021) suggest ways in which they intersect and interconnect through an intermediary approach. However, through an extensive review of findings in the study of crisis management, organizational behavior, and consumer behavior, several potential relationships have been established and tested to confirm and refute the existing body of knowledge. By considering the simplification of the model, the measurement model presented in this study is formulated based on the gaps in previous research on crisis management and brand frameworks. As a result, the simplified model with rigorous empirical findings will make this study a reliable source for future crisis-brand-related studies.

Second, some scholars characterize crisis management as multidimensional (Bernhardsdottir, 2015; Mueller, 2010). However, studies examining crisis management from a one-dimensional perspective are limited. Few existing studies on crisis management adoption in the Indonesian hotel industry examine crisis management from a one-dimensional perspective, focusing on a single type of crisis management. The authors suggest that using a uni-dimensional approach to crisis management to measure how companies respond to their brand during the COVID-19 pandemic, this research offers a more constructive analysis for measuring brand performance results. In addition, the linkage of experience, reputation, and positioning values will also provide a new dimension in crisis management - a brand performance framework that was previously based on one specific category.

Furthermore, although theories related to crisis management are profound from the macro perspective, few studies look into the micro-level that can become the reference for the industry players during this unprecedented crisis. In addition, the studies found in the literature were preliminary, thus making it inappropriate for the hotel industries to adopt (Çoban & Özel, 2022; Darvishmotevali et al., 2020; Lai & Wong, 2020; Wu et al., 2020). Contrary to expectations, some firms in the hospitality industry have already adapted their business models successfully (Breier et al., 2021). This study offers complex modeling techniques to gather instruments for measuring crisis management by looking into internal resources that redefine the upscale hotel segment's brand reputation and positioning.

Third, the study's findings will enrich the theory development in the service discipline, particularly explaining the significant and positive effect of crisis management caused by the COVID-19 pandemic and the outcome mediating variables toward brand performance. A linear relationship between crisis management and brand performance is considered too straightforward and has low explanatory power if the organization is quick response and well-managed (Farooq et al., 2021; Schürhoff, 2021). Thus, by introducing mediating variables, the relationship can be further scrutinized by comparing the size of the mediating effect to the independent-dependent variable relationship. There is no denying that each outcome variable (i.e., crisis management, brand reputation, and brand positioning) can act independently, but combining them in one model can better affect brand performance as a sole outcome variable.

Fourth, the study's findings will make it worthwhile for researchers to understand the importance of internal resource management, addressing the hospitality industry's lack of a link between crisis management and brand performance (Golubeva, 2021; Rezkalla, 2021). Furthermore, there are limitations of the brand studies conducted after the crisis caused by the COVID-19 era (Fahmy et al., 2020). This study focuses on the post-crisis period, which has received less attention despite its significance. In addition, based on the impact of COVID-19 on the hotel industry, integrating potential instruments for crisis management will offer a new value proposition for the hotel players that can enhance the existing brand performance (Baghi & Gabrielli, 2021; Serezliev, 2020). It also opens to a more structured and measurable technique in crisis management that contributes to the new body of knowledge in turning risk into opportunities.

### 1.7.2 Practical Perspective

From a practical standpoint, studying is essential because it will enable hotel managers to comprehend how brands and organizations communicate and respond following a crisis (Bundy et al., 2017; Singh, Crisafulli, & Quamina, 2020). Hence, during the global pandemic crisis, numerous businesses have adapted their operations to safeguard their employees and continue to serve their customers (Fahmy et al., 2020; Garrido-Moreno et al., 2021; Le & Phi, 2021; Pongsakornrungsilp et al., 2021; Ritter & Pedersen, 2020). Indirectly, this study will assist hotel managers in looking at the impact of crisis management from multiple perspectives rather than a single one.

Aside from that, the findings of this studied have been helpful to hotel managers in developing appropriate crisis management strategies or suggestions to maximize operating profits through the brand during the pandemic (Wu et al., 2020). Nevertheless, some businesses have demonstrated greater resilience than others, rapidly adjusting their strategies to meet the challenges and take advantage of the opportunities presented by the crisis. By measuring the crisis management items, this study will assist the executives in taking the critical crisis management measurement for their hotel's strategic decision-making. In addition, assists the organization in developing a crisis management strategy for the future by combining operations, marketing, and finance within a strategic framework.

Subsequently, based on the relationship outlined in this model, hotel managers can improve brand reputation and brand positioning as perceived by consumers to enhance hotel brand performance. Creating a brand's reputation and positioning will help the industry compete with these new challenges and change how companies conduct business regarding the sale of products and services during a crisis (Iyer et al., 2019; Kucharska, 2020; Santoso, 2020). However, under uncertainty, brand evaluations are more difficult to revise when positioning was not aligned with the challenge. In this case, brand positioning fails, and businesses cannot benefit from brand positioning (Zhiwei, 2021). Consequently, high-end brands and products must meet the needs of the crisis. In addition, this study provides a solution for brand reputation, such as improving the resources-based view and focusing on competitiveness during the pandemic. Moreover, the positive crisis management --brand roles will assist hoteliers in analyzing their competitive advantages in terms of products and services offered, allowing them to refine and adapt their marketing strategies to meet customers' needs.

## 1.8 Definition of Key Terms

This section highlights the definition of key terms that were used in the context of this study:

COVID-19

Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus (World Health Organization, 2020).

Crisis Management

Crisis management is a process in which the crisis indicators are collected and evaluated, and the appropriate steps are taken and enforced to experience a minimal loss in a crisis (Fener & Cevik, 2015).

Brand Reputation

Brand reputation is formed as an aggregation of images, accumulating in customers' minds over time into an overall evaluation of a company; it can be assumed that an individual global stakeholder's emotional association with an organization has an impact on the image he/she forms of it (Foroudi, 2018).

Brand Positioning

Brand positioning creates its image, distinctive properties, positive associations, and values in consumers' minds to create a sustainable trademark image and ensure consumers' attachment to this trademark (Fayvishenko, 2018).

Brand Performance

Brand performance is defined as the success of a brand within the market (Ismail et al., 2021).

## 1.9 Structure of The Thesis

This thesis is divided into five chapters, beginning with an introduction that identifies and discusses relevant aspects of the problem set, the study's objectives and questions, the research design, the significance of the study, and definitions of key terms. The second chapter examines the existing literature on the subject of the study, which is discussed in several board sections. The first section of this chapter discusses the evolution of crisis management – brand performance during the COVID-19 pandemic in upscale hotels in Indonesia, including their history and growth. In addition, the published literature pertinent to COVID-19 pandemic crisis management, brand positioning, brand reputation, and brand performance is considered. This is based on previous research conducted in various settings and industries until the hotel industry and is highlighted in various sections of this chapter. This chapter also includes the theoretical framework and related hypotheses posited in this study in the last section of the chapter. The subsequent chapter, methodology, focuses on the research approach, population and sampling design, measurement, data collection procedures, and statistical methods employed in this study. The fourth chapter discusses the quantitative analysis and the study's findings. Finally, the fifth chapter presents a summary of the findings, limitations, recommendations, implications, and conclusions.

# CHAPTER 2
# LITERATURE REVIEW

## 2.1 Preamble

This section discusses the progress of literature on the variables of interest. The chapter provides an overview of the theoretical foundation, which is intended to provide explanations and justifications for developing the conceptual framework for the current study. In the initial stages of this investigation, information from previous studies was gathered to demonstrate the relationship between various factors. These factors may be associated with crisis and branding and the successful development of this topic. Crisis management and brand development dynamics warrant extensive reviews to understand how to respond to changes in the external environment, market, and consumer perceptions—leveraging management strategies to achieve key brand performance objectives. The final section of this chapter includes the preceding literature and three pertinent theories by constructing the theoretical framework and research hypothesis.

## 2.2 The Indonesian Hotel and Classification System

Since the Dutch colonial era, commercially managed accommodations in Indonesia have existed, such as the Binnenhof Hotel in Bogor (now Hotel Salak The Heritage), West Java, constructed in 1856 by Albertus Jacobus Duymaer van Twist (Pulungan, 2022), next, the Savoy Homan Hotel in Bandung, West Java, constructed in 1888 by Mr. A. Homann, a German immigrant (Savoy Homann Hotel, n.d.), and the Mij De Boer Hotel in Medan, now the Inna Dharma Deli Hotel, North Sumatra, constructed in 1898 by Workum native and Dutch businessman Aeint Herman de Boer (Dinas Pariwisata Kota Medan, 2018; Syakim, 2022). Then, the fourth oldest hotel, which was founded in the Dutch colonial era, namely the Grand Hotel de Djokya operated in 1911 (founders unknown) and is now the Inna Garuda Yogyakarta Hotel, Yogyakarta (Prasasti, 2021). These three historic properties are now operated by Hotel Indonesia Group (HIG), a consortium brand for hotels owned by the Indonesian government.

Subsequently, during the Indonesian government, Hotel Indonesia, the first hotel in Indonesia, opened on July 16, 1962, and was operated by Intercontinental Hotels until

1974 (Intercontinental Hotels Corporation, 1962). Initiated officially by the first President, Soekarno, Hotel Indonesia opened its doors in 1962 as the first five-star hotel in Southeast Asia to offer international standards (Agmasari, 2018). The hotel's central location in the city is highlighted by the "Welcome Statue," which was erected to welcome visitors to Jakarta for the 4th Asian Games in 1962. On August 5, 1962, the first President of Indonesia, Ir. Soekarno officially opened the hotel in time for the Asian Games IV. Abel Sorensen, an American architect, and his American wife, Wendy, created the design for the Hotel Indonesia. The hotel's catchphrase is "A Dramatic Symbol of Free Nations Working Together," it covers an area of 25,082 square meters. The Hotel Indonesia opened for business on July 16, 1962, operated by Intercontinental Hotels, which ran the hotel until 1974.

Since international hotel chains managed several government hotels, the implementation of star hotel standards in Indonesia began. When classifying hotels by quality, ratings are based on laws approved by national or local governments or criteria established by independent organizations, such as hotel associations, national consumer travel organizations, guidebooks, travel websites, and volunteer organizations (Guillet & Law, 2010). Hotels are typically rated on a scale from one to five stars, and this scale is universally understood and used. Fang, Ye, Kucukusta, and Law (2016) argue that a hotel's overall quality can be inferred from the number of stars awarded to it by a credible organization. However, if the quality is understood to meet the customer's wants and needs, then the hotel rating system is a reliable indicator of a hotel's standard of service (Fernández & Bedia, 2004).

In some countries, such as Indonesia, autonomous governments have the authority to legislate in this area and use their criteria when assigning hotels a star rating; consequently, hotels within the same nation use different classification systems. Font (2002) also mentions the application and certification of standards to meet national regulations. Hotels are categorized by the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy with the Business Certification Agency (Lembaga Sertifikasi Usaha, or LSU). Mid-2018 the Indonesian government introduced a new licensing procedure system: Government Regulation No. 24 of 2018 on Integrated Business Licensing E-Service (the "OSS Regulation"). Government Regulation Number. 24 of 2018, dated June 21, 2018, concerns Electronically Integrated Business Licensing Services ("PP 24/2018"), which regulates the licensing system through Online Single Submission ("OSS").

Following the publication of Omnibus Law Number 11 of 2020, dated November

2, 2020, on Job Creation (the "Job Creation Law"), which introduces risk-based business licensing (the "Risk-Based Business Licensing"), the government issued Government Regulation Number 5 of 2021 on the Administration of Risk-Based Business Licensing ("GR 5/2021") on February 2, 2021. Government Regulation Number 5 of 2021 replaces and repeals Government Regulation No. 24 of 2018, dated June 21, 2018, on the Electronically Integrated Business Licensing Service ("GR 24/2018"), which regulates the licensing system through Online Single Submission ("OSS"). The Government Regulation Number 5 of 2021 was enacted on February 2, 2021.

The new system is often called the “Online Single Submission (OSS)” system. The government is attempting to implement a centralized licensing system. Following the OSS system, all business licenses must be issued through this system. The Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy/Head of the Tourism and Creative Economy Agency issued Regulation Number 10 of 2018 regarding Integrated Business Licensing E-Service in the Tourism Sector (the "Tourism OSS Regulation") in response to the OSS Regulation (The Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy/Head of the Tourism and Creative Economy Agency Number.10, 2018).

Risk-based business licensing in the tourism sector is implemented through the online single submission system since the business licensing process is carried out as regulated in Government Regulation 5 of 2021 on Implementation of Risk-Based Business Licensing. The business licensing requirements for each level of risk classification are as follows in Table 2.1:

Table 2.1
Risk Categorization Based on Appendix I of Government Regulation No. 5 of 2021

| **KBLI Code** | **KBLI Title** | **Land Area** | **Risk Level** | **Standard requirements for Business licensing** |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 55110: Star Hotel 55120: Non star hotel | Hotels with less than 61 rooms or less than 41 employees | Less than 4,000 $m^2$ | Low | Business Identification Number (NIB/Nomor Induk Berusaha) + K3L certificate |
| | Hotel with 61-100 rooms or 41-99 employees | 4,000-6,000 $m^2$ | Medium-low | NIB + Standards Certification (SPPL, CHSE, Accommodation Health Eligibility Certificate). |
| | Hotel with 101-200 rooms or 100-200 employees | More than 6,000 $m^2$ to less than 10,000 $m^2$ | Medium-high | NIB + Standards Certification (SPPL, CHSE, Accommodation Health Eligibility Certificate). |
| | Hotel with more than 200 | More than | High | NIB + Standards |

| KBLI Code | KBLI Title | Land Area | Risk Level | Standard requirements for Business licensing |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | rooms or more than 200 employees | 10,000 $m^2$ | | Certification (SPPL, CHSE, Accommodation Health Eligibility Certificate) + Business Permit |

Source: Government of Indonesia (2021)

In Regulation number 4 of 2021, issued by the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy of Indonesia, the standards for hotel operations were outlined as shown in Table 2.2.

Table 2.2
The formula for Star Rating Hotel in Indonesia based on Risk-Based Business Licensing

| **No.** | **Criteria** | Medium-low risk | | Medium-high risk | | High risk | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | No. of Questions | Min. Weightage % | No. of Questions | Min. Weightage % | No. of Questions | Min. Weightage % |
| 1. | Facilities | 4 | 100 | 9 | 100 | 10 | 100 |
| 2. | Organization and Human Resource | 6 | 90 | 9 | 90 | 10 | 90 |
| 3. | Service | 2 | 90 | 3 | 90 | 3 | 90 |
| 4. | Product | 4 | 90 | 5 | 90 | 6 | 90 |
| 5. | Management System | 2 | 90 | 4 | 90 | 4 | 90 |

Source: Regulation of The Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy/Head of The Tourism and Creative Economy Agency of The Republic of Indonesia Number 4 of 2021 on Standards of Business Activities on The Implementation of Risk-Based Business Licences in The Tourism, (2021)

All in all, five core areas are assessed by the Business Certification Agency (Lembaga Sertifikasi Usaha, or LSU). LSU will issue hotel business certificates based on the risk to both star and non-star hotels. The Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy/Head of the Tourism and Creative Economy Agency, in conjunction with the local government, will oversee hotel business activities through the OSS System no later than the fourth week of January of the following year, prioritizing the principles of transparency, accountability, and data sharing while ensuring data confidentiality. The following table (Table 2.3) summarizes the items assessed by LSU for the star rating formula based on risk-based business licensing.

Table 2.3
The formula for Star Rating Hotel in Indonesia based on Risk-Based Business Licensing

| No. | Criteria | Item |
|---|---|---|
| 1 | Facilities | 1) Guest and service lift for buildings with at least 5 (five) floors; clean, well-maintained, and equipped with periodic test reports and CCTV.<br>2) The corridors/hallows have rescue access, fire extinguishers, and adequate air circulation and lighting.<br>3) The hotel has clean public restrooms that are separated for male and female guests and adequate air circulation and lighting.<br>4) The hotel has a public restroom for guests with special needs.<br>5) The hotel provides office space with work tools and equipment, good air circulation and lighting.<br>6) The hotel provides employee rooms with a dining area, covered trash cans, and clean, well-maintained bathrooms and toilets for both male and female employees.<br>7) The hotel has clean water installations, and quality standards are routinely tested.<br>8) The hotel provides a kitchen with floors, walls, and ceilings that are strong, safe, and easy to maintain, drainage equipped with a grease trap (grace trap), a stainless kitchen hood equipped with a grease filter, an air circulation system, and sound lighting system, first aid kit, separate closed bins for wet and dry waste, fire extinguishers, fire blankets for extinguishing management (fire suppression) for medium-high risk hotels, and early detection of gas leaks and automatic disconnection of energy sources for high-risk hotels.<br>9) The hotel provides temporary bins for organic and non-organic garbage for medium-high risk and high-risk hotel categories.<br>10) The hotel has a Wastewater Treatment Plant; regardless of whether it is managed independently, regionally, or by the local government, routine testing of wastewater quality standards is conducted for medium-high-risk and high-risk hotel categories.<br>11) The hotel provides employee health examination rooms equipped with medical equipment for medium-high-risk hotels and staffed by medical professionals for high-risk hotels. |
| 2. | Organization and Human Resource | 1) Organizational structure: Job descriptions for each position, accompanied by SOPs or work implementation instructions (manually)<br>2) Have an authorized occupational health and safety (P2K3) committee or team for at least 100 employees.<br>3) Hotels have firm regulations.<br>4) The hotel has a program for occupational health checks for employees for medium-high risk and high-risk hotel categories.<br>5) The hotel adheres to sanitation, hygiene, and environmental standards (PEST control and general cleaning) for medium-high risk and high-risk hotel categories.<br>6) Have a well-organized Emergency Response Team that follows daily checklists for medium-high risk and high-risk hotel categories.<br>7) Implementation of fire prevention and management procedures or other emergency procedures for medium-high-risk and high-risk hotel categories<br>8) Perform routine inspections of Occupational Health and Safety equipment (K3) for medium-high-risk hotels and high-risk hotel categories.<br>9) The hotel has a schedule for the Preventive Maintenance Program for medium-high risk and high-risk hotel categories.<br>10) Prioritizing domestic/regional goods and labor for medium-high risk and high-risk hotel categories.<br>11) Employees wear uniforms emblazoned with the company's name and/or logo for medium-high risk and high-risk hotel categories. |

| No. | Criteria | Item |
|---|---|---|
| 3. | Service | 1) Cleaning services for guest, public, and employee facilities are available for medium-low, medium-high-risk, and high-risk hotels.<br>2) For medium-to-high-risk and high-risk hotels, a security service with room for security officers and CCTV installations (surveillance cameras) is available.<br>3) Available health services, such as information about the nearest doctor, hospital, or clinic, should be documented for medium-low-risk, medium-high-risk, and high-risk hotel categories. |
| 4. | Product | 1) Buildings designated as hotel businesses, clean and well-maintained with good air circulation and lighting, with clear and easily visible signs for safe exits or evacuation signs for medium-low-risk hotels, medium-high-risk hotels, and high-risk hotel categories.<br>2) Clean, well-maintained lobby with air circulation, good lighting for medium-low risk hotels, equipped with accessibility (ramp) for guests with physical disabilities for medium-high risk hotels and high-risk hotels.<br>3) The front office is outfitted with outlets/counters (consisting of tables and chairs)/facilities for guests checking in/checking out in medium-low risk hotels and guest luggage storage in medium-high risk and high-risk hotels.<br>4) Restaurant with chairs and tables, good ventilation and lighting, clean and well-maintained for medium-low risk hotels, medium-high risk hotels, and high-risk hotel categories.<br>5) The bedroom includes a bathroom, equipped bed and its accessories, doors with safety locks, windows with safety devices, lighting and good air circulation, trash cans, room location plans, and self-evacuation instructions for medium-low risk hotels, equipped with smoke detectors and sprinklers for medium-high risk hotels, and equipped with energy-saving systems, smoke detectors and sprinklers for high-risk hotels.<br>6) Bedrooms for guests with physical limitations (1 room for guests with physical limitations for every multiple of 200 rooms, or following applicable regulations) in hotels with a high risk. |
| 5. | Management System | 1) Have SOP documents and/or business management implementation instructions for medium-low-risk hotels, medium-high-risk hotels, and high-risk hotel categories.<br>2) Implement documented Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and/or implementation instructions for medium-low risk hotels, medium-high-risk hotels, and high-risk hotel categories.<br>3) Have SOP documents and/or instructions for implementing internal business management audit work for hotels classified as medium-to-high risk and high risk.<br>4) Implement SOP and/or implementation instructions for business management internal audit work documentation for medium-to-high-risk and high-risk hotels. |

Source: Regulation of The Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy/Head of The Tourism and Creative Economy Agency of The Republic of Indonesia Number 4 of 2021 on Standards of Business Activities on The Implementation of Risk-Based Business Licences in The Tourism, (2021)

## 2.3 Hotel Industry during COVID-19 Pandemics

In light of the COVID-19 crisis, the hotel business faced various challenges in a complex and rapidly changing manner (Ritter & Pedersen, 2020). In the initial phase of governments' responses to the pandemic, businesses were either temporarily closed due to a direct government order (e.g., hotels, restaurants, pubs), the absence of demand due to travel bans (e.g., airlines), a voluntary action to protect the health of employees, or a forced decision due to supply chain disruptions (Ivanov et al., 2020). It is evident that an abundance of conceptual and empirical studies on COVID-19 has been conducted within a short period in 19 quartiles one (Q1) and quartile two (Q2) tourism and hospitality journals in Social Science Citation Index (SSCI) (Huang & Wang, 2023). Most of the studies intended to observe the influences of COVID-19 on the hospitality and tourism industry (Bulin & Tenie, 2020; Ivanov et al., 2020; Jaipuria et al., 2021; Koh, 2020; Niewiadomski, 2020; Qiu et al., 2020), many of which focused on especially the hotel industry (Aji et al., 2020; Bajrami et al., 2021; Baum et al., 2020; Baum & Hai, 2020; Breier et al., 2021; Deloitte, 2020a; Glusac, 2020; Hao et al., 2020; Ivan, 2020; Jiang & Wen, 2020; Jones & Comfort, 2020; Le & Phi, 2021; Napierała et al., 2020; Pavlatos et al., 2021; Peco-Torres et al., 2021; Ritter & Pedersen, 2020; Teng et al., 2021; Vo-Thanh et al., 2020, 2022a; Webster et al., 2020).

At the beginning of May 2020, the United Nations World Travel Organization (UNWTO) stated that international tourism was down 22 percent in Q1 and could decline by 60-80 percent over the whole year, which is equivalent to 67 million fewer international tourists up to March that translate into US$80 billion in loss of revenues (UNWTO, 2020). The Asia-Pacific area is the hardest affected by the pandemic-related disaster, in which Indonesia and Thailand are the nations with the most strongly affected tourism destinations (Bulin & Tenie, 2020). Due to the travel restrictions imposed by governments, the hotel industry witnessed a dramatic fall in the occupancy rate because of the cancellation or postponement of trips for leisure or business purposes (Jiang & Wen, 2020). Furthermore, many planned trips were cancelled due to perceived health risks and emotional threats (Gursoy et al., 2020; Peco-Torres et al., 2021; Sigala, 2020; Wen et al., 2021). All in all, the COVID-19 crisis posed risks of (i) a health-associated threat because of the opportunity of falling unwell all through the journey (Roehl & Fesenmaier, 1992); and (ii) an emotionally-driven threat precipitated both through the pressure of being in direct contact with hotel personnel and different customers who may be infected (Otoo & Kim, 2018).

In Indonesia, the hospitality industry contributes to the expansion of the tourism sector (Sulistyadi & Eddyono, 2017). They stated that tourism could not be separated from hotel accommodations, and the hotel is the primary tourist infrastructure. Developing standards and certification programs is significant in tourism (Strambach & Surmeier, 2013). The government, through the Ministry of Tourism and Creative

Economy, encourages tourism businesses to pay attention to aspects of cleanliness, health, safety, and environmental sustainability through the stipulation of Regulation of the Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy/Head of the Tourism and Creative Economy Agency Number 13 of 2020 concerning Standards and Certification of Hygiene, Health, Safety, and Environmental Sustainability of the Tourism Sector during the handling of the COVID-19 Pandemic in Indonesia (Minister of Tourism and Creative Economy/Head of The Tourism and Creative Economy Agency of The Republic of Indonesia, 2020).

## 2.4 Crisis

A crisis is an unfolding situation that may not be contained within a single region or country (Mikušová & Horváthová, 2019). The earlier definition of crisis by O'Connor (1981) and Starn (1971) noted that crisis is defined as a 'turning point' and a 'decision.' For an economist, a crisis is defined as an interruption of capital accumulation, while for a capitalist, a crisis is defined as 'objective' processes of system dysfunction or disintegration (O'Connor, 1981). Numerous researchers have agreed that a crisis can be defined as a disturbance that physically affects a system and threatens its basic assumptions, subjective feelings, and the core of its existence (Hartmann, 2011). A broader perspective has been adopted by Bilić et al. (2017), in which they argue that a crisis is termed as any issue, drawback, or disruption that triggers an adverse stakeholder reaction that affects the business and financial strength of the organization. Before that, Pearson and Clair (1998) defined a crisis as a low-probability or high-impact event threatening the organization's viability. It is distinguished by the ambiguity of cause, effect, and means of resolution, as well as a belief that decisions must be made quickly.

Concerning the work-related study, Appelhans and Kupferer (2002) stated that a crisis could affect a person's ability, such as loss of health, ability to continue working, loss of social support, financial issues, and self-image. A preferred approach to defining organizational crisis differs from the organization and stakeholder-focused understanding of the crisis in existing literature (Pollard & Hotho, 2006). Jacobsen and Simonsen (2011) stated that a crisis manifests when an individual, based on subjective intentionality, attributes meaning to something, which is acknowledged intersubjectively by the organization and formalizes a particular behaviour. However, the main objective of crisis response is to reduce uncertainty between citizens seeking services and organizations attempting to manage risk and ensure operational continuity (Grace & Tham, 2021; Reynolds & Seeger, 2005; Walsh & Walker, 2016). On the other hand, Hartmann (2011) categorized crisis into four major groups as follows:

- Natural Crisis events are caused by nature, for instance, floods, earthquakes, hurricanes, tsunamis, and volcanic eruptions.
- Epidemics spread widely and quickly throughout multiple countries: swine flu, SARS, foot and mouth disease, and the COVID-19 outbreak.
- Technology Failures are related to nuclear meltdowns, computer irregularities, aircraft crashes, and power blackouts.
- Civil Conflicts are mainly based on political tensions between different countries, such as war, terrorism, strikes, and demonstrations, and non-political civil conflicts include suicides, sabotage, and violence.

Various models have been developed to understand crisis and mitigation, where Fink (1986) outlined a four-stage crisis model comprising the prodromal, acute, chronic, and resolution stages. He argues that the prodromal stage encompasses the time between the first symptoms and the crisis eruption. According to Fink, during this period, crisis managers should proactively monitor, identify warning signs of an impending crisis, and attempt to prevent or contain it. The acute phase of a crisis begins when the precipitating event is triggered. This stage involves activating crisis managers and their respective plans. The chronic phase encompasses the long-term effects of the crisis, such as when teams repair damaged buildings and roads after a flood or a hurricane. The resolution phase demonstrates the conclusion of the crisis and is a time for internalizing what went wrong through root-cause analysis and implementing changes to prevent a recurrence. Several authors, such as Zamoum and Gorpe (2018) and Rozanov et al. (2020), have contributed to crisis management by adopting the Fink crisis concept to reflect their area of focus. They suggested that the response to a crisis should be determined by the degree of responsibility assigned to the company.

### 2.4.1 Crisis Management

Crisis management is a continuous and holistic endeavor efficiently carried out by organizations to understand and avoid a crisis and resolve those that occur, taking the needs of stakeholders into account (Alzoubi & Jaaffar, 2020). Crisis management is a process in which the crisis indicators are collected and evaluated, and the appropriate steps are taken and enforced to experience a minimal loss in a crisis (Fener & Cevik, 2015). Similarly, Pearson & Clair (1998) defined crisis management as “a systematic attempt by an organization and its stakeholders to manage or prevent crises from occurring, such that key partners believe the success outcomes outweigh the failure outcomes.” They added that crisis management includes managing the industry from terrorism, natural disasters, political instability, war, and epidemics. To accomplish this goal, long before signs of an imminent crisis, the company’s senior executives must strongly support and engage in crisis management efforts (Aljuhmani & Emeagwali, 2017). The key to crisis management for a company is to act proactively and not to be reactive when a business is ready to face a crisis, even though it is never 100 percent possible to prepare for a crisis because it is unpredictable (Hartmann, 2011).

However, historical and contemporary corporate behavior is crucial in building, maintaining, and defending a reputation in a crisis. Greyser (2009) notes that honesty in communications and substantive credibility in the form of behavior is most likely to restore trust and save a brand in crisis, based on his analysis of numerous corporate brand crisis experiences. However, the most crucial actions are those required to construct a “reputational reservoir” as a solid foundation for a company’s reputation. According to Payton (2021) and Greyser (2009), effective crisis management strategies reduce the impact of organizational disruptions on brand reputation and profitability. In addition, competitive pressures worsened some businesses’ situations due to a shift in comparative and competitive advantages (Wut et al., 2021). Subsequently, crises are sequences of events that can have significant negative consequences for an organization if they are not managed effectively (Coombs, 2007a, 2015). In addition, during the current COVID-19 pandemic, many businesses suddenly need substantial business model adaptation (Ritter & Pedersen, 2020). In one of the most cited crisis management models, Ritchie (2004) argues that effective crisis communication is essential for tourism to survive and recover from a global crisis. He classified crisis management into seven stages: prevention and planning, strategic implementation, evaluation and control, crisis communication and control, resource management, stakeholder collaboration and resolution, evaluation, and feedback. However, recent reviews indicate that tourism crisis and disaster management research primarily focuses on recovery after a disaster and provides little insight into communication during a long-term global crisis, such as the coronavirus pandemic (Aliperti et al., 2019; Ritchie & Jiang, 2019).

Many models have been developed as part of a more considerable effort to build organizational capacity and skill to anticipate, avoid, and mitigate crises. A crisis management model is a conceptual framework for all aspects of preparing for, preventing, coping with, and recovering from a crisis (Mikušová & Horváthová, 2019). Some authors argue that crisis management began in a crisis communication research article first published in 1975 in the Journal of Public Relations Review and Public Relations Review, revealing the theoretical framework of crisis management (Zamoum & Gorpe, 2018). They revealed that the crisis management theories are from public relations and management, including rhetorical theories such as image restoration and apology theory. On the conformity side, as the environment becomes more complex, it becomes increasingly apparent that the rate at which organisations learn may determine their ability to survive or adapt (Schwandt & Marquardt, 2000).

Subsequently, a crisis, regardless of its type or severity, can potentially cause organisations and individuals catastrophic or irreparable harm (Mitroff, 1988). Theory of issue and crisis management. The term issues management was coined in 1976 by Howard Chase. In his words:

> *"Issues management is the capacity to understand, mobilize, coordinate, and direct all strategic and policy-making functions, and all public affairs/public relations skills, toward the achievement of one objective: meaningful participation in the creation of public policy that affects personal and institutional destiny"* (p. 209).

Mitroff (1987) offers a four-stage model for crisis management. This model is segmented into four points, beginning with detection and continuing with repair, assessment, and detection. The first stage is signal detection, where people look for warning signs and take preventive steps. The indicator "detection" is placed before the sloping line labeled "prevention/preparation" to indicate that it is difficult to prevent or prepare for crises that have not been detected systematically and comprehensively. Most people and organisations prioritise detection over prevention. Thus, detection logically occurs before prevention for most people and organizations. Although it is possible to unintentionally prevent what has not been detected, in such cases, prevention is based on luck and chance rather than deliberate organisational intervention. Second, the model demonstrates that no organisation can prevent every possible crisis. Indeed, the primary objective of planning and crisis management is not to prevent every crisis. However, constant testing and revision of plans should enable an organisation to deal with crises more effectively because such efforts teach the organisation how to roll with the punches. Prevention and planning include safety policies, maintenance procedures, environmental impact audits, crisis audits, emergency planning, and worker training. The third stage represents the significant structures and mechanisms an organisation has in place to guide recovery, in which individuals attempt to return to normalcy, and the final stage is learning, in which people reflect on how the crisis was handled and draw lessons. Furthermore, Figure 2.1 depicts the concept of the Mitroff model.

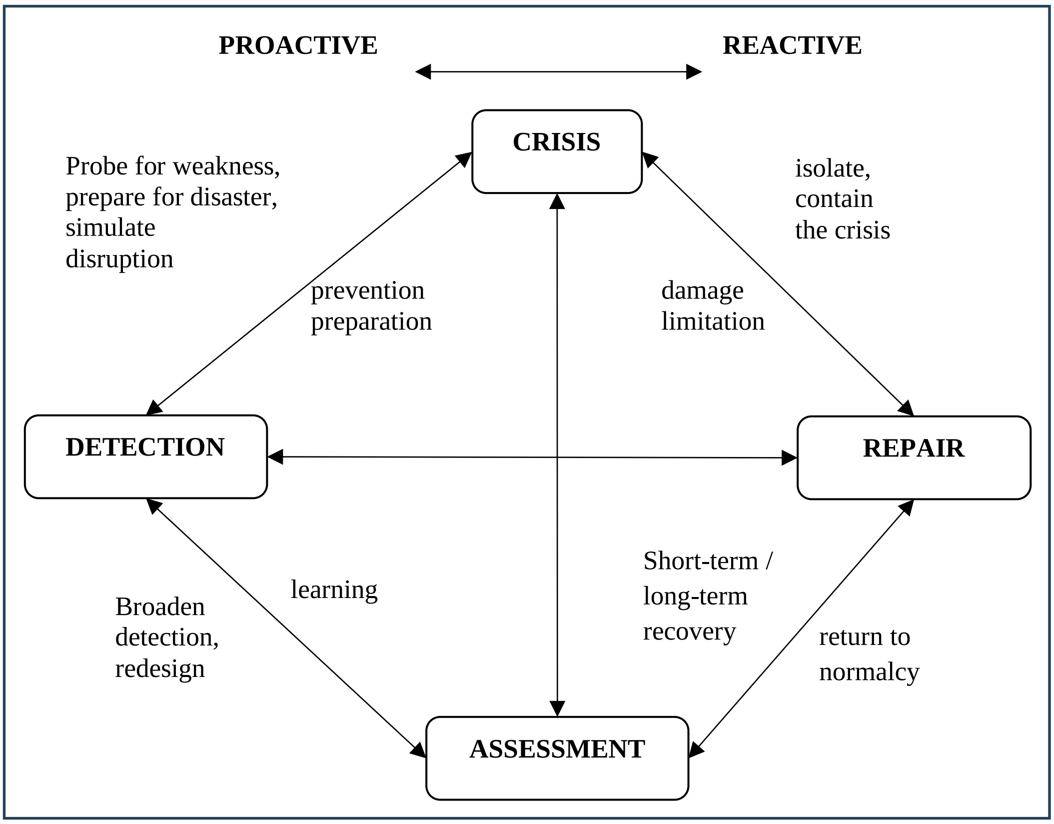



Figure 2.1 A Preventive Crisis Management Model

Source: Mitroff et al. (1987)

Therefore, most models emphasize taking the initiative rather than being reactive. In one of the most cited crisis management models, Pearson and Mitroff (1993) described five crisis stages, which also follow a similar life cycle progression in particular crisis signal detection, probing, and prevention (i.e., probing refers to looking for risk factors), containment, recovery, and learning. First, signal detection identifies the indicators of potential organizational problems. Signal detection analyses the indicators of potential organizational crisis or early warning signal (Fink, 1986). The next stage is preparation or prevention. This phase involves members of an organization identifying recognized crises and determining preventative measures (Coombs, 2007a). Like Fink's prodromal stage, the pre-crisis stage is characterized by signal recognition, probing, and prevention. The third phase is containment and damage limitation. This phase entailed the occurrence of the crisis and the implementation of measures to prevent its spread. Like Fink’s chronic stage, damage containment focuses on the steps taken following the crisis. Like Fink's advanced stages, damage containment focuses on the actions taken after the crisis. The fourth step, recovery, demonstrates that the most prepared businesses have short- and long-term business recovery plans. Recovery also must take the opportunity to resume normal operations. The final part of crisis management is learning, which involves proper contemplation and critical analysis of the lessons learned from the crisis. In responding to the abovementioned critiques directed at crisis management, previous researchers argued that the recovery and learning stages distinguish Fink and Mitroff's different approaches (Boudreaux, 2005). According to Fink (1986), organizations recover at varied rates.

In contrast, Mitroff emphasizes the possibility of strengthening crisis managers in a specific crisis event, whereas Fink is solely concerned with the recovery timeline. The second difference is that Pearson and Mitroff's (1993) model enables the company to implement what it has learned from the crisis into its organization’s strategy. Besides that, Herrero and Cornelius (2009) align with Pearson and Mitroff (1993), which match the stages by incorporating issues management, planning-prevention, crisis, and post-crisis. Figure 2.2. depicts the concept of Pearson and Mitroff's (1993) model.

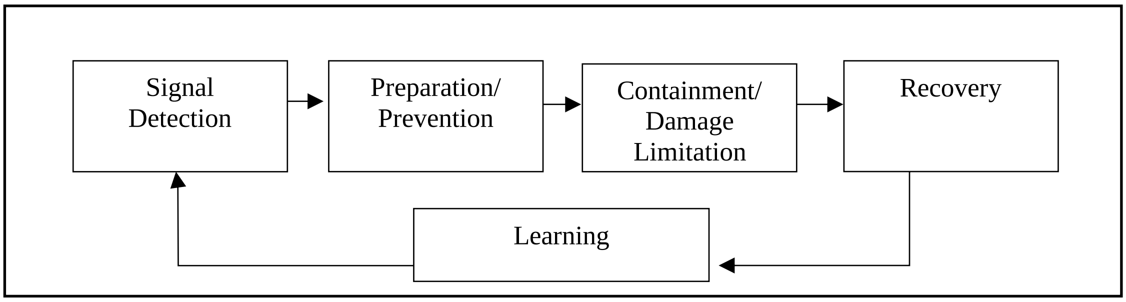



Figure 2.2 Five Crisis Management Stages

Source: Pearson & Mitroff (1993)

Contrary to the previous paragraph, Burnett (1998) proposed a crisis management model with three broad stages, each consisting of two steps: identification, confrontation, and reconfiguration (Figure 2.3). This model, like other lifecycle models, follows a series of progression. Burnett’s model consists of the following steps: goal formulation, environmental analysis, strategy formulation, strategy evaluation, strategy implementation, and strategic control. Preparing for a crisis requires establishing objectives and analyzing the threat environment. Managers must formulate a strategy in the face of a crisis, and the organization responds to the crisis via strategy implementation and strategic control (i.e., the latter stage includes overseeing crisis management actions and post-crisis review). Burnett believed that it becomes increasingly difficult to manage as the process progresses. He placed obstacles to crisis management in an outer ring, such as time constraints, control issues, threat level concerns, and response option limitations. In an outer ring, he arrayed factors in the way of crisis management, including time pressure, control issues, threat level concerns, and response option constraints.

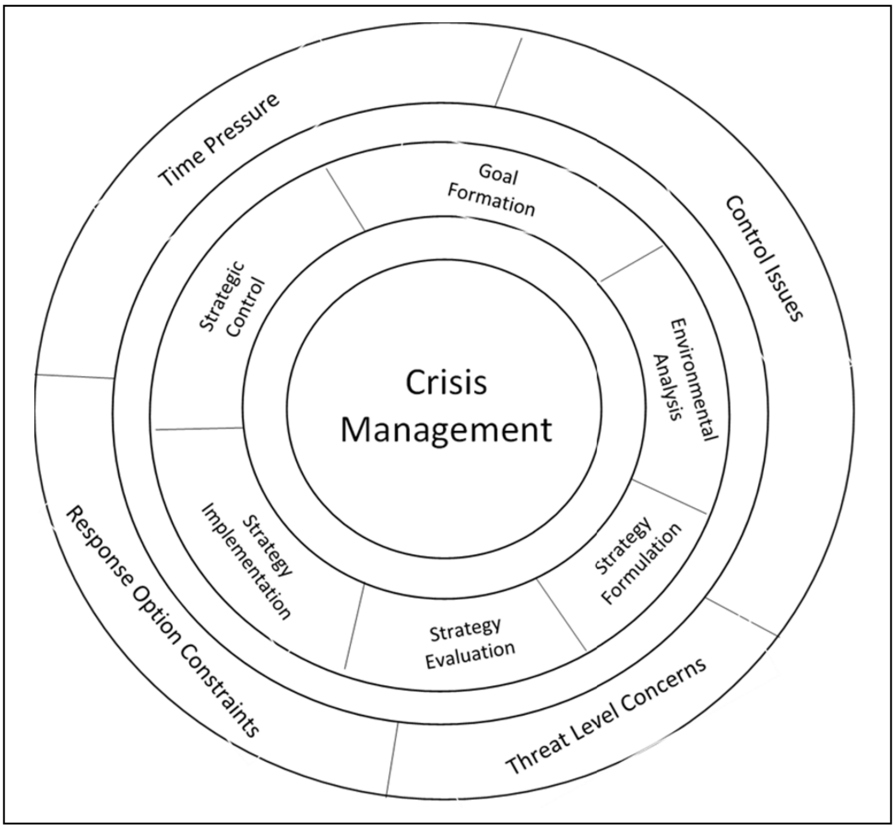



Figure 2.3 Burnett's Crisis Management Model

Source: Burnett (1998)

In this regard, most scholars in the hospitality realm regarded crisis as managing hospitality resources. The hospitality industry is among the hardest-hit industries by the COVID-19 lockdowns (Breier et al., 2021). While several industries suffered minor impacts, the hospitality industry nearly lost most of its business for quarters (Baum et al., 2020; Baum & Hai, 2020). Some researchers argue that the COVID-19 pandemic will impact established business hospitality models (Breier et al., 2021; Ritter & Pedersen, 2020). As a result of the health crisis-caused global decline in the tourism industry, the industry will need to plan its recovery and reconstruction with a greater emphasis on customer biosecurity (Ivanov et al., 2020). Additionally, during the pandemic, to prevent the spread of coronavirus, many service industries are implementing new technologies (such as artificial intelligence) to replace human workers (Voorhees et al., 2020).

Some researchers investigated the impacts of health crises and disasters on employees' attitudes and behaviors in the hospitality literature (Chen & Eyoun, 2021; Jung et al., 2021; Stergiou & Farmaki, 2021; Vo-Thanh et al., 2020,2022; Voorhees et al., 2020). Despite this, among the valuable COVID-19-related studies in the hotel literature relating to the attitudes and behaviors of tourists toward these unexpected events (Bhargava et al., 2020; Jo et al., 2021; Kim et al., 2021; Kohli et al., 2020; Mason et al., 2021; Peco-Torres et al., 2021; Sood, 2020). However, there is a dearth ohad and continues to have a tremendous impact on our societies and economies, including customer satisfaction and organizational productivity (Kieck & Gain, 2021; Udofia et al., 2021; Usman et al., 2021) and talent management (Aguinis & Burgi-Tian, 2021; Bieńkowska et al., 2022; Tangthong, 2020).

### 2.4.2 The Theories of Situational Crisis Communication (SCCT)

The Situational Crisis Communication Theory is one of the numerous studies that have applied attribution theory to crisis management (SCCT) (Coombs, 2007b; Kwok et al., 2021; Payton, 2021; Zhou et al., 2019). Previous research establishes a connection between Attribution Theory and crises (Bradford & Garrett, 1995; Bundy et al., 2017; Coombs, 1995; Meister, 2019). The underlying concept of crisis management is based on two fundamental crisis response theories, namely Attribution Theory (AT) by Weiner (1985) and Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) by Coombs and Holladay (1996). Specifically, SCCT theories were developed with brand image enhancement and protection as their goals (Benoit, 1997; Coombs, 2007a). The first to integrate crises and response strategies was situational crisis communication theory (SCCT), which argued that the choice of a crisis response strategy is determined by some factors (Zhou et al., 2019). SCCT is one of crisis communication's most widely used theoretical frameworks (Kim & Sung, 2014).

The Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) identifies crisis response strategies organisations can use. It is determined by who caused the crisis and the severity of the threat to the company's reputation (Salem et al., 2021). They indicate that SCCT indicates the importance of analyzing the negative impacts of crises and applying strategies and practices to protect an organization's reputation. According to Kim and Sung (2014), crisis response has two major components: (a) base crisis response strategies versus reputation management strategies (i.e., guiding and modifying information) and (b) two-sided crisis messages (sharing both positive and negative information) versus one-sided messages (only sharing positive). Coombs (2007b; 2018) stated that crisis response has two main components: (a) base crisis response (i.e., instructing information and adjusting information) and (b) reputation management crisis response. However, Coombs et al. (2020) present a review of the Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) that revises the current understanding of the theory.

The Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) is essential to crisis communication knowledge. According to SCCT, all crises require at least two responses: guiding and modifying information (Coombs, 2007b; Sturges, 1994). Hence, Sturges (1994, p. 300) advises SCCT to approach each crisis stage, focusing on meeting the diverse management needs and challenges posed by each stage's different dynamics and dimensions. According to Christensen and Lgreid's (2020) study, organisations' reputations are negatively affected by crises. In addition, they argued that as the number of crises has increased, so has interest among researchers in determining how these crises impact organisational reputation. Therefore, Coombs (1996, p. 292) expressed that "*organizations say to their various publics during a crisis should influence the extent of the reputational and financial damage a crisis can inflict on the organizational image*." It could be argued that SCCT has many roots in Attribution Theory, which describes how an organization attempts to make sense of a situation, event, or behaviour by attributing responsibility to either dispositional (internal) or situational (external) factors (McLeod, 2012).

According to research by Coombs (2015), taking a situational approach, the SCCT proposes three parts for a successful crisis response: first, instructing information; second, information that modifies (adjusting information); and third, reputation management strategies. The SCCT urges companies to use the deny strategy in the event of a crisis that involves a vulnerable group, the diminish strategy in the event of a crisis that was caused by accident, and the re-build strategy in the event of a crisis that could have been avoided (Claeys & Cauberghe, 2014; Coombs, 2007a).

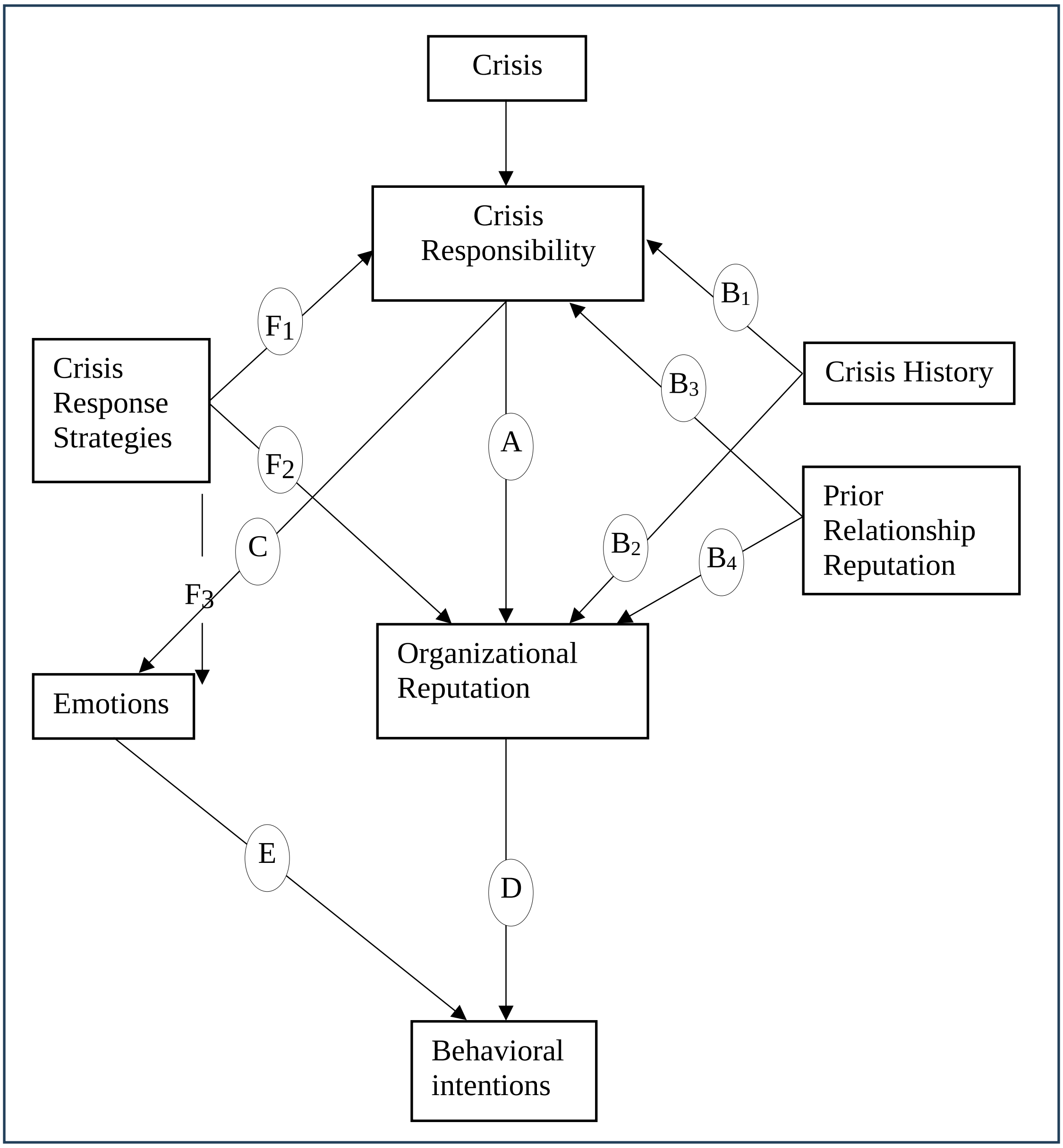



Figure 2.4 Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) Crisis Model

Source: Coombs (2007)

Looking at Figure 2.4, SCCT suggests that a crisis manager can better protect their organization's reputation by thoroughly understanding the crisis before deciding on a crisis response strategy. When first evaluating a crisis, it is essential to consider the type of crisis that has occurred (Coombs, 2007b). The crisis type frames the rationale behind crisis types. An organization's response to a crisis has affective and behavioral consequences (Coombs et al., 2020). Although prior studies on the crisis by Frandsen and Johansen (2020), Hewett and Lemon (2019), Iglesias-Sánchez et al. (2022), Lim and Brown-Devlin (2021), and brand crisis in the hotel industry (Hegner et al., 2021) demonstrated the relationship between crisis communication and organisational reputation by demonstrating that internal communication drives the crisis response perception both directly and indirectly, thereby influencing how the public perceives or assumes (Bridgewater, 2021). Since the customer relies on the organisation itself as a source of information, poor internal communication can be problematic in times of crisis. As a result, the customer's perception of the company had been affected, either positively or negatively, by the disclosure of this information. However, the managerial and business practises that may be affected by improvements in internal communication during times of organisational crisis have not been subjected to rigorous empirical and theoretical testing (Andersson, 2019). To mitigate the potential harm caused by events like COVID-19, it is crucial to understand how individuals perceive and cognitively process crisis events and related (post) crisis messages (Coombs et al., 2020; Sanders et al., 2020).

An organization's initial crisis responsibility is determined by the extent to which its stakeholders attribute the crisis to the actions of specific individuals within the company (Coombs, 1995). The crisis responsibility has had a substantial effect on the crisis response strategies of organizations (Bundy et al., 2017; Nekmat & Kong, 2019), particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic (Chunxia et al., 2022). Contrarily, the risk is the potential harm to the company's image if it does not respond appropriately to a crisis.

Additionally, Coombs (2007b) revealed that three factors in the crisis shape the reputational threat: (1) initial crisis responsibility, (2) crisis history, and (3) prior relational reputation. In terms of reputation protection, crisis response strategies have three goals: (1) shape attributions of the crisis, (2) change perceptions of the organization in crisis, and (3) reduce the adverse effects generated by the crisis (Coombs, 1995). The model's arrows $F_1$, $F_2$, and $F_3$ depict the contributions of these three aims to the overarching aim of reputation protection. However, a responsible response can influence individuals' decisions during a crisis via emotional and reputational channels (Meister, 2019). Reputation and feelings are linked in ways that can be partly explained by the fact that crisis management is a shared responsibility.

The model's arrows $B_1$ and $B_2$ illustrate the Crisis History Proposition, which states that an organization with a history of crises will take more blame for a crisis and sustain more indirect and direct reputational damage than one without a similar history of crises (Coombs, 2007a). According to the model's arrows $B_3$ and $B_4$, representing the

Prior Relationship Reputation Proposition, a company's crisis responsibility and direct and indirect reputational damage are higher when it has a history of mistreating its stakeholders. As shown by arrow *C* in the model, the Crisis Responsibility - Proposition states that anger, schadenfreude, and sympathy increase as one's sense of personal responsibility for the crisis grows. Previous relationship reputation and crisis history propositions explain how situational factors can amplify a crisis's reputational risk and change the nature of the crisis (Chunxia et al., 2022; Coombs, 2020).

The ultimate goal of the model is to establish a causal link between crisis outcomes and subsequent behavior and intention. There would be no reason to be concerned about the effects of crises if they altered reputations and caused effects but had no effect on behavioral intentions. In the model, arrow *D* represents the Organizational Reputation - Behavior Intention Proposition, which states that stakeholders are less likely to report supportive behavioral intentions when the organization's reputation is poor (e.g., using products or services). Therefore, the relationships between the organization and its stakeholders are affected by the reputational damage caused by a crisis (Payton, 2021). According to the Affect-Behavioral Intention Proposition, as represented by arrow *E* in the model, the stronger the feelings of negative affect, the less likely it is that stakeholders will report supportive behavioral intentions toward an organization. Furthermore, crisis responsibility affects behavior through emotions and reputation (Schoofs & Claeys, 2021).

### 2.4.3 Crisis Management in The Hospitality Industry

In the context of hospitality, crisis management refers to the planning and implementation of structured and deliberate processes to manage and overcome the adverse effects of crises and disasters on tourism stakeholders (Fink, 1986; Ghaderi et al., 2012; Liu et al., 2015). It also addresses the opportunities for advancement in hospitality systems and procedures. Hang et al. (2020) argue that during the current COVID-19 pandemic, crisis management focusing on shared emotions is critical, as it can establish emotional attachment with tourists. Similarly, Wut et al. (2021) suggest that most mainstream crisis management research focuses on crisis impact and recovery, risk management, risk perception, and disaster management. All prevention practices remain in the priority quadrant during the pandemic stage, such as marketing practices (lowering office service list prices and marketing to new segments), human resources practices (reducing the labor force by unpaid vacation), and governmental assistance should be at a low priority (Lai & Wong, 2020). According to Tsao & Ni (2016), the pandemic crisis significantly impacted the tourism industry because it could take over a year to restore travel patterns to the pre-pandemic level (Pine & McKercher, 2004).

In addition, the COVID-19 pandemic has treated a significant blow to the hotel industry, given the increasing number of travel restrictions, and crisis management procedures supporting the industry's needs are changing as the pandemic continues (Andri, 2021; Çoban & Özel, 2022; Lai & Wong, 2020; Wut et al., 2021). There are two main dominant perspectives in crisis management studies: hospitality service providers and the stakeholders (Leta & Chan, 2021). In the hospitality industry, service providers are crucial in business strategies, handling challenges, and overall operations management (Johnston & Jones, 2004; Kang et al., 2016; Lau, 2020; Pascarella et al., 2020). From the stakeholders' perspective, the hospitality business is about how the service provider interacts with various stakeholders to create value and avoid failures jointly (King et al., 2019; Pizam & Tasci, 2019). However, a service provider requires stakeholders to exist and sustain its business (Dunham et al., 2006).

Figure 2.5 according to the model, a strategic management and planning approach to crisis and disaster management can benefit hotel managers in managing these incidents strategically: prevention and planning, implementation, evaluation, and feedback (Ritchie, 2004). He argues that at the pre-event and prodromal stages of a crisis or disaster, managers can develop strategies and plans to prevent or mitigate its effects by conducting environmental scanning and collecting data on the political, economic, social, and technological environment, which can provide information on possible trends and their probable effects on the organization. The following stage is strategic implementation, which addresses strategic management by incorporating crisis management into strategic planning and revitalization (Vašíčková, 2020). The final stage of strategically dealing with crises and disasters is the evaluation and feedback stage, which occurs as an organization begins to recover from a crisis and normalcy returns. Nonetheless, the response to the crisis appears to be reactive, intuitive, and based on prior experience to mitigate its effects as effectively and efficiently as possible (Paraskevas & Quek, 2019). However, an organization's capacity to learn is contingent on the extent to which it is interested in gaining knowledge from incidents and, to some extent, its organizational culture (Ritchie, 2004).

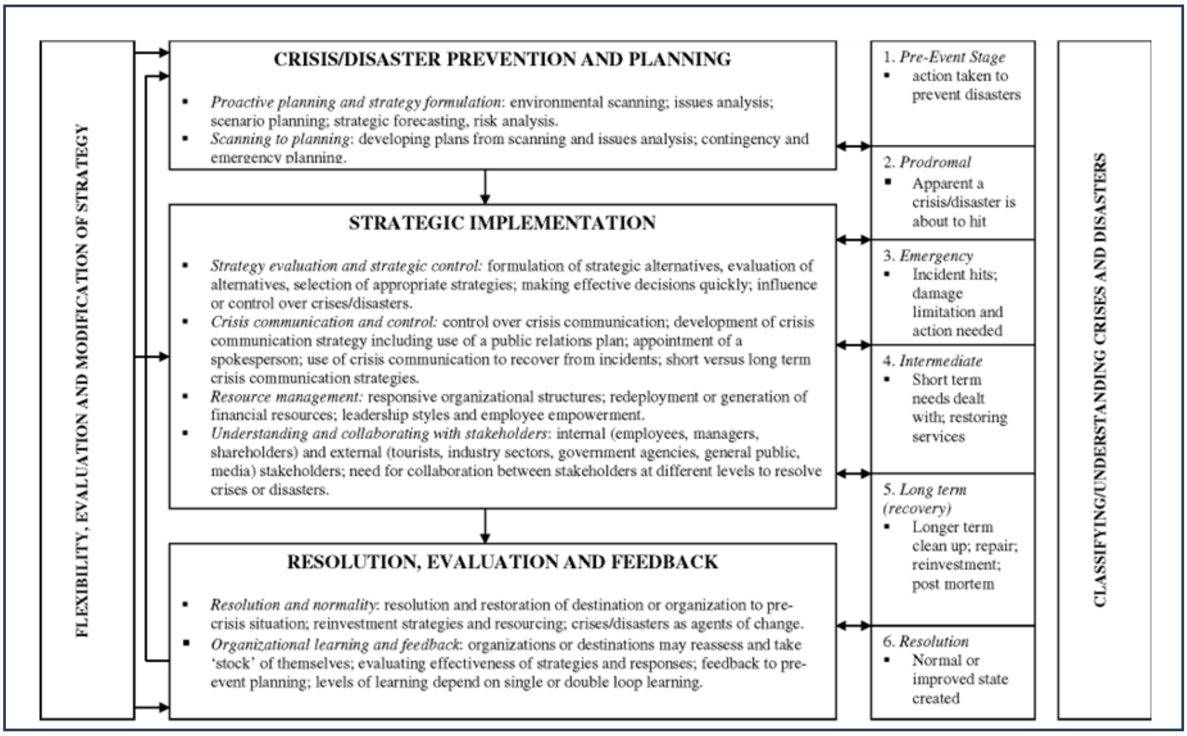



Figure 2.5 A Conceptual Basis for Hotel Emergency Preparedness

Source: Ritchie (2004)

By looking at the points highlighted above, one of the outbreaks is a health-related crisis that has recently garnered a great deal of public attention and has had profound effects on the hotel industry (AlBattat & Mat Som, 2013; Breier et al., 2021; Lai & Wong, 2020). AlBattat and Mat Som (2013) propose a theoretical framework explaining the hotel industry's relationship between emergency preparedness, planning, and safety and security. They argue that the management's commitment is to adopt, develop, and update emergency plans. The majority of the research, however, was conducted after the crisis, and the same pattern was observed during COVID-19.

### 2.4.4 Crisis Management Measurement

To date, several academics have proposed a crisis management model. For example, a study by Racherla and Hu (2009) suggested six crisis management stages: (1) Pre-Event phase, where a possible crisis can be prepared or avoided; (2) Prodromal phase, when it becomes clear that a situation is inevitable; (3) The emergency Phase is when the catastrophe's repercussions are felt, and steps are needed to protect individuals and property; (4) The intermediate phase is when people's short-term needs are met, and restoration efforts begin; (5) Long-term phase is when the rehabilitation efforts have been institutionalized, and the company, the society, and its stakeholders have returned to pre-disaster status; and (6) The resolution and Feedback Phase is when companies learn about the crisis and create updated procedures to resolve the crisis experience. Nevertheless, with the currently turbulent environment, organizations cannot easily plan for crises in advance (Pearson & Clair, 1998). Once an organization has a crisis management plan, it is easier to train employees and gather background information on time (Paraskevas & Altinay, 2013).

To counter the flaws in the previous model, Johar et al. (2010) emphasized the significance of analyzing the current situation, i.e., gathering all pertinent data, establishing the desired case after management, and determining how to reach the target from the current condition. As seen in their model, they argue that crisis management itself consists of three levels: preparation, analysis, and communication. As previously stated, every crisis is unique; therefore, preparation can only help support management and cannot resolve the entire situation; it should be undertaken before the crisis (Randall, 2018). However, the model developed by Johar et al. (2010) has weakness in that when a company is in the middle of a crisis, employees are frequently unable to see things from multiple perspectives and consequently miss vital information that could be used to mitigate the impact on the brand's reputation (Bodeklint et al., 2017). Nevertheless, they argued that they seek assistance from external sources, particularly regarding analysis, stating that an objective view of the situation is sometimes necessary for the best outcome.

There are two main categories of hospitality crises described by Leta and Chan (2021): (a) macro-level crises and (b) micro-level crises. They explained that macro-level crises were caused by external factors beyond the hospitality industry's control, such as economic recessions, health crises, natural disasters, terrorist attacks, and political instability (Aldao et al., 2021; U & So, 2020; Zamoum & Gorpe, 2018). Then, micro-level crises relate to the internal business operations of hospitality firms, such as service failure and technological turbulence (Lu et al., 2020; Pappas, 2018; Sengupta et al., 2015; Wang & Wu, 2018). Moreover, the hospitality crisis has not given enough attention to the pre-crisis planning stage, although a lack of crisis planning and poor management practices may harm the hospitality industry (Faulkner, 2001; Prideaux, 2004).

On the other hand, Liu et al. (2015) proposed four phases of managing a crisis in the hotel industry, namely, (1) Reduction, (2) Readiness, (3) Response, and (4) Recovery. They suggest that reduction is a phase that aims to increase crisis awareness among the organization, identify potential risks, and search for a way to minimize the crisis's impact. In this phase, hotels must make standard operational procedures (SOP) to monitor the perception of crises and reactions on social media. Based on the guest's opinion, hotels could assess or determine the crisis that must be resolved. Hotels must engage a social media specialist who would handle social media daily in the reduction phase. However, ideally, this person had been part of the hotel crisis management team to monitor and responded to the crisis that was gone to happen (Liu et al., 2015).

Next, readiness aims to increase the organization's readiness to face a crisis. The contingency plans include establishing a crisis management plan and preparing health and safety measures. Hospitality practitioners have witnessed increased natural and artificial crises threatening the hospitality industry's vulnerability to crises and internal and external threats (AlBattat & Mat Som, 2013). After that, Liu et al. (2015) proposed that the hotel industry be responsive in managing crises. The response phase refers to the activities and movements of an organization after a crisis. The appropriateness of the response strategy and pacing is crucial to the success of the response strategy. At this phase, hotels must allow the social media expert time to track, react, and report findings to management. This specific task must be continued until management decides that the crisis no longer needs attention on social media networks. Finally, Liu et al. (2015) emphasized the importance of recovery. They explained that recovery stands for the movement of companies to restore regular business. Business continuity strategies and resource reallocations are necessary measures based on the lessons learned from the crisis. Additionally, several academics suggest that to establish the most effective crisis management practices for hotels, practitioners must listen to consumers, understand visitor problems, and have crisis management plans (Coombs, 2015; Greyser, 2009).

According to Fener and Cevik (2015), there are five stages of crisis management: (1) Perceiving crisis signals; (2) Preparedness for crisis; (3) Taking crisis signals; (4) Shifting to a normal state; (5) Learning and assessment. First, perceiving crisis signals shows the impending crisis's presence and disturbance, and managers should respond to these signals. Catching signals is tricky because businesses are constantly bombarded with information, even under the most adverse conditions. Next, preparedness for crisis and protection requires the organization to use the crisis signal it has received to prepare and take appropriate precautions against crises through its early warning system. After that, 'taking the crisis under control' requires the company to look for early warning, prevention, and protection mechanisms that may work effectively in some situations. It may not be able to resolve the crisis entirely, so the data obtained in the first two stages are used to track the crisis's progress.

Next, stabilizing the organization once the crisis is managed and resolved is crucial for shifting to a normal state. Finally, for the learning and assessment stage, the company must evaluate the decisions, precautions, and methods used in crises and draw lessons from the crisis state. In response to the criticisms directed at crisis management by Fener and Cevik (2015), Hotel managers must be knowledgeable and competent to overcome unpredicted crises. However, if organizations are not managed effectively during a crisis, new issues will inevitably arise (Aguinis & Burgi-Tian, 2021; Bartsch et al., 2020; Frandsen & Johansen, 2020; Pereira et al., 2020; Randall, 2018; Thornton, 2021). By definition, Alpaslan et al. (2009) focus on stakeholder involvement and view the crisis management maturity continuum as follows: (1). Proactive Crisis Management: All stakeholders that could be harmed should participate in crisis preparation. In the response phase, the organization anticipates knock-on effects and voluntarily discloses the most damaging information before the media discovers it. (2). Accommodative Crisis Management: The organization accepts that a crisis is possible and involves a broad set of stakeholders in preparation. In a crisis, the company accepts responsibility, voluntarily meets the needs of the victims, and tells the truth. (3). Defensive Crisis Management: The business prepares for crises with high expected costs and involves stakeholders only if required by law. During a crisis, the organization resists admitting full responsibility but does admit some. The company only does what is mandated by law. (4). Reactive Crisis Management: The organization denies the possibility of a crisis and any negative consequences. In a crisis, the company denies all responsibility, closes off communications, and hides the truth. Its stance is uncooperative.

Throughout the literature search, many hotels stopped operating during the pandemic. The organization must protect its employees and stakeholders from “any risks related to injury, sickness, safety, security, health, and finances” (Karpoff, 2021; Smith, 1990; Ulak, 2020; WHO, 2020b). In contrast, each company should plan for at least one type of crisis in each category based on the level of uncertainty it wishes to reduce (Seeger et al., 1998). In other words, a proper classification system illuminates the type of crisis a company faces and its ability to respond appropriately, plan, and allocate resources (Alpaslan et al., 2009; Cretu & Alvarez, 2010; Reynolds & Seeger, 2005; Saxton, 2013). Conversely, Donaldson and Preston (1995) present more critical distinctions, problems, and implications associated with the stakeholder concept. In crises, adopting a stakeholder corporate governance model will lead companies to engage more frequently in proactive and accommodating crisis management behaviour, even if these crises are not perceived to maximize shareholder value.

According to Andrianopoulos (2015), crisis management can be divided into three phases: pre-crisis, crisis response, and post-crisis. (1). The Pre-Crisis Phase. The purpose of the pre-crisis phase is to avoid crises using risk assessment, which is the method of identifying, evaluating, and reacting to project threats, which consists of scanning and analyzing the environment to define systematically, evaluate, measure, and prioritize the respective environmental risks to companies, and to estimate the probability of a specific risk. Employees need to be prepared to contribute to crisis management by being knowledgeable and qualified to use organizational tools, possibly through training sessions to make them aware of the procedures, protocols, and action plans to be followed when a crisis is imminent. (2). The Crisis Response Phase. The organization goes into “crisis mode” and enters the response process when prevention attempts fail, and a crisis is caused, marked by short decision time, uncertainty, and ambiguity because there is still a chance of immediate harm. The first step in crisis containment is to quickly analyze the situation by obtaining as much detailed information as possible. The crisis management team will take over and perform its pre-assigned tasks after the evaluation by mobilizing the needed resources. (3). Post-crisis Phase. When the crisis abates, the company reaches the final stage, the post-crisis phase, where the crisis is over, and business resumes as usual. Hence, the crisis is no longer the object of management’s attention, although some attention is still needed.

In this phase, the company will concentrate on emerging from the crisis and restoring confidence and reputation by controlling public opinion. A crisis should be a learning opportunity, and attempts to manage the crisis should be reviewed to see what works and requires improvement. Some researchers argued that how a company communicates the actual situation to the public and stakeholders during a pandemic is significant because stakeholder perceptions are crucial to a company's success and should, therefore, be given equal or even higher priority than technical solutions (Heide & Simonsson, 2021; MacLiam, 2007; Wang et al., 2021). Following the argument by Whitworth (2006), to ensure business continuity, the ability to "continue delivery of products or services, at acceptable predefined levels following a disruptive incident," a company must analyze which business functions are essential to the organization's mission in order to prioritize them in the case of a problem.

As more reviews are conducted to understand the measurement of crisis management, the present recent research shows that five phases of a framework for crisis management have been widely adopted and used by researchers: signal detection, preparation/prevention, damage containment, recovery, and learning (Alkhawlani et al., 2016). First, signal detection. Generally, there are many studies considering the signal detection phase. Mitroff (1994) notes that the sign detection phase entails looking for the cautious symptoms of a crisis and acting to save you as many as possible before the warnings result in a crisis. Signal detection is the first stage, focusing on detecting potential crises that could impact the company (Alkhawlani et al., 2016). The sign detection segment recognizes small but considerable indicators of a probable crisis event (Randall, 2018). Paraskevas and Altinay (2013) suggested three factors for looking for crisis signals: (a). Internal: company structure, culture, and resource variables. (b). External: economy, technology, government policy variables, and socio-culture. (c). Task: industry force variable (departments within the company). Emergency planning and preparedness for a crisis are the most significant components of dealing with failures (AlBattat & Mat Som, 2013). However, according to Dimitrov and Yangyozov (2013), this system must be able to detect early warnings from messages obtained from internal and external sources, determine which warnings deserve action, continually collate information and activities associated with an early warning, and monitor the results and opportunities to fine-tune them.

Second, preparation and prevention. Prevention consists of diverse ways to lessen the chance of a disaster. The selection of a prevention method is primarily based on the diagnosis focus. Even though the risk cannot be eliminated, prevention is used to reduce the potential impact of a crisis (McNeil et al., 2015). Mikušová and Horváthová (2019) motive for prevention is to set up a technique and content material for sports, including the securing of sources, to keep away from a crisis. The main objective must be to do as much as possible to prevent a crisis from arising at the onset and manage those that still occur effectively, irrespective of the most efficient efforts made (Alkhawlani et al., 2016). Indicators that measure prevention and preparation are readiness, awareness, and prevention before the crisis gets bigger and harder to fix (Coombs & Laufer, 2018). This stage includes training for the crisis, simulation exercises, and forming crisis teams (Alkhawlani et al., 2016). Robert & Lajtha (2002) stated that moving away from a negative perspective on crisis management and seeing the crisis as a learning opportunity, giving them a positive character, crisis management training, teamwork, organizational resilience, and strategic setting is essential.

The third is damage containment. Damage containment is one of the emerging determinants in assessing crisis management in the service sector. According to Pearson and Mitroff (1993), damage containment refers to the activities undertaken to reduce the spread and impact of a crisis. Paraskevas and Quek (2019) explained that impact damage containment consists of three tasks. First, it must respond to the crisis by allocating resources to deal with the unfolding events to protect its human and capital assets and mitigate any harm caused by the crisis. Second, the organisation must ensure business continuity during the crisis so that the organization's essential functions continue uninterrupted (supplies and staffing adequate for basic operations; management controls). The third task at this stage is to maintain open lines of communication with all of its current and future constituencies. Nevertheless, rapid crisis containment usually necessitates the development of comprehensive crisis plans that predict and plan for the worst-case scenarios (Dinkin, 2007). The damage containment stage aims to mitigate the crisis effect (Alkhawlani et al., 2016). In this stage, effective management is proven by the preventive plans to avoid the localized crisis from contaminating other parts and their environment (Pearson & Mitroff, 1993).

Fourth recovery**.** Several review papers on crisis management and recovery are available. Organizations best organized in short- and long-term business recovery should have a program (Alkhawlani et al., 2016). The short-term recovery goal is to bring the system back online so that a minimum reasonable standard of service is achieved, while long-term recovery follows as organizational activities are returned to their pre-crisis level (Crandall et al., 2013). The reduction concept can also be defined as the start of the method wherein the employer resumes functions after a crisis (Beirman, 2016). The last is learning. The final stage of crisis management is that the lessons learned from the previous crisis can be reflected in acceptable plans (Alkhawlani et al., 2016). This stage includes reflection activities where lessons are learned from the crisis (Crandall et al., 2013). Learning provides new knowledge to the company to prevent such crises and develop warning signal detection, damage containment, and recovery mechanisms (Abo-Murad & Al-Khrabsheh, 2019).

### 2.4.5 Crisis Management during COVID-19 Pandemics

Since their discovery in 1965, coronaviruses, which can infect humans, other mammals, and birds, have been responsible for several disease outbreaks (Jones & Comfort, 2020). On 31 December 2019, hospitals in Wuhan, Hubei province, China, started a cluster of cases of pneumonia for an unknown reason, attracting worldwide interest (Li et al., 2020; Wenjie et al., 2020; Zhu et al., 2020). Some researchers explained that a new variant of coronavirus became diagnosed, named 'extreme acute breathing syndrome coronavirus 2' (SARS-CoV-2) (Fauci et al., 2020). SARS-CoV-2 is part of a group of viruses in a layout much like the crown (Corona), in particular belonging to the species Betacoronavirus, inclusive of the Middle East breathing syndrome coronavirus (MERS-CoV) and severe acute breathing syndrome coronavirus (SARS-CoV) (Khanna et al., 2020; Wenjie et al., 2020; Zhu et al., 2020). On 21 January 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) released the first situation report on 2019-nCoV, popularly known as COVID-19 (WHO, 2020c), and revised its appraisal of the outbreak as an international public health emergency on 31 January (WHO, 2020a). Later, on 11 March 2020, WHO described the outbreak as a pandemic. (Ducharme, 2020; Sohrabi et al., 2020).

Infection by coronavirus (CoV-19) has led to emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic developed a global public health crisis (Abbas et al., 2021; Fauci et al., 2020; Paital et al., 2020). Since safety is the top priority when tourists plan their trips, a pandemic can diminish tourist numbers (Ervina et al., 2021; U & So, 2020). According to Su et al. (2021), a significant characteristic of a crisis is that it is usually used as an emergency communication strategy when at least three crises coincide.: (1) a crisis or unanticipated disaster with widespread personal and economic implications (e.g., the COVID-19 pandemic); (2) A communication breakdown that could hinder important stakeholders from collaborating on a solution (e.g., COVID-19 infodemics); and (3) A potential trust crisis may already exist or be forming, in part because of the preceding two crises (e.g., public trust crises).

Concerning the previous paragraph, U & So (2020) discovered that different types of crises would have varying degrees of adverse effects on the tourism industry, which is significant for policymakers and the tourism industry in crisis management and in overcoming the challenges of attracting more tourists under highly unfavorable conditions. On the plus side, the COVID-19 crisis demonstrated mature businesses' ability to adapt in an agile manner – both in strategy and in operations – catalyzing the widespread adoption of digitalization and remote working and, as a result, determining significant changes in organizational cultures and management models (Pinzaru et al., 2020). Accordingly, Israeli and Reichel (2003) and Lai and Wong (2020) were the first to analyze the usage and significance of crisis management methods in the Israeli hotel industry in crisis management practices. The findings reveal which practices the managers deem essential and which they employ during an industry crisis. They discovered that importance-usage-performance analysis was employed to categorize six categories of practices (i.e., pricing, marketing, maintenance, human resources, government assistance, and epidemic prevention) into four executable crisis management strategies (i.e., priority, maintain, low priority, and possible overkill) for each stage.

Nevertheless, previous studies in crisis management practices only focused on research post-crisis stage after the pandemic (King & Wan, 2020; Lee, 2009). This statement aligns with Otoo and Kim (2018), who stated that a research gap needs to be filled by continuously studying the hotel perception during the crisis stage to measure the crisis management practices that should be undertaken at different times during the pandemic. During COVID-19, frontline employees became more crucial than ever because, without healthy employees, a hotel had been unable to instill trust and confidence in customers, especially to restart the operations that were halted due to this pandemic (Rivera, 2020; Vo-Thanh et al., 2022a; Voorhees et al., 2020). Moreover, hotels must integrate fragmented marketing and communication expertise to satisfy customer needs during a crisis, regain competitiveness, and develop marketing crisis competencies (Lies, 2021). Pennings et al. (2002) and Yannopoulou et al. (2011) examine the roles of consumers during crises, whereas Charlebois and Elliott (2009) highlight hotel businesses' willingness to be open and innovative during crises. Proper crisis communication is necessary to keep stakeholders informed, secure, and planned (Kwok et al., 2021). They contend that organizations can protect employees and customers and maintain business continuity by using well-prepared and designed crisis communication strategies that allow for prompt and effective communication during a crisis. In contrast, Davahli et al. (2020) analyzed the impact of the crisis on hospitality and found that the pandemic caused severe problems for luxury hotels in particular. They assumed that the crisis was global and that there were no significant differences between hotels, regardless of their facility type, brand, or level of quality, and how hospitality management reacted to the crisis caused by the pandemic (Kukanja et al., 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic has triggered studies to find the vaccine and many studies in social science disciplines. Previous studies highlighted that the COVID-19 pandemic expanded the uncertainty in day-by-day life due to numerous factors, together with the uncertainty of the pandemic's duration, how it is going to affect the sector consequently, and whether or not some other pandemic might affect the worldwide economy (Al-Thaqeb et al., 2020; Caggiano et al., 2020; Fauci et al., 2020). The COVID-19 pandemic posed enormous problems for governments, societies, and businesses worldwide (Clark et al., 2020). Many countries carried out lockdowns and quarantine measures, which increased pressure and panic (Qiu et al., 2020). Nobody is aware of when the world will return to regular, and it is uncertain when a vaccine may be prepared; this has pushed the authors to excessively- mild the importance of world cooperation and its public, personal, and non-earning sectors to supply a vaccine (Corey et al., 2020). Eventually, the approval of COVID-19 vaccines for emergency use was expected to encourage individuals to dine out, travel to destinations, and stay in hotels. (Gursoy et al., 2021; Gursoy & Chi, 2021).

### 2.4.6 Crisis Management and Branding Studies

Based on the literature search, a few studies have attempted to measure the impact of crisis management on various branding concepts. The reasons why brand became a popular outcome variable in previous studies were obvious. Consumers experience a personal connection to the brands they use and like, and these brands often become part of their extended self-concept (Escalas & Bettman, 2017). Consumers regard brands as a source of meaning, decreasing uncertainty and reinforcing identity (Fischer et al., 2010). In addition to Greyser (2009) is a list of the various causes of corporate brand crises:

- Failure of a product.
- The lack of social responsibility.
- Corporate malpractice.
- Executive incompetence.
- Misbehavior and controversy by a spokesperson.
- Company's emblematic demise.
- Reduction in public support.

- Ownership controversy.

According to Bodeklint et al. (2017), crisis management consists of three levels: preparation, analysis, and communication (Figure 2.6). The preparation, however, should be done before the crisis, yet it is a part of crisis management since it will simplify the work when the crisis occurs. Consistent with Pearson and Mitroff (1993), an organization must be prepared for the long-term effect of a crisis if significant events occur during the crisis. The authors formulated the following theory based on previous interviews with managers and scientific studies. Small business owners and managers tend to prepare for a crisis but are impeded by helplessness (Mikušová & Horváthová, 2019). They lack the knowledge necessary to initiate crisis preparation. Due to every situation being unique, properly analyzing the crisis and collecting information is another critical step in successful crisis management (Dwiedienawati et al., 2021; Qadir et al., 2016). Without the analysis, it is not easy to communicate the right message to the public. If the analysis was not done and the wrong message was communicated, crisis management would be defective and impractical (Abo-Murad & AL-Khrabsheh, 2019; Kraus et al., 2020; Lundberg & Asplund, 2011). Communication is the final phase of crisis management work (Keller et al., 1998). Communication is essential since this is evidence of what the consumers see from the company's actions (Kaushal & Srivastava, 2021a; Panda et al., 2019a; Payton, 2021; Ritchie, 2004; Sigala, 2020; Webster et al., 2020). The company's brand will suffer long-term consequences if it conveys the wrong message (Bhandari et al., 2021; Dunn et al., 2011). Therefore, for companies to minimize brand reputation damage, they must be prepared for how to act in the situation, do a proper analysis to get accurate information, and then communicate this information at the right time from the right person (Beirman, 2016; Coombs, 2015; Daboul, 2016; Keller, 2013; Kukanja et al., 2020; Lombardi et al., 2021; Paraskevas & Quek, 2019; Wang & Lu, 2020; Wut et al., 2021).

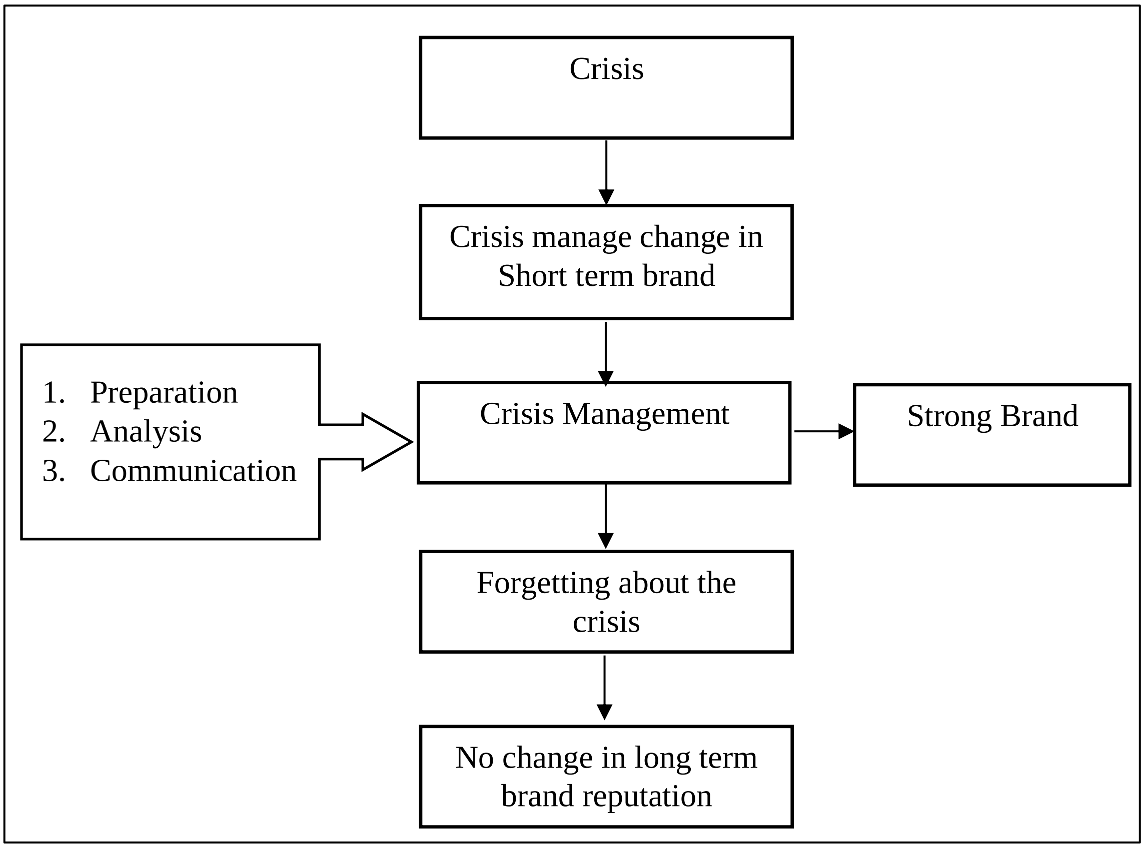



Figure 2.6 Crisis Management Affects Brand Reputation

Source: Bodeklint et al., (2017)

Contrary to the previous paragraph, it has never been more critical to know what consumers think and how they connect with the brand or industry in these unprecedented times (Feldman, 2015; Hewett & Lemon, 2019; Hsiu-Ying Kao et al., 2020; Li & Wei, 2016; Salvador et al., 2017; Toklu & Kucuk, 2016; Wang & Lu, 2020). Monitoring the evolution of customer attitudes and purchase patterns during the pandemic will help adjust business marketing strategies to fit new consumer interests effectively (Anas et al., 2022). Businesses should be true to their intentions and connect with their clients, stakeholders, suppliers, and consumers in order to establish deeper relationships that will benefit all key actors and strengthen the brand (Agag & El-Masry, 2016; Aji et al., 2020; Hameed & Kanwal, 2018; Hegner et al., 2021; Hong & Cho, 2011; Hsiu-Ying Kao et al., 2020; Jian et al., 2020; Peco-Torres et al., 2021; Rather, 2021; Rather et al., 2019). Aronczyk (2020) analyzed the digital media ecosystems during the pandemic, devaluing socially relevant information to preserve brand reputation. Nonetheless, during pandemics, brands strategically employ the words immunity, safe, and protect to place their brands in the minds of consumers (Tongare, 2021). Brand crises are becoming more common in the global economy during and after the COVID-19 pandemic (Verlegh et al., 2021).

## 2.5 Brand

Before 1860, the original purpose of branding was for artisans and others to identify the products of their labor so that consumers could quickly identify them (Keller, 2013). Branding, or trademark, can be traced back to ancient pottery and stonemason's marks used to identify the source of handcrafted goods (Aaker & Equity, 1991). Patterns have been discovered on ancient Chinese porcelain, ancient Greece and Rome pottery jars, and Indian goods from around 1300 BCE (Low & Fullerton, 1994; Morgan, 1986). The word brand derives from the Old Norse word 'brandr,' which means "to burn," as brands were and continue to be how livestock owners identify their animals (Murphy, 1987; Wiley, 1992). The brand is a multidimensional concept (Keller, 2013). Although brands have been widely discussed and debated in the academic world, brand experts could not agree on a standard definition. Alexander (1960) described a brand as "A name, term, design, symbol, or a combination of them, intended to identify the goods or services of one seller or group of sellers and differentiate them from competitors."

In addition, consumers view a brand name as the most visual information and a significant way of considering brands and branding (De Chernatony, 2010). It is the foundation for branding and communication (Keller et al., 1998). They suggested that a brand can help produce the right image and increase brand awareness for a new product. Thus, brands consist of tangible and intangible elements that can be grouped into the following categories: 1) Name, logo, corporate colors and fonts, slogan, packaging, graphics, and shape are illustrations of visual design elements; 2) Distinctive characteristics of the product: quality, individuality, sounds (a unique melody or set of notes can become a distinguishing characteristic of the brand), aroma, and flavor; 3) Intangible aspects of customer interaction with a product or company, such as reputation or customer service quality (Kononenko, 2021). Pike (2011) stated that branding, not just images, is critical to creating customer value within the same context. In addition to Kotler (1997), a deep brand has six levels: 1) price and performance, 2) prolonged use, and feeling important are examples of functional or emotional benefits. 3) safety and prestige illustrate values, 4) a specific group of people's culture, 5) a person's or an animal's personality, and 6) the product's suitability for the user.

From the internal and external sides, the brand should express a comprehensive and coherent identity by utilizing the visual and behavioral identity of the corporation to create the brand (Heding et al., 2009). Subsequently, Damodaran (2020) claims that the benefit of having an established brand is the ability to charge premium prices due to the value of the brand name. He observes that brand is more important to consumers than product quality, styling, service, and dependability. Consumers are willing to pay more for a product due to its brand. Levitt (1975) argued that the new competition is not between companies producing in their factories but between what they add to their factory output in packaging, services, advertising, customer advice, financing, delivery arrangements, and consumer value. However, many managers define a brand as creating a certain level of market awareness and reputation (Keller, 2013). According to Jia and Jing (2012), a company can benefit from brand extension by establishing connectivity between the parent and extended brands.

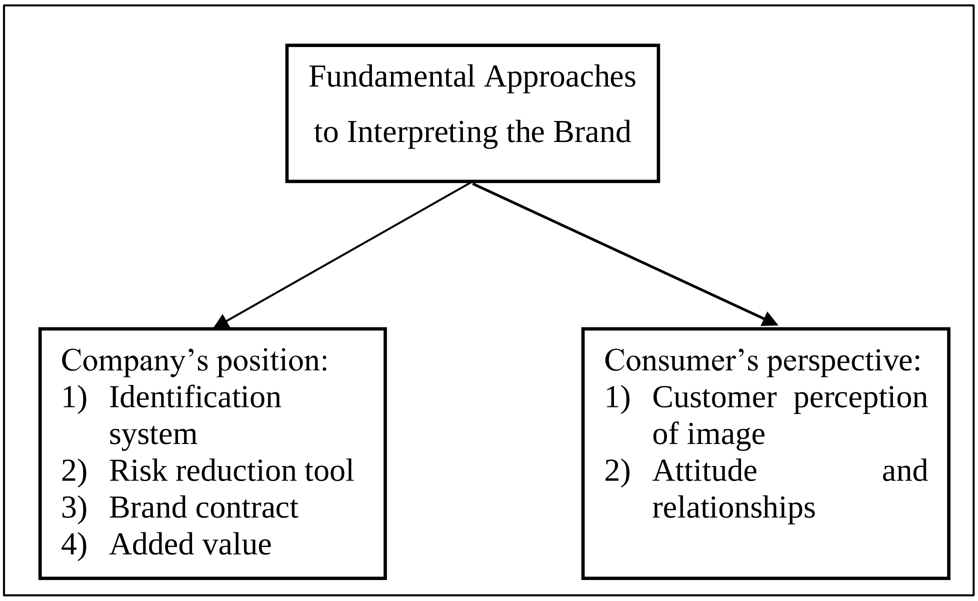



Figure 2.7 Varieties of Brand Interpretations

Source: Kononenko (2021)

As shown in Figure 2.7, a model created by Kononenko (2021) illustrates brand interpretations from two perspectives: (1) company perspective and (2) customer perspective. From the consumer's viewpoint, brand attitude is represented by overall evaluations of the brand in terms of its quality and the satisfaction it generates (Ambler et al., 2002). Another consideration is the brand image. A company's brand image is a product or service it offers to other customers (Heding et al., 2009; Jarrar, 2015). From an organization's point of view, the identification system is first followed by the risk reduction tool, brand contract, and added value. Brand identity is a planned brand image that determines the direction of a company's marketing efforts (Ianenko et al., 2020). Some academics suggest that brand identification creates a product stigma by stressing the product's qualities, culture, and positioning so that consumers automatically identify the brand's meaning with the product (Sun et al., 2015). Brand risk is a critical step in building an operational risk program. Identifying the potential impact on the brand if the risk materializes is crucial to consider while constructing inventory (Deloitte, 2019). A contract is a component of brand trust necessary for all types of partnerships. It builds the customer and brand relationship by minimizing the associated risk (Bergström & Zuazu, 2019). The final perspective is that added value determines what a brand should stand for in terms of consumer value and how it should be positioned in a competitive market (Kotler & Armstrong, 2010).

Contrary to the previous paragraph, Ruzzier and Ruzzier (2013) argue that the modern approach surpasses the traditional brand definition. Its visual characteristics serve as a means of differentiation. Due to fluctuating market conditions, adopting a contemporary brand conceptualization strategy is necessary. Another modern opinion approach came from Keller (2013), who suggested that branding service could effectively communicate to consumers that the business has created a unique and deserving service offering. He gave the example of British Airways, which brands its premium business class service as “Club World” and uses the name “Club World” in its advertising. Despite the vastness of the concept of “brand” and its long history, obtaining a single definition of this term is tough, even though abundant literature on branding has been found. De Chernatony and Riley (1999) argue that there are differences between the branding of products and services at the operational level highly dependent on the type of service brands, namely, the inseparability of consumption and production, invisibility, perishable nature, and heterogeneous nature, as well as the current inaccuracy in the delivery of the brand image. However, Kotler (1997) stressed that creating, maintaining, protecting, and enhancing a brand that ‘identifies the seller or maker is “perhaps the most distinctive skill of professional marketers.” Nevertheless, due to the unique characteristics of the tourism industry, branding in tourism presents its unique challenges (Cai, 2002).

### 2.5.1 Brand Reputation

A brand's reputation has been described as the perception of a name's quality (Aaker & Keller, 1990). According to Morgan-Thomas and Veloutsou (2013), brand reputation evolves due to the firm's brand image communication to its audience. Consequently, consumers value a brand's quality based on its previous activities and market presence, influencing consumers to have a favorable opinion based on the company's credibility (Dwiedienawati et al., 2021; Harjadi et al., 2022; Opare & Blankson, 2017; Varadarajan et al., 2006).

Similarly, Shapiro (1983) and Zeithmal (1988) divided two indicators of the company's overall reputation to assess the brand's reputation. They emphasized absolute prestige (positive and negative image) and the level of importance concerning competitors. By definition, Greyser (2009) focuses on four major areas investigated by enterprises to analyze a developing (or developed) issue that may represent a reputational threat to their brand as follows: (1) the brand elements. In terms of the brand elements, market brand positioning refers to the capacity to impact customer perception of a brand or product relative to competitors (Aaker & Keller, 1990; Hariyanto, 2018; Wang & Lu, 2020), brand's advantages and disadvantages (Kumar, 2019; Žugić & Konatar, 2018) and how the brand's defining characteristic (Ianenko et al., 2020; Jalkala & Keränen, 2014; Keller, 2013). (2) the crisis brand situation. The initial brand crisis is severe if the issue can harm many consumers or some of them negatively, such as health risks (Aronczyk, 2020). (3) strategic initiatives. Understand the influence on the brand and the problem situation of the company's actions and communications in this situation (Çoban & Özel, 2022; Darling et al., 2005; Maulani, 2021; Srivastava, 2015; Wang & Lu, 2020), (4) The last, the results which in the stage how the efficiency of initiatives in terms of recovery/relaunch, restoring brand meaning, and favorability or market share (Li & Wei, 2016).

Moreover, Smaiziene and Jucevicius (2009) stated that three different focuses on corporate reputation interpretations might be identified. It would be more accurate to treat impression management as a corporate image-creating instrument, namely: (1) Resource-based view, in which reputation is an intangible asset and has intrinsic value (Borda et al., 2017; Esmaeilpour et al., 2007; Hall Jr. & Lee, 2014; Koh et al., 2009; Olmedo-Cifuentes & Martínez-León, 2014; Paper & Deren, 2013; Smaiziene & Jucevicius, 2009; Vorobyova, 2021). Another definition of a resource-based perspective is the competitive advantages of a positive reputation, such as attracting new customers (Dalton & Croft, 2003), encouraging greater loyalty from consumers (Bairrada et al., 2019), reducing uncertainty considering product quality (Linder & Williander, 2017), (2). Focus on competitiveness. In some instances, diversification is promoted to improve performance or enhance a firm's strategic competitiveness, which may affect a firm's reputation (Hall Jr. & Lee, 2014; Porter, 2008; Smaiziene & Jucevicius, 2009). (3) Focus on stakeholders. Failure to evaluate an unanticipated event that threatens stakeholders' positive expectations will result in negative outcomes that eventually influence a company's performance (Moon, 2019).

Based on the model by Bromley (1993) and Ferris et al. (2003), an additional critical aspect for researchers and practitioners is determining the most effective method to manage brand reputation. They note that a company's ability to use idea management strategies to imprint and manipulate its reputation is restricted to stakeholders, who also evaluate its efforts to shape its reputation. In contrast to earlier findings, Selnes (1993) found that the brand appears more frequently associated with the company's reputation than with specific products or services. Similarly, Verlegh et al. (2021) believe that brand reputation is crucial in times of crisis, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, because it decreases uncertainty and reaffirms consumers' self-concepts. As a result, Verlegh et al. (2021) propose that increased levels of fear and anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic are linked to increased brand relevance for consumers.

### 2.5.2 Brand Positioning

Brand positioning is a strategy to attract customers' interest (Fuchs & Diamantopoulos, 2010; Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). Keller (2013) noted that brand positioning is at the heart of marketing strategy. In the 1960s, Alpert and Gatty (1969) pioneered positioning as a consumer product marketing. Scholars regarded positioning as one of the essential features of modern marketing management, both from an academic standpoint and a practical frame of reference (Iyer et al., 2019; Jalkala & Keränen, 2014; Panda et al., 2019b; Urde & Koch, 2014). However, advanced brand positioning has additional business benefits (Panda & Rath, 2018). A successful positioning strategy is linked to the company's organizational capabilities (Fuchs & Diamantopoulos, 2010), highlighting the industry's unique way of delivering value to customers (Blankson et al., 2018). Brand positioning creates its image, distinctive properties, positive associations, and values in customers' memory to create a sustainable trademark image and ensure consumers' attachment to it (Fayvishenko, 2018). Furthermore, Iyer et al. (2019) explained the partial significance of the consequences of these positioning strategies on brand performance. These authors found that only two of three positioning techniques, namely brand image-based differentiation, price-based differentiation, and undifferentiated positioning, and the association between brand performance and price-based differentiation was negative. Fayvishenko (2021) proposed that brand positioning builds a recognizable image, distinctive qualities, positive connotations, and values in the consumer's mind to create a valid trademark image and guarantee consumer attachment to this trademark.

Previous research indicated that the positioning strategy influences a brand's positioning (Fuchs & Diamantopoulos, 2010). They confirmed that benefit-based positioning partially performed feature-based positioning strategies along the three dimensions (i.e., favorability, differentiation, and credibility). Besides that, Janiszewska and Insch (2012) identified the key elements that establish the structure of the positioning claim resulting from the brand positioning process. When it comes to new product development, marketers must understand the product and consumer preferences and how consumers can manage consumers who differ in their perceptions and preferences (Doyle, 1975). Otherwise, according to Fayvishenko (2018), brand positioning creates a brand's identifiable image, unique properties, corporate reputation, and values in the consumer's mind to build a viable trademark image and guarantee consumer attachment to this brand. In addition, he suggested that nine stages are involved in formulating and implementing a company's positioning strategy.

In support of this, Fayvishenko (2018) defined brand positioning as a procedure that begins with formulating a trademark position. He suggested nine fundamental steps in formulating and implementing a company's positioning strategy: (1). external and internal environment analysis, products analysis; (2). trademark design; (3). selection and analysis of differential positioning characteristics; (4). forming a plan (description of a positioning strategy); (5). setting strategic and tactical objectives and having the insight to attain them; (6). the formulation of a strategy implementation plan; (7). the implementation of the strategy; (8). the evaluation of results and control of strategy implementation; and (9). corrective actions. In addition to identifying the dimensions of brand positioning strategy, researchers must consider the unique industrial characteristics of the hospitality industry (Bavik, 2016; Hallin & Marnburg, 2008; Murphy et al., 2018; Narkhede, 2014). In contrast, from the company's perspective, studies of brand positioning strategy in the hotel industry are still in their infancy (Chailan, 2010; Hegner et al., 2021; Varadarajan et al., 2006). According to Hegner et al. (2021), an informal communication style can be detrimental to a hotel with a practical positioning, while a casual communication style can harm a utilitarian-positioned hotel. In addition, Hegner et al. (2021) highlight the significance of communication styles for hotel brand positioning strategies that influence consumer evaluations. This study focuses specifically on brand positioning strategy in the hotel industry. The key to success in the hotel industry is developing and managing unique brands (Jiang et al., 2002). It is necessary to examine the hotel brand positioning from the consumer's perspective and the implementation of various competing hotels in a market to achieve a precise positioning with solid market orientation (Plumeyer et al., 2019).

Nevertheless, empirical studies measuring hotel brand positioning typically uncover only a portion of these factors and offer limited strategic implications (Hu & Trivedi, 2020). Amid the COVID-19 pandemic, which significantly impacts business and the economy, the question now is how do hotel managers maintain and strengthen their brands to continue to exist (Breier et al., 2021; Coombs, 2015; Feldman, 2015; Hewett & Lemon, 2019; Wang & Lu, 2020). Companies that acted swiftly in maintaining brand presence had positioned themselves successfully during COVID-19 or would have an advantage in the post-lockdown market (Arora et al., 2020).

According to the literature, the three most important aspects of a company's brand positioning strategy are (1) Quality-based Differentiation. (2) Differentiation based on Brand Image and (3) Differentiation based on Price (Iyer et al., 2019; Morgan & Rego, 2009).

1) Quality Differentiation

Perceived quality refers to the strength of consumers' positive grades for the brands in the firm's portfolio (Gale, 1992; Smith & Park, 1992). Some industries benefit from high-quality brands more than low-quality ones (Allenby & Rossi, 1991; Blattberg & Wisniewski, 1989; Kamakura & Russell, 1989). High-quality brands suffer less negative demand impact from price increases (Sivakumar & Raj, 2012) and involve less advertising expenditure and fewer price reductions (Agrawal, 1996).

However, Porter (1980) was recognized for identifying and refining three generic techniques based on existing theory typology. Mintzberg (1987) provides an alternative typology consisting of six general approaches contradicting Porter's simplistic notions of cost leadership, differentiation, and focus. Mintzberg (1987) describes differentiation by quality as “the product does not do anything that competing products cannot do; it only does the same tasks with (a) more reliability, (b) greater durability, and (c) superior performance.” Thus, there is a need to pay more attention to the relationship between brand performance directly or indirectly by emotional attachment antecedents such as perceived value, customer contentment, perceived quality differentiation, and brand trust (Atulkar, 2020).

2) Brand Image-based Differentiation

Numerous studies have proved that product differentiation strongly connects to customer satisfaction and may influence it (Marito & Radi, 2019). They considered brand image crucial to creating or implementing to entice customers to purchase a product. Organizations invest in research and development to create distinctive or distinct products and services for brand promotion as part of the differentiation process. (Kimpakorn & Tocquer, 2010; Kotha & Vadlamani, 1995; Zehir et al., 2015). The corporation should identify the current needs of the market’s customers and seek superior solutions to meet those needs (Herhausen, 2016). Brand image-based differentiation is an example of a differentiation strategy that can cause minimal to low disruptive effects (Kotha & Vadlamani, 1995).

However, brand differentiation is the degree to which the customer perceives the brand to be distinct from its competitors (Berry, 2000; Kuo & Chen, 2015). Companies and industries can distinguish along five dimensions (Kotler & Keller, 2011): product differentiation, service differentiation, personal differentiation, image differentiation, and channel differentiation. In addition, according to Goyal (2018), brand-based uniqueness is crucial in establishing and maintaining a competitive advantage. Thus, brand image influences consumer preference within a specific product category.

3) Price-based Differentiation

Pandemics such as COVID-19 can threaten some of the most well-established revenue management strategies, such as the elements that impact luxury pricing. One common feature of the case studies presented by Byrne and McCarthy (2020) stated that differential pricing refers to charging prices for different customers or groups of customers for the same good or service. Price-based distinction requires a company to obtain low-cost raw materials, increase efficiency across core businesses, reduce expenses, and keep a large inventory (Iyer et al., 2019; Kotha & Vadlamani, 1995; M. Porter, 1980). According to Kintler & Remenova (2020), price differentiation refers to a pricing strategy that allows a corporation to charge different rates for the same product based on client segmentation. From this perspective, price differentiation is a source of a dependable and effective competitive pricing strategy based on differentiation from competitive replacements (Porter, 1980). In the period following the COVID-19 outbreak, it was commonly reported that prices dropped in the period immediately preceding and during the lockdown (Arabadzhyan et al., 2021). Therefore, the change in the number of hotels remaining on the market was the most significant indicator.

Pricing has been identified by Pantelic (2017) as one of the four hotel selection criteria that influence the purchasing choice of guests. Some researchers argue that pricing directly impacts revenue and, when mixed with costs, leads to the organization's total profitability (Al-Shakhsheer et al., 2017; Jensen & Prebensen, 2015). They emphasized that lowering room prices will increase occupancy, but it is ineffective in increasing hotel revenue. Similarly, it might be suggested and considered that lower pricing could indicate company problems or, in some cases, a reduction or loss in quality (Iyer et al., 2019). As a result, price strategy is crucial to long-term organizational performance (Islami et al., 2020; Kohli et al., 2020). As the price cannot be determined in a sealed room, changes in trade conditions must be noticed, and pricing strategies must be modified to keep access to luxury products in the hospitality industry in line with shifting consumer expectations and disposable incomes (Janssen, 2021; Noone et al., 2013). For example, when dealing with high severity levels of the pandemic, hoteliers use a more streamlined booking portfolio to cope with the crisis.

### 2.5.3 Brand Performance

Recent studies evaluating brand-related concepts have focused on brand performance, although it provides a more accurate picture of the efficacy of an organization's brand-related activities (Chang et al., 2018; Cui et al., 2014; Wai Jin et al., 2016). Brand performance can be viewed as a factor in determining a brand's success; this can help brands reach their market objectives (Jennifer, 2022). Brand performance explains a brand's market strength and is also defined as the relative measurement of a brand's success in the marketplace (O'Cass & Weerawardena, 2010). Tuan (2012) states, "Brand performance is reflected in its attainment of corporate strategy and goals, as evaluated by sales growth, profitability, and market share." As a result, brand performance is linked to stakeholder relationships (Whysall, 2000). Consequently, industries with a performance appraisal system that serves the interests of stakeholders rather than just employees tend to develop strong brand performance.

Several strategies, broadly classified as financial and non-financial performance, can be used to measure the performance of a business (Ahmad & Jamil, 2020). Raju and Rajagopal (2008) state that many organizations engage in various integrated marketing activities to monitor brand performance indicators such as awareness, acquaintance, affiliation, allegiance, and assessment, dispersed across perceptional, performance, and financial variables. According to them, brand acquaintance refers to customers' familiarity with a company's brands, whereas brand association refers to customers' purchasing behavior toward familiar brands. Furthermore, allegiance and appraisal are synonymous with brand loyalty and performance relative to company investments, respectively (Obiegbu et al., 2020; Toklu & Kucuk, 2016). In particular, the efficiency and effectiveness of the implemented business strategy's marketing activities will determine their performance.

Return on investment has been added to the metrics of brand performance models to measure the brand's financial performance (Badenhausen, 2017). According to Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001), brand performance results from desirability and profitability. Iyer et al. (2019) define brand performance as a combination of financial performance measurements (such as market share and profitability) and non-financial performance measures focused on the medium- to long-term maintenance of brands. In addition, the literature analysis reveals that brand performance is evaluated by enterprises and consumers (Unurlu & Uca, 2017). While consumer evaluations are frequently referred to as "brand performance," evaluations based on businesses are called "financial or profitability performance." Among the fundamental factors used to evaluate brand performance are pricing flexibility, price bonuses, market share, cost structure, profitability, and category success (Çalik et al., 2013). Keller (2003) points out relevant performance measurement indicators for brand success: market share, relative pricing, price premium, and price flexibility. However, factors such as the higher limit of payment for consumer interests, the effects of price adjustments on brand demand, and the brand's market share are critical in evaluating the brand's market performance (Ural, 2009). Similarly, Tung-Lai Hu et al. (2010) state that the higher the level of customer trust in the company, would increase customer trust and positively affect brand performance.

According to Iyer et al. (2019), brand performance is defined as a combination of financial performance measures (such as market share and profitability) and non-financial performance measures that are oriented toward the medium to long-term maintenance of brands (brand equity elements such as brand image and brand awareness). Indeed, recent studies assessing brand-related constructs have focused on brand performance because it accurately indicates an organization's brand-related activities' efficacy (Chang et al., 2018; Cui et al., 2014). Figure 2.8 portrays the concept of an Integrated approach to brand performance.

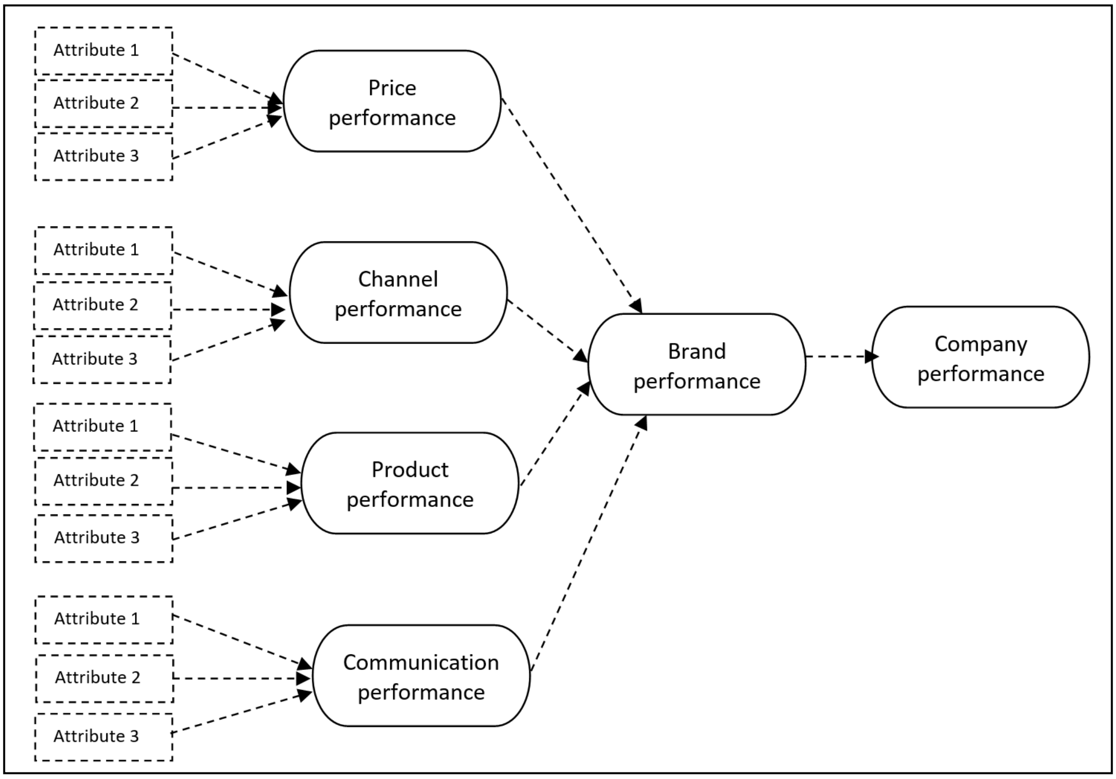



Figure 2.8 Integrated Approach to Brand Performance

Source: Adopted from Iyer et al. (2019)

Research on brand performance in the hotel industry primarily examines the brand’s marketing performance and evaluates the brand’s performance from the visitors’ perspective. Similarly, field studies on brand performance in tourism typically focus on hotel companies and attempt to define the connection between other variables influencing a hotel brand’s performance in the views of guests (Do & Nham, 2021; Gupta et al., 2020; Liu et al., 2020; So et al., 2013).

### 2.5.4 Branding Studies during COVID-19 Pandemic

Embarking on the research journey is packed with theoretical and empirical examinations to generate a new body of knowledge and uphold novelty findings.

Nevertheless, contribution to the industry remains a priority, mainly to align the findings with the actual case problem. In branding studies conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, evaluating the individual's sense of the brand's meaning can endanger the individual's ontological stability (Giddens, 2020; Subotić, 2019). As with most crises, the perception of brand crises had been fundamentally relational, and state responses would require coping with and attempting to regulate the emotions involved on all sides (Hutchison, 2016). As Hutchison's case study demonstrates, this is especially evident when the intrinsic emotional aspect combines with the crisis's content and reveals the crisis's connection to people's lives and identities through branding.

The pandemic COVID-19 crisis has had a significant impact on consumers and brands. One reason for this is that stay-at-home directives, drastic shifts in demand for specific product categories, distribution channel undersupply, and supply chain difficulties for certain companies have disrupted habitual behavior and forced customers to shop in new ways (Knowles et al., 2020). During a pandemic, luxury brands use celebrities to communicate with their followers on social media. They concentrated on the same message, which is critical during the pandemic period (stay and home and self-isolate)(Grilec et al., 2020). A brand crisis is defined as a significant threat to brand equity, with a potentially negative outcome affecting brand reputation and, in extreme cases, destroying the entire business (Daboul, 2016). Major research on brand crises has focused on the factors that influence different types of crises, the financial consequences for brands, and the financial, psychological, and physical consequences to society, with the data coming from experiments, surveys, and quantitative analysis (Salvador & Ikeda, 2017). In addition to the different types of brand crises, the brand reaction and response strategy to the incident is an important stage that can either lead to damage containment or be responsible for exacerbating the problem and causing additional complications (Benoit, 1997; Coombs, 1995, 2015; Dutta & Pullig, 2011).

Many recent brand crisis management studies have examined the impact of social media on brand perception by tracking the spread of crises and analyzing their impact on reputations and positioning (Salvador et al., 2017). In addition, there are numerous causes for brand crises, including uncertainty and change in organization such as brand reputation, and financial outcome (Daboul, 2016; Hewett & Lemon, 2019) as it happens unpredictably (Bundy et al., 2017; Coombs, 2007a), and unexpectedly; such an event might result in negative consequences for organizations (Aronczyk, 2020; Coombs & Laufer, 2018; Zhou et al., 2019), potential threats to consumer safety (Rea et al., 2014), issues with corporate social responsibility, improper conduct by executives, poor financial results, unprofessionalism on the part of company spokespeople (Greyser, 2009; Salvador et al., 2017).

According to Do and Nham (2021), Brand crisis response strategies were divided into two categories. *Firstly*, the primary response strategy is to conduct mandatory responses only when a brand crisis occurs. This category is divided into two sub-categories: defensive and accommodating. Five levels tiers of increasing responsibility and effort are presented for the defensive cluster. These include distance strategy, accept but minimization, simple denial, winning a sympathy, and no comment. There were two distinct categories identified within the accommodative cluster: accept responsibility without improvement, and improvement. These methods encourage brands to demonstrate a high level of responsibility and corrective action in the event of a brand crisis, as opposed to employing extreme defensive strategies such as no comment and simple denial. *Second*, secondary responses can be implemented at any stage of a company's lifecycle to support primary response plans. It includes phrases like bolstering, ingratiating, polishes the halo, and proactive. Prior fundamental research by Benoit (1997) and Coombs (2007a) provided a list of possible responses ranging from denial to corrective and weight- mentioned strategies as equivalent to primary responses in dealing with the brand crisis.

However, following the crisis, hotels must rehabilitate their brand (Balakrishnan, 2011; Guo et al., 2021; Ognjanović & Bugarčić, 2021). Balakrishnan (Balakrishnan, 2011) and Pongsakornrungsilp et al (2021) investigated how businesses in the tourism industry can manage brand burn during a crisis. Despite this, Li and Wei (2016), Falkheimer and Heide (2015), and Hegner et al. (Hegner et al., 2014, 2021) concentrate on brand crises that emerge from business operations. Results show that the brand crisis literature focuses on business and financial crises but pays less attention to how a brand can recover from a crisis (Pongsakornrungsilp et al., 2021). On the other hand, in addition to managing brand in products and services, developing employer brand is critical during the COVID-19 pandemic. The goal of developing an employer's brand is to attract and retain talented employees while also instilling confidence in guests (Ognjanović & Bugarčić, 2021).

Brand managers aid policymakers in enhancing the public's view of a company's brand by utilizing best practices (Jang, 2020). When a crisis strikes an organization, the public wants to know what transpired and how it may affect them; therefore, good crisis communication should be proactive, transparent and include significant accountability measures to restore the business's reputation (Hsiu-Ying Kao et al., 2020; Kádárová et al., 2015; Wooten & James, 2008). However, the limitation is that the new crisis management and brand crisis keywords that appeared during COVID-19 are hard to obtain (Breier et al., 2021; Knowles et al., 2020; Tongare, 2021).

## 2.6 Conceptual Framework of Crisis Management and Brand Performance Relationship

The research model illustrates the relationship and flow of the research following the specified research objectives about the current crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in the Indonesian hotel industry. An organizational crisis is an event that managers or stakeholders perceive as highly significant, unexpected, and potentially disruptive that can threaten the organization's goals and have far-reaching effects on its relationships with stakeholders (Bundy et al., 2017). In order to conduct our review, the author conducted a comprehensive and integrative search of articles published in leading organisational academic journals, subject to specific stipulations designed to make the review relevant to management and organisational scholars. The Mitroff (1988) MIT Sloan Management Review article has been used as a starting point for later developments in the literature. This study also began with this article. In light of the literature, two major points of view examine the crisis and brand management from different vantage points and employ different theoretical traditions to answer different research questions. As observed in crisis research, the influence of crisis in various disciplines is possible based on several established theories and empirical findings. First, the theoretical foundation had been presented to establish the link between the focal points of the study. Previous findings and arguments are extensively reviewed to examine the gap in the structural relationship and the flaws in the findings based on the limitations. It is vital to carefully examine the connection between crisis and brand that will influence the overall outcome of this study. The second section examines the application of crisis management on brand-building processes like brand reputation, brand positioning, and brand performance to understand the impact of each crisis category on hotel businesses.

Concerning the previous paragraph, some argue that crises frequently result in negative publicity for businesses, threatening the company's image (Dean, 2004). Ulmer and Sellnow (2000) have conceptualized the corporate crisis as a rising and essential issue. They observed that crisis issues indicate that corporate communication during a crisis assumes strategic significance. The brand crisis is a source of uncertainty and organisational change (Hewett & Lemon, 2019) because it occurs unexpectedly (Bundy et al., 2017; Coombs, 2007a). The author performed full-text searches on brand reputation, positioning, and performance to identify pertinent brand crisis articles in these publications. The author then identifies and categorizes the critical themes impacting crisis management on brand reputation, brand positioning, and brand performance to generate a set of articles for inclusion. This involves removing articles not focusing on crisis management and brands in their research questions, hypotheses, or propositions.

By looking at the points highlighted above, processes for uncovering and dealing with such events can be murky at times; lines of responsibility for leading firms' responses can be blurred, with marketing, corporate communications, and other relevant groups, such as external agency partners, all believing that they should bear at least some of the blame. However, during times of crisis, internal strife and politicking can impair a company's ability to anticipate and respond to such events effectively (AlBattat & Mat Som, 2013; Greyser, 2009; Heide & Simonsson, 2021; Lotfollahzadeh et al., 2019). Thus, a significant issue for firms is how internal processes enable firms to identify and respond to brand crises effectively, with various groups coordinating and cooperating. This is consistent with Hewet and Lemon (2019) research, which revealed that the process of representing integrated marketing communications (IMC) efforts during crises includes three steps: sensing or scanning the environment and gathering insights about crises; informing or disseminating these insights throughout the organisation to create transparency; and responding or reacting to the event through a coordinated effort. The following argument by Mitroff et al. (1987) stated that corporate crises are calamities caused by people, organisational structures, economics, and/or technology that cause extensive harm to human life and natural and social environments.

Additionally, in the literature review, regarding its beneficial contributions to the brand, crisis management was established and presented in extensive detail (Coombs & Laufer, 2018; Mitroff et al., 1988). Regardless of the arguments presented above, the theory of crisis management (CM) by Mitroff (1988) is the most prevalent theory, which proposes that companies would do well to consider forming dual crisis portfolios: one consists of a set of preventative actions developed from the action clusters and another comprised of a set of crises taken from the crisis clusters. In addition, Mitroff (1988) categorized crises according to two basic parameters: 1) the origin of the crisis and 2) whether technical or human/organizational causes primarily drive it. In his approach, Mitroff (1988) notes that businesses could not only begin to ensure themselves with basic coverage across a set of crises but could also add a significant justification component to their crisis management programs. Mitroff's model also proposes using an integrated crisis management method comprising proactive and reactive measures aimed at the management plan before, during, and after the crisis (Ritchie & Jiang, 2019). Methods that are prepared and executed prior to a disaster to mitigate its adverse effects are known as proactive approaches.

To connect impacts on such outcomes, a theory of brand performance must contain features of consumers' relationships with the firm, the product, the price, or the crisis itself (Aaker, 1991; Semerciöz et al., 2015; Shaluf et al., 2001; Wut et al., 2021). Besides, product design, which encompasses technical, aesthetic, and socio-symbolic qualities, directly affects brand strength and value (Dutta & Pullig, 2011; Herrmann et al., 2010). They argue that an integrated approach to product and brand management is necessary for a successful strategy during or after the COVID-19 pandemic to investigate the factors necessary for a framework to explain brand performance based on marketing activities and their interaction with consumer wants. This study adopted and supported the Hewet and Lemon Models (2019), which provide evidence regarding the types of events that may develop into crises and the brand, firm, and communications characteristics that can facilitate effective responses. Hewett and Lemon (2019) believe that brand strength is related to performance indicators such as brand performance and corporate performance based on marketing activities and their interaction with consumer wants.

Apart from that, a lack of frameworks combined with a lockdown situation in which communication between external stakeholders and decision-makers was limited resulted in a lack of creative innovation, indicating that the absence of foundations during a crisis can have significant consequences (Breier et al., 2021; Pinzaru et al., 2020; Saraceno, 2021; Vašíčková, 2020). However, there is a scarcity of literature that can elaborate on firms' processes to identify and manage events of this magnitude.

Following identifying the variables in the relevant literature reviews, this study's criterion variable of interest is "brand performance," and the predictor variable is "crisis management." Meanwhile, "brand reputation" and "brand positioning" mediate. As these examples demonstrate, brand crises can be costly regarding their potential short-term effects on sales and liability (financial performance) and their long-term effects on brand value and reputation (Hewett & Lemon, 2019). If a brand's brand performance is strong, it will affect brand positioning and reputation, which supports the business stability of a brand (Bhandari et al., 2021; Breier et al., 2021; Hariyanto, 2018; Iyer et al., 2019; Maulani, 2021). However, studies on the mediating role of brand reputation and brand positioning in the crisis management and performance relationship were hardly found, especially in the hotel industry context. Additionally, it is worth mentioning that there are a few studies that viewed brand reputation and brand positioning as mediating variables. Figure 2.8 depicts the conceptual framework developed after thoroughly reviewing the literature on crisis management and brand-building processes.

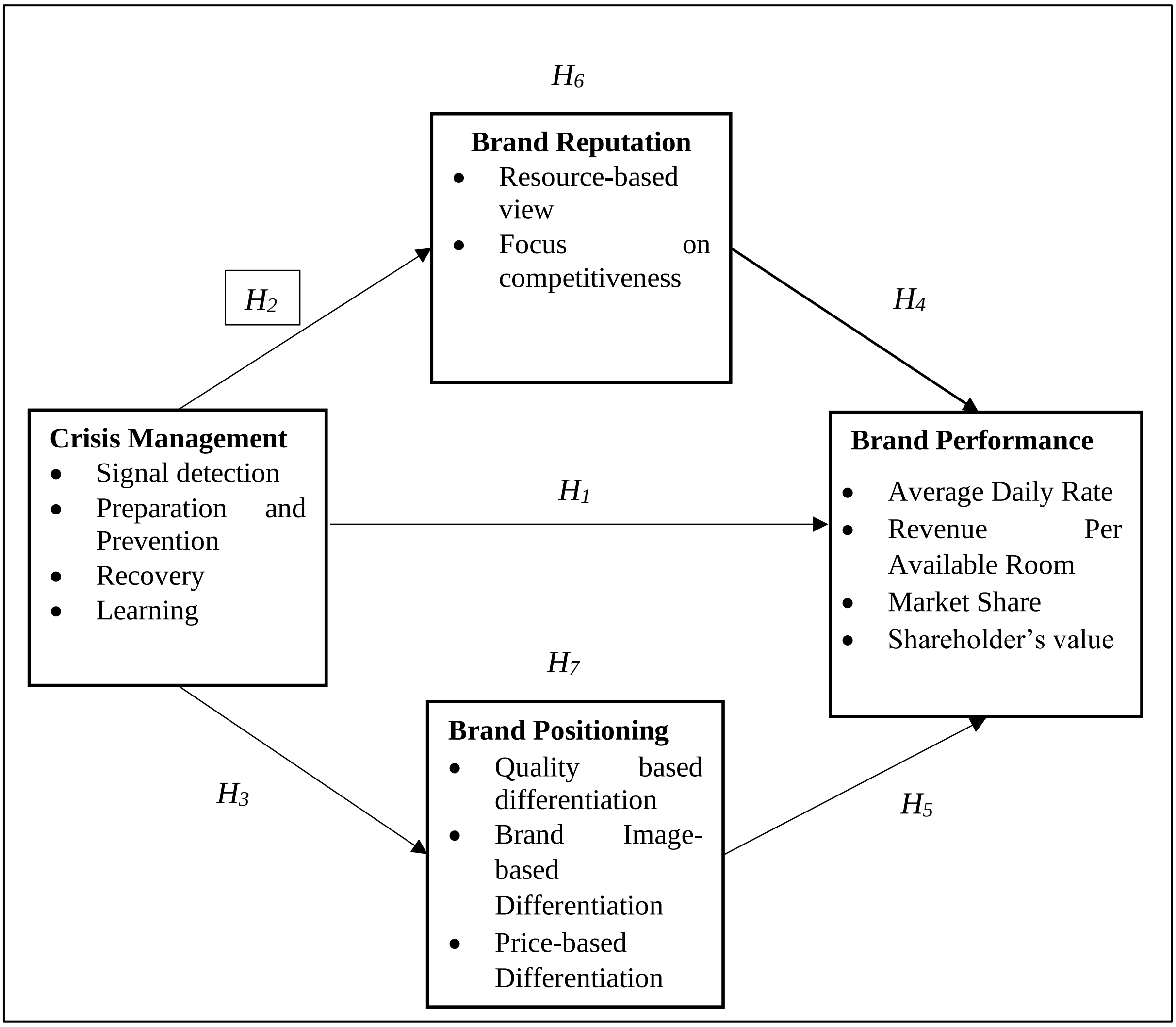



Figure 2.9 Conceptual Framework of Crisis Management and Brand Performance Relationship

Source**: Crisis Management** (Mitroff et al.,1987; Alkhawlani et al., 2016; Coombs, 2007; Faulkner, 2001; Liu et al., 2015); **Brand Reputation** (Foroudi, 2020; Greyser, 2009; Ritter & Pedersen, 2020; Schürhoff, 2021; Smaiziene & Jucevicius, 2009); **Brand Positioning** (Beal & Lockamy, 1999; Iyer et al., 2019; Kintler & Remenova, 2020; Mirzai et al., 2016; Morgan & Rego, 2009; Zehir et al., 2015); **Brand Performance** (Carvell et al., 2016; Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Iyer et al., 2019; O'Neill & Carlbäck, 2011)

Some studies on crises focus on the circumstances that influence consumer response, such as performance (Coombs & Holladay, 2012), food hygiene, brand, and company (Fahmy et al., 2020; Janssen, 2021; Jiang & Wen, 2020; Kaushal & Srivastava, 2021b, 2021a; Talwar et al., 2020; World Travel & Tourism Council, 2020) as well as a good reputation of the company (Alkhawlani et al., 2016; Bodeklint et al., 2017; Coombs & Holladay, 2012; Dwiedienawati et al., 2021b; Greyser, 2009; Hassan & Soliman, 2021; Helm & Tolsdorf, 2013; Li & Wei, 2016; Lyon Payne, 2006; Opare

& Blankson, 2017; Vázquez-Martínez et al., 2021). In contrast, post-disaster efforts involving responses and recovery are known as reactive approaches (Luhukay, 2009; Moe & Pathranarakul, 2006).

## 2.7 Hypothesis Development

### 2.7.1 The Effect of Crisis Management on Brand Performance

Most marketing research on brand uncertainty focuses on how consumers process information under conditions of uncertainty (Eckert et al., 2012; Islam & Hussain, 2022; Jian et al., 2020; Shakina et al., 2020). The researchers identify four primary characteristics of a brand crisis: uncertainty, brand disease, contagion, and the butterfly effect (Do & Nham, 2021). On the conformity side, brand market share and sales volume were utilized to measure a brand's market performance (Tuan, 2012). Unlike the typical environment where the brand pulls the customers, and the customers pay a premium for their preferred brands, the case was not so similar during the COVID-19 pandemic (Gogoi, 2021).

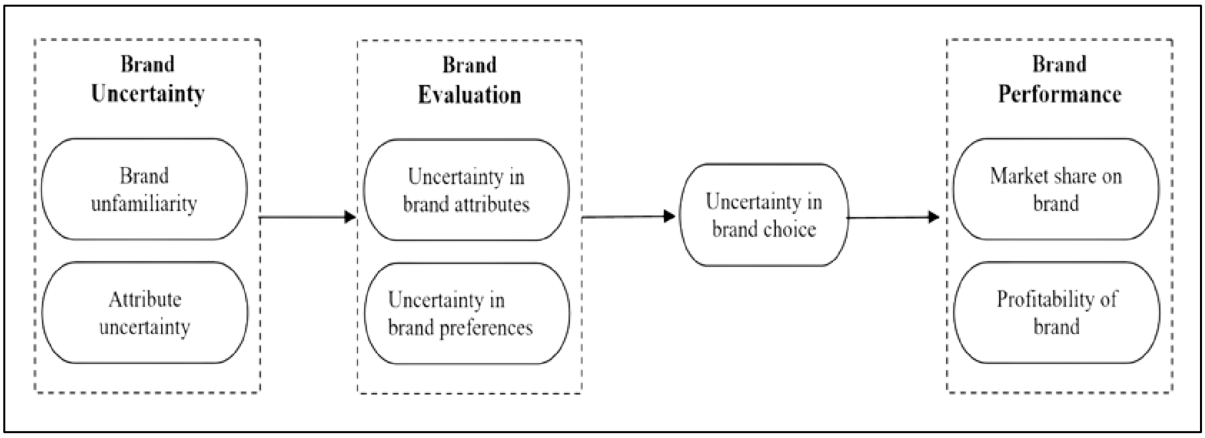



Figure 2.10 Modeling the influence of brand uncertainty on brand performance

Source: Ghosh et al. (1995)

In this study, brand performance is measured along four dimensions: three financial measures, such as average room rate (Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001, 2002; Morgan & Rego, 2009; Sun et al., 2015), revenue per available room (Carvell et al., 2016; Napierała et al., 2020), and market share (Matthew, 2016; O'Neill & Carlbäck, 2011; Wu et al., 2020); and one non-financial indicator, shareholders' value (Alpaslan et al., 2009; Haksever et al., 2004; Iyer et al., 2019; Kurznack et al., 2021; Signori et al., 2021). These dimensions are hoping to prompt brand crisis and their performance. In this section, the clarification concerning the previous studies had been made accordingly, based on the hypotheses derived. Figure 2.11 depicts the proposed study framework, as stated in chapter 1. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the shift in the hotel business (Arabadzhyan et al., 2021; Deloitte, 2020a; Musadad, 2020).

There has been little research on how hospitality organizations respond to and recover from brand crises during a pandemic (Paraskevas & Quek, 2019; Piga et al., 2021; Shen et al., 2020). Nevertheless, the study of Rezkalla (2021) indicates that there is an impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on firms' brand performance. However, Wu et al. (2020) and Polemis (2021) argued that brand performance fluctuated during the COVID-19 pandemic based on the tendency of room rates to decline significantly. We will investigate the relationship between crisis management and brand performance factors. According to our knowledge, this is the first study to examine the simultaneous influence of indicators derived from multiple theories on hotel brand performance in Indonesia during the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus,

*$H_1$: Crisis management has a significant effect on the up-scale hotel brand's performance during the post-COVID-19 pandemic.*

### 2.7.2 The Effect of Crisis Management on Brand Reputation

Literature suggests that crisis management is essential for businesses to maintain their reputation (Bodeklint et al., 2017). Over the years, the significance of crisis management has been discussed; however, questions remain regarding what influences brand reputation and why (Greyser, 2009). Previous academics concur that presenting the truth is vital when considering crisis management and its impact on brand reputation (Bodeklint et al., 2017; Oombs & Laufer, 2018; Greyser, 2009; Johar et al., 2010). Organizations can rebuild their reputations by speaking the truth unless challenged by a crisis or its onset (Fors-Andrée & Ronge, 2015). According to a Daboul (2016) study, both crises decrease the perceived functional/experiential and symbolic brand benefits. He argued that the crises seriously affected the impression of perceived benefits. Bundy et al. (2017) and Coombs (2020) identify crisis impacts by focusing on reputational risk, corporate branding, and organizational reputation rehabilitation.

Although different crises can affect a company, the consumer relationship with a brand is at risk if the crisis is not well controlled (Greyser, 2009; Salvador et al., 2017). Furthermore, Walsh et al. (2009) assert that a person's relationship with an organization is a significant determinant of that person's perception of a company's reputation and that customers are more likely than other stakeholders to have a relationship with a company and brand, which increases brand performance. Therefore, effective marketing methods for establishing a "hotel chain" provide brand reputation benefits during a pandemic (Mocancu, 2020; Piga et al., 2021; Toklu & Kucuk, 2016). Hence,

$H_2$: Crisis management has a significant effect on the up-scale hotel brand's reputation during the post-COVID-19 pandemic.

### 2.7.3 The Effect of Crisis Management on Brand Positioning

Previous research has revealed that successful crisis management is critical for improving relationship marketing, one of the most important aspects of brand positioning (Mair et al., 2016; Tongare, 2021; Van Leeuwen Boomkamp & Vermolen, 2021). However, few studies have provided a comprehensive brand positioning strategy detailing how to survive and grow in a market that is becoming increasingly competitive (Adina et al., 2015; Arabadzhyan et al., 2021; Grundey, 2009; Steve, 2022; Zhiwei, 2021). For instance, in Tongare (2021), consumers are more thoughtful in this unexpected critical scenario, which affects consumption patterns, and the future is uncertain, so there is no single solution for all brands. The study by Saqib (2021) identified brand positioning perspectives as competition, empty connector, consumer perception, differentiation, and competitive advantage. This is consistent with the current situation, in which hospitality businesses are expected to make significant changes to their operations and brand positioning in the COVID-19 work environment in order to ensure employee and customer health and safety, as well as increase customer willingness to buy the product their business (Gössling et al., 2020). Furthermore, Adina et al. (2015) investigated the potential effects of place of origin controlling factors on brand positioning foundations. They examined the managerial implications of country-of-origin governing factors on brand positioning strategy, proposed enhancements for optimistic associations, and an optimal comparison of the country of origin and brand positioning aspects.

Consistent with prior research and crisis management hypotheses, integrated brand positioning is hypothesized to influence a spectrum of performance-related outcomes in the hotel industry (Arabadzhyan et al., 2021; Hao et al., 2020; Musadad, 2020). While the hotel industry literature suggests that some benefits stem from crisis management, such as increased quality-based differentiation (Allenby & Rossi, 1991;

Blattberg & Wisniewski, 1989; Kamakura & Russell, 1989), brand image-based differentiation (Berry, 2000; Herhausen, 2016; Kuo & Chen, 2015), price-based differentiation (Agrawal, 1996; Iyer et al., 2019; Morgan & Rego, 2009; Sivakumar & Raj, 2012), and reduced perceived risk Bendixen et al. (2004). In this study, positive brand positioning was most beneficial in an uncertain environment, such as a COVID-19 pandemic. Although the crisis management-brand positioning literature tends to be theoretically and anecdotally informed, the consensus points to the positive effect of consistent crisis management on a range of brand positioning outcomes. Therefore,

*$H_3$: Crisis management has a significant effect on the up-scale hotel brand's positioning during the post-COVID-19 pandemic.*

### 2.7.4 The Effect of Brand Reputation on Brand Performance

According to Foroudi (2018), Gonring (2008), and Reid (2002), brand reputation is a critical performance indicator for a brand and relates to how others perceive a given brand (person or corporation). In addition, O'Neill and Xiao (2006) suggest that brand reputation is one of the most important contributors to a property's profitability, along with net operating income and revenue per available room. Another research on brand reputation has been undertaken by Fiaz et al. (2019) to assess the impact of brand image in a firm on product and service sales, brand success, and company performance.

Contrarily, the frequent poor performance may also be linked to the firm's inability to implement a viral marketing approach in its marketing program (Jennifer, 2022). This is in line with de la Fuente Sabaté and de Quevedo Puente (2003), who stated that it is essential to understand that brand reputation is not always the catalyst for sales and profits to rise. Furthermore, brand reputation can improve current or future hotel brand performance, loyalty, re-purchase, and recommendation. Thus,

*$H_4$: The brand reputation of the up-scale hotel has a significant effect on its brand performance during the post-COVID-19 pandemic.*

### 2.7.5 The Effect of Brand Positioning on Brand Performance

As stated previously, positioning exists for the primary purpose of highlighting differentiating elements from the competition and is based on the fact that all consumer decisions result from a comparison process with the various market offerings. Thus, the positioning of the firm relative to the onset of the crisis's spread and its response directly impacts its effects (Greyser, 2009; Souiden & Pons, 2009). Considering the points highlighted above, positioning is a crucial source of competitive advantage for organisations (Rodríguez-Molina et al., 2019), particularly in concentrated markets of a particular industry where an adequate positioning strategy enhances superior performance (Xie et al., 2018). Nevertheless, the position of the company concerning the start of the crisis and how it responds to it have a direct effect on its effects (Amadi, 2022; Dawar & Pillutla, 2000; Souiden & Pons, 2009; Steve, 2022; Zhiwei, 2021). The following argument by Morgan and Rego (2009) stated that brand positioning significantly affects performance. Positioning affects a firm's long-term competitive advantage if the implementation is according to the marketing plan (Hooley et al., 2011; Kotler & Keller, 2011; Porter, 2008). Performance evaluation is also connected with clear strategy (Hooley et al., 2011). However, given the rise of brand positioning principles in hotel industry markets, it becomes imperative to understand the potential positioning types that can allow firms to gain a marketplace advantage in an increasingly competitive environment (Porter, 2008).

There is a lack of understanding regarding positioning and its relationship to its antecedents and outcomes, especially in the hotel industry context, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic. The need to study this gap is further exacerbated by the increasing emphasis on branding by hotel firms. The present study aims to address this research gap in the hotel branding literature by investigating the relationship between positioning platform (Kotha & Vadlamani, 1995; Mintzberg, 1987), firm performance, and a key antecedent (Hult & Ketchen, 2017; Kohli et al., 2020; Narver et al., 2004) Based on this perspective, the present study argues that market-focused resources, such as brand positioning, influence strategy selection, and implementation, leading to firm performance. Based on this notion, the subsequent investigation will develop a brand positioning and brand performance reflective construct that measures hotel crisis management capabilities. Hence:

*$H_5$: The brand positioning of the up-scale hotel has a significant effect on its brand performance during the post-COVID-19 pandemic.*

### 2.7.6 The Mediating Effect of Brand Reputation in Crisis Management and Brand Performance Relationship

Previously, Cabral (2012) asserted that a firm's performance is contingent on its reputation and is stochastically dependent on its efforts to enhance its reputation. Apart from that, reputation management was more frequently associated with crisis management, so administrators only prioritized their reputation when it was essential (Aronczyk, 2020; Breier et al., 2021; Do & Nham, 2021; Li & Wei, 2016; Singh et al., 2020). Most crisis management before dealt with financial crises (Alonso-Almeida & Bremser, 2013) or crises from health risks (Dwiedienawati et al., 2021; Stergiou & Farmaki, 2021). Regarding building reputation, Urde and Koch (2014) point out that companies need to evaluate how they are perceived in their environment. In this way, brand reputation represents 'the charm' of the brand as recognized by employees, suppliers, investors, communities, and customers. Bodeklint et al. (2017) found that crisis management minimizes the negative effect that a crisis can have in the long-term perspective.

Global hotel managers can employ the guests' evaluations of hotel brands during the COVID-19 pandemic to understand the relationship between brand reputation and performance, including the factors in its antecedents (Bundy & Pfarrer, 2015; Urde & Koch, 2014). Considering these individual factors simultaneously with different organizational factors on various crisis outcomes (including learning, reputation, and performance) may reveal important sets of conditions critical to the processes associated with crises and crisis management (Bundy et al., 2017). The better the reputation, the more trust is built; thus, more revenue is generated from it (Vorobyova, 2021).

In addition, brand reputation demonstrates that consumers have confidence in the brand and are willing to do the transaction (Bratu, 2019; Esmaeilpour et al., 2017). Therefore, the present study assumes a good reputation is a critical factor in achieving a sustainable competitive advantage for the organization and finds a positive connection between brand reputation and performance during the COVID-19 pandemic. Moreover, this study hoped to fill the gap by adding brand reputation in crisis management to brand performance literature. Even, If a firm is dependent on a group of stakeholders who have critical resources and sufficient autonomy to sanction (reward) the organisation as a result of its reputation, a poor (better) reputation will lead to worse performance (Neville et al., 2005). Most importantly, this study examines the mediating role of brand reputation during the COVID-19 pandemic. Based on the discussion outlined, the hypotheses derived are as follows:

*$H_6$: The brand reputation of the up-scale hotel mediates the relationship between crisis management and brand performance during the post-COVID-19 pandemic.*

### 2.7.7 The Mediating Effect of Brand Positioning in Crisis Management and Brand Performance Relationship

Brand positioning is the process of influencing the customers' minds, so it is linked to the firm's capabilities and unique way of delivering its product or service values to customers (Blankson et al., 2018; Fuchs & Diamantopoulos, 2010). However, impact of crisis management caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in the hotel business has a significant impact on brand positioning and brand performance (Ahmad & Jamil, 2020; Arabadzhyan et al., 2021; Breier et al., 2021; Do & Nham, 2021; Islami et al., 2020; Iyer et al., 2021; Olsen et al., 2022; Propheto et al., 2020; Santoso, 2020; Steve, 2022; Wang & Lu, 2020; Zhiwei, 2021).

Concerning the previous paragraph, drawing on the framework developed by Iyer et al. (2019), several studies agree that brand positioning is crucial to long-term organizational performance (Alpert & Gatty, 1969; Arabadzhyan et al., 2021; Byrne & Mccarthy, 2020; Noone et al., 2013; Olsen et al., 2022) during the COVID-19 pandemic. Access to luxury products in the hospitality industry must be maintained following shifting consumer expectations and disposable incomes that will, in turn, influence the company's performance (Janssen, 2021; Noone et al., 2013).

Studies have proved that brand positioning mediates the relationship between crisis management (Cai et al., 2023) and brand performance (Baghi & Gabrielli, 2021; Shahid, 2019). However, the effect of brand positioning on brand performance during the COVID-19 pandemic was inconsistent since employees may have found it difficult to internalize numerous values, resulting in uncertainty about how to behave in certain situations and, thus, inconsistent branding. To adopt the previous statement, the authors assume that a brand with a strong and sustainable positioning is more likely to compete successfully against rival brands and ensure customer identification with the brand. On the conformity side, brand positioning and vision have a direct positive effect on brand performance, positively affecting financial performance (Muhonen et al., 2017). The following hypotheses derive from assessing all of the variables involved. Therefore,

*$H_7$: The brand positioning of the up-scale hotel mediates the relationship between crisis management and brand performance during the post-COVID-19 pandemic*

## 2.8 Chapter Summary

This chapter provides a literature review of the investigated variables. Relevant literature has emphasised the fundamental concept of crisis management. Based on the literature review, several gaps were identified. Prior studies utilised a unidimensional approach to crisis management. Few studies examine crisis management—brand performance in Indonesian hotels during the COVID-19 pandemic. This study discussed the underlying theories that explained the criterion variable. Based on the crisis management theory model (Mitroff, 1988) and brand performance (Iyer et al., 2019). However, there is new knowledge that can be added to the literature on crisis management and branding. As stated in the preceding chapter, this study is situated within the hotel industry perspective. Therefore, by conducting this study, it is hoped that a better way to understand hotel managers is to identify the factors that contribute to the crisis management of brand reputation, brand positioning, and brand performance of up-scale hotels in Indonesia. The following chapter will discuss the methodology employed to achieve the purpose of this study.

# CHAPTER 3
# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

## 3.1 Preamble

This chapter describes the research procedures and methodology employed to examine the causal relationship between crisis management, brand reputation, brand positioning, and brand performance during the COVID-19 pandemic. The subsequent sections begin with a description of the research design, the unit of analysis, the population and sampling methods, the instrumentation, the pilot test, the data collection, and the statistical analysis employed to test the hypothesis.

## 3.2 Research Design

In general, research design shows the best procedure for collecting and analyzing pertinent data for the study (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Hussey and Hussey (1997) describe the research design as a systematic method that extends from the theoretical foundation to data collection and analysis. The research design specifies how qualitative, quantitative, and mixed-method approaches had been used to answer the research questions (Creswell, 2015). In other words, the research paradigms chosen would substantially affect the entire study design for a comprehensive research procedure. Creswell (2009) states that study design must account for (a) knowledge claims that emphasize a theoretical perspective, (b) inquiry strategies and procedures, and (c) data collecting and analysis techniques.

Based on the refined research questions presented in Section 1.5, the research methods described in this chapter are intended to elicit responses to the following four research questions:

1) What is the effect of crisis management initiatives on the brand performance of up-scale hotels in the post-COVID-19 era?
2) What is the effect of crisis management initiatives on the brand reputation and positioning of up-scale hotels in the post-COVID-19 era?
3) What effect do brand reputation and positioning have on brand performance in an up-scale hotel brand?

4) What are the mediating effects of brand reputation and brand positioning in the crisis management -brand performance framework?

This study has one independent variable, two mediating variables, and one dependent variable. Crisis management is the independent variable, brand reputation and brand positioning are the mediating variables and brand performance is the dependent variable. The presumption underlying this study is that all variables are interconnected through a mediated relationship.

In order to answer research objectives, the research design serves as the blueprint for conducting research in light of the study's purpose. The collection, measurement, and analysis of data is the most critical aspect of any research design, and it serves as a stepping stone for making crucial decisions regarding what, where, how much, when, and what steps are to be taken for the research design (Wisenthige, 2023; Younas et al., 2023). This research design follows Sekaran and Bougie (2016) and Zikmund et al. (2013) procedures used to "outline the sources of information, the design technique, sampling, collecting and analyzing the data and including the schedule and cost of the research.

According to Neuman (2011), "exploratory research is used when the area under investigation is relatively new" (p.10). Van Wyk (2012) defines explanatory research as a study identifying causal relationships between selected variables. This type of research is carried out to explain the direction of the relationship or highlight the differences between groups chosen in specific situations (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). In addition, Sue and Ritter (2012) note that this research explains why a particular phenomenon occurs and can predict future occurrences. Hypothesis testing aims to determine a relationship's direction and predict possible outcomes (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Bhattacherjee (2012) distinguishes that descriptive research typically seeks the 'what,' 'where,' and 'when' of a phenomenon, whereas explanatory research clarifies the 'why' and 'how' questions. However, research can be conducted with a combination of these three objectives, but one objective typically predominates in terms of why the research is conducted (Neuman, 2011). It is recommended to conduct exploratory research on issues with insufficient empirical studies and no model to help explain the phenomenon (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Aside from that, an exploratory research project is conducted to lay the groundwork for more empirical studies as theories are developed and hypotheses are formulated, which will follow (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

Thus, an examination of prior research on crisis and brand revealed that several studies, including the following, have conducted exploratory research (Bundy et al., 2017; Claeys & Cauberghe, 2014; Coombs, 2020; Johar et al., 2010b; Schoofs & Claeys, 2021). This is considered the most used exploratory technique employed during the COVID-19 pandemic, which is how a strong brand would help mitigate the crisis's effects (Bodeklint et al., 2017; Fahmy et al., 2020; Knowles et al., 2020; Saini & Singh, 2020). The framework for evaluating brand performance is crucial in crisis management, according to Baghi and Gabrielli (2021). However, a lack of research findings specifies the role of brand performance in mitigating the effects of crisis management, and no brand performance application that can assess this impact needs to be explored (Mikušová & Horváthová, 2019).

In addition, this study used an exploratory research design based on the interpretivism philosophical worldviews that influence the research practice, especially in preparing research. Research philosophy is a conceptual framework that guides research based on ideas about the nature of reality and knowledge (Collis & Hussey, 2014). The two predominant research philosophies are positivism and interpretivism (constructivist). These philosophies represent two fundamentally distinct ways humans make sense of the world around them: in positivism, reality exists independently of us so that researchers can observe reality objectively. Because our perceptions shape reality, interpretivism views it as highly subjective (Collis & Hussey, 2014).

Table 3.1

Four Worldviews

| Post-positivism | Constructivism |
|---|---|
| • Determination<br>• Reductionism<br>• Empirical observation and measurement<br>• Theory verification | • Understanding<br>• Multiple participant meanings<br>• Social and historical construction<br>• Theory generation |
| **Advocacy/Participatory** | **Pragmatism** |
| • Political<br>• Empowerment<br>• Collaborative<br>• Change-oriented | • Consequences of actions<br>• Problem-centered<br>• Pluralistic<br>• Real-world practical oriented |

Source. Creswell (2015)

For this research, post-positivism was the foundation of the current study (see table 3.1). As indicated in Table 3.1, scholars have historically based their research on post-positivism, constructivism, advocacy, and pragmatism as essential philosophical orientations toward the world and the nature of research (Creswell, 2015). Phillips and Burbules (2000) stated that by using this study paradigm, researchers might obtain complete and exact data and quantitative interpretation. They argue that quantitative data could also be analyzed graphically through modeling, tables, charts, and graphs to advise interested parties about the four and five-star hotel's insights into crisis management. It will influence brand reputation, positioning, and performance in the Indonesian hotel industry and whether it would become one of the breakthrough strategies in the future. Foroudi (2018) and Heding et al. (2009) stated that using a positivist paradigm in brand research is more suitable for theory testing than theory generation to test the proposed hypotheses and their causal relationships and validate the scale. Whereas a positivist paradigm permits the identification of attitudes, behaviors, and decision-making processes, the experiential brand is based on an interpretivist paradigm that assumes reality is socially constructed and multiple, humans are social and proactive, and behaviour and knowledge are context-dependent (Obiegbu et al., 2020).

In consideration of this study utilized a positivist paradigm and a quantitative methodology to answer the research questions posed (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). Positivism derives from the natural sciences and focuses on the scientific testing of hypotheses and the discovery of logical or mathematical proof derived from statistical analysis (Collis & Hussey, 2014). Initially, consideration was given to two significant paradigms or traditions in social science research, namely positivism (quantitative) and phenomenalism (qualitative) (Currall & Towler, 2003). Therefore, positivists typically utilize the scientific method to generate knowledge. Positivism includes Scientific Method, Empirical Science, Post Positivism, and Quantitative Research (Rahi, 2017). Alternatively, phenomenology is also known as naturalistic inquiry, critical interpretation, qualitative, naturalistic inquiry, or social constructionism (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016). In contrast, interpretivism (constructivist) researchers and academics frequently employ qualitative methods such as field experiments, induction, and exploratory analysis (Grix, 2004). Interpretivism is "a reaction to positivism's excessive dominance"(Grix, 2004). In interpretivism, reality is regarded as highly subjective because perceptions shape it (Collis & Hussey, 2014).

Furthermore, taking into consideration recent research concerning the hotel industry to explore the crisis through the COVID-19 epidemic has an impact on brand dimensions in selecting which research methodology would best suit the current study (Arabadzhyan et al., 2021; Baum & Hai, 2020; Chen & Eyoun, 2021; Çoban & Özel, 2022; Davahli et al., 2020; Galanakis et al., 2021; Kaushal & Srivastava, 2021a; Kohli et al., 2020; Piga et al., 2021; Vo-Thanh et al., 2022a, 2022b, 2020; Voorhees et al., 2020). Based on the review, most of the previous studies used quantitative research, like the recent ones (Arabadzhyan et al., 2021; Breier et al., 2021; Davahli et al., 2020; Do & Nham, 2021; Paraskevas & Altinay, 2013; Srivastava, 2015).

On the one hand, brands have never been more sensitive, and on the other, managers have never had so much information available to prevent and identify potential crisis-causing issues (Salvador & Ikeda, 2017). Based on experiments, surveys, and quantitative analysis of internal reports, they stated that most research on brand crises has focused on the factors that influence the different types of crises and their financial, psychological, and physical effects on society.

## 3.3 Purpose of Research

According to Collis & Hussey (2014), research has a purpose since it focuses on core perspectives and beliefs about the world and its epistemology, piques researchers' interest in performing studies that align with their thought processes. In social science research, there are three distinct categories of research objectives: (1) exploratory, (2) descriptive, (3) and explanatory (Stebbins, 2001; Sue & Ritter, 2012; Van Wyk, 2012). Additionally, Taherdoost et al. (2022), "Quantitative research is the method of employing numerical values derived from observations to explain and describe the phenomena that the observations can reflect on them" (p.54). Furthermore, quantitative research is used by social scientists, including communication researchers, to observe phenomena or occurrences affecting individuals (Burrell & Gross, 2017). In contrast, according to Owen and Chandler (2002), numerous difficulties must be addressed before conducting qualitative research on branding to avoid equivocal findings.

According to Van Wyk (2012), the research design choice will affect the investigation's purpose. This study examined the effects of crisis management during the COVID-19 era and brand reputation, positioning, and performance for four, and five-star hotels. This study utilized a positivist paradigm and a quantitative methodology to answer the research questions (Rehman & Alharthi, 2016b). Quantitative research tests the hypotheses deduced from the theory (Creswell, 2015). In addition, three components of the positivist paradigm, namely ontology (theory of being/reality/essence), axiology/methodology (theory of method/action), and epistemology (theory of knowledge) were utilized (Aliyu et al., 2015). In brief, the former considers what can be known, while the latter focuses on how it can be known (Lincoln & Denzin, 2003). Although a few researchers added a few more categories, such as case study analysis (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016), predictive (Adams et al., 2007), evaluation (Van Wyk, 2012), and history (Van Wyk, 2012), the majority of previous researchers adopted the three previously mentioned categories.

However, the dearth of quantitatively based findings prompted the researcher to conduct a study to provide four-star hotel industry players with solid evidence. The present study will proceed with the descriptive research method as the purpose of the research because surveys, questionnaires, and structured observations are usually employed in quantitative research. On the other hand, the systematic method of journal research, interviews, and questionnaires will also be employed to examine theories with numbers and statistical data (Sobh & Perry, 2006). The survey strategy is popular because it allows researchers to collect quantitative and qualitative data on various research topics. In exploratory and descriptive research, surveys are frequently used to gather information about individuals, events, or situations (Bougie & Sekaran, 2016). However, Yin (2002) has posited that there are five key research strategies in social sciences based on three conditions such as research questions, control of behavioral, and focus on contemporary events. These are experiments, surveys, archival analyses, histories, and case studies.

This study identified the research method and design as quantitative with a survey and causal-comparative approach with a research population of four to five-star hotels in Indonesia, who continued to thrive in business during and after an unexpected operational interruption by the COVID-19 crisis. This survey method aims to measure the characteristics of a specific target population by surveying a subset of that population using a questionnaire and statistical techniques (Taherdoost, 2018). According to Sukamolson (2007), the most crucial aspects of surveys are obtaining a (1) Sampling procedure, (2) Questionnaire design, (3) Questionnaire administration, and (4) Data analysis procedure. Consequently, the Causal-comparative method determines the interaction between independent variables and their influence on dependent variables (Williams, 2007).

## 3.4 Type of Investigation

The researcher explained the three sub-sections of the research design: the type of research design, the purpose of the research, and the type of investigation. The present research will include quantitative, descriptive, and causal elements. The broad arguments presented in the first section of the study methodology are influenced mainly by Creswell’s (2009) suggestion that the research methodology must be credible because it affects the inquiry methods and procedures to be implemented. In the following section, a decision must be made regarding the study’s setting, unit of analysis, time horizon, sampling, data collection method, and item development.

The type of investigation used to examine the influence between dissimilar variables is correlational. Creswell (2009) defines correlational research as a study that measures the relationship between the variables chosen in the study. Raulin and Graziano (1995) note that when deciding which type of investigation to use in research, correlational studies are routinely deployed to interpret the strength of the relationship between variables selected in the study, which aids in identifying potential confounding variables. As Russo et al. (2011) demonstrated, extensive research has been conducted to prove that correlation is causal, resulting in a structural strategy incorporating various statistical methods for model-building and model testing. This modeling process includes a few steps and measures causal structures explaining data correlations.

Thus, Sekaran and Bougie (Bougie & Sekaran, 2016) note that it weighs two or more variables to determine the strength of the relationship in a discernible pattern. According to them, this type of investigation is optimal for those interested in elucidating the problem's primary variables. Kenny (2011) emphasizes that correlational research is free of manipulation and control and, as a result, relies heavily on statistical output. This view is comparable to Field's (2009), who defines correlational research as observing natural phenomena that occur in the real world without human intervention. However, he mentions that the data had been analyzed to determine the relationship between naturally occurring variables instead of making statements about cause and effect.

Raulin and Graziano (1995) note that correlational study is routinely computed to interpret the strength of the relationship between all variables selected in the study, which assists in identifying potential confounding variables when deciding which type of investigation should be employed in research. In the past, regression was the most popular technique for observing variables and making predictions while accounting for a correlation between the variables (Raulin & Graziano, 1995). Despite this, they note that path analysis has become the standard analysis for causal inference based on the assumption that the observed data result from a set of latent data. Like the regression technique, path analysis proved reliable in explaining correlational data (Raulin & Graziano, 1995; Russo et al., 2011). By emphasizing the differences between correlational and causal studies, the current study confirms with Russo et al. (2011) that causal inference through structural strategy is the best method because it provides a robust modeling process while explaining correlational data. Aside from that, as Russo et al. (2011) points out, a common goal for all sciences, whether pure, applied, or social, is to seek causes. They add that the ability to infer causes assists researchers in explaining phenomena, making predictions, and controlling for bias and confounding. However, the conceptual framework for this study was to investigate a crisis management–-brand performance model to identify and organize crises by the COVID-19 factors that influenced hotel managers' decisions to discontinue or continue to improve their brand performance via brand positioning and brand reputation.

In this study, a cross-sectional approach was utilized to collect data. This type of investigation provides the required information in a reliable and representative manner. Notably, a cross-sectional survey design is the most frequently employed method of data collection in correlation research (Creswell, 2015). The quantitative and statistical descriptions of population trends, opinions, beliefs, behaviors, and attitudes provided by survey studies enable the generalization of findings across a population (Cresswell, 2009; Creswell, 2015; Lavrakas, 2008). Given that survey questions generate dependable data, the questionnaire format was chosen for this study in order to collect dependable, exhaustive data that could be used to measure numerous variables (Lavrakas, 2008). Using a self-administered questionnaire, statements involving feelings were evaluated. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect feelings-related statements to ensure confidentiality and minimize interference. In addition, this study conducted preliminary research to collect the opinions and recommendations of expert panels in order to design the structural questionnaire. The questionnaires were modified based on the panel of experts' comments and recommendations regarding the item development.

## 3.5 Research Settings

This study aims to enhance the hotel managers' understanding of the brand reputation, brand positioning, and performance and its effect on the four-star hotel segment during the COVID-19 pandemic. The research design phase follows the phases in which the research problem and objectives are identified. According to Zikmund et al. (2013), a research design is a master plan identifying the key to gathering and analyzing the necessary data. It is also a framework or plan that outlines the actions and procedures used in data collection and analysis. A study can be conducted to answer a research question in which data is collected only once, perhaps over days, weeks, or months (Bougie & Sekaran, 2016; Zikmund et al., 2013). The main objective of using a third party (mail chimp) was to make this study non-contrive (Rahi, 2017). Unlike contrived research, researcher influence becomes minimal in a non-contrived research setting. This studied shall took placed in a non-contrived setting with a unit of analysis on hotel managers of four-star hotels in Indonesia. The non-contrived research setting is appropriate for the current study, which is consistent with Sekaran and Bougie (2016b), who that note non-contrived settings are best suited to respondents who are familiar with their natural environment required to work from home during the COVID-19 period. As a result, the research can be done with little interference from the researcher's team, and the respondents were interviewed face-to-face in a casual setting to ensure the best interview session with the respondents (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

Regarding time horizon, the study used a cross-sectional design, with data collected at a single point over two months set aside by the researcher. A self-administered questionnaire had been used for data collection Academicians frequently prefer cross-sectional studies due to time and resource constraints (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). The marketing literature has declared the need for more cross-sectional research in the following areas: brand (Foroudi, 2020; Liu et al., 2020), organizational behavior (Linnhoff et al., 2020), and relationship marketing (Herhausen, 2016). Furthermore, studies in branding typically measure data only once, with no interest in looking at the phenomenon over a long period or the cause over the periods used by the longitudinal study (Hashim & deRun, 2013). In support of this, the cross-sectional research design illustrates fixed relationships between the research variables. Although the associations between variables are captured at a single point in time, there may be peculiarities that would differ if data were collected at different times (Foroudi, 2020).

Due to the impossibility of observing the evolution of crisis management and branding orientation, this study has selected cross-sectional research. In addition, the population had been determined by selecting brand performance as the dependent variable. Aside from that, other outcome variables, such as brand reputation and positioning, had been measured simultaneously. Subsequently, a hotel manager is selected as the unit of analysis because they survive in uncertain conditions by implementing unpredictable strategies during a pandemic towards outcome variables in particular brand performance.

### 3.6 Research Instruments

A self-administered questionnaire had been used as a research instrument to list questions with specified scales designed to examine the rating towards dimensions established in the theoretical framework. Questionnaires commonly collect large amounts of quantitative data (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Sekaran and Bougie (2016b) explained that questionnaires could be given in person, mailed to respondents, or distributed electronically. Once the survey is limited to a small geographic area, personally administering the questionnaires is an effective way to collect data. A mail questionnaire is a paper-and-pencil questionnaire that is mailed to respondents. Online questionnaires are instead posted on the internet or emailed. Other researchers, Richards and Schmidt (2013) classify three distinct types of questionnaires: (a) closed-ended or structured, (b) open-ended or unstructured, and (c) a combination of closed-ended and open-ended questions. Closed-ended questions control the respondent to the predetermined alternatives, while open-ended questions require the respondent to express opinions without the researcher's influence. Commonly used closed questions may limit the depth of participant responses Hair et al. (1998); consequently, the collected data may be of inferior or insufficient quality. A mixture of closed-ended and open-ended questions, usually semi-structured, was employed when there was a possibility of soliciting different responses from various respondents.

According to Sekaran and Bougie (2016b), the appearance of the self-administered questionnaire is crucial for ensuring a high return rate, so the design and wording of the questionnaire were meticulously crafted. According to the Indonesia Hotel General Manager Association (HGMA), there seem to be 1,400 IHGMA members across 34 provinces in Indonesia, with nearly 95 percent of general hotel managers in Indonesia being Indonesian citizens (Gunawan, 2021). Furthermore, expecting large targeted populations of IHGMA members before the data collection, the decision to translate the questions from English to Indonesia was inevitable. Brace (2013) emphasized the importance of proper selection to ensure respondents understand the meaning, shades of meaning, and nuances.

### 3.6.1 Item Selection

COVID-19 has substantially influenced the demand for the brand (Aronczyk, 2020; Knowles et al., 2020; Tongare, 2021; Verlegh et al., 2021; Vorobyova, 2021). Knowles et al. (2020) argue that the stay-at-home directives, radical shifts in demand for specific product categories, undersupplied distribution channels, and supply chain issues for certain companies have disrupted customers' regular buying habits and compelled them to make unusual purchases. As adequate research has been conducted in crisis management, the existing literature serves as the primary resource for managing brands. According to Hair et al. (2003), a researcher only needs to develop a new construct if there has been no prior research on the proposed topic. Using crisis management as the keyword has also streamlined the search for additional outcome variables such as brand reputation, positioning, and brand reputation. The final survey instrument comprised the number of items listed in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2

Items Selection

| Section | Constructs | Sources of Scale | No. of Items | Questions Number |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | Crisis Management | (Alkhawlani et al., 2016; Coombs, 2007a; Faulkner, 2001; B. Liu et al., 2015) | 15 | 1-15 |
| B | Brand Reputation | (Foroudi, 2020; Ritter & Pedersen, 2020; Schürhoff, 2021) | 6 | 16-21 |
| C | Brand Positioning | (Beal & Lockamy, 1999; Kintler & Remenova, 2020; Mirzai et al., 2016; Zehir et al., 2015) | 8 | 22-29 |
| D | Brand Performance | (Carvell et al., 2016; Chaudhuri & Holbrook, 2001; Iyer et al., 2019; O'Neill & Carlbäck, 2011) | 4 | 30-34 |

### 3.6.2 Item Selection for Crisis Management

The second construct in section A consists of items to investigate crisis management. According to Alkhawlani et al. (2016), the majority of crisis management researchers used the dimensions and items proposed by Mitroff et al.(1987) and Fink (1986). As the search engine, Mitroff et al.(1987) indicated, "Effective Crisis

Management” has been cited by more than 487 sources. Mitroff et al.(1987) propose five stages to represent crisis management. On the other hand, the related items were also used by Alkhawlani et al. (2016), who introduced five more related items, while Faulkner (2001) utilized five related items, and Liu et al. (2015) used three items. Finally, Coombs (2007) utilized only two items (see Table 3.3).

Table 3.3

Items for Crisis Management

| **Question Number** | | **Measurement** | **Sources** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Signal detection | The hotel formulates and assesses potential disaster origin and probability scenarios. | Faulkner (2001) |
| 2 | | The hotel must appoint a crisis management team (i.e., a coordination and communication system) | Liu et al. (2015) |
| 3 | | The hotel identifies external organizations that can assist the hotel during a crisis. | Faulkner (2001) |
| 4 | Preparation and prevention | The hotel establishes a crisis call center for hotel operations | Faulkner (2001) |
| 5 | | The hotel provides health risk education and training for hotel employees. | Alkhawlani et al.( 2016) |
| 6 | | The hotel has scheduled meetings to conduct a sham crisis management drill | Liu et al. (2015) |
| 7 | | The hotel maintains cleanliness and hygiene in and around the property | |
| 8 | Recovery | The hotel allocates funds for technological development to detect factors and harmful effects of crises | Researcher |
| 9 | | The hotel actively seeks financial incentives from the government | Researcher |
| 10 | | The hotel performs a damage audit/monitoring system for the recovery process. | Faulkner (2001) |
| 11 | | The hotel applies media communication strategies (e.g., apologies, corrective actions, mortification) in online and traditional communication methods to identify the hotel's safety. | Liu et al. (2015); Faulkner (2001) |
| 12 | Learning | The hotel’s top management evaluates crisis management and plans future improvements. | Alkhawlani et al. (2016); Coombs (2007) |
| 13 | | The hotel’s top management is responsible for providing training from other agencies in dealing with crises. | Alkhawlani et al. (2016); Coombs (2007) |
| 14 | | The hotel’s top management believes rapid action during the crisis will reduce the negative impacts. | Alkhawlani et al.( 2016) |
| 15 | | The hotel provides the resources needed (i.e., materials, people, technology, and information) to prepare for anticipated crises. | Alkhawlani et al.( 2016) |

### 3.6.3 Item Selection for Brand Reputation

The second section in the item development is brand reputation, which had been labeled as 'Section B' in the questionnaire. In hotels, product and service quality is vital in attracting new customers and encouraging return visits (Schürhoff, 2021). Some researchers revealed that product and service quality is the most influential factor in a company's reputation (Borda et al., 2017; Park et al., 2014; Rhee & Haunschild, 2006). Meanwhile, the approach of measuring brand reputation with six items adapted from previous literature (Foroudi, 2020; Greyser, 2009; Ritter & Pedersen, 2020; Schürhoff, 2021; Smaiziene & Jucevicius, 2009).

Table 3.4

Items for Brand Reputation

| Question Number | | Measurement | Sources |
|---|---|---|---|
| 16 | Resource-based view | Brand reputation reduces uncertainty regarding product quality | Schürhoff (2021) |
| 17 | | Reputation will encourage the hotel to focus on attracting new business partners. | Foroudi (2020); Schürhoff (2021) |
| 18 | | Reputation will provide the hotel bargaining power in dealing with the trading partners. | Foroudi (2020) |
| 19 | | Reputation encourages greater brand loyalty | Schürhoff (2021) |
| 20 | Focus on competitiveness | Brand reputation is a barrier for rivals to act efficiently in the four-star hotel segment | Researcher |
| 21 | | Brand reputation encourages the hotel to be innovative and creative | Foroudi (2020); Greyser (2009); Schürhoff (2021) |

### 3.6.4 Item Selection for Brand Positioning

In 'Section C' of the self-administered questionnaire, the "Brand Positioning" dimension had been examined. Numerous findings in the literature emphasize the significance of positioning. Alpert and Gatty (1969) and (Doyle, 1975) pioneered positioning as a consumer product marketing. Hence, positioning entails influencing the perceptions of an organization's stakeholders compared to its competitors, and how a firm position itself in the market significantly affects its competitiveness and performance (Ke et al., 2020). Differentiation is essential to a company's success, and a solid reputation is required; a good product or service is insufficient (Mirzai et al., 2016). The selection of the items was straightforward, in which items used by Iyer et al. (2019) and Morgan & Rego (2009) were chosen to examine the brand positioning. However, three subdimensions for brand positioning were adapted from Beal and Lockamy (1999); Kintler and Remenova (2020), Mirzai et al. (2016), and Zehir et al. (2015). Table 3.5 depicts the proposed items for this dimension:

Table 3.5

Items for Brand Positioning

| Question Number | | Measurement | Sources |
|---|---|---|---|
| 22 | Quality based differentiation | The hotel executes strict product quality control techniques | Beal & Lockamy (1999) |
| 23 | | The hotel performs benchmarking to the best hotel to maintain its quality | Beal & Lockamy (1999) |
| 24 | | The hotel implements product improvements based on a detailed assessment of gaps in meeting customer expectations. | Beal & Lockamy (1999); Zehir et al. (2015) |
| 25 | Brand Image-based differentiation | The hotel ensures the brand stands out from the competition in the eyes of a consumer. | Mirzai et al. (2016) |
| 26 | | The hotel ensures the promotion and service guarantee should be clear and communicative. | Researcher |
| 27 | | The hotel creates buying environments/atmospheres to elicit specific emotional responses from the buyer | Researcher |
| 28 | Price base differentiation | To maximize revenue, the hotel assigns products with varying levels of usefulness to distinct guest segments. | Kintler & Remenova (2020) |
| 29 | | Price differentiation can flexibly respond to changing market conditions regardless of physical or online markets | Kintler & Remenova (2020) |

### 3.6.5 Item Selection for Brand Performance

The “Brand Performance” dimension had been examined in ‘Section C’ of the self-administered questionnaire. The empirical literature is mixed in determining whether these branded hotels perform (Carvell et al., 2016; Iyer et al., 2021). As stated in the prior section, travel and lodging demand fell during the COVID-19 pandemic. The brand support systems, such as global marketing, distribution, and guest loyalty, will benefit branded hotels, resulting in relatively higher profitability for the hotel properties. The present study will employ average daily rate (ADR), room revenue per available room (RevPAR) based on Carvell et al. (2016) and O’Neill & Carlbäck

(2011), and market share by Chaudhuri & Holbrook (2001), Iyer et al. (2019) to investigate the financial performance of a brand.

Table 3.6

Items for Brand Performance

| Question Number | | Measurement | Sources |
|---|---|---|---|
| 30 | Financial | The hotel's Average Daily Rate (ADR) is a crucial determinant of brand performance. | Carvell et al. (2016); O'Neill & Carlbäck (2011) |
| 31 | | The hotel's Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR) is a crucial determinant of brand performance. | Carvell et al. (2016); O'Neill & Carlbäck (2011) |
| 32 | | The hotel's market share is vital in understanding brand performance. | Chaudhuri & Holbrook, (2001a); Iyer et al., (2019) |
| 33 | Non-financial | The shareholder's value is vital for the hotel to assess the hotel's performance. | Researcher |

## 3.7 Measurement Scale

Due to its simplicity and popularity, several seven-point Likert scales have been found in the past for branding topics as found (Carlson et al., 2019; Chang et al., 2018; Foroudi, 2018; Han et al., 2015; Kandapa, 2015; Lucas & Wilson, 2008; Sarstedt et al., 2022; Tuan, 2012). The constructs of interest were measured based on established, psychometrically sound scales from prior research ( Hair et al., 1998, 2003; Sarstedt et al., 2022). Whereas all statements of the questionnaire in this study were measured with a seven-point Likert-type scoring system applied to a scale anchored by "strongly disagree" (1) to "strongly agree" (7). The following figure summarizes the measurement scale used for this study (see table 3.7)

Table 3.7

Scale of Measurement

| Strongly Disagree | | | | | | Strongly Agree |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

## 3.8 Demographic Profile

According to Andreti et al. (2012), the following are some demographic profile-related criteria for respondents: occupation, age, gender, location, and income. The last section, labeled 'Section E,' will include general demographic information like gender, age, educational level, job title, or position. For a branding study, a demographic profile is critical for understanding selection and preference to assist the firm in marketing efforts and decision-making (Vilčeková & Sabo, 2013). Previous research suggested that brand can be linked to demographic profiles, in which Kaswengi and Diallo (2015) found significant differences across age, gender, employment, and income in consumer adaptation in a recession period.

### 3.9 Pre-test and Expert Panel Interviews

In developing the questionnaire for this research, a second opinion will assist the researcher in having better instruments for the data collection. The present study will interview a group expert panel of ten senior hotel managers and five senior academicians. This study was a method designed to answer the review questions), transparent (explicitly stated), reproducible and updatable, and synthesized (summarizes the evidence relating to the review question) (Briner & Denyer, 2012). The role of hotel managers in this stage is vital to provide insight into the items adapted from the previous studies. Furthermore, several items were modified by the researcher to suit the nature of the hotel industry; thus, soliciting the expert panel's opinion will confirm the suitability of the items. The following should be considered when designing a questionnaire or question route for interviews: (1) planning the content of a research instrument; (2) questionnaire layout; (3) interview questions; (4) piloting; and (5) cover letter (Kelley et al., 2003). In addition, the researcher will interview several senior academicians to inquire about their perspectives on crisis management and branding during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their insights on the sentence structure, terminology, and lingo used in the instrument suit the sample. For the actual expert panel interviews, the complete version of the self-administered questionnaire had been sent to the group of experts via email and face-to-face interviews.

A panel expert interview was conducted during the process of drafting the questionnaire. Several experts from the field of branding were interviewed to probe their insight into the overall structure of the study, especially with the decision to embark on the selected brand image dimensions. For a better illustration of the description, the following table is referred to:

Table 3.8
Panel Expert Background

| Expert Panel (EP) | Brief Background |
|---|---|
| EP1 - 5 | • Senior academician at the School of Hotel and Tourism in a public university.<br>• Accumulated more than 20 years of experience in hospitality education. |
| EP 6-13 | • General Manager of four and five-star hotels.<br>• Held various positions in international hotels in Jakarta, Surabaya, Bandung, Bangka Belitung, Makassar, and Bali |
| EP 14-15 | • Director of Sales in the five-star hotels in Jakarta<br>• Has more than 15 years of working experience in the hotel industry. |

From the above table, several senior academicians were first approached to probe their insight on crisis management, brand reputation, brand positioning, and brand performance. EP1 stated that this area is lacking because lots of research conducted in the hotel emphasized issues and challenges faced by the industries. Next, on a similar note, EP2 pointed out that crisis management and brand crisis are essential parts of their overall strategy, and they use crisis management strategies to make sure guests and employees are safe, to set themselves apart, and to be able to recover quickly if a crisis happens. EP3, on the other hand, stressed using several brand reputation, brand position, and brand performance categories related to the customer, operational, behavior changes, or pricing changes and issues.

For the actual expert panel interviews, the full version of the self-administered questionnaire was emailed and hand-delivered to the group of experts. EP1, EP2, and EP3 were among the first expert panel respondents to be contacted. EP1 suggested that item 11 in section A be modified from the original item of "Highlight Safety in Hotel Marketing & Guest Communication" to "The hotel applies media communication strategies (e.g., apologies, corrective actions, mortification) in both online and traditional communication methods to identify the safety of the hotel" rather than the original "Highlight Safety in Hotel Marketing & Guest Communication." In this section, EP2 and EP3 accepted the draft questionnaire without comment.

Like section A, the senior academicians (EP1) preferred the items to be implemented to the covid 19 situation or more applicable. In Brand Reputation (section B), to be modified from the original item of "Brand reputation reduces uncertainty regarding product quality" to "Brand reputation reduces uncertainty regarding product and service quality (i.e., recognized by AllSAFE by Accor, Safe Travels from WTTC, CHSE from Indonesia Government)." EP2 suggested amending item 18 to read:

“Reputation will provide the hotel bargaining power in dealing with the trading partners (er., stay now pay later, staycation, Work from Hotel package)” instead of the original “Reputation will provide the hotel bargaining power.” EP3 suggested elaborating on the statement "Brand reputation encourages the hotel to be innovative and creative" and adding a specific example, such as "Brand reputation encourages the hotel to be innovative and creative (e.g., hotel food delivery services, online cooking classes, and soft selling)." In sections C and D, EP1, EP2, and EP3 accepted the draft questionnaire with fewer comments, only grammar should be revised.

After completing modifications to the questionnaire, it was emailed to the respondents on August 10, 2022, who were given one week to respond. The captain of industry understood the information that the questionnaire was designed to collect, with no issues raised in the response. All expert panel respondents could complete the questionnaire independently within 10 to 15 minutes without assistance. Finally, after receiving approval on September 21, 2022, from The UiTM Research Ethics Committee (REC), which operates following ICH Good Clinical Practice, the next pilot test can continue.

## 3.10 Pilot Test

The pilot study results can help researchers identify actual and potential problems they can address before beginning the anticipated future study (Fraser et al., 2018). The pilot test will examine respondents understanding of the questions and the appropriateness of the questions in the questionnaires. Pilot studies are a crucial element of a good study design. A pilot study does not guarantee success in the main study but increases the likelihood (Evans et al., 2018). They stated that pilot studies might also try to identify potential problems following the research procedure. A small sample of hotel managers who are IHGMA members were randomly selected for a pilot test between 30 and 50 respondents (Su et al., 2016).

The respondents had been contacted in advance to asked for their consent to participate in the pilot test. The self-administered questionnaire in the document format had been sent to them via email, social media, or personal meetings. The personal meeting with the respondents will give crucial information to the researcher on whether the average time for each respondent to answer the questionnaire is around 10-15 minutes. However, the fifteen-minute decision was made because there had been only

33 items in the questionnaire, requiring 20 seconds for each item, including the demographic profile.

After receiving approval from the ERC, 30 questionnaires had been sent between September 21, 2022, and October 05, 2022, to senior hotel managers at thirty-five four-star and fifteen five-star hotels in Jakarta, West Java, and Bali. According to BPS-Statistic Indonesia (2021), five provinces with the most significant rooms were still omitted: Jawa Barat, Bali, Jawa Timur, DKI Jakarta, and Jawa Tengah. In Jawa Barat, that is as many as 93,390 rooms or 12.99 percent of the total number of beds in Indonesia; in Bali, 79,112 rooms (11.00 percent); in Jawa Timur, 78,377 rooms (10.90 percent); in DKI Jakarta 64,059 rooms (8.91 percent), and in Jawa Tengah 58,677 (8.16 percent)

Following the pre-test, the final draft was sent to the target respondents comprised of the General Managers of the four and five-star hotels who had ten years of working experience in the hotel industry. Some of them are general managers of hotels for the Hotel International Chain. During the pandemic, chain-affiliated hotels attracted more guests than independent hotels because they had implemented crisis management plans across their networks. The hotel chain's managers were well-versed in the crisis management strategies available to businesses (Kwok et al., 2021). Alternatively, fifty questionnaires were distributed to the target respondents for two weeks. The respondents were told to underline or jot down any problems in understanding the structure of the questionnaire for both languages. After two weeks, 50 completed responses were collected. Some feedback for Indonesian translation, particularly jargon, was highlighted, similar to the one experienced during expert panel interviews.

The completed questionnaire was screened before entering the database for data analysis. The basic functions of the statistical software had been performed to assess the reliability and validity of the items and respondents. Pallant (2002) stated that only alpha values greater than 0.70 should be considered reliable for the study sample. The data were entered into the statistical files (SPSS), then their dependability was evaluated. The results of the pilot test's reliability analysis are summarised in table 3.9.

Table 3.9

Result of Pilot Test (Scale Reliability Analysis)

| Section | Dimension | Total Item | α |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | Crisis Management | | |
| | Signal Detection | 3 | 0.724 |
| | Preparation and prevention | 4 | 0.792 |
| | Recovery | 4 | 0.720 |
| | Learning | 4 | 0.833 |
| B | Brand Reputation | | |
| | Resource-based view | 4 | 0.727 |
| | Focus on competitiveness | 2 | 0.704 |
| C | Brand Positioning | | |
| | Quality based differentiation | 3 | 0.920 |
| | Brand Image-based differentiation | 3 | 0.846 |
| | Price base differentiation | 2 | 0.863 |
| D | Brand Performance | 4 | 0.882 |

As shown in Table 3.9, the reliability of the pilot test for all constructs ranges from 0.704 to 0.882. The result shows that all constructs demonstrate acceptable internal consistency. All study measurements have high reliability (> 0.7), assuming that a very high alpha value is always a good thing (Taber, 2018). Additionally, Taherdoost (2016) stated that the score includes excellent reliability (0.90 and above), high reliability (0.70-0.90), moderate reliability (0.50-0.70), and low reliability (0.50 and below). However, only alpha values greater than 0.7 should be deemed reliable for the sample selected for this study. Based on the scale reliability analysis, no modification of items (i.e., removing item using Alpha if item deleted) was performed.

## 3.11 Population and Sample

The population can be defined as a group of things or persons with similar qualities and characteristics that researchers study to achieve the research goal (Yandari & Kuswaty, 2017). Generally, the population of this study is the Hotel General Manager, cluster Hotel General Manager or Chief Operation Officer from four-star hotels in Indonesia registered under the Indonesian Hotel General Manager Association. The population of this study is 1,400 members of IHGMA (Gunawan, 2021). The table below can eliminate significant bias in some samples with specific characteristics (Conroy, 2016). The Conroy sample formula is as follows:

Table 3.10

Sample Size for Percentage or Proportion

| Acceptable Margin of Error | Size of Population | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | **Large** | **5.000** | **2.500** | **1.000** | **500** | **200** |
| **>20%** | 24 | 24 | 24 | 23 | 23 | 22 |
| **>15%** | 43 | 42 | 42 | 41 | 39 | 35 |
| **>10%** | 96 | 94 | 93 | 88 | 81 | 65 |
| **>7.5** | 171 | 165 | 160 | 146 | 127 | 92 |
| **>5%** | 384 | 357 | 333 | 278 | 217 | 132 |
| **>3%** | 1.067 | 880 | 748 | 516 | 341 | 169 |

Source: Conroy (2016)

Conroy (2016) mentions that because the population and time are limited, a researcher is ready to tolerate an uncertainty margin of 5 percent when studying the proportion of the population that possesses characteristics over a certain period. With a margin of error of 5 percent for a 1.400 to 2.500, this study's minimum sample size is 333. In social research, a margin of error of 5 percent is acceptable (Taherdoost, 2016). However, large sample size does not guarantee precision (Bell et al., 2022).

In most studies, the minimum sample size required for the analysis according to the SEM literature (e.g., the ten times rule proposed by Hair et al. (2017) and Sekaran and Bougie (2016)) was met. As shown by Hair et al. (2017), the 10-times rule stipulates that the minimum "sample size should be equal to the greater of 10 times the largest number of formative indicators used to measure one construct or ten times the largest number of structural paths directed at a specific latent construct in the structural model". It was heavily criticized by subsequent studies, which argued that it is not a valid criterion for determining sample size for SEM. However, Peng and Lai (2012) stated, "The 10-times rule of thumb for determining sample size adequacy in SEM analyses only applies when certain conditions are met, such as large effect sizes and high reliability of measurement items" (p. 469).

Based on the statement in the paragraph above, the ten times role suggestion by Peng and Lai (2012), Hair et al. (2017), Sekaran and Bougie (2016), and Memon et al. (2020), this study adopted sample size recommendations. The present study adopted a 10:1 subject-to-item ratio and concluded that the sample size used for the factor analysis ranges between 150 to 210 cases based on the suggestion by Pallant (2013) and because of the following calculation (3.1):

*Number of items x Number of subjects* (3.1)

*Where,*

*33 items x 10 subjects = 330 cases*

This calculation is close to the recommendations of Taherdoost (2016) and Conroy (2016), with a 5 percent margin of error for a 1,400 to 2,500 sample size, with the minimum sample size for this study being 330.

### 3.12 Sampling Technique

Sekaran and Bougie (2016) suggested that sampling begins with defining the target population precisely. They explain that sampling techniques can be differentiated into probability and non-probability sampling. Ultimately, probability sampling was suitable to be deployed when the chance for each element within the population to be selected as the sample subjects is known (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). Probability sampling is usually more rigorous and challenging when compared to non-probability sampling (Stratton, 2019).

According to Lenth (2001), sample size planning is the most critical and complex part, requiring the close and direct collaboration of statisticians and subject matter experts. Furthermore, Taherdoost (2018) highlights two common flaws in quantitative research: (1) ignorance of sampling error in determining sample size and (2) ignorance of response and non-response bias. In response to the concerns raised by Cooper and Schindler (2014), quantitative methodologists use collected data to test hypothesized relationships between a predetermined variable and a sample population that generalize and generate predictions.

For this study, the researchers adopted purposive sampling, a technique under non-probability sampling. Purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling method, is proper when a targeted subset of a culture's experts needs to be studied (Tongco, 2007). He also explained that using a purposive approach can benefit quantitative and qualitative research methods. Conduct in-depth interviews and questionnaires with key informants, including company executives (CEOs or COOs) or general managers above (Lechner et al., 2006). While still adhering to the principles of appropriateness and sufficiency, this approach allowed for the most significant possible degree of variation (Gaskell, 2000; Kraus et al., 2020).

Another valid reason why nonprobability sampling was favored over probability sampling is that of the enormous target population (Banerjee & Chaudhury, 2010).

Deploying homogeneous sampling, or purposive sampling, is a non-probability sampling method used in research to select participants or subjects who share specific characteristics or traits pertinent to the study and will assist the researcher in obtaining participants with similar characteristics (Etikan et al., 2016). The sampling method adopted was the purposive sampling technique also known as judgmental sampling, considering that the researcher knew the samples were actual Indonesian Hotel General Manager Association members in four and five-star hotels in Indonesia.

The sampling method adopted was the purposive sampling technique, considering that the researcher knew the samples were actual Indonesian Hotel General Manager Association members in four and five-star hotels in Indonesia. From 330 target samples, the area would be divided into three zones based on zone time in Indonesia to collect data: 70 percent of the sample would be distributed to the western Indonesia zone, which consists of the province of Sumatera Island, Java Island, and several cities on the island of Borneo (West Kalimantan and Central Kalimantan). Thus, 20 percent of the central Indonesia zone includes surrounding cities in Bali, Nusa Tenggara, Sulawesi, and three cities in Kalimantan (North Kalimantan, East Kalimantan, and South Kalimantan). The last 10 percent of the eastern Indonesia zone, namely surrounding Maluku and Papua Islands.

According to BPS-Statistic Indonesia (2021), the division based on this cluster follows the level of distribution of star hotels in Indonesia, where the number of star hotels is still scattered in the western part of Indonesia, namely Java and Sumatra. Next, the Bali, Nusa Tenggara, and Sulawesi islands in the central part of Indonesia. For other reasons above, this study divides the area into three zones because of typical language and time operations (Rajeg et al., 2022).

### 3.13 Data Collection

Data collection methods are an integral part of research design. This phase involves epistemology and theoretical stance work for the research, providing perspective on the studied topic (Ryan, 2006). Kornegay and Segal (2013) note that primary data were collected due to the inability of the existing data to answer the research hypothesis, while secondary data were collected for several purposes and are used for several studies that can be used to answer the research question. In addition to the previous points, a survey is the most common and widespread primary data collection method, including mail, telephone, face-to-face, internet, and dot surveys

(Curtis, 2008). Hox and Boeije (2005) point out four methods of primary data collection, in particular (a) field experiment, (b) survey, (c) qualitative research, and (d) solicited and spontaneous data. In addition, Sekaran and Bougie (2016) argue that the five data collection methods are: interviews, observation, questionnaires, physical measurement, and unobtrusive.

For the present study, the primary data was collected through a survey questionnaire, which is in line with the suggestion of Murphy et al. (2015), who believe in a survey's capability to grant the researcher a decisive source of basic scientific knowledge and offer varieties of technique that can be employed to reach the sample size. After conducting the pilot study, all questionnaire items were finalized, followed by the survey questionnaire collected via email or mobile application interaction (IHGMA WhatsApp group) to the IHGMA representatives through its chapters in every province in Indonesia. Supporting letters from the President of IHGMA were attached to the survey questionnaire link, which had been shared with the respondents (attached in Appendix A, page 254). IHGMA Central Management has a WhatsApp group for all members, whereas each IHGMA branch has its chairman and WhatsApp group. Ertikan et al. (2016) noted that purposive sampling is ideal for research that seeks to identify the characteristics of respondents. To collect an accurate sample, Hotel general managers who remain will not only be similar to each other but will also constitute a more homogeneous group, in which the skills an individual possesses are the crucial determinant in the selection process.

By looking at the points highlighted above, the minimum sample size for this study is 330 samples, and further communication has been established to remind them of their role in this research (attached in Appendix A, page 248). The duration of the data collection is anticipated to be one month, from 22 September to 21 October 2022. However, in most social and management surveys, response rates for postal and e-mail surveys are rarely one hundred percent (Taherdoost, 2016).

Regarding the structure's contents, the instrument's layout was created in an easily comprehendible manner. The university's logo was placed on the cover page to persuade respondents to respond honestly and openly. On the front page, there was also a brief summary of the researcher's background and the purpose of the intended respondents. On the front page, there was also a brief summary of the researcher's background and the purpose of the intended respondents (Zikmund et al., 2013).

Due to the differences in hotel managers profiles and educational levels, both instruments were developed in two different languages: (1) Bahasa Indonesia and (2) Bahasa English. Both languages are widely spoken in Indonesia, and some respondents may have a limited understanding of either. Despite this, there is no distortion of meaning in the translation of the document, as it was translated by an Associate professor of English literature from the TST Language Center who is also fluent in Bahasa Indonesia. This lecturer was asked to translate the Bahasa Indonesia version of the questionnaires back into English.

Moreover, a 33-item self-administered questionnaire (see Appendix A) was created to collect empirical data from the respondents. Sekaran and Bougie (2016) highlight the benefits of self-administered questionnaire methods, which include: (1) the researcher can collect a completed form in a short amount of time, and (2) the researcher can introduce the research topic and ensure that the respondent provides correct and accurate responses. Thus, by employing this method, the researcher can reduce the amount of missing data.

Ethical considerations in research require that the researchers protect the respondents' rights by maintaining the confidentiality of all questionnaire information (Kaiser, 2009). Consequently, several measures should be taken to protect the anonymity of respondents. On the front page of the questionnaire, the purpose of the study was described, and it was guaranteed that the data collected would be regarded as confidential. At the faculty level, draft questionnaires and dissertation proposals were submitted for submission to an ethics committee hearing, expert validating questions, and demographic questionnaire items. Notably, this is a crucial step in ensuring that the content of the questions is appropriate for the intended respondents. Before survey distribution, the Research Ethics Committee of UiTM reviewed and approved the study protocol for this research after receiving approval on September 21, 2022. In order to ensure that the research is conducted ethically, the approval of research ethics is required for data collection involving people and the use of survey forms. Appendix 2, page 254, contains the letter of approval.

## 3.14 Data Analysis

The survey questionnaire data were analyzed using the SPSS (version 24) and IBM SPSS AMOS (version 23.0) statistical software. The first analysis has been a descriptive analysis to summarise the respondents' demographic profiles. Second, the pre-test data for each variable were analyzed using confirmatory factor analysis (CFA).

The final step involved data analysis based on structural equation modeling (SEM) by SPSS AMOS. This type of analysis results is based on this study's research objectives, questions, and hypotheses.

### 3.14.1 Descriptive Statistics

In descriptive statistics, data was summarised in the most basic and simplest form possible by using numerical values such as population size (N), the percentage from a sample, mean (M), and standard d**evi**ation (S.D) (Kaliyadan & Kulkarni, 2019). The demographic profiles of the respondents for the current study were first tabulated using N and percentages from a sample. This step is critical to ensuring a fair distribution of demographic profiles. Thus, this can also assist the current study in avoiding errors associated with data collection, including sampling error, non-sampling error, non-response error, and sampling bias (Kaliyadan & Kulkarni, 2019).

### 3.14.2 Preparation and Evaluation of Data

Questionnaire-based data collection typically includes several fundamental concerns that must be addressed. Probably the most time-consuming aspect of data analysis is the evaluation of data applicability and data screening after collection and before analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Data screening is important when using covariance-based techniques like structural equation modeling, where assumptions are stricter than for the standard t-test. Floyd and Widaman (1995), Meyers et al.(2006), Field (2009), Kline (2005), and Tabachnick and Fidell (2007) suggest assessing univariate normality as the first step.

According to Kline (2005, p. 49), many common estimation methods in SEM (such as maximum-likelihood estimation) assume: (a) "all univariate distributions are normal, (b) the joint distribution of any pair of variables is bivariate normal, and (c) all bivariate scatterplots are linear and homoscedastic." After the scale was cleansed, the data were prepared and screened for the subsequent SEM analysis phase. Preparing the data for SEM analysis necessitates exhaustive preparation, screening for potential issues, and corrective action as necessary (Kline, 2016). Consequently, as a precautionary measure, the following data preparation and screening data have been implemented:

a. Missing Data

Missing data are typically the result of errors in data collection, which various factors can cause. Unintentionally or otherwise, respondents may fail to answer one or more questions in a survey, resulting in missing or incomplete data (Enders, 2010). Some researchers contend that problems caused by missing data can lead to a decline in the statistical test's ability to detect a relationship in a data set and a biassing of parameter estimates (Hair et al., 2006). If the study's statistical power is diminished, any estimates obtained have been tainted by these biases, resulting in misleading findings (Kang, 2013). A researcher must consider the issue of missing data in terms of whether it is sufficient, significant, and non-random enough to cause problems with estimation and interpretation. If a cure is sought, a researcher has several options from which to choose.

Cases with missing data are usually dropped automatically by most statistical procedures. Moreover, this means the researcher may not have enough information to conduct the analysis. Some techniques for imputation of missing data are hot or cold deck attribution, case substitution, mean substitution, and relapse ascription. This study suggests a method to reduce the amount of missing data in clinical research (Scharfstein et al., 2012). First, the study design should limit data collection to those participating. This can be accomplished by selecting the number and criteria of respondents from each hotel, i.e., collecting only the most crucial information and surveys from the hotel's top-level management during a pandemic and developing appropriate strategies. Second, before beginning the research, detailed research documentation in the form of an operations manual should be developed, which includes methods for screening participants, methods of communication between researcher and hotel managers through the chairpersons of the IHGMA chapter across Indonesia, and procedures for collecting, entering, and editing data. Third, a small pilot study conducted before the start of the main trial may aid in identifying unexpected problems that are likely to arise during the study, reducing the amount of missing data. Fourth, the researcher is required to establish a priori thresholds for unacceptable levels of missing data. Considering these goals, data collection in each location should be closely monitored and coordinated in real-time with the IHGMA Chapter Chair in each city throughout the study. Finally, the researcher should identify and aggressively, but not coercively, approach hotel managers who are often extremely busy.

However, there are several ways to replace missing data, including replacing the missing data with their associated means and imputation, which is the process of estimating the missing value based on the valid values of other variables and/or cases in the sample. The first method is more widely used and, according to Hair et al. (2006), is the best single replacement estimate, whereas the second is used to replace missing values based on their association with other variables in the dataset. However, before proceeding to a formalized method, the simplest approach is to delete offending cases and/or variables. As a result, there have been several articles written about how to deal with missing data, the issues that can arise from it, and what can be done to prevent or reduce their impact on marketing research (Malhotra, 2010; Shahid, 2019; Tawaha, 2021; Tung-Lai Hu et al., 2010).

To ensure that there were no missing values in the data for this study, the researchers employed SPSS software and ran preliminary descriptive statistics to determine if missing data existed. The lack of statistical significance indicated that the types of missing values were completely random. Cohen et al. (2014) suggested that missing values of less than 10 percent in random types are typically negligible and can therefore be typically disregarded. However, they must be considered if they exceed 20 to 30 percent. This study adopts the proposal by Cohen et al. (2014) that 5% or 10% of missing data on a scale is insufficient. However, this study found no missing data.

b. Outlier

Outlier detection is a significant research problem in data mining that aims to discover functional abnormal and irregular patterns hidden in large data sets. There is an assumption that population data are normally distributed for numerous inferential statistics reported in crisis management and marketing research (Amadi, 2022; Simola, 2005; Usman et al., 2021). The purpose of identifying outliers is to identify unrepresentative observations of the population from which the sample was drawn so that they can be discounted or even eliminated from the analysis as unrepresentative. There are numerous methods for detecting outliers. To determine outliers from high-dimensional data without prior knowledge, we obtain outliers based on distance measures able to handle large data sets. Outliers can be found by their unique and different traits, such as having a high or low value on a variable or being on the edge of the distribution (Hair et al., 2017).

Particularly in SEM, outliers can skew results, distorting estimates of parameters and standard errors and making the model less reliable overall. There are two types of outliers: univariate outliers, which are instances of a high value on a single item, and multivariate outliers, examples of an irregular clustering of abnormal values in two or more variables (Kline, 2016). SPSS was used to check for univariate outliers by identifying cases with high z-score values. Thus, the sole univariate anomaly was identified and corrected. In addition to testing box plots and histograms for univariate detection, standardized z-scores were applied to each variable (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Inside univariate outliers, a case is deemed abnormal if the standard score for a small sample size (80 or fewer observations) is 2.5 or greater, whereas, for a large sample size (more than 80 observations), the standard score can be intentionally greater than 4 (Hair et al., 2013).

Next, Mahalanobis Distance (D) was used to identify and address multivariate outliers. The Mahalanobis $D^2$ measure by Hair et al. (2006) is a statistical method for identifying multivariate outliers by comparing the location of each observation to the median of all observations in a given set of variables. The procedure entails executing Mahalanobis in SPSS and comparing the resulting values to the Chi-square table (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). A significant Mahalanobis distance score indicates extreme values for one or more independent variables. Essentially, a significant Mahalanobis distance score signifies a case of extreme values on one or more of the independent variables. The AMOS program can identify outliers by employing the Mahalanobis distance technique, in which each construct is measured and then compared to a critical $\chi^2$ value, the degree of freedom being equal to the number of independent variables with a probability of $p< 0.01$ (Hair et al., 2010). It is known that 33 items were adapted, representing the degree of freedom with $P < 0.001$, so the standard is 85.35 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Any figure with a Mahalanobis Distance of 85.35 or greater is a multivariate outlier and should be removed.

c. Normality

The normal distribution is the most fundamental assumption in any multivariate analysis and the final assumption in SEM (Hair et al., 2013). The necessity for, type, and loci of normality assumption depend on the analysis type performed. Data normality can be tested in three ways: univariate, bivariate, and multivariate normality (Nimon, 2012). Univariate group comparison tests (t-tests, ANOVA, ANCOVA) are based on univariate normality (Warner, 2008). Simple linear regression assumes bivariate normality (Warner, 2008).

A univariate outlier is a case of an extreme value on one variable. This statistical assumption is known as univariate normality when a score distribution is symmetrical and has the correct height-to-width ratio (Nimon, 2012). Researchers can use graphical or non-graphical tests to assess univariate normality (Stevens, 2012). In addition, Stevens (2012) explained that the normality probability plot and the histogram are examples of graphical tests (or stem-and-leave plots). Thus, the chi-square goodness of fit test, the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test, the Shapiro-Wilks test, and the evaluation of kurtosis and skewness values are examples of non-graphical tests. Non-graphical tests are preferred for small to moderate sample sizes, with the Shapiro-Wilks test and the evaluation of kurtosis and skewness values being preferred methods for sample sizes less than 20.

The bivariate normal distribution is a special case of the multivariate normal distribution. As noted by Stevens (2012), in addition to establishing univariate normality, two additional characteristics of a normal multivariate distribution are that the linear relationship of any combination of variables is normally distributed, and all possible subsets of the sets of variables are normally distributed. Thus, Burdenski (2000) stated that the linear relationship between two variables has a normal distribution, satisfying the bivariate normality assumption. Each variable's univariate normality is a necessary but insufficient condition for bivariate normality (Nimon, 2012). Graphs can be used to evaluate bivariate normality (e.g., scatterplots). In practice, however, even large datasets ($n > 200$) have insufficient data points to assess bivariate normality, which may explain why this assumption is frequently untested and unreported (Warner, 2008).

A multivariate outlier is an unusual combination of scores on two or more variables. Multivariate analyses (ANOVA, MANOVA, MANCOVA, multiple linear regression, and canonical correlation) are based on the assumption of multivariate normality (Stevens, 2012; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). The normality assumption applies to each independent variable level to analyze variance-type tests (OVA-type tests) involving multiple samples (Nimon, 2012). Graphs such as a histogram and normal probability plot are used to establish the normality of a dataset. The normal probability plot compares cumulative data scores to a normal cumulative distribution, represented by a straight diagonal line. The line representing the actual data distribution had been close to superimposing the diagonal line in cases of normal distribution. Two critical characteristics of distribution patterns typically identify non-normality: 1) skewness and 2) kurtosis are two examples of skewness. The values that can be used to represent a normal distribution range between -3.0 and +3.0.

A statistical method of Skewness and Kurtosis was used to assess the normal data distribution. The data is normally distributed if the skewness and kurtosis values are zero (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Kline (2016) mentioned that Skewness is positive when most values are below the average; a negative point indicates otherwise, a positive Kurtosis indicates a high peak and a negative. Other researchers, such as Curran et al. (1996) and Everett (2013), have suggested that a kurtosis cutoff value of less than seven and a skewness range of -2 to +2 be used for normally distributed data. According to Kline (2016), each item's skewness and kurtosis values should be less than three and less than 10. Absolute values of skewness more significant than three and Kurtosis greater than ten may indicate a problem, and values greater than these indicate a problem. However, this study employed skewness and kurtosis to assess the normality of the data.

### 3.14.3 Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

SEM is a second-generation multivariate data analysis technique frequently used to study marketing-related fields (Anderson et al., 2012; Fornell, 2006; Richter et al., 2016). Moreover, to examine the relationships between model variables, the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) technique utilized by Hair et al. (2006) argued that SEM could examine two types of models, namely the measurement model, which represents the theory, and the model, which represents the latent factors. Multivariate analyses are used in structural equation modeling (SEM) to show relationships between constructs and the causal dependencies between endogenous and exogenous variables (Hair et al., 2013).

Moreover, Byrne (2016) stated that “SEM is a statistical methodology that takes a confirmatory (i.e., hypothesis-testing) approach to the analysis of a structural theory bearing on some phenomenon” (p.3). According to Tabachnick and Fidell (2007), SEM can be viewed as a technique for model testing confirmation. There are two families of SEM, namely covariance-based SEM (CB-SEM) and variance-based SEM (PLS-SEM) (Hair et al., 1998, 2014; Sarstedt et al., 2017). This study employed the structural equation modeling (SEM) technique, and the data were analyzed with the IBM SPSS AMOS version 28 program. The data set was analyzed, and hypotheses were tested using SEM as the primary statistical technique. There are three main reasons behind the decision to adopt this software.

First, Structural Equation Modelling is one of the more powerful statistical methods (Puteh, 2018; Richter et al., 2016), which SEM estimates model parameters so that the difference between the empirical covariance matrix and the covariance matrix determined by the theoretical model is minimized (Richter et al., 2016). The. Second, to test the measurement model's compatibility with pandemic-related conditions. Third, AMOS is rarely used in prior empirical and theoretical studies of user acceptance (Byrne, 2016; Fan et al., 2016; Malhotra, 2010; Mustafa et al., 2020). In addition, this study developed based on the notion that SEM is a relatively new technique, and its use as a research tool is gaining traction, particularly in testing the relationships in theoretical models (Garrett-Mayer, 2006; Hair et al., 2021).

Covariance-based Structural Equation Modeling (CB-SEM) is better at providing model fit indices, whereas PLS-SEM fit indices are still evolving (Hair et al., 2017). Testing Process Using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) consists of five stages: model specification, model identification, parameter estimation, model evaluation, and model modification (Byrne, 2016; Kline, 2016):

a. The initial measurement model or Model specification

The study's proposed model must satisfy the established criteria for establishing causal relationships. This study employs AMOS version 28 to explore the relationship between crisis management (SD, PP, R, L) as the independent variable, two mediators (brand reputation and brand positioning), and brand performance (financial and non-financial) as the dependent variable. According to Hair et al.(2021), there must be sufficient relationships between variables, the existence of cause and effect, and theoretical justifications for the relationships. Based on one's knowledge, the model specification defines the hypothesized relationships between variables in an SEM (Fan et al., 2016). Most of a researcher's model specification is based on empirical findings from prior research and theory (Shaheen et al., 2017). Kline (2016, p. 145) proposed three essential criteria for determining the most suitable SEM: (1) "The model degrees of freedom must be at least zero to ensure the degrees of freedom (df) is greater than zero ($df M^{m} \geq 0$)"; (2) "every latent variable (including the residual terms) must be assigned a scale, which means that either the residual terms' (disturbance) path coefficient and one of the latent variable's factor loading should be fixed to 1 or that the variance of a latent variable must be fixed to 1"; and (3) Every latent variable needs at least two indicators.

b. Model Identification

After model specification, the researcher must estimate the model with the help of observed data. The researcher is responsible for ensuring all parameters are known and identified in a model. Model identification checks if the model is over-identified, just-identified, or under-identified (Fan et al., 2016; Kline, 2016). Identifying a model involves resolving the identification problem in parameter estimation. Model identification involves resolving the identification problem in the parameter's estimation. As Awang (2012) states, adjusting the parameter to achieve an acceptable loading factor. It begins with identifying the parameter for each dimension in the model and modifying it based on the loading factor so that the highest loading factor is equivalent to '1'. According to Schumacker and Lomax (2010), to avoid scale indeterminacy, each observed variable must have one loading factor fixed to "1."

The loading factor in path analysis was created to quantify the associations between multiple variables (Fan et al., 2016). It was the original name for structural equation modeling (SEM) before latent variables were introduced, and it proved to be a robust tool for examining and developing structural hypotheses involving direct and indirect causal effects (Wright, 1921). Mediation is a typical function of path analysis, which assumes that a variable can, directly and indirectly, influence an outcome through another variable. Structural equation modeling (SEM) is a popular method for testing models with mediating effects (Cheung, 2007). Mediators are variables that explain the relationship between an independent and dependent variable and can be specified as an indirect effect. It is possible to view contextual factors as mediated influences, in which the context data is viewed as a distal causal influence (Little et al., 2007). The mediating effect of two mediators labeled M is depicted. Baron and Kenny's (1986) influential paper on mediation analyses outlined three conditions that must be met to claim that mediation is occurring. In this study, however, brand reputation and positioning emerged as mediators.

c. Parameter Estimation

Only certain parameter estimation methods, such as maximum likelihood, make multivariate normality a strict assumption (Floyd & Widaman, 1995). Most researchers drew conclusions based on the assumption of an entire data set (Kang, 2013). In marketing, the general issue of missing data has received little attention. Maximum Likelihood (ML) and Partial Least Squares (PLS) are the two most commonly used estimation methods in SEM. In contrast, ML relies on Bootstrapping in cases where the distributional assumptions are violated. However, Sharma and Kim (2013) suggested that for larger sample sizes, ML-based bootstrapping be used. This study employs ML for parameter estimation, as suggested by Sharma and Kim (2013), with a total of 341 respondents. To validate the model estimation, researchers employ various fit statistics, each of which has its cut-off value, and researchers must interpret these estimates in light of these standardised cut-off values (Shaheen et al., 2017). This study's latent variable model included one exogenous variable, two mediators, and one endogenous variable, each with four reflective indicators and no cross-loadings, model misspecifications, or interaction effects. The measurement model's factor loadings (lambdas) were set to 0.6, while the structural model's path loadings (betas) were set to 0.3 (Sharma & Kim, 2013).

d. Model Evaluation

According to Hu and Bentler (1999), model evaluation evaluates fit indices and goodness of fit. This section consisted of a measurement model assessment evaluation. Also, the measurement model evaluation by Hair et al. (2013) was meant to test how reliable and valid the construct measures were. Moreover, Using estimated model parameters and a comparison of validated correlations or covariances with observed values, correlations between variables are validated (Shaheen et al., 2017). The researcher will return to the drawing board if the model fails the fitness test following this procedure. This study considers three commonly used model fit indices based on a fit function given a particular estimation method. The fit indices for the test of a single path coefficient (i.e., p-value and standard error) and the overall model fit (i.e., RMSEA) are used to evaluate SEM. The Goodness of Fit statistic evaluates the relative amount of variances or covariances with the model.

Numerous academics concurred unanimity with a set of discovered fit indices (Awang, 2012; Hair et al., 2010; Kline, 2016; Lin & Hsieh, 2009; Stevens, 2012). AMOS software generates at least two dozen distinct goodness-of-fit measures, causing methodologists to argue which is the most appropriate. Kline (2016) identified four categories of approximate fit indices because some indexes can be classified under multiple categories: first, absolute fit indexes measure how well an a priori model explains the data. This is because most just-identified models will perfectly explain the observed covariances, even if they are misspecified. This is achieved by increasing the number of free parameters in the model until no more degrees of freedom are left (dfM = 0). Second, To quantify how much better the researcher's model fits the data than the original model, incremental (or comparative) fit indices are calculated. Incremental fit indices based on the null model, as pointed out by Miles and Shevlin (2007, p. 870), "effectively say, ‘How is my model doing, compared with the worst model there is?”.

This indicates that the null model is a fallacious "strawman" argument. Third, Parsimony- adjusted indexes. Although degrees of freedom (dfM) and parsimony share some similarities, they are not similar. Because dfM is not a proportionate measure of the relationship between observations and parameters, it cannot be used to make this claim. According to Mulaik et al. (1989), obtaining parsimony fit indices in the 0.50 range is possible, while other goodness of fit indices achieve values greater than 0.90. Fourth, Predictive fit indexes estimate. Predictive fit indices estimate model fit for hypothetical replication samples of the same size drawn randomly from the same population as the original sample.

Some researchers argue the fit indices model, specifically the root mean square error of approximation or RMSEA (Byrne, 2016; Steiger, 1990), the comparative fit index (CFI) (Hu & Bentler, 1999), and the Tucker–Lewis index (TLI) (Tucker & Lewis, 1973). However, Hu and Bentler (1999) identified two pressing issues for applying fit indexes for model evaluation: incremental and absolute fit indexes. They favored various fit indices, including the following: (1) Chi-square, (2) RMSEA (root mean square error of approximation), (3) comparative fit index (CFI), 4) Goodness-of-fit index (GFI), 5) Adjusted Goodness-of-fit index (AGFI), and 6) Normed fit index (NFI).

Following Hopper et al. (2008) and Dash and Paul (2021) recommendations, some methods for enhancing model fit include: (1). Absolute fit included in this category are the Chi-Squared test, RMSEA, GFI, AGFI, the RMR, and the SRMR, (2). Incremental fit indices, also known as comparative fit indices. While some indices compare the chi-square value to a baseline model rather than using the chi-square in its raw form, The null hypothesis for these models is that all variables are uncorrelated. to calculate incremental fit indices with NFI and CFI, (3). Parsimony fit indices. two parsimony of fit indices has been developed: the Parsimony Goodness-of-Fit Index (PGFI) and the Parsimonious Normed Fit Index (PNFI). Adjusting for the loss of degrees of freedom, the PGFI is based on the GFI. The PNFI also accounts for degrees of freedom, but it is derived from the NFI.

As shown in Table 3.11, this study developed three fit indices based on the recommendations of the above-mentioned researchers: absolute fit, incremental fit, and parsimonious fit.

Table 3.11

Index Category and the Level of Acceptance for every Index

| Name of Category | Model-Fit Criterion | Level of Acceptance | Interpretation |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Absolute fit | Discrepancy Chi Square (Chisq) | P > 0.05 | Sensitive to sample size > 200 |
| | Root Mean Square of Error Approximation (RMSEA)* | RMSEA < 0.08 | Range 0.05 to 0.10 acceptable |
| | Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)* | GFI > 0.9 | GFI = 0.95 is a good fit |
| 2. Incremental fit | Adjusted Goodness of Fit Index (AGFI)* | AGFI > 0.9 | AGFI = 0.90 to 0.95 is a good fit |
| | Comparative Fit Index (CFI)* | CFI > 0.9 | CFI = 0.90 to 0.95 is a good fit |
| | Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) | TLI > 0.9 | TLI = 0.90 to 0.95 is a good fit |
| | Normed Fit Index (NFI) | TLI > 0.9 | NFI = 0.90 to 0.95 is a good fit |
| 3. Parsimonious fit | Chi-Square/Degrees of Freedom (Chisq/df)* | Chisq/df< 5.0. | The value should be below 5.0. |

Note. * Denotes recommended index

*Source. Awang (2012) and Schumacker and Lomax (2010)*

As seen in the table above, Awang (2012) and Schumacker and Lomax (2010) recommend using RMSEA, GFI, CFI, and Chisq/df when conducting CFA. In contrast, McDonald and Ho (2002) discovered that the most commonly reported fit indices are the CFI, GFI, NFI, and NNFI in their review. For absolute fit, this is typically depicted as follows: Discrepancy Chi-Square (Chisq). The theoretical model can only be tested statistically using the Chi-square ($\chi 2$) test (Schumacker & Lomax, 2010). Measures the degree of discrepancy between the sample and fitted covariance matrices (Hu &Bentler, 1999). Many authors classify the Chi-Square as a "badness of fit" (Kline, 2016; Malhotra, 2010; Schumacker & Lomax, 2010; Steiger, 1990) or "lack of fit" statistic (Mulaik et al., 1989). Chi-squared is so sensitive to a sample size that it is not always possible to determine whether a statistically significant result results from a poor model fit or small sample size (Stevens, 2012). The chi-square ($\chi 2$) determines how different the model-implied covariance matrix is from the original covariance matrix (Fan et al., 2016). Consequently, the insignificant difference is preferred. With $p > 0.05$, the $\chi 2$ test would be optimal for optimal fitting of the selected SEM (Bentler & Bonett, 1980; Hu & Bentler, 1999; Mulaik et al., 1989). However, Schumacker and Lomax (2010) confirmed that "*degrees of freedom, and/or the chi-square values to formulate an index of model fit that ranges in value from 0 (no fit) to 1 (perfect fit)*" (p.75).

Next, the Root means square of error approximation (RMSEA). The second fit statistic is the RMSEA (Steiger, 1990). RMSEA is an absolute fit index that assesses how far a hypothesized model is from a perfect model. On the contrary, CFI and TLI are incremental fit indices that compare the fit of a hypothesized model with that of a baseline model (i.e., a model with the worst fit). This metric assesses how far the population's covariance matrix deviates from the parameter estimates of the hypothesized models that best fit it (Byrne, 2016). Some experts have significantly lowered their recommended RMSEA cut-off points. An RMSEA indicated a fair fit between 0.05 and 0.10, and values above 0.10 indicated a poor fit (Awang, 2012; Hooper et al., 2008; Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1993). A RMSEA value falling between the range of 0.08-0.10 indicates a fit that is neither good nor bad (Cangur, 2015). Hu and Bentler (1999) suggested an optimal RMSEA of less than .06. A few researchers stated that RMSEA is among the fit indexes affected the least by sample size. However, based on the number of degrees of freedom, some researchers have proposed that the chi-squared statistic paints a different picture. A CMIN/df value between 3 and 5 is typical of a well-fitting model (Dash & Paul, 2021). This index is preferable because a confidence interval can be determined by its value (Browne & Cudeck, 1992; MacCallum et al., 1996). According to a few researchers, RMSEA is one of the fit indices least affected by sample size (Marsh et al., 2004).

Last in absolute fit is the Fitness index (GFI). Joreskog and Sorbom (1993) developed the Goodness-of-Fit statistic (GFI) as an alternative to the Chi-Square test; it calculates the proportion of variance accounted for by the estimated population covariance (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). A GFI greater than 0.09 is required if the scale runs from 0 to 1 (AmirAlavifar, 2012). Contrarily, Sharma et al. (2005) recommend that researchers who prefer to use predefined cut-off values use TLI, RNI, NNCP, and root-mean-square-error-of-approximation (RMSEA) to evaluate model fit. They prefer that the use of GFI be avoided. GFI calculates the proportion of variance accounted for by the population's projected covariance. As GFI frequently exceeds other fit models, 0.95 has been suggested as the cut-off (Hair et al., 2017; Miles & Shevlin, 2007). Contrarily, the range of GFI from 0 to 1.0, with the best fit at 1.0, is no longer recommended due to the effect of sample size on GFI (Fan et al., 2016; Hooper et al., 2008; MacCallum et al., 1996; Sharma et al., 2005). However, it compares the model's fit function to that of the null or independent model when all model parameters are set to zero. As the sample size increases, the value of GFI tends to increase.

Next, calculate incremental fit indices with AGFI, CFI, TLI, and NFI for incremental fit. *Adjusted goodness of fit index (AGFI)*. The AGFI is similar to the GFI, but it modifies GFI depending on degrees of freedom, with more saturated models yielding a worse fit (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). AGFI can organise more complex models and favors those with the minimum number of free paths. Invariably, the values are lower than the value of GFI. Like GFI, AGFI > 0.9 is acceptable, and AGFI = 0.95 is an excellent fit for the required output (Hooper et al., 2008). The AGFI can take on values between 0 and 1, with 0.90 or higher typically indicating a model that fits data reasonably well (Hooper et al., 2008). Thus, the *Comparative fit index* (CFI). This index is an updated form of the NFI that compares the sample covariance matrix of the null or independence model with the covariance matrix of the full model, assuming that all latent variables in the model are uncorrelated (Hooper et al., 2008). The Comparative Fit Index, which accounts for sample size (Byrne, 2016), is effective even when the sample size is small (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Bentler (1999) was the first to propose this CFI. By setting the independence model to zero, it compares the existing model fit to a null model that assumes the latent variables in the model are uncorrelated. CFI, like AGFI, has a requirement: accepted when CFI > 0.9, while CFI = 0.95 is a good fit. The CFI generates values between 0 and 1, and high values indicate a good fit (Cangur, 2015). CFI should be equal to or greater than 0.90 to accept the model, indicating that the given model can reproduce 90% of the covariance in the data (Hooper et al., 2008). A threshold value of 0.90 or higher (>0.95 in small samples) indicates a good model fit (Hair et al., 2021; Hu & Bentler, 1999).

The Tucker-Lewis Index (TLI) is an incremental fit index. The index is very close to the NFI, but it gives more weight to less complex models that are more vulnerable to limited data (Hooper et al., 2008). The TLI > 0.9 threshold, as is the AGFI > 0.95 threshold for a good fit, is also accepted. The values found using TLI are typically lower than those obtained using GFI (Bentler, 1990; Hair et al., 2021). On the contrary, Hu and Bentler (1999) and Cangur (2015) stated that a good model-data fit is indicated by TLI >.95.

*Lastly*, the Normed fit index (NFI) is an incremental fit index. In the past, chi-square statistics have been used to evaluate the fit of a structural model, but this is the first time that a normed and non-normed fit index has been proposed as an alternative (Bentler & Bonett, 1980). The acceptance of the null model indicates no correlation between any of the measured variables, so this index compares the $\chi 2$ value of the model to the $\chi 2$ of the null model to determine if the model is significant (Hooper et al., 2008). NFI is very sensitive to sample size (Bentler, 1990). As a result, NFI is no longer used to evaluate the model fit (Bentler, 1990; Hoyle, 2011).

On the other hand, the number of estimated coefficients needed to achieve goodness-of-fit is quantified by the parsimonious fit criterion. Hair et al. (1998) emphasized modifications to the model and proposed TLI and RMSEA as parsimonious alternatives. Both the Parsimonious Goodness-of-Fit Index (PGFI) and the Parsimonious Normed Fit Index (PNFI) were developed to place a greater emphasis on simplicity and to penalize model complexity (Mulaik et al., 1989). As a result of GFI's transformation into PGFI, NFI's transformation into PNFI is also practical (Dash & Paul, 2021). Although no specific cut-off value is recommended, 0.5 is typically considered adequate (Hooper et al., 2008). However, this study came out with Chi Square to be divided by Degrees of Freedom (Chisq/*df*) and suggested the result must be <5.0 for parsimony (Awang, 2012).

e. Model Modification /Structural and Measurement Models

SEM has two primary components: the measurement and the structural models. CFA is used to specify and validate the theory of measurement. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) is a technique used to measure latent variables (Byrne, 2016; Kline, 2016). For example, crisis management as a latent variable is measured by the observation of pra-crisis, during crisis, and post-crisis. This method permits a researcher to evaluate each scale item's contribution and incorporate the scale's sensitivity to measure the concept into estimating the relationships between dependent and independent variables (Hair et al., 2006). This results in a graphical representation of the measurement model, with a summary of its estimates and model, fit accessible on demand by clicking the text output icon, which triggers the output to be displayed in textual format. Reducing the dimensionality of the data, standardizing the scale of multiple indicators, and taking into account correlations inherent to the dataset are all possible with the help of confirmatory factor analysis, an estimation technique that uses the correlated variations of the dataset (e.g., association, causal relationship) (Byrne, 2016). To postulate a latent variable, one should be concerned with the reason for using a latent variable. The Goodness-of-Fit (GoF) test is then used to evaluate the measurement model. More precise hypothesis testing can be carried out by analyzing the results of measurement and structural model testing (Garson, 2012). For a detailed explanation of CFA, see the section preceding this one. However, in factor analytic models such as CFA, the relationship between factors is deemed insignificant and is therefore disregarded.

### 3.14.4 Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

Through confirmatory factor analysis, the measurement quality of the constructs is examined, and the structural model used to determine crisis management and brand reputation, brand positioning, and brand performance is then estimated (Olmedo-Cifuentes & Martínez-León, 2014). Model fit is evaluated for CFA to validate the measurement (Dash & Paul, 2021). It differs from Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) as it verifies the already available factor specification with empirical data. Using Comparative factor analysis (CFA) rather than Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA), many researchers confirm hypotheses or test competing models (Osborne, 2016). EFA is used when the researcher has no expectations regarding the number or nature of the factors (Taherdoost et al., 2022). While CFA is used to test the researcher's hypotheses, structural equation modeling (SEM) is used to evaluate existing models.

In contrast to EFA, CFA makes assumptions and has expectations based on a priori model and theory regarding the number of constructs and which construct theories or models are most appropriate (Taherdoost et al., 2022). Some researchers argue that there are several essential steps to consider before the CFA can be performed, with the most important being the motive of validating the model proposed by EFA. Holtzman and Vezzu (2011) note that if the model was proposed using EFA, a completely different dataset must be collected for the CFA, or the initial dataset must be randomly subdivided into multiple subsamples for each procedure.

Comparative factor analysis (CFA) is an alternative to factor analysis that can be performed in SEM. CFA is performed to validate the data structure or map specific latent variables to predefined factors (Sun et al., 2018). In addition, confirmatory factor analysis is a statistical method for validating the factor structure of a set of observed variables (Suhr, 2006). A CFA enables the researcher to test the relationship hypothesis between observed variables. Results showed no values greater than a rescaled value of 7, which met the conditions for normality and, by extension, the assumption behind the maximum likelihood estimation of structural equation modeling (Hair et al., 2021). Covariance-based Structural Equation Modeling (CB-SEM) and Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) are employed to conduct a CFA to evaluate and possibly validate theoretical measurement theory and structural model relationships. CB-SEM is evaluated based on its reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity, as well as its ability to reproduce the relationships between the indicator variables, as represented by the observed covariance matrix.

Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) and structural equation modeling are the two stages of SEM. In evaluating the results in the CFA stage, the only difference between the two methods is that CB-SEM is assessed based on reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity, as well as on how well the relationships between the indicator variables, as represented by the observed covariance matrix, can be reproduced (Hair et al., 2017). The degree to which these relationships can be replicated is called "goodness-of-fit" (Hair et al., 2010). In contrast, By contrast, PLS-SEM lacks a fit measure because it is not based on covariances. While PLS-SEM does not directly test the existence of theoretical relationships between observed indicator variables and their underlying latent constructs, the CFA stage does. Reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity are the only metrics used in PLS-SEM to verify the CFA hypotheses for the measurement model. CFA verifies the factor structure of a set of observed variables while examining the relationship between observed variables and their latent constructs (Suhr, 2006).

Next, the minimum number for the variable-to-factor ratio must be at least three items, or else the model is not fit for further analysis. The sample size is another critical aspect of CFA in which the majority of the researchers agreed at a 10:1 ratio subject to item ratio, as found in Osborne and Costello (2009), Nunnally (1994), and Pallant (2013). Lastly, other assumptions that must be achieved include checking missing data, outliers, multivariate normality, and collinearity (Holtzman & Vezzu, 2011).

Lack of unidimensionality is a measurement error that can be tested by ensuring that the items used to measure the construct all measure the same thing. Garson (2012) explained several methods for testing unidimensionality, each with a different meaning and stringency: Cronbach’s Alpha, Factor Analysis, and CFA. However, the proposed measurement model in CFA was examined to determine the adequacy of model fit to data, unidimensionality, validity, and reliability using Analysis of Moments Structure (AMOS) software, which has the capability of modeling and analysing the inter-relationships among constructs with multiple indicators more accurately (Awang, 2012).

### 3.14.5 Validity and Reliability

Before conducting confirmatory factor analysis, Awang (2012) and Hair et al. (1998) say strict requirements, validity, and reliability are two critical things that must be met. Validity describes the degree to which the obtained data represents the area of inquiry (Ghauri & Grønhaug, 2005). The other criteria proposed for this fit are divided into three fitness validity: fitness index, Convergent Validity, and Construct Validity (Mustafa et al., 2020). Field (2009) discovered that in order to reduce the possibility of measurement error, it is advantageous to identify the characteristics of the measurement that ensure it is functioning as intended. Validity is the first characteristic of whether the instrument can measure the desired quantities. The second is the instrument's reliability, or how well it holds up under different conditions. Whether or not an instrument accurately measures the variables of interest is what we mean when discussing validity.

Several researchers have diverse perspectives on the measurement of validity and reliability, such as Taheroost (2016), who identifies four major types of validity: face validity, content validity, construct validity, and criterion validity. This is the most crucial step in determining whether or not the model is valid for measuring its intended variables. According to Fabrigar (2020), there are four fundamental types of validity: the validity of statistical conclusions, internal validity, construct validity, and external validity.

Convergent and discriminant validity served as the primary criteria for evaluating the measurement model's validity derived from construct validity. Convergent validity is the degree to which the scale positively correlates with other measures of the same construct (Malhotra, 2002; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007; Taherdoost, 2018). The average variance extracted (AVE) was calculated for each latent construct to assess convergent validity. In addition, the AVE, which represents the total number of latent constructs, must exceed the recommended threshold of > 0.50 (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). After the above, discriminant validity is the extent to which the construct of distinct concepts does not correlate with other measurements. A test of discriminant validity examines whether or not items unintentionally measure something else (Urbach & Ahlemann, 2010). For measuring discriminant validity in SEM, Fornell-Larcker's method by Fornell & Larcker (1981) and the cross-loading technique are frequently employed (Hair et al., 2014).

Next, the reliability indicator is a major criterion alongside composite reliability, convergent validity, and discriminant validity (Hair et al., 1998). Reliability is another crucial CFA analysis, emphasizing the need for a valid research instrument to measure the targeted latent construct (Awang, 2012; Hair et al., 2017). Hair et al.

(2014) propose examining the indicator loading (factor loading) value and the composite reliability (to measure internal consistency reliability) when evaluating reliability. They stated that the cut-off points for the factor loading values should be greater than 0.70 (> 0.70) for the confirmatory research data to ensure that the model is statistically significant and fit. Hence, Internal consistency reliability (ICR) was also assessed to confirm the constructs' reliability (Taber, 2018).

According to Hu & Bentler (1999), the preceding statement indicates that the closer the value is to 1, the better the items explain latent construct variances. In the final result, regardless of the reliability coefficient used, if the value is greater than 0.70 (> 0.70) in the early stages and greater than 0.80 (> 0.80) in the later stages, it is considered satisfactory. If the value is less than 0.6 (< 0.6), it indicates that the item is not reliable (Hulin et al., 2001). Four thresholds for reliability have been proposed by Hinton et al. (2014): excellent reliability (0.9 or higher), high reliability (0.70-0.90), moderate reliability (0.50-0.70), and low reliability (0.50 and below).

In addition, to confirm the constructs' reliability, the internal consistency reliability (ICR) was also evaluated. Historically, the measurement of the ICR was based on the value of Cronbach's alpha (CA) (Cronbach, 1971). Moreover, the constructs with a high Cronbach's alpha (CA) value suggest that the items within the construct have the same range and meaning (Cronbach, 1971). In addition, previous literature has suggested using composite reliability (CR) as a substitute for the CA due to its more accurate underestimation (Chin, 1998; Hair et al., 2021). The value displayed in this factor's composite reliability (CR) will range from 0 to 1. According to Ghozali and Latan (2015), the preceding statement indicates that the closer the value is to 1, the better the latent construct variances are explained by the items. An acceptable level of internal consistency reliability would be at least 0.7 in the preliminary stages of a study and at least 0.8 or 0.9 in the later phases (Vaske et al., 2017).

In conclusion, regardless of the specific reliability coefficient used, if the value is greater than 0.70 (> 0.70) in the early stages and 0.80 (> 0.80) in the later stages, then it can be considered satisfactory. However, if the value is less than 0.6, the item is unreliable (Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994; Nunnally, 1967). Table 3.12 depicts the guidelines for assessing a measurement model.

Table 3.12

Summarises the Criteria for Evaluating A Measurement Model

| Reliability / Validity | Criterion | Guidelines |
|---|---|---|
| Reliability | Indicator loadings | Item's loading > 0.7 and significant at least at the 0.05 confidence level. |
| | Composite reliability (CR) | CR > 0.70 |
| | Internal consistency reliability (ICR) | ICR > 0.70 |
| Convergent Validity | Average Variance Explained (AVE) | AVE ≥ 0.50 |
| Discriminant Validity | Fornell and Larcker | The square root of the AVE of a construct should be greater than the correlations between the construct and other constructs in the model. |
| | Cross loading | Item's loading of each indicator is highest for its designated construct. |

According to Hair et al. (2014), several steps must be considered when evaluating the structural model. Tests on the coefficient of determination ($R^2$), cross-validated redundancy, predictive relevance ($Q^2$), and path coefficients were highlighted. $R^2$ indicates the proportion of variance in each dependent variable that the independent variables can explain or measures the predictive accuracy of a model (Hair et al., 2014). The $R^2$ indicator ranges from 0 to 1, and according to a general rule, it must be at least 0.10 or greater Falk and Miller (1992); Chin (1998) considers $R^2$ values of 0.19, 0.33, and 0.67 to be weak, moderate, and substantial, respectively. Hooper et al. (2008) stated that items with a low multiple $R^2$ (less than .20) should be excluded from the analysis because this indicates extremely high error rates. For construct reliability, the critical ratios for all constructs are well above the required values (CR ≥ 0.6), and therefore retained items are reliable for measuring the constructs. Furthermore, items showed strong internal reliability (α > .70), which indicated that the decision to retain items in a designated group is precise and strongly reliable.

The predominant measure is Stone-($Q^2$), Geisser's, used to determine the predictive significance of endogenous variables using a reflective measurement model (Roldán & Sánchez-Franco, 2012). $Q^2$ evaluates the predictive validity of a model using blindfolding procedures and PLS. $Q^2$ is typically estimated in PLS using an omission distance between 5 and 10 (Akter et al., 2017). If the $Q^2$ values are greater than zero, the exogenous constructs have predictive values for the endogenous construct (Hair et al., 2014). According to Hair et al. (2014) and Cohen-Charash & Spector (2001), a $Q^2$ value of 0.02, 0.15, or 0.35 indicates that the exogenous variable has a low, moderate, or high predictive relevance on a specific endogenous variable. The path coefficient, also known as the standardized regression coefficient, represents the relationship between the research model's hypothesized latent variable and the endogenous construct (Hair et al., 2014; Roldán & Sánchez-Franco, 2012; Sarstedt et al., 2017).

### 3.14.6 Analysis of Mediation Effect

In this study, the bootstrap test was used to assess the mediation effect for SEM when analysing the variables. Hair et al. (2014) recommended using bootstrapping for mediation analysis. The authors also noted that when testing the mediating effect, researchers should follow Hayes (2009) and bootstrap the sampling distribution of the indirect effect, which is applicable for both simple and multiple mediator models. In addition, the assumption of a normal distribution for the indirect effect is not required when employing the bootstrap method, as it is a nonparametric technique. Consequently, it is suitable for SEM and can be applied to small sample sizes (Hair et al., 2014). Hayes (2009) proposes two steps for testing the mediating effect using the bootstrapping method. First, SEM is used to generate the constructed model. The subsequent step is to estimate the effect of the independent variable (X) on the mediator variable (M) and the dependent variable (Y). A mediation effect occurs when both coefficients are significant. If one of the coefficients is insignificant, there had been no mediation effect, and no further analysis had been conducted on this subject. Secondly, the t-test was calculated using the nonparametric bootstrapping method to examine the mediation effect. The mediation effect test, conducted for 5-time variances, revealed no significant results in the final result. So, the results of the mediation test might show different effects for each time period.

## 3.15 Chapter Summary

This chapter explains and justifies all of the required elements of the research methodology for this study. With the goal and objectives in mind, this chapter describes the research design, population sampling, research instruments, pilot study, data collection, data analysis, and Structural Equation Modelling have all been covered. In addition, the analysis of Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), which includes tests for unidimensionality, goodness-of-fit, and convergent and Discriminant Validity of the research findings, was discussed using SPSS software. This section justifies the quantitative methodology utilised in this thesis. The analyses and this study's results are discussed in the next chapter.

# CHAPTER 4
# RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

## 4.1 Preamble

This chapter presents the outcomes of the statistical analysis discussed in Chapter 4. The order of data processing determines the arrangement of the subsection. After a brief explanation of the response rate, there is a demographic profile. The quantitative analysis began with the descriptive results of each item's mean and standard deviation from the questionnaire. The chapter then continues with technical analysis, beginning with confirmatory factor analysis. In addition to presenting the measurement model for each dimension, a thorough explanation of the modification procedure and hypotheses testing employing the appropriate statistical tools are also provided. This chapter concludes with path analysis, the final step before determining the final model.

## 4.2 Response Rate

A humble suggestion based on Memon's (2020) experience is that a sample size between 160 and 300 valid observations is most often suitable for multivariate statistical analysis techniques (such as CB-SEM and PLS-SEM). As previously mentioned, a minimum of 330 questionnaires were distributed, and 341 were successfully returned, for a collection success rate of 103.3 percent. In this study, adjusting the sample size can help collect the minimum required number of respondents while maintaining statistical validity and producing meaningful results (Bhattacherjee, 2012). Three hundred forty-one respondents were coded for further analysis, and 16 respondents (4.69 percent) provided invalid responses, such as a single alternate rating throughout the questionnaire (e.g., the respondent circles either '6' or '7' in alternate patterns). Before entering the data into the analytical software, data cleansing was performed. Each questionnaire was inspected for any missing information during the data entry process. Humphries (2010) noted that only a few items were missing. Data were likely incomplete due to a skip pattern in the survey, intentional missing as part of the data collection process, or refusal to respond. The return rate of questionnaires distributed for this study is shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1
Summary of Response Rate

| Descriptions | N | % |
|---|---|---|
| Sample size | 330 | 100% |
| Surveys collected | 341 | 103.33% |
| Invalid response | 16 | 4.69 % |
| Response rate | 325 | 98.48% |

For instance, a survey of journal editors revealed that 90 percent of editors considered response rate an essential factor in publication decisions (Carley-Baxter et al., 2009). They stated that the response rate is at least somewhat relevant to the decision to publish; however, there appears to be little in the way of agreed-upon standards or conventions for either reporting response rate information or establishing minimal thresholds. Based on the table above, this study has a response rate of 98.48 percent or must have a response rate of at least 80 percent (Fincham, 2008). Some researchers contend that in most social and management surveys, response rates for mailed and emailed questionnaires are rarely one hundred percent (Taherdoost, 2016). The most common and time-efficient method for ensuring minimum sample sizes is to increase the sample size by up to 54.44%, which was not significant in hospitality research (Ali et al., 2021).

## 4.3 Respondents' Demographic Profile

Table 4.2 summarizes the respondents' demographic profiles, including gender, age, educational level, job title, hotel star rating, type of hotel, hotel operating arrangement, market segment, and location.

Table 4.2

Respondents' Demographic Profile

| Variable | | Frequency | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| Gender | | | |
| | Male | 264 | 81.2 |
| | Female | 61 | 18.8 |
| Age | | | |
| | below 30 years | 23 | 7.1 |
| | 31 – 39 | 93 | 28.6 |
| | 40 – 59 | 204 | 62.8 |
| | Above 60 | 5 | 1.5 |
| Educational Level | | | |
| | Secondary School (SMA/SMK) | 30 | 9.2 |
| | Diploma | 118 | 36.3 |
| | Degree | 133 | 40.9 |
| | Postgraduate (S2-S3) | 44 | 13.5 |
| Job Title | | | |
| | Vice President/COO/Cluster GM/GM | 24 | 7.4 |
| | General Manager | 121 | 37.2 |
| | Hotel Manager | 38 | 11.7 |
| | Executive Assistant Management | 19 | 5.8 |
| | Director/Head of Department | 123 | 37.8 |

Note: N=325

The above table (Table 4.2) of this section reports the frequencies of gender, age, educational level, and job title of the respondents. As can be seen, the number of males in the sample exceeded that of females, with 81.2 percent against 18.8 percent. This data indicated that women are rare in the hospitality industry, dominated by men (Masadeh & Alhammad, 2020), and the total number of IHGMA woman members is less than 4 percent or approximately 48 persons. Regarding age distribution, 40-59 (62.8 percent) was the most dominant group, followed by 31-39 (28.6 percent) and below 30 years (7.1 percent). Findings indicate that experience and reputation are prevalent among 40 and older (Ben Aissa & Goaied, 2016). Next education level, Degree holders (40.9 percent) dominated the educational level category. It was closely followed by Diploma holders (36.3 percent). For a developing country like Indonesia, the literacy rate was low; therefore, this result, in one way or another, confirmed that notion. In other categories, Postgraduate (13.5 percent) ranked as the third largest group, while Secondary school participation (9.2 percent) was comparatively low. Following the job titles of the Vice President, Chief Operating Officer, Cluster General Manager, General Manager, and Hotel Manager, it is evident that top-level management plays a crucial role in completing this questionnaire, or 56.3 percent is another dominant group in this category. Executive Assistant Manager (5.8 percent) and Director/Head of Department (37.8 percent) were the minority positions in the survey.

Table 4.3

Hotel Characteristics

| **Variable** | | **Frequency** | **%** |
|---|---|---|---|
| Hotel Star Rating | | | |
| | 5- star rating | 64 | 19.7 |
| | 4- star rating | 261 | 80.3 |
| Number of years Property | | | |
| | Less than one year | 231 | 71.1 |
| | 1 – 5 | 48 | 14.8 |
| | 6 – 10 | 9 | 2.8 |
| | Above 10 years | 37 | 11.4 |
| Type of Hotel | | | |
| | City Hotel | 288 | 88.6 |
| | Resort Hotel | 37 | 11.4 |
| Hotel Operating Arrangement | | | |
| | International Chain | 147 | 45.2 |
| | National Chain/Independent | 178 | 54.8 |
| Market Segment | | | |
| | Government | 72 | 22.2 |
| | Corporate | 77 | 23.7 |
| | Leisure or pleasure | 62 | 19.1 |
| | MICE | 89 | 27.4 |
| | All the above | 25 | 7.7 |

Note: N=325

As shown in Table 4.3, over eighty percent of hotels have a four-star rating, followed by 19.7 percent of five-star hotels. Regarding the number of years of property, 71.1 percent of respondents have less than one year. Followed by one to five years (14.8 percent) and ten years or more (11.4 percent). For the type of hotel, most respondents were from city hotels (88.6 percent) and resort hotels (11.4 percent). Regarding the hotel operating arrangement of respondents. 54.8 percent from national or independent retailers, followed by 45.2 percent from international chains. Most market segment respondents came from the MICE segment (27.4%), followed by the corporate segment (23.7%), and then the government segment (22.2 percent).

Referring to Table 4.4 reflects the demographic profiles reported by the location of the respondents. The figure indicates that 16.9 percent of the respondents in this study were from West Java, followed by DKI Jakarta (16.6 percent), Papua (6.8 percent), and Central Java and West Kalimantan as the following two provinces (6.5 percent). DKI Jakarta and West Java are the largest provinces overall in terms of the number of star hotels and the number of rooms (BPS-Statistics Indonesia, 2022). Four provincial representatives did not respond: Nanggroe Aceh Darussalam, West Sulawesi, Maluku, and North Maluku. In these provinces, there were very few four- and five-star hotels (BPS-Statistics Indonesia, 2021). However, results show that the majority of the respondents collected from the Western Indonesia Zone (75.7 percent), followed closely by the Central Indonesia Zone (18.78 percent) and the Western Indonesia Zone (8.48 percent).

Table 4.4

Respondents' Demographic Profile reported by Location

| Zone | | Province | Minimum Questionnaires Distributed | Collected | Valid Responses | Valid Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Western Indonesia Zone | 1 | North Sumatera | 231 (70%) | 9 | 8 | 2.5 |
| | 2 | West Sumatera | | 1 | 1 | 0.3 |
| | 3 | South Sumatera | | 3 | 3 | 0.9 |
| | 4 | Riau | | 3 | 3 | 0.9 |
| | 5 | Riau Island | | 12 | 12 | 3.7 |
| | 6 | Bengkulu | | 2 | 2 | 0.6 |
| | 7 | Jambi | | 6 | 6 | 1.8 |
| | 8 | Bangka Belitung | | 5 | 5 | 1.5 |
| | 9 | Bandar Lampung | | 10 | 9 | 2.8 |
| | 10 | DKI Jakarta | | 64 | 54 | 16.6 |
| | 11 | West Java | | 55 | 55 | 16.9 |
| | 12 | Banten | | 7 | 7 | 2.2 |
| | 13 | Central of Java | | 21 | 21 | 6.5 |
| | 14 | Yogyakarta | | 9 | 9 | 2.8 |
| | 15 | East Java | | 18 | 18 | 5.5 |
| | 16 | West Kalimantan | | 21 | 21 | 6.5 |
| | 17 | Central Kalimantan | | 4 | 3 | 0.9 |
| | | **Amount** | | **250** | **237** | **75.7** |
| Central Indonesia Zone | 18 | Bali | 66 (20%) | 16 | 16 | 4.9 |
| | 19 | West Nusa Tenggara | | 4 | 4 | 1.2 |
| | 20 | East Nusa Tenggara | | 2 | 2 | 0.6 |
| | 21 | North Kalimantan | | 2 | 2 | 0.6 |

| Zone | | Province | Minimum Questionnaires Distributed | Collected | Valid Responses | Valid Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 22 | East Kalimantan | | 11 | 11 | 3.4 |
| | 23 | South Kalimantan | | 10 | 9 | 2.8 |
| | 24 | North Sulawesi | | 1 | 1 | 0.3 |
| | 25 | South Sulawesi | | 11 | 11 | 3.4 |
| | 26 | Southeast Sulawesi | | 2 | 2 | 0.6 |
| | 27 | Central Sulawesi | | 2 | 2 | 0.6 |
| | 28 | Gorontalo | | 2 | 2 | 0.6 |
| | | **Amount** | | **63** | **62** | **18.78** |
| Eastern Indonesia Zone | 29 | Papua | 33 (10%) | 22 | 22 | 6.8 |
| | 30 | Central Papua | | 6 | 4 | 1.2 |
| | | | | **28** | **26** | **8.48** |
| | | **Total Amount** | **330** | **341** | **325** | **100** |

## 4.4 Descriptive

This section described the descriptive analysis for each item within the proposed study dimension. Discussions can be generated by examining the constructs' individual components and providing their interpretation to facilitate a deep understanding of their implementations. The table's mean score is calculated using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from "1=Strongly Disagree" to "7=Strongly Agree." The data comparison between each time variance is summarized based on the mean score after this section. This section of the data depicts the mean score (M) and standard deviation (SD) for each item on each variable, respectively (SD).

### 4.4.1 Crisis Management

For crisis management, the results of descriptive statistics are summarized in Table 4.5. The magnitude of the mean scores ranging from 5.88 to 6.57 indicates that most top-level management anticipates or have created potential recovery scenarios for the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. The highest mean among the fifteen items is preparation and prevention (PP2, M=6.57, SD=.757), indicating that hotel managers have recommended that employees receive training to help keep team members and customers safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is then followed by Recovery (R1, M=5.82, SD = .869), which suggests technologies can help reduce the spread of the coronavirus while helping businesses stay open, including contactless digital payments, digital check-in and checkout, and robotics. To remain in business, the development of new touchless technologies to accommodate social distance requirements and pandemic-era hygiene concerns has been essential. In addition, Several technologies, such as contactless digital payments, digital check-in and check-out, and robotics, can reduce the spread of the coronavirus while allowing businesses to remain open.

According to the perception of the hotel manager, the lowest mean score on recovery (R2) (M=5.88, SD = 1.133) indicates that a stabilization and support package for workers and enterprises from the Indonesian government will assist the hotel in surviving the uncertainty caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. Tax incentives are also designed to help taxpayers manage cash flow during uncertain times caused by COVID-19 and assist individual taxpayers in hotel industries. The mean second-lowest score followed by the same in the recovery (R2, M=5.98, SD = 1.149), which recovery plan is a component of a business continuity plan that outlines practical strategies to help manage and stage a crisis recovery.

Table 4.5

Descriptive Result for Crisis Management

| **Code** | **Item** | ***M*** | ***SD*** |
|---|---|---|---|
| SD1 | The hotel formulates and assesses potential disaster origin and probability scenarios during the current COVID-19. | 6.25 | .942 |
| SD2 | The hotel appoints a crisis COVID-19 management team (i.e., a coordination and communication system. | 6.45 | .806 |
| SD3 | The hotel identifies external organizations to assist the hotel during the COVID-19 crisis. | 6.16 | 1.001 |
| PP1 | The hotel establishes a crisis call center for hotel operations | 6.06 | 1.036 |
| PP2 | The hotel provides health risk education and training for hotel employees during COVID-19. | 6.57 | .757 |
| PP3 | The hotel has scheduled meetings to conduct a sham crisis management drill. | 6.50 | .834 |
| PP4 | The hotel carries out scheduled sanitization work in and around the property. | 6.15 | .958 |
| R1 | The hotel allocates funds for technological development to detect factors and harmful effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. | 6.56 | .809 |
| R2 | The hotel actively applies for financial incentives whenever offered by the government. | 5.88 | 1.133 |
| R3 | The hotel performs a damage audit/monitoring system for the crisis recovery process. | 5.98 | 1.149 |
| R4 | The hotel applies media communication in both online and traditional communication methods to broadcast and promote all efforts to make certain the hotel is safe and COVID-19-free. | 6.17 | .957 |
| L1 | The hotel's top management is responsible for evaluating crisis management and planning future improvements. | 6.46 | .858 |
| L2 | The hotel's top management is responsible for providing training from other agencies in dealing with crises | 6.44 | .868 |
| L3 | The hotel's top management believes fast action during the crisis will reduce the negative impacts. | 6.43 | .867 |
| L4 | The hotel provides the resources needed (i.e., materials, people, technology, and information) to prepare for anticipated crises. | 6.39 | .884 |

Note. N=325; Seven-point Likert scale: 1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree

In summary, as shown in table 4.6, dimensions of crisis management score well in Indonesia's upscale hotel segment. Learning dimension is the highest mean score (M=6.43, SD=.747) which COVID-19 has caused significant disruption and had numerous negative effects on the hotel industry. However, the pandemic disrupted such interactions. A continuing process of learning, interaction, and strategies is essential to meeting guests' needs during their stay (Hanafiah et al., 2021; Hsiu-Ying Kao et al., 2020). The results indicated that hotel managers could learn from their experiences to prepare for future crises. Each hotel implemented various crisis mitigation strategies, such as enforcing safety measures to improve health and safety between hotel employees and guests.

Table 4.6

Descriptive Result for Dimension of Crisis Management

| | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Signal Detection | 3.67 | 7.00 | 6.2882 | .78306 |
| Preparation and Prevention | 3.75 | 7.00 | 6.3208 | .73676 |
| Recovery | 3.50 | 7.00 | 6.1454 | .77618 |
| Learning | 4.00 | 7.00 | 6.4300 | .74736 |

Note.
N=325; Seven-point Likert scale: 1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree

Table 4.6 indicates that recovery is the lowest mean score (M=6.14, SD= .776). This score indirectly explains that hotel managers focus on learning, preparation, or prevention to reduce impacts and maximize potential opportunities during a crisis.

### 4.4.2 Brand Reputation

This research measured brand reputation with a resource-based view and focused on competitiveness. In the resource-based perspective, the respondents' assertiveness was demonstrated when they agreed to improve their brand reputation with customers and effectively manage inventory. Businesses must have effective resources (M ranging from 6.24 to 6.45). The highest scores indicated that hotel managers believe brand reputation will follow the role of credibility in improving quality (M= 6.45: SD= .847). They not only had a resource-based perspective on crisis type and response strategies for brand reputation but they were also inclined to spread the good news about competitiveness, which encourages the hotel to be inventive and innovative (M= 6.36; SD= .851) and have bargaining power in dealing with the trading partners (M= 6.36; SD= .893). However, hoteliers imply that the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic is not easy, creating opportunities to increase customer loyalty to existing businesses (M= 5.86; SD= 1.150). This represents the lowest mean score recorded for items focusing on competitiveness.

Table 4.7

Descriptive Result for Brand Reputation

| **Code** | **Item** | ***M*** | ***SD*** |
|---|---|---|---|
| BR1 | Brand reputation increases the confidence level of product quality. | 6.45 | .847 |
| BR2 | The hotel collaborates with new business partners to increase its reputation during COVID-19. | 6.24 | .904 |
| BR3 | Reputation will provide the hotel bargaining power in dealing with the trading partners. | 6.36 | .893 |
| BR4 | Reputation encourages greater brand loyalty. | 6.42 | .811 |
| BR5 | Brand reputation is a barrier for rivals to act efficiently in the four or five-star hotel segment. | 5.86 | 1.150 |
| BR6 | Brand reputation encourages the hotel to be innovative and creative. | 6.36 | .851 |

Note. *N*=325; Seven-point Likert scale: 1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree

Overall (refer to Table 4.8), the measurement for a brand reputation for resource-based view received considerably high agreement from the four and five-star hotel managers (M= 6.36; SD= .711). Next, followed by a focus on competitiveness (M= 5.86; SD= .851). This demonstrates that brand reputation is important in the resources-based perspective for attracting new customers, credibility, trustworthiness, an intangible asset, and market mobility barriers. For a long time, the focus of hotel managers on image creation was exclusively post-pandemic.

Table 4.8

Descriptive Result for Dimension of Brand Reputation

| | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Resource a based view | 4.00 | 7.00 | 6.3662 | .71157 |
| Focus on competitiveness | 3.50 | 7.00 | 6.1062 | .85181 |

Note. *N*=325; Seven-point Likert scale: 1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree

### 4.4.3 Brand Positioning

Table 4.9 reveals, based on mean scores and standard deviations, that the average brand positioning scores for each question do not differ significantly (M ranges from 6.30 to 6.46). As for brand positioning, three dimensions were used, as suggested by many previous scholars. The first dimension, quality-based differentiation, scored surprisingly high with the lowest mean score recorded by BP 6 (M=6.30, SD = .831), which suggests that four and five-star hotel managers feel passion about the buying environments/atmospheres to elicit specific emotional responses from the customer. The highest mean score belongs to BP 5 (M=6.46, SD =.855), indicating that hotel managers should ensure that the promotion and service guarantees are transparent and communicative during pandemics. Concern for price differentiation that can respond flexibly to changing market conditions regardless of physical or online markets is another effective marketing strategy for attracting hotel guests planning a future stay BP 8 (M=6.32, SD =.879). Next, BP 7 (M=6.33, SD =.912), To maximize revenue, the hotel assigns products with varying levels of usefulness to distinct guest segments to influence their attitude toward future visits.

On the other hand, as one of the solutions to increase hotel occupancy, the hotel implements product enhancements based on a thorough evaluation of gaps in meeting customer expectations BP 3 (M=6.37, SD =.839). This may be due to the significance of brand positioning BP 4 (M=6.39, SD =.838), on which they slightly agreed, which ensures that the hotel stands out from the competition in the consumer's eyes. BP 1 (M=6.42, SD = .841) indicates that the hotel can implement stringent product quality control procedures. Lastly, item BP 2 (M=6.44, SD =.839) indicates that the hotel benchmarks against the best hotels to maintain quality.

Table 4.9

Descriptive Result for Brand Positioning

| Code | Item | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| BP 1 | The hotel executes strict product quality control techniques. | 6.42 | .841 |
| BP 2 | The hotel performs benchmarking among the best hotel to maintain its quality. | 6.44 | .839 |
| BP 3 | The hotel implements product improvements based on a detailed assessment of gaps in meeting customer expectations. | 6.37 | .839 |

| Code | Item | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| BP 4 | The hotel ensures the brand stands out from the competition in the eyes of a consumer. | 6.39 | .838 |
| BP 5 | The hotel ensures the promotion and service guarantee should be clear and communicative. | 6.46 | .855 |
| BP 6 | The hotel creates buying environments/atmospheres to elicit specific emotional responses from the buyer. | 6.30 | .831 |
| BP 7 | To maximize revenue, the hotel assigns products with varying levels of usefulness to distinct guest segments | 6.33 | .912 |
| BP 8 | Price differentiation can flexibly respond to changing market conditions regardless of physical or online markets | 6.32 | .879 |

Note.
*N*=325; Seven-point Likert scale: 1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree

The data in table 4.10 indicates that the mean scores for the brand positioning dimension range from 6.32 to 6.41, with quality-based differentiation having the highest mean score (M=6.41, SD =.762), followed by brand image-based differentiation (M=6.38, SD =.751) and price-based differentiation (M=6.32, SD =.837). Finally, based on the data, it is assumed that hotel managers slightly agree that brand positioning is crucial for understanding what the hotel's target audience desires. The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted how the hotel business operates, too. It can be challenging for organizations to know how to respond during these difficult times. With declining customer spending and economic uncertainty threatening to derail the economy, hotel owners and general managers may focus on protecting the bottom line. However, if the Hotel industry is to achieve long-term success, it must also ensure its brand response and positioning strategy are reflected in its actions.

Table 4.10

Descriptive Result for Dimension of Brand Positioning

| | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Quality based differentiation | 3.67 | 7.00 | 6.4133 | .76248 |
| Brand Image based differentiation | 4.00 | 7.00 | 6.3836 | .75122 |
| Price based differentiation | 3.50 | 7.00 | 6.3231 | .83717 |

Note.
*N*=325; Seven-point Likert scale: 1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree

### 4.4.4 Brand Performance

The next brand performance shows a slightly wide deviation between the items, with the lowest mean score recorded by Pf 1 (M=5.97, SD = 1.015) and the highest in Pf 3 (M=6.27, SD = .926). The item with the lowest score is item Pf 1 (M=5.97, SD = 1.015), indicating that hotel managers concur that the Average Daily Rate (ADR) is a crucial determinant of brand performance. The highest mean score is attained by Pf 3 (M=6.27, SD = .926), which shows that hotel managers slightly agree that the hotel's market share is vital in understanding brand performance. The second highest score belongs to item Pf 2 (M=6.14, SD = 1.000), in which the hotel's Revenue per Available Room (RevPAR) is a crucial determinant of brand performance. This result indicates that hotel managers believed RevPAR to be an important business performance metric that helps hoteliers measure their room revenue over time. Subsequently, hotel managers concurred that shareholder value is essential for evaluating the hotel's performance Pf 4 (M=6.09, SD = 1.023).

Table 4.11

Descriptive Result for Brand Performance

| Code | Item | Mean | Std. Deviation |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pf 1 | The hotel's Average Daily Rate (ADR) is a crucial determinant of brand performance. | 5.97 | 1.015 |
| Pf 2 | The hotel's Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR) is a crucial determinant of brand performance. | 6.14 | 1.000 |
| Pf 3 | The hotel's market share is vital in understanding brand performance. | 6.27 | .926 |
| Pf 4 | The shareholder's value is vital for the hotel to assess the hotel's performance | 6.09 | 1.023 |

Note.
*N*=325; Seven-point Likert scale: 1=strongly disagree; 7=strongly agree

## 4.5 Measurement Model

The measurement model is derived from the crisis management theories and brand studies that become the basis for developing a theoretical model. On top of that, the formulation of variables in the measurement model is carried out based on extensive literature reviews. However, to measurement the properties of the survey instrument, a Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) must be conducted to test the adequacy of the measurement model and the method for measuring latent variables (Byrne, 2016; Fan et al., 2016). In this study, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to examine the data and model fitness and a structural equation model was employed to test the hypotheses (Udofia et al., 2021).

According to Hair et al. (2014), This section describes the evaluation of the measurement model. In addition, the goodness-of-fit indices indicate that the measurement model is a good fit for the data, so one item was eliminated to improve the measure. First, the survey instruments were evaluated to ensure their factor loadings were at least 0.60 or higher. Next, the average variance extracted (AVE) value was calculated to validate convergent validity. To ensure sufficient convergence, AVE should be greater than 0.50. Due to the inability of the AMOS software to perform the composite reliability and AVE calculations, the measurements were calculated manually. For this study, a factor analysis was conducted to identify the structure of independent variables that represented sub-dimensions of crisis management. The adopted item was slightly modified to accommodate the unit of analysis. After performing a factor analysis and reliability analysis, all items were retained.

## 4.6 Initial Measurement Model

The initial measurement model is determined based on the factor analysis and extensive literature review. The crisis management variable is identified as an exogenous construct (C). Factor analysis using Principal Component Analysis is performed on these variables, and items are well grouped as constructed during research instrumentation. However, only one endogenous construct, brand performance, is included in the model (F). Two mediators have been identified in the measurement model: brand reputation (R) and brand positioning (P). Measurement errors (*e*) are also assigned to each latent construct. Figure 4.1 depicts the model specification as previously mentioned.

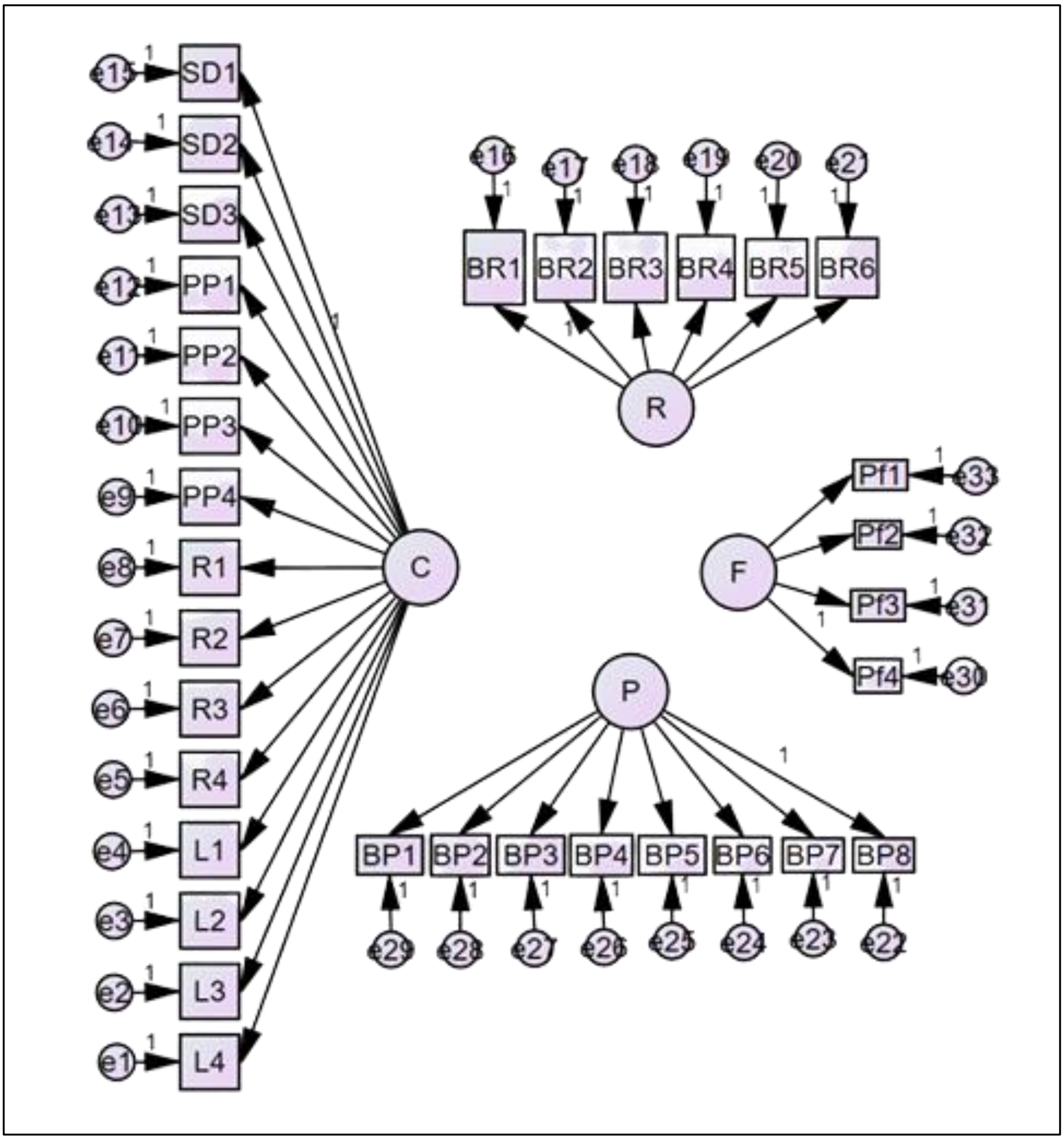



Figure 4.1 Initial Measurement Model

*Note. C-Crisis Management; R-Brand Reputation; P-Brand Performance; F-Brand Performance*

After constructing the initial measurement model, the degree of freedom is estimated. Kline (2016) suggested searching for overidentified models (*dfM* > 0) that can be utilized for analysis and modification. Table 4.12 provides a summary of the output of the degree of freedom for which the above model specification result is overidentified (df=495, p=.000). Furthermore, the value of the Parsimonious fit index *(χ2/df = 8.20)* indicates that the model requires additional modification.

Table 4.12

Model Specification (Degree of freedom)

| **Computation of degrees of freedom (default model)** | | |
|---|---|---|
| Number of distinct sample moments | : | 561 |
| Number of distinct parameters to be estimated | : | 66 |
| Degrees of freedom (561-72) | : | 495 |
| | | |
| **Result (Default model)** | | |
| Minimum was achieved | | |
| Chi-square = 2893.213 | | |
| Degrees of freedom = 495 | | |
| Probability level = .000 | | |

## 4.7 Model Identification

Model identification involves resolving the identification problem in the parameter's estimation. It is crucial to fix the parameter to achieve an acceptable loading factor, as Awang (2012) suggested. It begins with identifying the parameter for each dimension in the model and modifying the parameter based on the loading factor so that the highest loading factor is equivalent to '1'. According to Lomax and Schumacker (2010), each observed variable must have one loading factor that fixes to '1' to avoid scale indeterminacy.

### 4.7.1 Model Identification for Crisis Management

For the initial measurement model in crisis management, two values recorded more than the required acceptance level (RMSEA 0.133 > 0.08; $\chi$2/df 6.76> 5.0), and therefore modification is conducted as shown in Table 4.3. In the modified model (Table 4.4), the parameter is changed from signal detection (SD2) to learning (L2), while nine covariance arrows are established between measurement error of recovery (R3) and (R4) R: e10 <-->e11; MI: 84.157; preparation and prevention (PP2) and (PP3) R: e5 <-->e6; MI: 43.784; preparation and prevention (PP2) and learning (L2) R: e5 <-->e13; MI: 18.655; preparation and prevention (PP4) and recovery (2) R: e7 <-->e9; MI: 12.683; preparation and prevention (PP4) and leaning (L2) R: e7 <-->e12; MI: 19.096; leaning (L2) and (L3) R: e12 <-->e13; MI: 13.839; leaning (L3) and (L4) R: e13 <-->e14; MI: 40.742; leaning (L3) and (L5) R: e13 <-->e15; MI: 13.046; and leaning (L4) and (L5) R: e14 <-->e15; MI: 38.545 is established. Furthermore, all loading factors are well above the acceptance level ($\lambda > 0.5$) and therefore retained for further analysis. The goodness-of-fit indexes for the modified model are also good as compared to the initial model.

Table 4.13

Model Specification for Crisis Management (C)

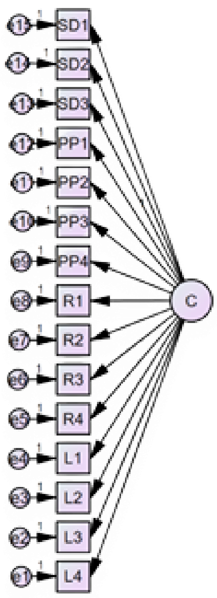
<table>
<tr><th>Initial measurement</th><th>After modification</th></tr>
<tr><td>



Figure 4.2 Initial Measurement Model Crisis Management

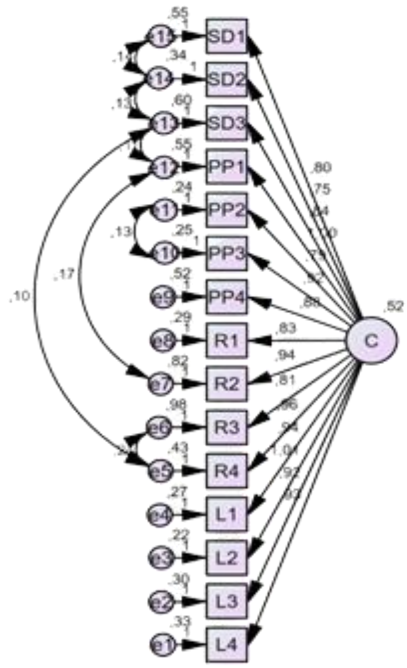
Note. C-Crisis Management; SD-Signal Detection; PP-Preparation & Prevention; R-Recovery; L-Learning
</td><td>



Figure 4.3 Modified Measurement Model Crisis Management

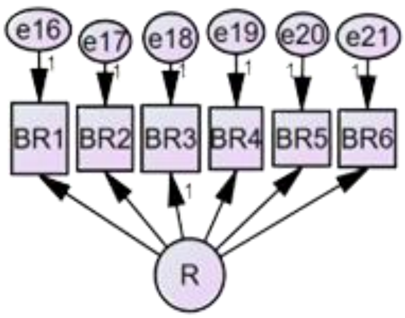
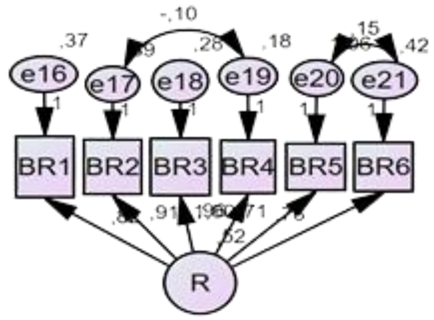
Note. C-Crisis Management; SD-Signal Detection; PP-Preparation & Prevention; R-Recovery; L-Learning
</td></tr>
<tr><td>Parameter (SD2)</td><td>Parameter (SD2 change to L2)<br>R: e10 <-->e11; MI: 84.157 ;<br>R: e5 <-->e6; MI: 43.784;<br>R: e13 <-->e14; MI: 40.742;<br>R: e14 <-->e15; MI: 38.545;<br>R: e7 <-->e9; MI: 12.683;<br>R: e7 <-->e12; MI: 19.096;<br>R: e5 <-->e13; MI: 18.655;<br>R: e12 <-->e13; MI: 13.839;<br>R: e13 <-->e15; MI: 13.046;</td></tr>
<tr><td>Fitness Indexes<br>$p$ = .000<br>RMSEA = .133<br>GFI = .788<br>AGFI = .717<br>CFI = .837<br>TLI = .810<br>NFI = .815<br>$\chi^2/df$ = 6.760</td><td>Fitness Indexes<br>$p$ = .000<br>RMSEA = .099<br>GFI = .876<br>AGFI = .820<br>CFI = .917<br>TLI = .896<br>NFI = .895<br>$\chi^2/df$ = 4.170</td></tr>
</table>

### 4.7.2 Model Identification for Brand Reputation

According to table 4.14, An identical result is observed in the initial measurement for brand reputation, where all indexes fell short of the level of acceptance (RMSEA above 0.10 and $\chi^2/df$ = *5.266* above Chisq/df< 5.0). No parameter modification indicates the fitness index model is still valid (BR3), but for better indexes, two covariance arrows are established between measurement error of brand reputation (BR2) and (BR4) R: e17 <-->e19; MI: 10.383), and measurement error of brand reputation (BR5) and (BR6) R: 20 <-->e21; M.I: 13.173). In addition, all loading factors *($\lambda$ > 0.5)* are acceptable and appropriate for further analysis.

Table 4.14

Model Identification for Brand Reputation (R)

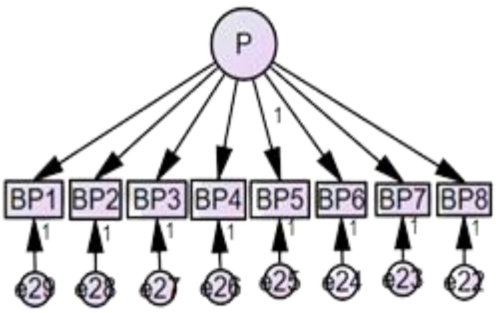
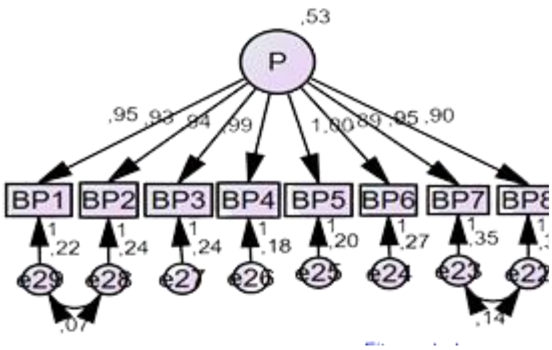
| **Initial measurement** | **After modification** |
|---|---|
| <br>Figure 4.4 Initial Measurement Model Brand Reputation<br>Initial Measurement Model Brand Reputation<br>*Note. R-Brand Reputation; BR1-4-Resources-based view; BR4-5-Focus on competitiveness* | <br>Figure 4.5 Modified Measurement Model Brand Reputation<br>Note. R-Brand Reputation; BR1-4-Resources-based view; BR4-5-Focus on competitiveness |
| *Parameter (BR3)* | *Parameter (BR3)*<br>*R: e20 <-->e21; MI: 13.173 ;*<br>*R: e17 <-->e19; MI: 10.383;* |
| Fitness Indexes<br>*p* = .000<br>RMSEA = .155<br>GFI = .956<br>AGFI = .897<br>CFI = .950<br>TLI = .917<br>NFI = .940<br>$\chi^2/df$ = *5.266* | Fitness Indexes<br>*p* = .019<br>RMSEA = .066<br>GFI = .984<br>AGFI = .953<br>CFI = .987<br>TLI = .973<br>NFI = .979<br>$\chi^2/df$ = 2.404 |

### 4.7.3 Model Identification for Brand Positioning

Similar to table 4.15, the initial measurement model for brand positioning illustrated poor fitness where two indexes are outside the level of acceptance (Table 4.9) which RMSEA still above 0.10 and $\chi^2/df > 5.0$. After the modified model, the parameter no changed still BP5 remains unchanged, whereas the covariance between measurement error of BP1 and BP2 (*R: e22 <-->e23; M.I: 54.490)* and BP7 and BP8 *(R: e28 <-->e29; MI: 21.476)* is established. This modification has improved all loading factors above the acceptable level *($\lambda$ > 0.5) or above 0.8.* The model's goodness-of-fit indices for Incremental Fit *(CFI > 0.93; TLI > 0.9; TLI > 0.9)* and Root Mean Square of Error Approximation *(RMSEA > 0.09)* and Parsimonious Fit (*$\chi^2/df > 5.0$)* are satisfactory. The modified model (Figure 4.10) is used in the measurement model.

Table 4.15

Model Identification for Brand Positioning (P)

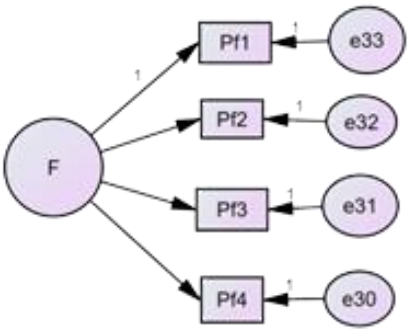
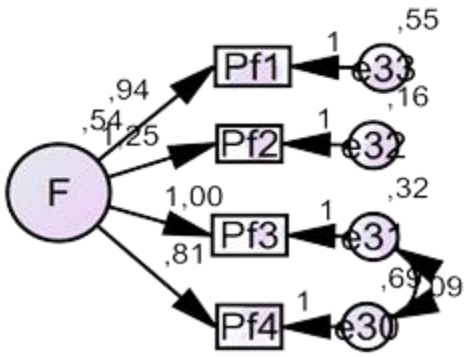
| **Initial measurement** | **After modification** |
|---|---|
| <br>Figure 4.6 Initial Measurement Model Brand Positioning<br>*Note. P-Brand Positioning; BP1-3- Quality based differentiation; BR25-27- Brand Image-based differentiation; BP28-29- Price base differentiation* | <br>Figure 4.7 Modified Measurement Model Brand Positioning<br>*Note. P-Brand Positioning; BP1-3- Quality based differentiation; BR25-27- Brand Image-based differentiation; BP28-29- Price base differentiation* |
| *Parameter (BP5)* | *Parameter (remain BP5)*<br>*R: e22 <-->e23; MI: 53.490 ;*<br>*R: e28 <-->e29; MI: 21.476;* |
| Fitness Indexes<br>*p* = .000<br>RMSEA = .155<br>GFI = .956<br>AGFI = .897<br>CFI = .950<br>TLI = .917<br>NFI = .940<br>$\chi^2/df = 5.266$ | Fitness Indexes<br>*p* = .000<br>RMSEA = .093<br>GFI = .951<br>AGFI = .903<br>CFI = .975<br>TLI = .961<br>NFI = .967<br>$\chi^2/df$ = 3.808 |

### 4.7.4 Model Identification for Brand Performance

As shown in Table 4.16, fitness indexes for the initial measurement model for satisfaction were out of acceptance level. Next, to modify, the parameter is moved from Pf2 to Pf3 while the covariance between measurement error of Pf1 and Pf2 (*R: e30 <-->e31; M.I: 0.055)* is established. This modification has improved the goodness-of-fit of the model and all loading factors are above acceptable levels *(λ > 0.5)* in general. The modified model's goodness-of-fit indices are comparable to the original model's.

Table 4.16

Model Identification for Brand Performance (F)

| **Initial measurement** | **After modification** |
|---|---|
| <br>Figure 4.8 Initial Measurement Model Brand Performance<br>*Note. F-Brand Performance* | <br>Figure 4.9 Modified Measurement Model Brand Performance<br>*Note. F-Brand Performance* |
| *Parameter (Pf2)* | *Parameter (Pf2 change to Pf3)*<br>*R: e30 <--> e31 4,101; MI: 0.055* |
| Fitness Indexes<br>*p* = .005<br>RMSEA = .116<br>GFI = .985<br>AGFI = .923<br>CFI = .984<br>TLI = .953<br>NFI = .981<br>$\chi^2/df$ = 5.365 | Fitness Indexes<br>*p* = .005<br>RMSEA = .094<br>GFI = .994<br>AGFI = .941<br>CFI = .995<br>TLI = .969<br>NFI = .993<br>$\chi^2/df$ = 3.839 |

## 4.8 Measurement Model

The correlation path between all constructs was established after a comprehensive examination of the initial model for each proposed framework construct. Figure 4.10 depicts the structural research model derived from the modified measurement model created in the previous step. In conclusion, there are five latent constructs, 33 measuring items, and measurement errors.

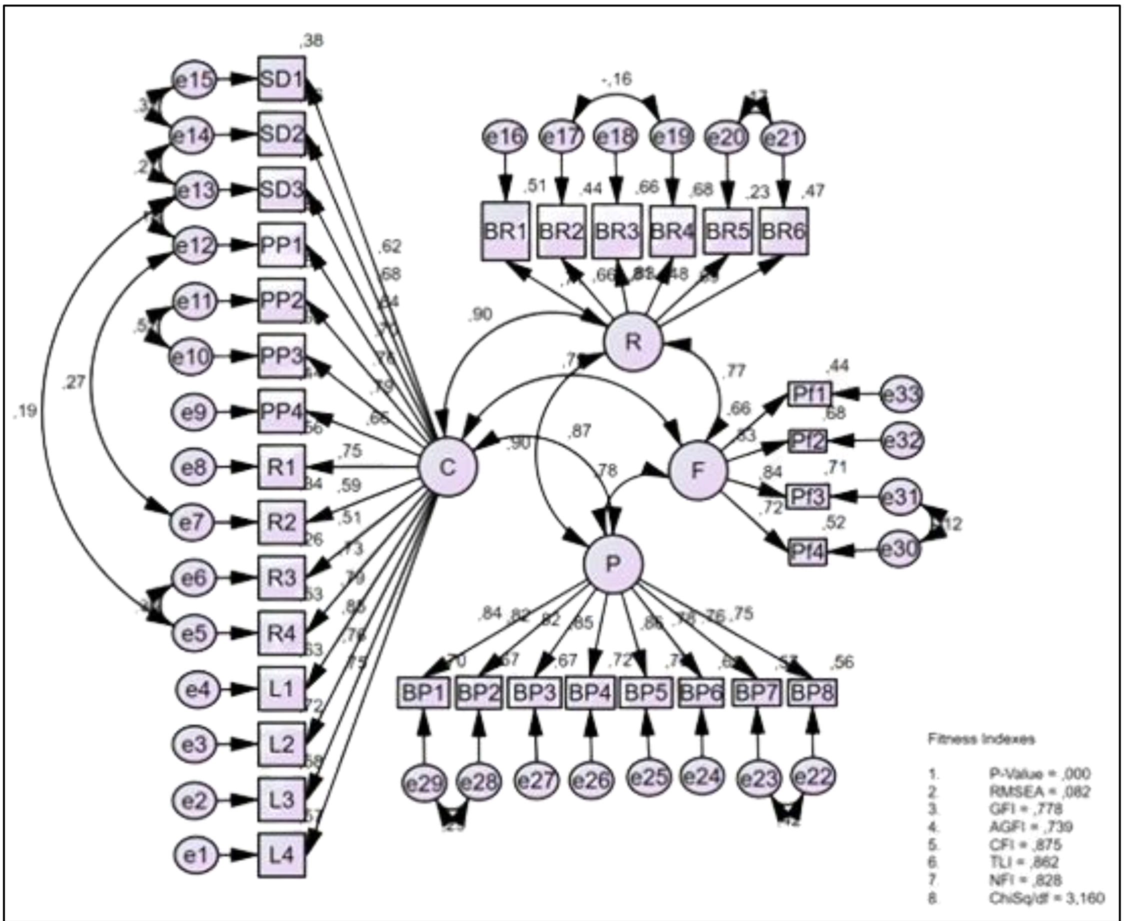



Figure 4.10 Measurement Model 1

Note.
C – Crisis Management; R – Brand Reputation; P – Brand Positioning; F – Brand Performance
Fitness Index: *p = .000; RMSEA = .082; GFI = .778; AGFI = .739; CFI = .875; TLI = .862;*
*NFI = .828;* $\chi^2/df$ *= 3.160 Chi-square = 1507.397 Degrees of freedom = 477 Probability level = .000*

The structural research model is overidentified *(df=477; n=325)* and significant *(p < 0.00)*, which is a relatively good indicator before further observation is performed. However, looking at the fitness indices, only one index is accepted ($\chi^2/df$ *3.160 = < 5.0)*, while others do not meet the thresholds *(*RMSEA < .08; *GFI < 0.9; AGFI < 0.9; CFI < 0.9; TLI < 0.9)* which indicates lack of incremental fit. Consequently, measurement model 1 is the modified measurement model for the following step.

Table 4.17

Fit Indices of Measurement Model 1

| Measures | Structural Model | Threshold Values |
|---|---|---|
| *p*-value | 0.000 | |
| RMSEA | 0.082 | Between 0.03 and 0.08 |
| GFI | 0.778 | > 0.9 |
| AGFI | 0.739 | > 0.9 |
| CFI | 0.875 | > 0.9 |
| TLI | 0.862 | > 0.9 |
| NFI | 0.828 | > 0.9 |
| $\chi^2/df$ | 3.160 | Less than 5 |

By looking at the correlation value in Figure 4.10, all factors are significant *(p<.000)*. However, with only three high values of correlations *(r= .897 > .85*) between crisis management (C) and brand reputation (R), brand reputation (R) and brand positioning (P) *(r= .902 > .85*), and the last crisis management (C) and brand positioning (P) *(r= .871 > .85*) . This model indicates lack of discriminant validity and high collinearity that leads to standard errors as suggested by Kenny (2016). Based on the result, another similar procedure is performed in the initial model measurement to re-specify the model. This step is in line with Kenny (2011), who suggested improving the model fit by (a) examining the factor loadings and error variances and (b) evaluating measures of standardized errors and modification indices.

Table 4.18

Improvement of Fit in Measurement Model 1

| **Model 1 (Deletion of item)** | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Item** | **Standardised Regression (Loading)** | **Reason** |
| SD1 - The hotel formulates and assesses potential disaster origin and probability scenarios during the current COVID-19 | .587 | Low loading factor (*λ < 0.6)* |
| R2- The hotel actively applies for financial incentives whenever offered by the government | .585 | |
| R3- The hotel performs a damage audit/monitoring system for the crisis recovery process | .509 | |
| BR5- Brand reputation is a barrier for rivals to act efficiently in the four- five-star hotel segment | .478 | |
| **Fitness Indexes** | | |
| *p = .000; RMSEA = .076; GFI = .824; AGFI = .781; CFI = .909; TLI = .894; NFI = .868;* $\chi^2/df$ *= 2.884* | | |

Several re-specification of the model is done to improve the model fit. As Kenny

(2011) suggested, a step-by-step re-specification is deployed to the structural research model. The first step is to look for the low loading factor (*$\lambda < 0.6$)* as suggested by Awang (2012). In model 1 (Table 4.18), four items, namely R2 (*$\lambda = 0.58$)*, R3 (*$\lambda = 0.50$)*, and BR5 (*$\lambda = 0.47$),* are deleted due to the low loading factor. Based on Ping (2009) suggested that dropping the item with the largest measurement error is the best solution to increase AVE rather than deleting and replacing cases or establishing covariance error. Fitness indexes value suggested that Model 1 and Model 2 are only good in parsimonious fit *($\chi^2/df < 5.0$)* but lacking other fitness criteria in particular absolute fit (RMSEA > 0.082; GFI < 0.9) and incremental fit (AGFI < 0.9; CFI < 0.9; TLI < 0.9; NFI < 0.9). Therefore, another re-specification needs to be conducted until acceptable goodness-of-fit is achieved.

Further re-specification is made to Model 3, where covariances between measurement errors are established, as Kenny (2011) suggested. He noted that alternatives for model fit might include establishing correlated errors that result in a more complex model. Furthermore, for the overidentified model *($\chi^2/df= 3.160 <5; p<.000$)* as observed in Model 1, establishing more covariances looks reasonable. All possible covariances between measurement errors are explored, and in the end, twenty-eight covariances between measurement errors are established as shown in Table 4.19.

Table 4.19

Improvement of Fit in Measurement Model 3

| **(Covariance between Measurement Error)** | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *No.* | *Standardized Residual Covariance (R)* | Modification Indices (M.I) | Par Change |
| *1* | *e13 <-->e14* | 39.461 | 0.157 |
| *2* | *e14 <-->e15* | 40.127 | 0.153 |
| *3* | *e22 <-->e23* | 54.784 | 0.145 |
| *4* | *e12 <-->e13* | 19.657 | 0.141 |
| *5* | *e23 <-->e33* | 26.503 | 0.135 |
| *6* | *e12 <-->e13* | 81.515 | 0.123 |
| *7* | *e13 <-->e17* | 15.124 | 0.117 |
| *8* | *e13 <-->e30* | 12.226 | 0.115 |
| *9* | *e13 <-->e33* | 11.322 | 0.113 |
| *10* | *e9 <-->e12* | 13.811 | 0.113 |
| *11* | *e13 <-->e15* | 12.285 | 0.11 |
| *12* | *e5 <-->e13* | 14.745 | 0.11 |
| *13* | *e12 <-->e14* | 14.200 | 0.092 |
| *14* | *e32 <-->e33* | 10.717 | 0.089 |
| *15* | *e1 <-->e2* | 18.659 | 0.087 |
| *16* | *e1 <-->e15* | 13.948 | 0.085 |
| *17* | *e5 <-->e12* | 9.070 | 0.079 |
| *18* | *e9 <-->e27* | 14.068 | 0.078 |
| *19* | *e4 <-->e30* | 10.955 | 0.078 |

| (Covariance between Measurement Error) | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| *No.* | *Standardized Residual Covariance (R)* | Modification Indices (M.I) | Par Change |
| *20* | *e24 <-->e30* | 10.045 | 0.073 |
| *21* | *e13 <-->e18* | 9.268 | 0.073 |
| *22* | *e15 <-->e18* | 9.775 | 0.072 |
| *23* | *e2 <-->e28* | 19.284 | 0.071 |
| *24* | *e17 <-->e22* | 9.082 | 0.07 |
| *25* | *e4 <-->e5* | 11.652 | 0.07 |
| *26* | *e1 <-->e12* | 11.123 | 0.077 |
| *27* | *e21 <-->e31* | 12.678 | 0.075 |
| *28* | *e13 <-->e32* | 10.832 | 0.073 |
| **(Deletion of item)** | | | |
| **Item** | | **Standardised Regression (Loading)** | **Reason** |
| SD1 - The hotel formulates and assesses potential disaster origin and probability scenarios during the current COVID-19. | | .587 | Low loading factor ($\lambda < 0.6$) |
| **Fitness Indexes** | | | |
| *p = .000; RMSEA = .074; GFI = .840; AGFI = .798; CFI = .919; TLI = .905; NFI = .880;* $\chi^2/df$ *= 2.760* | | | |

The measurement model must be free from redundant items that can be observed from Modification Indices (MI). Awang (2012) noted in the case of redundancy; the researcher could set the correlated pair as a “free parameter estimate”. To improve the model fit, after correlating twenty-eight covariances between measurement errors in Structural Measurement Model 3 the model showing factor covariances and errors of measurement the goodness of fit indices (RMSEA= .08, CFI, and TLI) is indicating a good fit but the resulting impact SD1 was eliminated because factor loading decreased ($\lambda = 0.587$). However, as a result of this step, only a slight improvement is witnessed in Model 3 (RMSEA = 0.074< 0.8; CFI = 0.915 > 0.9; TLI 0.901 > 0.9) as compared to Model 1 and Model 2. In RMSEA, the best fit is indicated by obtaining 0 values and the value below 0.05 are satisfactory and the value 0.08 or less is reasonable model 3 is selected as the modified measurement model to be used in the next step. The results of the improvement of measurement model fit are summarised in Table 4.20.

Table 4.20

Summary of Results from Improvement of Measurement Model Fit

| Measures | Structural Measurement Model 1 | Structural Measurement Model 2 | Structural Measurement Model 3 | Threshold Values |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| *p*-value | 0.000 | 0.000 | 0.000 | |
| RMSEA | 0.082 | 0.081 | 0.074 | Between 0.03 and 0.08 |
| GFI | 0.778 | 0.801 | 0.835 | > 0.9 |
| AGFI | 0.739 | 0.761 | 0.792 | > 0.9 |

| Measures | Structural Measurement Model 1 | Structural Measurement Model 2 | Structural Measurement Model 3 | Threshold Values |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| CFI | 0.875 | 0.892 | 0.915 | > 0.9 |
| TLI | 0.862 | 0.879 | 0.901 | > 0.9 |
| NFI | 0.828 | 0.851 | 0.875 | > 0.9 |
| $\chi^2/df$ | 3.160 | 3.152 | 2.769 | Less than 5 |

### 4.8.1 Modified Measurement Model

The modified measurement model as shown in Figure 4.11 is derived from three series of re-specification of the model that involves the deletion of items (Model 1, 2 & 3) and establishing covariances between measurement errors (Model 2). Several rules as suggested by Awang (2012), Kenny (2011), Kenny et al. (2015), and MacCallum et al. (1996) are applied before finalizing the measurement model. In short, three items in crisis management (SD1, R2, R3) and one item in brand reputation (BR5) are deleted mainly because of their low loading factor.

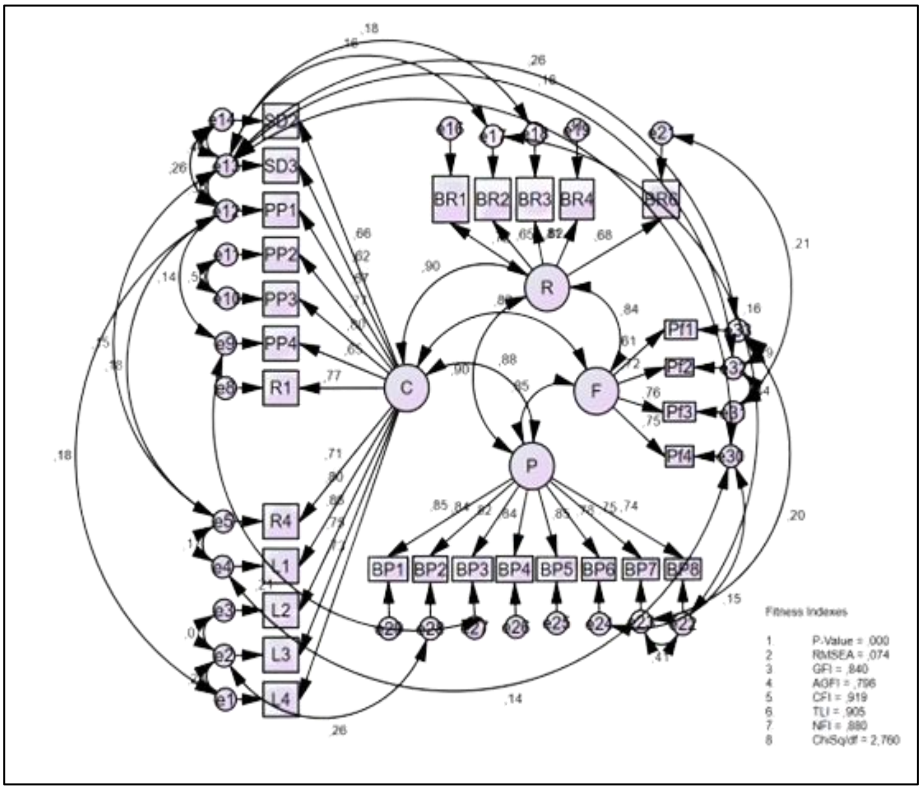



Figure 4.11 Modified Measurement Model

Note.
C – Crisis Management; R – Brand Reputation; P – Brand Positioning; F – Brand Performance
Fitness Index: *p = .000; RMSEA = .074; GFI = .840; AGFI = .798; CFI = .919; TLI = .905; NFI = .880;* $\chi^2/df$ *= 2.760*

From the modified measurement model, at least three items are retained for every construct, as Kenny (2011) suggested. Twenty-nine items are retained from the original 33 items. The measurement model is overidentified *(df=345; p<.01)* with acceptable goodness-of-fit (*RMSEA = .074; GFI = .840; AGFI = .798; CFI = .919; TLI = .905; NFI = .880;* $\chi^2/df$ *= 2.760).*

Table 4.21

Fit Indexes of Modified Measurement Model

| Measures | Structural Model | Threshold Values |
|---|---|---|
| *p*-value | 0.000 | |
| RMSEA | 0.074 | Between 0.03 and 0.08 |
| GFI | 0.840 | > 0.9 |
| AGFI | 0.798 | > 0.9 |
| CFI | 0.919 | > 0.9 |
| TLI | 0.905 | > 0.9 |
| NFI | 0.880 | > 0.9 |
| $\chi^2/df$ | 2.760 | Less than 5 |

*N= 325 samples*

## 4.9 Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability are two critical components needed before confirmatory factor analysis can be conducted in which strict requirements are set as suggested by Awang (2012), and Hair et al. (1998). For construct reliability, the critical ratios for all constructs are well above the required values (CR ≥ 0.6) and therefore retained items are reliable for measuring the constructs. Furthermore, items showed strong internal reliability (α > .70) which indicated the decision to retain items in a designated group is precise and strongly reliable.

For validity assessment, four constructs are merely above the cut-off point for the average variance extracted in particular crisis management *(AVE = .683),* brand reputation *(AVE = .545),* brand positioning *(AVE = .874),* and brand performance *(AVE = .588)*. Nevertheless, the measurement model has no issue in convergent validity since all constructs exceed the cut-off point *(AVE ≥ 0.5).* The validity and reliability values for all scales are summarized in table 4.22.

Table 4.22

Convergent Validity and Reliability Test

| Construct | Item | λ | α | AVE | CR |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Crisis Management | SD2 - The hotel must appoint a crisis during the COVID-19 management team (i.e., coordination and communication system. | .667 | .937 | .683 | .934 |
| | SD3 - The hotel identifies external organizations that can assist the hotel during the crisis COVID-19. | .614 | | | |
| | PP1 - The hotel establishes a crisis call center for hotel operations | .685 | | | |
| | PP2 - The hotel provides health risk education and training for hotel employees during COVID-19. | .764 | | | |
| | PP3 - The hotel has scheduled meetings to conduct a sham crisis management drill. | .798 | | | |
| | PP4 - The hotel carries out scheduled sanitization work in and around the property. | .649 | | | |
| | R1 - The hotel allocates funds for technological development to detect factors and harmful effects of the COVID-19 pandemic. | .759 | | | |
| | R4 - The hotel applies media communication in both online and traditional communication methods to broadcast and promote all efforts in making certain the hotel is safe and COVID-19-free. | .710 | | | |
| | L1 - The hotel's top management is responsible for evaluating crisis management and planning for future improvements. | .790 | | | |
| | L2 - The hotel's top management is responsible for providing training from other agencies in dealing with crises. | .855 | | | |
| | L3 - The hotel's top management believes fast action during the crisis will reduce the negative impacts. | .749 | | | |
| | L4 - The hotel provides the resources needed (i.e., materials, people, technology, and information) to prepare for anticipated crises. | .738 | | | |
| Brand Reputation | BR1 - Brand reputation increases the confidence level of product quality. | .722 | 0.855 | .545 | .856 |
| | BR2 - The hotel collaborates with new business partners to increase its reputation during COVID-19. | .642 | | | |
| | BR3 - Reputation will provide the hotel bargaining power in dealing with the trading partners. | .806 | | | |
| | BR4 - Reputation encourages greater brand loyalty. | .821 | | | |
| | BR6 - Brand reputation encourages the hotel to be innovative and creative. | .684 | | | |
| Brand Positioning | BP1 - The hotel executes strict product quality control techniques | .853 | .940 | .874 | .938 |
| | BP2 - The hotel performs benchmarking among the best hotel to maintain its quality. | .837 | | | |
| | BP3 - The hotel implements product improvements based on a detailed assessment of gaps in meeting customer expectations. | .819 | | | |
| | BP4 - The hotel ensures the brand stands out from the competition in the eyes of a consumer | .843 | | | |
| | BP5 - The hotel ensures the promotion and service guarantee should be clear and communicative. | .853 | | | |
| | BP6 - The hotel creates buying environments/ atmospheres to elicit specific emotional responses from the buyer. | .770 | | | |

| Construct | Item | $\lambda$ | α | AVE | CR |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | BP7 - To maximize revenue, the hotel assigns products with varying levels of usefulness to distinct guest segments. | .741 | | | |
| | BP8 - Price differentiation can flexibly respond to changing market conditions regardless of physical or online markets | .742 | | | |
| Brand Performance | Pf1 - The hotel's Average Daily Rate (ADR) is a crucial determinant of brand performance. | .623 | 0.839 | .558 | .833 |
| | Pf 2 -The hotel's Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR) is a crucial determinant of brand performance. | .804 | | | |
| | Pf3 - The hotel's market share is vital in understanding brand performance. | .842 | | | |
| | Pf4 - The shareholder's value is vital for the hotel to assess the hotel's performance | .700 | | | |

Apart from construct validity, discriminant validity is another issue that needs major attention, as suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981). They suggested that the squared correlation between constructs must not exceed the average variance extracted, as demonstrated in Table 4.23. A simple rule-of-thumb of the correlation value between construct *($r$ < .85)* predetermines the discriminant validity, as noted by Awang (2012).

Table 4.23

Discriminant Validity

| $Construct_1$ | | $Construct_2$ | $r$ | $r^2$ | $AVE_1$ | $AVE_2$ | Discriminant Validity |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| C | <--> | R | 0.453 | 0.205 | 0. 683 | 0.545 | Established |
| C | <--> | F | 0.433 | 0.187 | 0.683 | 0.558 | Established |
| R | <--> | F | 0.449 | 0.202 | 0.545 | 0.558 | Established |
| R | <--> | P | 0.473 | 0.224 | 0.545 | 0.874 | Established |
| C | <--> | P | 0.445 | 0.198 | 0.683 | 0.874 | Established |
| P | <--> | F | 0.463 | 0.214 | 0.874 | 0.558 | Established |

*Note.*
*C – Crisis Management; R – Brand Reputation; P – Brand Positioning; F – Brand Performance*

From the output (Table 4.22 & 4.23), it is observed that the items retained for the modified measurement model are reliable and valid for testing the structural research model in the subsequent section.

## 4.10 Structural Research Model

A structural research model can be tested only after thoroughly examining unidimensionality, validity, and reliability. The signal detection, preparation, prevention, damage containment, business recovery, and learning constructs of crisis management were examined to initiate the analysis of the structural research model.

While the author did not include damage containment/during a crisis, this study is an ongoing crisis brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic, so damage containment/during a crisis was omitted. Consequently, researchers are concentrating more on the recovery/post-pandemic period. Taking the cue from Pearson & Mitroff (1993) and Alkhawlani et al. (2016), the formative construct is preferred based on the popularity of these four latent constructs in crisis management studies.

Structural model evaluation is the second step of SEM analysis, that is, path analysis, which assesses all the proposed hypotheses. According to Hair et al. (2021), parameters with a t-value greater than or equal to 1.6445 are significant at the 5 percent level ($p$0.05), and those with a t-value of 2.33 are significant at the 1 percent level ($p$0.01). The critical values for significance levels of 1 percent (= 0.01) and 10 percent (= 0.10) probability of error are 2.576 and 1.645 (two-tailed test), respectively. Assuming a significance level of 5 percent, a t-value greater than 1.96 (two-tailed test) indicates that the indicator weight is statistically significant.

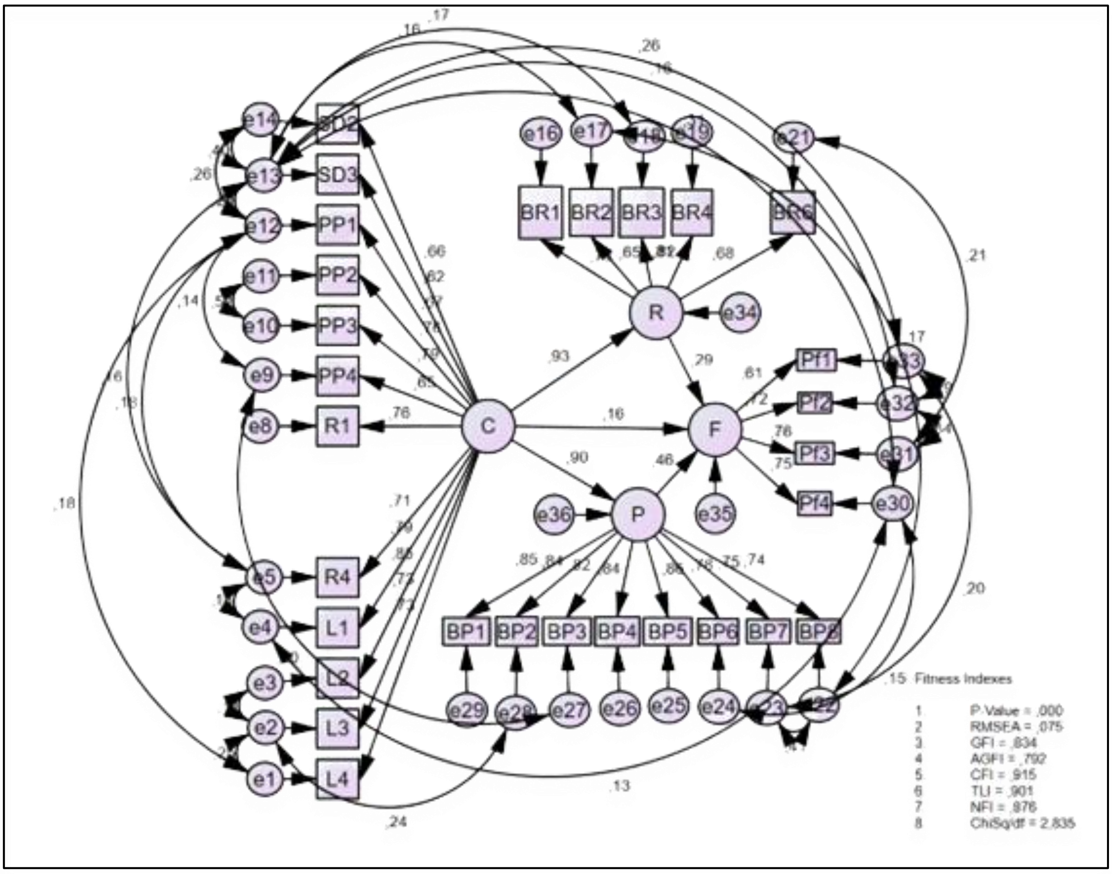



Figure 4.12 Structural Research Model

Above all, Coltman et al. (2008) noted that an empirical analysis should reflect the theoretical considerations in which they suggest checking for collinearity for the formative model. Overall, five causal paths are established in the structural research model, as shown in Figure 4.12.

Based on the structural research model, the unidimensionality is observed just by looking at the loading factor of all items ($\lambda > 0.6$). However, fitness indexes (Table 4.24) suggested that the model is within the required goodness-of-fit *(RMSEA = .075; CFI = .915; TLI = .901;* $\chi^2/df$ *= 2.835)* and acceptable range of model fit *(GFI = .834; AGFI = .792; NFI = .876)* which is satisfactory based on the model fit as recommended by Hu and Bentler (1999) and Kline (2005).

Table 4.24

Fit Indices of Structural Research Model

| **Measures** | **Structural Model** | **Threshold Values** |
|---|---|---|
| *p*-value | 0.000 | |
| RMSEA | 0.075 | Between 0.03 and 0.08 |
| GFI | 0..834 | > 0.9 |
| AGFI | 0.792 | > 0.9 |
| CFI | 0.915 | > 0.9 |
| TLI | 0.901 | > 0.9 |
| NFI | 0.876 | > 0.9 |
| $\chi^2/df$ | 2.835 | Less than 5 |

The summary of structural paths in the hypothesized model is shown in table 4.25. Each path is assessed based on its standardized coefficient, critical ratio, and *p*-value. Only two of the five causal paths the structural research model established are not supported. As shown in Table 4.25, Crisis management has a significant path with a brand reputation *(SE = .077, CR = 12.510, p < .01)* and brand positioning *(SE = .073, CR = 12.918, p < .01),* while no significant paths with brand performance *(SE = .235, CR =.692, p = .489 > .01).* Brand positioning, on the other hand, has significant paths with brand performance *(SE = .121, CR = 3.726, p < .01).* Lastly, brand reputation has no significant path with brand performance *(SE = .07, CR = -.746, p > .05).*

Based on the structural research model, causal paths representing two hypotheses ($H_1$ and $H_4$) are found not significant, and Byrne (2016) suggested removing non-significant paths to improve model fit when re-specifying the structural research model. Kenny (2011), on the other hand, proposed more comprehensive methods because they consider the model's theoretically significant complexities and simplifications. He noted that examining theories provided a better justification and merited more attention than empirical testing for model fitting.

Table 4.25

Hypothesis Path for Structural Research Model

| Hypothesized Path | | | | Estimate | S.E. | C.R. | ***p*** | Hypothesis |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| $H_1$ | Crisis Management (C) | → | Brand Performance (F) | .163 | .235 | .692 | .489 | Not Supported |
| $H_2$ | Crisis Management (C) | → | Brand Reputation (R) | .966 | .077 | 12.510 | *** | Supported |
| $H_3$ | Crisis Management (C) | → | Brand Positioning (P) | .949 | .073 | 12.918 | *** | Supported |
| $H_4$ | Brand Reputation (R) | → | Brand Performance (F) | .283 | .179 | 1.585 | .113 | Not Supported |
| $H_5$ | Brand Positioning (P) | → | Brand Performance (F) | .450 | .121 | 3.726 | *** | Supported |

Note. ***Significant at p<0.01; **Significant at p<0.05

Next, following Kenny's recommendation (2011), one causal path (C --> F) is eliminated from the original structural research models (Figure 4.13). One hypothesis, H1, is eliminated to improve model fit.

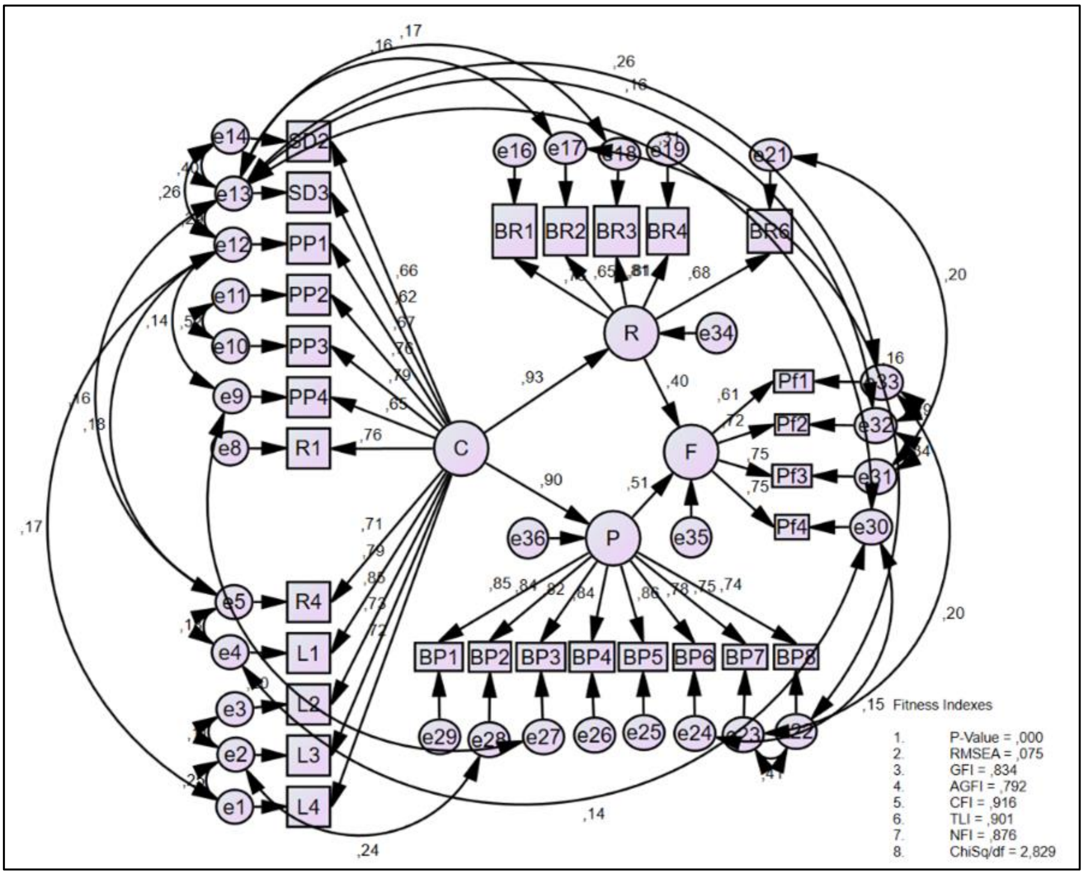



Figure 4.13 Modified Structural Research Model

Consequently, fitness indexes (Table 4.26) demonstrated a higher level of goodness-of-fit than the initial structural research model. Five indexes are within the required level *(RMSEA = .075; CFI = .916; TLI = .901; $\chi^2/df$ = 2.829)* compared to four in the initial structural research model. The fitness indexes showed absolute fit, incremental fit, and parsimonious fit, as Hu and Bentler (1999) and Kline (2005) recommended.

Table 4.26

Fit Indices of Modified Structural Research Model

| **Measures** | **Structural Model** | **Threshold Values** |
|---|---|---|
| *p*-value | 0.000 | |
| RMSEA | 0.075 | Between 0.03 and 0.08 |
| GFI | 0..834 | > 0.9 |
| AGFI | 0.792 | > 0.9 |
| CFI | 0.916 | > 0.9 |
| TLI | 0.901 | > 0.9 |
| NFI | 0.876 | > 0.9 |
| $\chi^2/df$ | 2.829 | Less than 5 |

The regression weights of the modified structural research model were shown in the table (Table 4.27) after removing non-significant paths to improve model fit (Figure 4.13). All modified retained causal paths between crisis management and brand reputation are significant (SE =.077, CR = 12.524, $p < 0.01$). Crisis management is significant with brand positioning (SE =.073, CR = 12.930, $p< 0.01$). Next, brand reputation is significant with brand performance (SE = .097, CR = 4.083, $p < .01$); and brand positioning is significant with brand performance (SE = .095, CR = 5.171, $p < .01$), thus H1 is not supported. These findings indicate that crisis management has no direct impact on the brand performance of Indonesian hotels but must be mediated by brand reputation and brand positioning.

Table 4.27

Hypothesis Path for Modified Structural Research Model

| Hypothesized Path | | | | Estimate | S.E. | C.R. | *P* | Hypothesis |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| $H_2$ | Crisis Management (C) | → | Brand Reputation (R) | .966 | .077 | 12.524 | *** | Supported |
| $H_3$ | Crisis Management (C) | → | Brand Positioning (P) | .950 | .073 | 12.930 | *** | Supported |
| $H_4$ | Brand Reputation (R) | → | Brand Performance (F) | .397 | .097 | 4.083 | *** | Supported |
| $H_5$ | Brand Positioning (P) | → | Brand Performance (F) | .493 | .095 | 5.171 | *** | Supported |

Note. ***Significant at p<0.01; **Significant at p<0.05

## 4.11 Path Analysis for Mediation Effect

Initially, two mediating effects ($H_6$, $H_7$) were established based on literature reviews. The process began with (a) computing the average value for each construct and (b) renaming the average value as the new target variable. As shown in Figure 4.14, there are four target variables, specifically crisis management (C), brand reputation (R), brand positioning (P), and brand performance (F) for the path analysis. The path analysis examines the direct effect of the path *an* (*IV* --> *M*), path *b* (*M* --> *DV*), and path *c* (*IV* --> *DV*).

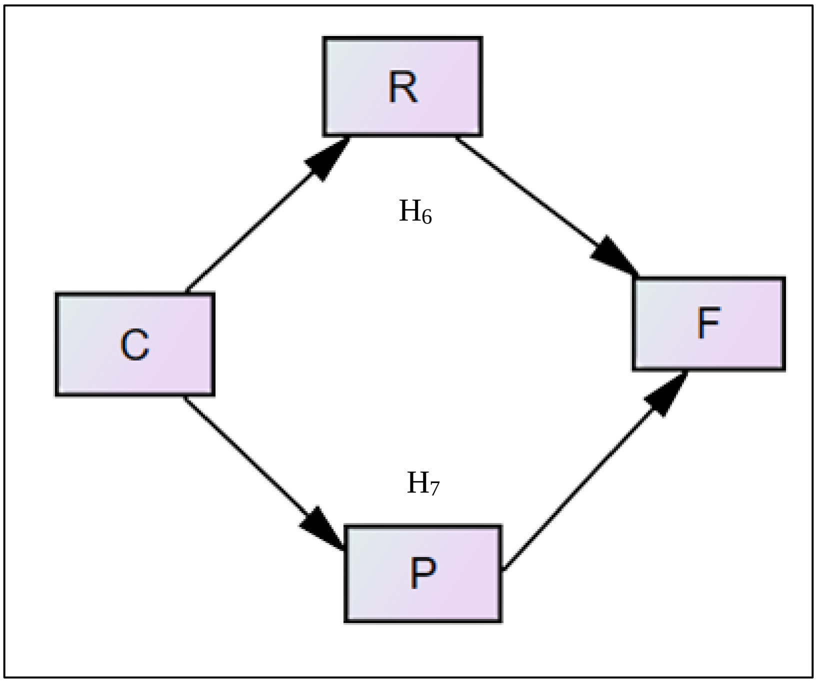


Figure 4.14 Path Analysis

Note:

*C – Crisis Management; R – Brand Reputation; P – Brand Positioning; F – Brand Performance*
*$H_6$ (X = Crisis Management, M = Brand Reputation, Y =Brand Performance);*
*$H_7$ (X = Crisis Management, M = Brand Positioning, Y =Brand Performance)*

Consequently, the path analysis must consider the causal paths as established in the structural research model (Figure 4.14). As mentioned by Baron and Kenny (1986), *X* and *Y* can only be analyzed if path *c* (IV → DV) has a significant effect otherwise discontinued the analysis. In this case, two identified non-significant paths *c* ($H_1$, $H_4$) need no mediation analysis. This rule, in turn, stopped the mediation analysis for two mediating paths ($H_6$, $H_7$). Conversely, Hayes (2013), and Shrout and Bolger (2002) disagreed with this belief and stressed that it is appropriate to continue the mediation analysis even if the direct effect of path *c* is not significant. The analysis can be conducted by examining the total effect using additional tools like bootstrapping (MacKinnon et al., 2004) and a Monte Carlo simulation study (Preacher & Selig, 2012). However, the result of the mediation when path *c* is insignificant is classified as inconsistent mediation where the mediator acts as a suppressor variable and most likely leads to a bigger direct effect size than the total effect size (Kenny, 2016; MacKinnon et al., 2007). Therefore, only significant path *c* is accepted for the mediation analysis. These ensure that only conclusive statements through proper empirical analysis are made for the final structural research model.

Table 4.28

Mediation Effects of Brand Reputation on the Relationship between Crisis Management and Brand Performance

| **Effect** | ***β*** |
|---|---|
| Total *(c')* | .69*** |
| Direct *(c)* | .38*** |
| Indirect (mediation) | .31*** |
| *X-->M (a)* | .81*** |
| *M-->Y (b)* | .38*** |

Note. ****p<.01, **p<.05, df=325, X-Crisis Management, M-Brand Reputation, Y-Brand Performance*

The first mediation analysis is conducted on the brand reputation that played one mediation role in the present study ($H_6$). The first mediating effect for satisfaction (Table 7.38) showed that brand reputation ($M = R$) mediated the relationship between crisis management ($X = C$) and brand performance ($Y = F$). The indirect effect ($\beta$=.22) showed that the effect of mediation is significant ($p$<.01) and positive toward crisis management and brand performance. Furthermore, crisis management ($\beta$=.81, $t$(325), $p$<.01) is positively associated with brand reputation, similar to satisfaction with a brand reputation ($\beta$=.38, $t$(325), $p$<.01). It is worth noting that the direct effect ($\beta$=.38) indicated mediation ($p$<.01) is observed for the brand reputation and brand performance relationship. Hence, $H_6$ is accepted.

Table 4.29

Mediation Effects of Brand Positioning on the Relationship between Crisis Management and Brand Performance

| **Effect** | ***β*** |
|---|---|
| Standardized Total Effects *(c')* | .69*** |
| Direct *(c)* | .31*** |
| Indirect (mediation) | .38*** |
| *X-->M (a)* | .80*** |
| *M-->Y (b)* | .47*** |

Note. ****p<.01, **p<.05, df=325, X-Crisis Management, M-Brand Positioning, Y-Brand Performance*

Next, the mediating effect is analyzed between brand positioning *($M = P$)*, crisis management *(X = C)*, and brand performance *(Y = F)*. The result indicated that a positive and significant ($p$<.01) relationship is observed for the indirect effect of brand positioning ($\beta$=.38,) toward crisis management and brand performance relationship. Brand positioning has a moderate positive association with crisis management ($\beta$=.80, $t$(325), $p$<.01) while brand positioning has a high positive association with brand performance ($\beta$=.47, $t$(325), $p$<.01). The result of the direct effect ($\beta$=-.31,) indicated mediation ($p$>.05) occurred between crisis management toward brand performance relationship, thus, $H_7$ is accepted. The following table (Table 4.30) summarizes the mediation test for the identified path based on the suggestion by Baron and Kenny (1986).

Table 4.30

Summary of the Mediation Test

| Hypothesized Path | | Total Effect $\beta$ c' | Direct Effect $\beta$ c | Indirect Effect $\beta$ | Hypothesis |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| $H_6$ | Crisis Management → Brand Reputation → Brand Performance | .69*** | .38*** | .31*** | Supported |
| $H_7$ | Crisis Management → Brand Positioning → Brand Performance | .69*** | -.31*** | .38*** | Supported |

Note. ****p<.01, **p<.05, df=325*

## 4.12 Summary of Path Analysis

After thoroughly examining the measurement model, structural research model, and mediation analysis, the finding of the path analysis is summarized in Table 4.31. This table serves as the key input for presenting the conclusion in the next chapter. Overall, there are seven hypothesized paths proposed in the study based on the extensive literature search. Out of 7 hypotheses, one hypothesis is rejected ($H_1$) based on the outputs of the goodness-of-fit indexes and literature evaluation. Fitness indexes serve as the key to rejecting hypotheses, but theories examination are also considered before making the final judgment, as proposed by Kenny (2011).

From the table, it is found that hypotheses for crisis management have significant relationships with brand reputation ($H_2$) and brand positioning ($H_3$) but are not significant with brand performance ($H_1$). Moreover, brand reputation is significant with brand performance ($H_4$). The last causal path, brand positioning to brand performance ($H_5$), is also significant. For the mediating effect, two hypotheses ($H_6$, $H_7$) are proposed from the literature reviews and then examined based on the suggestion by Hayes (2013) and Shrout and Bolger (2002). Two mediation paths are supported based on the indirect effect towards independent and dependent variable relationships.

Table 4.31

Summary of Path Analysis

| **Hypothesized Path** | | **Hypothesis** |
|---|---|---|
| $H_1$ | Crisis Management → Brand Performance | Not Supported |
| $H_2$ | Crisis Management → Brand Reputation | Supported |
| $H_3$ | Crisis Management → Brand Positioning | Supported |
| $H_4$ | Brand Reputation → Brand Performance | Supported |
| $H_5$ | Brand Reputation → Brand Performance | Supported |
| $H_6$ | Crisis Management → Brand Reputation → Brand Performance | Supported |
| $H_7$ | Crisis Management → Brand Positioning → Brand Performance | Supported |

# CHAPTER 5
# FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION, AND RECOMMENDATION

## 5.1 Preamble

This chapter summarizes the findings meaningfully that answered the research questions outlined in the first chapter. The researcher must validate the findings with the research questions to ensure the study's objectives are accomplished. The findings are also validated to ensure consistency with the previous findings. Next, recommendations are made, considering the study's limitations. Finally, the conclusion is presented to wrap up the study.

## 5.2 Final Model

To begin this chapter, the final model (Figure 5.1) is presented straightforwardly, excluding latent variables and measurement errors. All significant paths retained in the modified structural research models are displayed in solid lines, while non-significant paths are displayed in dash forms. Beta weight is also displayed along the path for detailing the size of the effect between *X* and *Y*. Most importantly, the effect of *M* towards the relationship between *X* and *Y* is also presented through beta weight and *p*-value. The mediating effect is the quintessence of the model and powerful analysis that became the main contribution to the new knowledge body. Furthermore, the final model is presented in a way the relevant stakeholders easily understand to ensure they gauge the effect of predictor variables on outcome variables. As a result, the final effect on brand performance had been justifiable as the primary goal for every profit-motive firm.

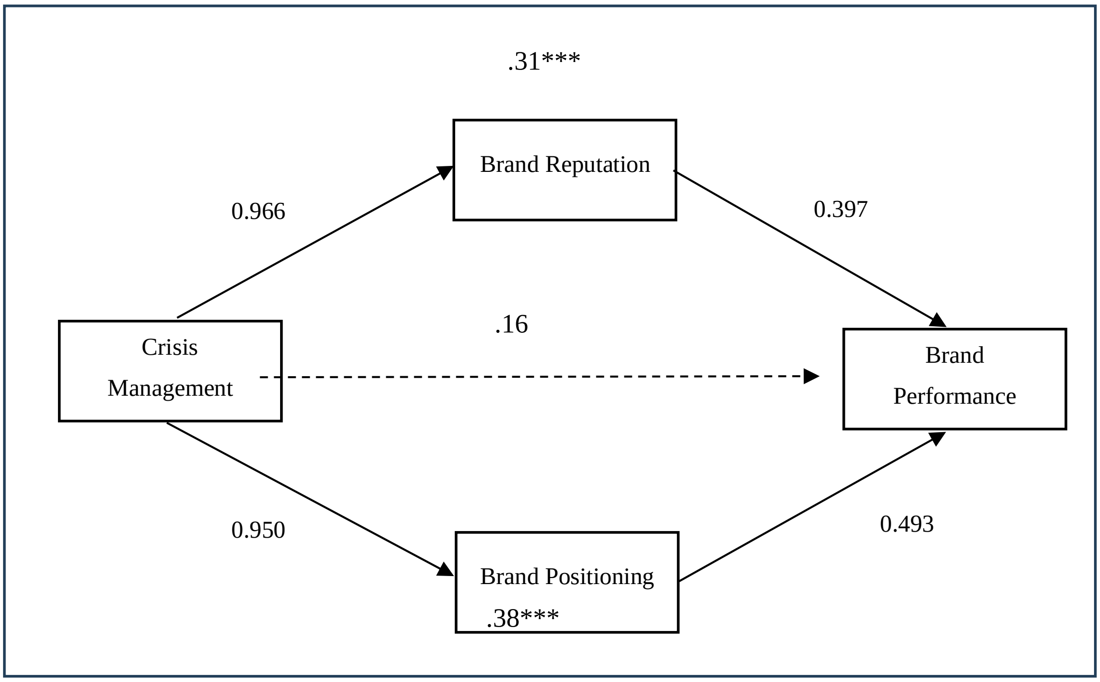



Figure 5.1 Final Model

Note: In the interest of clarity, errors of measurement are not included.
Indicator: ⟶ Significant path; - - → Non significant path;
Overall model fit: RMSEA = .075; GFI = .834; AGFI = .792; CFI = .916; TLI = .901; NFI = .876; $\chi^2$/df = 2.829

Table 5.1

Summary of the Mediation Test

| Hypothesized Path | | Total Effect *β c'* | Direct Effect *β c* | Indirect Effect *β* | Hypothesis |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| $H_6$ | Crisis Management → Brand Reputation → Brand Performance | .69*** | .38*** | .31*** | Supported |
| $H_7$ | Crisis Management → Brand Positioning → Brand Performance | .69*** | -.31*** | .38*** | Supported |

Note. ****p<.01, **p<.05, df=325*

## 5.3 Recapitulation of The Research Question

As mentioned in the first chapter, crisis management is essential for companies to maintain brand reputation, positioning, and brand performance. On the other hand, crisis management has become a crucial component of modern business, as it can occur in any global industry, including tourism and hospitality. The key to crisis management for a company is to act proactively rather than reactively, in which a business is prepared to face a crisis, although it is impossible to prepare for a crisis in its entirety because it is an unpredictable event (Hartmann, 2011).

In this study, crisis management comprises four main elements: signal detection, preparation and prevention, recovery, and learning, which indirectly carry the business traits. As discussed in the literature, crisis management is progressing rapidly in hospitality-related brand studies. This study aims to shed light on the connection between crisis management and brand performance, which is especially important for four- and five-star hotels. Furthermore, few studies are currently conceptualizing crisis management from the interlinking point of view amid various industry challenges. On top of that, the injection of two mediation effects in the theoretical model creates a dominant element to survive the stiff competition not only from the same segment but also from the new segments in the era of technological postmodernism. From the academic standpoint, the element of knowledge contribution, in particular, modeling and describing the phenomenon, remains persuasive; thus, the present study sought to answer the following research question (RQ):

*RQ1:* *What is the effect of crisis management initiatives on the brand performance of up-scale hotels in the post-COVID-19 crisis?*

*RQ2:* *What is the effect of crisis management initiatives on the brand reputation and brand positioning of the up-scale hotels in the post-COVID-19 crisis?*

*RQ3:* *What effect do brand reputation and positioning have on brand performance in an up-scale hotel brand?*

*RQ4:* *What are the mediating effect of brand reputation and brand positioning in the crisis management–brand performance framework?*

Taking crisis management and brand performance as the core of the framework, the direct effect and mediating effect of two outcome variables identified in the study add complexity and novelty to the understanding, which may assist hotel managers in mitigating the effects of this brand crisis. The empirical findings presented in this chapter are then compared with the previous findings, thus becoming the basis for the study's recommendation and conclusion.

## 5.4 Crisis Management As A Unidimensional Approach

Crisis management has been identified as a means of under conditions of uncertainty advantage. The crisis management proposed by Mitroff (1988) categorized crises based on two fundamental parameters: 1) the origin of the crisis and 2) whether technical or human/organizational causes are primarily responsible for it. Mitroff (1988) notes in his approach that businesses could not only begin to ensure themselves with basic coverage across various crises but could also add a significant justification component to their crisis management programs. Even though organisations recognize the likelihood of crisis occurrence, numerous studies have revealed that few have preparedness or a plan to deal with them.

Nevertheless, this need carries increasing importance when brand crisis enables managers to perceive not only where they should allocate resources when designing and adopting a new service but also to design the interlinking of services best able to achieve the desired results under uncertainty during the COVID-19 pandemic. Coombs (2007) details how a brand responds to a specific crisis and influences how consumers perceive that brand. Accordingly, Israeli and Reichel (2003) and Lai and Wong (2020) were the first to examine how crisis management methods were used and how important they were in the Israeli hotel industry. The results show what kinds of practices the managers think are important and what kinds of practices they use during a crisis in the industry.

In this study, crisis management used the dimensions and items proposed by Mitroff et al.(1987), Fink (1986), and Alkhawlani et al. (2016). This model comprises four crisis stages: crisis signal detection, preparation and prevention, recovery, and learning. However, the shift from using multiple regression methods to modeling structural equations has made re-examining empirical findings from one-dimensional studies interesting. This study found that crisis management has a strong internal reliability of more than 0.9 and an average variant of more than 0.5, indicating that the decision to retain items or unidimensional items in a designated group is precise and strongly reliable. Apart from that, only three of the fifteen items in crisis management were taken out to make the model fit better.

Hotel managers have responded to this crisis during its initial and pandemic phases. The findings indicate that hotels with a more managerial orientation have implemented dynamic customer attraction strategies more proactively during the pandemic. This finding is consistent with the previous studies (Alpaslan & Mitroff, 2021; Çoban & Özel, 2022; Dobrowolski, 2020; Ivanov et al., 2020; Lai & Wong, 2020). This study examined how hotel managers respond to the post-COVID-19 pandemic and how their brands can be saved.

In contrast, denying responsibility and lacking corrective action or communication would hurt the brand (Dawar & Pillutla, 2000). Overall, the findings of this objective would aid in comprehending the uni-dimensional concept of crisis management concerning hotel brands. Furthermore, concerning different time variances, the following objectives, questions, and hypotheses were discussed to understand better how hotel managers perceived these two mediating variables concerning brand performance.

## 5.5 The Effect of Crisis Management on Brand Performance

As observed in the literature search, the relationship between crisis management as the independent variable and brand performance as the dependent variable is hugely popular in branding studies (Breier et al., 2021; Gogoi, 2021; Rezkalla, 2021; Venkatakrishnan, 2021). Some authors, including Wu et al. (2020) and Polemis (2021), argued that brand performance fluctuated during the COVID-19 pandemic due to the significant decline in room rates. As a probability or threat of damage, injury, liability, loss, or any other negative occurrence resulting from external or internal vulnerabilities, brand performance can be measured in financial or non-financial terms (Ahmad & Jamil, 2020; Mikušová & Horváthová, 2019).

Regarding the subject mentioned above, this study's first research question and hypothesis addressed the effects of crisis management initiatives on the brand performance of up-scale hotels in the post-COVID-19 crisis. Hypothesis 1 posits that crisis management significantly affects the up-scale hotel brand's performance during the post-COVID-19 pandemic. In the measurement model, the hypothesized ($H_1$) correlation between crisis management determinants and brand performance is not significant. Based on the findings of previous research (Farooq et al., 2021; Schürhoff, 2021), this study concludes that the signal detection, preparation and prevention, recovery, and learning processes of crisis management have no direct effect on brand performance. A crisis epidemic occurs when an unanticipated problem threatens the stability of a business or organisation. The hotel must evaluate the performance of the organisation during crises such as financial, organisational, technological, and natural disasters.

The findings of this study contradicted the prior research by (Eltamboly & Abdallah, 2022; Golubeva, 2021; Rezkalla, 2021; Vo-Thanh et al., 2020). They discovered that the COVID-19 pandemic crisis has an impact on performance. This result infers that a brand's performance that is not influenced by crisis management is unidimensional. No significant relationship between crisis management and brand performance is vital to justify the indirect effect of other mediating variables established in the study. Regarding the indirect effect, the study found that hotel managers believed that, from a profitability standpoint, brand performance measurement could assist organisations in evaluating the usefulness of strategies for mitigating the impact of crises and provide information on whether these strategies should be tailored.

Therefore, it can be stated that to meet the challenges posed by the pandemic, businesses around the globe had to respond quickly and decisively to achieve their revenue goals. Hotel managers should ensure the process of setting expectations, providing feedback, and addressing performance results. Subsequently, removing the direction of causality from the crisis management to the brand's performance proved to be a crucial step in developing a better model, thereby justifying the decision to reject the hypothesis.

## 5.6 The Effect of Crisis Management on Brand Reputation and Brand Positioning

The second research question investigated the effect of crisis management initiatives on brand reputation and brand positioning of the up-scale hotels in the post-COVID-19 crisis ($H_2$ and $H_3$), which has been further discussed below. Hypothesis 2 posits that crisis management significantly affects the up-scale hotel brand's reputation during the post-COVID-19 pandemic. The findings confirmed that all crisis management and brand reputation constructs occurred in the hotel industry as predicted. The result showed a positive significance and thus supported hypothesis 2 in this study. These findings are consistent with previous research that found a significant relationship between crisis management and brand reputation ($H_2$) (Bodeklint et al., 2017; Dwiedienawati et al., 2021). In light of the crises affecting the tourism industry, the hotel industry has experienced similar effects, as it is one of the primary pillars of the tourism industry. During the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, operational expenses were adjusted to meet the fluctuating demand, and a brand reputation assisted in regaining the trust of customers (Van Leeuwen Boomkamp & Vermolen, 2021).

Initialize the crisis brand situation if the issue, such as health risks, has the potential to negatively impact a substantial number of consumers or a subset of them (Aronczyk, 2020).

This study, however, disagreed with Coombs's (2007a) conclusion, believing that the priority in any crisis is to protect stakeholders from harm, not reputation. Verlegh et al. (2021) note the importance of brand reputation during times of crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic because it reduces anxiety and reinforces consumers' sense of identity. This result demonstrated that hotel managers were united in their desire to shield their brands from negative reviews regarding circumstances beyond their control. Reopening businesses face a new normal, and it is more important than ever to protect their brand reputation during this period to attract customers. As a result, they propose that increased levels of fear and anxiety during the COVID-19 pandemic are linked to increased brand relevance for consumers.

Next, hypothesis 3 posits that crisis management significantly affects the up-scale hotel brand's positioning during the post-COVID-19 pandemic. To answer the question and test the third hypothesis, this study used three subdimensions for brand positioning that were adapted from Beal & Lockamy (1999), Kintler & Remenova (2020), and Mirzai et al. (2016), Zehir et al. (2015). The Mitroff model's crisis stage has influenced these subdimensions. As hypothesized, the results proved that crisis management significantly influences brand positioning. This effect is consistent with recent research by Arabadzhyan et al. (2021) and Li and Wei (2016).

In other words, this study proved that hotel managers are more likely to use based differentiation to create and redesign brand positioning strategies to pique customers' interest (Fuchs & Diamantopoulos, 2010; Keller, 2013; Kotler & Armstrong, 2010). From the present study, high perceptions emphasize the product's quality as its key selling point. Hotels, for instance, adapt their products and marketing to the new normal era. In addition, hotel managers believed that brand image differentiation strategies included a cost leadership strategy, minimalized service variations, the expansion of marketing channels, and special promotions (price base differentiation). On the contrary, under low certainty, brand crisis evaluations are more difficult to revise when positioning was not aligned with the challenge, in which case brand positioning is a failure and businesses are unable to enjoy the benefits of brand positioning (Zhiwei, 2021).

It is also noticeable, brand positioning is the process of establishing this distinction in the minds of consumers (Zhiwei, 2021). As recommended by Li and Wei (2016), the role of brand positioning in brand crisis context studies needs to pay more attention to brand/corporate and consumer factors. Different types of compensation may be required for brands with different positioning, which may also impact trust recovery after a brand crisis because some customers or new customers can change while being expected to perceive organisation response strategies (Garrido-Moreno et al., 2021). Aside from that, studies have shown that brand reputation and brand positioning have a moderately positive relationship with crisis management.

## 5.7 The Effect of Brand Reputation and Brand Positioning on Brand Performance

The third research question focuses on the influence of brand reputation and positioning on the brand performance of an up-scale hotel brand. In response to this research question and objective, two hypotheses were developed. Hypothesis 4 proposed a causal relationship between brand reputation on brand performance. According to the initial structural research model and the four hypotheses, this study determined that brand reputation has a significant and positive relationship with brand performance ($H_4$). This is evidenced by hotel managers' actions based on a resource-based perspective and an emphasis on competitiveness significantly correlated with brand performance. However, retaining the causal path between brand reputation and brand performance proved decisive in increasing the model fit and produced a significant relationship. This finding, however, disputes the direct effect of brand reputation on brand performance, as found in Chaudhuri and Holbrook (2001), Casidy (2018), Foroudi (2018), and (Koh et al., 2009). In addition, O'Neill and Xiao (2006) suggest that brand reputation is one of the most important contributors to a property's profitability, along with net operating income and revenue per available room. Neville et al. (2005) explained that a significant impact on a company's reputation would result in a decline in performance.

Hypothesis ($H_5$) posits that the up-scale hotel's brand positioning significantly affects its brand performance during the post-COVID-19 pandemic. As stated in $H_5$, it is observed that there is a strong size of effect from brand positioning toward brand performance ($H_5$); thus, justify the actions to retain the causal path. The results confirmed that all items in brand positioning have strong internal reliability ($\alpha > .70$).

Based on these results, it can be deduced that hotel managers believe that brand positioning based on quality differentiation, brand image differentiation, and price differentiation is more effective at attracting new customers and has greater brand performance acceptance than broad brands. These results are in line with Holley et al. (2011), Olsen et al.(2022), and Plumeyer (2019).

This outcome recommends brand reputation based on quality-based differentiation, brand-image-based differentiation, and price-based differentiation. A differentiation strategy is when an organization attempts to differentiate itself from competitors by improving the quality of its products or services (Griffin, 2015). Porter (1985) demonstrated the relationship between firm performance and the benefits of pursuing a differentiation strategy, such as realizing higher incomes than rivals due to brand trust, product quality, and customer perception. According to Thompson et al. (2018), managers can differentiate based on value drivers by creating product features and performance attributes that appeal to a wide range of buyers; improving customer service or adding extra services; pursuing innovation and technological advances; pursuing continuous quality improvement; increasing marketing and brand-building activities; seeking high-quality inputs; and emphasizing human resource management. However, in both the short and long term, a company's performance can improve if it adopts a differentiation strategy (Islami et al., 2020). In the short run, this strategy generates revenue for the company thanks to the competitive advantage it enjoys thanks to its superior product or service compared to its rivals. There is long-term value for all industries in adopting a differentiation strategy.

Particularly during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, hotel managers must maintain brand image-based differentiation as a vital means of establishing and sustaining competitive advantage. This result is consistent with research conducted by Berry (2000) that if brand differentiation can shape brand image, then consumers will automatically choose and remember the brand so that it will automatically build a brand identity. A company's image doesn't automatically set it apart from its competitors. The brand has to stand for something, be recognizable to the target audience, and say something unique and different from the competition. According to the findings of a study conducted by Goyal (2018), most customers were concerned with the brand's image, followed by the product's configuration and price. Though prices do not influence users much, products should not be overpriced since consumers want value for money.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Hotel managers must simultaneously adjust brand positioning and maintain brand reputation. Customers will remember brands for genuine acts of kindness during a crisis. COVID-19 has caused significant changes in people's lifestyles and business strategies. The study emphasizes the importance of hotel managers in dealing with crises such as pandemics and the effects on consumer behaviour in the new normal era. This study indicated that hotel executives must revise their positioning strategies to retain and attract new customers. A distinct brand positioning will increase occupancy, repeat visits, service patronage, profitability, and relative resiliency during an industry downturn (Hu & Trivedi, 2020).

## 5.8 The Mediating Effect of Brand Reputation and Brand Positioning in The Crisis Management and Brand Performance Approach

The fourth research question deals with the mediating role of brand reputation. The objective was to determine the mediating impact of brand reputation on the relationship between crisis management and brand performance ($H_6$). Moreover, to determine the mediating impact of brand positioning on the relationship between crisis and brand performance ($H_7$). This would be independently discussed further.

Results of Hypothesis 6 found that brand reputation partially mediated the relationship between crisis management and brand performance. This finding indicated that brand reputation had both a direct and an indirect impact on brand performance. The indirect impact is through crisis management. The result implied that hotel managers maintaining a positive brand reputation increases customer loyalty or attract new customer, builds confidence in the market, and helps position as a leader in their area.

Hypothesis 7 ($H_7$) posits that the brand positioning of the up-scale hotel mediates the relationship between crisis management and brand performance during the post-COVID-19 pandemic. Based on that hypothesis, this study indicates that brand positioning, directly and indirectly, affects crisis management. This study determined that positive brand positioning is most advantageous in an uncertain environment, such as a COVID-19 pandemic crisis. The crisis management role in this study is crucial as it is the gateway that links brand reputation, brand positioning, and brand performance as other outcome variables. Even though brand reputation and brand positioning are highly valued in the marketing study, the positive effect on other determinants is somewhat irrelevant when employing the structural research model in the present investigation.

Before modifying the structural research model, the findings indicated that crisis management and brand reputation were crucial. Moreover, crisis management is crucial for brand positioning. The results indicated a significant relationship between crisis management and brand reputation and positioning, but no such relationship exists between crisis management and brand performance. Brand positioning, on the other hand, has significant ties to brand performance. Lastly, brand reputation has no significant relationship with brand performance. Therefore, ($H_1$) and ($H_4$) are not supported. These results indicate that crisis management has no direct effect on the brand performance of Indonesian hotels but must instead be mediated by brand reputation and brand positioning.

After modifying the structural research model, two mediating effects involving brand reputation and brand positioning were tested significantly as either independent or mediating variables. This study showed that brand reputation and brand positioning mediated the relationship between crisis management and brand performance. The indirect effect revealed that mediation has a significant (p.01) and positive effect on crisis management and brand performance. In terms of direct paths, crisis management was found to have an insignificant effect on brand performance, yet it significantly impacted brand reputation and/or brand positioning via an indirect path. The indirect relationship demonstrated that brand performance was not significantly related to leveraging the relationship with brand reputation.

Interestingly, only brand positioning remained significant as an independent or mediating variable before and after the structural research model modification. This analysis revealed that brand positioning is a crucial aspect of a company's strategy for establishing this distinction in the minds of consumers whose lifestyles are altering due to COVID-19. The findings are consistent with those of Fourati and Dammak (2021) and Kurcharska (2020), who deployed mediators to establish a link between crisis management and performance. Finally, the research demonstrated that brand reputation and brand positioning are interdependent or have a two-way relationship. In other words, both constructs influence each other, and the relationship between the two is crucial for hotels.

Overall, the study's findings further added that brand reputation and brand positioning had been significantly mediated between crisis management and brand performance. As mentioned by previous researchers, if a brand's brand performance is not performed, it will affect brand positioning and reputation, which supports the business stability of a brand (Bhandari et al., 2021; Breier et al., 2021; Hariyanto, 2018; Iyer et al., 2019; Maulani, 2021).

## 5.9 Implications of The Study

This study expands current crisis management and brand performance research from an academic, practical, or managerial perspective. The research findings were presented in a spectrum that has contributed to current literature regarding brand crisis management. Theoretical and methodological contributions guide the intellectual component, while the managerial or practical input is closely related to marketing, organizational crisis response, and hotel business management. This continuum has categorized all available crisis response strategies according to their level of intensity, allowing researchers and practitioners to track solutions more effectively. Due to the paucity of branding research in the hospitality industry during the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly in Indonesia's four- and five-star hotel industry, the findings of this study are timely and relevant to the industry. Furthermore, scholars and practitioners may benefit significantly from this research because they can distinguish between strategies and choose the appropriate response promptly. Consequently, the ramifications of both perspectives have been exhaustively explored in the following sections.

### 5.9.1 Theretical Implications

Our research adds significant value to the brand management literature and provides numerous theoretical contributions. Several potential relationships are preset and tested to confirm and dispute the existing body of knowledge through extensive reviews of theories in crisis management and branding studies. The lack of research on crisis management and brand performance as mediated by brand reputation and brand performance in the hotel industry during a pandemic presents a challenge to researchers. The challenges of crisis management influencing brand performance in a highly competitive industry during a pandemic are addressed in several ways by the findings of this study, which contribute to brand crisis management in the hotel industry.

Apart from the significant academic contribution, this study will benefit the practitioners with insights to help survive a crisis, create an advantage during slowgrowth recoveries, and thrive when the crisis is over, especially in the hotel industry. The process of learning from the hotel organization's crisis history should be expanded to include learning from stakeholder crisis history and documented in the hotel organization's most recent crisis management plan (Donthu & Gustafsson, 2020; Le & Phi, 2021; Musadad, 2020; Pavlatos et al., 2021). However, during a crisis caused by a pandemic, organizations try to admit their weaknesses and find a solution to help both their brands and stakeholders.

The underlying concept of crisis management is based on two fundamental crisis response theories, namely Attribution Theory (AT) by Weiner (1985) and Situational Crisis Communication Theory (SCCT) by Coombs and Holladay (1996). The current study adds to the body of the crisis management literature by Mitroff et al. (1987) on brand dimensions. The findings of this study proved the distinction of crisis management as unidimensional, namely signal detection, preparation and prevention, recovery, and learning process have significant indirect effects on brand performance. Situational crisis communication theory (SCCT) is the first theory to integrate crises and response strategies, arguing that the selection of a crisis response strategy depends on various factors. In this study, crisis as a unidimensional construct is derived from hypotheses based on research in corporate response strategy, organizational theory, organizational behavior, public relations, and corporate communication that create seamless cause-and-effect relationships. Numerous studies have examined the predefined relationship based on this concept, with most researchers allowing the empirical findings to determine whether or not to accept or reject the hypotheses. Incorporating both theoretical and empirical findings, on the other hand, produces a meaningful outcome that contributes to the expansion of the existing body of knowledge. In turn, justifying the result with both theoretical and empirical evidence will reduce potential debates regarding the study's key findings. Consequently, the outcome had been beneficial for the future development of hypotheses and a reliable source for cross-disciplinary comparisons.

The initial 15 crisis management items, six brand reputation items, eight brand positioning items, and four brand performance items were selected based on their applicability to the four- and five-star hotel industry. Pre-testing and cross-validation with industry experts are performed to ensure the suitability and dependability of these items. The final items are then reduced to four using a theory-driven, comprehensive analysis (one in signal detection, two in preparation and prevention, and one in brand reputation). This reduction will allow future researchers to adapt and test them against other outcome determinants when assessing the combined effects of crisis management on various outcome variables. It will benefit young academics who wish to apply an established framework to complete their studies while searching for novel approaches to knowledge production.

Next, this study adds knowledge of brand reputation and brand positioning as mediating variables. Notably, this study gave strong evidence for crisis management's direct and indirect effects on brand performance. One important empirical contribution that contradicts previous prevalent findings is that crisis implications do not directly affect brand performance. The evolution of brand performance theories renders this variable attractive for the foreseeable future. In the future, brand performance is anticipated to dominate the outcome determinants in branding studies. Including brand performance will lend credibility to the researchers, specifically in the form of increased citations. Hotel managers are frequently considered through other outcomes of interest that influence performance, such as organisational learning and brand evaluations. Therefore, the contribution of the findings is not limited to studies in the hotel industry. It can also expand theknowledge to the broad spectrum of crisis management and brand research. During economic downturns caused by the COVID-19 pandemic in the Indonesian hotel industry, hotel brands may be the most valuable to hotel properties, and certain brands can generate relatively high intangible asset values.

Lastly, a detailed step-by-step analysis of formative and second-order constructs is another recent trend in social science research that has been thoroughly reviewed before the method is used in the current study. Considering the underlying theories, the reflective construct of crisis management is debatable. The formative construct is more flexible regarding reliability and validity when strict rules are applied to the reflective construct. The structural research model in this study will promote more approaches in deploying formative constructs that proved foundational rather than consequence as commonly employed in the social science study. In the future, much more comprehensive and rigorous research will be required to provide more substantial evidence, as the replication of this study hoped to contribute to the resurgence and evolution of crisis management.

### 5.9.2 Practical/ Managerial Implications

This study's results have many important real-world implications, especially for the hotel industry, which needs to know more about its customers during a prolonged crisis like the COVID-19 pandemic. This framework serves as a starting point for developing a proper response strategy when a crisis arises due to the COVID-19 pandemic that is not covered by the organization's crisis management planning for brand reputation, brand positioning, and brand performance. Despite the abundance of crisis management tools in various disciplines, no measures are specifically designed for the four- and five-star hotels segment. During the COVID-19 pandemic, it has become impossible for some hotels to make substantial investments due to low occupancy. Investing in technology adoption that protects direct employee-to-guest interaction from virus exposure, which is time-consuming, expensive, and limited, is necessary.

According to research, the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has significantly impacted brand reputation, including international and domestic brands, due to fear and anxiety over the spread of the virus. The current study contributes to the practitioners' awareness of keeping employees and customers safe and healthy. In addition, updating health and safety procedures following standard safety or security management directives during a pandemic for hotel organizations to use in external communications to avoid increasing fear and false assumptions is essential (Le & Phi, 2021). During the crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, relatively few new brands competed in well-established markets to attract new customers.

Once the crisis is resolved, a reform business strategy is implemented, and brands offer some change or improvement (Cwalina & Falkowski, 2018). Labor costs may decrease to convince brands and attract customers during and after COVID-19 as operators flatten their structures and eliminate contract labour, job eliminations, salary reductions, and reduced-hour work weeks, allowing senior management to interact with guests. Implementing completely new protocols, such as hospital-grade sanitization, masks, thermometers, and religiously sanitizing and disinfecting, had been relatively costly compared to supply costs.

In crises where service providers may be uncertain, clear, prompt, and transparent communications are even more crucial for preserving brand reputation. According to the findings of this study, hotel managers should pay close attention to brand reputation when considering the effect of the pandemic on customer expectations

(Schürhoff, 2021). In addition to financial investment, developing a powerful brand requires time and possibly trial and error. The brand is a strategic investment that transcends a sequential approach. Developing a brand and identifying how consumers perceive the brand to be appropriate or connected to themselves so that consumers perceive the brand to have human-like features, thoughts, and personality traits (e.g., experiencing emotions such as working from a hotel or staycation) (Do & Nham, 2021; Hang et al., 2020; MacInnis & Folkes, 2017).

This study has been applied to the hotel industry and advises hotel managers to create new brand icons that adhere to a new standard operating procedure (new normal) due to its inescapable impact on the profitability and long-term success of the firm. Following Foroudi's (2018) findings, it is recommended that, during a crisis, managers make every effort to establish a positive corporate identity that is consistently communicated to the market. Consequently, the widespread application of brand positioning demonstrates its significance, utility, and applicability.

These hypotheses are supported by the fact that pursuing a competitive strategy of quality differentiation during the growth phase creates viable opportunities to attract current and potential customers during a period of crisis. Price strategy can also be implemented via product versioning-based differentiation, time-based differentiation, group-based differentiation, couponing and self-selection-based differentiation, and regional-based differentiation (Kintler & Remenova, 2020). Moreover, in the brand positioning strategy, the price strategy can be implemented through product versioning-based differentiation, time-based differentiation, group-based differentiation, couponing and self-selection-based differentiation, and regional-based differentiation. However, this study suggests that the differentiation in quality, image, and price can also be used as a competitive tool to improve brand positioning.

This study suggests to hotel managers that, in terms of brand performance, they should emphasise their brands' ability to attract more customers through their distribution channel strategies and corporate sales initiatives. This study illustrates several hotels based on consumer ratings of price preferences for brand-affiliated properties versus unaffiliated hotels and the benefits of hotel KPIs for unaffiliated hotels (Carvell et al., 2016). Hotel managers should review and communicate company policies regarding travel, payroll, meeting attendance, and holidays with their entire staff. Consider whether new policies, such as safety at work or working from home, are necessary. This is in line with O'Neill and Carlbäck (2011), who suggest hotel managers should improve planning, budgeting, and cash flow projections, but it will also help with financing because the operation will appear less risky to potential investors.

Next, the field of crisis caused by COVID-19 is still in its infancy, and the evolution of branding can be observed on a variety of topics (Foroudi, 2020; Mitroff et al., 1988), including identity, equity, and association, and perhaps a new brand category is forming; therefore, an Upscale hotel brand must be equipped with a solid foundation of what the brand can provide. However, the findings would serve as guidelines for Indonesia's four- and five-star hotel industry to be proactive, adaptable, and focused on maintaining a positive guest experience while addressing new weather concerns the storm and maintaining its brand reputation and positioning. Currently, the most effective method for boosting brand performance in the segment of four- and five-star hotels is to combine crisis management with an analysis of their combined impact. The way forward for the four- and five-star hotel industry is to create a strong brand based on this premise. However, the field of crisis caused by COVID-19 is still in its infancy.

This study would provide limited solutions to hotel practitioners and those involved in the tourism industry abroad who are also dealing with (pandemic-related) crises. Hotel managers can also select the best crisis management, brand reputation, and brand positioning practises for their organisation. Hotel operators who continue to expend effort to pay their employees during a crisis fully will strengthen their business and consumer engagement. Because it promotes trust, transparency will likely serve the interests of all parties involved, including the business's owner, management, employees, customers, and the general public. More broadly, our research could help hotel managers in emerging ASEAN countries.

This study is designed to fill the gap from the previous findings that different cultures and educational environments may impact leadership styles differently in crisis management response (Alkhawlani et al., 2016; Foroudi, 2020). However, the researcher successfully distributed the questionnaire using communication via the IHGMA Whatsapp group and permissions from the top management and dividing three Indonesian zones.

## 5.10 Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

Similar to other studies, this study has some limitations that must be addressed. Although hotel managers are considered decision-makers, the assessments can influence a stakeholder's or customer's mindset. This study selected the four- and five-star hotel industry as its context because the mandated shift to a restricted business model in the early days of the COVID-19 crisis allowed for examining the variables of interest in a crisis setting of unprecedented magnitude and severity. Thus, a four- and five-star hotel (categorized as an upscale one) is more suitable, complex, and well-organized than a three-star one, which has more services and facilities, though they are still limited. It would be interesting to suggest that future studies include the viewpoint of hotel managers from three-star hotels in Indonesia.

Second, This study is limited to Indonesia. Since the government of Indonesia determined that the pandemic period was still ongoing, the scope of this study was also constrained, due to which several hotels were still struggling and not as fit as before the pandemic. However, this has the advantage of revealing whether or not the brand strategy is being implemented effectively. As a result, it may be preferable to limit the respondents to those with a stable business. It is because their knowledge of managing crises and brands during pandemics would add better insight to the data analysis, especially regarding brand reputation and positioning evaluation and their subsequent effect. It would recommend future research to reconnect with them.

Third, while the primary focus of this study was crisis management for brands, the role of other types of brand reputation, brand positioning, and brand performance in a crisis setting warrants investigation. This study only discusses 4- and 5-star hotels concerning brand reputation, positioning, and performance during a crisis. Similarly, it could be argued that the types of brand performance investigated in this study do not require a comparable indicator to be financial or non-financial performance. s In the future, this research will also explain brand reputation, positioning, and performance in each star class. Furthermore, the "hotel industry" limitation appears to be one that should be addressed in a potential future study. It appears promising to broaden the research to the "hospitality industry," as this could result in a more diverse focus.

As stated previously, this study employed a quantitative cross-sectional approach; therefore, a longitudinal approach will cross-check the respondent's consistency in the future. Therefore, conducting additional research to investigate and identify ways to enhance this method would be crucial. During a pandemic, research techniques play a relatively minor role in the creation of new brands. Overall, it is hoped that this study will help researchers in the future improve their methods.

Lastly, from the theoretical perspective, adding a moderating variable like external or uncontrollable factors is recommended for future research. External factors such as innovativeness and technology, disruptive technologies, brand differentiation, and market orientation are the real challenges to the four-five-star hotel brand in post-pandemic lifestyles. In contrast, the model is currently purely operationally oriented. In a potential subsequent step, the customer perception element may be included. Consequently, the managerial relevance of applying the model may even be increased. This aspect of hotel size impact should be further explored. Therefore, adding these variables may contribute to new findings that will not only result in the formation of a new body of knowledge but will also be crucial for the future direction of the hotel industry in post-pandemic COVID-19.

## 5.11 Conclusion

The significance of crisis management in the four and five-star hotel segment is irrefutable during the COVID-19 pandemic. A strong hotel brand is not an achievement but an interlinkage of what the hotel brand offers and how the guest accepts the offer in uncertain situations. In this study, the author attempted to build a reflective factor model, whereas crisis management as a unidimensional stage sufficed for the other constructs. The crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has a high explanatory power, indicating that the mediating effects of the brand reputation and brand positioning components have a significant and positive relationship with brand performance in the upscale hotel industry in Indonesia.

Contrary to our expectation, the concept path model of crisis management leading directly to brand performance revealed no significant impact, nor did influencing brand reputation as mediation have any significant impact on brand performance as a dependent variable. This study found a significant and positive relationship between crisis management and brand performance due to brand reputation and positioning as mediating models. Lastly, the final model showed that the relationship in the crisis management-brand performance framework is rather straightforward to adopt by future researchers and industry practitioners. Overall, it is hoped that this study contributes to the education of those, directly and indirectly, involved, regardless of whether they work in the academic field.

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# APPENDICES

# APPENDIX 1

## Supporting Letter

Makassar, 25 Juli 2022

Nomor : 013/V/2022/SM-DPD/DPP IHGMA
Perihal : Surat Dukungan IHGMA

**Kepada Yth**
**Bpk. Agus Riyadi, SST.Par.,M.Sc., CHIA.,QCRO**
**PhD Candidate**
**Dosen Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata Trisakti**
di Tempat

Dengan Hormat,

Sehubungan dengan surat permohonan dukungan dari Sekolah Tinggi Pariwisata Trisakti tertanggal 11 Juli 2022 perihal permohonan surat dukungan penelitian terkait Crisis Management and Branding yaitu: **"EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT ON BRAND REPUTATION AND BRAND POSITIONING TOWARD PERFORMANCE OF THE STAR HOTEL BRAND IN COVID-19 CRISIS"** dalam rangka penyelesaian studi lanjut program Doktoral di Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management, Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia (UiTM), serta dukungan untuk membantu dalam penyebaran kuisioner dan masukan dari para anggota IHGMA yang akan dimulai pada 01 Agustus s.d 31 September 2022,

Sehubung dengan hal di atas, dapat kami sampaikan bahwa Indonesian Hotel General Manager Association mendukung sepenuhnya penyelenggaraan kajian penelitian tersebut. Penelitian ini sangat bermanfaat dan tepat guna mendukung aktivitas pelaku usaha Pariwisata khususnya dunia perhotelan di wilayah Indonesia sehingga menambah potensi pada industri bisnis. Harapan kami semoga kegiatan penelitian ini dapat terlaksana dengan lancar dan sukses.

Demikianlah surat dukungan ini kami sampaikan, besar harapan kami kegiatan penelitian ini dapat memberikan kontribusi dan manfaat.

(Indonesian Hotel General Manager Association)

**Dr. I Gede Arya Pering Arimbawa, SE.,M.Si.,CHA,CHIA**
President, Indonesian Hotel General Manager Association (IHGMA)

# APPENDIX 2

## Approval Letter from UiTM Research Ethics Committee

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UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

Pejabat
Timbalan Naib Canselor
(Penyelidikan dan Inovasi)

Reference : 600-TNCPI (5/1/6)
Our reference : REC/09/2022 (PG/MR/226)
Date : 21 September 2022

**Dr Mohd Raziff Jamaluddin**
**(Agus Riyadi – 2020729811)**
Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management
UiTM Campus Puncak Alam
42300 Bandar Puncak Alam
SELANGOR

Dear Dr Mohd Raziff,

**APPROVAL LETTER - UiTM RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE**

Thank you for submitting your research proposal to the Research Ethics Committee (REC). After considering your application, the Committee approved your proposal titled "Examining the Impact of Crisis Management on Brand Reputation and Brand Positioning toward Performance of Four-Star Hotels during COVID-19 Crisis" in Indonesia (see attachment).

Details of the approval are as follows:

| | |
|---|---|
| **Ref. number:** | REC/09/2022 (PG/MR/226) |
| **Approval Period:** | 21 September 2022 until 30 April 2023 |
| **Authorised personnel:** | 1. Dr Mohd Raziff Jamaluddin<br>2. Agus Riyadi<br>3. Dr Muhammad Izzat Zulkifly |

The UiTM Research Ethics Committee operates in accordance to the ICH Good Clinical Practice Guidelines, Malaysian Good Clinical Practice Guidelines and the Declaration of Helsinki. The approval of this project is conditional upon your continuing compliance with these guidelines and declaration.

We draw to your attention the requirement that a report on this research, must be submitted every 12 months from the date of the approval or on the completion of the project, whichever occurs first. Failure to submit reports will result in withdrawal of consent for the project to proceed. Amendments, if any, to the study documents are to be submitted to the REC for approval.

If you require further information, please contact the REC Secretariat at 03-55448069/03-55442794 or email at recsecretariat@uitm.edu.my.

Yours sincerely,

**EMERITUS PROFESSOR DATO' DR RAYMOND AZMAN ALI**
Chairman
UiTM Research Ethics Committee

c.c.: Dean, Faculty of Hotel and Tourism Management, UiTM

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ISO 9001:2015 No. Sijil: 101201

UiTM di hatiku

| No | City | Province |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | Jakarta | Jakarta |
| 2 | Tangerang, Anyer, Serang | Banten |
| 3 | Bogor, Bekasi, Karawang, Cirebon, Bandung | West of Java |
| 4 | Yogyakarta | Yogyakarta |
| 5 | Semarang, Solo | Central of Java |
| 6 | Surabaya, Malang, Madiun | East of Java |
| 7 | Denpasar | Bali |
| 8 | Mataram | West of Nusa Tenggara |
| 9 | Bandar Lampung | Lampung |
| 10 | Batam | Riau Island |
| 11 | Medan | North of Sumatera |
| 12 | Pontianak | West of Kalimantan |
| 13 | Samarinda | East of Kalimantan |
| 14 | Makasar | South of Sulawesi |

# APPENDIX 3

## Example of Questionnaire

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**
**FAKULTI PENGURUSAN HOTEL DAN PELANCONGAN**

**SOAL SELIDIK**

**KAJIAN KESAN PENGURUSAN KRISIS TERHADAP REPUTASI JENAMA DAN KEDUDUKAN JENAMA TERHADAP PRESTASI JENAMA HOTEL EMPAT BINTANG SEMASA KRISIS COVID-19**

**Salam Tuan/Puan,**
Saya sedang membuat kajian dalam bidang Pengurusan Hospitaliti. Penyelidikan ini berhasrat untuk menyiasat hubungan antara inisiatif pengurusan krisis dan kesannya terhadap reputasi dan kedudukan jenama, yang akhirnya membawa kepada prestasi jenama.

Saya amat berterima kasih sekiranya anda dapat meluangkan masa lebih kurang 10 minit untuk melengkapkan soal selidik ini. Pengalaman luas anda dalam menguruskan hotel empat bintang di Indonesia amat dihargai dan sangat penting untuk kejayaan penyelidikan ini.

Respons anda harus mencerminkan pengalaman anda mengetuai dan menjalankan operasi hotel 4 bintang semasa pandemik COVID-19. Sila jawab semua soalan selengkap dan setepat mungkin. Tiada jawaban yang betul atau salah, dan jawaban harus benar-benar mencerminkan pendapat anda. Saya menjamin kerahsiaan maklum balas anda dan akan menggunakan jawaban untuk pendidikan sahaja.

Terima kasih atas penyertaan dan kerjasama anda dalam kajian ini. Saya benar-benar menghargai masa yang anda habiskan. Sekiranya terdapat sebarang pertanyaan mengenai soal selidik, sila jangan teragak-agak untuk menghubungi saya.

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**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**
**FACULTY OF HOTEL AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT**

**QUESTIONNAIRE**

**EXAMINING THE IMPACT OF CRISIS MANAGEMENT ON BRAND REPUTATION AND BRAND POSITIONING TOWARD PERFORMANCE OF THE FOUR-STAR HOTEL BRAND IN COVID-19 CRISIS**

**Dear Sir / Madam,**
I am currently doing research in the field of Hospitality Management. This research intends to investigate the relationship between crisis management initiatives and their effect on brand reputation and positioning, which ultimately leads to brand performance.

I would be very grateful if you could spare approximately 10 minutes to complete this questionnaire. Your vast experience in managing four-star hotels in Indonesia is highly appreciated and very important to the success of this research.

Your responses should reflect your experience leading and running operations of 4-star hotels during the COVID-19 pandemic. Kindly respond to all questions as completely and accurately as possible. There is no right or wrong answer, and responses should genuinely reflect your opinion.

Thank you for your participation and cooperation in this study. I genuinely appreciate your time spent. Should there be any questions regarding the questionnaire, please do not hesitate to contact me.

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**MAKLUMAT KERAHSIAAN**
***(Confidentiality Information)***

Maklumat anda akan dirahsiakan oleh penyiasat dan tidak akan didedahkan kepada umum melainkan pendedahan diperlukan oleh undang-undang
*(Your information will be kept confidential by the investigators and will not be made public unless disclosure is required by law).*

Dengan menandatangani borang persetujuan ini, anda akan membenarkan semakan rekod, analisis dan penggunaan data yang timbul daripada penyelidikan ini
*(By signing this consent form, you will authorize the review of records, analysis and use of the data arising from this research).*

Jika anda mempunyai sebarang pertanyaan tentang penyelidikan ini atau hak anda, sila hubungi Agus Riyadi di talian **+62 815 3600 4435** atau **+60 1495 444 17** atau e-mel: agus.riyadi@stptrisakti.ac.id
(*If you have any questions about this research or your rights, please contact **Agus Riyadi** at **+62 815 3600 4435** or **+60 1495 444 17** or email**:** agus.riyadi@stptrisakti.ac.id*)

**Tandatangan :** **Tarikh:**
(Signature) (Date)

____________________ ______________________

**BAHAGIAN A: PENGURUSAN KRISIS**
**PART A : CRISIS MANAGEMENT**

Bahagian ini mengkaji inisiatif pengurusan krisis hotel empat bintang semasa pandemik COVID-19. Sila nyatakan respons anda dengan memilih salah satu skala di bawah *(This section examines the four-star hotel crisis management initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please indicate your response by choosing one of the scales below)*

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sangat tidak setuju (*Strongly Disagree*) | | | | | | Sangat setuju *(Strongly Agree)* |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Hotel merumuskan dan menilai senario kemungkinan asal dan kebarangkalian bencana (*The hotel formulates and assesses potential disaster origin and probability scenarios*) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 2 | Hotel mesti melantik pasukan pengurusan krisis (iaitu, penyelarasan dan sistem komunikasi) (*The hotel must appoint a crisis management team (i.e., coordination and communication system*) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 3 | Hotel ini mengenal pasti organisasi luar yang boleh membantu hotel semasa krisis (*The hotel identifies external organizations that can assist the hotel during a crisis*) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 4 | Hotel ini mewujudkan pusat panggilan krisis dalam operasi hotel (*The hotel establishes a crisis call center in hotel operations*) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 5 | Hotel ini menyediakan pendidikan dan latihan risiko kesihatan untuk pekerja hotel *(The hotel provides health risk education and training for hotel employees).* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 6 | Hotel ini telah menjadualkan mesyuarat untuk menjalankan latihan pengurusan krisis palsu *(The hotel has scheduled meetings to conduct a sham crisis management drill)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 7 | Hotel ini mengekalkan kebersihan dan kebersihan di dalam dan sekitar hartanah *(The hotel maintains cleanliness and hygiene in and around the property)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | Hotel ini memperuntukkan dana untuk pembangunan teknologi untuk mengesan faktor dan kesan berbahaya daripada krisis *(The hotel allocates funds for technological development to detect factors and harmful effects of crises)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 9 | Hotel ini secara aktif mencari insentif kewangan daripada kerajaan (*The hotel actively seeks financial incentives from the government)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 10 | Hotel menjalankan sistem audit/pemantauan kerosakan untuk proses pemulihan *(The hotel performs a damage audit/monitoring system for the recovery process)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 11 | Hotel ini menggunakan strategi komunikasi media (cth., permohonan maaf, tindakan pembetulan, kekecewaan) dalam kedua-dua kaedah komunikasi dalam talian dan tradisional untuk mengenal pasti keselamatan hotel *(The hotel applies media communication strategies (e.g., apologies, corrective actions, mortification) in both online and traditional communication methods to identify the safety of the hotel)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 12 | Pengurusan tertinggi hotel bertanggungjawab menilai pengurusan krisis dan merancang untuk penambahbaikan pada masa hadapan *(The hotel's top management is responsible for evaluating crisis management and planning for future improvements)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 13 | Pengurusan tertinggi hotel bertanggungjawab menyediakan latihan daripada agensi lain dalam menangani krisis *(The hotel's top management is responsible for providing training from other agencies in dealing with crises)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 14 | Pengurusan tertinggi hotel percaya tindakan pantas semasa krisis akan mengurangkan kesan negative *(The hotel's top management believes rapid action during the crisis will reduce the negative impacts)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 15 | Hotel ini menyediakan sumber yang diperlukan (iaitu, bahan, orang, teknologi dan maklumat) untuk bersedia menghadapi krisis yang dijangkakan *(The hotel provides the resources needed (i.e., materials, people, technology, and information) to prepare for anticipated crises)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

**BAHAGIAN B: REPUTASI JENAMA**

***PART C : BRAND REPUTATION***

Bahagian ini mengkaji kepentingan reputasi jenama hotel empat bintang semasa pandemik COVID-19. Sila nyatakan respons anda dengan memilih salah satu skala di bawah

*(This section examines the importance of the brand reputation of a four-star hotel during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please indicate your response by choosing one of the scales below)*

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sangat tidak setuju (Strongly Disagree) | | | | | | Sangat setuju (Strongly Agree) |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Reputasi jenama mengurangkan ketidakpastian mengenai kualiti produk *(Brand reputation reduces uncertainty regarding product quality)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 2 | Reputasi akan menggalakkan hotel untuk memberi tumpuan kepada menarik rakan kongsi perniagaan baharu *(Reputation will encourage the hotel to focus on attracting new business partners)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 3 | Reputasi akan memberikan kuasa tawar-menawar hotel dalam berurusan dengan rakan kongsi perdagangan *(Reputation will provide the hotel bargaining power in dealing with the trading partners)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 4 | Reputasi menggalakkan kesetiaan jenama yang lebih besar *(Reputation encourages greater brand loyalty)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 5 | Reputasi jenama menjadi penghalang kepada pesaing untuk bertindak dengan cekap dalam segmen hotel empat *bintang (Brand reputation is a barrier for rivals to act efficiently in the four-star hotel segment)* | | | | | | | |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6 | Reputasi jenama menggalakkan hotel untuk menjadi inovatif dan kreatif *(Brand reputation encourages the hotel to be innovative and creative)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

**BAHAGIAN C: KEDUDUKAN JENAMA**
***PART C : BRAND POSITIONING***

Bahagian ini mengkaji inisiatif kedudukan jenama hotel empat bintang semasa COVID-19. Sila nyatakan respons anda dengan memilih salah satu skala di bawah
*(This section examines four-five star hotel brand positioning initiatives during COVID-19. Please indicate your response by choosing one of the scales below)*

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sangat tidak setuju (Strongly Disagree) | | | | | | Sangat setuju (Strongly Agree) |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Hotel ini melaksanakan teknik kawalan kualiti produk yang ketat *(The hotel executes strict product quality control techniques)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 2 | Hotel ini melakukan penandaarasan kepada hotel terbaik untuk mengekalkan kualitinya (*The hotel performs benchmarking to the best hotel to maintain its quality*) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 3 | Hotel ini melaksanakan penambahbaikan produk berdasarkan penilaian terperinci tentang jurang dalam memenuhi jangkaan pelanggan (*The hotel implements product improvements based on a detailed assessment of gaps in meeting customer expectations)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 4 | Hotel ini memastikan jenama itu menonjol daripada persaingan di mata pengguna (*The hotel ensures the brand stands out from the competition in the eyes of a consumer)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 5 | Hotel memastikan promosi dan jaminan perkhidmatan harus jelas dan komunikatif *(The hotel ensures the promotion and service guarantee should be clear and communicative)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 6 | Hotel ini mewujudkan persekitaran/suasana membeli untuk mendapatkan tindak balas emosi tertentu daripada pembeli *(The hotel creates buying environments/atmospheres to elicit specific emotional responses from the buyer)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 7 | Untuk memaksimumkan hasil, hotel memperuntukkan produk dengan pelbagai tahap kegunaan kepada segmen tetamu yang berbeza *(In order to maximize revenue, the hotel assigns products with varying levels of usefulness to distinct guest segments)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 8 | Pembezaan harga boleh bertindak balas secara fleksibel kepada keadaan pasaran yang berubah tanpa mengira pasaran fizikal atau dalam talian *(Price differentiation can flexibly respond to changing market conditions regardless of physical or online markets)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

**BAHAGIAN D: PRESTASI JENAMA**
***PART D: BRAND PERFORMANCE***

Bahagian ini mengukur prestasi jenama hotel empat bintang semasa pandemik COVID-19. Sila nyatakan respons anda dengan memilih salah satu skala di bawah *(This section measures the brand performance of a four-five star hotel during the COVID-19 pandemic. Please indicate your response by choosing one of the scales below)*

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Sangat tidak setuju (Strongly Disagree) | | | | | | Sangat setuju (Strongly Agree) |

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Kadar Purata Harian (ADR) hotel ialah penentu penting prestasi jenama *(The hotel's Average Daily Rate (ADR) is a crucial determinant of brand performance)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 2 | Pendapatan Setiap Bilik Tersedia (RevPAR) adalah penentu penting prestasi jenama *(The hotel's Revenue Per Available Room (RevPAR) is a crucial determinant of brand performance)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 3 | Bahagian pasaran hotel adalah penting dalam memahami prestasi jenama *(The hotel's market share is vital in understanding brand performance)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |
| 4 | Nilai pemegang saham adalah penting untuk hotel menilai prestasi hotel (*The shareholder's value is vital for the hotel to assess the hotel's performance)* | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 |

**BAHAGIAN E: MAKLUMAT LATAR BELAKANG**
**PART E: BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Sila jawab setiap soalan berikut dengan MENENTUKAN atau MENGISI jawapan yang sesuai *(Please answer each of the following questions by TICKING or COMPLETING an appropriate answer).*

1. Jantina *(Gender)*
□ Lelaki (*Male*)  □ Perempuan (*Female*)

2. Kumpulan Umur (*Age group*)
□ Di bawah 30 tahun (*below 30 years*)  □ 40 – 59 tahun (*years*)
□ 31 – 39 tahun (*years*)  □ 60 tahun dan keatas (*years and above*)

3. Tahap pendidikan tertinggi yang dicapai *(Highest education level attained)*
□ Sekolah Menengah (*Secondary School*)  □ Sarjana (*Postgraduate*)
□ Sarjana Muda (*Undergraduate*)  □ Lain-lain (sila nyatakan) *Others (please specify):* ____________________

4. Sila nyatakan jawatan anda (*Please state your job title*)
□ Naib President/ Ketua Pegawai Operasi/ Kluster GM (*Vice President/ Chief Operating Officer/Cluster GM*)
□ Pengurus Besar/Pengurus Hotel (*General Manager/Hotel Manager)*
□ Penolong Pengurus Eksekutif
□ Pengarah/ Ketua Jabatan (*Director/Head of Department*)
□ Lain-lain (sila nyatakan) *Others (please specify):* ____________________

(Executive Assistant Manager)

5. Bilangan tahun dalam jawatan sekarang *(Number of years in the present position)*

□ Kurang satu tahun *(Less than one year)*
□ 1-5 tahun (*years*)
□ 6-10 tahun (*years*)
□ 10 tahun ke atas *(Above 10 years)*

6. Apakah jenis hotel anda *(What is your type of hotel)*

□ Hotel bandar *(City hotel)*
□ Hotel peranginan *(Resort hotel)*

7. Apakah aturan operasi hotel anda *(What is your hotel operating arrangement)*

□ Rantaian antarabangsa *(International chain)*
□ Rantaian kebangsaan *(National chain)*

8. Bilangan tahun di hartanah ini *(Number of years at this property)*

□ Kurang daripada 10 tahun (Less than 10 year)
□ 10 - 13 tahun (*years*)
□ 13 -15 tahun (*years*)
□ 15 tahun ke atas (*Above 15 years*)
□ Lain-lain (sila nyatakan) *Others (please specify):*
____________________

9. Apakah segmen pasaran utama anda *(What is your major market segment)*

□ Kerajaan (*Government*)
□ Korporat (*Corporate*)
□ Masa lapang atau keseronokan *(Leisure or pleasure)*
□ MICE
□ Lain-lain (sila nyatakan) *Others (please specify):*
____________________

**TERIMA KASIH ATAS PENYERTAAN ANDA**
**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION**

# AUTHOR’S PROFILE

Agus Riyadi obtained a Bachelor of Applied Science in Tourism Management in 2001 from Udayana University, Bali, a Master of Science in Hotel Management in 2010, and a Ph.D. in Hotel Management (2023) from Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM). His Ph.D. thesis entitled “The Impact of Crisis Management on Brand Reputation and Brand Positioning Towards the Performance of Upscale Hotels in the Post-COVID-19 Era”. His interest involves topics concerning the hotel industry, which covers a broad to a specific area. Currently, he is a Senior Lecturer and former Head of the Department of Hotel Management at Trisakti School of Tourism, Indonesia, and he is pursuing research into brand management and business strategy for hotel business performance during the Covid-19 pandemic.

**List of Publications:**


Riyadi, A., Leonandri, D. G., Jamaluddin, M. R. (2023). Crisis Management, Brand Reputation, and Brand Performance of Upscale Hotels in the Post-COVID-19 Crisis in Indonesia. 9TH INCOMAR The Ninth International Conference on Marketing and Retailing, 2357-1330

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