The Effect of Competitive Intelligence Practices on Hotel Performance: The Perspective of General Managers in Malaysia

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Abstract: Competitive intelligence (CI) practices involve gathering and analysing information about competitors to gain a competitive advantage. They involve monitoring competitors' pricing strategies, analysing customer reviews, tracking competitors' marketing campaigns, attending industry events, conducting competitor analysis, monitoring industry trends, and using data analytics. The goal of competitive intelligence is to gain insights into competitors' operations and strategies and use this information for decision-making. However, there is still ambiguity on the impact of competitive intelligence practices on performance, particularly in the hotel industry in Malaysia after the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, this research was conducted to investigate the impact of CI practices on the financial and non-financial performance of the respective hotels. A quantitative research design was adopted in this study. To obtain the necessary data for analysing the hypothesised model of the study, 203 questionnaires were issued to general managers, and a total of 101 completed questionnaires were gathered, with a response rate of 50%. The research data were analysed using SPSS and PLS-SEM. The results indicate that CI practices had no effect on financial performance; however, CI had a positive and significant impact on the non-financial performance of hotels. This study offers specific theoretical and practical implications. Furthermore, these findings will help the properties' owners, industry players, and academicians better understand the key factors that should be encouraged to improve their organisational performance. However, since this study is only limited to general manager's perspectives, it may introduce bias. Future studies are expected to examine the response from the managers especially in CI departments.

Keywords: Competitive intelligence, financial performance, hotel performance, hotel industry, non-financial performance.

Introduction

The tourism industry is the third-most important contributor to Malaysia's Gross Domestic product (GDP) after manufacturing and commodities. In 2018, this sector contributed about 5.9% to Malaysia's total GDP. The tourism industry comprises other sectors such as accommodation, food and beverages, recreation and entertainment, transportation, and travel services. According to the Malaysian Investment Development Authority (MIDA), the tourism industry in Malaysia is one of the top contributors to the country's economy, as noted in the National Key Economic Areas (NKEAs). Additionally, being one of the top 10 tourist destinations, this country has undeniably verified its tourism industry capacity. Tourism Malaysia, an agency under the Ministry of Tourism, recorded an increase in both domestic and international travel to Malaysia (refer to Figure 1 and Figure 2). However,

the numbers have decreased due to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has forced the government to impose travel restrictions on both international and domestic travellers.

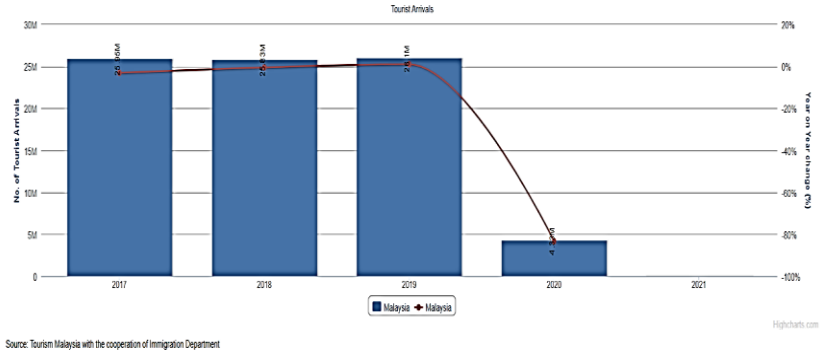

Fig. 1. Tourist arrival between 2017 to 2020

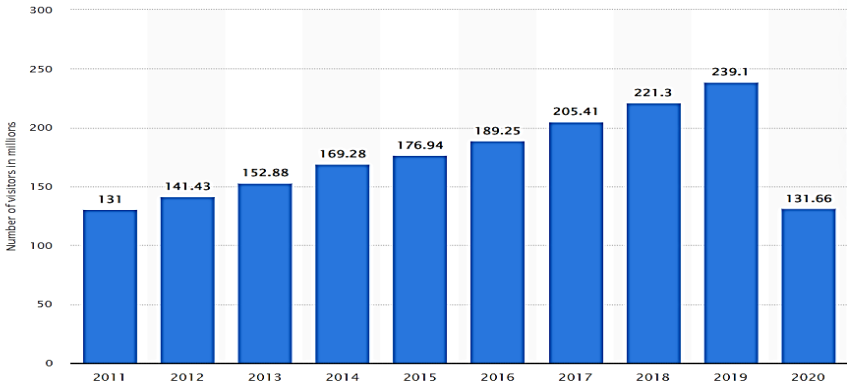

Fig. 2. Number of domestic visitors between 2011 and 2020

Based on the statistics above, Malaysia planned to launch a Visit Malaysia 2020 tourism initiative with the ambitious target of attracting 30 million visitors and RM100 billion in tourist receipts. Sadly, the COVID-19 outbreak in late December 2019 forced worldwide travel restrictions, thus defeating the target. COVID-19 is an infectious disease caused by a newly discovered coronavirus that has badly affected numerous countries, including Malaysia. Nevertheless, the problem was not entirely due to COVID-19, according to the Malaysian Association of Hotels (MAH). The MAH president clarified that some hotel owners and operators had already been looking to sell before the pandemic, and some had even advertised their assets for sale. The oversupply of rooms caused by Online Travel agents such as Airbnb and Agoda has led to the number of rooms available for rent being dramatically underestimated, as these properties are not considered part of the number of hotel rooms available in a state or country. Moreover, competition among hotel industry and other short-term accommodation (STA) such as Airbnb and homestays has affected the performance of hotel industry because some tourists choose accommodation at a cheaper rate, which is still equipped with the necessary home facilities (Ozkan, 2019). Poon and Huang (2017) also found that tourists are more concerned about price than the services provided.

In addition to the government's strategic planning aimed at assisting the tourism sector in its return, the hospitality sector needs to move quickly and effectively to recognise the factors that impact hotel performance. According to Im et al. (2012), organisations need to adjust quickly and consistently to the evolving customer demands, global competition, and technology advancements. Therefore, the adoption of competitive intelligence (CI) could lead to a sustainable competitive advantage and improve business performance (Shahbandi & Farrokhshad, 2019). However, many companies have yet to establish a formal CI department, even though CI is becoming increasingly important to an organisation's survival in today's dynamic economy (McGonagle & Vella, 2004). Typically, this could be due to a lack of formal training in CI (Fleisher, 2004). According to Bose (2008), one of the advantages of CI implementation is its ability to help determine the strengths, weaknesses, strategies, objectives, market positioning, and most likely response patterns of competitors. In today's business

world, companies have to withstand pressure from suppliers, services, products, and new technologies. There have been minimal systematic attempts to provide empirical evidence on the relationship between CI practises and organisational performance (Yap & Rashid, 2011), although CI has gained importance in organisations recently. Samat et al. (2018) also identified several competitive intelligence benefits, including filling gaps by covering areas that an organisation has overlooked in its assumptions. CI helps facilitate the development of company strategies, identify areas to improve, and determine risks.

In addition, CI could include information on their competitors for example on the market trends that allows a company to recognise opportunities. Due to the tourist sector's substantial contribution to the world economy, Malaysia's economy is largely dependent on it (Hanafiah & Harun, 2010; Nair et al., 2014). According to a recent report (Tourism Malaysia, 2020), there was a notable increase in the number of foreign visitors arriving in Malaysia between 2018 and 2019, particularly in Kuala Lumpur. In addition, there were more domestic tourists throughout these two years. Nonetheless, the hotel sector noticed declining occupancy in this time frame. When comparing the first nine months of 2019 to the same period in 2018, the hotel occupancy percentage dropped from 65.51% to 60.8% (MAH, 2019). This fall suggests that the hotel industry might not have been doing well. The decline in return business further indicates that could be the growth of short-term accommodation providers like Airbnb and local homestays has had a negative impact on hotels' performance (Bansal & Taylor, 2005; Jung et al., 2017).

In addition to the above-mentioned issues, the COVID-19 epidemic has made things worse in the hospitality industry. This infectious disease has severely impacted numerous nations across the globe, including Malaysia. Concerns regarding hotel performance during these crucial periods have been brought up by earlier study (Koseoglu et al., 2021; Pascual-Fernández et al., 2021). Hence, the tourism industry needs to keep improving hotel performance because the high numbers of tourists before the pandemic led to increased tourism revenue. Based on the main problem mentioned earlier, efforts to improve the business performance of the hotel industry has caught the researchers' attention due to the volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity of the business world.

Literature Review

Current Hotel Performance in Malaysia

MALAYSIA AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATES JANUARY-SEPTEMBER 2019/2020

LOCALITY	2019	2020	DIFF
KUALA LUMPUR	60.6	26.7	-33.9
PUTRAJAYA	63.2	46.0	-17.2
SELANGOR	54.9	30.7	-24.2
PENANG	56.1	24.9	-31.2
PERAK	41.9	26.4	-15.5
KEDAH	56.4	27.6	-28.8
PERLIS	32.9	22.6	-10.3
NEGERI SEMBILAN	50.7	27.5	-23.2
MELAKA	51.9	21.6	-30.3
JOHOR	56.5	32.9	-23.6
PAHANG	79.0	41.8	-37.2
TERENGGANU	40.2	32.7	-7.5
KELANTAN	44.1	34.4	-9.7
SABAH	67.7	28.2	-39.5
LABUAN*	40.6	44.9	4.3
SARAWAK	44.6	26.3	-18.3
MALAYSIA	58.5	31.6	-26.9

Source: Tourism Malaysia (Based on Hotel Survey)
**Higher due to quarantine hotels*

MALAYSIA AVERAGE OCCUPANCY RATES (AOR) OF JANUARY-DECEMBER 2018/2019

LOCALITY	2018	2019	DIFF
KUALA LUMPUR	63.3	59.9	-3.4
PUTRAJAYA	72.1	64.2	-7.9
SELANGOR	57.2	56.4	-0.8
PENANG	62.2	56.5	-5.7
PERAK	44.1	43.9	-0.2
KEDAH	56.1	55.7	-0.4
PERLIS	31.0	36.0	5.0
NEGERI SEMBILAN	54.2	51.9	-2.3
MELAKA	57.3	51.7	-5.6
JOHOR	58.7	57.3	-1.4
PAHANG	78.8	79.4	0.6
TERENGGANU	39.9	41.3	1.4
KELANTAN	44.1	43.4	-0.7
SABAH	67.2	65.8	-1.4
LABUAN	46.2	42.2	-4.1
SARAWAK	48.9	46.1	-2.8
MALAYSIA	60.8	58.8	-2.0

Source: Tourism Malaysia (Based on Hotel Survey)

Fig. 3. Malaysia Average Occupancy from January to September 2019 and 2020

A previous report (Figure 3) from Tourism Malaysia summarised the differences in the Average Occupancy Rate between the year 2019 and 2020. It has a huge difference due to the international travelling ban imposed by the government in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic. As illustrated in Figure 3, the difference records a negative 26.9% in 2020 compared to the year 2019. According to Tourism Malaysia, the number of hotel guests between 2015 and 2021 is also decreasing as illustrated in Figure 4. However, this situation is not mainly caused by the pandemic. Evidently, Figure 3 indicates that the decrease in hotel occupancy occurs before the pandemic between the year 2018 and 2019.

Fig. 4. Malaysia Average Occupancy from 2015 to 2021

Consequently, this is a critical situation for the hotel industry because the average occupancy rate is one of the hotel's performance measurements. When the average occupancy rates decline, the number of guests staying in a hotel also simultaneously decreases. Figure 4 summarises the average occupancy room for hotels, specifically in Kuala Lumpur. It is proven that the average occupancy started to decline from 63% in 2018 to 59.9% in 2019. It was even worse in 2020 due to the pandemic. Between 2018 and 2019, the number of domestic and international tourists reportedly increased (refer Figure 1). However, the average occupancy in a hotel declined during those times. As compared to previous years since 2015, the number of tourist arrivals kept increasing before the pandemic. It demonstrates that the hotel business was not performing well because tourists might have opted for alternative short-term accommodations such as Airbnb. Consequently, hotels are encouraged to prepare strategically in order to enhance their performance. This study acts as a medium that identifies the effects of competitive intelligence practices on hotel performance involving financial and non-financial performance.

Hotel Performance

Technically, organisational performance is the capacity of an organisation to achieve its objectives, i.e., to earn a profit, have a competitive edge, increase its market share, and assure its long-term survival. It is contingent upon efficient operational strategies and action plans (Oyemomia et al., 2019). Organisational performance encompasses nearly all productivity and excellence goals pertaining to prices, adaptability, speed, reliability, and quality. Additionally, organisational performance can be viewed as an umbrella that encompasses all outcomes of the organisation's progress and operations. As the primary objective of the organisation, organisational performance is one of the most crucial aspects of management (Chan & Chao, 2008; Shahzad et al., 2017; Soriano, 2010). Every business strives for better performance in a market that seems to be extremely competitive. Sainaghi (2010) claimed that success is linked to the consideration of the value generated by an organisation. The author also asserted that the performance definition includes a combination of financial and non-financial measures.

Most organisations choose financial measures, such as return on assets, average yearly occupancy rate, net profit, and return on investment (ROI), to analyse their performance. Due to the accounting period delay, there were shortcomings in the financial measures, including inadequate precision, neutrality, summarisation, and irrelevance (Wadongo et al., 2010). Furthermore, it is unbalanced and fails to reflect the strategic challenges and performance over a longer time frame (Wadongo et al., 2010; Harris and Mongiello, 2001; Kaplan and Norton, 1992, 1997). As a result, many studies use both financial and non-financial performance indicators to calculate performance (Saunila et al., 2014; Wadongo et al., 2010; Grawe et al., 2009; Razalli, 2008; Jusoh and Parnell, 2008). Brown et al. (2014) asserted that performance is connected to assessing managers or owners' perceptions of organisational performance. Therefore, this study evaluates the general manager as a respondent who usually makes significant decisions about their organisation.

Performance Measurement

According to Child (1972), organisational performance is a comparison of an organisation's actual output or results to its desired outcomes. First, financial performance, which comprises income and returns on investment, is one of the categories that can be used to classify organisational performance. Then, sales and market share are the product market performance outcomes. Lastly, for shareholders, it includes the overall return on the share and value added (Richard et al., 2009), Performance measurement is crucial for hotel general managers (Phillips, 1999). The financial findings usually illustrate the operation's performance (Chin et al.,1995). The most prevalent indicators are the average daily rate, occupancy rate, and revenue per room (Damonte et al.,1997; Enz et al., 2001).

Financial and non-financial performance are two critical aspects used to assess the overall performance and success of hotels in the hospitality industry. Financial performance in the hotel industry focuses on the hotel's economic viability and its ability to generate profits and revenue. Key indicators and metrics used to evaluate financial performance include:

a. Sales growth, which is the percentage increase in the hotel's overall revenue over a given period compared to that same period last year.
b. Return on Investment (ROI), which is used to measure the profitability of the hotel in relation to its total investment. It is calculated by dividing the net profit by the total investment and multiplying by 100.
c. Revenue per Available Room (RevPAR) that measures the average revenue generated per available room. It is calculated by dividing total room revenue by the total number of available rooms.
d. The average room rate (ARR), which is calculated by dividing the total room revenue generated during a given period by the total number of rooms sold during that same period.
e. Non-Financial Performance, which in the hotel industry, looks beyond metrics and assesses other aspects that contribute to the hotel’s success and reputation. These performance indicators include:
f. Customer loyalty, which is a crucial performance measure in the hotel industry because loyal customers not only provide a stable revenue stream but also act as brand advocates, referring new customers through positive word-of-mouth and online reviews.
g. Customer Satisfaction and Guest Reviews: Guest reviews, ratings, and surveys provide valuable insights into guest satisfaction and overall service quality.
h. Competitive position: the hotel's relative standing and performance compared to its competitors within a specific market or geographic area. It involves evaluating the hotel's strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats in relation to other hotels in the same market segment.

Financial and non-financial performance indicators are critical for hotel managers and owners in making informed decisions, identifying areas for improvement, and ensuring the hotel's long-term success and market competitiveness.

Competitive Intelligence

Competitive intelligence, or CI, also refers to an organisation's ability to identify and address the knowledge gap and the value differences between the organisation and its competitors (Tuan, 2013). CI is utilised for the ethical and legal collection, processing, and evaluation of data collected from internal and external environments involving consumers, industry, direct and indirect competitors, potential environmental and consumer behaviour patterns, and business connections (Koseoglu et al., 2011). Competitive intelligence is a "systematic process undertaken by companies to gather and analyse information about competitors and the organisation's overall socio-political and economic environment" (Colakoglu, 2011). According to Calof and Wright (2008), CI is an emergent process that converts data into usable information. This strategy also helps organisations to understand the business environment, make informed decisions, and recognise opportunities and threats. In this context, CI is seen as the interpretive result of a process for gathering, evaluating, and analysing external data and decision-making, which forms the basis for innovation, development, and research. Numerous studies on CI have been published. However, little is known regarding CI approaches in the hotel industry in Malaysia.

However, Sewdass and Du Toit (2014) decided to look into the CI operations in South Africa, Brazil, Malaysia, and Morocco. The study's goal was to identify how these countries use competitive intelligence to increase their overall competitiveness in the global market. Although, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, few studies have concentrated on the hospitality and tourism industries, and a few studies have addressed certain aspects of competitive intelligence's application. Yap et al. (2013), for instance, conducted a CI study in Malaysia in which they assessed the present state of competitive intelligence techniques and the perception of environmental uncertainty among Malaysian publicly traded organisations. The following paragraph describes the many types of intelligence accessible in the literature and justifies CI as one of the strategic instruments for enhancing organisational performance.

The Various Disciplines of Intelligence

CI comprises four aspects, namely market intelligence, competitor intelligence, technological intelligence, and strategic intelligence (Shahbandi & Farrokhshad, 2019). Market intelligence examines the existing and projected demand of clients as well as new market segmentation opportunities. Market intelligence consists of the collection and evaluation of data pertaining to customers, manufacturers, sellers, and retailers. Relevant suppliers, product and service innovations, loyal distributors, and buyers are market intelligence variables. CI on the other hand, concentrates on price policies, replacement items, and competitor development policies. In addition, technological intelligence evaluates emerging technologies and forecasts possible technological advancements by analysing applications, basic research, and patents. Lastly, strategic intelligence encompasses the categories of policy, taxes, finances, economic and political influence, and human capital. Therefore, this study presented CI practices from the hotel industry's standpoint. The subsequent section elaborated on the CI process and its role inside the organisation.

The Importance of Competitive Intelligence

Since CI has the potential to guide organisational decision-making, many organisations, both in the public and private sectors, are developing their competitive intelligence (CI) platforms to guide their decision-makers. Consequently, combining the competitive intelligence process with the strategic management process and practices becomes a necessity. CI contributes to the enhancement of the strategic management process's essence in theory and practice (Quarm & Busharads, 2020). This research hopes to become a reference for the hotel industry to design possible strategies for achieving better performance.

Subramanian and Ishak (1998) found that companies that use integrated systems to monitor their rivals' activities have higher profits than companies that do not have such strategies. The previous study has also been supported by Fuld (1999), which concluded that competitive intelligence has positive effects on the performance of an organisation, where corporate success is the result of well-designed products and services, hard-won marketing strategies, and strategic intelligence management, while most failures are due to poor decisions, bad timing, and misuse or inadequate use of competitive intelligence. Very few investigations have been carried out on CI in the hotel industry worldwide, and little is known about it in Malaysia. According to a previous study by López-Robles et al. (2019), Asia has not been listed to date for CI. However, countries such as India experienced tremendous growth, placing them among the most productive nations for CI article publication. Unfortunately, Malaysia is not listed in the bibliometric analysis from 1984 to 2017, as the nation is not listed as a country that published many articles on competitive intelligence strategy (López-Robles et al., 2019).

Previous scholars have discussed strategic decisions and how these strategies relate to performance (Ibrahim et al., 2015; Kroon et al., 2013; Papadakis & Lyriotaki, 2013; Pisano, 2017; Pollanen et al., 2017; Shah, 2005; Shepherd & Rudd, 2014). By building CI to succeed in the market, managers should regulate these strategies for their hotels and consider organisational culture a crucial factor in improving their performance. This study concludes by examining CI practises that influence hotel performance. According to Koseoglu et al. (2016), CI influences organisational success. Therefore, effective strategy implementation is directly related to competitive intelligence and business performance. Due to the importance of CI as a strategic tool in strategic decision implementation

(Davey et al., 2017; DuToit, 2013), hotel firms should consider integrating CI operations into their strategic decision implementation, management practices, and organisational culture.

Hypothesis Development

Despite the numerous studies on strategy tools to improve hotel performance, there is little evidence on how CI influences hotel performance. CI is considered a process and product that is widely known as a strategy tool to improve organisational performance (Calof & Sewdass, 2020; Jamal Ali & Anwar, 2021; Koseoglu et al., 2018; Markovich et al., 2019) and understands competitors' strategies (Markovich et al., 2019; Nzewi et al., 2016). It was noted that some industry players have little awareness of CI in hotels (Koseoglu et al., 2016). Moreover, researchers have yet to find conclusive evidence of CI's role in the hotel industry (Koseoglu et al., 2019; Salguero et al., 2019). However, CI utilisation has been successfully implemented in other industries, such as education (Garcia-Alsina et al., 2016), construction in Morocco (Sewdass & Toit, 2014), strategic CI professionals in Canada (Calof, 2017), and small and medium enterprise (SME) industry (Magasa & Mphahlele, 2014).

Improving organisational performance is crucial for the hotel industry for several reasons. First, it enhances competitiveness by offering superior service quality, better facilities, and personalised experiences, which attracts more guests and increases market share. Second, it leads to higher revenue and profitability, as hotels that operate efficiently generate healthy financial returns. Third, it impacts guest experiences, as well as employee satisfaction and retention. Fourth, it allows hotels to adapt to market changes, ensuring long-term relevance and competitiveness. Finally, it involves risk management, identifying and mitigating potential risks to strengthen resilience and minimise disruptions.

Financial performance in the hotel industry focuses on the hotel's economic viability and its ability to generate profits and revenue. Key indicators and metrics used to evaluate financial performance include sales growth, Return on Investment (ROI), Revenue per Available Room (RevPAR), and the average room rate (ARR). Competitive intelligence allows hotels to monitor competitors' pricing strategies in real-time. By analysing rates charged by competitors for similar room types, packages, and services, hotels can adjust their own pricing strategies to remain competitive while maximising revenue. This optimisation can lead to improved revenue per available room (RevPAR) and overall financial performance. Non-financial performance in the hotel industry looks beyond monetary metrics and assesses other aspects that contribute to the hotel's success and reputation, including customer loyalty, occupancy, customer satisfaction, and competitive position. Both financial and non-financial performance indicators are crucial for hotel managers and owners to make informed decisions, identify areas for improvement, and ensure the hotel's long-term success and competitiveness in the market. Hence, the following hypotheses are suggested:

H1: Competitive intelligence practices positively affect hotel financial performance.
H2: Competitive intelligence practices positively affect hotel non-financial performance.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is constructed based on extensive and comprehensive literature review, nature of the research problem, recommendations on study variables, findings, and theories. The proposed framework is developed to investigate the role of competitive intelligence practices on hotel performance involving financial and non-financial performance. Figure 5 displays the conceptual framework of this study.

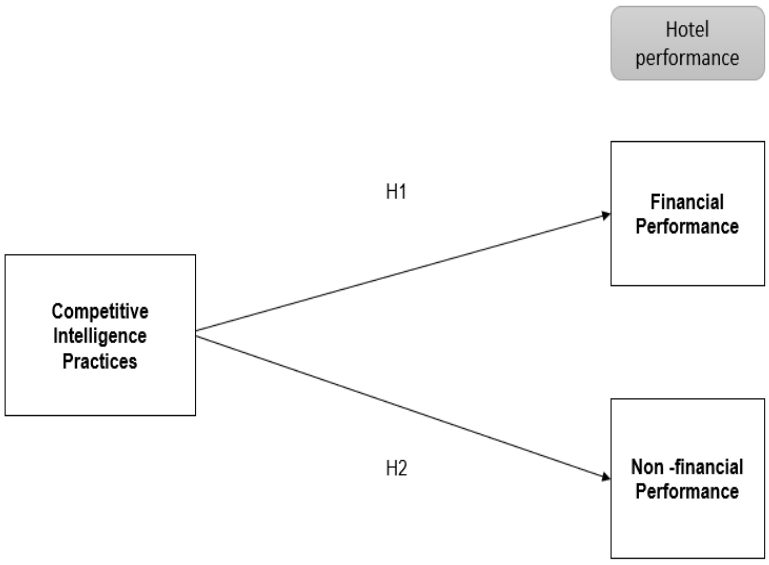

Fig. 5. Conceptual Framework

Methodology

This study applies the quantitative method, where the survey questionnaires were distributed via email to the targeted respondents. The respondents of this study were among the general managers of four and five-star hotels in Malaysia. The general managers were the representatives of each organisation which became the unit of analysis. Based on the listings from the official website of Ministry of Tourism and Culture in Malaysia (MOTAC), there were 227 hotels categorised under four- and five-star hotels as of January 2022. The researcher distributed to 203 hotels out of 227 because some of the hotels were closed permanently and temporarily, declined to participate, and some were led by the same management. This study managed to receive 169 responses from the organisation, however, only 101 usable responses were analysed indicating a 50% response rate.

Data Analysis

This study used IBM SPSS 28 and Smart PLS software Version 3.2.7 for data analysis (Ringle et al., 2015). We employed variance-based structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM), which involves two stages, namely the evaluations of the measurement model and the structural model. Before this analysis, we performed a common method variance (CMV) test since the data was collected from the same group of respondents.

Common Method Variance Test

The correlation matrix method and Harman's single-factor test were used to address the issue of CMV (Tehseen et al., 2017). Harman’s single-factor test indicated 23 distinct factors that account for 36.684 % of the total variance, with the largest factor accounting for 8.437 % of the variance. Hence, CMV was not an issue in this study since the results showed less than 50% of the proposed cut-off value (Podsakoff et al., 2003). We also employed the correlation matrix approach to identify the CMV problem in this study. As proposed by Bagozzi et al. (1991), a correlation of more than 0.9 among the main constructs indicated the presence of CMV. Table 1 shows that the data is free from CMV effects because the correlation among the constructs is less than 0.9.

Table 1. Latent variable correlation

	CI	FP	NFP
CI	1		
FP	0.121	1	
NFP	0.304	0.694	1

CI=competitive intelligence, FP=financial performance, NFP=non-financial performance

Results

Table 2. Organisations' profile

Organisations' Profile (N=101)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Hotel Star Category	**59**	**58.4**
4 Stars	42	41.6
5 Stars		
Total guest rooms are in the hotel		
1 to 150 rooms	22	21.8
151 to 400 rooms	52	51.5
401 to 1500 rooms	25	24.8
1500 rooms and over	2	2
Total years of property		
At least 1 year but less than 3 years	3	3
At least 3 years but less than 5 years	18	17.8
At least 5 years but less than 10 years	23	22.8
10 years or more	57	56.4
Hotel's affiliation		
Chain	52	51.5
Independent	24	23.8
Single owner	25	24.8

As shown in Table 2, most respondents work in 4-star hotels (N=59, 58.4%) compared to 5-star hotels (N=42, 41.6%). Most hotels had 151 to 400 rooms (N=52, 51.5%), and most properties had been in operation for more than 10 years (N=57, 56.4%). Regarding hotel affiliation, the data indicate that most hotels belong to a hotel chain (N=52, 51.5%), followed by single-owner hotels (N=25, 24.8%) and independent hotels (N= 24, 23.8%).

Table 3. Respondents' profile

Respondents' Profile(N=101)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Female	40	39.6
Male	61	60.4
Age range		
25 to 34 years	10	9.9
35 to 44 years	31	30.7
45 to 54 years	42	41.6
55 to 64 years	15	14.9
65 to 74 years	2	2

Respondents' Profile(N=101)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
75 and older	1	1
Academic qualifications		
Certificate	12	11.9
Diploma	30	29.7
Degree	45	44.6
Masters	11	10.9
PhD	3	3
Total years in current position		
Less than 1 year	3	3
At least 1 year but less than 3 years	12	11.9
At least 3 years but less than 5 years	16	15.8
At least 5 years but less than 10 years	39	38.6
10 years or more	31	30.7
Total years in the hotel industry		
Less than 1 year	0	0
At least 1 year but less than 3 years	1	1
At least 3 years but less than 5 years	2	2
At least 5 years but less than 10 years	18	17.8
10 years or more	80	79.2

Table 3 displays the respondents' demographic information. It was found that 61 of the respondents were male (60.4%), and 40 of the respondents were female (39.6%). Age-wise, there were 1 respondent who was 75 years old (1%), 2 respondents were between 65 and 74 years old (2.0%), 10 respondents (9.9%) were between 25 and 34 years old, 15 respondents (14.9%) were between 55 and 64 years old, 31 respondents (30.7%) were in the 35 to 44 years age group, and the majority of respondents were between 45 and 54 years old (N=42, 41.6%). The majority of the respondents (N= 4, 44.6%) have an academic degree, followed by a diploma (N= 30, 29.7%), a certificate (N= 12, 11.9%), a master's degree (N= 11, 10.9%), and 3 respondents have a doctorate (N= 3, 3.0%). In terms of total years in their current position, the majority of respondents had at least 5 years, but less than 10 years (N= 39, 38.6%) tenure, while 3 respondents had worked less than one year in their current position. Most respondents had been in the hotel industry for at least 10 years (N= 80, 79.5%), and none had been in the hotel industry for less than one year.

Assessment of Reflective Measurement Model

Convergent validity and discriminant validity were evaluated for the reflective measurement model. According to Hair et al. (2017), factor loadings and the average of variance extracted (AVE) should be analysed to evaluate convergent validity. Preliminary measurements indicated that all the loadings exceed the recommended value of 0.708 (Hair et al., 2017), except for CI5, C10 and NFP4. Hence, we removed these three items. Furthermore, all the constructs fulfilled the minimum cut-off values for CR and AVE, where all CR are greater than 0.7 and all AVEs are greater than 0.5 (Hair et al., 2017). Table 5 shows the results of the indicator loadings, CR, and AVE following the removal of the items. All the constructs meet the criteria for reliability and convergent validity.

Table 5: Assessment of the Measurement Model

Construct	Items	Descriptions	Loading	Cronbach's Alpha	CR	AVE
CI	CI1	We are aware of CI	0.711	0.945	0.951	0.599
	CI2	We practise CI in our hotel.	0.744			
	CI3	We have a formalised CI process.	0.793			
	CI4	We have a computerised CI system.	0.706			
	CI6	We attend CI training.	0.760			
	CI7	We analyse our competitor's strategies to predict their actions.	0.708			
	CI8	All information is validated for accuracy by at least one other source of information.	0.754			
	CI9	We implement CI for decision making purposes.	0.811			
	CI11	We prepared intelligence reports on emerging technologies that we believe are most important.	0.881			
	CI12	We produce a landscape analysis that addresses several possible outcomes of our competitor's action that might impact our hotel.	0.829			
	CI13	We were constantly aware of the latest technology in the market.	0.777			
	CI14	We use information management tools to understand our customers.	0.765			
	CI15	CI activities help our hotel perform better.	0.801			
FP	FP1	Sales growth	0.941	0.936	0.951	0.829
	FP2	Return on Investment	0.924			
	FP3	RevPAR	0.919			
	FP4	Average room rate	0.854			
NFP	NFP1	Customer loyalty-NFP	0.918	0.871	0.921	0.795
	NFP2	Customer satisfaction-NFP	0.849			
	NFP3	Competitive position-NFP	0.907			

Next, we evaluated the discriminant validity. Since the square root of AVE (diagonal) is larger than the correlations (off-diagonal), Table 6 demonstrates that all reflective constructs have sufficient discriminant validity (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The average variance that each construct and its measures share is greater than the variance that each construct shares with the other constructs in the model. Furthermore, indicators load their construct more strongly than other constructs in the model (Fornell & Larcker, 1981).

Table 6. Discriminant validity using Fornell & Lacker

	CI	**FP**	**NFP**
CI	**0.774**		
FP	0.119	**0.910**	
NFP	0.311	0.667	**0.892**

Assessment of Structural Model

According to the lateral collinearity test, all the independent variables' inner values were 1.000, which is less than 5 and indicates that collinearity did not pose an issue in the study (Hair et al., 2017). In this study, two hypotheses are developed. The t-statistics for all paths are obtained using the SmartPLS 3.3.3 bootstrapping method to measure the significance level. According to the analysis of the path coefficients in Table 7, statistical value from the analysis of the path coefficients in Table 7 indicates that Hypothesis 1 is not supported. Meanwhile, Hypothesis 2 has a t-value of ≥2.33 and is significant at 0.01.The confidence intervals bias-corrected result for the upper and lower bound of hypothesis 2 also indicates significant results as 0 does not straddle between the confidence intervals bias results. Thus, the results suggested Hypothesis 2 is supported. CI (β=0.311, $p<0.01$) is positively associated with non-financial performance and explains 8.8% of the variance in non-financial performance. The model has sufficient predictive relevance since the Q^2 for financial and non-financial performance are 0.002 and 0.065, respectively, which is more than 0 (Geisser, 1974; Hair et al., 2017).

Table 7. Hypotheses tests

H	**Relationship**	**Std Beta**	**Standard Error**	**t-value**	**Decision**	**BC 95% LL**	**BC 95% UL**	**f^2**
H1	CI -> FP	0.119	0.157	0.758	Not supported	-0.354	0.209	-
H2	CI-> NFP	0.311	0.094	3.302**	Supported	0.138	0.431	0.107

Note: **p<0.01, *p<0.05

Discussion

According to Tej Adidam et al. (2012) and Yap et al. (2018), in this regard, the overall performance approach should be utilised to evaluate CI outcomes because financial indicators could not give a complete picture of CI influence. As a result, using a financial and non-financial performance measure to examine the impact of CI practices ("planning and focus, gathering, analysis, and communication") on hotel performance is conclusive because of its useful measure in evaluating an organisation's overall operational performance (Wu & Lu, 2012; Mohammed et al., 2017; Cheangtawee et al., 2020). However, this study has examined the effect on both performance measures. Based on the above findings, the relationship between CI and financial performance is not supported could be due to the nature of the industry which mainly focused on delivering services. The quality-of-service delivery in the hospitality industry has become the main source of getting the revenue for an establishment. In contrast to Adidam's (2012) findings, which indicated Indian firms with higher levels of competitive intelligence activities managed to achieve better financial results, Waithaka's (2016) study found no

statistically significant impact of competitive intelligence practices on the financial performance of the firms listed on the Nairobi Securities Exchange.

Based on the respondent's profile in this study, the type of hotel affiliation could be one possible reason for the non-significant impact of CI on financial performance. Most respondents (51.5%) belonged to chain-affiliated hotels. Chain hotels typically establish certain minimum standards, rules, policies, and procedures that must be followed by other properties in the same chain. These hotels are usually classified as operators under a management contract, franchises, or referral group. A previous study concluded that hotels compete and collaborate on CI only with their sister hotels. There is no practical CI collaboration between competing hotels at the inter-organisational level (Koseoglu et al., 2021). A recent study by Hao et al. (2020) claimed that branded hotel chains emerged more competitive during the pandemic due to their business model advantages, refined SOP, disaster management mechanisms, and proficient operations. Chain hotels usually have better financial support and resources. Post-pandemic inelasticity contributed to the insignificant financial performance. This study has revealed that CI has a significant relationship with non-financial performance involving customer loyalty, satisfaction, and competitive position. This is because returning guests have positive feedback on the properties and will be the major contributors for the hotel revenue.

Therefore, it is important for these strategies to focus on customer satisfaction which leads to customer loyalty. Other than that, CI has a great impact on competitive position for the hotel that indicates the hotel performance because keeping an eye on competitors is no longer enough if the hospitality industry wants to survive in this volatile business environment. Hospitality professionals should have a comprehensive set of CI capabilities that enable companies to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage. With a sample of Spanish hotels, Salguero et al. (2019) carried out a quantitative study to investigate the effects of organisational and environmental factors on CI. According to their research, hotels are more inclined to use CI in environments where there is strong competition.

Conclusion

In summary, competitive intelligence practices enable hotels to gain a deeper understanding of the market and their competition. This knowledge, when used strategically, is able to empower hotels to make data-driven decisions that positively impact customer loyalty and satisfaction. By continuously monitoring the competitive landscape, hotels can stay ahead of the curve and remain responsive to evolving customer preferences, leading to a stronger and more loyal customer base. Therefore, the finding concluded that CI practices have a significant positive effect only on non-financial performance instead of financial performance. This research makes several implications such as examining the significant impact of CI which plays an important role in increasing hotel performance. The implementation of competitive intelligence strategies yields benefits for all parties involved in the hotel sector, including better decision-making, more efficiency, reduced risk, and an improved overall visitor experience.

Hotels may generate value for all parties involved and keep a competitive advantage in the market by utilising competitive intelligence efficiently. This research also provides a set of basic conditions for a better understanding of the CI practices in the hotel industry which is a strong foundation for the decision-making process. In addition, this study enriches the existing body of literature in the context of the hotel industry. The use of CI could assist hotel managers and other stakeholders such as investors and suppliers to better understand their organisational environment and create the most effective adaptation strategies (Salguero et al., 2019). This study reveals that CI has a significant impact on hotel performance, especially in non-financial performance.

Suggestions for Future Research

Future research should explore more CI activities and practices in the context of hospitality industries. Hotel management should accelerate the incorporation of competitive intelligence practices to become innovative for hotel performance. The limitation for this study is that the results are based on management perceptions, which may introduce bias. Therefore, future studies should analyse perceptions from the perspective of different levels of management, such as executive level and below. In addition, the scope of this study is limited to four- and five-star hotels. It is suggested for future studies to examine three-star hotels, as this category may yield different results, as in the study of Abu-Qulah and Harahshah (2017), where it confirmed the differences with statistical significance for different types of hotels in the Jordanian hotel industry.

The other limitations are the affiliation and the hotels' sizes. As explained by other researchers in the field, the nature of the study could be one of its limitations (Nazarian et al., 2019). This research mostly investigated hotels affiliated with chains, which could lead to a different result from previous studies in which hotels in Iran were considered independent hotels of different sizes, from small to large, which is a large part of the industry (Nazarian et al., 2021). This led to a different outcome in hotel performance, as independent hotels typically faced problems obtaining appropriate resources due to financial and non-financial constraints (Nazarian et al., 2019), which could directly impact organisational performance/effectiveness and customer satisfaction (García-Lillo et al., 2018).

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Authors' Contribution

The authors confirm contribution to the paper as follows: study conception and design: Dian Aszyanti Atirah Mohd. Asri and analysis of data was done by Nur Hayati Ab Samad. All authors reviewed the whole manuscript and approved the final version of the manuscript.

Conflict of Interest Declaration

We certify that the article is the Authors' and Co-Authors' original work. The article has not received prior publication and is not under consideration for publication elsewhere. This has not been submitted for publication nor has it been published in whole or in part elsewhere. We testify to the fact that all Authors have contributed significantly to the work, validity and legitimacy of the data and its interpretation for submission to the conference.

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