

Understanding Government and Firm Responses to Global Disruption: A case of Fiji's Hotel Industry During the Covid-19 Pandemic

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Attestation of Authorship

I hereby declare that this submission is my own work and that, to the best of my knowledge and belief, it contains no material previously published or written by another person (except where explicitly defined in the acknowledgements), nor material which to a substantial extent has been submitted for the award of any other degree or diploma of a university or other institution of higher learning.

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Abstract

In the past, global disruptions such as natural disasters and man-made crises posed major economic disruptions. Despite these past challenges, the tourism sector continued to grow, and the industries within the sector continued to benefit from the influx of international tourists all around the globe. However, with the recent diffusion of the Covid-19 pandemic, the tourism sector is one of the most hit industries. The immediate economic implications concerned many countries as businesses were closing, rise in unemployment, increase in poverty and health casualties. For most developing countries like Fiji, Covid – 19 significantly impacted Fiji's economy and its tourism sector. Therefore, this dissertation aims to carry out a systematic literature review on the concept of operational resilience and how it relates to firms survivability in times of disruption. Thus, the study finds that operational resilience can have a major implication on firms survivability and continuity through creating a resilient system that can teach businesses how to adapt to change or disruption in a progressive manner for survivability. Therefore, this study uses case study methodology to examine the case of Fiji's hotel industry during the Covid-19 pandemic.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The overlapping, interdependent, and disintegrated nature of tourism products requires businesses to collaborate with different stakeholders within the sector, such as supplier distribution, government, travel industry competitors, and other related firms that operate in the hospitality industry (Gonzalez-Torres et al., 2021). Therefore, such collaboration and cooperation between businesses and stakeholders are seen as drivers of organisational performance. These drivers are factored in through business flexibility, agility, adaptation and transformational business models (González-Torres et al., 2021). However, being in an interrelated industry like tourism, businesses are exposed to a high level of risk, as any shock from one agent can quickly spread and impact the overall tourism supply chain. Hence, this makes the tourism sector highly sensitive and vulnerable to external shocks, such as economic crisis, financial crisis, natural disaster, international conflict, terrorism or an epidemic outbreak (González-Torres et al., 2021; Jiang et al., 2019).

In the past, crises from natural disasters posed major threats to the tourism sector. The impact from natural disasters have a significant and effect on the economy and livelihood of individuals along with the anticipated effects such as job losses and reduced tourism revenue (Jiang et al., 2019). Man-made crises also influence and affect tourism demand and negatively impact both the supply and demand side of the tourism supply chain. For example, the global financial crisis and terrorist attacks both caused upheaval in the tourism sector (Jiang et al., 2019). Despite these past crises, the international tourism sector has grown drastically during the past three decades due to technological advancements in transportation and interconnectedness between countries (Pforr & Hosie, 2007). The development in the tourism sector has created huge enterprise benefits and extensive economic growth for countries. Therefore, many countries depend on tourism revenue for economic growth and social development.

However, the rapid diffusion of the Covid-19 pandemic caused major upheaval in the tourism sector. In March 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared the Covid-19 outbreak a pandemic, resulting in countries closing borders, imposing lockdowns, social distancing and mandatory quarantine processes (González-Torres et al., 2021). The outcomes of these measures quickly translated into global economic disruption. While the effects of Covid-19

crippled countries and their economies, the impacts of this virus was unprecedented and fast-changing on the hotel and travel industry (González-Torres et al., 2021). Hence, the repercussion of this pandemic was described as 'catastrophic' to the tourism and hospitality industry.

The devastating impact of Covid-19 on tourism and the effect on economies was a major concern for countries like Fiji. Fiji's tourism sector is one of the biggest providers and contributors to economic growth in Fiji. The sector employs around 150,000 people and contributes around \$2 billion in tourism earnings (Reserve Bank of Fiji, 2020). Of this, around 80% directly comes from the hotel industry (Reserve Bank of Fiji, 2021). Therefore, for a small developing country like Fiji, the devastating impact Covid-19 on business is particularly concerning.

In Fiji, it is challenging for businesses to overcome financial distress when competing with disruption and shocks with limited resources (financial) and capacity (expertise) to counter the crisis occurring (Reddy et al., 2020). Crisis management is an issue for small and medium businesses, whether for a pandemic or a natural disaster. Businesses in Fiji lack effective strategies that can protect them from shocks and natural disasters. This study looks into the areas which can assist businesses in the hotel industry to develop operational resilience strategies to prepare themselves when a disruptive event unfolds, and also how government can assist in a holistic way to develop scalable intervention for recovery plans in times of crisis (Sharma et al., 2021).

Therefore the focus of this paper entails around understanding the concept of operational resilience and why hotel firms need to approach new skills and strategies as tourism marketing might have worked in past, but now we are facing new challenges and the complexities with pandemics are far more unprecedented than it was before. Operational resilience focus is to look into business continuity and survivability through value creation functions and the availability of businesses to operate as usual in times of disruptions (Essuman, Boso and Annan, 2020). Thus, understanding how hotels can navigate or customise this concept into a crisis management technique for hotel businesses can assist firms to untangle complexities and challenges faced in times of disruption.

Although operational resilience can be one aspect of understanding how hotel firms can revolutionise their strategies during disruptive events, such as pandemics. In order for firms to make radical changes in their operational system, it is important for the government to provide that intuitional space where policies and pandemic strategies are aligned with reviving businesses through government support. Therefore, the aim of this study outlines the focus of this dissertation and its chapter focus.

1.2 Aim of the study

As the Covid-19 pandemic intensified, the effect of this crisis was crippling and spreading rapidly. The severity of Covid-19 questioned the capacities of countries and their resilience to deal with such unforeseen circumstances. Countries around the world acted with policies and measures to save their economy, and since the virus was new to modern history, it became difficult for health officials and policy-makers to come up with effective strategies to mitigate the current crisis. Businesses were closing, and job losses were rising. The tourism sector was heavily hit. The businesses within the tourism industry, like hotels, were not prepared to manage such a crisis as the coronavirus. Many businesses closed or were heading towards closure. Therefore, in response to Covid-19, businesses needed to revisit their recovery strategies and improve their resilience to face the long-term impact of this current situation.

The tourism literature does address the importance of resilience during an event of crisis; however, very little is known on how businesses become resilient to disruptive events. Therefore, the aim of this study is to carry out a comprehensive systematic literature review on the concept of operational resilience and why hotel industry businesses need to capitalise on this concept to survive in times of disruption.

The study also aims to provide a broad overview of how policies were implemented during global disruptive events and how government roles impact industries during times of disruption. The study highlights the importance of government intervention through policies and funding to navigate a path for businesses with resources and capacities to manage a crisis and survive the long-term consequences.

Therefore, the study aims to answer the following research questions:

1. How does operational resilience relate to business survivability in times of disruption?

- 1a. How has Covid-19 disrupted the hotel industry in Fiji?
2. How does government support help industries during the disruption?
 - 2a. How have government policies assisted Fiji's hotel industry to become more resilient in dealing with Covid-19 disruptions.

1.3 Format of Dissertation

This dissertation consists of six chapters, as follows:

Chapter 1 provides a general overview of the topic and the background of this study. The chapter also includes the aim of this study and the two research questions with each of its sub-questions.

Chapter 2 provides an overview of the definition of resilience, the application of the resilience concept in the destination sustainability framework. It explains the underpinning concept of organisational resilience, an overview of the dynamic concept and its applicability to achieve operational resilience.

Chapter 3 details the background context for Fiji's tourism sector, particularly the hotel industry to understand the implications of Covid-19 on Fiji's tourism sector and how Covid-19 has disrupted the hotel industry.

Chapter 4 provides an overview of ontology and epistemology positioning for this study. The study uses an interpretivist paradigm selection and a second case study method for collating documents for analysis, such as journals, industry reports, government and non-civil organisation documentations.

Chapter 5 discusses government response during global disruptions in the past and how policies and strategies have changed. The study investigates the past events on financial recessions and epidemics and pandemics outbreaks.

Chapter 6 summarises the study. This chapter presents the conclusion and recommendations alongside research limitations, managerial implications for hotel owners, and future research avenues.

2. Chapter Two: Literature Review

2.1 Chapter Introduction

Studies on resilience during periods of crisis in the tourism industry have mostly focused on the ecological and socio-ecological aspects of resilience (Prayag, Spector, Orchiston & Chowdhury, 2020). “Crisis management resilience” is defined as how individuals and organisations use their capacity to adapt, respond and recover from unexpected disruptions (Prayag, 2018). Hence, consideration of the factors of resilience provides a better perspective from which to understand crisis management and how firms can cope with any scale of adversity when an extraordinary event unfolds (Prayag, 2018; Becken & Khazai, 2017; Lew, 2014).

Disaster management literature suggests that resilient firms and organisations are less likely to be affected during disruptive events as they can recover more quickly from the negative impacts (Hall, Malinen, Vosslander & Wordsworth, 2016; Prayag, 2018). However, crisis management literature suggests that the concept of resilience is not only important for the loss of business revenue, but it also looks into damage control, the resilience of local communities, supply chain resilience and business recoverability (Prayag, 2018). Therefore, resilient firms result in resilient communities.

A review of the existing disaster management and crisis management literature reveals there are very few studies that conceptualise resilience in tourism. There is insufficient empirical evidence examining resilience-building for tourism entrepreneurs in terms of business survival, performance and recovery mechanisms after disruptive events (Prayag, 2018). Therefore, compared to other industries, firms and organisations in the tourism industry are highly vulnerable to internal and external environment shocks (Espiner, Orchiston & Higham, 2017), and little attention has been given to how firms in the tourism sector can revive or adapt to the changing environment (Prayag, 2018).

2.2 Definition of Resilience

The term "resilience" is a commonly used word. It is difficult to identify a precise definition related to a specific discipline, such as a business discipline. Bodin and Wiman (2004) state that in physical science, resilience refers to the capacity of a firm's operating system to bounce

back to its original state after being affected by shocks. In social science, the concept of resilience is more of an explanation of experience by individuals, families and communities when faced with a series of disruptions or shocks (Herman, Stewart, Granados, Berger, Jackson & Yuen, 2011). Therefore, the concept of resilience has been widely used in disaster management, ecology, global environment and crisis management.

Norris et al. (2008) explain that definitions of resilience can vary across disciplines. The generally accepted understanding of resilience in management and business is how firms or individuals adjust during disruptions, stress, shocks, or in adverse events (Norris et al., 2008). The most common definition of resilience is "bouncing back from challenges" and how can firms survive, manage or mitigate the crisis being faced. Other scholars claim that resilience is concerned with learning, re-organising and understanding the situation or disruption while going forward (Cutter, Barnes, Berry, Burton, Evans, Tate & Webb, 2008). Norris et al. (2008, p. 130) define resilience as "a process linking a set of adaptive capacities to a positive trajectory of functioning and adaptation after a disturbance".

Management literature considers resilience on two levels—individual and organisational resilience. Individual-level resilience is a concept that relates to individual challenges and coping mechanisms at a personal level (Norris et al., 2008). Organisational resilience is the strategies and proactive measures firms use to identify and bounce back to the challenges faced (Norris et al., 2008). Under the ecological definitions, resilience refers to "the ability of a social or ecological system to absorb disturbances while retaining the same basic structure and ways of functioning, the capacity for self-organisation, and the capacity to adapt to stress and change" (Pyke, De lacy, Law & Jiang, 2016, p. 50).

Therefore, operational resilience represents firms continuity or survivability, response strategy, business revival and growth during disruptive events (Dahles & Susilowati, 2015), aligning with individual resilience. As Carpenter, Walker, Anderies & Abel (2001) explain, resilience is an expression of the strength generated through human behaviour and the environment.

Although this study focuses on operational resilience, the relationship between operational resilience and individual resilience is undeniable. Operational resilience constitutes firms' continuity in times of disruption and individual resilience constitutes multiple interrelated factors, such as employee resilience to help to shape firms in events of disruption. Therefore,

this study offers a comprehensive overview on the themes and concepts of resilience in times of disruption and how it can be contextualized to firms in the hotel industry.

Thus, the study looks into Destination Sustainability Framework (DSF), organisation resilience and an overview of dynamic capabilities before explaining the concept of operational resilience. A comprehensive overview of the themes and concepts of resilience provides an interdisciplinary insight into why resilience needs to be contextualized for firms in the hotel industry and how it can help firms during unprecedented times.

2.3 Resilience Application in Destination Sustainability Framework

Scholars in crisis and disaster management understand resilience to be how and what can be done to mitigate and revive the negative impacts caused by natural disasters (Bruneau, Chang, Egunchi, Lee, Rourke, Reinhorn, Shinozuka, Tierney, Wallace, Winterfeldt, 2003). Disaster management, scholars Calgaro, Lloyd and Dominey-Howes (2014) reviewed and proposed a “Destination Sustainability Framework (DSF)” for the destination level. This framework conceptualises resilience and destination vulnerability to support resilience-building initiatives for tourism destinations. The following themes are embedded in the DSF framework: shocks and stressors, exposure, sensitivity, adaptation, communication, planning, and long-term adaptation (Calgaro et al., 2014). Pyke et al. (2016) applied this framework to understand the destination vulnerability and resilience for small tourism destinations in Australia, like Harrietville, that depend on the tourism sector for growth. Therefore, Pyke et al. (2016) concluded that the DSF approach offers a more layered understanding of crisis and allows extensive insight for risk planning for tourism destinations.

Beirman (2018) also focused on the DSF, organisation resilience and crisis management approach to understanding how Thailand's tourism industry recovered from various challenges and adversities. Avraham and Ketter (2016) argue that countries that rely heavily on the tourism sector have historically regarded the concept of resilience as preventative and proactive strategy planning to face potential disruptions and crises. Thailand is the world's most resilient tourism destination after facing series of crises and disruptions, such as the 2004 tsunami, political unrest in 2010 and flooding during 2011 (Beirman, 2018). Thailand's tourism industry has experienced constant growth, while other countries have struggled to uphold their destination image reputation. Beriman (2018) explains that the Thailand tourism industry has

a strong relationship with government authorities and private sector businesses. The Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) understand how much the country depends on the tourism industry for economic growth. Therefore, TAT engages in organisational and operational resilience planning, strategizes dynamic capabilities, and imposes adaptive resilience plans when crisis and disruption arise.

2.4 Organisation Resilience

Scarpino and Gretzel (2015) explain that firms can achieve resilience through understanding the concept of organisational resilience. Organisational resilience focuses on eight concepts. First, proactive planning and strategic development. This element addresses ways in which tourism-dependent countries can dedicate units and task forces, focusing on sensing potential threats and dealing with challenges or crises as they arise. Secondly, strategy evaluation and strategic control. This involves accessing and responding to impending disruptive events. Thirdly, scanning to planning, which looks at how operational resilience at the firm level can be enhanced by adopting proactive risk management strategies from an organisational perspective. Scanning to planning imposes a proactive approach which is more suitable as disruption can happen anytime, and firms need to be proactive to counter challenges (Beirman, 2018). Fourthly, resources management involves budgeting and human resource capabilities for better communication in dealing with a crisis (Scarpino & Gretzel, 2015).

The fifth concept is crisis communication and control. Beirman (2018) explains that crisis communication and control contributes to Thailand's response to critical and urgent matters as fast as possible. The sixth element is understanding and collaborating with stakeholders. This concept focuses on the stakeholder relationship with inter-related industries, such as airlines, restaurants, and government authorities (Beirman, 2018). Resolution and normality is the seventh element and this focuses on post-crisis recovery. Post-crisis recovery is how firms can reposition themselves to the 'new normal' and adapt to new changes and the requirements to be prepared. Beirman (2018) highlighted that extra building compliance requirements were imposed on the hotel industry after the 2004 tsunami. Lastly, organisational learning and feedback. This element highlights previous events and how organisations can learn and improve from experience (Beirman, 2018).

Scholars strongly propose collaboration, planning, and stakeholder involvement to achieve resilience at the organisation and community level. Beirman (2018), Pyke et al. (2016) and Calgaro et al. (2014) have focused on identifying collective strategies for firms and government and how they can help to face challenges from disruptive events and crises. However, literature on how firms in the tourism sector become resilient is very limited.

The concept of resilience adopted by business in the hotel industry is critical in a crisis or when a disruptive event unfolds. Jiang, Ritchie and Verreyne (2019) argue that, although there is much said about organisations being resilient in overcoming crises or disruptions, there are still gaps in understanding how these firms become resilient. Wang and Ritchie (2012) also argued that tourism industries lack crisis management preparedness during disasters and disruptions. Ineffective recovery strategies, heavily relying on government support and lack of proactive planning make firms vulnerable during disruption and crisis (Wang & Ritchie, 2012; Jiang et al., 2019). Therefore, it is important for firms to recognise the key characteristics which enable businesses to achieve resilience in an increasingly turbulent environment.

Jiang et al. (2019) argue that the lack of a theoretical framework in the tourism and hotel industries has resulted in firms and organisations not capitalising on strategies that can guide them to prepare, respond, and achieve long-term resilience. Therefore, before conceptualising operational resilience, in strategic management literature, organisational capabilities are highly driven by the dynamic capabilities of businesses, which facilitates strategic activities to achieve organisational performance. Teece (2007) explains that the ability of businesses to integrate and reconfigure internal capabilities helps them to respond to changes created by the external environment. Most studies have focused on macro-level issues and ignored micro-level impacts and coping strategies used by managers in the tourism industry (Smart, Ma, Qu and Ding, 2021). Therefore, adoption of the dynamic capabilities approach can heighten firms to operationalise strategies to survive and determines how they respond to disruptive events. Thus, the study also provides an overview of dynamic capabilities in the context of the hotel industry, in order to bring interdisciplinary insights to the concept of operational resilience and how it can be used by firms to achieve operational resilience to survive disruptive events.

2.5 Overview of Dynamic Concepts

The current empirical research on how tourism organisations achieve resilience does not provide a comprehensive understanding of the concepts. Further, existing literature on resilience studies on tourism firms does not offer sufficient evidence to prove relationships between different types of resilience and firm core competencies (Jiang et al., 2019; Prayag, Spector, Orchiston and Chowdhury, 2020). Firms mostly focus on achieving resilience either at an organisational or individual level (Jiang et al., 2019). Prayag et al. (2020) noted that the key dimension to achieve resilience in tourism businesses, at the organisational and individual level, occurs when human capital is seen in terms of employees' adaptive capacity and individual resilience, and owners' entrepreneurial lifestyle (choice and satisfaction) .

Most small and medium businesses reflect a strong stakeholder relationship as an aspect of adaptative resilience (Prayag, 2018). Orchiston (2013) argues that most of the tourism-related firms' idea of achieving resilience is through financial covers like insurances and employee inductions. However, a quantitative study by Dahles and Susilowati (2015) reflected that small businesses in Indonesia's accommodation sector needed dynamic resources vital for firms to achieve resilience. Therefore, to achieve operational resilience, it is evident that firms need "individual resilience (people), systems resilience (processes), and supply chain resilience (partnerships)" (Dahles & Susilowati, 2015b; Jiang et al., 2019).

Dynamic capabilities is defined as "the capacity of an organisation to create, extend, or modify its resource base purposefully" (Chukwuemeka & Onuoha, 2018, p. 8). Teece (2007) explains that dynamic capabilities is the foundation by which firms achieve a competitive advantage, especially in a rapidly changing environment. The core elements that underpin dynamic capabilities are sensing, seizing and reconfiguring (Teece, 2007). These elements are meant to sense any potential threat, seize opportunities and manage threats, and reconfigure strategies for value-enhancing within a firm. Therefore, the dynamic capabilities framework depicts organisational and managerial competencies that allow firms to achieve competitive advantage and change business models depending on the situation. These situations can be new market entrants or global disruption.

Scholars have argued that the resource-based view (RBV) is an important aspect of achieving competitive advantage (Barney, 2001; Li & Liu, 2014). The importance of RBV is that it

focuses on the creation of core competencies and capabilities that are unique and difficult to imitate. Resilient firms and organisations have the flexibility to adjust their management structures, business models, and strategies (Borekci, Say, Kabasakal, & Rofcanin, 2014; Kucera & Jiang, 2019). Therefore, hotels and other tourism-related organisations need to build resilience by boosting their core competencies, thereby extending their strategies in capitalising on the dynamic capabilities of the organisation.

Dynamic capabilities in the strategic management literature examines how organisations and firms can achieve competitive advantage in a highly competitive environment. Technology is rapidly advancing, and market dynamics are highly disruptive (Teece, 2007). The dynamic capabilities approach can offer a different perspective to understand how firms can achieve operational resilience. Although the hotel industry is mostly small to medium-sized in developing countries, having limited resources and lack of experience in strategic planning are some of the barriers to achieving resilience in a disruptive environment (Jiang et al., 2019). On the contrary, small and medium-sized businesses have a high level of flexibility to change and adapt due to their simple organisational structure and niche business focus (Ates & Bititci, 2011). Therefore, dynamic capabilities can offer insights to the tourism literature to understand how firms can achieve operational resilience when faced with disruption.

Based on the discussion above, dynamic capabilities can provide firms with an edge to improve, achieve resilience and recover during disruptions (Jiang et al., 2019). Firms can achieve resilience by “utilising firms slack resources, embedding and integrating into organisations functions and processes and changing organisations operational routines” (Jiang et al., 2019, p. 888). The advantage of the dynamic capability approach is that it can change the organisation focus from a static strategy to a proactive action-based approach. Therefore, firms in the hotel industry can benefit from these approaches as their focus is on actively processing what is going around them and how firms can meet the challenges that arise from a turbulent environment.

Resilient firms can cope better with crisis and disruption because they have the dynamic capabilities resources that can identify and manage complexities and challenges faced by firms. A firm's competencies and resources can assist in developing strategies, operational routines, and how they can approach crisis or disruptive events (Jiang et al., 2019). Prayag (2018) argues that tourism studies need to change their focus from crisis/disaster management to a much-

defined resilience approach for firm survivability in the tourism industry context. The long term goal for tourism crisis management is to determine how businesses can return to their former state. However, Prayag (2018) states that tourism firms need to change their approach to align with adaptation and transformational plans for new opportunities and growth.

Therefore, this study intends to link the core concepts of dynamic capabilities with the sub-themes of operational resilience. These themes have overlapping ideas on how firms should react when faced with disruptions, thus the amalgamation of themes from dynamic capabilities and operational resilience can provide insight to firms from both value-creation functions and being adaptive and transformational for business survivability.

2.6 Operational Resilience

Essuman et al. (2020) explain the importance of understanding resilience at the operational level. Firms operation is the most important subsystem as it constitutes value-creation functions and generates revenue. In events of disruption, the availability of a business to operate as usual, has a negative impact (Essuman et al., 2020). Therefore, operational resilience refers to a firm's ability to continue its operation in the event of major disruption.

Resilience is key to establishing ways and approaches that will improve the firm ability to cope with disruptions and their implications. The tourism sector is one of the key areas of revenue generation for many economies around the globe. It is a sector that contributes significantly to a country's economic growth. However, the vulnerability of this sector to external disruptions is of concern for business continuity and survivability for businesses currently in that industry (Khalid, Okafor & Bursynska, 2021). Therefore, operationalising the concept of resilience can actively engage firms to develop a different outlook on developing resilience that can focus on firms' ability to continue operation in major disruptive events.

Essuman et al. (2020) describe operational resilience by contextualising disruption absorption and recoverability elements of output-based resilience. Operational resilience is more appropriate during disruption, as in the short run, it is impractical and costly for firms to change and adapt to new changes whenever disruption occurs (Essuman et al., 2020). Therefore, when disruption occurs, "resilient organisations operate under the belief that they are imperfect but

can become more perfect over time through learning from events and near events” (Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2007, p. 3419).

Disruption absorption refers to the ability of business to maintain the structure and continue with the business operation when faced with disruption (Chowdhury & Quaddus, 2017; Essuman et al., 2020). The term “recoverability” refers to the business’s ability to return to normal operation after being disrupted (Essuman et al., 2020). Based on resilience literature (Chowdhury & Quaddus, 2017; Essuman et al., 2020; Tukamuhabwa et al., 2015), resilience is explained from input- and output-based approaches. The input-based approach focuses on the ability of business to respond to disruptions effectively. The firm's ability to absorb and recover from impacts leads businesses to reposition in the face of disruption (Chowdhury & Quaddus, 2017).

2.7 Input–Based Resilience

The key aspects of input-based resilience (IBR) are achieved through “firm flexibility, buffers, visibility, disruption preparedness, agility, collaboration, integration, and information sharing” (Essuman et al., 2020, p. 2). Output-based resilience (OBR) theories argue that resilience cannot be asserted without a disruption (Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2007). The key elements of output-based resilience are disruption absorption, recoverability, adaptability and transformability (Essuman et al., 2020)

2.7.1 Firms Flexibility and Agility

The business environment has evolved over the past three decades. It is highly challenging for businesses to keep up with fast-moving business models, product innovations, globalisation, domestic and international competition and technological advancement (Utoyo, Fontana & Satrya, 2020). Revolution in the business era has exposed many businesses weaknesses, and it has challenged many established firms. Therefore, it is important to understand the rationale of dynamic capabilities and how firms can use this approach to react and respond to their needs in a challenging business environment during a disruptive event (Sheng, 2017).

Sheng (2017) argues that firms need to sense these disruptions to be prepared for upcoming challenges. Sensing includes identifying threats and visualising future new business prospects before the event unfolds (Henneberg, Naude & Mouzas, 2010). Klein, Wiggins and Dominguez

(2010) argue that businesses which fail to execute their sensemaking strategies overlook important cues signalling disruptions or upcoming challenges. Kindstorm, Kowalkowski and Sandberg (2013) explain that for service-oriented businesses, such as accommodation providers and hotel industry firms, sensing capabilities should be proactive in market situations, and any sense of threat or disruption to the business process evaluated. Hotel organisations can use sensing capability to identify future threats and disruptions, which can help them prepare to survive upcoming challenges or crises and allow flexibility for change.

The flexibility concept explains how firms respond to disruption for survivability and operation continuity (Aboah, Wilson, Rich & Lyne, 2018). How fast a system can respond to disruption reflects the agility of the business to create capabilities and their capacity to respond to a disruptive event (Aboah et al., 2018). Charles, Lauras and Wassenhove (2010) explain that the concept of flexibility can only be applied when firms have a pre-event investment which keeps them in a strong position to be flexible and agile to changes when disruptive events unfold. Prior investment in resources and infrastructure gives firms an edge to prepare themselves. However, Aboah et al. (2018) argues that flexibility is only achievable if firms can balance the cost involved with flexibility and how effectively they deal with resilience. The concept of flexibility allows firms to build operational resilience only if they have the capacity and resources. Therefore, if firms have both dynamic capabilities and financial resources, they are likely to survive during disruptive events. However, if firms resources in the hotel industry are constrained, they can resort to other strategies that allow the flexibility to change and be more transformational during a disruptive event by learning from previous events (Vogus & Sutcliffe, 2007)

Dahles and Susilowati (2015) describe the effect of a decade of disruptive events in Indonesia between 1996-2006. Indonesia went through forest fire in 1996, causing a decline in international tourists. In 1997, the Asian monetary crisis caused the purchasing power of Asian consumers to decline, and thus a decline in Asian tourist arrivals. In 1998, political instability caused ethnic and religious turmoil which also led to a decline in international visitors. The country experienced bomb attacks between 2002-2005 and also had the SARS epidemic in 2003. Following, in 2006 the country had an earthquake. In these series of events, small and medium sized business were heavily affected with losses from previous events accumulating year on year. It was extremely difficult for these businesses to continue (Dahles & Susilowati,

2015). Therefore, for survival, businesses had to remodel their strategies and adapt to new conditions to survive (Dahles & Susilowati, 2015).

Despite the complexities and challenges arising from economic conditions, natural and social systems, some firms manage to survive the adversity of these disruptive events. Firms that have previously encountered extreme crises or disruptions from events have demonstrated their ability to respond and adapt to new processes while identifying new opportunities for business survivability (Dahles & Susilowati, 2015). Therefore, hotels and accommodation businesses which were affected in Indonesia reduced their operational cost (decreased employee working hours), converted hotel rooms to boarding houses for students and converted hotel space for restaurant businesses (Dahles & Susilowati, 2015). Whenever an event disrupted international tourist arrival, the Indonesian hotel and accommodation industry optimised their local tourism market. Therefore, it is evident that the capacity to respond to these types challenges and to revive operation back to normal is seen as one of the qualities of business resilience (Norris et al., 2008)

2.7.2 Collaboration

Collaboration in input-based resilience is when all stakeholders internally and externally work together to ensure firms operations run smoothly (Aboah et al., 2019). The concept of collaboration is embedded when information sharing, integration, coordination and visibility are all aligned with the objective of the business. A lack of consensus amongst these elements could result in differing ideas and systems for firms to achieve operational resilience. Therefore, it is evident from Beirmen's (2018) study on Thailand's tourism sector that a strong collaboration between government and firms existing in the tourism sector enhances the recoverability of firms to survive and continue operations after a series of disruptive events.

2.7.3 Disruption Preparedness

Disruption preparedness is embedded in the notion of firms resourcefulness (Aboah et al., 2019). Aboah et al. (2019) define resourcefulness as "the ability to identify problems, establish priorities and mobilise resources to deal with disruptions, to ensure recovery of the functionality of the system" (p. 278). The system's functionality refers to how firms make economic decisions, develop capacities and proactively respond to disruptions. Firms can only

make these economic decisions when they have the flexibility and agility to move resources such as pro-investment funds, core competencies, and a resilient business system that is ready to adapt to disruptions.

Although elements of input-based resilience (IBR) relate to achieving operational resilience, Essume et al. (2020) and Yu, Jacobs, Chavez and Yang (2019) argue that empirical studies have shown that IBR elements cannot fully account for the notion of resilience. Essmune et al. (2020) state that the resilience of a business is not ascertained unless there is a disruption unfolding. Therefore, IBR is regarded as indicative of “formative resilience” (Scholten, Scott and Fynn, 2019), “resilience enhancers” (Blackhurst, Dunn and Craighead, 2011) and drivers of the resilience system (Hosseini, Ivanov and Dolgue, 2019). Firms can only respond to disruption effectively if it has the ability to absorb and recover from disruptive events. Hence, the need to understand output-based resilience (OBR) is equally important since most businesses in small developing countries do not have the level of investment and resources to adapt to the IBR system; OBR allows firms to learn and adapt while in the face of disruption.

2.8 Output-Based Resilience (OBR)

OBR means that firms can effectively respond to disruptive events by absorbing and recovering from the impacts by repositioning themselves during a crisis (Essuman et al., 2020). The four key elements of OBR are disruption absorption, recoverability, adaptability and transformability (Essuman et al., 2020). However, Essuman et al. (2020) assert that the two main components to conceptualise operational resilience are disruption absorption and recoverability. In contrast, adaptability and transformability lean more towards strategic management concepts such as requiring dynamic capabilities to perform a certain task (Essuman et al., 2020; Scholten et al., 2019). Since the study has previously addressed the dynamic capabilities in operational resilience and the tourism sector, this section will only cover the two main factors of OBR (disruptions absorption and recoverability).

2.8.1 Disruption Absorption

Disruption to firms’ operations can directly and negatively impact performance and efficiency, threatening the survivability of firms during a disruptive event (Manhart, Summers and Balckhurst, 2020). In the context of the hotel industry, the firms within the industry are facing

a huge level of uncertainty with the spread of the Covid-19 virus. The negative impacts of Covid-19 can be seen in high operational costs such as rent, taxes, maintenance, employee pay, and loss occurring to keep the hotel operational (Torres, Sanchez and Barahona, 2021). Therefore, in order for firms to survive disruptive events, cash flow or liquidity is essential.

Essuman et al. (2020) define disruption absorption as the “ability of a firm to maintain the structure and normal functioning of operations in the face of disruptions” (p. 3). The disruption profile suggests that business operation can be resilient during disruption if their performance is known prior to the disruption (Li et al., 2019). Essuman et al. (2020) explain that when a business experiences a drop in performance during an event of disruption, the ability to remain operational reflects the disruption absorption qualities. Therefore, firms that are able to absorb the financial cost of operating as usual during disruptive events are more sustainable with financial and human resources, whereas it is more challenging for businesses that face these uncertainties with financial constraints to continue with their operation. However, the economic impact of Covid-19 was huge and not only resource constrained firms suffered, but large enterprises were also affected. This required government support and intervention to assist industries which were heavily impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic crisis.

The financial distress caused by the Covid-19 pandemic required bailout strategies for business in the form of government support to assist businesses to absorb the financial cost for being operational. This led governments around the globe to implement policies, such as monetary and fiscal policies, to counter the effects of Covid-19 on industries like airline, tourism, healthcare, manufacturing and supply chain (Ozili & Arun, 2021). Firms could not absorb the losses from the effects of Covid-19 were assisted through banks offering low interest rate loans and government support policies to absorb the cost of being operational. These government initiatives gave hotel firms options and support enabling them to be operational in times of global disruption although not at their optimal level. Therefore, although firms may take time to recover from this pandemic crisis, the disruption absorption strategies can assist hotel firms to maintain their structure and continue being operational during a disruptive event.

2.8.2 Recoverability

Essuman et al. (2020) define recoverability as "the firms' ability to restore operations to a prior normal level of performance after being disrupted" (pg. 3). Behzadi et al. (2017) explain that

even although a firm can have disruption absorption capacity, that does not mean they also possess recoverability resilience. Essuman et al. (2020) explains that firms can be resilient in the face of adversity and yet lack the stability to return to their normal operational level for business continuity. For example, hotels which closed or were hibernating from the impact of Covid-19 will find it hard to return to their operational level since the cost of reopening the business is not determined. This study does not address the cost of reopening a business because it would require empirical research, however, we look into how firms in hotel industry recovered from previous disruptive events.

Disruptive events cause behavioural changes in both domestic and international visitors. (Kubickova et al., 2019). The 9/11 event caused fear and insecurities for travelling and the 2008 financial crisis restricted consumer spending as tourists became more price sensitive and people were concerned about their disposable income (Kubickova et al., 2019; Gul et al., 2015). The spill-over effects of these events were heavily felt in developing countries, since the tourism sector in those countries was strongly associated with generating income and employment (Kubickova et al., 2019). The hotel industry has been forced to revisit their marketing and pricing strategies to overcome these challenges (Solrin, 2016). For example, hotels in Mauritius offered free nights to their guests rather than decreasing the price of their rooms (Solrin, 2016). Therefore, past events show that in order for firms to bounce back from a crisis, recoverability is associated with how well they can alter their business strategies to fit the current situation.

Past events direct firms to reassess their business strategies and their adaptation to current situations. Therefore, pricing strategy, marketing and promotions were some of the measures that can assist firms to recover from losses and continue to operate during a disruptive event. In a country like Fiji, where Covid-19 cases were low during 2020, the hotel industry was promoting local travel through low hotel rates, and since there was no international travelling, locals were keen to take this opportunity. However, although firms were able to operate, certain virus containment measures still affected business operations and large hotel corporations were able to absorb the cost but small firms were disadvantaged. Promotion or cost reduction were not appropriate for these small businesses because they were already offering rooms at lower rates before the disruption.

Therefore, firms can achieve operational resilience if they have financial resources, core competencies, and a system that can withstand huge operational cost for business continuity during disruptive events. The ability of a firm to survive the negative impacts of disruption is cultivated into its resilience strategies which are drawn from input-based and output-based resilience factors of operational resilience.

2.9 Chapter Summary and Research Gap

Disruptions have been occurring over the past decades in the tourism sector. The tourism sector has always focused on disaster risk management, crisis management at the macro level and on climate change issues. What has changed is that the tourism sector has become more visible and its importance to economic activity more apparent. The growth of the economy has so much influence on people and businesses operating directly or indirectly with the tourism sector. It's undeniable that many small and developing countries depend on tourism sectors for economic growth and revenue generation. Peoples' livelihoods are dependent on the tourism market and since the outbreak of Covid-19, it has become apparent that countries are struggling to revive their suffering economy from the impact of Covid-19. Although disruption has occurred in the past, it is interesting to note that there are insufficient conceptual and empirical research papers that look into how firms adapt or survive during a global disruption. Therefore, the lack of study on operational resilience in the context of firms in hotel industry inspires the following research question:

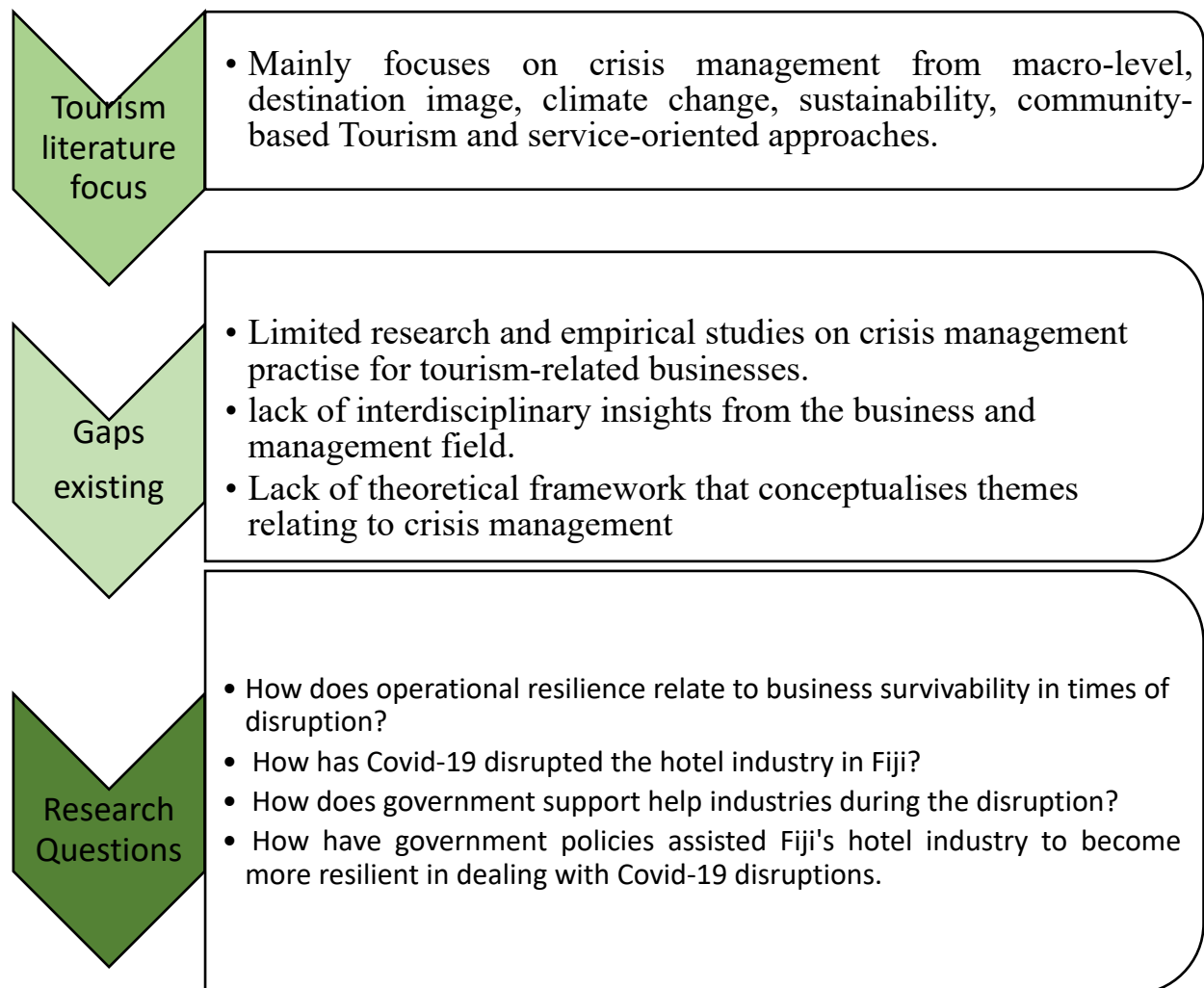
“How does operational resilience relate to firms survivability in time of disruption?”

“How has Covid-19 disrupted the hotel industry in Fiji?”

The answer to this research question will enable firms to rationalise the concept of operational resilience for business survivability in times of disruption by looking into what is occurring and how firms can meet the challenges that arise from a turbulent environment. Previous literature describes continuous learning from crisis, as crisis does not only have an immediate effect on countries, but it can also be long-lasting. The implication is that a resilient system existing in firms can not only overcome crisis, but can teach a business to adapt to changes in a progressive manner for survivability (Kubickova et al., 2019; Prayag, 2018). However, the lack of empirical studies around how firms cope with crisis or disruptive events does not offer much correlation between interdisciplinary themes and concepts. Therefore, tourism scholars

need to change their focus from crisis/disaster management to a defined resilience approach for firms' survivability in the context of the hotel industry. The gaps identified are set out in Figure 1 below.

Figure 1: Research gap.



3. Chapter Three: Case Study

3.1 Chapter Outline

The previous chapter provides a comprehensive overview of themes and concepts around operational resilience and how it relates to firms survivability in times of disruption. Although the literature review on resilience provides an extensive understanding of the ideologies of resilience and its application as firms' response strategies, there is still much to clarify within the tourism discipline.

This chapter entails background context for Fiji's tourism sector, particularly the hotel industry. To understand the implications of Covid-19 on Fiji's tourism sector and how Covid-19 has disrupted the hotel industry, it is crucial to analyse the current situation and what the firms within the industry are experiencing.

The beginning of the chapter looks into some of the past global cases of tourism disruption including the history of Fiji's tourism sector. This includes some detail of other disruptive events and how the challenges were overcome. Past events and information offer insight into how Fiji's economy depends on the tourism sector and its effect on the economy. Thus, the discussion in this chapter identifies post-Covid growth of the tourism sector and investigates trends and observations that explain why this research adopts Fiji as a case study. The rationale for this study is to understand the importance of the hotel industry and the firms within the industry. The importance of the hotel industry is often overshadowed since most of the data reflects gross tourism earnings. The impact of this pandemic has worsened the situation for hoteliers and global tourism market is at a halt.

Governments and relevant stakeholders need to address these challenges separately. Suppose small hotel businesses do not continue to exist in the industry because of their vulnerability in this pandemic outbreak. In that case, the long-term impact will be greater as Fiji would not be able to provide accommodation for visitors since small and medium firms comprise 52% of the accommodation rooms in Fiji (Fiji Tourism Report, 2021). Therefore, this study provides an overview and describes the impact which the hotel industry has on the wider economy in Fiji and why it is necessary to discuss this industry in the context of Covid-19.

3.2 Hotel Industry Disruption Before Covid-19

There have been many unexpected events which the tourism industry has suffered from that have steered a sudden reduction in international tourist arrivals. External environmental factors cause negative factors that affect the tourism sector. Factors such as “natural disasters, political instability, wars, economic crisis, terrorism and outbreak of contagious diseases (SARS, bird flu, Ebola)” (Kim, Chun & Lee, 2006, p. 370). These external factors create uncertainties and upheaval in the tourism industry. Therefore, to understand the crisis and how the industries within the tourism sector have managed to overcome the challenges, it is important to investigate a previous similar crisis that caused a sudden halt in international tourist demand.

The U.S. hotel industry faced two major external disruptions during 2001 and 2008 (Kosová & Enz, 2012). The terrorist attack on September 9th 2001 and the financial crisis during 2008. Kosova & Enz (2012) state that during these events, the overall hotel operation is affected. Disruptions like these impact hotels, customer segments, and operation routines for firms and industries that indirectly link with the tourism sector, such as airlines, restaurants and theme parks. Kosova and Enz (2012) show that although both the events heavily impacted the U.S. hotel industry, it took the industry four months to recover after the event occurred. Some of the strategies used by the hotel and accommodation providers in New York were financial and with the assistance of government initiatives firms were able to buffer themselves out from uncertainties (Kosová & Enz, 2012). Therefore, following the disruptions caused by terrorist attacks and financial recession, hotel firms are able to sustain themselves as restrictions on travelling are not halted as compared with pandemic outbreaks.

A pandemic crisis has a more crippling impact on countries and industries because the risk of spreading the virus halts the travel industry, thus having a direct impact on the tourism sector. The outbreak of the SARS virus in 2002 had a significant impact in East Asia. The hospitality and tourism industry was hugely impacted between 2002 to 2003 (Kim et al., 2005). Kim et al. (2005) compared the impacts of the SARS outbreak to the 9/11 event. It was found that the impacts from the pandemic crisis had a greater effect on people and firms than the man-made disruptive event. Chien and Law (2003) studied the impact of the SARS virus on the Hong Kong hotel industry. Hong Kong's hotel industry suffered a huge drop in occupancy rates from 86% to 10% during the SARS outbreak. This was due to a decrease in tourist arrivals and the huge number of hotel booking cancellations (Chien & Law, 2003). Therefore, the immediate

response from the hoteliers was to reduce the cost, defer international promotions and avoid non-essential capital expenditures (Kim et al., 2005; Chien & Law, 2003). The consequence of reduced revenues from booking cancellations resulted in hoteliers suspending some of their operations as it was hard for them to cover electricity, water and wages for their staff. The SARS virus was a new experience for hoteliers. As with the current Covid-19 pandemic, it was not known how long SARS would continue in Hong Kong, making the decision to close inevitable for many businesses (Chien & Law, 2003).

Kim et al. (2005) reflected on how Malaysia's hotel industry responded to the SARS pandemic outbreak. Hoteliers in Malaysia applied control strategy, discount marketing, close collaboration with inter-related industries such as airlines, and human resource development for employees to better understand the SARS virus and how to mitigate its risk on the hotels (Kim et al., 2005), thus reducing the damaging impact on firms and businesses. Kim et al. (2005) identifies a more cohesive approach taken by the firms in the hotel industry. For example, hoteliers applied strategies including pricing strategy, promotion strategy, short-term reduction of operation cost and utilizing tax exemption. In their study, Chien and Law (2003) indicate that firms lack understanding at the beginning of a pandemic crisis, but, as they grow into different phases of the outbreak, they start to adapt and transform business strategies which help business to survive during disruptive events.

The studies from Kim et al. (2005) and Chien and Law (2003) are more contextual and lack empirical data to reflect how firms were able to endorse strategies in a vulnerable phase. Therefore, previous events cannot predict whether firms in the hotel industry are resilient to disruptive events and what underpinning concepts can be utilized to determine if firms will adopt a resilience strategy rather than applying reactive strategies when faced disruption. The lack of theoretical implications in the tourism discipline, particularly the hotel industry, creates a gap in the business knowledge of the concept of resilience. It is for this reason that scholars like Jiang et al. (2019) and Prayag (2018) argue that firms that exist within the tourism industry need to change their approach and be more adaptive and transformational for new opportunities and growth.

The tourism literature has mainly focused on the concept of resilience for firms as a coping strategy for disruption caused by natural disasters (Khalid et al., 2021). Therefore, government response to external disruption has always been reactive. Thus, this indicates most management

policies and strategies at the firm level are also reactive as firms are often reliant on government funding in times of disruption (Jiang et al. 2019). However, the roles of government were challenged in the face of Covid-19. Countries were finding it hard to control the spread of the virus while managing the adversities caused by Covid-19 on the economy (Mehta, Kumar and Ramkumar, 2021). Policymakers in many countries were in a dilemma about whether to impose strict lockdown laws or keep the country running to cover the economic losses from Covid-19. Therefore, policymakers have a crucial role to play in how policies can directly impact a sector or industry to become more resilient to global disruptions.

The importance of designing policy and addressing the issues within industries that have a greater influence on the economy, such as the hotel industry, cannot be underestimated (Purwomarwanto & Ramachandran, 2015). Meng (2014) also argues that policies formulated to assist hotel industries during disruption have great benefit. This was evident during the Asian financial crisis. Malaysia's and Singapore's policy response to the financial crisis disruption was aligned with its hotel industry to boost domestic travel regionally (Khalid et al., 2021; Purwomarwanto & Ramachandran, 2015). Therefore, firms' resilience during disruption is also subject to government policies and how the industry can influence post-crisis recovery for the economy (Khalid et al., 2021).

3.3 Fiji's Tourism Sector

Over the past three decades, Fiji's tourism sector has evolved drastically. Narayan (2000) explains that the dramatic growth in Fiji's tourism sector has overtaken the export sugar industry sector, the main foreign exchange earner and major employment generator in the early 90s. During 1998, Fiji's tourism sector contributed around F\$568 million compared to sugar exports of \$F244 million, where the tourism sector contributed 22.1% to GDP and sugar exports contributed 9.5% (Narayan, 2000). During the early 2000s, Fiji economy was dependent on the tourism sector for economic growth as there was an 11% GDP growth in the tourism sector compared to the 1980s (Narayan, 2000). However, the growth and success of the tourism sector were halted by disruption caused by political instability resulting from the 2000 coup. This caused other countries to stop their citizens from travelling to Fiji due to political crisis (Narayan, 2000). A 1% increase in visitor arrivals in the short run or in the long run contributes around a 0.13% to 0.20% per capita increase (Kumar, Kumar, Patel &

Stauvermann, 2019). Thus, any causalities or adversities caused by disruptive events can drastically impact Fiji's economic growth (Kumar et al., 2019; Narayan, 2000).

Fiji is known for its beautiful islands, sandy beaches, tropical climate, cultural diversity, and local hospitality. Apart from its scenery, Fiji's strength lies in being the second-largest country to have coral reefs globally. This attracts tourists who wish to engage in sporting activities like surfing, snorkeling and diving (Narayan, 2000). Apart from the abundance of natural resources, Fiji provides excellent hospitality and is known for its warm "Fijian Bula smile". Also, with globalisation, Fiji has optimised global expansion for its tourism market through marketing and promotion. Fiji has a broad source of international tourism. New Zealand and Australia are the major sources of tourism for Fiji. In 2019, Australia's tourism earnings averaged around F\$225 million per quarter, and New Zealand amounted to around F\$117 million per quarter (Reserve Bank of Fiji [RBF], 2021). Lastly, hotels and accommodation facilities offering domestic airline services is a further growing aspect of Fiji's tourism sector. Figure 2 shows the growth of tourism in Fiji from 2009 to 2018.

Figure 2: Graph reflecting Tourism earning from 2009 - 2018



Source: Reserve Bank of Fiji, 2018 Annual Report

The above graph reflects how tourism earning has grown in Fiji. According to the RBF 2018 annual report, there was a 5.4% growth in tourism earnings in 2018 compared to 4.9% in 2017. The increase in tourism earning was due to marketing and promotion done by the Ministry of Tourism and Trade in countries like the U.S., Europe, Japan, U.K., New Zealand, China, India and other Pacific Islands (Reserve Bank Annual Report, 2018). Therefore, when the

international tourism market gets disrupted, repercussions from the crisis are felt by the whole country.

3.4 Fiji's Tourism Economic Overview

Fiji's tourism sector had a linear growth in tourism earning over the past years. This has positively impacted the country's economic growth. However, the impact of Covid-19 has been reduced tourism earnings from \$2 billion FJD in 2019 to \$314.7 million FJD in 2020, as reflected in Figure 3 below. A total drop of 84% in tourism earning. Therefore, the repercussions from Covid-19 is huge for countries like Fiji whose economy is dependent on tourism earnings.

Figure 3: Tourism Earning from 2017 till March 2021



Source: Fiji Bureau of Statistics

Although tourism earning shows a huge drop from the second quarter of 2020, it is interesting to note that gross tourism earning encompasses a huge percentage of hotel turnover earnings. Figures 4 and 5 reflect the results from hotel statistics over the period from 2017 up till March 2021. More than 50% of gross tourism earning is from the hotel industry in this period. In 2020, hotel turnover accounted for \$251 million of the \$314.9 million FJD gross tourism earnings, increasing from 60% to 80% of gross tourism earnings. In 2021, hotel turnover was \$15.2 million FJD and gross tourism earning was around \$2.8 million FJD, surpassing the gross tourism earnings.

Figure 4: Total hotel turnover earning and Gross Tourism earnings per year.



Source : Reserve Bank of Fiji (Hotel Statistics 2021)

Figure 5: Hotel Turnover to Gross Earning in percentage.



Source : Reserve Bank of Fiji (Hotel Statistics 2021)

3.5 Hotel Industry

In the event of the current pandemic crisis, the hotel industry has been confronted with an unprecedented negative impact. The spread of Covid-19 has severely impacted the tourism sector around the globe. The latest records of Covid-19 show around 230 million people being

affected and caused more than 4.72 million deaths worldwide (worldometer.info, 2021). The effects of this pandemic were very evident as countries went through lockdown to control the spread of the virus and were unsuccessful in eliminating or finding a solution at the beginning of 2020. The consequences of social distancing, lockdown and border closure led to a halt in domestic and international travelling. The impact of these control strategies caused businesses to be disrupted. This led some businesses to close, reduced demand for hotels, caused a crisis in health systems, increased unemployment, and affected countries dependent on tourism for economic growth (Mehta et al., 2021).

The concerns relating to health and hygiene are perceived as risky by tourists with this pandemic crisis. Therefore, this has caused a significant drop in tourism demand (Mehta et al., 2021). Mehta et al. (2021) argue that the Covid-19 pandemic has refocused the hotel industry to look into different approaches and strategies to be effective in scanning businesses for sudden disruption and identify changes in business patterns. These patterns may reflect sudden changes to customer expectations, new lifestyles, and changes in customer segments (Das & Tiwari, 2020). Therefore, this pandemic will add new customer expectations that will reassure visitors concerned over their health and safety, ensuring and restoring guest confidence to resume travelling (Mehta et al., 2021). Thus, firms in the hotel industry will need to adapt and adjust to new operational conditions set by visitor expectations.

Regarding change and the severity of the effect on the hotel industry during this pandemic, this study looks into how Covid-19 disrupted Fiji's hotel industry and how important the industry is to Fiji's economy.

3.6 Covid-19 Impact on Fiji's Hotel Industry

Fiji's tourism sector started to feel the impact of Covid-19 in late 2019. Tourism businesses were hit hard with the disruption caused by the Covid-19 crisis. Between February 2020 and March 2020, around 90% of firms were impacted in the tourism sector (International Finance Corporation, 2020). The tourism sector contributes around 40% of Fiji's GDP (F.J. \$2bn) and employs more than 150,000 (The Guardian, 2020). In 2019, Fiji recorded a total of 894,000 visitor arrivals which is more than the population of Fiji of around 880,000. The knock-on effect of Covid-19 on the tourism sector and industries linked such as the hotel industry was

heavily impacted. Therefore, the hotel industry was the first industry which faced the impact from international suspension of travelling.

In a small economy like Fiji, it's very challenging for businesses to overcome financial distress when facing disruption. In the context of the hotel industry, the majority of hoteliers are small and medium size. Hotel firms in Fiji are highly vulnerable to external shocks like natural disasters and the Covid-19 outbreak exposes the industry's vulnerability to counter the pandemic situation. The halt in inbound tourism caused booking cancellations and business revenues started to drop to the point where it became very difficult for hotels to be in operational. Fiji Hotel and Tourism Association (FHTA) stated that about 279 hotels and resorts had to close down due to the outbreak of Covid-19 (The Guardian, 2020). This caused more than 25,000 job losses and a consequent hike in unemployment, putting vulnerable businesses under pressure and uncertainty about their business operation post-Covid-19 crisis.

Fiji's Hotel industry is primarily made up by small and medium size firms. Figure 6 reflects the total number of rooms available throughout the country, noting the data reflects figures from 2017 which are the latest figures available from the Reserve Bank. A total of 11,191 rooms are available, out of which 32% are premium rooms, 17% high-quality rooms, 24% mid-range, and 28% are from budget and backpacking accommodations (Fiji Tourism Report, 2021). The premium, deluxe and luxury refers to rooms that are offered by 5-star hotels or resorts. High-level rooms are offered by 4-star hotels or resorts, whereas medium rooms refer to 3-star hotels, and budget rooms refer to hotels that are 2- stars or less. The majority of hotels in Fiji are small and medium firms. Thus, the effects of Covid-19 on firms in the hotel industry are concerning since most are small and medium, making them highly vulnerable to external disruptions.

Figure 6: Hotel Room Inventory Summary for 2017

REGION	Exclusive (\$2,500+)	Luxury (\$1,500- \$2,499)	Deluxe (\$500- \$1,499)	High (\$250- \$499)	Medium \$100- \$249)	Budget (<\$100)	Total
Nadi	2	69	1,296	955	1,261	805	4,388
Coral Coast	1	17	519	1,197	213	50	1,997
Suva	-	4	131	307	488	425	1,355
Mamanuca	28	70	709	123	13	19	962
North	53	50	165	73	246	215	802
Lautoka/Rakiraki	5	1	116	200	294	172	788
Pacific Harbour/Beqa	13	48	169	162	107	17	516
Yasawas	-	2	123	135	62	55	377
Tailevu/Lomaiviti	-	1	28	4	39	87	159
Cruise	34	-	52	25	-	-	111
Kadavu	6	21	25	10	26	23	111
Levuka	-	-	-	-	25	68	93
Lau	-	-	-	-	-	5	5
TOTAL	142	283	3,333	3,191	2,774	1,941	11,664

Source: Fiji Tourism 2021 Report.

Based on the International Finance Corporation and the Ministry of Commerce, Trade, Tourism and Transport (MCTTT) survey, the following analysis reflects the impact of the Covid-19 crisis on tourism-focused businesses and non-tourism focused businesses. This survey entails the financial, staffing, and operational challenges faced by firms in the tourism sector. Therefore, to further contextualise the impact on the Covid-19 crisis, this study reflects how Covid-19 has disrupted the hotel industry in Fiji.

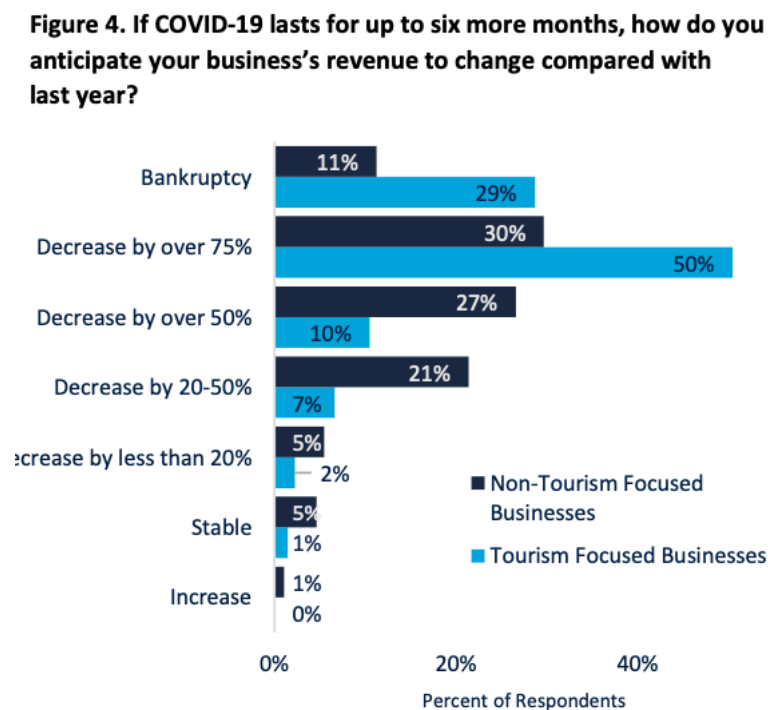
3.7 Impact of Covid-19 on Hotels' Financial Aspects

Small businesses make up 70% of firms in the hotel industry and a higher percentage in developing countries (Sharma & Upneja, 2005). Sharma and Upneja (2005) argue that, although the importance of small business activity for economic growth is necessary, there is still a scarcity of comprehensive research which can assist scholars in understanding the dynamics of hotel operations. The continuity for business to operate as usual is tied up with firms financial performance. For a business to be stable and operate effectively, entrepreneurs' objectives and management practices influence the conditions in which businesses can survive and operate (Sharma & Upneja, 2005). Therefore, small business owners in the hotel industry mostly pivot their firm's financial performance with business-oriented strategies for revenue

optimisation (Meng, 2014). In times of disruption and crisis, if business operation is affected for a longer period of time, most entrepreneurs choose to close the business or switch to another business (Sharma & Upneja, 2005). This is evident in the case of Fiji's hotel industry as 60% of tourism-focused firms considered closing or moving away from tourism-related operation due to the disruption caused by Covid-19 (International Finance Corporation, 2020).

Figure 7 shows that tourism businesses are affected more than non-tourism businesses. A survey by International Finance Corporation comprises 3,596 respondents, which are businesses from both the tourism and non-tourism focused sectors. The analysis shows that if Covid-19 exists for more than six months, 29% of tourism-focused businesses can anticipate bankruptcy. Whereas, if revenue decreased by more than 75%, almost 50% of tourism-focused businesses can also expect bankruptcy (International Finance Corporation, 2020).

Figure 7: How revenue is affected in tourism focused businesses if Covid-19 crisis last more than six months.

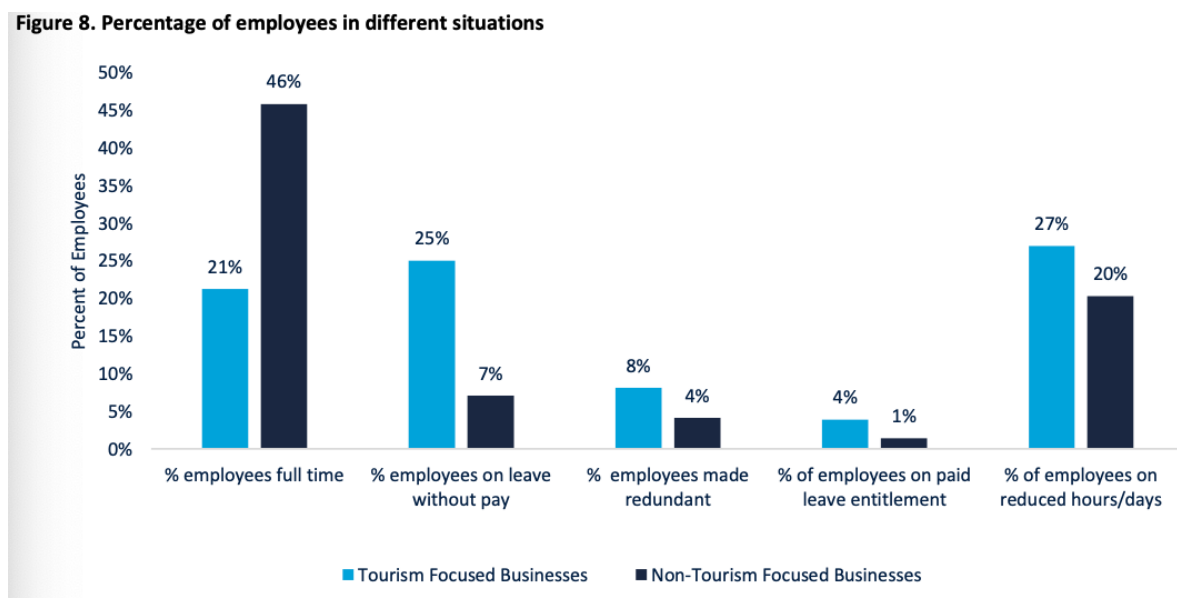


Source: International Finance Corporation Report 2020.

3.8 Impact of Covid-19 on Firms Staffing

The impact of Covid-19 on firms staffing is also an area of concern. The loss of tourism revenue has led businesses to reduce the number of employees as it is getting more difficult for businesses to survive this pandemic crisis. The tourism sector provides over 150,000 jobs related to the tourism and hotel industry. Figure 8 reflects that only 21% of tourism business employees retained their job, and more than 50% of staff are either on leave without pay (25%) or working reduced hours (27%). Therefore, this leads to an increase in the unemployment rate and businesses losing their key employees for survivability.

Figure 8: The percentage of employees employed or working on reduced hours in tourism-focused businesses



Source: International Finance Corporation Report 2020.

3.9 Impact of Covid-19 on Hotel Operation

In the initial period of the Covid-19 outbreak, some of the hotels were still operational as they had local guests and were providing a quarantine service to people returning. However, as the virus spread around the globe, the impact of Covid-19 on hotel operations was devastating, with most hotels being closed for business due to the huge number of booking cancellations, no inbound tourism locally or international and domestic lockdowns which were imposed by

Fiji. Therefore, to be operational, firms had a huge cost burden in employee wages, maintenance and other operational costs such as electricity, water and staff wages.

For example, hotels in Fiji like Rosie Holidays and Ahura Resort employed around 600 staff. The effect of Covid-19 caused Rosie Holidays to reduce its workforce from 600 employees to 40 essential employees only (Chanel, 2020). Although hotels were laying off workers and closing down business, large hotels and resorts like Sofitel used the opportunity to focus on renovating and carrying out maintenance work since the resorts has been closed since March 2020 (Sofitel Fiji Resort & SPA, 2020). Therefore, hotel and resorts who had financial capacity looked into other initiatives which gave those hotels a long-term advantage while also providing employment to people in difficult times. However, this was not possible for many small and medium sized hotels, with the negative impact of Covid-19 crippling many businesses, leading them to close permanently or hibernating until borders opened. Hence, the insight provided by International Financial Corporation on businesses which have been affected shows that most tourism related businesses are closed or in a hibernating stage, as can be seen in Figure 9.

Figure 9: The period when businesses started seeing the impact of Covid-19 in Fiji and the percentage of tourism-focused and non-tourism focused businesses in operation or not

Figure 2. When did your business start to see an impact from COVID-19?

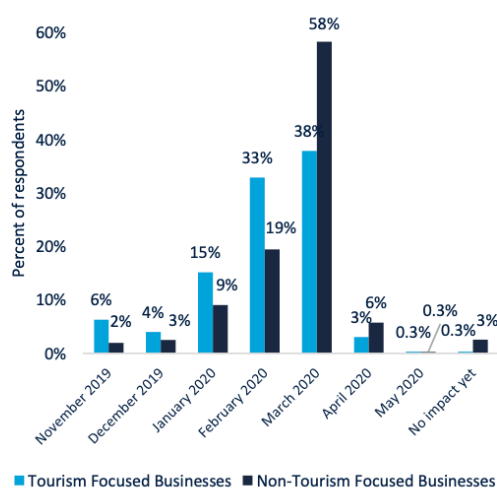
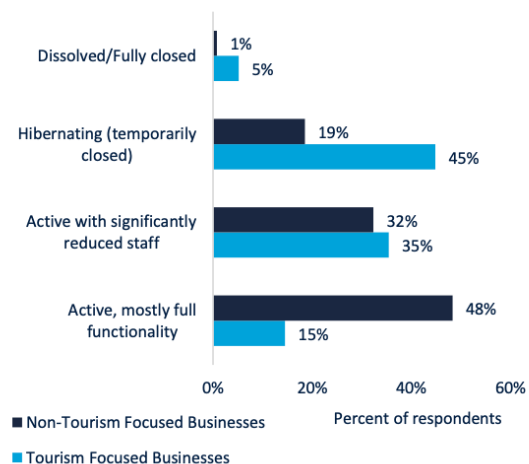


Figure 3. What is your current business status?



Source: International Finance Corporation Report 2020.

Based on the International Finance Corporation analysis, 92% of businesses in Fiji were impacted by Covid-19 by March 2020. However, tourism-focused businesses were hit the hardest as more than 50% of them remained closed, hibernating or fully closed. Therefore, as anticipated by MCTTT and IFC, further visitor arrivals were forecasted to contract by 43% in the coming months for Fiji.

3.10 Chapter Conclusion

Fiji's hotel industry plays a huge role in the tourism sector and has a huge impact on the country's economy. Most of the revenue and employment is generated by firms in the hotel industry. In order to make a scalable intervention for recovery plans, Fiji's tourism sector requires insightful data, comprehensive reports, reliable and validated data analysis. Currently, reports on Fiji's tourism are reflected in one data set comprising all the industries that exist within the tourism sector. Therefore, to understand the industry situation, researchers have to use generalised data created from Ministries, Reserve Banks and the Fiji Bureau of Statistics. It is challenging for researchers to further analyse the hotel industry in order to articulate a comprehensive analysis on the importance of the hotel industry and why government intermediaries need to pay more attention to businesses existing within the hotel industry.

It is important to understand the role government in times of crisis, such as this pandemic crisis. Although health crises have been faced before, the unique factor about Covid-19 pandemic crisis is that it's new, and most countries don't have resources and financial assistance with which they can help or bail out certain industries. Governments around the globe have implemented various policies to respond to the Covid-19 pandemic crisis. Regarding Fiji's tourism sector, the Fijian government came up with a 'roadmap to recovery' plan, which considers specific recovery actions and guidelines to maintain and improve health and hygiene (International Finance Corporation, 2020). This roadmap plan was reinforced by sufficient funding and implementing it in various agencies to help businesses. Therefore, firms need to understand and seek to influence the dynamic outcomes for their operations. However, some of these operational outcomes can be controlled by firms themselves. Other factors which cannot be addressed by firms can be looked at through collaborative strategies between tourism operators, government and other relevant stakeholders (Ashley, et al., 2007). Thus, the roles of government during the pandemic crisis and its support towards tourism sector, particularly the hotel industry, sparks an interest in the research question:

“How does government support help industries during the time of disruption?”

Therefore, the following chapter will look into answering the above question in the context of the hotel industries.

4. Chapter Four: Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction

Chapter Two highlighted the definitions, impacts, and types of resilience in different disciplines to understand how operational resilience can be applied in times of disruptive events such as disaster, pandemics, climate change, wars, and other crises. In order to understand the response of government and firms to global disruption, this research reflects the understanding of how operational resilience can be related to firms' survivability in times of disruption.

Chapter Three puts the theory into practical perspective, contextualising Fiji's hotel industry and how the industry is affected by the pandemic in that country. The vulnerability and availability of resources for small developing countries like Fiji are of concern as they recently experienced a second wave of the virus in April 2021. It is important to highlight and reflect how the government can play an important role in controlling the virus spread and developing strategies and policies that can benefit during this global pandemic. Therefore, the study highlights the gap in Fiji's control strategies, policies to control virus spread and stabilise its economy.

This chapter provides an overview of ontology and epistemology positioning for this study. The study uses an interpretivist paradigm selection and a secondary case study method for collating documents for analysis, such as journals, industry reports, government and non-civil organisation documentations.

This research will adopt a secondary case study approach grounded in a systematic literature review. The first stage will include a systematic review of the literature in the areas of firm and industry resilience, and government interaction/response during disruption.

The study requires a comprehensive search relating to the topic, including identifying relevant literature that explains the concept of operational resilience in times of disruption in context of the Covid-19 pandemic crisis. As part of the study plan, the study will compare Fiji with Australia and New Zealand and assess how those countries have responded to the Covid-19 outbreak and how the government can assist particular industries during disruption.

4.2 Research Aim

This research aims to carry out a systemic literature review on firms and government response to global disruptions and then apply these ideas to a secondary case study of firm and government responses to the adversity caused by Covid-19 in the hotel industry in Fiji.

Main research question:

1. How does operational resilience relate to firms survivability in times of disruption?
 - 1a. How has Covid-19 disrupted the hotel industry in Fiji?
2. How does government support help industries during the disruption?
 - 2a. How have government policies assisted Fiji's hotel industry to become more resilient in dealing with Covid-19 disruptions?

4.3 Research Paradigm

The philosophical assumptions of a researcher set the core layers of theories and concepts for their methodology preference (Cotty, 1998). At the beginning of any research, it is important to understand the choice of the researcher's ontology and epistemology viewpoint and their belief systems. Therefore, ontology, epistemology, and methodology provide the researcher with information on how to answer their research question.

Gray (2018, p. 18) states that ontology "is the study of being, that, the nature of existence and what constitutes reality". Pringle and Booysen (2018) stipulated that ontology is the researcher's views on how reality exists, and individuals understanding of the same reality creates multiple realities. Whereas epistemology "provides a philosophical background for deciding what kind of knowledge are legitimate and adequate" (Gray, 2018, p. 21). Lastly, structured methodologies are used so that researchers can justify the research methods used and how they can answer the study's main objectives.

The two main research paradigms used in social science are positivist and interpretivist. From the 1930s till the 1960s, positivism was a dominant epistemology paradigm in social science (Gray, 2018, 2013). The core argument in positivism ontology is that its objective nature is to assume one single reality, which consists of what is available to the senses. It can be seen and

smelt, and these observations can be quantified and measured (Gray, 2018). Therefore, with the positivism research paradigm, researchers usually use quantitative methodology.

Unlike positivism ontology, interpretivist positioning is subjective, and researchers understand the phenomena through different lenses, as people's information or views can differ from each other. The ontology positioning of interpretivist is realism. Therefore, interpretivist position asserts that reality is subjective, and it can differ from person to person (Gray, 2018; Scotland, 2012). Gray (2018) explains that as a realist researcher, studies that constitute culture, organisations and corporate planning can exist and act differently from what the researcher observes. Therefore, to understand the complexities of realities, "knowledge is advanced through process of theory-building in which discoveries add to what is already known" (Gray, 2018, p. 27).

Based on the explanation and understanding of how information is interpreted between two paradigms and the beliefs and views of the current researcher, *the Interpretivist approach* is adopted for this study. Interpretivist paradigms allow flexibility to understand the world through multiple realities, which are created through groups, culture, location, and beliefs. The knowledge acquired through the use of qualitative methodologies does not need to be quantified (Meyers, 2010). Therefore, this study applies a secondary literature review to the concept of operational resilience and how it can be applied in the event of the Covid-19 pandemic crisis on hotel industries.

The underpinning concept of operational resilience is used for this study to explain how this concept is worth exploring in relation to tourism and the hotel industry. The concept of operational resilience has been mainly used in supply chain management practises from a disruption profile. Essuman et al. (2020) explains that there are interrelationships between the concept of operational resilience and disruptions. However, the empirical knowledge between these themes are underdeveloped (Essuman et al., 2020). Therefore, with an interpretivist position, this study conducts a comprehensive systematic literature review on the concept of resilience and operational resilience from different schools of thought and provides an overview on the concept of dynamic capability. The interpretivist approach allows for an understanding of the complexities of realities through the advancement of knowledge and adding discoveries to what is already known. The gap identified in tourism literature can be further explored by understanding the implication of operational resilience on the hotel industry

and how the concept of operational resilience can coexist with resilience building behaviour during a disruptive event; and, further, how the concept of dynamic capability can add more perspectives towards achieving operational resilience in firms. Hence, the systematic literature provides an understanding of the relationship between the concept of resilience and its operation and how firms can mitigate the impact caused by the Covid-19 crisis on the hotel business from an operational point of view. Therefore, the systematic literature review derived from this study is subject to the researcher's information and how it is understood to answer the research question:

“How does operational resilience relate to firms’ survivability in times of disruption?”

4.4 Research Design

This study requires a comprehensive search to identify relevant literature that explains the concept of resilience and operational resilience in times of disruption. As part of the study plan, the study will compare the New Zealand tourism sector and its response to the Covid-19 outbreak with government interventions through policies and measures to assist the hotel industry during disruptions.

The literature review synthesises key conceptual themes that align with operational resilience and its implication for firm survivability during disruption. These themes such as the firm’s flexibility and agility, collaboration, disruption preparedness, disruption absorption and recoverability, provide an underlying understanding of firm efficiency strategies, crisis management strategies, and policies used in prior events by countries like Australia, U.S , New Zealand, Thailand and China. These concepts provide an underlying idea of how firms can respond during a disruptive event and why it is important to study in the context of the hotel industry. The lack of empirical studies requires the conceptualisation of operational resilience and how firms which lack resources can salvage themselves in a disruptive event like the Covid-19 pandemic crisis. Therefore, the concept of operational resilience explains how firms need to be proactive rather than reactive which is how they have been in other disruptive events, whether natural or man-made, previously.

It is important to note that, compared to other disruptive events like natural disasters or man-made events, Covid-19 is very new, and its impact has extended beyond that of other crises.

The knowledge and information around Covid-19 and its implication to spreading and crippling economies was very limited. Therefore, determining how countries dealt with the spread of the coronavirus differs from country to country and from developed to developing countries. This information enables an understanding of how the government and firms responds to the Covid-19 pandemic crisis.

A case study based on Fiji's hotel industry provides an insight into how small developing countries like Fiji are responding to the repercussions of the Covid-19 pandemic crisis on its economy and particularly the hotel industry. In order to understand the policy impact and its importance, the study also looks into the New Zealand government's responses towards their tourism sector and how it helped its hotel industry to cope with the effects of Covid-19. Therefore, the context of the case will assist in the answering the second research question, parts a and b:

RQ 2: "How does government support help industries during the disruption?"

RQ 2a "How have government policies assisted Fiji's hotel industry to become more resilient in dealing with Covid-19 disruptions?"

Therefore, this study adopts a secondary case study approach based on a systematic literature review. The first stage of reviewing will consider the concept of resilience and its application in the tourism sector and hotel sector. The literature will further narrow down the concept of operational resilience in the context of firms' survivability to disruptions. Past events indicate that firms have responded to disruptions either through learning from it or by government support. The concept of operational resilience focuses on firms developing proactive strategies to avoid the impact of the crisis from having such crippling effects. Therefore, the literature review focuses on the impacts of disasters, terrorism, man-made and epidemics on the tourism sector and hotel industry and how firms can evolve in a crisis like Covid-19 which is very new as it has disrupted the global supply chain for the tourism market.

Regarding the literature search, a PRISMA four-phase flow diagram will be used. The rationale for using a PRISMA diagram is to provide a transparent reporting of a systematic review (Liberati et al., 2009). Journal articles will be grouped according to their methodological similarities. Numerical and graphical presentation of the results will be reported in a manner to facilitate understanding of the topic.

4.4.1 Case Study Approach

Case study methodology has a clear objective, and that is to conduct research. The research questions and objectives are specified beforehand by investigators and observe certain phenomenal issues (Benbasat, Goldstein and Mead, 1989). Benbasat et al. (1987) explains that to understand the feasibility of using a case study method, one must ask the following four questions:

“can the phenomenon of interest be studied outside its natural setting?; Must the study focus on contemporary events?; Is control or manipulation of subjects or events necessary?; and Does the phenomenon of interest enjoy an established theoretical base?”
(p. 372)

Based on the ontology and epistemology positioning established, this research seeks to understand and investigate an in-depth understanding of the research problem. The case study approach addresses the questions of “how” and “why”, in contrast to answering the research questions which are quantified, such as; “How much? or how many?” (Benbasat et al., 1987; Yin, 2014). Although the notion of “control or manipulation of events” fits more of a positivist researcher, in contrast, the interpretivist ontology positioning in this paper focuses on understanding global disruptive events by adopting case study methodology.

The case study methodology is more applicable as this study is focused on current issues based on real-life context. In the context of global disruption, the study explores how firms and government responded in previous events and how that response differs from the current pandemic crisis. Although, in previous events such as natural disaster, epidemics and man-made events, the global supply chain of travelling and tourism was disrupted. However, the severity of these events did not affect the whole world, for example the SARS virus was contained within East Asia, but the impact from Covid-19 has crippled many countries and still poses a major health and economic crisis. For countries like Fiji which depend heavily on tourism revenue, firm and people’s livelihoods depends on this sector, thus, understanding how governments and firms respond to global disruptions provides insights into the impact of Covid-19 on the economy and why the hotel industry is such an important factor for the economy. Therefore, the case study approach allows the freedom to investigate concepts and

theories, provide insights on how government policies and industries can respond to the adversities caused by certain events, and obtain the necessary information to answer the research questions (Neuhofer, Bahalis & Ladkin, 2015).

Bonoma (1985), Kaplan (1985) and Yin (1984) defined the case study approach as a study of the phenomenon in its own natural setting, where researchers can use multiple methods for data collection from one or a group of people or entities. Benbasat et al. (1987) explain that a case study research strategy is useful when the researchers focus on “*contemporary events*” and past research does not have strong theories that can provide a base foundation for the study. The case study approach is a rich setting for developing new theories. However, Yin’s (2014) definition of case study is “*an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon ('the case') in-depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident*” (p. 16). Although Yin’s definition adopts a more positivistic stance for research studies, this implies that certain results will be provided as objective facts and established truth (Gray, 2018). Therefore, for the purpose of better conceptualising the dynamics of the case study approach, Table 1 reflects the phases of the case study approach.

Table 1: Research phases operated using case study approach

Traditional Phases of Knowledge Accrual	Yin's [56] Framework	Bonoma's [5] Framework	Number of Cases
Exploration	Description	Drift	Single or multiple case(s)
Hypothesis generation	Exploration	Design	Multiple cases
Hypothesis testing			
• Confirmation	Explanation	Prediction	Multiple cases
• Disconfirmation	Explanation	Disconfirmation	Single critical case

(Benbasat et al., 1987)

The case study approach allows researchers to study and gain understanding from different disciplines which leads into new and expanded theories or concepts. The extension of grounded theories are added from understanding individuals, groups, industries, firms, social, political and related experiences (Yin, 2014; Chetty, 1996). Therefore, one of the strengths

of the case study research approach is that it is used in many different settings, including the collection of data from industries and economies, its ability to collate a diverse range of data from both primary and secondary sources, such as interviews, observations, reports, public documents and artefacts, provides extensive insights to researchers (Yin, 2009).

Understanding government and firms responses during disruptive events such as climate change, natural disasters or man-made events, terrorism or a pandemic crisis is a vague concept to be studied. The ambiguity and generalisation existing amongst concepts and themes require in-depth and detailed investigation. Therefore, the secondary case study method is employed for this study. To eliminate ambiguity, the case study approach assists researchers with strategies to reach a comprehensive and detailed understanding of concepts, which requires in-depth investigation on how government and firms can respond to the during a crisis (Feagin, Orum & Sjoberg, 1991).

The case study method is supported by Baxter and Jack (2008). Their explanation of the case study method involves exploring situations and understanding the phenomenon where there is no single set of outcomes. Yin (2014) also states that case studies can be used to explain the phenomena in different situations. Take, for example, a study by Allison (1971) on the missile crisis. He used different theories to explain the same course of events and identified the best concept to provide the best explanation and its importance in understanding the situation. In addition, Meyer (2001) also explains that that case study approach is appropriate for exploring theories and concepts with unclear outcomes.

Therefore, the secondary case study approach is the appropriate choice for this research since the study is based on understanding operational resilience due to the lack of study done on operational resilience in Tourism disciplines. This allows extensive research and amalgamation of themes associated with resilience. Thus, this requires an in-depth review of the concept of resilience and operational resilience existing in literature around different disciplines. The literature review helps to understand how firms in the hotel industry can survive or prepare themselves during disruptive events and the role of government during a crisis. Thus, the following questions were formulated as the main research questions:

1. *How does operational resilience relate to firms' survivability in times of disruption?*
2. *How does the role of governments impact industries during times of disruption?*

4.4.2 Data Collection

After reviewing relevant literature, a secondary case study will be conducted to examine the literature in the context of the Fiji hotel industry during the Covid period. All the relevant data gathered from the study will be analysed for data collection, and the results and findings will be validated. The analysis and collation of data will be presented as a finding that will be used to answer the research questions. Therefore, for data validation and transparency reporting of the systematic literature review PRISMA four-phase flow diagram is used for this research.

4.4.3 PRISMA Four-Phase Flow Diagram

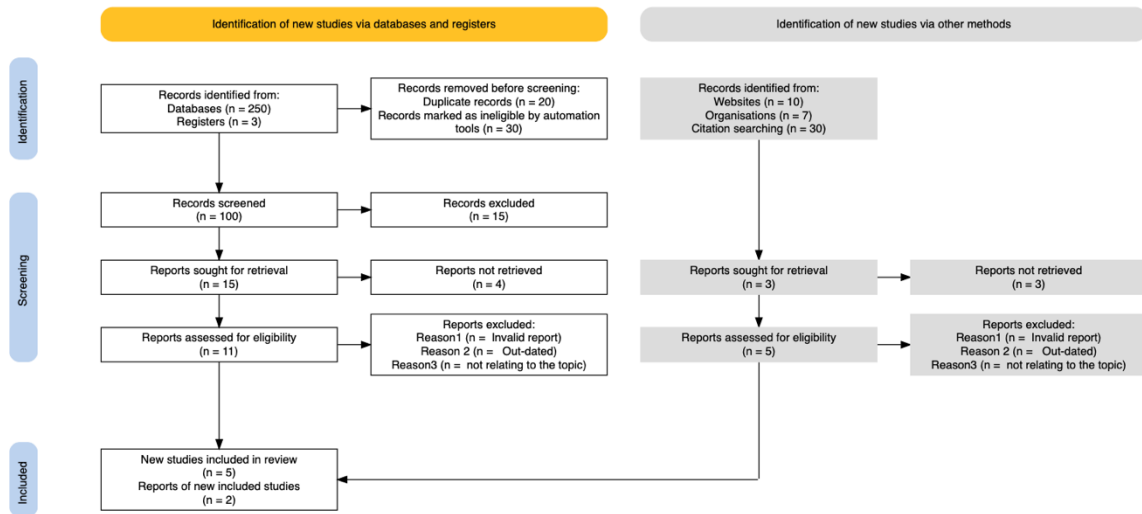
Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis also known as PRISMA. The statement of PRISMA involves the facilitation of reporting transparent and completed systematic reviews (Page et al., 2021). The facilitation of the reporting structure of PRISMA is based on 27 checklist items and a four-phase flow diagram. The checklist items explain how researchers can validate papers based on conformance with the themes and concepts or theories (Liberati et al., 2009). The list used for this research is attached as an appendix(Exhibit 1), which was taken from Liberati et al. (2009) paper.

Based on the checklist item, the four-phase flow diagram is developed. There are four stages involved in developing the diagram: identification, screening, eligibility and inclusion (Page et al., 2021). The first stage involves identifying articles that are relevant to the study. This involves going through abstracts and citations from the database used to obtain all the journal articles (Liberati et al., 2009). For this research, AUT library database, Scopus and google scholar was used. The key words used to look for relevant journal articles were resilience, crisis management, recoverability, recovery, risk management, disasters framework, crisis, disruption, global tourism, Covid-19, epidemic cases, impacts, and implication of Covid-19. The second stage involves screening the articles. In this stage, researchers read through the abstract and determine if the articles are relevant and contain key themes that link to the keywords (Liberati et al., 2009).

The third stage is deciding the eligibility of the journal articles. This process involves reading the full journal articles. Understanding the article can assist in answering the research question

and finalising the list of studies included for the literature review (Liberati et al., 2009). Therefore, after careful selection of journal articles, reports and papers, PRISMA 2020 suite was used to reflect the number of journals reviewed and the reasoning to be included or excluded

Table 2: Four Phase Flowchart



The rationale for using the PRISMA diagram is to have a transparent reporting of a systematic review (Liberati et al., 2009). Therefore, journal articles will be grouped according to their methodological similarities. Numerical and graphical presentation of the results will be reported in a manner to facilitate understanding of the topic.

Table 3: Identified Journal Articles and Reports Used

Authors Name	Publications	Themes	Paper Type
Resilience			
Aboah et al	Supply Chain and Management	Value chain, resilience and adaptability	Conceptual
Aylin Ates and Umit Bititci Strathclyde	International Journal of Production Research	Organisational resilience; SME; change process; manufacturing	Empirical
Borekci et al	Journal of Management and Organisation	Resilience, relational quality and supplier collaboration	Empirical
Bruneau et al.	Earthquake Spectra	Community resilience, seismic resilience. The paper presents a conceptualises robustness, resourcefulness and redundancy into four dimension of community resilience; technical, organisational, social and economic.	Conceptual
Calgaro et al.	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	Sustainability, tourism development, vulnerability and resilience	Conceptual
David Beirman	Tourism Review International	Tourism resilience; Crisis management; Recovery marketing; Private–public sector collaboration; Organizational resilience; Destination reputation	Empirical
Dominic Essuman, Nathaniel Boso, Jonathan Annan	International Journal of Production Economics	Operational resilience Operational efficiency Operational disruption Firm resources Contingency perspective Sub-Saharan Africa	Empirical
Emma Calgaro, Dale Dominey-Howes & Kate Lloyd	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	Sustainability; development; vulnerability; resilience; systems theory	Empirical

		Destination Sustainability Framework (DSF)	
Espiner, Orchiston and Higham	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	Sustainable Tourism, resilience, developing resilience and mature resilience	Conceptual
Herrman et al.	The Canadian Journal of Psychiatry	Resilience, mental health, gene–environment interaction, public health	Review
Ihab Hanna Salman Sawalha	Management Research Review	Resilience, vulnerability, Insurance, risk, organisational resilience, resilience and culture	Empirical
Md Maruf H. Chowdhury, , Mohammed Quaddus	International Journal of Production Economics	Supply chain resilience Dynamic capability Measurement instrument Multidimensional constructt	Conceptual
Norris et al.	American Journal of Community	Resilience , Community resilience, Disaster preparedness Resilience and adaptation	Conceptual
Per Bodin and Bo L.B Wiman	ESS Bulletin	Resilience, stability, diversity in ecological systems	Conceptual
Prayag, Spector, Orchiston and Chowdhury	Current Issues in Tourism	Psychological resilience, employee resilience, organizational resilience, life satisfaction	Empirical
Steve Carpenter, Brian Walker, J. Marty Anderies, and Nick Abel	Ecosystems	Resilience; resistance; stability; persis- tence; socioecological system (SES); sustainability; self-organization; adaptive capacity; adaptive cycle	Empirical
Sharma et al	Tourism Management Prespectives	Innovation, resilience, government outlook, sustainable tourism	Conceptual

Tukamuhabwa et al.	International Journal of Production Research ISSN:	supply chain resilience; strategies; agility,	Empirical
Yu et al	International Journal of Production Economics	Supply chain, disruptions, resilience and firm performance	Empirical
Resource Based and Dynamic Capabilities			
Chukwuemeka & Onuoha	International Journal of Management Science and Business Administration	Dynamic capabilities, Sensing capability, Learning capability, Reconfiguration capability, Competitive advantage	Empirical
David Teece	Strategic Management Journal	Dynamic Capabilities, nature of capability, sensing, seizing and reconfiguring	Conceptual
David Teece	Journal of Management Studies	Dynamic Capabilities, operations, core competencies and resources.	Conceptual
Indra Utoyo	International Journal of Innovation Management	Capability-drive strategy, disruptive environment; entrepreneurial culture; entrepreneurial leadership; entrepreneurial mindset; innovation performance; strategic entrepreneurship	Conceptual
J Barney	Journal of Management	Resource-based view and neo-classical microeconomics Resources based view and evolutionary economics Implication of Resource based view	Conceptual
Jiang, Ritchie and Verreynne	International Journal of	Dynamic capabilities, environmental turbulence,	Conceptual

	Tourism Research	operational routines, organizational resilience, slack resources, disruptive events	
Khan, Daddi and Iraldo	Journal of Cleaner Production	Dynamic capabilities, sensing, seizing, reconfiguring	Empirical
Kinderstorm, Kowalkowski and Sandberg	Journal of Business Research	Service innovation, Dynamic capabilities , Micro-foundations Services , Service orientation Strategy	Empirical
Li & Liu	Journal of Business Research	Dynamic capabilities Environmental dynamism Competitive advantage Emerging economy	Empirical
Sheng	Industrial Marketing Management	Combinative capabilities, dynamic capabilities, organisational capabilities	Conceptual
Stephan C. Henneberg Peter Naudé, Stefanos Mouzas	Industrial Marketing Management	Sense-making Cognition Business network Business relationships Research agenda	Conceptual
Wilden, Gudergan, Nielsen and Lings	Long Range Planning	Dynamic Capabilities (DCs) and Firm performance, DCs and organisational Structure, DCs and competitive intensity	Empirical
Crisis Management and Disruption			
Avraham and Ketter	Business and Management	Image restoration, crisis management	Book
Behzadi et al	International Journal of Production Economies	Supply chain, risk management, robust, resilient strategies	Contextual

Carl Gibson and Michael Trrannt	The Australian Journal of Emergency Management	Conceptual Model of Organisational resilience Organisation capabilities, management strategies, process management, adaptative capacity and disruption related risk	Conceptual
Caroline Orchiston	Current Issues in Tourism	Disaster planning; tourism; earthquakes; resilience; community. Crisis and disaster planning in Tourism. Community disaster planning	Empirical
Duan Biggs , C. Michael Hall & Natalie Stoeckl To	Journal of Sustainable Tourism	Crisis, Enterprise resilience, social capital, financial crisis, human capital and lifestyle benefits.	Empirical
Girish Prayag	Tourism Management Perspectives	Resilience, crisis management	Contextual
Heidi Dahles , Titi Prabawa Susilowati	Annals of Tourism Research	Small-scale business Crisis Business resilience Embeddedness Livelihood Longitudinal study on Indonesia Tourism Industry	Empirical
Kabadayi et al	Journal of Service Marketing	Corona virus, disruption, policies and economic impact	Contextual
Kim, Chun and Lee	Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research ISSN:	SARS, crisis, hotel, impact Crisis management, contingency concept, marketing, human resources, recovery	Empirical
Kosova and Enz	Cornell Hospitality Quarterly	Strategy, strategic management, human resources, marketing and sales, economics	Empirical

Kucera and Jiang	Oxford Development Studies	Structural transformation, macro-economies, growth, economic policy	Empirical
Margaret L. Sheng	Industrial Marketing Management	Business-to-business marketing, environment Combinative capabilities, Dynamic capabilities Organizational capabilities, Sensemaking	Empirical
Mehta et al	Tourism Recreation Research	Hospitality, social and economic risk, customer reviews.	Empirical
Ozili and Arun	Not specified	Policies, outbreaks, crisis, global recession and spillover effects	Contextual
Saurabh Ambulkar, Jennifer Blackhurst*, Scott Grawe	Journal of Operations Management	Supply Chain disruption, Resilience, Scale Development, Risk Management, resource reconfiguration and firm resilience	Empirical
Sant	Government report	Pandemic, containment strategies and policy impact	Report
Smart et al	International Journal of Hospitality Management	Crisis management, coping strategies	Empirical
Susan L. Cutter , Lindsey Barnes, Melissa Berry, Christopher Burton, Elijah Evans, Eric Tate, Jennifer Webb	Global Environmental Change	Resilience Vulnerability science Disasters Hazards Disaster resilience of place (DROP) model Assessing disaster resilience at the local or community level	Empirical

Torres et al	International Journal of Hospitality Management	Economic disruption, tourism supply chain, role of relationship management	Contextual
Wang & Ritchie	Tourism Management	Crisis planning, theory of planned behaviour, preparedness method for resilient tourism organisation	Empirical

4.5 Secondary Data Analysis

In this study, the research aims to draw insights from existing literature that contribute to existing knowledge in tourism in times of crisis. The main objective of this research is to carry out the systematic literature review. Therefore, the majority of data collected is journal articles identified based on themes and grouped accordingly on methodological similarities. The analysis portion of this paper will look into organisation reports, governments reports, international reports and interviews. Since the research employs a secondary case study approach, information is based on investigation of research problems and observations, and this data does not need to be quantified (Benbasat et al., 1987).

In addition, the study does not look into creating new theories. Instead, this research is based on generalising key concepts of resilience, crisis management and risk management. Based on the epistemology positioning outlined, an inductive approach is used to analyse data to and identify key underpinning concepts. Through the inductive approach, I can seek to identify emerging themes or concepts related to answering the research question. Therefore, the systematic literature review on resilience, crisis management and disruptions were analysed to understand the concept of operational resilience and how it can be navigated towards understanding the disruptions and which key themes such can be applied in this study.

The secondary data will depict statistical information regarding how firms and governments are reacting to the Covid-19 crisis. This statistical information will provide observations and information on the sub-question for this research study. The finding will reflect information on how Covid-19 has disrupted economies, its implication for businesses, and how the government reacted to minimise or control the pandemic crisis and revive its economy.

5. Chapter Five: Discussion

5.1 Chapter Introduction

Chapter 3 outlined the gap in operational resilience research and how firms are constrained by a lack of effective strategies which can assist them in becoming resilient in times of a disruptive event. Therefore, this study generated the research question which led to the study of "How does the role of government impact industries during a time of disruption?" The research explores the understanding of government responses during global disruptions in the past and how policies and strategies have changed. The study investigates past financial recessions and epidemics and pandemics outbreaks.

The study also uses New Zealand as an example to compare how developed countries responded to the impact of Covid-19 and how resources constrained countries like Fiji responded to impacts of Covid-19, and how both countries were able to address the health and related economic challenges. Therefore, three main themes emerged from recent journals and government reports. These are Country's Response towards Covid-19, Fiscal Policy Response Towards Covid-19, Monetary Policy Response towards Covid-19 and Government's response towards Hotel Industry.

5.2 Understanding Government Response During Global Disruptions

In 2019, the global economy was concerned about the impact of an ongoing trade war between the US and China, the US presidential elections and Brexit (Ozili and Arun, 2021). These trade wars and international between countries tension still had a moderate global growth of 3.4 per cent, as predicted by International Monetary Fund (IMF) (Ozili and Arun, 2021). However, the sudden spread of the Covid-19 pandemic crisis unexpectedly changed the outlook for countries around the globe. The spread of the Covid-19 virus changed the focus of G7 countries into controlling the health crisis, economic crisis and coming up with solutions and policies to control the damage caused by the Covid-19 crisis.

Although the virus outbreak started in China in 2019, the lack of attention given to this situation quickly translated from a health crisis to an economic crisis (Ozili and Arun, 2021). Covid-19 was rapidly spreading and changing the world faster than most countries expected or anticipated. Baldwin (2020) explains that the covid-19 pandemic crisis has a greater impact than the 2008-2009 global financial crisis; the 2008 world trade experienced unexpected,

severe and more of a synchronised collapse as it affected the demand shock on world trade organisations. The 2020 Covid-19 pandemic crisis has impacted both the demand and supply side, such as disrupting the global supply chain, manufacturing, stock market, and service industries around the world. Therefore, in 2020, corona virus impact caused fear and uncertainties such as causing huge global stock market loss of US\$6 trillion in wealth, the S&P 500 index lost over US\$5 trillion in value, and more than US\$1.4 trillion of loss was expected to occur by large multi-national corporations (Ozili and Arun, 2021).

In the first quarter of 2020, The International Air Transportation Associated (IATA) predicted that the travel industry would lose around US\$113 billion in this crisis (Ozili and Arun, 2021). The tourism industry was also affected as travel restriction policies started by countries around the globe to minimise the spread of the covid-19 virus. The travel restriction steered into an increased number of flight cancellations, hotel booking cancellation, cancellation of local and international events, and cancellation of a major sporting event such as Toyoko Olympics 2020, Wimbledon Championships and ICC T20 World Cup cost more than US\$200 billion (Ozili and Arun, 2021; Krishnan, 2020).

Covid-19 significantly impacted the global supply chain given that China holds the world's largest manufacturing factories, and the implication of covid-19 presenting with the high level of health risk with its rapid spread, Chinese government imposed lockdowns where major factories were closed for months (Kabadayi, O'Connor and Tuzovic, 2020). Therefore, the implication of covid-19 as its entails is greater than other global disruption faced by countries worldwide. Italy, Iran, France, South Korea, and Japan were first to face the high number of covid-19 cases, and later it spread to the USA, Spain, and the rest of the world (Kabadayi et al., 2020). The outbreak in Italy and other countries issued lockdown (stay at home) policies to minimise the spread of the virus. It caused a huge number of deaths and questioned countries' public healthcare systems (Ozili and Arun, 2021). Therefore, policies like travel restrictions, lockdown, social distancing were some of the factors that were driving the world economy to enter recession in 2020.

Although the literature on the cause of global disruptions like natural disasters, financial crisis, crisis management and recession is vast (Jiang et al., 2019; Kabadayi et al., 2020; Khalid et al., 2021; Ozili and Arun, 2021), the impact caused by Covid-19 on the healthcare and economy is unique in modern history. For example, we have experienced mass disruption in companies through innovative technology disruption, natural disasters, man-made disruptions, and

terrorism in the past. In regards to the financial crisis, we had the 1997 Asian debt crisis, caused by the collapse of the Thai baht and resulted in financial and economic recessions in Asia (Ozili and Arun, 2021). Secondly, the 2008 global financial crisis was caused by weak monetary policy and weak regulatory structure, causing upheaval in the banking and mortgage sector (Ozili and Arun, 2021). Thirdly, the recession in Greece during 2010 was caused by the 2008-2009 financial crisis, thus causing the Greek economy to collapse due to weak monetary policy and the regulatory structure (Rady, 2012). Therefore, the implication of Covid-19 stands out from other disruptions caused in previous events of recession or financial crisis.

Financial distress had a substantial impact on the world economy. Certainly, Covid-19 is not the only health crisis the world has endured. Previously there have pandemic and epidemic outbreaks, for example, Spanish flu 1917-1918, H1N2 Asian flu between 1957 – 1958, HIV/AIDS in 1981, SARS in 2003-2004, Swine Flu occurred 2009-2010, Ebola in 2014-2016, Zika virus in 2015-2016 (Yu, Razzaq, Rehman, Shah, Jameel and Mor, 2020). However, unlike Covid, previous virus did not have an economic impact as the virus was not spreading through cough or sneeze. Whereas, virus-like Swine flu is a close comparison as the virus affected 60 million people around the world, caused 275,000 hospitalisation and more than 12,000 deaths (Kabadayi et al., 2020). The impact of swine flu on business and the world economy was not as high as what the globe is going through now. Therefore, while other pandemics like swine flu was major health crisis and costing many lives, the impact of covid-19 on human loss is much greater as the number of deaths is more than 4.7 million and more than 230 million people being affected by the virus (worldometer.info, 2021) and the world economy has endured more than trillions of dollars in loss (Ozili and Arun, 2021).

In regards to financial market impacts, previous pandemics and epidemics had a mild impact on financial market volatility and the uncertainties within the business industries (Yu et al., 2021). In contrast, the impact of Covid-19 was felt by every single country around the world. The pandemic has challenged the healthcare system, disrupted tourism and hospitality industries, travel industry, manufacturing, and disrupted the global value chain (Kabadayi et al., 2020). The impact of the Covid-19 virus resulted in major social and economic disruption around the world and forced governments to implement stringent policies to counter the effects of Covid-19 (Ozili and Arun, 2021). Therefore, since the virus was very new and countries had to react quickly, many countries developed fast policies that were ineffective and inefficient to control the impacts caused by Covid-19.

Although the intention of the fast policy was good, it was insufficient and ineffective; for example, the monetary policy was supposed to stop the financial recession by controlling the policy variables, such as lowering the interest rate and increasing the money supply (Ozili and Arun, 2021). These were supposed to encourage demand amongst customers and investors. However, consumers were not spending as usual, and no investments were happening due to covid-19 constraints (Ozili and Arun, 2021). Therefore, monetary policy implementation and stay-at-home strategies contradict each other as they didn't allow investment or create demand for credits from customers and investors.

The absorption of Covid-19 disruption varied across countries, and divergence in government policy response explains why some countries like New Zealand and Australia , successfully controlled the spread of the virus while others have been impacted heavily from healthcare and economic perspectives (Sant, 2021). Sant (2021) explains that governments worldwide used different types of policies as a response strategy to mitigate the impact of Covid-19. Table 4.1 provides a list of types of measures adopted by countries around the globe during the Covid-19 pandemic crisis. Sant (2021) argues that policymakers tried to implement fast policies to mitigate the adversities caused by Covid-19 on the economy without realising the effectiveness and significance of the policies. Therefore, in order to understand the effectiveness and significance of a policy to be implemented, it's important to understand the timing and stringency of these response strategies to allow their effectiveness (Ozili and Arun, 2021).

Table 5.1: List of Policy implemented in response to Covid-19

Type	Policy Adopted	Countries
1. Monetary Policies	Granting regulatory forbearance to bank and principal or interest suspension to debtors affected by Covid-19 Source: www.imf.org and www.rbnz.govt.nz	New Zealand, Ireland, China, Italy and Fiji
	Central bank provision for financial liquidation (Ozili and Arun, 2021).	China and US
	Lowering interest rates by registered and central banks. Source: www.imf.org	New Zealand, US, Tuckey, Japan, UK, South Korea, Canada and Fiji
	Sustained credit flow of bank credits from banks to SMEs,	New Zealand, Australia, US, UK and Fiji

	public health sector and individuals. Source: www.imf.org	
2. Fiscal Policies	Government providing stimulus packages for business industries impact heavily by Covid-19. Source: www.imf.org	New Zealand, UK, US, Australia and Fiji
	Governments providing income support for individual as wage and income relief subsidy Source: www.imf.org	New Zealand, Australia, UK, US, India and Fiji
3. Public Health Policies and measure	Public Quarantine	Almost every country
	Border Quarantine	New Zealand, Australia, Fiji, US, UK, Canada
	Lockdown or stay at home policy	New Zealand, Italy, UK, US and Fiji
	Social distancing policy, mandated mask wearing policy Source: www.imf.org	New Zealand, Australia, US, UK, Singapore, Japan, South Korea, India, Germany, China and Fiji.
	Imposing Curfew hours Source: www.imf.org	US, UK, New Zealand and Fiji
4. Human Control Policies	Closing of air, land and sea borders (Ozili and Arun, 2021).	Taiwan, India, Mexico, US, Germany
	Closing of Schools and Universities.	US, UK, Spain, Italy, New Zealand and Australia
	Military enforcement for ensuring stay at home policies are followed (Ozili and Arun, 2021).	Malaysia, Italy, US and Russia
	Travel Ban Source: www.imf.org	New Zealand, Australia, EU countries, US, Canada, China and Pacific Island countries.
	Visa suspension	New Zealand, Australia

One of the critical concerns for policymakers in government and inter-related organisations like Central banks was to make decisions either to 'save the lives of people before economy' or to 'save economy before people' (Ozili and Arun, 2021). Countries were put into difficult positions as to which conditions needed to be prioritised first. If the choice was to save people, lockdowns and stay-at-home policies meant reduced economic activities, causing an economic slowdown and if economy over people was to be considered, this meant putting people lives at risk, major health crisis and there was no vaccine which could stop people from getting infected or spreading of the virus. Preferably, policymakers worldwide opted to save people's lives before saving the economy, which resulted in many countries suffering from economic recession (Ozili and Arun, 2021). The main objective of governments around the world was to reduce the spread of the Covid-19 virus. Therefore, it's imperative to say that the roles of the government and their response in times of disruption is very important. The timing and stringency of certain measures and policies implemented by governments navigate countries' economies towards recovery and assists industries that gets heavily impacted by the disruptions.

The findings from New Zealand presents how the NZ government effectively dealt with the spread of the virus and how influential the policy response from the government was to assist certain industries affected by Covid-19. Therefore, in context to this study, the policy response will focus on firms from the hotel industry.

5.3 New Zealand Response Towards Covid-19

On March 11 2020, the World Health Organisation (WHO) declared Covid-19 as a pandemic (WHO, 2020). This led New Zealand Government to act quickly and implement a four-level alert system to control the spread of the virus; Alert Level 1 (Prepare), Alert Level 2 (Reduce), Alert Level 3 (Restrict) and Alert Level 4 (Lockdown) (Hemmington & Neill, 2021). The country went into Alert Level 4 on March 25 as there was an increasing number of cases of Covid-19 in New Zealand. Therefore, the NZ government declared a state of emergence and implementing strong containment measures (IMF, 2021). The response by the authorities was closing of borders and nationwide lockdown including the businesses to close and only essential services such as hospitals, supermarkets and health-related were open.

5.3.1: New Zealand's Containment Strategy to Control Covid-19 Virus

The control strategies imposed by the New Zealand government was seen as one of the strictest response worldwide (Hemmington & Neill, 2021). The Level 4 lockdown policies included; work from home, schools and businesses to close, and travel to New Zealand in and out was limited to essential service only (New Zealand Government, 2020). These had an immediate impact on the hospitality industry. Therefore, the New Zealand Government response strategies to look into the livelihoods of its people and support its businesses industries in times was highly crucial. Thus, the government and authorities developed fiscal and monetary policies which can assist its people and businesses from the impact of Covid-19. Tables below detail the key policy response from the New Zealand Government, such as; fiscal, monetary and macro-financial support.

Table 5.3.1: New Zealand's Containment Strategy to Control Covid-19 Virus			
Lockdown Period	Alert Level	Restriction	Duration
March 25, 2020	Level 4	Closure of all Non-essential Businesses.	Four weeks
		Cancellation of all events and gathering.	
		Closure of schools.	
		Borders closed for non-residents.	
April 23 – May 13 2020	Level 3	Gradual opening of Businesses	Three weeks
		Restrictions on Events and gatherings	
May 13 2020	Level 2	Gradual opening of Businesses.	Three weeks
		Gathering and events were allowed with strict guidelines and contact tracing	
June 8 2020	Level 1	Restrictions was lifted on personal movements, gathers,	September 2020 until March 2021

		service and workplace.	
		Brief lockdowns occurred during August and September in Auckland.	
June 23 2021	Level 2	Wellington was placed under level 2 lockdown due to infiltration of virus from Australian Tourist.	Two weeks
June 29 2021	Level 1	Wellington moves to alert level 1.	
August 17 2021	Level 4	All of New Zealand move into level 4 lockdown.	Two weeks
August 31 2021	Level 3 Level 4 Level 2	All of South Auckland moves to alert level 3. Auckland and Northland remains at alert level 4. Other parts of New Zealand moves to level 2 except Auckland.	Three weeks (31 August – 20 September)
September 21 2021 – October 19 2021	Level 2 Level 3	The rest of New Zealand remains at alert level 2. Auckland remains at alert level 3	Five weeks.

Source : www.imf.org & Covid19.govt.nz

5.3.2 Fiscal Policy Response by NZ Government

The New Zealand Government announced a key policy response as of July 1, 2021, which includes a fiscal measure of NZ\$62.1 billion through FY2024-2025 (IMF, 2021). The fiscal policy measures are outlined in Table 5.3.1. The policies implemented by the New Zealand government such as wage subsidy, short-term loan scheme and income relief support assisted people with their expense and livelihood. Since most of the businesses were closed due to Covid-19, wage subsidy and loans scheme were helping the economy to be afloat while the policy makers looked into recovery strategies for the economy to return to its normal operation.

Table 5.3.2 Fiscal Policy Response by NZ Government	
Response & Recovery Fund in Sectors	Total Budget
Healthcare related spending; Cost of managed isolation and cost of procuring vaccines	NZ\$5.1 billion
Social Welfare	NZ\$2.4 billion
Wage subsidy for employers affected by the impact of Covid-19	NZ\$13.9 billion
Income relief support for people who got unemployed by Covid-19	NZ\$0.6 billion
Temporary Tax cuts and permanent change in Business Taxes	NZ\$8.6 billion
Support towards Aviation Sector	NZ\$0.6 billion
Tourism Recovery Package	NZ\$0.4 billion
Debt funding Agreement; Convertible equity with Air New Zealand	NZ\$1.5 billion
Short- Term R& D Loan Scheme for private sector.	NZ\$0.2 billion
Small Business Loans Until end of 2023	NZ\$100,000

Source: www.imf.org

5.3.3 Monetary and Macro-Financial Response

For further financial stability, the Reserve Bank of New Zealand (RBNZ) changed its Term Auction Facility (TAF), allowing NZ banks to access collateralised loans for 12 months. The RBNZ further introduced Term Lending Facility (TLF) for banks at 0.25 per cent for the next five years. The access of TLF allowed banks to lend around NZ\$6.25 billion towards Business Finance Guarantee Scheme (BEFGS) and having the government cover 80 per cent of the credit risk for approved and eligible loans (IMF, 2021). SME's and homeowners were able to access six-month principal and interest repayment deferrals for their mortgages. BEFGS were able to offer loans to small and medium-sized businesses with low-cost schemes (IMF, 2021). Therefore, the New Zealand government, RBNZ and the New Zealand Banks Association were able to provide a number of financial support to SMEs', homeowners, and BFGS affected during this pandemic.

Regarding other related measures, the NZ government imposed a 6-month residential rent freeze on residential rents and restrictions on tenancy termination during March – June 2020 (IMF, 2021). The business debt hibernation scheme was also introduced for businesses to hold

on to existing debt until October 31, 2021 (IMF, 2021). Therefore, this gave time for businesses to adapt to the new operating system as Covid-19 disrupted the traditional method for most businesses. The approach towards online, no contact purchase and delivery strategy led businesses to change their business models and adapt to new technology-driven initiatives that allow no-contact options.

5.3.4 Covid- 19's Impact on New Zealand's Hotel Industry

The impact of Covid-19 had a significant impact on New Zealand's economy, particularly the tourism and hotel industry. The short-term impact of Covid-19 on hotel NZ's hotel industry was rapid as 33 per cent of hotel business closed down (Colliers, 2020). Despite the lockdowns, hotels businesses were classified as essential services. However, the service was limited to only aircrews, self-isolation, and quarantine for returning NZ residents (Colliers, 2020). The lockdowns and closing of borders caused many hotels to close or hibernate while waiting for restrictions to go down to level 2 and level 1. Colliers (2020) research indicated that at least 30 per cent of hotels firms were closed in 2020. Therefore, hotels in New Zealand barely made it 50 per cent occupancy in 2020, resulting in a 40 per cent average revenue drop per room in 2020 (Newshub, 2021).

Figure 5.3.5 reflecting NZ hotel occupancy and revenue drop In 2020



Source: (Newshub, 2021)

The analysis from Newshub indicated a substantial fall in revenues by the hotel industry across all regions in New Zealand. The average room revenue fell from \$95 in 2019 to \$50 in 2020 for 3-star hotels and \$214 to \$123 for 5-star hotels. Queenstown felt the biggest hit on tourism

decline as the average hotel occupancy fell from 82 per cent in 2019 to 42 per cent in 2020 (Newshub, 2021).

5.3.6 New Zealand Governments response towards its Hotel Industry

Since the start of the pandemic, New Zealand's tourism sector has been impacted heavily. Therefore, the NZ government provided broad-based and supported its targeted industries since the beginning of the pandemic (MBIE, 2021). In 2020, the government implemented a \$400 million Tourism Recovery Package, which looked into; Regional Events Fund (REF), Strategic Tourism Assets Protection Programme (STAPP) and Documents relating to Tourism Recovery Package (MBIE, 2021).

The Regional Events Fund was allocated \$50 million to encourage domestic tourism and travel between the regions in New Zealand through holding events (MBIE, 2021). This strategy aimed to support the tourism sector through hosting events so that international spending could be replaced by domestic tourism (MBIE, 2021). At the same time, STAPP focus was to protect the assets in Tourism Sector, which provided essential tourism offerings, such as; Hotels, Café's, bar's, parks (mbie.gov.nz, 202). Therefore, while REF focused on event creating demand for domestic travel, STAPP ensured firms survival in the face of covid-19 disruptions. STAPP supported the firms by offering loans and grants, which are "5-year loan terms, interest-free and no repayments for the first 24 months, offering an interest rate of 3% per annum and loans to be unsecured" (MBIE, 2021). Therefore, firms that were struggling for survival had options available which could assist during the Covid-19 crisis.

In 2021, the New Zealand Government further implemented the "2021 support – Tourism Communities: Support, Recovery and Re-set Plan" (MBIE, 2021). The five target communities (Queenstown Lakes, Southland, Kaikoura, Mackenzie and Westland) are identified as communities that are highly dependent on international tourism for local economic growth (MBIE, 2021). Therefore, the 2021 tourism support plan ensures that industries within the tourism sector can become sustainable and resilient if any disruptive events unfold (MBIE, 2021). However, businesses in hotel and hospitality industry pointed out that the government initiatives are not enough as operational cost such as rents and bills are very high, thus the cost of the businesses to be operational is concerning for businesses owners and it can lead them to permanently shut down (Hemmington & Neill, 2021).

New Zealand is a developed country with the expertise and high level of financial resources available. How New Zealand Government responded to the disruption caused by Covid-19 is quite outstanding. Implementing a virus containment strategy and then responding towards the economic impact through viable policies was one of the key roles the NZ government played to return its country to normal. However, for small, developing pacific countries like Fiji, it's challenging. Therefore, the next section of this study will discuss the response from Fiji Government towards reducing the adversities caused by the Covid-19 virus and what role the government played towards its hotel industry sustainability and survivability.

5.4 Fiji's response towards Covid-19

The spread of Covid-19 was rapidly spreading, and within three months, it had spread all around the globe, and the number of infections kept increasing. Despite the rapid spread of Covid-19, Fiji had only recorded 33 cases and two deaths up till the end of October 2020 (Connell, 2021). The Fijian government effective and early imposition of a travel ban restricted the importation of the virus (IMF.org, 2021). Heath authorities and government authorities worked together to set a broad set of measures for confirmed cases entering Fiji borders and resulting in community transmission. These measures included; massive screenings of the population, closure of the international airport, travel restriction on domestic travel, limitation on public gathering, closure of schools, the closing of non-essential businesses (e.g. cinemas, gyms, malls, restaurants), nationwide curfew and lockdown of areas which were affected by the virus (IMF.org, 2021).

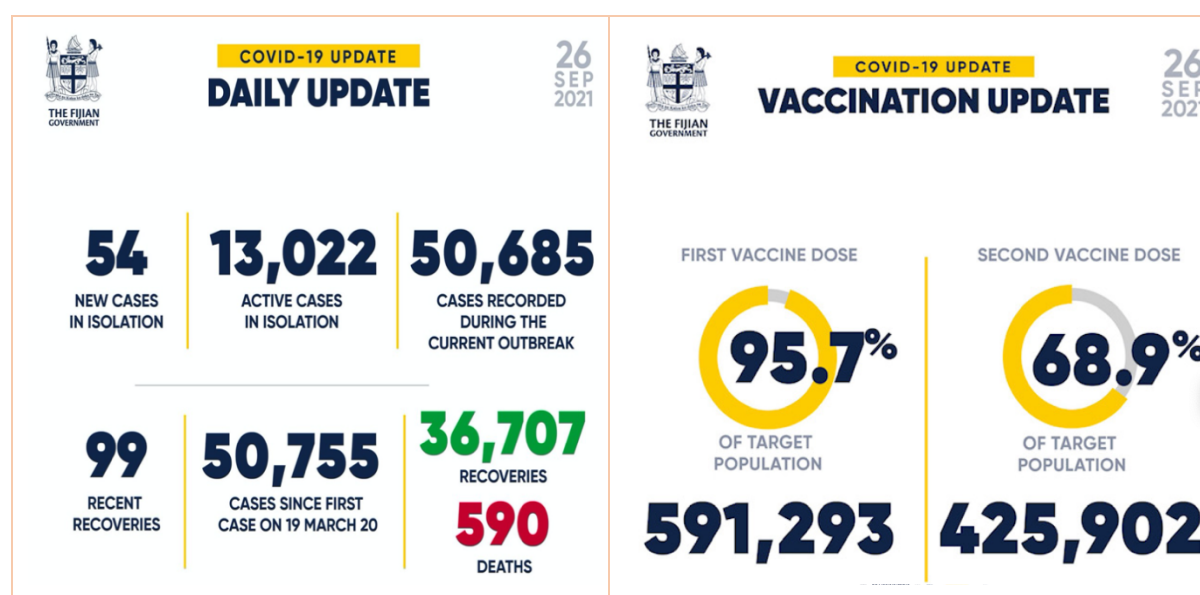
Although the country managed to control the increase in covid-19 cases for almost a year, in April 2021, the country went through the second wave of the Covid-19 outbreak, which was a highly infectious variant. By the end of April 2021, there was 4418 cases and 21 deaths caused by Covid-19. The increase in the number of virus cases led authorities to impose strict lockdown rules to control community transmission (imf.org, 2021). The lockdown did not have much effect on stopping the spread of the Covid-19 virus. The latest stats from Fiji Government reflects a record of more than 50 000 cases since March 2020, active cases in isolation more than 13,000, with 36,707 recoveries and causing 590 deaths (Fiji Government, 2021). Lockdown strategies were not as effective in stopping the virus transmission within communities, as the lockdown strategies was brief and only lasted for two weeks during April 2021.

The government lockdown strategies as Fiji is vulnerable to large scale halt in production, as this caused unemployment and poverty crisis in communities (Singh et al., 2021). Therefore, the government's response was to imposing curfew hours between 10pm to 4am and focus on COVAX initiative. The COVAX initiative focused on getting the majority of the population vaccinated as one of the strategies towards gradually reopening the economy and minimising the deathly threat of the Covid-19 virus (IMF.org, 2021).

Figure 5.4.1 Reflecting number of Covid cases record and the vaccination update on the general population

As of September 2021, more than 95 per cent of Fiji's population was vaccinated with the first dose of vaccine and more than 68 per cent with the second dose (Fiji Government, 2021). The COVAX initiative helped Fiji's economy gradually ease some of the restrictions, e.g. national curfew time, limitation on public gathering, reopening schools and reopening recreational facilities under certain guidelines (IMF.org, 2021).

Figure 5.4.2



Source: Fiji Government

Despite the virus containment strategy, Fiji's economy was devastated by border closer. The tourism sector had collapsed as more than 70 percent of tourism related business had closed or closed temporary (International Finance Corporation, 2020). The repercussion of covid-19 impact was huge on the livelihood of people and businesses in the tourism sector. Therefore,

government authorities implemented fiscal, monetary and macro-financial policies to save the economy and assist industries that have been greatly affected.

5.4.2 Fiscal Policy Response by Fiji Government

Fiji announced two major fiscal stimulus packages in response to the spill over effect of Covid-19. Table 5.4.2 reflects the types of fiscal response strategy and policies which was implemented for economic assistance. Although Fiji's fiscal policy response as stimulus package was around FJD 1 billion, the government could was not able to bail out firms which was suffering in tourism related business. The fiscal policies did offer consensual loan schemes and tax exemptions. However, this support were not enough for firms to be operational as the cost of being operational with less number of booking and guest was not feasible for businesses to be operating.

Table 5.4.2 Fiscal Policy Response by Fiji Government	
First Package Stimulus announced on March 26	
Response & Recovery Fund in Sectors	Total Budget
Supplement Public Health Expenditure	\$ FJ1 billion
Lump sum payout By Fiji National Provident Fund (FNPF)	
Tax and Tariff reductions	
Loan repayments	
Second Package Stimulus announced on July 17 for FY2020-2021	
Sizeable Tax and Tariff cuts	No figure Provided
Fiscal and import excise duties were reduced	No figure Provided
Elimination of Service turnover tax, environmental tax and departure tax.	No figure Provided
Unemployment Subsidy	FJ\$100 million
Fiji Airways Subsidy	FJ\$60 million
Development of Sugar Sector	FJ\$50.9 million
Concessional loan initiative for MSMEs	FJ\$23.5 million

Source: www.imf.org

5.4.3 Monetary and Macro-Financial policy response by Fiji

For monetary policies to be implemented, Reserve bank of Fiji reduced its policy rate from 0.5 percent to 0.25 percent (IMF.org, 2021). This policy change was to counter the economic impact covid-19 had on Fiji. Secondly, RBF also expanded its SME credit guarantee scheme, this allowed small entities to offer loans for businesses which was struggling during the pandemic (IMF.org, 2021). Thirdly, the RBF acted to raise the Natural Disaster and Rehabilitation facility by FJD 60 million, this fund was used to build containment facilities for covid-19 patients (IMF.org, 2021). Thus, Table 5.4.3 provides a breakdown on monetary policies implemented and how much funds were allocated to revive Fiji's economy.

Table 5.4.3 Monetary & Macro-Financial Policy Response by Fiji Government	
Policy Response	
Response & Recovery Fund in Sectors	Total Budget
Reserve Bank of Fiji (RBF) reduced the policy rate from 0.5 per cent to 0.25 per cent	
RBF expanded the SME credit scheme for small businesses.	
Raised Import & Export finance Facility for; large scale commercial agricultural farmers, public transportation and renewable energy businesses.	FJ\$100 million
Providing concessional loans to commercial banks for lending to businesses affected by Covid-19	FJ\$60 million
Purchase government bonds to help finance government deficit	FJ\$280 million
Loans and grants Given by other Countries	
Asia Pacific Disaster Response Fund grant by ADB	US\$2 million
World Bank approved US\$4145 million to support the pandemic crisis	FJ\$299 million
The Japanese government provided the emergency loan on strengthening the public health system	F\$200 million
Australia Governments Covid relief support	F\$ 96 million
New Zealand Governments support package (RNZ, 2021)	\$12 million

Source: www.imf.org

5.5 Fiji's Governments response towards its Hotel Industry

The Fijian government implemented a number of strategies to provide support for businesses as part of their Covid-19 Response Budget Package (International Finance Corporation, 2020). In regards to business operational expenses, Fiji National Provident Fund reduced employer contribution from 10 per cent to 5 per cent, followed by employee contribution reduction from 8 per cent to 5 per cent (International Finance Corporation, 2020). The elimination of service turnover tax, environmental tax and departure tax, unemployment subsidy, concessional loans, and expanded SME credit scheme for small businesses were some of the general schemes provided for firms affected by Covid-19 by the Fiji government. These were some effective policies which gave firms time to cover up their loan repayments and tax exemption helped businesses with their cashflows. Although at this stage, the study cannot determine how effective this strategies were, the study will need to conduct primary research to evaluate the findings on the effectiveness of fiscal and monetary policies implemented by Fiji government to revive its economy during crisis.

However, although fiscal policies and monetary policies were assisting Fiji to continue with its operation, International Finance corporation report showed that firms need some in a holistic way, which focuses on overall tourism marketing and campaigns to encourage domestic tourism. Therefore, the International Finance corporation survey indicated that large tourism related businesses needed around FJD500,000 of financing, MSMEs firms in the tourism sector needed around FJD30,000 to survive the Covid-19 crisis (International Finance Corporation, 2020). Therefore, firms in the hotel industry seek support in;

- National promotional and marketing campaign for tourism-related activities which initiates domestic travel.
- Close collaboration between Tourism Association, Ministry of Trade and Tourism and hotel entrepreneurs to find new market strategies.
- Regional campaigns and support to increase domestic tourism related sales.
- Health and safety certification and compliance to Covid-19 protocols.
- Capacity building for Small & Medium businesses to understand the change occurring and how to adapt into new normal.
- Customer collaboration and understanding market perspectives from domestic market.
-

5.6 Chapter Conclusion.

The discussion chapter was focused on answering the research question 'how does the role of government impact industries during times of disruption'. Understanding the government response in times of global disruption suggests that most of the time, the government's recovery strategy to combat any crisis is to strengthen its Fiscal and Monetary policies first. However, with the Covid-19 pandemic, a health crisis translating into an economic crisis created many challenges amongst the policymakers around the globe. The impact of Covid-19 is deadly and crippling. Therefore, governments worldwide had to choose between saving the lives of people or saving economies from recession.

Since the impact of Covid-19 is new in modern history, the roles of governments in this situation were saving industries and economies and saving people's lives and developing containment and elimination strategies to stop the spread of the virus. Therefore, government response comprised of; Public health policies, human control measures, fiscal policies and monetary policies.

New Zealand's findings present how the NZ government support effectively dealt with the spread of the virus and how influential their policy response is to mitigate challenges raised from this pandemic. The governments' strategies and fiscal policies were aligned with the recoverability of hotel industry firms through their Regional Events Fund (REF), Strategic Tourism Assets Protection Programme (STAPP) and Documents relating to Tourism Recovery Package. Whereas, as a small developing island constrained by financial resources, Fiji can align their fiscal policy towards rebuilding the tourism sector by coordinating and collaborating with relevant stakeholders to initiate campaigns to recover Fiji's hotel industry.

6. Conclusion

The previous chapter discussed the roles of government during times of disruption. The study investigated past events like financial crisis and pandemic outbreaks to provide an overview on how countries previously reacted with the policies as a response towards a crisis. This provided insights for this study in terms of understanding the role of government and why policies and strategies implemented during a disruptive event can have a huge impact on most impacted industries.

For this final chapter, the dissertation summary is presented, along with concluding statements, research limitations, and suggestions for future research.

6.1 Dissertation Summary

Chapter 2 of this study outlined the classification of the term resilience, definition of resilience, application of resilience in the Destination Sustainability Framework, organisation resilience, the relationship between the dynamic capabilities concept with the sub-themes of operational resilience and outlining the concept of operational resilience in context to business survivability during disruption. Chapter 2 concluded with the research question and the related rationale for this study. Chapter 3 outlined the background context of Fiji's tourism sector, particularly the hotel industry and the related rationale to understand the importance of the hotel industry and its roles in a country's economy. Chapter 4 presents the research methodology, the method applied,, data collection and analysis adopted for this study. In chapter 5, the study presents the discussion on the role government plays during an event of a disruption. The chapter outlines government response during global disruptions in the past and how policies and strategies have changed in context to the Covid-19 pandemic crisis.

The chapter provides examples of New Zealand's containment and policies measures to compare with the policies and containment measures with Fiji. The comparison between the two countries provides insights into how developed countries like New Zealand were able to counter the Covid-19 crisis and provide intensive support directly and indirectly to their tourism sector, whereas Fiji struggled with resources and lacked strong fiscal policies to assist their hotel industry.

6.2 Research Contribution

This study contributes to improving crisis management practices for businesses in the hotel industry and understanding how government response in the form of policies can navigate a long-lasting impact to revive economies severely affected by global disruptions.

6.2.1 Contribution to Crisis Management Practice for Businesses in the Hotel Industry

Undoubtedly, the business world has viewed resilience in crisis management strategy to be essential for businesses to be stable and adaptable to external shocks perceived as risks and disruptions. The concept of resilience is embedded as proactiveness, absorption, reactiveness and the dynamic attributes it holds to achieve such qualities of resilience. Hence, for businesses to make scalable interventions for business stability and continuity in times of disruptions, these resilience strategies require coordination amongst the themes to be effective. Therefore, businesses with a comprehensive network structure between resilience techniques and external collaboration with stakeholders can survive and mitigate the implications of a disruptive event.

Although management and business literature use resilience as a crisis strategy, it does not provide a holistic idea of how businesses can achieve resilience, especially how small and medium businesses can achieve resilience in times of crisis. Most literature entails macro-level issues, where business performance and competitive advantage is heavily driven towards their success and survivability. However, with this pandemic crisis, businesses that had resources and were capable of handling a crisis were crippled by the impact of Covid-19. For example, hotels and resorts around the world closed. For most countries, the hospitality industry has collapsed, businesses are going into bankruptcy, and the government cannot provide support or bailout to all industries. Therefore, this study offers an operational perspective for business resilience in the hotel industry at a vulnerable time.

Operational resilience focuses on the value creation functions in business which looks into business continuity and revenue generation. The concept of operational resilience is adopted from supply chain management, which focuses on business continuity when the supply chain is disrupted. Therefore, the outlook on operational resilience is input and output based.

The input-based resilience strategy (firm flexibility, buffers, visibility, disruption preparedness, agility, collaboration, integration, and information sharing) must be implemented by businesses before disruptions have occurred. It is quite impractical to implement this strategy during a

disruptive event as it can be costly for businesses to adapt to new changes. Input-based resilience gives businesses options to be agile to new conditions and circumstances that can unfold in the future.

Output-based resilience is how effectively businesses can respond to disruptive events by absorbing, recovering and repositioning themselves during a crisis. Therefore, businesses that lack financial resources to cover themselves during disruptive events can focus on output-based resilience. Businesses with both financial and resource capacity can look into input-based resilience, where businesses can use internal resources to make transformational changes to adapt to new changes in environmental conditions.

Although both approaches of operational resilience provide strategies and dynamic attributes for businesses to achieve resilience during disruptive times, at this stage, the lack of empirical data and conceptualising of themes based on their significance level to achieve resilience in times of disruption cannot be determined. However, the literature review suggests that it is possible for businesses to prepare themselves for future shocks and disruptions through analysing previous crises. Therefore, the study provides a comprehensive overview of the concepts of operational resilience and how these themes can relate to business survivability during times of disruption.

6.2.2 Government Response – Policy Implications

Understanding the role of government during times of disruption and crisis was presented. The discussion highlighted some critical issues and considerations policymakers have to address when implementing policies in events of crisis. In past events, monetary and fiscal policies provided support for economic recoverability. Thus, these policies targeted the revivability of corporations, banks and industries which directly or indirectly influence economic recoverability during a disruptive event. However, with the Covid-19 outbreak, policymakers were stretched and were in a dilemma as to how to act and respond to the sudden shock the virus had on the economy from both social and economic standpoints.

The impact of the Covid- 19 pandemic didn't only expose many vulnerable countries. It also exposed many developed countries with their lack of effective response strategy, crippling their health infrastructure and causing unprecedented health casualties. Countries all over the globe tried to implement fast policies to reduce the ramifications of the Covid-19 virus. These policies were implemented with the intention of preventing economic recession and to revive

economies post-Covid. However, these policies were ineffective and insufficient to bail out countries from the long-term impact of Covid-19. Industries relied heavily on government stimulus packages and intervention. However, economic policies contradict health policies and containment virus strategies; either way, economies suffered heavily. Therefore, this pandemic provides a new outlook and understanding for government and policymakers to make a scalable intervention.

Although this pandemic crisis provides a new outlook on government policies and strategies, small developing countries that are vulnerable, lack resources, and are dependent on tourism for economic growth will have a long-term impact if policies are not directly targeted at industries which contribute to their economic growth. Therefore, countries like Fiji need to reassess their policies and steer them towards revamping industries that directly and indirectly support the economy. Thus, the policy recommendations concluded from this study are as follows:

1. Policies

Fiji's monetary and fiscal policies did provide concessional loan initiatives for MSMEs, tax exemptions and wage subsidies. However, most of these policies were endorsed through government borrowing and international aid. Fiji portrayed a tight fiscal situation to counter the implication of Covid-19. Therefore, Fiji must develop their crisis reserve fund as part of its annual budgetary process.

2. Public Health Education

Although the virus was contained during 2020, people did not take the deadly virus seriously. The vaccine approach was criticised. In such a critical situation, vigorous information sharing on is important, and people need to understand the gravity of this pandemic; and in future, if a similar event occurs, people will understand and know what is required from them.

3. Virus Containment Strategies

Unlike other countries, Fiji's lock-down strategy was very brief. Therefore, during the second wave of coronavirus in April 2021, the virus spread and resulted in hundreds of cases per day. During the second wave, Fiji just had two weeks of lock-down, reflecting

that Fiji cannot stay in lock-down for too long. This shows that Fiji is vulnerable to put its economy on a large scale halt in production and activity. Thus, Fiji needs tight quarantine and containment strategies that reduce the chances of the virus spreading into communities. If Fiji can stop and prevent viruses within the quarantine facilities, the community transmission will subside, and businesses can operate with safe guidelines system such as social distancing and mandatory mask practices.

4. Business Revival Strategies

Based on the analysis presented in this study, most businesses, especially in the tourism sector, have closed or are hibernating. Although the government is trying and doing its best to support people and businesses, the support is not enough for businesses to remain open. Most firms in Fiji's hotel industry are small and medium sized and need more government intervention. For example, the New Zealand government implemented recovery packages for its tourism industry, which looked into ways to encourage domestic tourism within New Zealand, thus creating demand for local tourism operators.

In the context of Fiji, there were no such initiatives by the government, although large hotels were offering cheaper hotel rates to encourage domestic travel, but small hotel businesses were not able to absorb such operational and marketing costs. Therefore, for a country like Fiji, where tourism contributes 40% of GDP, the country needs a more holistic approach to support its high earning industries. The pandemic may cause many small and medium hotel businesses to close, and these SMEs provide around 52% of room occupancy (Fiji Tourism Report, 2021).

SMEs in Fiji, both tourism and non-tourism related businesses, need resources, support and expertise in times of disruption. Therefore, the Fiji government needs to design business insurance policies to salvage businesses from closure or losses from disruptive events and a business information package, which entails effective strategies and control measures to enable firms to achieve resilience in times of disruption.

6.3 Research Limitation

Like most research, this research has several limitations. The main limitation of this study is that it is based on a secondary literature review. This limits the study from collecting primary data. The second limitation is that this study cannot provide informed results from the perspective of hotel owners on how the pandemic has impacted their businesses and how effective the strategies and support from the government are. Thirdly, Fiji's data on the tourism sector includes all industries within the sector, and so most of the insights in this study include other businesses related to tourism sector, not just the hotel industry.

6.4 Future Research Area

The Covid-19 pandemic has triggered many authors to research areas across all fields of Covid-19 and its implications and effects. The research is bound to be characterised from an economic, social, environmental and sustainable climate change perspective. However, based on the literature review findings, the lack of empirical research on issues and challenges associated with tourism and businesses within the sector is limited. The tourism sector is seen as a major contributor to the economy. Most of the studies have focused on crisis management from a macro-level perspective, thus omitting out the crisis management framework for businesses in tourism-related industries. Therefore, future research should focus on assessing the impact of disruptive event on business strategies which were effective for businesses survivability.

Secondly, globalisation, virus outbreaks and other external shocks have caused the tourism sector to be vulnerable. Therefore, research on resilience and sustainability in the tourism sector needs urgent attention, evidenced by the importance of the tourism sector in Pacific Island countries like Fiji. More studies and research are required so that relevant stakeholders can implement effective policies that encourage the development of the tourism sector in a more sustainable way.

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