

Understanding and Overcoming the Limitations to Strategy Execution in Hotels within the Small and Medium Enterprises Sector - Qualitative Pilot Study Report

Abstract

This qualitative pilot study underscores the challenges and significance of strategy formulation and execution, especially in the Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) hospitality sector. Despite decades of research and professional scrutiny, strategy implementation remains a daunting task in strategic management. The research is of paramount importance not only to small hotels, especially in a rapidly changing and pandemic-stricken environment but also to the broader tourism sector. It equips managers in the hospitality and tourism sectors with insights to navigate implementation challenges and adopt innovative methods to bridge the gap between strategy formulation and its successful execution. The research findings, aimed at enhancing decision-making, productivity, and competitive edge, will benefit various stakeholders, including organizational managers, academic scholars, policymakers, regulators, and the general public. These findings will be disseminated through academic and professional channels, serving the public interest and contributing substantially to existing knowledge. Notably, while this study provides valuable insights, it does present limitations, particularly its focus on top management and its restricted observational scope due to the pandemic. Future research might consider broadening the participant pool and studying larger hotels across different regions to enhance generalizability.

Keywords: Strategy, SME, hospitality, strategic management, pandemic implications, tourism, decision-making, productivity, competitive advantage, policymakers

Introduction

The strategy and policy formulation process safeguard against hasty and erroneous decision-making. Strategy is important, and execution is critical. Once we have a strategy, the big challenge is execution, and if we cannot execute our strategy, then we may not have a strategy (Dee, 2014). The formulation and execution or Implementation of strategy are both central parts of a strategic planning process. In an ideal world, managers could formulate a long-term strategy, methodically implement it, and sustain the resulting competitive advantage (Sull, 2007). Unfortunately, this is not the case.

Organizations spend a lot of time and funds planning strategies, but organizational leaders successfully implement very little. Merkus et al. (2019) agree with this assertion, stating that there is often a gap between the planned strategy to be executed and the actual Implementation. Twase et al. (2019) also support this notion that, far too often, firms develop grand plans for strategic change but experience a shortfall in execution once teams walk out of the boardroom. Vernizzi et al. (2019) further state that although researchers and professionals have been investigating the significance and operational significance of strategy execution for decades, strategy implementation continues to be considered one of the most significant challenges in strategic management.

The business setting of hotels is a dynamic one. It may be a revised law, technological changes, or new Customer and stakeholder demands. Hotels often find themselves in changing settings and need to respond to the change consequently. The response can bring about a modification or change of strategy. This modification or change of plan is significant because it helps retain or gain a competitive advantage in a continually changing business atmosphere. Strategy formulation and successful Implementation have some objectives, including increased competitive edge and higher organizational performance (Twase & Tabesh, 2020). However, strategy formulation's biggest challenge is the phase after planning, the successful Implementation of the strategy. Therefore, the researcher's interest stems from the understanding that effective strategy implementation is a critical component of organizational success and a potential source of competitive advantage (Twase & Tabesh, 2020). The researcher's further interest lies in the results that the failure rate found in scientific studies for strategy execution ranges from as low as 7% to as high as 90%, with an average of about 50% (Candido & Santos, 2015).

The researcher's overall goal is to conduct a research study to identify and understand factors limiting strategy implementation success in small hotels and recommend remedies. The researcher is looking to identify the problems small hotels face when executing their strategies. When the researcher knows these problems, he can understand why strategies fail, which will help him propose solutions that could enhance their competitive advantage. Additionally, the researcher would like to understand the relationships between the various factors that affect strategy implementation in small hotels, identify new possibilities and problems for further research, and expand upon or ask new questions.

To understand and overcome the limitations to strategy execution in hotels in the SME sector, the researcher seeks to answer two questions: - what factors affect strategy execution, and how can we bridge the gaps between strategy formulation and Implementation in hotels in the SME sector? Therefore, the researcher proposes learning and understanding the limitations of strategy execution and how these limitations affect strategy execution, focusing on a hotel in the small and medium enterprises (SME) sector. The focus is on hotels because hotels are considered one of the fastest-growing sectors of the tourism sector, with 700,000 rooms worldwide and contributing \$3.41 trillion to the global economy (IBISWorld, 2021). Further, hotels in the SME sector are the focus because one of the significant characteristics of a flourishing and growing economy is a booming and blooming small and medium enterprises sector. SMEs play an essential role in the development of a country. SMEs contribute to economic growth by creating employment for a growing rural and urban workforce, providing desirable sustainability and innovation.

Literature Review

The key themes in the literature related to this topic are strategy planning or formulation, strategy implementation, and strategy evaluation or control. These three elements fit together in that they happen in sequence. A strategy is formed, implemented, and then evaluated.

Strategy formulation has to do with the mechanisms used by the firm in formulating its strategy. As the name implies, strategy formulation topics deal with the articulation of a strategy or how a strategy is formed (Koseoglu et al., 2020). According to Mintzberg and Waters (1985), strategy formulation is developing the strategy where we are now. Where do we want to be? It includes internal and external analysis of the organization and the industry, the definition of objectives, planning, and decision-making involved in developing an organization's strategic

goals and plans. Strategy formulation has also been shown to effectively coordinate organizational efforts and decentralize decision-making (Jarzabkowski & Balogun, 2009).

On the other hand, many authors have also defined strategy implementation differently. For instance, Barrick et al. (2015) define strategy implementation as the top management team members' willingness to specify and pursue strategic objectives. Noble (1999) described strategy implementation as the communication, interpretation, adoption, and enactment of strategic plans. Therefore, the conservative strategic planning method is that organizational management treats formulation and Implementation in a sequence (the strategy is formulated and executed).

Another critical consideration for managers is measuring and evaluating performance during and after strategy implementation (Altinet al., 2018). Evaluation estimates the degree of variation between an organization's actual and standard performance. Strategy evaluation carries tremendous importance for processing feedback and developing timely and appropriate responses to the implementation process. It further lets organizations know how much a strategy can achieve its objectives.

This background is essential because the concepts are interconnected. In the conventional approach to strategic management, managers treat formulation, Implementation, and evaluation in a sequence. Formulation of a consistent strategy is a challenging job for every organization. Still, effective Implementation is likely to bring the intended benefits (Koseoglu et al., 2019). Besides, of the three separate but interconnected processes that make up strategic management (strategy planning, strategy implementation, and strategy evaluation), research companies show that strategy implementation is the most important and most underestimated (Misankova & Kocisova, 2014).

Researchers have carried out prior work on strategy formulation and Implementation in various contexts (business organizations, government agencies, hierarchies, geographies, sizes, and languages). Examples include the public sector (Olivier & Schwella, 2017), electricity distribution companies in Iran (Nazemi et al., 2015), Italian mid-sized companies (Vernizzi et al., 2019), Latin American companies (Brenes et al., 2007), and more specifically, the hospitality and tourism industry (Koseoglu et al., 2020).

The hotel industry, especially within the SME sector, faces distinct challenges in strategy execution. Delving into related literature, Olaniyi et al. (2023) highlight the significance of enterprise risk management in the contemporary business milieu, emphasizing the need for effective risk navigation strategies in the face of potential adversities (Olaniyi & Olaniyi, 2023). These insights are critical for hoteliers to ensure strategy execution aligns with an ever-changing risk landscape. Furthermore, in this era of rapid technological advancement, Big Data Analytics and Business Intelligence are emerging as paramount tools. Olaniyi et al. (2023) underscore their utility in fostering improved decision-making, notably within top-tier companies (Olaniyi et al., 2023). Such decision-making tools can be instrumental for hotels to evaluate and recalibrate strategies in real time.

Another relevant perspective is the advancement of data-driven decision-making in urban settings, with Olaniyi et al. highlighting the role of Big Data Analytics in optimizing operations within smart cities (Olaniyi & Omubo, 2023; Olagbaju et al., 2023). By extension, hotels in urban locales can benefit from integrating such data-centric approaches to enhance operational efficiency and guest satisfaction. Interestingly, while several references touch upon diverse topics ranging from education (Olaniyi, 2022) to technological landscapes (Olaniyi et al., 2023), their underlying themes of adaptability, innovation, and data reliance are universally applicable.

Thus, for hotels within the SME bracket, the literature points towards an integrated approach that amalgamates risk management, data-driven insights, and continuous adaptability to execute strategies in a dynamic environment effectively.

There have been several research studies in the hospitality industry in strategic management. These studies focus primarily on how organizations can enhance performance by gaining sustainable competitive advantages rather than how organizations should formulate and implement strategies (Harrington et al., 2014; Harrington & Ottenbacher, 2011; Koseoglu et al., 2018). Also, there have been several studies on strategic planning in the tourism industry (Phillips & Moutinho, 2014). Recently, a few studies directly addressed strategy formulation in the hotel industry (Koseoglu et al., 2020). On the other hand, strategy implementation has shown much scholarly interest in recent years (Harrington et al., 2014; Koseoglu et al., 2018), another reason for my interest in this topic.

Context

Context envelops and completes the whole. Without attention to and inclusion of context, qualitative findings are like a fine painting without a frame (Patton, 2015). This research study was conducted on a small hotel, a member of a group of hotels in the mid-west United States. The hotel is strategically located in an urban area close to the airport. It has fifteen employees of different nationalities, 110 rooms, and two suites on four floors, and has 3.9 out of 5 ratings (Marriot.com). The hotel also houses offices for employees, a coffee shop, a restaurant, a swimming pool, a gymnasium, and several conference rooms. It provides paid lodging on a short-term basis.

The researcher's relationships and roles within the context are essential in gathering the data needed for this study. In this study, the researcher was a spectator or non-

participant observer, an outsider (the etic approach). The etic approach involves “standing far enough away from or outside of a particular culture to see its separate events, primarily about their similarities and their differences, compared to events in other cultures” (Patton, 2015, p. 509). As the researcher observed and interviewed the research participants, they engaged them in frank discussions about their experiences and perceptions of strategy formulation and implementation in their organization. The researcher expected this position as an outsider to help connect with them. This is more so as it was made clear that their responses will be confidential and anonymously reported. However, the results of the etic approach have a chance of being misinterpreted and tend to be overly descriptive.

Methods

The underlying reason for this qualitative research is to gain a richly detailed understanding of why there is a gap between strategy on paper and in practice, based on first-hand experience. The researcher adopted applied research to understand the nature of strategy execution failures and provide insights into how to bridge the gaps between strategy formulation and execution in hotels in the SME sector. The researcher adopted a naturalistic inquiry and purposeful sampling approach. As Patton (2015) described, the qualitative design is naturalistic to the extent that the study takes place in real-world settings. The researcher does not attempt to affect, control, or manipulate what is unfolding naturally. In this situation, participants are in their familiar environment where they are comfortable and free to express themselves.

The researcher's paradigm for this research is the systems theory. The researcher wants to understand how and why the hotel functions as it does and how the various units and departments in the hotel (front office, housekeeping, food and beverage, engineering and maintenance, accounts and credits, security, human resources department, sales, and marketing,

purchase, and information technology) function. Also, the researcher wants to understand the departmental boundaries and interrelationships and how the teams and departments are interconnected in formulating and implementing the hotel's strategies. Also, the study adopted a pragmatic approach. Pragmatism seeks practical and valuable answers to solve problems concretely (Patton, 2015). For example, the researcher wants to use the qualitative data collected and analyzed to interpret and identify solutions for hotels that will bridge the gaps between the formulation and Implementation of their strategies. Pragmatism uses qualitative inquiry to not only understand the world or test theory but also make the world a better place (Patton, 2015).

Positionality

The researcher's role in this study necessitates identifying personal values, assumptions, and biases at the study's outset. Positionality describes how our identities and experiences influence and potentially bias our perspective on the world. The researcher wishes to acknowledge that his views are not inevitable and that his positionality can bias his epistemology. "Reflexivity reminds the qualitative inquirer to observe herself or himself to be attentive to and conscious of the cultural, political, social, linguistic, and ideological origins of one's perspective and voice as well as, and often in contrast to, the perspectives and voices of those one observes and talks to during fieldwork" (Patton, 2015, p. 381). The researcher worked as a head of operations, customer services manager, and Zonal Operations Manager at a commercial bank in Nigeria, West Africa, and as a Manager at a retail trading organization in the United States. He has a master's degree in Business Administration and Business Analytics. He is confident that these experiences improved his awareness, knowledge, and sensitivity to the issues being addressed in this study and helped him work with the participants.

Although the researcher tried to ensure objectivity, his personal bias may shape how he views and understands the data collected and their interpretation. He recognized and understood the need to be open to others' thoughts and opinions and set aside his experiences to understand those of the study participants.

Research Participants

In selecting participants for this study, the researcher adopted a purposeful sampling strategy and a single significant case approach, studying experiences in one hotel because of the participants' unique expertise in their respective fields. Patton (2015) describes purposeful sampling as strategically selecting information-rich cases to study - cases that, by their nature and substance, will illuminate the inquiry question being investigated. Studying information-rich cases yields an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon, giving insight into the questions under study (Patton, 2015). The research participants included purposefully selected employees, two general managers, and the operations director. They are participants who can articulate their experiences as they relate to the phenomena being investigated – implementing their organization's strategy.

Once the research participants had been selected, the researcher obtained their informed consent. The researcher is responsible for respecting the participants' rights, needs, values, and desires. The researcher anticipated ethical issues such as confidentiality and informed consent in the research process. For this study, the researcher presented an informed consent form to the participants containing vital elements of the research and their participation.

Data Collection

Qualitative inquiry collects data from in-depth interviews, focus groups, open-ended survey questions, social media postings, direct field observations, and document analysis (Patton.

2015). The researcher collected the study's verbal (interview responses, documents, and field notes) and non-verbal (drawings, photographs, videotapes, and artifacts) data. These data include recorded interviews, the hotel's vision and mission statement, strategic plan, annual reports, meeting minutes, PR documents, social media posts, field notes, and reflections. Also, the researcher collected the study participants' demographic data and their position in their organization.

The researcher adopted a direct personal experience and engagement approach to collect data. The researcher got very close to the people and the organization and their activities to capture what is happening, seeing what there is to see, and hearing what there is to listen. There was, however, only a little activity to observe, as there was a slowdown in customer activity due to the covid 19 pandemic. "Going into the field means having direct personal contact with the people under study in their environments—getting close to the people and situations being studied to understand the realities and minutiae of daily life personally" (Patton. 2015, p. 55). Patton (2015) further emphasizes that actively participating in the observed participants' lives means going where the action is, getting one's hands dirty, participating where possible in actual program activities, and getting to know program staff and participants personally—in other words, getting personally engaged in using all of one's senses and capacities, including experiencing emotion no less than cognition.

The research used the single significant case approach to study the participants in one hotel. Gathering data consisted of in-depth face-to-face interviews using a semi-structured interview approach that lasted between thirty minutes and one hour, participant observations, and document analysis. By so doing, the researcher gained a richly detailed understanding of the topic based on first-hand experience.

The researcher focused on and took account of what was said and done, how something was spoken or carried out by the participants, taking note that mannerisms can hold answers to questions in themselves. The body language and tone of voice displayed by respondents were vital considerations. The researcher used a more open range of experiences from fewer people (3 participants) within the organization due to the study's limited time (3 weeks).

Data Analysis

Having collected the data, the researcher moved forward to organize and present them. The researcher adopted the analytical framework approach, narrowing it down to a single significant case approach to manage and present the data. The researcher chose this approach because, as Paton (2015) described, it will help him manage and map data from interviews, fieldwork, observation, and documents. The data collected was organized based on the themes that emerged from responses to the interview questions and were arranged question by question to illuminate critical issues. The researcher chose this approach to help identify reoccurring words, themes, and patterns across the data.

When the researcher had organized and presented the data, analysis followed. Before the data was analyzed, the researcher transcribed all interviews, observations, documents, journal entries, and field notes. The researcher adopted a content analysis approach in analyzing the data. Patton (2015) describes content analysis as any qualitative data reduction and sense-making effort that takes a volume of qualitative material and attempts to identify core consistencies and meanings. Also, the researcher integrated and triangulated the various data sources, interviews, observations, and documents to build a coherent justification for the themes and ensure credibility. Consistency of findings in the data sources increases confidence in the confirmed patterns and themes (Patton, 2015). The researcher continuously made comparisons among data

obtained from various sources. Patton (2015) emphasizes that it is vital to compare data that fit or do not fit into a pattern or theme and compare alternative explanations, conclusions, and chains of evidence.

Results

In describing the results of the research findings, the research uses the analytical framework approaches built around the interview questions. Four main themes emerged from the findings. These themes include the participants' understanding of strategy, factors considered for strategy formulation, factors considered for Implementation, and the comparison between formulation and Implementation.

The meaning and importance/role of strategy

Question 1 relates to the participant's understanding of strategy. The research findings reveal participants' understanding of strategy as plans to meet their organization's goals and objectives. Participant 1 (Emma) described strategy as "a plan of how we want the business to operate to achieve our goals and objectives." Participant 2 (Thomas) described strategy as "plans we can put in place to improve the overall productivity and efficiency of the organization." Participant 3 (Dexter) described strategy as "processes, procedures, and policies put in place that are well thought out to push the property best forward to meet my goals as a manager and leadership and organizational goals." Even though these findings show that their understanding of strategy is limited to plan, Vernizzi et al. (2019) support this understanding, stating that strategy is about designing which development path to take and target to reach. Also, the three participants were of the same view that strategy is essential to a business. Participant 3 stated thus, "The importance of strategy is order. "If there isn't a proper strategy in place, even the best intentions of managers and leaders can lead to chaos, especially when customers enter the scene.

It's essential to have a strategy that ensures order and efficiency. As Participant 1 emphasized, a strategy is crucial as it guides business leaders in the right direction.”

Factors considered in the formulation of the strategy

The participants identified internal and external factors as considerations when formulating their strategy. When asked the question, what factors do we consider when developing strategies? Their answers centered around revenue, customer reviews, employee inputs, and competitors' actions. Participant 1, for example, responded, “Revenue, what is going to make us money and has the easiest operational output.” Participant 3, on the other hand, replied, “Customer first. As general manager, I constantly speak with and listen to what my customers say. How was your stay? What do you expect out of this stay? Are they happy or upset with our services? Do they feel like we are not paying enough attention? I listen to what our customers say about us and to us through online reviews, by way of asking, such as what they say about our rates, cleanliness, and breakfast. I also listen to my staff because if they are happy, they will make our customers happy. Always listening for feedback from staff and building policy that works around them is important. Also, what our competitors are doing and how they operate are vital.” Results from several strategic management research (e.g., Nazeni et al. 2015 and Vernizzi et al. 2019) support the results from this research that organizational leaders need to consider factors from both inside and outside their organizations when formulating their strategies.

Factors that affect strategy implementation

The research findings revealed common views from all three participants. The research identified funding, communication, employee motivation, buy-in, feedback, and teamwork/collaboration as the primary factors for successful strategy implementation. According

to Participant 1, “incentivizing and motivating the employees, making them part of the process enable them to remain focused and work towards achieving our organizational goals.” Participant 2 also stated that “from my experience, several factors determine how successful our strategy implementation can be. A proper definition of employee roles, sufficient funding, teamwork, collaboration, employee buy-in, adequate communication of the plan, and taking feedback from employees and acting on them are all keys to successfully implementing our strategy. Suppose employees provide feedback and their suggestions are ignored. In that case, it takes the steam off them.” For Participant 3, “effective strategy communication is the strongest driving force, breaking down the plan into baby steps so the employees understand it. If your employees understand 100% what your strategy is and they understand the why, so if you provide a context and you provide a why a lot of the time, you are going to be a lot more successful.”

Previous research identifies an unclear strategy, poor communication, inadequate funding, resistance to change, and lack of teamwork as significant barriers to strategy execution (Koseoglu et al., 2019). Also, Engert & Baumgartner (2016) agree that “a strategy cannot be implemented successfully without motivated employees.” (p. 10)

Comparison between formulation and Implementation

Two participants agree that Implementation is more critical than strategy formulation from the research findings. According to Participant 1, “Definitely implementation, you can formulate whatever you want and say whatever you want; if it does not get implemented at the end of the day, it does not matter.” Participant 3 also said, “Implementation. It is easy to sit behind the desk and say this will work, and that will work. It is different from this; now we are in the process of doing it and understanding that your initial planning was not perfect, now they need to be tweaked. While strategy formulation is important, we should talk about these

things, and Implementation is more important because that allows you to see what works and does not work and fix it. I, as an individual, have been hands-on. I go out there to interact with the customers to see if they like or do not like what we have.”Twase et al. (2018) support this by saying that “in contrast to strategy formulation, strategy implementation takes more cognitive effort and is more emotionally draining and psychologically tasking” (p.3).

Participant 2 is, however, of the opinion that both formulation and Implementation are equally important. “Formulation and execution are equally important because change must always happen, or we get stuck in the same old routine. If strategies are not formed, there is nothing to execute, and if strategies are formed and not executed, we are still stuck in the same position.”

From the discussion with the research participants, first, the research found that the participants understand strategy as a plan to move their hotels towards a specific goal. They also agreed that strategy is essential and necessary for order in the organization and to point them in the right direction. Secondly, the participants identified revenue, customer reviews, employee inputs, and competitors' actions as factors considered when formulating strategies. Thirdly, they identified funding, communication, employee motivation, employee buy-in, employee feedback, and teamwork/collaboration as factors determining their strategies' success. Finally, 2/3 of the participants agreed that Implementation is more important than formulation.

Discussion

Due to the uncertain and dynamic operating business environment in all sectors of the world economy, particularly the hospitality industry, the need to develop initiatives to establish and maintain a competitive advantage and superior performance is the desire of organizational managers. Over the past few years, corporate managers and academics have been involved in

debates, and several studies have been carried out on the significance of closing the gaps between formulation and execution of strategy (Sull et al., 2015). This study reveals that practitioners agree with the importance of strategy execution. However, the Economist: Intelligence Unit (2013) points to the fact that managers have articulated their frustration with the effectiveness of the strategy implementation process.

This research explores and attempts to understand the factors necessary to close the gap between the formulation and execution of strategy in small hotels. The results of this research and existing research show that strategy execution can be a challenging endeavor for small hotel managers. Evidence from this study confirms factors indicated by research in small hotels that identified funding, effective communication, employee motivation, employee buy-in, and teamwork as dominant factors necessary for successful strategy implementation. When these findings are applied in practice, it will raise awareness among managers and employees as they plan and implement their strategy to help reduce the overall complexity of the challenging task of implementing strategy.

Participant's understanding of strategy is limited to "plans" to reach their goals. It reveals the need for an enhanced experience of strategy. For instance, Mintzberg and Waters (1985) described strategy as understanding where we are and knowing where we want to be. They, however, did indicate a good understanding of the role and importance of strategy as pointing them in the right direction and creating order in the work environment. Also, this research agrees with previous research that both internal and external factors are considered in formulating their strategies (Nazeni et al., 2015; Vernizzi et al., 2019). Participants identified revenue, customers' words, employee inputs, and competitor actions as motivating factors in strategy formulation. Further, this research confirmed the results of previous research (Koseoglu et al., 2020) on small

hotels, that funding, communication, employee motivation, buy-in and feedback, and teamwork/collaboration are vital factors in strategy implementation. Finally, 2/3 of the research participants recognized Implementation as more critical than formulation compared to other researchers, for instance, Koseoglu et al. (2020).

One expectation of the researcher lacking in our discussions was the effect of leadership on strategy formulation and Implementation. This was probably because the research participants held leadership positions in their organizations. When middle and lower-level managers and other employees are included as participants, the issue of leadership and its effect on strategy will be discussed.

Conclusions

Although researchers and professionals have been investigating the significance and operational implications of strategy execution for decades, strategy implementation continues to be considered one of the most significant challenges in strategic management (Vernizzi et al., 2019). The results of this research will serve the interests and benefit different groups. These groups include practitioners (organizational managers), scholars and researchers (the academic community), policymakers, regulators, family members, and the general public. Strategy execution poses an immense leadership challenge (Delcher, 2018); therefore, managers in organizations, especially in the hospitality and tourism business, will benefit from the study. They will be able to explore and adopt new and appropriate ways to overcome obstacles to implementing their strategies. According to Sull et al. (2015), academic research has attempted to address strategy implementation for decades. Therefore, this study will also contribute to knowledge in the academic community.

This study will be of immense significance to small hotels. They do business in a progressively active, uncertain, and competitive environment, especially during a pandemic. Therefore, central concerns are developing initiatives to establish and sustain superior and improved productivity and performance, improving decision-making, and enhancing competitive advantage. To gain enhanced productivity and competitive advantage, they must reach their goals. To achieve their goals, they must effectively implement their strategies.

Similarly, this study is of great significance to the tourism industry. Due to the pandemic, the tourism industry has faced challenging and uncertain times. They, therefore, need to understand what the challenges are and how to go about executing their strategies.

At the basic level, research studies serve the public interest. Research is done chiefly to solve societal issues and challenges. “If your research adds an important piece to what the human race knows and understands about the world, then you will, we hope, want to share your findings with a larger audience” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2015, p. 31). The researcher would share these findings with the research participants and their organizations, the academic community, other organizations in the tourism industry, and conferences. Also, he would consider publishing the final report in professional journals where it can be peer-reviewed in addition to open access journals.

Limitations and Future Study

The study's limitations involve the focus on top management for data collection. Future research can include middle and low-level managers and other employees to get deeper insights into the topic to understand the subject better. Secondly, this research study was conducted in a small hotel. A study of bigger hotels in different regions in future studies will likely throw more light on the factors that affect strategy formulation and Implementation, which can aid the

generalizability of the study. Thirdly, due to the Coronavirus pandemic and a lull in business, there was little to observe in the hotel studied. In future research, as business picks up, there will likely be a lot more to observe.

UNDER PEER REVIEW

References

- Altin, M., Koseoglu, M. A., Yu, X., & Riasi, A. (2017). Performance measurement and Management research in the hospitality and tourism Industry. *International Journal of contemporary hospitality management*, 30(2), 1172-1189
<https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-05-2017-0251>
- Barrick, M. R., Thurgood, G. R., Smith, T. A., & Courtright, S. H. (2015). Collective organization engagement: Linking motivational antecedents, strategic Implementation, and firm performance. *Academy of Management Journal*, 58(1), 111-135.
<https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2013.0227>
- Brenes, E. R., Mena, M., & Molina, G. E. (2007). Key factors for strategy implementation in Latin America. *Journal of Business Research*, 61(2008), 590–598.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jbusres.2007.06.033>
- Cândido, C.J.F., & Santos, S.P. (2015). Strategy implementation: What is the failure rate? *Journal of Management & Organization*, 21(2), 237-262.
<https://doi.org/http://dx.doi.org/10.1017/jmo.2014.77>
- Dalcher, D. (2018). Strategy execution: Overcoming the alignment trap. *PM World Journal*, 7(5), 1-7. www.pmworldjournal.net
- Dee, K. (2014). [Strategy is Important, Execution Critical | Eagle Staffing \(eagleonline.com\)](http://eagleonline.com)
- Engert, S., & Baumgartner R. J. (2015). Corporate sustainability strategy – bridging the gap between formulation and Implementation. *Journal of clean production*, 113(2016), 822-834. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2015.11.094>
- Harrington, R. J., Chathoth, P. K., Ottenbacher, M., Altinay, L. (2014). Strategic management research in hospitality and tourism: Past, present, and future. *International Journal of*

contemporary hospitality management, 26(5),778-808

<https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-12-2013-0576>

Harrington, R. J., & Ottenbacher, M. C. (2010). Strategic Management: An analysis of its representation and focus in recent hospitality research. *International Journal of contemporary hospitality management* 23(4), 439-462

<https://doi.org/10.1108/09596111111129977>

Hotels & Motels Industry in the US - Market Research Report, (2021)

www.ibisworld.com/united-states/market-research-reports/hotels-motels-industry/

Jarzabkowski, J., & Balogun, J. (2009). The practice and process of delivering integration through strategic planning. *Journal of Management Studies* 46:8 December 2009.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-6486.2009.00853.x>

Koseoglu, M. A., Altin, M., Chan, E., & Aladag, O. F. (2020). What are the key factors for the strategy formulation and Implementation? Perspectives of managers in the hotel industry.

International Journal of Hospitality Management, 89(2020), 102574.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2020.102574>

Koseoglu, M. A., Okumus, F., Dogan, I. C., & Law, R. (2019). Intellectual structure of strategic management research in the hospitality management field: a co-citation analysis

International Journal of Hospitality Management 78 (2019) 234–250.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijhm.2018.09.006>

Leedy, P. D., & Ormrod, J. E. (2016). *Practical Research Planning and Design*. 11th Edition
Pearson Education Inc.

Merkus, S., Williems, T., & Veenswijk, M. (2019). Strategy implementation as a performance

- practice: Reshaping organization into alignment with strategy. *Organization Management Journal*, 16(3),140-155. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1541651.2019.1611403>
- Mintzberg, H., & Waters, J. A. (1985). Of Strategies, Deliberate and Emergent. *Strategic Management Journal*,6(3), 257-272
- Misankova, M. &Kocisova, K. (2014). Strategic Implementation as part of strategic management. *Social and Behavioral Sciences 110* (2014) 861 – 870.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2013.12.931>
- Nazemi, S., Asadi S. T., & Asadi, S. T. (2015). Barriers to strategic planning implementation; Case of Mashhad Electricity Distribution Company. *Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 207(2015), 2-9.<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.10.142>
- Noble, C. H. (1999). The Eclectic Roots of Strategy Implementation Research. *Journal of Business Research* 45(1999), 119–134
- Olagbaju, O. O., Babalola R.O., & Olaniyi, O. O. (2023). Code Alternation in English as a Second Language Classroom: A Communication and Learning Strategy. *Nova Science*.
<https://doi.org/10.52305/YLHJ5878>
- Olagbaju, O. O., & Olaniyi, O. O. (2023). Explicit and Differentiated Phonics Instruction on Pupils' Literacy Skills in Gambian Lower Basic Schools. *Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies*, 44(2), 20–30. <https://doi.org/10.9734/ajess/2023/v44i2958>
- Olaniyi O. O. (2022, April 26). Best Practices to Encourage Girls' Education in Maiha Local Government Area of Adamawa State in Nigeria. The University of Arkansas Clinton School of Public Service (Research Gate).
<https://doi.org/10.13140/RG.2.2.26144.25606>
- Olaniyi, O. O., Olabanji, S. O., &Abalaka, A. I. (2023). Navigating Risk in the Modern Business Landscape: Strategies and Insights for Enterprise Risk Management Implementation. *Journal of Scientific Research and Reports*, 29(9), 103–109.
<https://doi.org/10.9734/jsrr/2023/v29i91789>
- Olaniyi, O. O., Olabanji, S. O., &Okunleye, O. J. (2023). Exploring the Landscape of

- Decentralized Autonomous Organizations: A Comprehensive Review of Blockchain Initiatives. *Journal of Scientific Research and Reports*, 29(9), 73–81.
<https://doi.org/10.9734/jsrr/2023/v29i91786>
- Olaniyi, O. O., Abalaka, A. I., & Olabanji, S. O. (2023). Utilizing Big Data Analytics and Business Intelligence for Improved Decision-Making at Leading Fortune Company. *Journal of Scientific Research and Reports*, 29(9), 64–72.
<https://doi.org/10.9734/jsrr/2023/v29i91785>
- Olaniyi, O.O., Okunleye, O.J., & Olabanji, S.O. (2023). Advancing Data-Driven Decision-Making in Smart Cities through Big Data Analytics: A Comprehensive Review of Existing Literature. *Current Journal of Applied Science and Technology*, 42(25), 10–18.
<https://doi.org/10.9734/cjast/2023/v42i254181>
- Olaniyi, O.O., Olaoye O.O., & Okunleye, O.J. (2023). Effects of Information Governance (IG) on profitability in the Nigerian banking sector. *Asian Journal of Economics, Business and Accounting*. 2023;23(18):22–35. <https://doi.org/10.9734/ajeba/2023/v23i181055>
- Olaniyi, O.O. & Omubo, D.S. (2023). The Importance of COSO Framework Compliance in Information Technology Auditing and Enterprise Resource Management. *The International Journal of Innovative Research & Development*.
<https://doi.org/10.24940/ijird/2023/v12/i5/MAY23001>
- Olaniyi, O.O. & Omubo, D.S. (2023). WhatsApp Data Policy, Data Security, And Users' Vulnerability. *The International Journal of Innovative Research & Development*.
<https://doi.org/10.24940/ijird/2023/v12/i4/APR23021>
- Olivier, A. J., & Schwella, E. (2018). Closing the strategy execution gap in the public sector. *International Journal of Public Leadership*, <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJPL-04-2016-0010>
- Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative Research and Evaluation Methods*. 4th Edition, Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks.
- Phillips, P., & Moutinho, L. (2014). Critical review of strategic planning research in hospitality and tourism. *Annals of Tourism Research* 48 (2014) 96–120
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2014.05.013>
- Sull, D. N. (2007). Closing the gap between strategy and execution. *MIT Sloan Management*

Review, 48(4), 29-38.

Sull, D., Homkes, R., & Sull, C. (2015). Why strategy execution unravels—And what to do

about it. *Harvard Business Review*, 93(3), 57-66.

Twase, A., & Tabesh, P. (2020). Strategy implementation: A review and an introductory framework. *European Management Journal (in press)*, 1-12

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.emj.2020.09.005>

Twase, A., Patrick, V. M., & Vera D. (2019). Crossing the chasm: Leadership nudges to help transition from strategy formulation to strategy implementation. *Business Horizons*

(2019) 62, 249-257. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.bushor.2018.09.005>

Vernizzi, S., Zanoni, A. B., & Zuccolotto, C. (2019). Strategy execution: one size does not fit all: evidence from Italian middle market. *International Journal of Business and Management*,

14(11), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.5539/ijbm.v14n11p66>