

Crisis? What crisis?! The strategic management of hotels in Brazil's Porto de Galinhas

Crise? Que crise?! A gestão estratégica dos hotéis de Porto de Galinhas no Brasil

¿Crisis? ¿Qué crisis?! La gestión estratégica de los hoteles en Porto de Galinhas, Brasil

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Abstract: Tourism in Brazil is a highly representative segment of the economy. The Northeast region consists of an extensive coastline. Porto de Galinhas, the destination chosen for this study, is located in the municipality of Ipojuca/PE. In August 2019, the region was affected by an oil spill disaster. At the end of 2019, Porto de Galinhas, like the entire planet, was negatively impacted by the new coronavirus pandemic, which caused a decline in the most diverse economic activities. The hotel and tourism industry in many international and national locations, in some cases, practically ceased to exist. In this way, the tourist segment of Porto de Galinhas was affected by an unprecedented crisis, thus the importance of crisis management became known. This study sought to analyze how the oil spill and Covid-19 influenced local businesspeople to implement crisis management. To this end, semi-structured interviews were carried out with entrepreneurs and business managers. To support this stage, the ATLAS.ti software was used in content analysis. As one of the main results of this study, it is clear that organizations tend to act reactively when facing crises.

Keywords: Entrepreneurs. Management. Strategy. Economic crisis. Hospitality.

Resumo: O turismo no Brasil é um segmento de elevada representatividade para a economia. A região Nordeste é constituída por um extenso litoral. Porto de Galinhas, destino escolhido para este estudo, está localizado no município de Ipojuca/PE. Em agosto de 2019, a região foi afetada pelo desastre de um derrame de petróleo. No final de 2019, Porto de Galinhas, assim como todo planeta, foi impactado negativamente pela pandemia do novo coronavírus, que provocou declínio nas mais diversas atividades econômicas. A hotelaria e o turismo de muitas localidades internacionais e nacionais, praticamente em alguns casos, deixaram de existir. Dessa forma, o segmento turístico de Porto de Galinhas foi afetado por uma crise sem precedentes, assim observou-se a importância da gestão de crises. Este estudo buscou analisar como o derramamento de óleo e a covid-19 influenciaram os empresários locais a implementar a gestão de crises. Para tanto, foram realizadas entrevistas semiestruturadas com empreendedores e gestores de empreendimentos. Para apoiar essa etapa foi utilizado o software ATLAS.ti na análise de conteúdo. Como um dos principais resultados deste estudo, percebe-se que as organizações costumam agir de forma reativa no enfrentamento das crises.

Palavras-chave: Empreendedores. Gestão. Estratégia. Crise econômica. Hotelaria.

Resumen: El turismo en Brasil es un segmento altamente representativo de la economía. La región Nordeste está formada por un extenso litoral. Porto de Galinhas, el destino elegido para este estudio, está ubicado en el municipio de Ipojuca/PE. En agosto de 2019, la región se vio afectada por un desastre por derrame de petróleo. A finales de 2019, Porto de Galinhas, como todo el planeta, se vio impactado negativamente por la pandemia del nuevo coronavirus, que provocó una caída en las más diversas actividades económicas. La industria hotelera y turística en muchas localidades internacionales y nacionales, en algunos casos, prácticamente dejó de existir. De esta manera, el segmento turístico de Porto de Galinhas se vio afectado por una crisis sin precedentes, por lo que se conoció la importancia de la gestión de crisis. Este estudio buscó analizar cómo el derrame de petróleo y el Covid-19 influyeron en los empresarios locales para implementar una gestión de crisis. Para ello se realizaron entrevistas semiestructuradas a empresarios y directivos de empresas, para apoyar esta etapa se utilizó el software ATLAS.ti en el análisis de contenido. Como uno de los principales resultados de este estudio, queda claro que las organizaciones tienden a actuar reactivamente ante las crisis.

Palabras Clave: Empresarios. Gestión. Estrategia. Crisis económica. Hospitalidad.

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1 Introduction

This study focuses on an area composed by hotel developments of different sizes. Ipojuca county in Pernambuco, Brazil, is known as a tourist center whose hotel industry is globally recognized. Porto de Galinhas has a high number of visitors and generates important economic results for the country (MACHADO et al., 2018). In general, visitors are primarily motivated by tourism, attracted by the destination's beaches, sunshine, natural pools with warm waters, water sports, and gastronomy—factors that contribute to its national and international appeal. The region has a large number of hotels, resorts, and inns, totaling more than 15 thousand beds (VASCONCELOS, 2021).

The information presented in this research is accurate and was obtained through interviews with representatives of hotel enterprises and tourist organizations, located on the south coast of Pernambuco. Pseudonyms are adopted to preserve the identity of participants and enterprises.

Although tourism plays a significant role in the local economy, tourism is a sector that has an irregular demand, and it is very vulnerable in catastrophic situations. In 2019, beaches along the coast of Brazilian northeastern were negatively impacted by the arrival of oil derived from petroleum on its coast. The ecological disaster first impacted the state of Paraíba before spreading to over 70% of the coastline in other Northeastern states.

In the same year, at the end of 2019, the world was surprised by the news of the appearance of a lethal virus that was later presented as Covid-19, that caused a highly contagious disease that prevented people's right to travel, among other consequences. The Covid-19 pandemic required a series of restrictive measures such as the use of masks, hand sanitizer and, crucially, social distancing (WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION, 2020). Unfortunately, the adoption of restrictive measures and coexistence with the new coronavirus were not enough to avoid the catastrophic situation that took place in various parts of the world, including Porto de Galinhas, in Pernambuco.

When considering the oil and the Covid-19 crises, it is possible to reflect: what has changed in hotel developments and in the destinations? Was anything implemented after these events? How important is crisis management? This study sought to analyze how the oil spill and Covid-19 influenced local businesspeople to implement crisis management. Thus, this study is structured into six sections, namely: introduction, topic 2 which addresses crises and the impacts of Covid-19 on the tourism sector, methodology, the results, discussions of the results and, finally, the conclusion.

2 Crises and the impacts of Covid-19 on the tourism sector

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In the economic segment, tourism is considered a sector that stands out in its representation for the world economy, as it generates revenue, jobs, investments and infrastructure in the countries that explore it (CHEN; GUO, 2023). Even with all its relevance to the economy, tourism is vulnerable to crises of the most diverse magnitudes (GÖSSLING; SCOTT; HALL, 2020). [...] Park, Kim and Kim (2022, p. 1) add: “An unexpected crisis (for example, natural, financial and health) can threaten tourist demand and harm the performance of hospitality-related companies”.

Corbari and Grimm (2020) define crises as complex events, caused by wars, natural, meteorological, biological disasters (epidemics and pandemics) and other situations that negatively impact the environment and society. According to Bas and Sivaprasad (2022) and Burnett and Johnston (2020), the tourism sector has witnessed events of the most diverse magnitude in recent decades, namely: the 2014 terrorist attacks in Europe; the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001; SARS in 2002 and 2003; 2009 Swine Flu Pandemic; 2003 Second Gulf War; 2004 Indian Tsunami; 2005 Hurricane Katrina and recently the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Covid-19 crisis caused a rapid demand for health services and a drop in several economic activities. Among the most affected were the areas of food, travel and leisure (AIGBEDO, 2021; CUOMO et al., 2021); moreover, it required changes in the operation of enterprises that were gradually trying to return to their activities. In the case of hotel developments, for example, Sharma and Kaushik (2021) postulate that the pandemic imposed new cleaning processes in hotels and ended up transforming an “aesthetically clean” industry into a clinically clean one.

Regarding technology, the implementation of new applications incorporated into the organization's routine has become a differentiator in its operation. Giousmpasoglou, Marinakou and Zopiatis (2021) highlight the emphasis on the use of technology as one of the main impacts caused by the pandemic on the operation of hotel projects, including brands such as Marriott, Hilton, Wyndham and Accor that invested in the development of high-tech solutions, such as mobile check-in and check-out, as one of the actions promoted by the organization to face the crisis. However, Faisal et al. (2020) postulate that crisis management must occur preventively and early. Furthermore, it will guide organizations to strategically manage the consequences of events.

3 Methodology

3.1 Profile of hotel enterprises

The hotel industry in Porto de Galinhas is extensive and presents varied classification depending on the size of the company (ASSOCIAÇÃO DOS HOTÉIS DE PORTO DE GALINHAS,

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2020). To this end, four hotel projects in the region of different sizes that served the international public were selected. Therefore, the criteria adopted for the selection of these hotels were, namely: having a history of guests originating from abroad, having shares in the commercial sector and/or reservations aimed at the international public and adopting hospitality policies for receiving foreigners, for example, employee admission and bilingual internal and external.

Table 1 presents basic information on the selected enterprises, namely: year the company was founded, number of housing units (HUs) and employees. The information is updated and was obtained during data collection. According to Table 1, Hotel-A was opened in 2000, has 204 apartments (HUs) and 343 employees. Hotel-B was opened in 2001, has 97 housing units (HUs) and 340 employees. Inn-C began its activities in 1995 and has 61 accommodations and 35 employees. Finally, Hotel-D was opened in 2012, has 240 apartments and 400 employees.

Table 1 - Enterprise information

Enterprises	Foundation year	Number of housing units (HU's)	Number of employees	Main origin of foreign guests
HOTEL-A	2000	204	343	Portugal/Argentina
HOTEL-B	2001	97	340	Portugal/Italy/France/Germany/Chile/Argentina/Uruguay
INN-C	1995	61	35	Argentina
HOTEL-D	2012	240	400	Portugal/Argentina

Source: Elaborated by the authors (2024).

3.1.1 Hotel-A

Hotel-A was inaugurated in 2000. It is a family business that has a manager with more than 40 years in the market on its board. At the beginning of the operation, two hotels were opened in the capital of Pernambuco. Later on, with the acquired know-how, the company decided to invest in a product with differentiated infrastructure, being the first resort to occupy the Porto de Galinhas region. Currently, commercial management has a robust commercial structure, highlighted by the direct sale of its products through representatives located in different regions of the country and some international partners. In addition, it values the hiring of managers from different cultures, enabling interaction and learning from international experiences.

3.1.2 Hotel-B

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Hotel-B started its activities in 2001. The focus of the resort is the luxury segment, its target audience is couples, and its proposal is to offer well-being and tranquility. The resort has international certification (Bureau Veritas) and it is a member of the Brazilian Luxury Travel Association (BLTA). In addition, it has internationally experienced managers on its staff. Strategic decisions are taken by a committee formed by the executives of each organizational area and by the organization's manager, who has a network with international entrepreneurs.

3.1.3 Inn-C

The family-run company was inaugurated in 1995. The structure where the organization is located today was a summer house, and for family reasons, the family matriarch and her grandson initially opened the company as a small hotel. However, later, the other family members decided to pursue something more intimate, which led to the idea of transforming it into an inn.

During the pandemic, the board of directors changed, which prompted a series of transformations in the company, including a stronger focus on the technological area. The main decisions of the organization are under the support of the directors, who have knowledge of the foreign market. Besides, the company does business abroad and manages to establish an active and almost constant network with the international market.

3.1.4 Hotel-D

This business opened in 2012, with the Best Western international franchise that remained until 2016. As of 2017, the resort became independent and the business began to be managed by the family. The directors have know-how about the hotel market, as well as experience with international franchising, and they maintain active interaction with the international market. Decisions are managed by the three directors, who are brothers and partners, and work in specific areas. The commercial direction considers that the expertise comes from the practice inherited from their parents, who have always worked in tourism.

This article was based on the qualitative research approach. As a strategy, the study of multiple cases was adopted, as its research focused on a contemporary phenomenon (YIN, 2001). Riadil (2020) used this method in his study, when he investigated Indonesian tourism from the perspective of employees working in the tourism and hospitality sector during the Covid-19 pandemic. To this end, the mapping and selection of three hotels and an inn located in the region of the study, from different sizes and with international public, were carried out. The interviews were semi-structured and conducted face-to-face, virtual and by telephone. Sharples et al. (2023) adopted the

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qualitative method of investigation in their research. In the case of data collection, semi-structured interviews were carried out with experts from the cruise industry during the pandemic. The article investigated the use of internal communications to promote workforce resilience in the cruise industry during a crisis. The interviewed subjects and the collection method are in Table 2. To collaborate in this step, ATLAS.ti was used, a software indicated for the investigation of qualitative data.

Table 2 - Presentation of the interviewed subjects

Interviewee's code	Description	Time in the company	ID ATLAS.ti	Data collection method	Date	Time
Interviewee 1 PG-EC-A	Hotel -A Account executive	2014 - present moment	D 247	Google Meet Online Platform	09/15	1h42min31s
Interviewee 2 PG-GG-A	Hotel-A General manager	2015- present moment	D 250	Google Meet Online Platform	09/28	1h19min11s
Interviewee 3 PG-GR-A	Hotel-A Booking manager	2009 - present moment	D 249	WhatsApp audio messages	10/05	17 min 53s
Interviewee 4 PG-CAB-A	Hotel-A Food and beverage coordinator	1985 - present moment	D 252	Telephone	10/19	1h34min06s
Interviewee 5 PG-AC-B	Hotel- B Commercial Assistant	2018 - present moment	D 248	Google Meet Online Platform <i>WhatsApp</i>	09/23 01/07/22	1h46min47s
Interviewee 6 PG-CME-B	Hotel- B Marketing and experience coordinator	2019 - present moment	D 254	Google Meet Online Platform WhatsApp	09/25 01/07/22	1h18min43s
Interviewee 7 PG-GC-B	Hotel- B Commercial Manager	2001 - present moment	D 255	Google Meet Online Platform WhatsApp and email	10/11 11/18 01/13/22	1h26min49s
Interviewee 8 PG-CC-B	Hotel-B Commercial coordination	2011 - present moment	D 256	Telephone/ WhatsApp	10/24	1h01min21s
Interviewee 9 PG-CR-C	Hotel- C Head receptionist	2004 - 2020	D258	Face to face	11/08	38min46s
Interviewee 10 PG-GH-C	Hotel-C Hosting manager	2017- present moment	D 259	Face to face	11/08	51min33s
Interviewee 11 PG-DC-D	Hotel -D Commercial Director	2012 – present moment	D 260	Google Meet Online Platform Email	11/22	1h19min08s
Interviewee 12 PG-CR-D	Hotel-D Head receptionist	2015 - present moment	D 261	Google Meet Online Platform	11/23	1h10min20s

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Interviewee 13 PG-D-E	Convention & Visitors Bureau Director	2015 - present moment	D 245	Google Meet Online Platform PPT(WhatsApp)	09/03	1h23min00s
Interviewee 14 PG-RC-E	Convention & Visitors Bureau Former Sales Representative	2019 - 2020	D 246	Google Meet Online Platform	09/08	1h27min17s
Interviewee 15 PG-DE-F	AHPG CEO	2013 - present moment	D 252	Telephone	10/04	1h12min23s
Interviewee 16 PG-GC-F	AHPG Commercial Manager	2011 - present moment	D 251	Telephone/ WhatsApp	10/20	40min00s

Source: Organized by the authors (2024).

The interviews were conducted in person with managers and employees of Inn-C, as well as through virtual platforms (Google Meet and WhatsApp) and by telephone with directors and managers of the projects (Hotel-A, Hotel-B, and Hotel-D). Interviews were also conducted with representatives of organizations supporting the destination, such as the Porto de Galinhas Hotels Association (AHPG) and the Porto de Galinhas Convention & Visitors Bureau (PGACVB). Each interviewee has a code, which is related to the region where the organization is located, the municipality of Ipojuca (Porto de Galinhas region (PG) and surrounding areas), the position held and area of activity. The description presents the hotel (pseudonym) and the position held, the length of time working at the company, the identity in ATLAS.ti (code generated in the system), the method used to acquire the information and the date of the information collection. In total, 16 subjects were interviewed, were recorded (in-person, telephone, audio on WhatsApp and through the Google Meet platform) and transcribed, totaling 12 hours, 423 minutes and 362 seconds, organized through September and November 2021.

4 Results

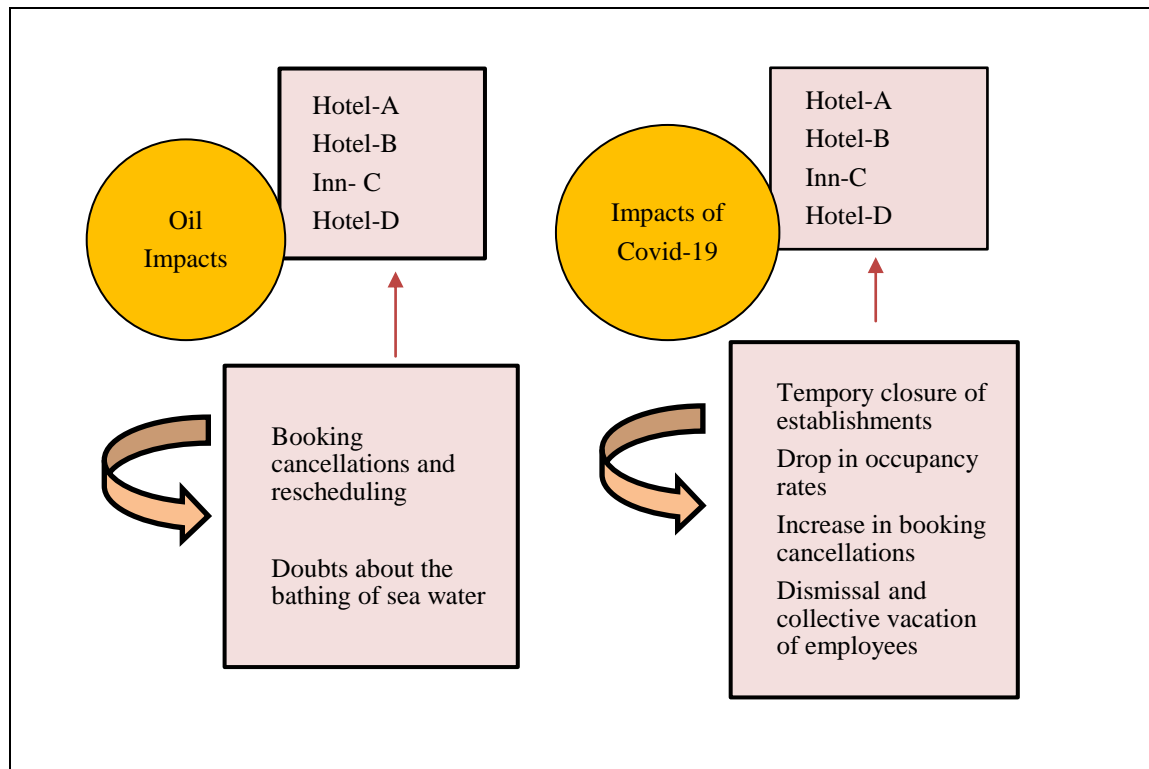
This study includes the analysis of four hotel projects in operation in the Porto de Galinhas region. This section reports the extent of the impacts caused by the oil disaster and the Covid-19 pandemic on these hotel projects. After that, we present the strategic actions of companies in the context of catastrophes.

Figure 1 shows the impacts caused by these events on organizations. Both events had negative consequences, but in different proportions. The oil spill was treated as a punctual crisis, as the affected companies did not close. The cancellations—although confirmed—were controlled, and bookings were rescheduled. Due to the infrastructure, the organizations were able to manage the situation without major losses and maintained communication and partnerships with the international market, as evidenced by the continuation of fam tours (visitation groups organized to showcase the enterprises). Information about the event was disseminated through the most varied forms of communication

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channels. In this way, it contributed to clarify the main doubts that came in through emails, social networks, and phone calls. According to Gomes and Mondo (2016, p. 197), “[...] tourists increasingly plan their trips using information they find available on communication channels”. In this context, social networks allow easy access and agility in sharing information, motivating other consumers (SOUSA et al., 2020; ZENG; GERRITSEN, 2014).

Figure 1 - Impacts of the oil spill and Covid-19 on enterprises



Source: Elaborated by the authors (2024)

In the case of the Covid-19, health measures such as isolation, quarantine, and lockdown were prioritized to the detriment of people's mobility and physical connectivity. Due to the lockdown, Hotel-A, Hotel-B, Inn-C and Hotel-D closed for a limited period. Entrepreneurs noticed the occupancy rate decrease, the increase in booking cancellations, and the market practically shutting down during this period. As a consequence, the companies had no choice but to dismiss employees or suspend operations collectively, as they could not sustain labor contracts. Soon, the managers of the most diverse tourist enterprises in the region realized that the destination was going through a crisis. For Faulkner (2001, p. 136), crisis can be defined as: “[...] an event, self-initiated through problems such as inept management structures and practices or a failure to adapt to changes”.

The tourist trade in Porto de Galinhas is made up of resorts, hotels, inns, car rental agencies, receptive services, restaurants, AHPG and the Convention & Visitors Bureau (PGACVB). The

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destination exhibits a distinctive characteristic: rather than intense competition, there is a collective effort to promote the area so that it attracts the largest possible number of tourists, thereby benefiting all stakeholders. This behavior is perceived by the people who work, support or go to the destination. Based on the common interest among the stakeholders, actions were established to mitigate the impacts caused by the oil spill and the Covid-19, which are presented below.

4.1. The strategic actions of companies in the context of catastrophes

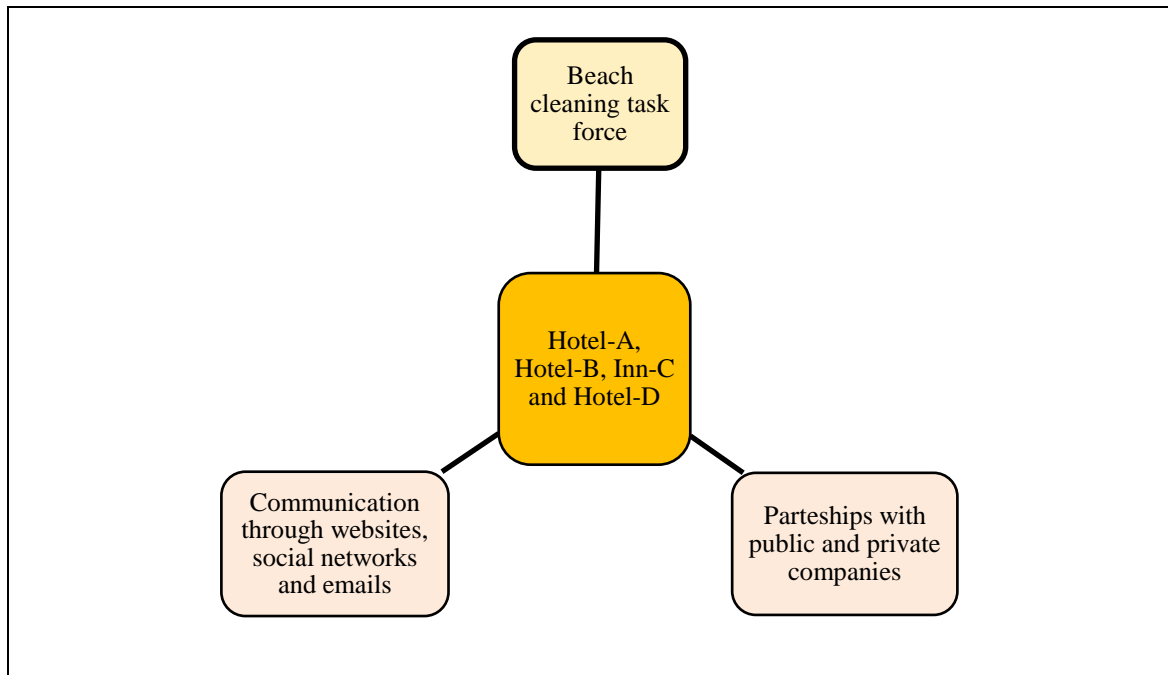
4.1.1 Oil spill

It is worth mentioning that during the oil crisis, actions were taken together, because the objective of the enterprises, hotel associations, and companies that support the region was the same: “to save the destination's image”, because they knew that in this way, everyone would benefit. Soon, the main actions were directed towards cleaning the affected area to minimize the visual impact on the environment. This action was carried out on a voluntary basis by company employees, members of the *Associação dos Hotéis de Porto de Galinhas* (AHPG) and the Porto de Galinhas Convention & Visitors Bureau (PGACVB), with the participation of the local population. The joint efforts were even televised by a nationwide program, which was important as it strengthened the image of the destination. The enterprises and companies that support the destination sought partnerships with public and private companies, intensified communication through website, social networks and e-mails.

In this aspect, the managers guided the commercial sector teams to conduct broadcasting video content in real-time on platforms in order to clarify the doubts that arose about the real situation. This type of action provided tourists with more security regarding the veracity of the facts on the oil event in the region, collaborating in the companies' communication with the customers and in their final decision to maintain the plan to visit the tourist destination (see Fig. 2).

Figure 2 - Actions taken by the hotels and the inn in the oil catastrophe context

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Source: Elaborated by the authors (2024).

4.1.2 Covid-19

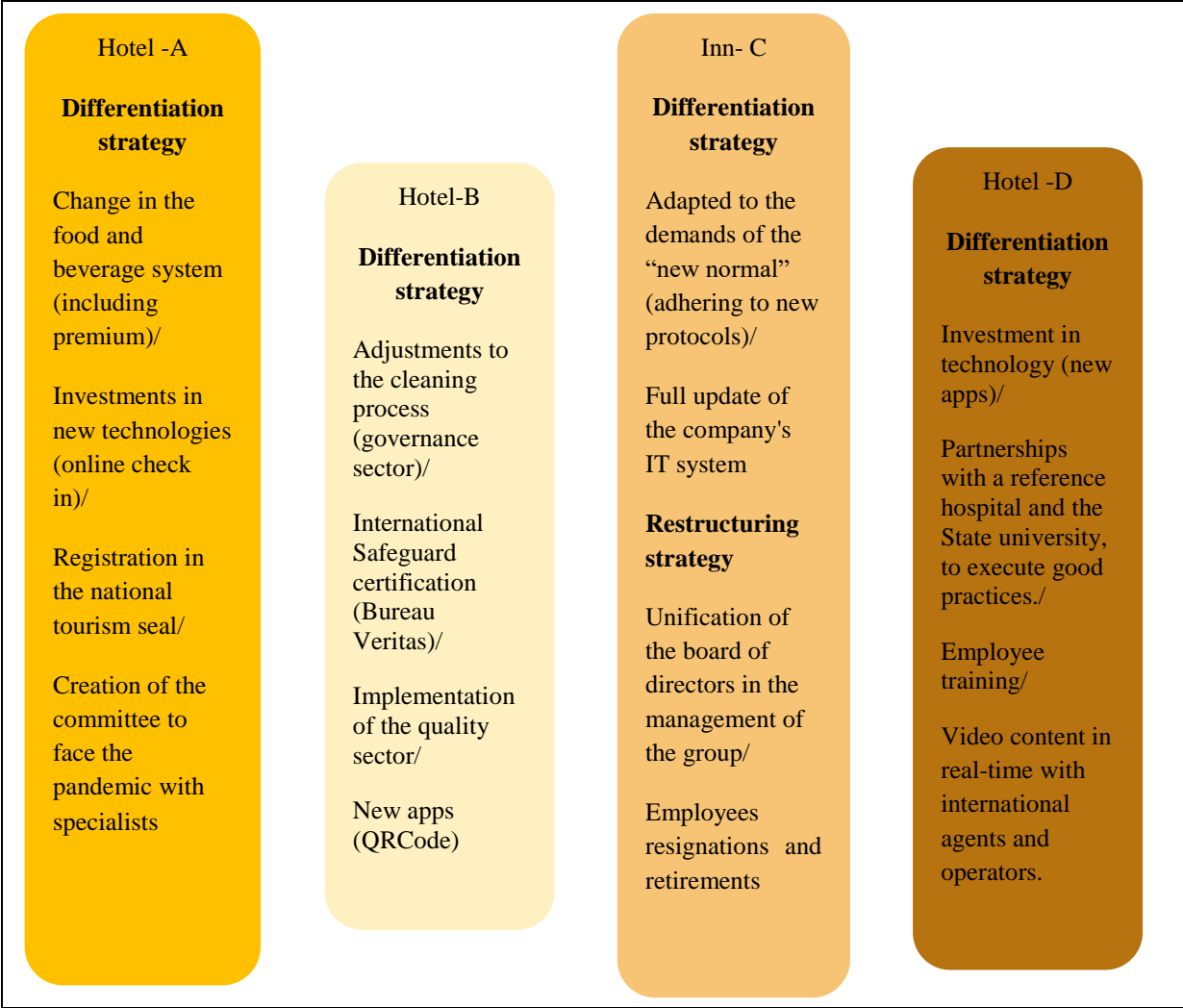
Considered as a global crisis, the Covid-19 pandemic caused major changes in establishments, and a common transformation in the four companies was in the physical environment. In this case, protective barriers were installed (acrylic at the reception counter and restaurants) and a change in the type of material used for cleaning. Alcohol dispensers were placed at strategic points in the establishments. Common areas and apartments began to be sanitized with hospital-standard products and all employees were trained, oriented and properly equipped with safety PPE (masks, face shields and gloves). In this way, the resumption of tourism could happen safely for guests and employees (DOURADO, 2020).

Regarding the strategies employed by the companies, it was observed that differentiation was the common approach adopted by all managers. Differentiation allows organizations to offer products and services with unique characteristics that guests perceive as superior to those of competitors (GORONDUTSE; HILMAN, 2019). Besides, the restructuring strategy was implemented by only one of the companies, the Inn-C. Each of the organizations sought alternatives to face the crisis. In this way, entrepreneurs carried out maintenance, modified the organizational structure, and implemented strategic changes, and to achieve this, it was necessary for companies to seek capital. The use of government support through MP No. 927/2020 (BRASIL, 2020a) and MP No. 936/2020 (BRASIL, 2020b) was another alternative used by three of the four companies. During the pandemic, emergency actions and measures were adopted by the federal government in an attempt to provide financial

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security for organizations and maintain workers' income (GUIMARÃES; RISSATO, 2020). Figure 3 shows the strategic actions established by each company individually.

Figure 3 - The main strategic actions taken by the managers in the face of Covid-19



Source: Elaborated by the authors (2024).

5 Discussion of results

5.1 Hotel-A

Despite the know-how, the entrepreneurs of this hotel recognize that the company needed to seek a differentiated position in relation to the competition. Even when experiencing a scenario full of uncertainties, such as the Covid-19 crisis, the managers decided to move forward and change the hotel's food and beverage system. In this way, Hotel-A migrated from the MAP system (half board) to the All Inclusive. Managers realized that internet searches by customers were focused on 'All Inclusive resorts'. All Inclusive (AI) resorts are accommodation options that offer accommodation, food, drinks

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(of all types) and other activities at the hotel included in the package price, paid in advance. Generally, the types of services and products (brands), as well as the activities, may differ from one establishment to another (RAYNA; STRIUKOVA, 2009; ELNASR; ALIANE; AGINA, 2021). Therefore, the change was necessary and it worked out well, in view of the customers' positive feedback with the change. The hotel is considered the only Premium "All Inclusive" in the region. This promotes prominence in relation to the competition, allowing it to reach higher levels, as mentioned by Gomes and Pereira (2016). In order to improve guests' perception of safety, the unit invested in technology (online check-in), training programs and hygiene protocols. Hotel-A was registered in the "National Tourism Seal" program, and required the creation of a committee to face the pandemic (composed of directors, area managers, specialized consultants, and an infectologist) to develop a safety manual within the established requirements by health authorities.

5.2 Hotel-B

In the Hotel-B, new implementations were made in the governance sector, one of which concerns the increasing period of cleaning in the apartments. The process used to take place in two stages: a team would come in to remove the bed linen, and then another team would start cleaning. With the new requirements in the cleaning protocols, the Hotel-B sought to improve and obtained the international certification. In the region, it is the only hotel that has the Safe Guard – Bureau Veritas.

[...] Safe Guard is granted to a company for use in specific facilities where the company has implemented policies and procedures aligned with local regulatory requirements, good hygiene, health and safety practices that support the mitigation of the spread of SARS-CoV-2 (the cause of Covid-19). After a remote audit, the label is initial. After an on-site audit, the label is confirmed (BUREAU VERITAS, 2021).

This type of certification is important, because besides guiding and formalizing the adoption of specific hygiene and risk prevention protocols for Covid-19, it promotes customer safety. Trainings were promoted, which qualified the delivery of services, as Hamouche (2020), Rodríguez-Antón, and Alonso Almeida (2020) state. The authors mention that training in crisis situations provides changes in the behavior of employees. As soon as the certification is achieved, the company sought guidance from specialists to develop the manual "you are well taken care of". This manual is available on the company's website so that customers have access to the changes made by the organization in order to offer a safe and satisfactory service. The quality sector was another initiative that emerged during the pandemic, resulting in more personalized service and enabling Hotel-B to move closer to the organizational excellence, thereby achieving significant benefits. The technology promoted visible

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changes to the organization, with the insertion of new apps, the extinguish of paper printing, and electronical menus through QRCode.

5.3 Inn-C

Differentiation was achieved through flexibility, training, and adaptation to the new safety protocols. The company's entire technology system was replaced, and according to the manager and employees, this change added value to the business and was closely linked to the new leadership that assumed control of the group during the Covid-19 pandemic. This record corroborates Sharma, Thomas and Paul (2021) when they state that adverse situations such as disasters help accelerate changes in technology. Given the pandemic scenario, the restructuring strategy, also known as downsizing (HITT; IRELAND; HOSKISSON, 2018) was implemented at Inn-C, and the number of employees was reduced through layoffs and retirements, and with the old management modification. This fact is in line with the thinking of Shabat (2020), who argues that downsizing is one of the best-known types of cost reduction initiatives during economic crises. Regarding the board of directors, although the company has 2 hotels and 1 inn, each establishment had a separate board and administration. This change is considered a radical change in the company.

5.4 Hotel-D

The hotel implemented new apps (Easy Trip), sought partnerships with a reference hospital and a state university to develop the manual of good practices. Moreover, it invested in training for employees so that they understood the importance and execution of the new safety protocols. The training helped the employees' orientation, allowing them to understand their reality to prevent and protect workers, as well as their families and clients. This evidence is in accordance with the literature, specifically with Dias et al. (2021). For the authors, training is important to find solutions in a crisis situation. This attitude was a way found by Hotel-D to communicate to the market that the place was operating safely for everyone. Therefore, several broadcasting video content in real-time were performed on social networks with national and international agencies, allowing the networking with the market. This was seen as a way to react to the drop in bookings and cancellations from the pandemic. This type of action was even recommended by the Federation of Trade in Goods, Services and Tourism of the state of São Paulo (Fecomercio/SP) published in the *Jornal Diario* of Pernambuco, in November 2020, which states: "It is important that entrepreneurs keep the digital channels active now, not only to offer packages and destinations, but also so that customers have clear communication of the new tourism security protocols".

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6. Conclusion

When a crisis sets in and organizations survive, it is necessary to understand what was learned. Did managers really understand that they went through crises? This study sought to analyze the extent to which the events caused by the oil spill and Covid-19 aroused local business people's concern about implementing crisis management plans.

To this end, the profile of four hotel projects was analyzed, three hotels and one inn, and strategic actions were used by these organizations during the confrontation of the oil spill crises in 2019 and Covid-19 in 2020. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with directors, managers and employees and analyzed using the ATLAS.ti software.

As main results of this study, it appears that both events had negative consequences, but in different proportions. The oil spill was seen as a one-off crisis, since the impacted companies did not close. In the case of Covid-19, in compliance with health and safety standards, lockdowns were necessary and Hotel-A, Hotel-B, Inn-C and Hotel-D closed for a limited period.

It is evident that these events triggered a series of changes within the companies. However, all actions were reactive—that is, they emerged as responses to immediate situations. This indicates that the companies did not incorporate crisis management into their business plans or strategic planning following the oil spill and the Covid-19 pandemic.

Finally, it is believed that this article contributed by highlighting research that addresses the topics discussed. Also, it provided a scientific basis for company managers to understand the importance of crisis management in adverse situations.

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