Sustainable Solutions and Implementations for the Tourism Industry of Cyprus

Dr. Eleftherios M. Colocassides, PhD, DSc

Lecturer in Human Resources (MBA programme),
College of Tourism and Hotel Management in Nicosia, Cyprus (European Union)

DR. ELEFTHERIOS M. COLOCASSIDES

A B S T R A C T

The role of leadership in a multicultural environment is an important factor that can direct employees in a way that satisfies the organisational operations. The solutions and implementations that are decided my managers should meet the key objectives of an organisation.

The purpose of this article is to present and analyse some sustainable solutions and implementations that currently exist in the tourism and hospitality sector of the Republic of Cyprus which can create profitability to the stakeholders.

Keywords: *Leadership, Organisational Culture, Tourism and Hospitality, Multicultural environment*

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

The economic challenges of a global business environment create the need for more competitive organisations in order to survive and achieve their goals. Organisations should decide about suitable implementations that would create a competitive advantage. The development of sustainable tourism related procedures, strategies and practices from organisations is a complex process but can create value to the organisation. Organisations are often place value on the role of a leader who aims to explore ways of transmitting the right messages to employees in order to achieve their targets. The implementation of sustainable solutions can motivate employees to follow strategic directions and create organisational culture.

1.1 Objectives of the Study

The overall objectives of this study are to investigate current actions of leadership, analyse the findings and suggest sustainable solutions for the tourism and hospitality industry of Cyprus. This study examines: 1) the role of leadership for organisations in the hospitality and tourism industry, 2) the concept of digital tourism development, 3) sustainable strategic directions to assure the quality and the functional values of services, 4) the managerial decisions in the tourism sector. 5) sustainable implementation of strategies for organisations to bridge different levels of management.

1.2 Research Questions

The scope of this research is to find answers on the following questions: a) "How leadership transformation could change the way an organisation is operating?", b) "How the transmission of digital messages could develop the stakeholders decisions?", c) "What are the sustainable strategic directions which can assure the quality and the functional values of an organisation's services?", d) "How the managerial decisions of an organisation in the tourism sector could motivate employees to satisfy their needs?", e) "What transmission and transformation of messages could bridge different levels of management to create organisational culture?".

METHODOLOGY

2.0 Research Procedure

Each organisation operates differently and uses existing theories in practice to create sustainable and competitive solutions in a global business environment of the 21st century. This research uses case study to examine the topic because "an empirical strategy could direct research into a particular contemporary phenomenon in real life conditions and bring practical collection of data" (Robson, 2002). "The strategic use of case study has a great ability to produce answers like 'why?', 'What?', and 'how?'" (Saunders, 2009). The use of a case study is also very important for a researcher who looks to gain "a rich understanding of the research framework and the procedures established" (Morris and Wood 1991).

2.1 Research Design

Qualitative and quantitative methods of study can find answers to the above research questions. A research design leads to analysis the collection of quantitative and qualitative data, usually in the form of quality analytical numbers and techniques. According to Saunders (2009), "there are three layers: research strategies, research options and time horizons. These three layers can be considered to be the focus of the research design process, to transform the research question into a research program" (Robson, 2002). The research will use the interview method to collect qualitative data, and the questionnaire method to collect quantitative data.

2.2 Ethical Considerations

The issues of 'confidence' and 'confidentiality' during an interview and the completion of a questionnaire by participants must be taken very seriously by researchers. Participants must remain anonymous as the main target is to examine given answers and not accuse or reward them. Interviews can show reactions and emotions as well as tone of voice, facial expressions and any hesitations. Questionnaires are also very important since the researcher has the opportunity to receive in writing important and useful information about the field of research. However, by asking in depth questions about the research topic, it might acquire in-depth knowledge and data, which should be carefully protected, and destroyed information given which could hurt the participant. Some examples include a list of completed questionnaires and a recorded interview. Furthermore, the use of any bibliography

and references during a survey review should be carefully presented on the final assignments, as authors' work might be taken as interception of other's primary data. All primary data is a copyright of the examiner author, and should be borrow with respect.

PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

3.0 *"What are the sustainable strategic directions which can assure the quality and the functional values of an organisation's services?"*

Cyprus is an island where its main income is based on services. Tourism industry is one of the most important factors for the economy of Cyprus and takes a very serious place in the final decisions of the local government. "The processes of a strategic plan could create value by meeting and exceeding customer needs and by delivering benefits to them" (Camilleri, 2018). Successful organisations rely on strategic planning, sustainable implementations and leadership actions to create value. Therefore, the strategic planning process is related to the short-term marketing and operational plans. All strategic plans related to tourism sector (like airlines, hotels, events) are affected by any internal or external factors (like coronavirus situation) around the world. In order to identify and evaluate marketing strategies for hospitality and tourism sector, someone must make a PESTEL (Political, Economic, Social, and Technological, Environmental, Legal) Analysis. The external environment plays a very serious role in order to start a business and especially if we talk about Cyprus which the last few years suffers from different reasons like the Turkish invasion in 1974, economic and bankruptcy situations in 2013, as well as with the current situation of Coronavirus.

Political: The Turkish invasion in 1974 had as a result the division of the island. Turkish are still creating problems in the area and as a result that is creating an unsafe environment. Cyprus makes agreements with other countries in the area in order to create safety for all but as long as Turkey is creating problems then tourism and hospitality sector is very complex.

Economic: In 2013 Cyprus had faced a very serious economic crisis. Two big banks have closed and others used the bail in method in order to survive. That means getting customers money to save banks. Tourism and Hospitality sector had lost very big amounts. For example, hotels could not pay salaries and other expenses, supply chain management could not work properly because money was not moving around the sector.

Social: In 2013 society had to face another crisis after the Turkish invasion in 1974. People and organisations had lost salaries, money from their accounts and nothing could move forward. Society was in shock. On the other hand, the tourism industry's role was very important because by promoting Cyprus in abroad could bring tourists to Cyprus and income to people and organisations.

Technological: Technology was very important in order to promote Cyprus in abroad in order to bring Tourists. Websites, social media, and other web technologies were used in order to make Cyprus as a very important destination for tourism and hospitality either for holidays or for organising events and conferences and other types of entertainment and businesses.

Environmental: Cyprus has sea and sun which is something that most tourists want and ask when they come to visit the island either for entertainment or business. The combination of those environmental beauties together with entertainment and business in a promotion campaign could help Cyprus to create a competitive advantage in this geographic area.

Legal: Cyprus Law is very friendly to business sector by giving low taxes and other attractive benefits, as well as protecting human rights based on European and other global laws and ethical norms.

The whole Political, Environmental, Social, Technological, Economic, Legal environment (PESTEL) in Cyprus is under pressure. Tourism organisations are trying to create new strategic plans and develop sustainable business solutions especially after coronavirus infection (Covid-19) in 2020 and the bail in of Cypriot banks in 2013. Most organisations, including operations in the tourism industry, lost money and could not pay salaries and suppliers. Investors from abroad who brought money to the country have also affected. Now, organisations that are still open are trying to merge or they are in the process to sell parts of their operations to survive. Hopefully, the high quality of services in the tourism industry of Cyprus is still alive but the market is in shock. People and organisations must get loans for banks to survive or bind personal property. Brexit also affected the tourism industry of Cyprus as United Kingdom is one of the biggest markets for the tourism industry of Cyprus. The Russian market is also very important for Cyprus but the arrival of tourists from Russia depend on the numbers of people's infection, and the travel restrictions.

3.1 *"How the transmission of digital messages could develop the stakeholders decisions?"*

Cyprus, as a small country in a global market, could not be affected by the changes of the sector. Technology takes a very serious place in our everyday lives, and affects most of our operations. Airline tickets, car rental, hotel booking and other forms of services in the tourism industry are

available to customers (visitors/tourists) over the internet in order to make their lives even more easily. On the other hand, governments and global organisations had created a very serious number of laws in order to protect human's rights and customer's decisions. For example, those laws covers customers in the case of flight delay or flight cancellation, in the case of bankruptcy, in the case that accommodation and other leisure or hospitality services booked over the internet were not on the level that the seller promised, and several other reasons that could affect or have a negative feedback on the customer's needs and wants related to the services he or she bought over the internet. Recently, governments have made decisions about electronic methods of travellers' protection from covid-19 infection (i.e vaccination).

Effective digital solutions often are significant on whether the design of a strategic plan could succeed and provide autonomy for leaders to act and implement managerial decisions. A direction challenge can be evaluated as successful only after continues actions, implementations and evaluations of strategic plans. A successful strategic plan should have excellent abilities and an important working involvement whenever organisational sizes, and continues learning. The idea of designing and developing a strategic plan for achieving a development is arising based on the goals that have been set by each organisation. To update a strategic digital plan for development needs to identify the necessary skills that must be improved, devise activities to improve those skills, identify the resources to perform those activities, identify the measures to record progress, and work out a timeline because without all these elements it is not possible to make an impact on communication's development. City tourism is one of the fastest growing travel segments worldwide and the impacts of the changing nature of city tourism become increasingly apparent in many cities. The proliferation of information and communication technologies (ICTs) has had a significant impact on the travel industry, as well as on tourist behaviour, and is also transforming the nature of travel and the actual tourist experience".

3.2 *"How the managerial decisions of an organisation in the tourism sector could motivate employees to satisfy their needs?"*

Motivation is has a key role to a psychological process that will bring a communication improvement. A person with an unsatisfied need will do whatever is possible and behave in a way that would satisfy that need. Maslow's motivation theory is saying that human beings are motivated by unsatisfied needs, and that certain lower factors need to be satisfied before higher needs can be satisfied. Therefore, it is

important for all organisations to understand all its employees' needs and try to satisfy them in order to pursue higher-level motivators, and create continues digital solutions which could be a serious fact for success. The degree to which a strategic leadership development would be successful is based on the encouraged engagement and positive discretionary behaviour of employees. To achieve a strategic leadership development is also very much depend on the ways in which employees can lead and manage others. Effective managers and team leaders often have considerable will on whether the design of a strategic development could succeed and provide autonomy for leaders to act and implement managerial decisions. A leader can be evaluated as successful after continues actions and implementations of strategic development plans. A successful leader should also have excellent communication skills and working experiences from different organisational sizes, but the idea of designing and developing a strategic personal development plan for achieving a strategic leadership development is arising based on the goals that have been set by each leader individually.

An organisational strategy should concentrate on what line managers have to do as leaders in order to play their vital and immediate part in increasing levels of engagement. Especially in a situation like this, which Cyprus had to face, any strategy should therefore include the steps required to improve performance and effective as well as increasing commitment of employees to implement leaders' orders and save the organisation from the bankrupt. By taking seriously the role of a leader to decode and transfer the messages of the management and to be accepted by the team, in order to face business situations through speaking, writing, and by use of electronic media (online leadership). In difficult business situations all actions are demonstrating the potential to grow and become an effective leader by mastering skills in organisational leadership as well as entrepreneurial leadership and develop teambuilding and effectiveness in self- managed teams and take leadership roles. A leader have to demonstrate an ability to identify, structure, and solve management problems using formulate organisational strategies in a daily, complex and new business environmental situations. Leadership behaviour is not something that is going to be created at the beginning, but it can be easily recognised and get developed. Each person is different and the leadership behaviour is coming from inside of each person. "Leadership behaviour is separated in two major types: the task and the relationship. A leader should develop those skills by taking, maybe, some additional training seminars for personal development and improvement" (Northouse, 2013).

3.3 *"What transmission and transformation of messages could bridge different levels of management to create organisational culture?"*

Leadership in practice requires some less tangible and less measureable skills as well as managerial skills on topics like trust, inspiration, attitude, decision-making, and personal character. The more experienced is a leader the better results will have to achieve his/her goals. A strategic leadership ambition is faces of humanity, and is enabled mainly by the leader's character and especially his/her emotional reserves. Any continues improvement of current skills and abilities will have an impact on the organisation that a leader works for. Good interpersonal skills and time management skills by leaders are very important for the success of the organisation and always help on giving a competitive advantage on an organisation. Improving of personal skills through various trainings are necessary for achieving the strategic leadership ambitions and future goals of any organisation to bring change. The new economic environment that has been created in Cyprus after the decisions of Eurogroup in 2013 had both negative and positive results. Positive results has the financial support to customer's accounts from the government to avoid bankruptcy for organisations and people, but negative because two banks closed and money have taken from customers' accounts to save some other banks. Customers' could not pay loans and other personal expenses. Organisations, including the tourism industry, lost money and could not pay salaries and suppliers, and investors from abroad who brought money in Cyprus have also been affected. Organisations have started buying each other in order to survive.

3.4 Limitations and Delimitations of the Study

It is clear that each organisation operates differently, so some methods and strategies that are implemented in one organisation cannot easily implement by other. "The measuring of effectiveness within an organisation has both strengths and weaknesses" (Tourish and Hargie, 2009:41) and this is something that this investigation was trying to finding. However, there were also some findings that needed more in depth analysis, to fill the gaps and achieve the target. Most of the research questions have been answered clearly, but some others looked to be difficult to answer because of the general way they have been presented to the participants. Time pressure and busy schedule environments was another serious problem for getting significant answers. For example, during the interviews, more specific questions to get clear answers could not bring more promising answers in order to understand better the messages arising from local leaders' decisions and actions. Also, the selection

of numerical data could show very positive information from the participants about their performance based on leaders' motivation. Furthermore, safety and data protection rules could not extent information about personal development based on participation on training courses related to tourism and hospitality industry.

DISCUSSION ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.0 Introduction

The whole Political, Environmental, Social, Technological, Economic, Legal environment was under pressure. Tourism organisations were designing new strategic plans to create sustainable business solutions based on the new situation. The high quality of services for the tourism industry is still alive but the market was in shock. People and organisations could not get loans for holidays and for organizational development, income was decreased, staff lost their jobs, companies were not hiring anymore, nobody knew what was going to happen. Nobody could say about what was going to happen to Cyprus. The achievement of outcomes of a plan is depends of the growth results has a business that the leader is working for. The decisions made against strategic needs will show a realistic vision of the future of leader's business. A strategic leadership development plan should not be confused with a business plan as this is based on personal strategic needs. The outcomes of the above shows how successful was by satisfying leader's needs and highlights some important issues to bear in mind that will show how to turn improve in the future any new planning and what changes must be made for implementation. The degrees to which sustainable and strategic directions are implicated and improved to become successful are based on the encouraged engagement and positive flexible behaviour of employees. There are also very much depend on the way motivation and training are complicated to achieve a strategic plan and also on the ways in which employees can lead and manage others' performance at workplace. The level to which leadership factors can be implicated to become successful are based on the encouraged engagement and positive discretionary behaviour of employees. The motivation of staff to achieve a strategic organisation's plans depends on the ways in which employees can lead and manage others. Effective leaders often have considerable will on whether the design of a strategic plan could succeed and provide autonomy to act and implement managerial decisions. A leader can be evaluated as successful after continuous actions and implementations of strategic sustainable plans for organisations. A successful leader should also have

excellent communication skills and working experiences, but the idea of implementing a strategic plan to achieve a mission of an organisation is arising based on the goals that have been set by each leader individually. Direct leadership development needs to identify personal skills which need improvement, devise activities to improve those skills, identify the resources to perform those activities, identify the measures to record progress, and work out a timeline because without all these elements it is not possible to make an impact on leadership development.

Motivation is also a psychological process. A person with an unsatisfied need will do whatever is possible and behave in a way that believes will satisfy the need. Maslow's motivation theory is saying that "human beings are motivated by unsatisfied needs, and that certain lower factors need to be satisfied before higher needs can be satisfied". Therefore, it is important for workplace leaders to understand its employee's needs for satisfaction to pursue higher-level motivators.

4.1 Assess of the relationship between managers and leaders to achieve the identified strategic ambitions for the tourism sector

A business planning for tourism development should take very seriously all the factors before start preparing a plan in order to satisfy the needs and wants of the business, to create a competitive advantage and make a profitable organisation. Furthermore, the tourism industry plans and creates a number of interesting trends and developments for many airlines and their intermediaries in order to create a competitive advantage. Travel "distribution" are now changing into "e-commerce services" with campaigns, offers, and digital channels of marketing. New technologies are making fundamental changes in the structure of the travel industry, including its products and services. Today, several airlines have closed their own ticket offices in many markets and are operating completely online or over the phone.

A Tourism development and strategic planning involves an analysis of the businesses' internal strengths and weaknesses, and as well its opportunities and threats in the market place. The scanning of the marketing environment leads management to choose particular customers and product strategies. Strategic planners have to assess their resources, competences and capabilities, as they should determine where their company stands relative to other competitors (Camilleri, 2018).

Businesses are expected to develop strategic options in order to consider alternative tactics, including market penetration, market development, product development and diversification. During the completion of an assessment the employee has the opportunity to examine whether it would be possible to be a leader in the organisation. "Leadership style questionnaires or leadership style assessments in general, are the first impression of an employee to an organisation" (Northouse, 2013). On the other hand the organisation by giving a style questionnaire has the opportunity to see whether and who is going to be the right person to hire for the "leadership position". The leadership style assessment also gives a good idea of a person's strengths in order to be a leader. As a person by knowing the leadership style might help to understand why that person leads the way you do, and whether by changing a style and performance will be beneficial for the future. "Leaders have to gain the necessary skills in order to make effective decisions concerning organisational resources, goals, and strategy" (Northouse, 2013).

Definitions of Management and Leadership mention that two different topics which have a very strong relationship between them are effective managers and leaders. Leaders and managers have to earn the necessary knowledge and skills in order to succeed in a managerial position or and situation. Leadership and management are about: "the development of people to think, write and speak effectively and creatively; the development of an appreciation of and respect for social, moral, and ethical values as the foundation of one's relationship to others and one's responsibilities to the community; the development for analytical, decision-making and communication competencies, self-reliance, responsibility, integrity and self-awareness;" (French, 1999).

4.2 Critical review of a leadership development plan

The effectiveness of a strategic plan is only available on final results. The level of success will get better performance, more satisfaction, and productivity. Downs and Adrian (2004:11) "classifies that the strategic planning can provide how employees view the implementation of any communication at workplace in relation to management's goals and vision". The power of a good communicating manager would affect the daily productivity of the internal working environment. To update a personal development plan and direct leadership development needs to identify those skills that need to be improved, devise activities to improve those skills, identify the resources to perform those

activities, identify the measures to record progress, and work out a timeline because without all these elements it is not possible to make an impact on leadership development. Key questions that need to me answered for review of this plan are: What are the important aspects in a personal life that need to grow? What are the important competencies that have the biggest influence on a personal life, career or objectives? What other results were presented by other leaders that might be included and implemented in a future leadership development plan? Leaders must write down a list of positive and negative points arise from a plan. That will help them to grow if each of the aspects is recognised for personal growth and make a reflection. Discussions with mentors will create personal relationships that can create good growth.

4.3 Digital transformation and organisational change

The action of not paying attention to employees equally, could show a serious misunderstanding of multigenerational differences. Managers who show more attention on how to earn more money create luck of trust and bad communication between employees, and colleagues do not respect each other. The research showed that the differences between generations have immediate effect of productivity. This is because older employees do not collaborate with younger employees and act based on experience 'mechanically', without paying attention to the modern methods or techniques that have been learnt by digital leaders and managers. On the other side, younger employees have entered an organization with modern skills and methods that have been learnt at colleges and universities. Those helped them to follow modern rules and computerized skills in order to survive in the competitive workplace environment. As a result, the two sides come in contract, by being competitive between them by having bad communication (like emotions, words, tensions). Here comes the role of a leader that need to find a solution to this conflict in order to bring the two sides together.

The role a digital leader is to find any gaps so that could have the best possible communication between employees. For example, if an instructor does not speak good English or a student does not speak or write good English then both should participate on English language classes. Also the leader is responsible for the communication between the top management and other administrative staff, as well as students regarding e.g examinations, registration of students, schedule of class, and payments

or salaries. The Emotional Intelligence (EQ), is a very good tool that someone needs to make a training, to 'take someone else's position' in order to understand how he/she feels on a specific situation. The development of this kind of performance could help to improve communication between employees. For example, by understanding each other's needs, culture, religion, behaviours should get prepared for a better and 'healthy' environment. This is not easy to send a message to a 'difficult and problematic' personality. There is also the generational difference so a message must be sending in a clear and simple way. A multinational working environment is also a complicated case that speak different languages or has other believes, even the majority of people communicate in English, there is also a difference on decoding a message in another language.

4.4 Digital managerial transformation for the tourism industry

Leaders have an everyday communication with employees. Leaders prepare everyday plans and suggest changes according to each situation. Leaders are moving together with the team, and they do not give orders like managers. They must understand team's needs and decisions to transfer them to the general management. This article presents the role and the 'power' of a leader as well as the important role of a leader in teamwork. Everyone needs each other in order to succeed, and to create passion, motivation and organizational culture. Employees looked to have completed with good faith the questionnaire, as the results on it showed the 'perfect job' that their leader has done in their department. Bad communication that does not work properly can create mistakes which could damage the whole strategy, and affect development and performance at workplace.

CONCLUSION

New sustainable ideas must be developed and implemented for the tourism industry of Cyprus as the need to increase the number of visitors to the island is very important. Digital leadership and managerial solutions are also important as the quick technology progress should be taken seriously by local government and the Cyprus Tourism Organisation in order to create a competitive advantage and take a good piece of the pie in the global tourism market. The management of each organisation should understand how the global competition works and create the right strategies and promotions to attract visitors. Over the last years even more organisations around the world have realized the importance of a communication plan as an important powerful tool which will help them to succeed. Sustainable

communication plans could be a necessary tool to develop an organisational culture and create 'change'. A healthy organisation in the tourism and hospitality industry of Cyprus would transfer their future directions to the local and global markets.

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Author

Dr. Eleftherios M. Colocassides is a Lecturer in Human Resources (MBA programme) at the **College of Tourism and Hotel Management in Nicosia, Cyprus (European Union).**

He graduated with a D.Sc in Communication, and a Ph.D in Human Resources Management. He also holds degrees and professional diplomas related to Business, Tourism and Hospitality Management.