

# **SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST? SURVIVAL ADAPTATIONS TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC: A QUALITATIVE STUDY ON INDEPENDENT HOTELS**

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# RESEARCH BACKGROUND



- While international chain hotels have received the majority of research focus, this study takes the initiative to comprehensively analyse the effects of COVID-19 in the context of independent hotels.
- The owner of the hotel has the freedom to operate the business differently and promote the hotel property based on its uniqueness (O'Neill & Carlbäck, 2011). Study by Ozdemir, Dogru, Kizildag, Mody and Suess (2021) stated that independent hotels are deemed to be more susceptible to the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.
- This vulnerability can be attributed to their lack of financial resources and infrastructure support, which are often available to larger hotel companies managing chains or franchises.

# RESEARCH OBJECTIVES AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

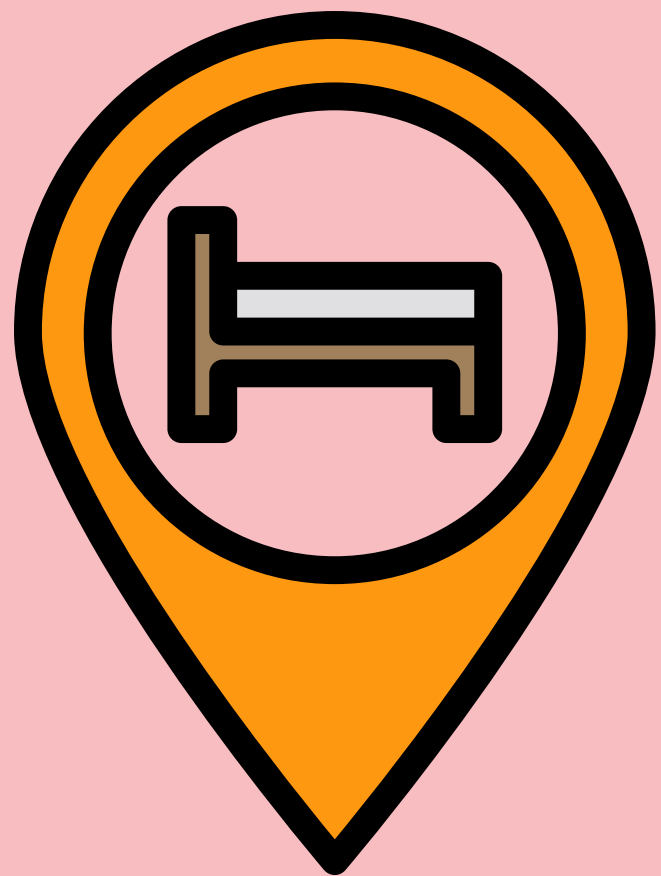


## RESEARCH QUESTION 1:

What strategies are implemented by the independent hotels dealing with the intra-pandemic?

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 1:

To identify the strategies taken by independent hotels during and after the COVID-19 pandemic;



## RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 2:

What practices are implemented by the independent hotels dealing with the intra-pandemic?

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVE 2:

To examine the practices adopted by these hotels in their business operations



# RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

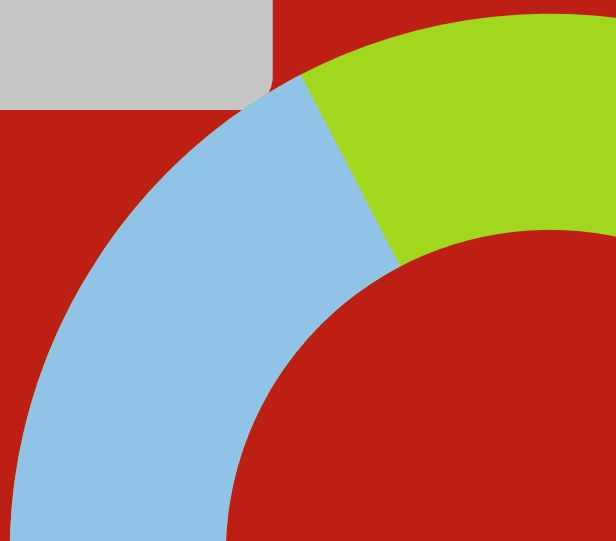
Source of data (primary and secondary data)

Qualitative study- explore the essence knowledge of the survival strategies and practices



An interpretivism-oriented approach - to study the independent hotels' view and knowledge dealing with the pandemic impacts

Target population and location of study: 3-5 star independent hotels that operated before the pandemic and during the pandemic until the data collection period located in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah



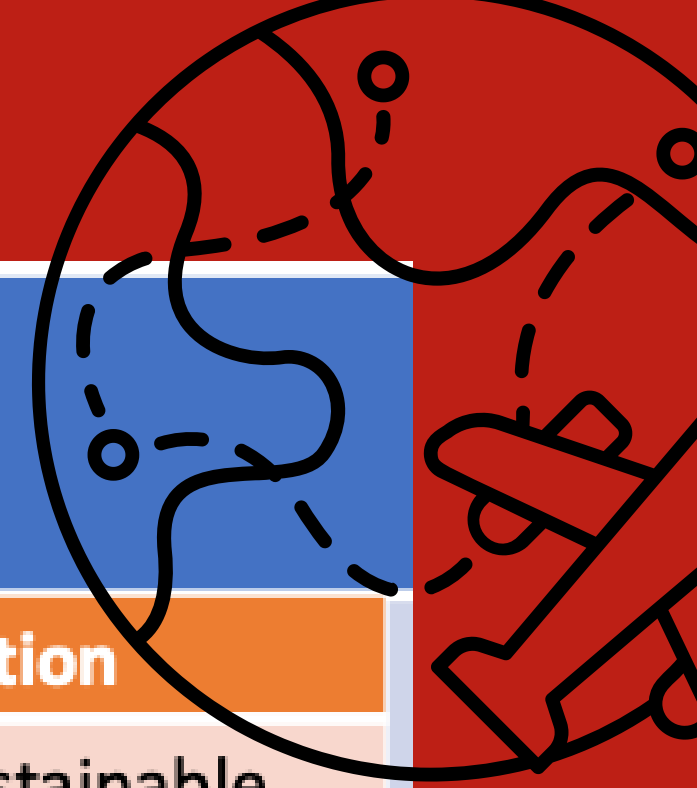
# RESEARCH FINDINGS



Research Question One	FINDINGS		
<b>What Strategies Implemented by Independent Hotels while dealing with the Intra-pandemic?</b>	Themes	Sub-themes	Description
	Defensive Strategies by Operation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimize/ No operation cost</li> <li>Immediate Response</li> <li>Reassurance on safety measure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Participants' view on the strategies employed to survive the independent hotels' businesses during the pandemic.</li> <li>The defensive strategies of lowering operational costs were effective, which also highlighted in many literature studies on health-related crises ((Lo et al., 2006; Kim et al., 2005; <u>Loi</u> et al., 2021; Hao et al., 2020).</li> </ul>
	Defensive Strategies by Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Unpaid leave &amp; Voluntary Separation Scheme</li> <li>Shifting target market</li> <li>Competition-based pricing</li> </ul>	
	Government Intervention & Responses		



# RESEARCH FINDINGS



## Research Question Two

## FINDINGS

**What Practices Are Implemented by Independent Hotels Dealing with The Intra-pandemic?**

### Themes

### Sub-Themes

### Description

The New Practices

Cost Control & Resources Management

Multitasking & Teamwork

Effective Response Strategy

Internal Work Reorganization

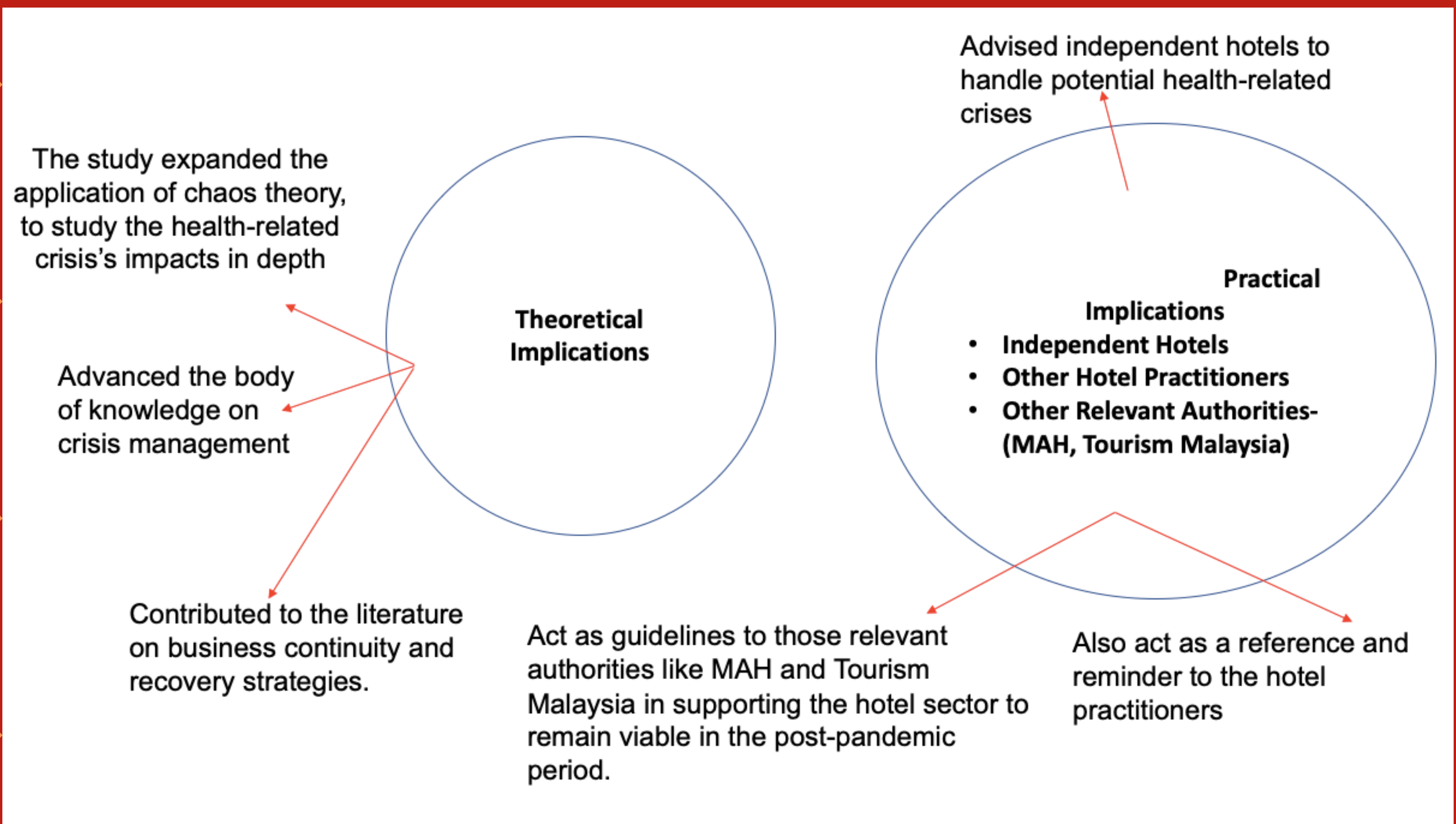
Rigid hygiene & Protection Measure

New sustainable practices by the independent hotels opted for quarantine business.





# IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY



**Thank you!**

