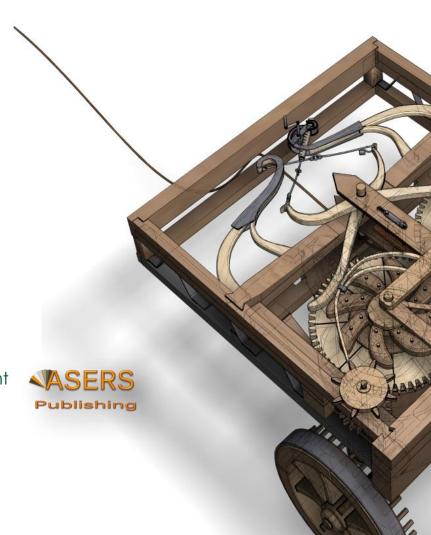
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Summer 2021 Volume XII Issue 4(52)

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Journal of Environmental Management and Tourism is an interdisciplinary research journal, aimed to publish articles and original research papers that should contribute to the development of both experimental and theoretical nature in the field of Environmental Management and Tourism Sciences.

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Crisis Management of Restaurant Business in Modern Conditions

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Abstract:

The aim of the article is the study of presumable and real causes of the crisis, the factors that cause it, its signs and consequences that deteriorate the normal conditions of the enterprise functioning. Research methods used in the process of writing the work include general and special methods. From general research methods the following were used: deduction (when constructing the structure of work in the logical interconnectedness and unity, as well as the interdependence of its components), induction (when forming general conclusions of the study), abstract logic and synthesis (when clarifying the interpretations of the categorical tools of crisis management), analysis (in the development of classifications of crisis phenomena, in the study of trends in restaurants crisis management, in processing the results). Special methods used include factor analysis, computational analysis and method of comparisons, tabular and graphic, economic and statistical correlation analysis, forecasting methods (in justifying the prospects of institutions) restaurant business after the cessation of the spread of the coronavirus pandemic) and other methods of studying economic and managerial processes and phenomena. This paper investigates the system of restaurant crisis management and defines its essence and main components. It also considers necessity and relevance of crisis diagnostics and monitoring of restaurants activities and operations during different crisis lifecycle stages. The present work includes a comparison of foreign and Ukrainian experience, as well as the practices of crisis management and reorganization, state regulation in the realm of bankruptcy. It establishes the main external factors of unprofitable activity of restaurant establishments. It determines that the innovation policy in the crisis management process is one of the main tools that contributes to the exit of the establishments under study from the crisis and increase their competitive positions in the market. The current study presents a generalized sequence of crisis management strategic goals implementation. It identifies the phases of the crisis development and the stages of the crisis lifecycle in the restaurant business. It shows the developed structural organisation of restaurant establishments under the influence of the anti-crisis action program. Also, it presents specially developed proposals to reduce electricity costs in the restaurant business. This research offers motivational components that are recommended for introduction into the establishments activities and presents the structural model of restaurants activity crisis management system.

Keywords: crisis management; motivation; bankruptcy; crisis diagnostics; innovation policy; reorganization; capacity to pay; liquidity.

JEL Classification: M54; L83.

Introduction

In today's volatile economic environment and amidst the COVID-19 pandemic, the efficiency of the restaurant industry fuctioning, as well as its capacity to pay, profitability and liquidity of assets are significantly influenced by many factors, including low purchasing power of consumers, ban on the activities of restaurants during lockdowns and their restrictions on the provision of services, jumps in exchange rates, as well as negative endogenous factors such as low level of management or insufficient staff training, weaknesses in production and marketing, lack of innovation policy.

Many restaurateurs do not even count the losses, because the work of their establishments has almost completely stopped. Therefore, the quarantine, which began due to the spread of the coronavirus, can be called the biggest crisis in the history of the Ukrainian restaurant business.

Under such conditions, a rapid response of managers (prompt Crash-program), efficient crisis management, mobilization of internal resources is needed (Druziuk 2020). An effective way out of the crisis is the use of crisis management procedure, which involves the introduction of production and technical measures into the restaurant activity system, the use of external and internal reserves to restore profitability and avoid bankruptcy.

Financial recovery as an integral part of crisis and bankruptcy management includes a targeted selection of the most effective tools, strategy, tactics needed for a particular type of business. The individuality of the choice of these means does not mean that there are not any generalized means, characteristic of all enterprises in financial crisis. Studying the experience of overcoming crisis situations of both different countries and specific enterprises allows to form a flexible system of crisis management.

1. Research Background

The crisis of the economy threatens any company, including restaurants, with not only financial problems and market position weakening, but also the loss of qualified personnel, without which it is impossible to ensure the survival of the company in crisis situations, confirmation of its competitiveness or successful business management in the future. This problem was considered in the works of Druziuk 2020; Vasilieva, Afanasieva 2013; Hrinko 2013; Danilov, Paientko 2015; James, Baldwin 2015; Kundenko, Moroz, Lohvinenko 2015; Lihonenko, Khilenko, Diankov 2015; Prokhorova, Yarmoliuk 2015; Semenov 2015; Yakovlieva 2016, and others.

However, there has been little research into the issue of improving the system of restaurant crisis management. This is especially true with regard to the crisis in the restaurant business, which began in 2019 and continues nowadays due to the continuing spread of the coronavirus pandemic. Well-known restaurateurs often times hold seminars and trainings on how to keep the restaurant business afloat, but very few economists have researched this issue.

2. Methodology

The purpose of the article is to study the anti-crisis management of restaurants in modern conditions. During the study, we proposed an approach to the analysis of crisis management based on the use of different research methods.

3. Results of Strategy Formation and Implementation

The system of restaurant crisis management is a set of coordinated elements that, interacting with each other, diagnose the signs and manifestations of the crisis, help to overcome it and return business structures to stable functioning, create the necessary conditions for overcoming the negative impact of external and internal factors on the establishments activities.

The main purpose of restaurant crisis management is to create conditions for stable functioning of enterprises in the market in response to any economic, political or social transformations in the country, to develop strategic alternatives based on forecasting and anticipating the development of the situation, to avoid financial problems and overcome the threat of bankruptcy at the lowest cost, to introduce innovative changes in activity (fig. 1).

The main purpose of signs of crisis diagnostics in the restaurant industry is to prepare information for analysis and its initial processing to implement appropriate decisions on enterprise management, including anticrisis measures, throughout the entire period of enterprise activity depending on the nature of the information received.

The results of economic diagnostics should be based respectively on the analysis of the current activity of the restaurant, preventive (previous) information and prospective analysis of the results of production, economic

and financial activities of the enterprise. They as well should influence the development program for this restaurant and its strategic choice.

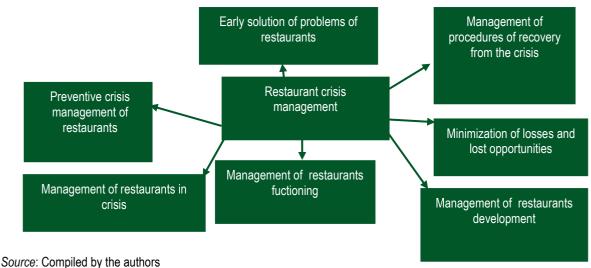


Figure 1. The essence of restaurant crisis management

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Restaurant crisis diagnostics can be schematically shown in Fig. 2.

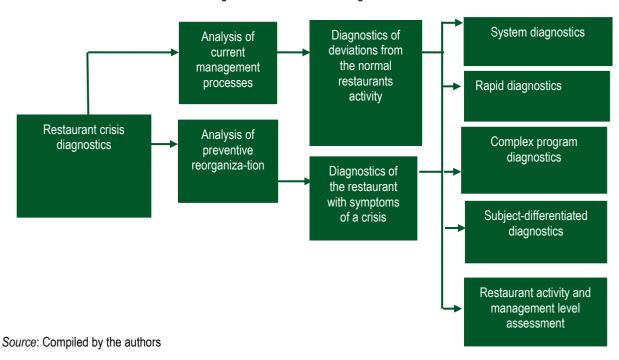


Figure 2. Restaurant crisis diagnostics

This diagnostics and analysis of the crisis in restaurants depends on the stage of the crisis (Fig.3).

Thus, as can be seen from Fig. 3, during the pre-crisis stage it is necessary to carry out a basic (fundamental) analysis of the possibility of crisis phenomena emergence, including the use of bankruptcy likelihood models and indicators (Altman method, Beaver method, Aaron Jones-Swory model, etc.), risk assessment methods (Monte-Carlo method, scenario analysis, critical limits method, peer review method, decision tree method), analysis of the industry emergencies, analysis of asset portfolio.

During the perturbation stage it is necessary to analyze the compliance of the implemented anti-crisis measures with the nature of the crisis: economic efficiency analysis in comparison with the average market value, analysis of the efficiency of asset portfolio differentiation, analysis of production and technical indicators of the enterprise, analysis of the correspondence between the costs of production and profit.

Pre-crisis stage

Acceleration stage

Acceleration stage

Crisis peak

Post-crisis stage

Defined time period

Figure 3. Stages of the restaurant crisis lifecycle

Source: Compiled by the authors

During the acceleration stage it is necessary to resort to the following methods of diagnostics: the use of probabilistic risk assessment methods (analogy method, sensitivity analysis, scenario analysis), alternative analysis of short-term prospects in the industry using technical stock market analysis.

Figure 3 highlights the last three stages. This applies to the crisis of restaurants, which began in 2019 due to the spread of Covid-19. No one expected such situation to occur, so the establishments were not prepared for this and therefore the crisis began with the 'crisis peak' stage.

Taking into consideration the fact that during the lockdown restaurants were in the peak of the crisis, the analysis of their condition on the basis of current anti-crisis measures had to be carried out in accordance with the following methods: rapid financial ratios analysis (liquidity, financial stability, business activity, profitability), 'DU PONT' model-diagram analysis, analysis of the dynamics of the crisis in the industry and technical analysis of the stock market.

In 2021, it will be difficult for restaurants to return to the normal activity. This stage also contains hidden risks, so a short-term analysis of the dynamics of negative manifestations and medium-term forecast should be performed by analyzing financial ratios, risk analysis and assessment, rapid analysis of business efficiency, comparison with competitors and market averages. During the deceleration stage it will be necessary to perform a fundamental analysis of lost opportunities, including in-depth analysis of business efficiency, the use of probabilistic risk assessment methods, assessing the impact of non-systematic risks.

The post-crisis state of the restaurants, which will begin with the end of quarantine restrictions and the complete cessation of the spread of coronavirus in Ukraine, will require constant analysis of this market. This should be done by monitoring the condition of these establishments and diagnosing possible threats, performing a comprehensive analysis of losses and conservation of capacity by analyzing the technical and organizational level and conditions of production, production resources, crisis prospects in the industry, and also by the use of global generalized indicators of bankruptcy likelihood, by assessing business and operational activity.

There is a very realistic chance that the coronavirus pandemic crisis has completely changed the restaurant market. The consumer has changed his priorities. During this crisis, the problem of security became especially relevant. During previous crises, the biggest problems arose in the field of economic security. This crisis will not be an exception, which, unfortunately, will not end with the lifting of quarantine restrictions. With regard to food security, in the current epidemiological situation, it is especially important to pay close attention to it, because the price of error is a real threat to the lives and health of employees and consumers. However, we should not forget about economic, personnel, information and physical security. During the crisis, crime rates often increase, so it is necessary to conduct timely collection of money proceeds, regular audits of property. Risks in each area must be minimized.

Quality and timely diagnostics of restaurants will form an appropriate analytical basis for creating an anticrisis program for these establishments, developing a set of relevant anti-crisis measures, and provide favorable conditions for the successful solution of problems connected with identification, prevention and overcoming such a crisis in the restaurant business (Semenov 2015, 89). During the period of full lockdown, which was introduced in the spring of 2020 and in January 2021, these establishments were not allowed to work at all, only in the mode of delivery of their products. But not every restaurant has its own delivery. Furthermore, there is not much profit from delivery, because it does not involve all staff and can be carried out with a limited group of dishes from the restaurant menu. Most of the profits of restaurants are received from banquets, corporate events, which in 2020 were not actually held. Only some restaurants took risks to do it despite the bans and fines. Therefore, in order for restaurants to be able to stay afloat, it is necessary to develop a program of action, in compliance with which it will be possible to keep staff, pay all taxes and utility costs and get at least a minimum profit.

Taking into concideration the essence of restaurant crisis management in modern conditions, the following ways to avoid the crisis situation were revealed during this research (Table 1).

Table 1. Recommended actions of restaurants in the event of a crisis

Recommended actions	Ways of application		
Start delivery and earn money that can at least partially cover the payment of team salaries	This is important if team members have key skills, and the restaurant business owner wants to keep them at all costs. Or if it is a small bar or a family type establishment, and the team is really a family, and everyone is willing to work 150% to get at least 30-50% of the usual salary.		
Get involved in volunteering.	Here as well it is necessary to understand what the resources are, how relevant this activity is for the restaurant business owner, how the team treats it, and so on. There are companies that have idle shops, and they prepare lunches for doctors to avoid this. Someone pays for products, and companies share their technology and equipment. There is also an idea with 'suspended pizzas'.		
Stay in touch with the guest, producing not a product but content	For example, Massimo Bottura did it, launching a 'quarantine cooking show'. In fact, many restaurateurs and chefs are now producing more content. And there is nothing wrong with that. It is important that all these inputs, recipes, tips, broadcasts meet the real expectations and requests of people.		
4.Don't try to keep pace with the others, but focus on systemic changes in the company that will allow you to quickly adapt to new conditions	Instead of keeping running to try to earn a few thousand hryvnias and spend much more, sometimes it is better to take a short break, realistically assess the strengths and weaknesses of your business and focus intellectual and creative efforts on rebuilding processes globally.		

Source: systematized by the authors

Table 1 shows the tactics that can be followed by restaurants during the coronavirus pandemic, choosing for themselves those actions that are the most suitable for a particular type of establishment.

The structural organization of restaurants under the influence of the anti-crisis action program is shown in Fig.4.

Resource saving also has a very important role to play in the work of restaurants. Electricity is the largest item of utility costs. The distribution of electricity costs in the studied restaurants is as follows: cooking - 23%, restaurant heating system - 19%, water heating (using gas) - 19%, lighting - 11%, other costs - 28%. We examined that saving electricity by 20% will be able to increase the profits by 33%. The elaboration of proposals to reduce electricity costs in restaurants is given in Table 2.

Resource saving still largely depends on the employees of the restaurant. After all, they should also strive to increase the profits of the restaurant and keep it on the market, because it will not only influence their workplace, but also the amount of wages. It is during a crisis situation that employees are acutely aware of the need for certainty and confidence that management has a plan of action.

In practice, personal contact of the head with the specialists of the restarant is one of the most common ways to reduce uncertainty. Keeping the team regularly informed and assuring it that anti-crisis measures and joint work yield positive results motivate employees to overcome difficulties. The strategy is what the restaurant business will be like after quarantine, whether the establishments will be able to optimize their costs, whether the management system will be flexible and stable enough. Salaries and wages of employees of the restaurant will increase depending on personal qualifications, the number of tasks performed, the quality of their performance. In Ukraine it is advisable to introduce such motivational components (Fig. 5).

External environment (market, economy, society (including the spread of Covid-19), scientific and technological environment, competitive environment of restaurants) Anti-crisis action program Ī Subjects of crisis management: (managers, analysts, experts, П consultants) Т start of delivery of ready-to-eat meals; attracting new consumers (advertising, discounts, various interesting attracting regular consumers who rarely visit restaurants; Internal environment promotion of dishes with low cost but high margin; create an informational occasion for publication in the media; conducting interesting promotions (a new menu offer); involvement of supplier partners to promote their products and reduce the cost of special offers. Т Institutional system of state ī support of restaurant business ī I Market, regular consumers, new consumers, consumers of innovative products (new dishes). Supplier partners. Investors

Figure 4. The structural organization of restaurants under the influence of the anti-crisis action program

Source: Compiled by the authors

Table 2. The elaboration of proposals to reduce electricity costs in restaurants

Nº	Electricity costs reduction proposal	Saving per year
1	Installation of the motion sensor in the parking lot of a restaurant	Approximately UAH 2000 on one street lamp
2	Photovoltaic cells of the lighting system	Up to UAH 1800 on one refrigerator
3	Fluorescent lamps installation	Up to UAH 500 on 1 light bulb per year
4	Thermostat installation	Up to 30% savings
5	Replace the emergency light bulb with a 20 watt light bulb	Up to UAH 700
6	Make a schedule of those responsible for electrical appliances among employees of the restaurant's production facilities	Up to 10% savings
7	Install a motion sensor or off timer in all service rooms of the restaurant	Up to 15% savings
8	Lighting system modification	Up to 40% savings
9	Replacement of electric stoves with induction ones	Up to 30% of electricity

Source: systematized by the authors

In our view, an important factor in achieving a high standard of living, as well as increasing productivity is motivation and incentives. In modern conditions, new models of remuneration are needed, which give space to the development of personal material interest. It is necessary not only to ensure material interest in certain results of work, but also to interest the employee in improving work efficiency.

Nowadays a special anti-crisis policy has become widespread, which includes a significant number of procedural measures to prevent the bankruptcy of restaurants and also procedures to maximize the satisfaction of creditors' claims by debtor companies.

The components of the state tools in the system of restaurant crisis management and anti-bankruptcy measures in business activities should be: the availability of effective state support for unprofitable enterprises;

influence on the activities of enterprises at the stage of creating a certain business structure; applying control at the state level over certain business transactions; state control over doing business on equal and fair terms; creation of organizations that will develop a methodology for crisis management, provide recommendations and consulting assistance to enterprises in a crisis (Vasylieva, Afanasieva 2013, 132).

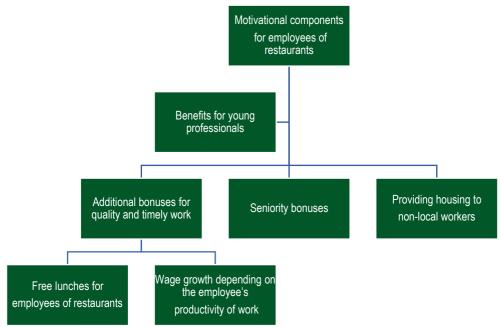


Figure 5. Motivational components that are recommended for restaurants in a crisis

Source: Compiled by the authors

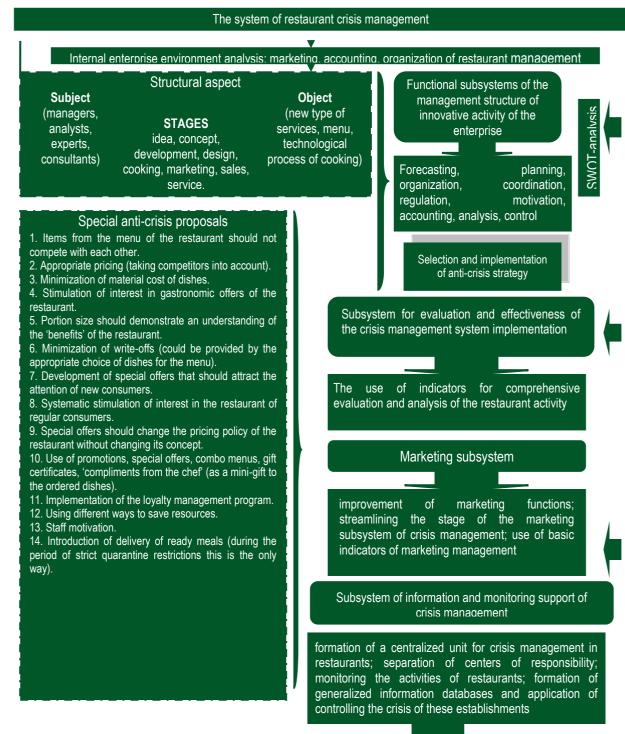
The structural model of the system of restaurant crisis management is shown in Fig.6.

Thus, as can be seen from Fig.6, an effective way out of the crisis is the use of crisis management procedure, which involves the introduction of production and technical measures into the restaurant activity system, the use of external and internal reserves to restore profitability and avoid bankruptcy.

Financial recovery as an integral part of crisis and bankruptcy management includes a targeted selection of the most effective tools, strategy, tactics needed for a particular type of business. The individuality of the choice of these means does not mean that there are not any generalized means, characteristic of all enterprises in financial crisis. Studying the experience of overcoming crisis situations of both different countries and specific enterprises allows to form a flexible system of crisis management.

The system of restaurant crisis management is a set of coordinated elements that, interacting with each other, diagnose the signs and manifestations of the crisis, help to overcome it and return business structures to stable functioning, create the necessary conditions for overcoming the negative impact of external and internal factors on the establishments activities.

Figure 6. The structural model of the system of restaurant crisis management



Keeping the restaurant on the market (during the quarantine restrictions), growth of innovative activity, effective use of the existing potential of restaurants

Source: Compiled by the authors

Conclusion

As shown above, against the background of the pandemic, the situation of the subjects of economic relations is exacerbated by their unpreparedness for the crisis. Given these points, crisis management is of great importance for market agents, which should be aimed both at preventing the crisis, minimizing its impact, and post-crisis

stabilization. Clarification of the place of restaurant crisis management in the theory and practice of management is done through the clarification of the concept of crisis, as well as the factors and causes of its occurrence in the activities of economic entities.

Foreign practice of crisis regulation and the institution of bankruptcy are characterized by an emphasis on communications, innovative and social aspects. Thus, the priority in the process of improving the enterprise condition is to restore the capacity to pay of economic entities, to save jobs. That is why the focus on achieving strategic goals, timely response to 'weak signals', innovation policy, adequate state and legislative regulation of bankruptcy and reorganization procedures are especially important in the recovery of restaurant businesses.

In the crisis caused by the coronavirus pandemic, democratic formats and interesting, unique ideas are important, but it is extremely difficult to make any predictions in terms of this crisis - it is not just economic, but systemic, covering basic human values, such as threats to their lives and health. However, the trend towards more affordable restaurants will continue to grow. The experience of other developed countries should be used in creating the new formats of restaurant establishments. It is likely that the fear of a pandemic may persist for a long time and consumers will not return to restaurants in the same numbers as before the quarantine any time soon. On the other hand, in recent years, many people have become accustomed to the fact that it is possible to order almost anything - it's fast, effortless and often not more expensive. The pandemic and crisis are sure to end, so restaurants need to survive this period with minimal losses to be ready not only to reopen to their guests, but also to come up with new interesting projects that will meet their changed values.

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