Chapter 15

Socially Responsible Practices in Hotels: Factor Analysis and Descriptive Statistics

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ABSTRACT

The aim of this work is to study social responsible behavior in three, four and five star hotels found in Galicia and the Northern region of Portugal. To be able to carry out this investigation two types of analysis are carried out. First of all there is a descriptive statistical analysis about the group of variables contained in the used scale. Secondly a factor analysis is applied in which the factors that make up social responsibility in line with the triple dimension identified by Elkington (1997) are identified. The development of this methodology has made it possible to compare practices of social responsibility carried out by the hotels under study in two different countries, Spain and Portugal. From this investigation it can be concluded that the initial hypothesis is confirmed, corporations behave differently when it comes to social responsibility depending on the country they are in.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is one of the main economic motors which Portugal and Spain rely on. But as well as in many other sectors, the crisis has had a strong impact on tourist activity in Spain and Portugal; however, despite the highs and lows in the first stage of the economic crisis, today, tourism has recuperated its importance in the economy. Based on official statistics from both countries it is possible to come to the conclusion that during the last four years, in both countries the tourism sector has recovered its importance in
Socially Responsible Practices in Hotels

the economy, recuperating the losses made in the first years of the economic crisis, a fact that is seen in the evolution of GNP. Employment is another of the representative factors of the economy, and in both countries the number of people working and the unemployment rate has grown much less than the national rate in this sector. The authors Alvarez, Vila, Fraiz and Rio (2013) and Lopes (2010) reinforce the importance that the tourism sector has for the economy of both countries.

Social corporate responsibility is nowadays in a prominent position due to the development over the years of different standards and regulations, pressures exerted by stakeholders, the implementation of CSR practices in organizations, and the interest from the scientific community, institutions as well as society in general. On the other hand it should be highlighted that in situations of economic crisis the adoption of socially responsible practices can be diminished by other interests (survival of the Organization, amongst others). The cultural factor also influences the degree of implementation CSR practices (Fanjul, 2010).

Due to this it is of interest to study social responsibility in the tourism sector in two bordering countries that have a similar culture and are going through a period of an economically diminished situation. The choice of the hotel subsector aims to add uniformity to the study to make a comparison in both countries.

The main objective of this research is to find out if the behavior of the hotels in this study in the field of social responsibility is different depending on the country where the activity of the organization takes place; Spain and Portugal. Therefore the following hypothesis is put forward in this investigation: corporations behave differently when it comes to social responsibility depending on the country they are in.

This research seeks to, on the one hand, in order to measure CSR, find the appropriate scale to implement in this research, adapt it to the object of study and validate it. Analysis of literature review and the application of the factor analysis technique are used to do this.

On the other hand it seeks to verify socially responsible behavior in hotels. In order to do so the descriptive statistical analysis technique is used making it possible to compare the set of items (practices) that make up each of the dimensions - social, environmental and economic (Elkington, 1997)-. Finally, the aim is to check if the practices implemented in hotels are in line with the proposals in the strategic plans of the representative institutions of the tourism sector in both countries.

As a result, to carry out this research work it is necessary to review the literature in the designated areas (socially responsible behavior, future prospects of tourism in both regions and the CSR measurement). An empirical study, using the techniques of descriptive statistical analysis and factor analysis is also necessary.

This paper explores how hotels in three, four and five star hotels located in Galicia (Northwest region of Spain) and in the Northern Region of Portugal apply social responsibility. These two regions border each other and have a similar culture although they belong to two different countries encompassed within the European Union.

This chapter is divided into seven sections. In the first section the main literature on socially responsible behavior in organizations, the future prospects of tourism in both countries and the monitoring of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) is reviewed. It is then followed by the main focus of the chapter with issues, controversies and problems. In the third section, the recommendations and solutions are put forward followed by future research directions. The conclusions are then presented followed by bibliographical references and the key terms and definitions.