The Risk Perception among Hotel Employees During Times of Uncertainty

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Abstract

Purpose: This study investigates hotel employees' perceptions of risk and analyses the relationship between perceived risk and job performance, emphasizing the uncertainty intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Methodology: The research employed a quantitative method, sampling 397 hotel employees in Bangkok using closed-ended questionnaires. Statistical tools included descriptive statistics (mean, percentage), F-test (ANOVA), and Pearson's correlation coefficient.

Key Findings: Risk perception was significantly influenced by education, work experience, contract type, job status, and hotel size. People perceived financial risks as the highest among five dimensions: technological, financial, health, natural disaster, and safety. A positive correlation was found between perceived risk and employee performance.

Contributions: The findings endorse risk-aware HR and organisational practices, enhancing our comprehension of employee conduct in uncertain conditions.

Keywords: 1) Risk Perception 2) Employee Performance 3) VUCA Environment 4) Hospitality Industry 5) Risk Management

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Introduction

Numerous challenges—such as digital technological transformation, economic downturns, political conflicts, air pollution, and the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic—have contributed to a global decline in tourism (Efthimiou, 2025, pp. 119-121). The COVID-19 pandemic, in particular, has intensified what is now widely referred to as a VUCA environment, characterized by volatility, uncertainty, complexity, and ambiguity. In this context, volatility denotes rapid and unpredictable change; uncertainty reflects the inherent unpredictability of future events; complexity refers to the multitude of interrelated factors that make decision-making difficult; and ambiguity describes situations where outcomes are unclear or information is incomplete (Johansen and Euchner, 2013, pp. 10-15).

The service sector, especially the hospitality industry, is highly vulnerable to such external disruptions and must constantly adapt to uncertain and evolving conditions. These risks are often sudden and unpredictable, posing substantial challenges that affect not only operational continuity but also employee well-being. In response to these uncertainties, hotels must demonstrate flexibility and resilience. Personnel, regarded as the cornerstone of service excellence, play a pivotal role in determining organizational success. Thus, attracting and retaining skilled employees while ensuring a safe and stable work environment is crucial. Moreover, fostering staff motivation and performance in dynamic contexts is essential.

Despite signs of recovery in global tourism following the COVID-19 pandemic, the hotel industry continues to face significant workforce shortages. High turnover rates, driven by employees leaving and being rapidly replaced, have led to reduced service quality and increased operational costs (Davidson Timo and Wang, 2010, pp. 451–466).

As a vital component of the global economy, the hotel industry remains highly exposed to various internal and external risks. Over the past decade, these risks have ranged from customer or colleague misconduct, equipment failures, and occupational hazards to broader environmental threats (Krause, Scherzer and Rugulies, 2005, pp. 326-337). The COVID-19 crisis further amplified these vulnerabilities by escalating job insecurity through travel restrictions and lockdown policies. These measures forced many businesses to suspend operations, intensifying employee anxiety and uncertainty. Many roles within the hospitality sector are classified as high-risk, further exacerbating feelings of insecurity and negatively impacting both physical and mental health. As a result, job performance is often compromised.

While some studies have addressed risk management in hospitality, the focus has predominantly been on physical safety and security. Other dimensions—such as financial, technological, and health-related risks—have received comparatively less attention, particularly in complex and dynamic environments (Waikar, Desai and Borde, 2015, pp. 99-114). Yet, a comprehensive understanding of risk perception is essential for minimizing losses and protecting both employees and business interests.

The objective of this study is to examine the relationship between perceived risk and job performance among hotel employees. Prior studies have addressed general risk in the workplace, but limited research focuses on multiple dimensions of perceived risk in the hospitality sector, particularly during pandemics. This study aims to fill that gap by exploring how personal characteristics and employment conditions influence employees' risk perception and, consequently, their work performance.

This research provides insight into how organizations can manage human capital effectively during crises and adapt HR strategies to improve staff performance and resilience and fills a gap by empirically examining how hotel employees in Thailand perceive risks in a VUCA environment and how these perceptions relate to job performance.

Literature Review

The tourism and hospitality industry is currently navigating a period of significant uncertainty and complexity, driven by ongoing shifts in the macro-environment, including climate change. Over the past decade, the sector has faced a growing range of unpredictable challenges, compelling organizations to address an increasingly diverse set of risks and disruptions. Since 2010, numerous events—such as the widespread adoption of digital technologies, political instability, global economic downturns, the outbreak of the MERS virus, incidents of terrorism and armed conflict, rising levels of air pollution (PM2.5), and the continuing impact of the COVID-19 pandemic—have intensified these uncertainties. In 2019, (Krawczyńska-Zaucha, 2019, pp. 167-179) defines uncertainty as the absence or insufficiency of knowledge, which impedes the ability to understand events and forecast future outcomes. This lack of clarity also complicates the development of effective solutions, as it is often unclear which interventions would be most appropriate or effective in a given context. Consequently, organizations in the tourism and hospitality sector often struggle to make accurate predictions and manage risks effectively in an increasingly volatile and rapidly evolving environment.

Definitions and Types of Risks

Uncertainty and risk are inherent characteristics of the modern work environment, and organizations are frequently required to respond to unforeseen events. Severe hazards have the potential to trigger emergencies that disrupt business operations and jeopardize organizational stability. According to (Rohrmann, 2008, pp. 711-728), risk refers to the probability of experiencing loss or harm as a result of unexpected or undesirable events that can adversely impact an organization. Risk encompasses a wide range of possible outcomes, and the presence of vulnerabilities or deficiencies in an organization's systems, processes, or controls can expose it to such threats, often leading to unanticipated consequences. All organizations, including those in the hospitality sector, encounter varying degrees of risk and uncertainty arising from their dynamic work environments.

In the context of the hotel industry, particularly from 2010 to the present, the risks associated with uncertainty can be broadly categorized into five key domains:

Technological Risks: (Khalifa and Ali, 2017, pp. 221-237) identified the critical drivers of information technology risk management in Egyptian hotels. As technological innovation accelerates, hotels are increasingly adopting digital tools to enhance operational efficiency. However, many hotel employees lack adequate skills or training in using these technologies, leading to increased job-related stress (Lam, Cho and Qu, 2007, pp. 49-65). Moreover, Li, Bonn and Ye, (2019, pp. 172-181) investigated employee perceptions of artificial intelligence and found a connection between awareness of AI applications and increased turnover intentions. Advances in smart technologies—such as STARA (Smart Technology, AI, Robotics, and Algorithms)—have raised concerns among hotel staff about potential job displacement and reduced employment security.

Natural Risks: Natural disasters such as earthquakes, tsunamis, typhoons, and floods pose significant threats to hotel operations and employee safety (Nguyen, Imamura and Iuchi, 2018, pp. 585-594). In the absence of thorough evaluation and strategic preparation, employees may lack the knowledge and skills required to respond effectively and safeguard their well-being in the face of potentially life-threatening natural catastrophes of significant magnitude. Hence, it is imperative for enterprises to have a comprehensive strategy to mitigate the consequences of natural calamities on their workforce and physical premises (Madhu, 2019, pp. 392-403).

Financial Risks: Financial risks in the hotel sector may stem from issues related to liquidity, mismanagement, or inaccuracies in financial reporting (Drobyazko, et al., 2020, p. 300). During the COVID-19 pandemic, many hotels experienced economic strain due to fluctuating market conditions. In response, some establishments adopted measures such as unpaid leave and staff layoffs to maintain liquidity. However, these cost-cutting strategies often result in reduced revenue, lower morale, and heightened job insecurity among employees.

Health Risks: Hotel employees, by the nature of their work, engage in frequent interaction with guests, increasing their susceptibility to work-related illnesses (Shani and Pizam, 2009, pp. 446-459; Yan, Zhang and Li, 2021, pp. 245-257) Compared to workers in other industries, they face a higher likelihood of contracting communicable diseases. Additionally, hotel staff are exposed to risks associated with contaminated food and water, which can lead to foodborne illnesses and gastrointestinal infections such as diarrhea (Fletcher, Maharaj and James, 2009, pp. 35-41; Leftwich, et al., 2021, p. 3539; Yin, 2014, pp. 127-136).

Safety Risks: it includes fire hazards (Hassanain, 2009, pp. 287-300), terrorism threats (Henderson, 2003, pp. 41-58), workplace violence, bullying, sexual harassment (Jung and Yoon, 2020, pp. 3-19), work equipment-related injuries, and incorrect treatment. The studies conducted by (Hsieh, et al., 2017, pp. 55-65) underscore how such risks can adversely affect employees' physical health, psychological well-being, and overall job satisfaction.

Factors Affecting the Perception of Risks

Beecher, Walters and Johnson (2005, pp. 785-792) emphasized that individual values, education, experience, and other personal characteristics influence how individuals perceive risk. Similarly, (Rohrmann, 2008, pp. 711-728) asserted that personal attributes significantly affect one's perception of danger. Several demographic and situational factors have been identified as key influencers of risk perception, particularly in high-risk and service-oriented environments such as hospitality. An example of such factors is:

Gender: Studies by (Sund, Svensson and Andersson, 2017, pp. 99-117) and (Rowe and Wright, 2001, pp. 85-103) found that women tend to perceive risks more intensely than men. This heightened sensitivity applies to various domains, including environmental hazards, food safety, violence, and crime. These findings underscore gender as a significant demographic variable shaping individual risk awareness, with females generally demonstrating greater concern about potential threats.

Age: In their 2020 study, (Chaswa, Phoya and Nyström, 2020, pp. 97-106) studied construction workers in Malawi and found that individuals aged 20–29 exhibited higher levels of risk perception than those under 20 and those between 50–59. Similarly, (Phoya, et al., 2011, pp. 643-649) concluded that older workers tend to demonstrate stronger risk recognition, likely due to accumulated experience, which contributes to heightened concern for occupational health and safety.

Parenthood: According to (Yan, Zhang and Li, 2021, pp. 245-257), examined the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on childcare workers, noting that the crisis imposed substantial economic and emotional strain. The uncertainty of employment conditions, coupled with prolonged school closures, heightened employees' perception of financial and health-related risks. Balancing professional responsibilities with parenting obligations led to increased psychological and physical stress, contributing to elevated risk awareness.

Level of Education: (Sund, Svensson and Andersson, 2017, pp. 99-117) reported a positive correlation between education level and risk perception, indicating that more educated individuals tend to recognize and assess risks more acutely. Similarly, (Chaswa, Phoya and Nyström, 2020, pp. 97-106) found that employees with lower levels of education or illiteracy experienced more frequent equipment-related injuries, further supporting the idea that educational attainment enhances risk awareness and safety behavior.

Job Experiences: (Holcroft and Punnett, 2009, pp. 247-255) highlighted the role of prior work experiences in shaping subjective risk perception. Employees who had previously encountered hazardous conditions or suffered workplace injuries were more cautious in their current roles. This accumulated experience fosters increased vigilance and plays a preventive role in avoiding occupational accidents.

Department of Employment: Different hotel departments expose employees to varying levels of risk, which shapes their perceptions accordingly. (Wong, et al., 2021, p. 93) found that front-office personnel—who interact directly with guests—experience higher levels of stress and thus exhibit greater risk perception than back-office staff, whose work is typically less exposed to direct customer interactions and associated uncertainties.

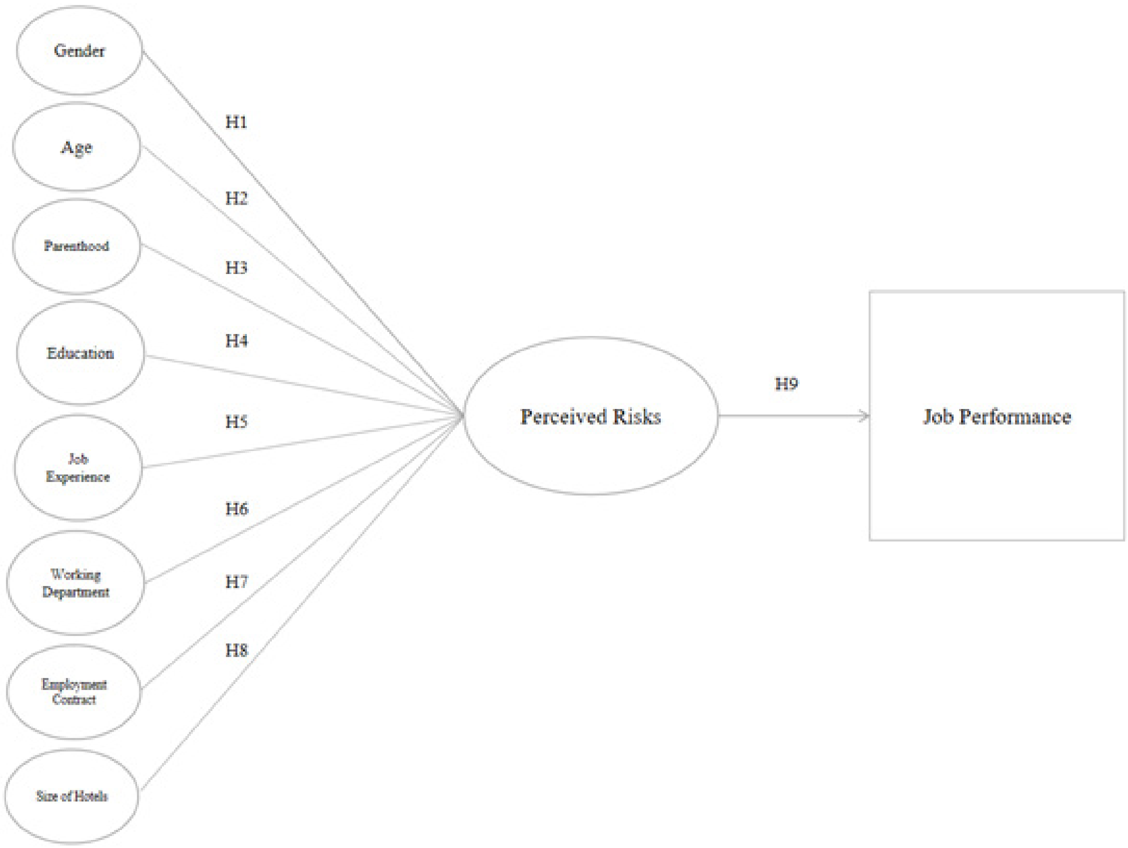
Employment Contract Type: (Giurgiu, Toma and Petre, 2016, pp. 317-327) noted that permanent employees often face higher levels of responsibility and pressure compared to part-time or temporary staff. Conversely, Aguilar, et al. (2021) found that temporary employees experienced greater job insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic, which intensified their perception of employment-related risks. These findings suggest that contract type influences both perceived and actual exposure to workplace threats.

Size of Hotels: According to (Aladejebi and Oladimeji, 2021, pp. 739-755.), observed that smaller hotels, especially 1- and 2-star establishments, are often locally owned and lack dedicated risk management departments, making them more financially vulnerable during crises. In contrast, medium-sized hotels tend to be more adaptable and capable of managing financial risks. Meanwhile, medium-sized hotels may exhibit more adaptability in financial management. Medium-sized hotels can recuperate more swiftly than small ones. Department heads at medium-sized hotels must strategize and oversee risk management (Sobaih, et al., 2021, p. 92). This is also relevant to large hotels, which frequently belong to global chains or possess several corporate affiliations. Thorough hospitality risk management department heads may delegate responsibilities to external professionals for the preparation and management of organizational risks.

Perceived Risks and Job Performance

Job performance refers to the specific actions and responsibilities that employees undertake to contribute to organizational objectives. This encompasses delivering services that include both tangible and intangible elements (Wong, et al., 2021, p.93). Since this study focuses on employees, their performance is assessed through self-rated evaluations, which are considered reliable indicators of individual performance. Two primary factors influence work performance: aspects of the work environment and personal characteristics such as emotions, attitudes, and job satisfaction. These factors can yield either positive or negative performance outcomes. When employees hold a positive attitude toward their roles and express satisfaction with their working conditions, they are more likely to perform effectively even under challenging circumstances. Cultivating such optimism enables employees to evaluate their own performance favorably, often resulting in commendable or exceptional outcomes. According to (Reynaldi, Ridjal and Sjahruddin, 2019), highlighted that employees' voluntary assistance and customer service behaviors substantially impact their overall job performance. Risk perception has been studied from psychological, managerial, and behavioral perspectives. The Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007, pp. 309-328) serves as a guiding framework for understanding the balance between job stressors and organizational supports. In the context of this research, perceived risk can act both as a job demand (e.g., anxiety from uncertainty) and as a motivator (e.g., employees striving to secure their positions. (Falco, et al., 2021) examined risk perception related to COVID-19 among frontline workers and its correlation with performance. Vo-Thanh, et al. (2021, pp. 879-900) found that perceived job insecurity led to emotional exhaustion. These findings align with our study's focus on multiple risk dimensions, including financial, technological, health, and safety risks. Hence, the way in which risks are perceived might have a detrimental effect on the performance of employees. Staufenbiel and König (2010, pp. 428-442) proposed a model to examine the effects of job insecurity on performance and turnover intentions. Their study suggested that the perception of job insecurity could impact an employee's job performance. Interestingly, this study claims that those who feel uncertain about their job security may demonstrate increased drive to exert more effort. Their drive arises from their aspiration to enhance the value of the business they work for. An individual's perception of hazards can have both beneficial and harmful effects on their performance. Therefore, the research suggests that an employee's perception of risk, whether it is related to employment instability or other types of risks, can impact their work performance.

Based on insights from the literature review, the researchers propose the following hypothesis:



H1: risk perception displays gender-based variances

H2: risk perception exhibits age-related variations in distinct manners

H3: parenthood has a wide range of effects on risk perception

H4: various types of risks perception related to educational levels

H5: job experiences correlate with risk perceptions

H6: risk perception varies by working departments

H7: employment contracts related to the perception of risks

H8: employees in various sizes of hotel establishments demonstrate differing risk perceptions

H9: employees' perception of risk correlates positively to their work performance

An Approach to Risk Management

Risk management is a critical responsibility for executives and departmental leaders within the hotel industry due to the diverse array of hazards they face. Understanding and systematically addressing these risks is essential for organizational resilience. (Madhu, 2019, pp. 392-403) highlights that traditional risk management approaches have primarily focused on mitigating losses or adverse outcomes resulting from risks. However, the contemporary hotel sector encounters increasingly complex and novel risks that challenge the effectiveness of conventional frameworks. Consequently, there is a need to shift risk management from a passive or reactive approach—limited to responding to crises and emergencies—towards a proactive strategy that emphasizes the identification, analysis, evaluation, and control of risks within defined parameters. According to (Madhu, 2019, pp. 392-403), while the implementation of risk management practices may introduce certain risks, it can also confer a competitive advantage by enhancing an organization's ability to anticipate and mitigate threats. Therefore, adopting a hierarchical perspective on risk management is crucial, where executives, committees, and key departments—such as human resources—develop a comprehensive understanding of the risks confronting the organization. This awareness is instrumental in formulating effective risk mitigation strategies that permeate all levels of the hotel operation. (Queiroz, 2002, pp. 31-33) identifies several critical success factors for risk management in the hospitality sector. These include cultivating a risk-aware organizational culture, designing practical and measurable risk management strategies, preparing the necessary equipment and tools for risk mitigation, clearly assigning risk management responsibilities, communicating potential hazards effectively, conducting employee training to classify and understand risks, and performing thorough audits to identify and rectify deficiencies in the risk management process. Implementing these factors holistically enhances the organization's capability to manage risks proactively and sustainably.

Methodology

This study employed a quantitative research design. The sample consisted of 397 hotel employees from one to five-star hotels in Bangkok. Hotels of varying sizes were incorporated to represent variation in operational structure, exposure to risk, and employment types.

The research sample comprises employees from hotels rated from 1 to 5 stars in Bangkok and its metropolitan area. The sample size was calculated using Yamane's technique, with an acceptable error margin of 5%, yielding 397 samples. The sampling included hotels ranging from 1 to 5 stars to represent diverse organizational structures and levels of risk exposure. It was allocated proportionately based on hotel size (small, medium, and large) using simple random sampling. The proportions were established as follows: 20% for hotels rated 1-2 stars, 25% for hotels rated 3 stars, and 55% for hotels rated 4-5 stars. The employment status (full-time, part-time, temporary) of respondents has been captured to indicate different levels of job security.

Research Tools for Conducting Research

The research instrument utilized in this study was a structured questionnaire, developed based on an extensive review of relevant concepts, theories, and prior research to ensure alignment with the variables identified in the conceptual framework. The questionnaire was divided into four sections. The first section, demographic information, comprised seven closed-ended and semi-closed-ended questions to capture participants' background characteristics. The second section, organizational culture, employed multiple-choice questions to assess various dimensions of organizational culture. The third section, risk perception, evaluated risks across five categories—technological, natural disasters, financial, health, and life safety—using a 5-point Likert scale. The final section, perception of risk in an era of uncertainty, assessed employees' perceptions of risk and its impact on job performance in uncertain environments, also using a 5-point Likert scale.

Participants were classified according to job status (full-time, part-time, temporary), department, work experience, educational level, and contract type. The data collection included a structured questionnaire modified from previously validated instruments in the field of organizational behavior. The instrument was reviewed by three academic experts to ascertain content validity. A pilot study included 30 participants, and the reliability of the questionnaire was confirmed with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.831.

Data Collection

Data collection was conducted between June and December 2022. A total of 430 questionnaires were distributed directly to hotel employees with the support of the Human Resources departments across various hotel sizes, as previously described. The inclusion criteria required that participants be at least 20 years of age and complete all items on the questionnaire, excluding the optional open-ended section. After the initial collection, the data were screened in accordance with these criteria. As a result, 397 questionnaires were deemed valid and used for subsequent analysis.

Data Analysis

The researcher employed SPSS statistical software to analyze the questionnaire data, utilizing a range of statistical techniques.

Descriptive statistics—including frequency distributions, percentages, means, and standard deviations—were used to summarize the general characteristics of the sample. For hypothesis testing (H1–H8), One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was applied at a significance level of 0.05. A p-value less than 0.05 indicated statistical significance, leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis in favor of the alternative hypothesis. Hypothesis H9 was tested using a one-tailed Pearson's correlation analysis, also with a significance level set at 0.05, to examine the direction and strength of the relationship between variables. Hypotheses H1–H8 were partially supported, with demographic factors such as education level, job experience, and contract type significantly affecting risk perception. H9 was supported, indicating a positive correlation between perceived risk and job performance.

Research Ethics

This research was approved by the Research Ethics Committee: IRBP No. P2-2031/2565 approved 01 June 2022- 31 May 2023.

Results and Discussion

Profiles of Respondents:

The frequency analysis revealed that 49.4% of the respondents were female. Most respondents have single status (56.2%) and don't have a child (60.5%). Categories of age groups, in group-size order, were 20-29 s (30.2%), 30-39 s (35.3%), 40-49 s (21.2%), 50-59 s (11.8%), and more than 60 s (1.5%). In terms of educational level, approximately 56.7% of the participants had a bachelor's degree. A majority of respondents were working at a big hotel brand (55.4%), while 27.0% were at a middle hotel level, and 17.6% of the participants worked in small hotels. About 29.0% of them are front line employees, and 76.6% are full-time. Regarding their experience in the hotel industry, the largest group had worked in hotels for one to five years (35.0%), followed by those who had worked for five to ten years (26.2%), those who had worked for ten to fifteen years (19.9%), and those who had worked for 15 years or longer (18.9%). Table 1 provides further detailed profiles of the participants.

Table 1 Profiles of the respondents (N = 397)

Variable	Categories	%	Variable	Categories	%
Gender	Male	43.3%	Working Department	Front Office/ Reception	**29.0%**
	Female	**49.4%**		Housekeeping	12.8%
	Others	7.3%		Food & Beverage	12.6%
Age	20-29 years	30.2%		Engineering	6.5%
	30-39 years	**35.3%**		Accountant	9.8%
	40-49 years	21.2%		Security	8.1%
	50-59 years	11.8%		Human resources	8.3%
	More than 60 years	1.5%		Marketing	5.3%

Variable	Categories	%	Variable	Categories	%
Status	**Single**	**56.2%**		Purchasing	3.8%
	Married	40.1%		IT	3.8%
	Others	3.8%	**Size of Hotels**	Small	17.6%
Parenthood	**No children**	**60.5%**		Medium	27.0%
	1 child	17.6%		Big	55.4%
	2 children	15.4%	**Employment Contract**	**Full-Time**	**76.6%**
	More than 3	5.5%		Fixed-term or temporary	16.1%
Education	Undergraduate	29.5%		Part-time	3.3%
	Bachelor	**58.7%**		Casual	3.5%
	Master Degree or higher	11.8%			
Job Experience	**1-5 years**	**35.0%**			
	5-10 years	26.2%			
	10-15 years	19.9%			
	More than 15 years	18.9%			

The results of the frequency analysis indicate that, in an era of uncertainty, risks can be categorized into five broad types: financial risks, technological risks, health risks, life safety risks, and natural disaster risks. The perception of these risks varies among hotel employees, depending on their roles and characteristics. Differences in perceived risk are reflected in the mean scores and standard deviations for each risk category. A detailed summary of these findings is presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Results of Perceived Risks in hotel work (N = 397)

Risks Types	Mean	Standard Deviation
Financial Risks	3.52	1.07
Technological Risks	3.16	1.01
Health Risks	3.11	1.08
Life Safety Risks	2.81	1.15
Natural Disaster Risks	2.61	1.1.3

This study examines the statistical significance of various demographic and organizational factors—including gender, age, parenthood status, educational level, work experience, department, type of employment contract, and hotel size—on employees' perceptions across five dimensions of risk: technological, financial, life safety, health, and natural disaster risks. The analysis is summarized using p-values, which indicate the extent to which each factor is statistically significant in influencing risk perception. Financial risk received the highest mean score, indicating that employees were most concerned about financial insecurity during the uncertainty period. This aligns with the context of the hospitality industry, where job stability is often tied to economic fluctuations.

Table 3 Risk Dimensions and corresponding P-values

Risks	ANOVA							
	P-Value							
	Gender	Age	Parenthood	Education	Experience	Department	Contract	Size of Hotels
Financial Risks	.242	.139	.637	.903	.368	.439	.042*	.002**
Technological Risks	.865	.630	.079	.322	.015*	.319	.661	.145
Health Risks	.951	.331	.455	.014*	.139	.493	.377	.025*
Life Safety Risks	.335	.318	.525	.937	.752	.055	.325	.001**
Natural Disaster Risks	.479	.235	.800	.498	.158	.836	.090	.055

The correlation analysis demonstrates a significant relationship between perceived risks and both positive and negative performance outcomes in the hotel industry. Technology, life safety, health, and natural disaster risks show strong correlations in both directions, indicating that these factors are crucial in shaping performance. Specifically, technological risks exhibit a highly significant positive correlation (.405, p = .000) and a highly significant negative correlation (.376, p = .000) with performance. Financial risks present a significant positive correlation (.125, p = .013) and a highly significant negative correlation (.440, p =.000). Life safety risks show a highly significant positive correlation (.322, p = .000) and a highly significant negative correlation (.436, p = .000). Health risks have a highly significant positive correlation (.326, p = .000) and a highly significant negative correlation (.353, p = .000). Lastly, natural disaster risks demonstrate a highly significant positive correlation (.377, p = .000) and a highly significant negative correlation (.414, p = .000).

The results indicate that perceived risk significantly differs across groups. For example, temporary workers and employees in lower-star hotels perceived higher risks. This suggests that employment stability and organizational resources influence employees' sense of security.

Table 4 The Correlation Analysis of Perceived Risks and Job Performance in the Hotel Industry.

Risk Type	Positive Performance	Negative Performance
Financial Risks	0.125* ($p = 0.013$)	0.440** ($p < 0.001$)
Technological Risks	0.405** ($p < 0.001$)	0.376** ($p < 0.001$)
Health Risks	0.326** ($p < 0.001$)	0.353** ($p < 0.001$)
Life Safety Risks	0.322** ($p < 0.001$)	0.436** ($p < 0.001$)
Natural Disaster Risks	0.377** ($p < 0.001$)	0.414** ($p < 0.001$)

A positive correlation suggests that employees who perceived higher levels of risk tended to demonstrate stronger job performance, potentially as a strategy to secure their positions or demonstrate value during uncertain times.

Discussions

The study revealed important insights into the relationship between risk perception and performance outcomes among hotel employees in Bangkok. The hotel industry continues to face a range of unpredictable challenges arising from macro-environmental factors such as climate change, economic crises, global health pandemics, and rapid technological advancements. These changes have heightened the complexity and frequency of uncertainties, compelling organizations to manage an increasingly diverse set of risks. Findings from this research indicate that employees' perceptions of risk vary significantly according to demographic characteristics, including age, gender, parenthood status, job experience, and departmental role. In particular, younger and less experienced employees reported higher levels of perceived risk compared to their older, more experienced counterparts. This aligns with the findings of (Alexopoulos, Johnson and Smith, 2009, 2009, pp. 183-192), who argued that employees' previous experiences in hazardous environments or past exposure to occupational injuries contribute to more cautious behavior and lower perceived risk. Similarly, (Chaswa, Phoya and Nyström, 2020, pp. 97-106) highlighted the role of age in shaping risk perception, while (Phoya, et al., 2011, pp. 643-649) found that older workers tend to be more conscious of health and safety risks due to their accumulated experience. Moreover, the study found that employees who perceived higher levels of risk—particularly in areas such as health and job security—tended to report lower levels of job satisfaction and engagement, which negatively affected their job performance. This finding is consistent with the research of (Vo-Thanh, et al., 2021, pp. 879-900), who observed that hotel employees experiencing heightened health risks and job insecurity during the COVID-19 pandemic exhibited a noticeable decline in performance.

Conversely, the study also revealed that employees who recognized specific workplace risks demonstrated improved performance outcomes. This nuanced finding suggests that awareness of certain risks may encourage proactive behaviors that enhance performance. This observation aligns with the work of (Staufenbiel and König, 2010, pp. 428-442), who found that job insecurity can, in some cases, positively influence employee performance. When employees perceive a threat to their job security, they may become more motivated to excel in their roles as a means of demonstrating value to the organization. This increased effort can act as a coping mechanism to reduce the perceived risk of job loss, ultimately resulting in improved performance outcomes. These results align with the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model, where risk acts both as a demand and a motivator. Employees perceiving higher risk may also engage more intensively to maintain performance standards.

Furthermore, the findings underscore the complex and dual nature of risk perception. Risk can function both as a deterrent and a motivator. Employees who interpret risks as manageable challenges rather than existential threats are more likely to adopt proactive coping strategies, which can positively impact their job performance and contribute to organizational success. This dynamic illustrates how differing perceptions of risk can lead to varied behavioral and performance-related outcomes among employees.

In conclusion, this study highlights the significant influence of risk perception on employee performance within Thailand's hospitality sector. It emphasizes the need for organizations to understand how demographic and psychological factors shape employee responses to perceived risks. Recognizing these dynamics can inform the development of more effective strategies aimed at enhancing job satisfaction, engagement, and performance. By fostering an environment where employees feel both supported and informed about potential risks, organizations can cultivate a culture of proactive engagement that strengthens both individual and collective resilience.

This perspective aligns with (Weston, Conklin and Drobnis, 2018, pp. 12-20), who emphasize that a foundational element of effective risk management is the promotion of a risk-aware organizational culture. Organizational culture encompasses shared values, beliefs, and behavioral norms that guide daily operations. A culture of risk awareness encourages vigilance, timely identification of potential threats, and the implementation of appropriate preventive or corrective measures. Moreover, the involvement of employees in risk management decision-making has been shown to improve compliance with safety protocols and promote more proactive identification and resolution of risks. These findings suggest that by embedding targeted risk management strategies into the organizational culture, hotels can enhance resilience and ensure sustainable performance in an increasingly uncertain and volatile business environment.

Academic and Practical Implications

Enhanced Understanding of Risk Perception: This research contributes to the academic discourse on risk management by providing empirical evidence on the factors influencing risk perception among hotel employees. It highlights the need for further studies to explore how demographic variables and organizational culture affect risk perception and management practices. The study provides a strong foundation for future research to investigate the relationship between risk perception, organizational culture, and performance outcomes in various contexts and industries. It sets a precedent for longitudinal studies to assess how changes in risk management practices over time impact employee behavior and organizational performance.

Practical Implications Training and Development: Hotels should implement targeted training programs to educate employees, particularly younger and less experienced staff, about risk management practices. This can help reduce their perceived risk levels and boost their confidence in handling uncertainties.

Strengthening Organizational Culture: Developing a strong culture of safety and risk management is crucial. Regular communication, employee involvement in decision-making processes, and recognition and reward for adherence to safety protocols can achieve this.

Employee Involvement: Encouraging employee participation in risk management can lead to better compliance and proactive risk identification. Hotels should create platforms for employees to share their concerns and suggestions regarding safety and risk management.

Performance Management: Understanding the link between risk perception and performance outcomes can help managers design better performance management systems. Hotels can enhance job satisfaction and performance by addressing employees' concerns about risks, ultimately leading to better service quality and customer satisfaction. By implementing these practical recommendations, hotels can create a safer work environment, boost employee morale, and achieve higher performance levels, thereby gaining a competitive edge in the hospitality industry.

This study contributes to academic literature in several key ways. First, it integrates multiple dimensions of perceived risk—including financial, technological, health, safety, and natural disaster risks—into a single framework for analyzing employee perceptions in the hospitality industry. This multidimensional approach advances previous research, which often focused on singular risk factors, such as health or safety alone (e.g., Vo-Thanh, et al., 2021, pp. 879-900). Second, by applying and extending the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007, pp. 309-328) to the context of a VUCA environment, this study highlights how perceived risks act as both job demands and potential motivators. This contributes to theoretical understanding of how risk perception influences job performance during crises. Third, the study provides empirical evidence from the Thai hospitality sector, which has been underrepresented in prior research. It offers comparative insights with studies conducted in other countries, thereby enriching cross-cultural understanding of risk perception in service industries. Finally, the findings support future theoretical model development that combines risk perception with resilience and performance frameworks, paving the way for more comprehensive models of employee behavior under uncertainty.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The study on risk perception and performance outcomes among hotel employees in Bangkok, Thailand provides critical insights into the factors influencing employees' perceptions of risk and how these perceptions impact their job performance. The findings indicate that demographic variables such as age, gender, and work experience significantly affect risk perception, with younger and less experienced employees perceiving higher levels of risk. Organizational culture also plays a vital role, with a strong culture of safety and risk management reducing perceived risks among employees. Moreover, the study establishes a clear link between risk perception and performance outcomes. Employees who perceive higher risks tend to report lower job satisfaction and engagement, negatively impacting their performance. Conversely, a well-managed risk environment enhances job satisfaction and performance. These insights underscore the necessity for hotels to adopt comprehensive risk management strategies to improve employee well-being and organizational performance.

Suggestions for Future Study

Future research should consider longitudinal studies to track changes in risk perception and performance outcomes over time. This will help to understand how ongoing changes in risk management practices impact employees and organizational performance.

Broader Demographic Analysis: Expanding the demographic variables to include more diverse populations across different regions and types of hotels can provide a more comprehensive understanding of risk perception.

Risk Management Practices: Investigating the effectiveness of specific risk management practices and interventions can help identify the most effective strategies for reducing perceived risks and improving performance outcomes.

Qualitative Approaches: Integrating qualitative research methods, such as interviews and focus groups, can provide deeper insights into the personal experiences and perceptions of employees regarding risk and safety in the workplace.

Comparative Studies: By comparing different sectors of the hospitality industry or hospitality with other industries, we can uncover unique risk management challenges and effective strategies that we can adapt to various contexts.

These suggestions aim to build on the current study's findings and encourage more in-depth research to further understand and improve risk management practices in the hospitality industry.

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