

Assessing the Influence of Co-creation on the Customer Behavior of Five-star Hotels in Cairo

تقييم تأثير الابداع المشترك على سلوك العملاء في الفنادق الخمس نجوم بالقاهرة

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Abstract

الملخص

The study aims to identify assessing the influence of co-creation on the customer behavior of a five-star hotel in Cairo. To achieve the research objective, a questionnaire was designed, which included two main axes: (co-creation) as the independent variable and the customer behavior axis represented by (customer satisfaction, customer trust, customer loyalty and perceived value). The questionnaire was distributed to a random sample of five-star hotel customers in Cairo, covering 21 hotels with a total of 420 forms. A total of 390 forms were retrieved, accounting for 92.8%, of which 380 forms were valid for statistical analysis, representing 90% of the total forms. The analysis of the questionnaire relied on the SPSS.v26 program, and the study found a statistically significant correlation between the independent variable (co-creation) and the dependent variable customer behavior (customer satisfaction, customer trust, customer loyalty, and perceived value). The study recommends working on expanding and developing applications of co-creation in Egyptian hotels.

يشهد نموذج خلق القيمة تحولاً نحو نهج أكثر تعاونية وتشاركية، حيث لم يعد العملاء متلقين سلبيين بل مشاركين نشطين في عملية خلق القيمة، لذا فقد هدفت الدراسة إلى التعرف على تأثير الابداع المشترك على سلوك العملاء في الفنادق الخمس نجوم في القاهرة. لتحقيق هدف البحث، تم تصميم استمارة استبيان تتضمن محورين رئيسيين: الاول (الابداع المشترك) كمتغير مستقل والمحور الثاني سلوك العملاء ويتضمن، (ولاء العملاء-رضا العملاء-ثقة العملاء والقيمة المدركة)، تم توزيع الاستبيان على عينة عشوائية من عملاء الفنادق الخمس نجوم في القاهرة، شملت 21 فندقاً بإجمالي 420 استمارة. تم استعادة عدد 390 استمارة، أي ما يعادل 92.8%، منها 380 استمارة صالحة للتحليل الإحصائي، تمثل 90% من إجمالي الاستمارات. اعتمد تحليل الاستبيان على برنامج SPSS.v26، وتوصلت الدراسة الى وجود علاقة ارتباط ذات دلالة إحصائية بين المتغير المستقل (الابداع المشترك) والمتغير التابع سلوك العملاء. (ولاء العملاء-رضا العملاء-ثقة العملاء والقيمة المدركة). توصي الدراسة بالعمل على ابتكار ممارسات الابداع المشترك في الفنادق المصرية.

Keywords: Co-Creation; Customer Behavior; Customer Satisfaction; Customer Trust; Customer Loyalty; Perceived Value.

الكلمات الدالة: الابداع المشترك؛ سلوك العملاء؛ رضا العملاء؛ ثقة العملاء؛ ولاء العملاء؛ القيمة المدركة.

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Introduction

Currently, organizations are shifting from the corporate level to the consumer level. (Marwa&Rania, 2019). As a result, the interaction between customers and suppliers has become more important than the product they purchase. (Vandenbosch & Dawar, 2002). Thus, communication technology has evolved to adapt to the interaction between customers and companies in business, (Marwa & Rania,2019). These trends have gradually led to more informed customers and provided the opportunity for a new type of innovation, which is co-innovation, where customers and the company participate in creating and exchanging value with customers. Marketers have changed their policies from focusing on product features to focusing on customer benefits. This is because customers demand unique products and services that distinguish them from other customers. (Yaozhi & nina,2025). Tourism companies are trying to attract potential customers, so tourism organizations will interact with their clients to discover and meet their needs, thereby providing tourism activities with distinguished products and services and creating shared value. (Shaw et al., 2011). Creating value is the value derived from using a product or service. At the same time, co-creation of value is the communication between companies and customers. These interactions serve as the link between stakeholders and consumers (Grönroos & Voima, 2013). The affirmation of shared value emphasizes collaboration with customers and cooperation with partners to innovate new services and enhance customer value (Aarikka-Stenroos & Jaakkola, 2012). In the hospitality and tourism industry, the creation of shared value has been studied. These studies have explained the evaluation of value co-creation processes with guests in the hotel industry (Shaw et al., 2011) and examined the impact of organizational efforts in co-creating value with customers and the continuous improvement in performance for tourism services, (Grisseemann & Stokburger-Sauer, 2012). On the other hand, some tourism studies have clearly explored the concept of value co-creation in the context of business-to-business interactions. (B2B). Therefore, there is an urgent need to design and develop a comprehensive research framework on co-creation to achieve a better understanding for companies to share value with their partners in the field of tourism and hospitality. (Chen et al., 2017). Moreover, in recent years, innovation management in the hospitality and tourism sector has gained importance, with the identification of categories of tourism innovation and critical factors for innovation. (Hjalager, 2010). Williams & Shaw (2011) pointed out that innovation and globalization are important issues in the tourism industry.

Chen et al., (2017), Practicing joint creativity in the field of tourism and participation between the company and partners leads to the emergence of creativity and innovation in the services provided and the emergence, as well as added value(Neves & Segarra-Cipres, 2015).

Based on the above, this study aims to assessing the influence of co-creation on the customer behavior of a five-star hotel in Cairo.

Study question

What is the influence of Co-creation on the Customer behavior?

Literature Review

Co-creation

Co-creation is described as the strategy that facilitates collaboration between customers and service providers in creating an improved service. García-Haro et al., (2015), mentioned that in tourism, co-creation activities denote the active and direct involvement of the client with the service provider in the design and development of new products. (Haro et al., 2014). Co-creation (CC) concentrates on the client engaging with the travel operator to build an innovative travel experience. (Mathis, 2013). Research indicates that co-creation generates value for both enterprises and consumers, while consumers often regard co-creation as more valuable, resulting in higher satisfaction levels. (Chen&Wang, 2016; Casais et al., 2020). Furthermore, CC aids in forecasting customer satisfaction with service providers, enabling them to modify their strategies and operations, and to execute a plan that fosters a distinctive tourism experience, so enhancing visitors' physical and emotional connection to the service providers, (Mathis, 2013). In this scenario, service providers must prioritize fulfilling clients' emotional ties by cultivating exceptional experiences. (Prebensen & Xie, 2017; Szarucki & Menet, 2018).

Greisman&Stockburger-Sauer, (2012) similarly discovered that collaborative efforts influence consumer satisfaction with the service provider. By highlighting the similarities and differences between three terms related to co-operation. **Neuhoffer, (2016)**, provided a comprehensive assessment of consumer communication and expanded the definition of cooperation.

A. Customer engagement

With the emergence of social media, the term "crowdsourcing" has become widely used in many industries. Companies are increasingly turning to outsourcing as a means to enhance the data available on their website (**Sigala, 2016**). Now, companies publish their data online so that customers can use it as a benchmark for data improvement, With the use of outsourcing.

Most companies seek customer feedback and opinions to correct errors and add new information. **Geiger et al. (2011)** described the idea of the crowd as "a term that encompasses a number of methods relying on the integration of a large and open crowd of people." Airbnb and VisitBritain, the official website for British tourism, are among the most famous examples of crowd-sourcing in the tourism industry. (**Sigala, 2016; Neuhofer et al., 2012**).

B. The method of co-production for co-creation with customers

In many fields, the term "co-production" has recently exploded in popularity. According to some academics, it is a means of exchanging information between companies and customers to create the best possible product. Accordingly, for participation in production to work, the customer must be present to receive the service and provide the necessary information to obtain it more successfully. In the hotel industry, guests often have a pre-selected list of items to choose from, including pillows, newspapers, and meals, (**Orabi,2021**).

The hotels here supplied their customers with the finest available services instead of introducing new ones (**Neuhofer, 2016**). Participation in production was defined by **Eraqi ,(2013) Kim et al., (2019)** as "the way inputs for production are provided by companies and customers throughout the entire production process, thereby increasing the outputs of supply and demand from these inputs". **Arica & Kozak (2019)** mentioned that customers should be viewed as partners in production rather than passive observers of the manufacturing process (**Yang, 2015; Sigala, 2016**).

C. Customer participation

The term "co-creation" first appeared in the context of the Service-Dominant Logic (S-D) as a marketing strategy that encourages consumers to actively participate in the experience creation process. (**Neuhofer et al., 2012; Sigala, 2016; Barreto & Campo, 2018; Wong & Lai, 2019; Kim et al., 2019**). The shift from a goods-dominant model to a service-dominant model (S-D) in customer interactions affects the nature of the relationship between companies and distribution networks. (**Eraqi, 2013; Shaw et al., 2011**).

According to several studies (**Eduardo & Panyi, 2015; Campos et al., 2018; Barreto & Campo, 2018; Kim et al., 2019; Wong & Lai, 2019**), co-creation activities involve consumers sharing their opinions and experiences from the early stages of product or service development, design, marketing, and consumption. Consumers who are willing to share their experiences and knowledge for the benefit of other consumers and themselves are the ones who drive innovation., **Sigala (2016), Mohd-Ani et al. (2015)**.

It was not enough for customers to participate only in manufacturing; they also had to participate in consumption with other customers. **Chung et al., (2015) Ercsey (2017)** provide relevant information. However, according to **Míguez & Fernández (2015)**, the co-innovation method may have negative consequences, such as customer backlash that could lead to service failure. According to several studies (**Ind & Coates, 2013; Mathis et al., 2016**). competing companies sometimes exploit customers who volunteer their knowledge and expertise to assist them.

Customer Behavior (CB)

The analysis of consumer behavior is regarded as a critical priority for every marketing strategy (**Samah, 2016**). **Rania & Neriman (2020)** characterized it as the conduct displayed by consumers during the processes of searching for, purchasing, utilizing, assessing, or discarding goods and services anticipated to fulfill their requirements. Consequently, marketers perceive contemporary consumer behavior as an ongoing process (**Al-Khudr et al., 2017**).

Customer loyalty (CL)

Tika et al. (2019) interpreted customer loyalty as an intention reflected in repeat purchases. Moreover, it is the commitment and response of customers towards a specific brand (Ikraman & syah,2020: Mohamed et al, 2021).

Customer Satisfaction (CS)

Leninkumar (2017) Khan et al. (2022), defines customer satisfaction (CS) as an emotional state arising from the discrepancy between expectations and perceptions during and following a trip.

Customer Trust (CT)

According to Trini & Salim (2018), the term "CT" refers to the urge to rely on an authority figure because one believes that person will take positive action. Thinks, feelings, openness, relevance, empathy, experience, and displayed emotions or behavior are all crucial for maintaining a long-term connection (Kishada & Wahab, 2015).

Perceived value

Hasfer et al. (2020). explained Perceived value is the assessment of a customer's feelings about a consumed product or service, relative to the sacrifices made, whether in terms of cost or time (Tuncer et al, 2021). There are four synonyms for value: the first is affordability, the second encompasses all the client's desires in the product (Jian et al,2022), the third relates to the quality received for the price, and the fourth concerns the return the customer obtains for their investment (Shaimaa, 2023). Yang et al (2021), explain the perceived value is the customer's assessment of items or services.

Research framework

The research model was designed based on literature models (Grissemann & Stok, 2012: Kuo et al., 2013: Aktepe, & Toklu, 2015: Setiawan & Sayuti, 2017: Ramadhan & Yolanda, 2019: Orabi, 2021: Abd Elhalim, ٢٠٢١): Elgarhy & Mohamed, 2022. which were partially integrated to build a rigorous comprehensive research framework.

The research model aims to identify the impact of CC on CB. By measuring the impact of CC on CL, CS, CTand PV. Four hypotheses were formulated. (Figure 1).

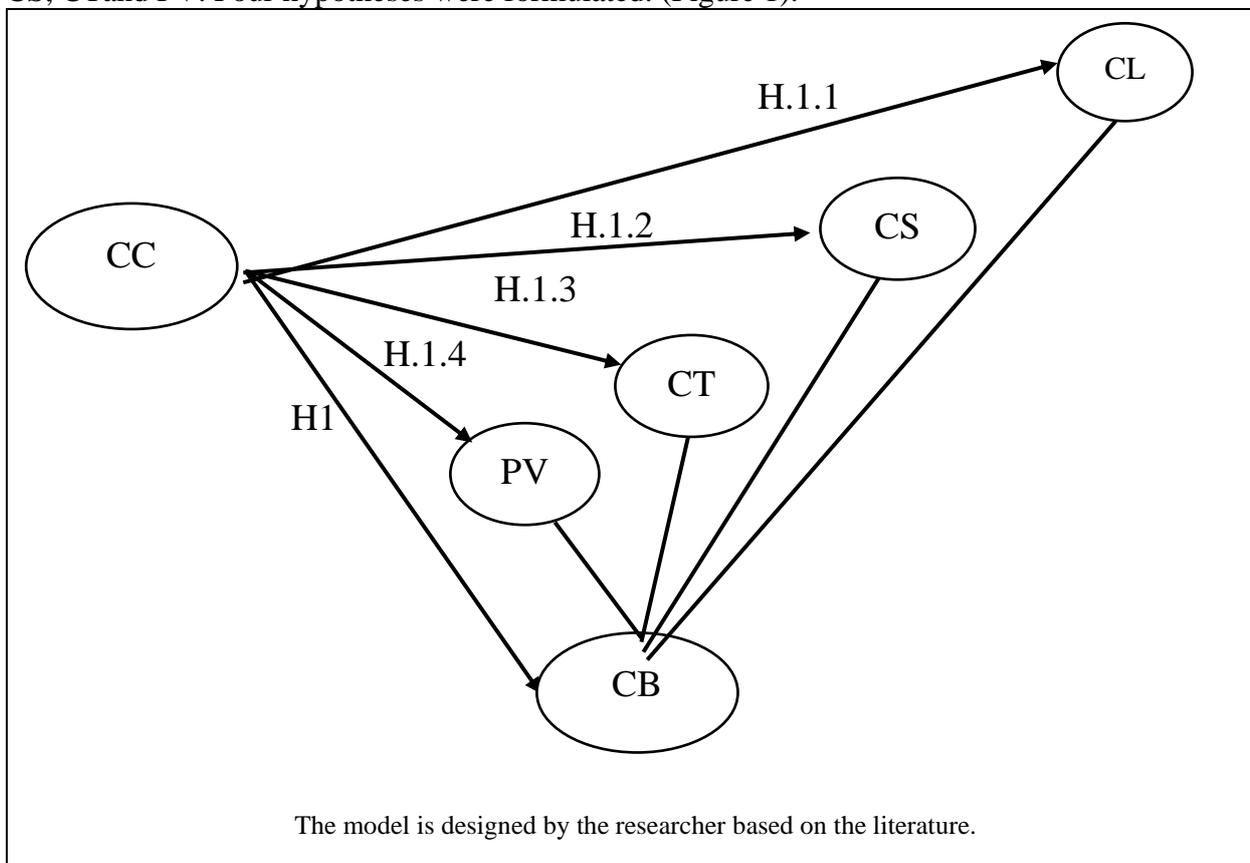


Figure1. The proposed research model. **CC**(Co-Creation). **CB** (Customer Behavior) **CL** (Customer Loyalty). **CS** (Customer Satisfaction). **CT** (Customer Trust). **PV** (Perceived Value).

Research Hypotheses

The main hypothesis

H1: There is a statistically significant impact relationship between the independent variable of CC and the dependent variable of CB.

Sub-hypotheses

H.1.1: There is a statistically significant impact relationship between the independent variable of CC and the dependent variable of CL.

H.1.2: There is a statistically significant impact relationship between the independent variable of CC and the dependent variable of CS.

H.1.3: There is a statistically significant impact relationship between the independent variable of CC and the dependent variable of CT.

H.1.4: There is a statistically significant impact relationship between the independent variable of CC and the dependent variable of PV.

Research Methodology

The study relied on the quantitative method to achieve its objectives as one of the approved scientific research methodologies. Moreover, based on the literature, the 5 variables used in this study were adapted from previous results and integrated. (Figure 1). CC was measured with six elements (Garcia-Haro et al., 2015; Liang & Xiao, 2018; Sun et al., 2020; De Vos & Witte, 2017), CL was measured with three elements (Chen & Wang, 2016; Javed & Cheema, 2017; Leninkumar, 2017). CS was measured with six elements (Chen & Wang, 2016; Javed & Cheema, 2017; Saidani & Sudiarditha, 2019), CT was measured with five elements (Leninkumar, 2017; Saidani & Sudiarditha, 2019; Wang et al., 2014), and PV was measured with six elements (Javed & Cheema, 2017; Keshavarz & Jamshidi, 2018; Ramadhan & Yolanda, 2019; Yang, 2019).

Sample and data collection

The study sample was selected from five-star hotels in Cairo, which number 21 hotels (Egyptian Hotels Guide, 2024), as five-star hotels possess the financial, human, and technological capabilities, and in their constant pursuit of achieving competition, increasing actual customers, and attracting the largest number of potential customers. A total of 420 questionnaires were distributed, with an average of 20 questionnaires per hotel. 400 questionnaires were retrieved, of which 385 were valid for statistical analysis, representing 91% of the total questionnaires. The questionnaire included twenty-six questions to measure the independent variable CC and the dependent variable CL (CS-CT-PV). A five-point Likert scale was used where strongly agree = 5, and strongly disagree = 1. Two online questionnaires were designed to collect data in Arabic and English, which were then tested and verified through trials with forty clients. After that, the links to the two online forms were directed to a random sample of the study's customers. Some specialists and relevant individuals assisted in distributing the survey links to the customers. Conducting this study from April 2024 to July 2024.

Statistical analysis methods

SPSS V.26 was relied upon as one of the specialized and approved statistical software programs for analyzing statistical data. Moreover, some measures were relied upon for data analysis and testing the study hypotheses, which are:

- Validity and reliability (Cronbach's alpha).
- The arithmetic mean
- Standard deviation
- Correlation coefficient
- Regression coefficient

RESULT

Table1 Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the main variables

Variable	N. P	Cronbach's Alpha
All the items in the questionnaire	26	0.913
CC	6	0.977
CB	20	0.983
CL	3	0.917
CS	6	0.935
CT	5	0.951
PV	6	0.976

It is clear from Table (1) that the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for all the questionnaire items was 0.91, while the Cronbach's alpha values for all the variables ranged between 0.91 and 0.98. And all of them are greater than 0.70, the accepted value in the humanities (Miller,1995). This indicates that the questionnaire form has a high degree of reliability.

Table2 Measurable Items: Mean, Standard Deviation

No	Measurable item	M	SD
CC	Co-Creation	4.36	0.678
CC1	The hotel assisted with the arrangements for my stay.	4.19	0.761
CC2	I participated in planning my vacation with the hotel.	4.31	0.777
CC3	I used my travel experience to arrange my stay with the hotel.	4.34	0.797
CC4	The main components of my hotel vacation were my suggestion.	4.28	0.805
CC5	The hotel staff helped me interact and participate in planning my stay.	4.36	0.793
CC6	I spent time and effort collaborating with the hotel in planning the duration of my stay.	4.31	0.774
CB	Customer Behavior	4.43	0.815
CL	Customer Loyalty	4.36	0.818
CL1	I will speak positively about this hotel.	4.30	0.864
CL2	I will recommend others to rely on this hotel when planning their trip.	4.33	0.921
CL3	I will recommend this hotel to others who appreciate my advice.	4.41	0.887
CS	Customer SUTISFICTION	4.35	0.892
CS1	Arranging the reservation with this hotel is worth my effort.	4.42	0.894
CS2	I am satisfied with my choice of this hotel.	4.51	0.844
CS3	I am satisfied with the booking and accommodation decisions I made with this hotel.	4.47	0.833
CS4	I am satisfied with the social interaction with the staff of this hotel.	4.50	0.840
CS5	I am satisfied with my participation in the arrangements for the stay at this hotel.	4.46	0.819
CS6	I am satisfied with the planning experience for the stay that I gained from this hotel.	4.44	0.817
CT	COSTUMER TRUST	4.50	0.812
CT1	I trust the staff of this hotel.	4.48	0.812

CT[†]	This hotel gives me a sense of confidence when I plan to stay there.	4.47	0.833
CT[‡]	I trust the suggestions this hotel offers me because they will be the best for my situation.	4.44	0.817
CT[£]	I trust the quality of the products and services offered by this hotel.	4.42	0.895
CT5	In general, I trust this hotel.	4.35	0.893
PV	Perceived Value	4.41	0.888
PV1	I believe that the stay I had at this hotel was worth the price.	4.33	0.921
PV2	I believe that the stay I had at this hotel was worth the money I paid.	4.30	0.864
PV3	I will evaluate my stay at this hotel because it meets my expectations in terms of quality.	4.33	0.824
PV4	The stay I had at this hotel is worth it because it meets my needs at a reasonable price.	4.42	0.850
PV5	I advise the important people in my life to deal with this hotel.	4.35	0.827
PV6	This hotel will be my first choice when I plan to travel in the future.	4.25	0.790

Table (2) shows the mean and standard deviation for all study variables based on the opinions of the study sample, where the mean for the independent variable CC was 4.3, while the dependent variable CB had an overall mean of 4.4. Moreover, it illustrates the extent to which the study sample responds to the practice of participating in creating their own experience and adding value to it. And this participation, diligence, and interaction with hotel staff, as well as the arrangement of the components of their hotel stay experience, have made them more satisfied, loyal, and even advocates for the hotel's brand.

Table3. Testing the hypotheses

independent variable	Dependent variables					Analysis results
	CB	CL	CS	CT	PV	
CC	.873**	.721**	.776**	.731**	.774**	R
	.762	.519	.602	.534	.599	R 2
	0,693	0,616	0,604	0,613	0,601	B
	11,24	12,14	10,12	12,14	10,16	T
	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	SIG

significant correlation at the level of Significant >0.05

Table (3) clearly shows the impact factor results. A substantial positive connection (r=0.87, 0.72-0.77, 0.73-0.73) is shown in the table between the fixed variable of collaborative creativity and each of the transactional variables (consumer behavior, customer loyalty, customer happiness, trust, and perceived value). Additionally, the dependent variables (CB-CL-CS-CT-PV) are changing as a consequence of the independent variable (CC practices), and the R2 coefficient, which describes this shift, is 76%-51%-60%-53%-59%. Regression coefficient B values, which measure the influence of the fixed variable on the dependent variables, were (0.69-0.61-0.60-0.61-0.65) at a significance level of less than 0.005, as indicated in the table. This proves that collaborative innovation has an effect on the table's independent variables. Results from the basic linear regression table support the study's hypotheses.

Table 4 Results of hypotheses tests.

Results of hypotheses	
H1: There is a statistically significant impact relationship between the independent variable of CC and the dependent variable of CB.	Supported

H2: There is a statistically significant impact relationship between the independent variable of CC and the dependent variable of CL.	Supported
H3: There is a statistically significant impact relationship between the independent variable of CC and the dependent variable of CS.	Supported
H4: There is a statistically significant impact relationship between the independent variable of CC and the dependent variable of CT.	Supported
H5: There is a statistically significant impact relationship between the independent variable of CC and the dependent variable of PV.	Supported

Conclusion

The study aimed to assess the impact of co-creation on customer behavior in five-star hotels in Cairo. To achieve the study's objective, two important parts were relied upon: first, theoretical studies to deepen the understanding of the term "co-creation" and shed light on the key areas where co-creation can be enhanced through customer participation in value creation with hotel management. And enhancing the customer experience, which enables the hotel to achieve customer satisfaction, trust, loyalty, and perceived value. The second part involves the fieldwork and the distribution of questionnaires to obtain quantitative data that can be analyzed to reach a conclusion supporting the study's objective.

١- The study sample's attitude towards their practices in co-creating value for the hotel experience through defining the components of the stay duration, the hotel's involvement in program planning, and strengthening relationships with staff before arriving at the hotel, and that this participation is aimed at innovating new experiences. Therefore, the study sample's response leaned strongly towards agreeing with the satisfaction variable points, and this result aligns with the study by (Griesman & Storkburger-Sauer, 2012).

٢- The study clarified the sample's opinions regarding their trust in the hotel, which is a result of their satisfaction with the services provided by the hotel, in addition to their trust in the hotel staff and their feeling of confidence in planning their stay and their experience in interacting with the hotel employees. Therefore, joint creativity had an impact on enhancing customer trust, and this result was consistent with the study by (Moliner et al. 2007; Arica et al. 2023).

٣- As a result of customers feeling satisfied and trusting the hotel due to co-creation practices, this had a significant impact on their opinions, which shifted towards strong agreement in the loyalty variable, reflecting their positive behavior of talking and promoting the hotel due to their participation in creating value for the experience. This aligns with the study by (Yang, 2019; Elgarhy & Mohamed, 2023).

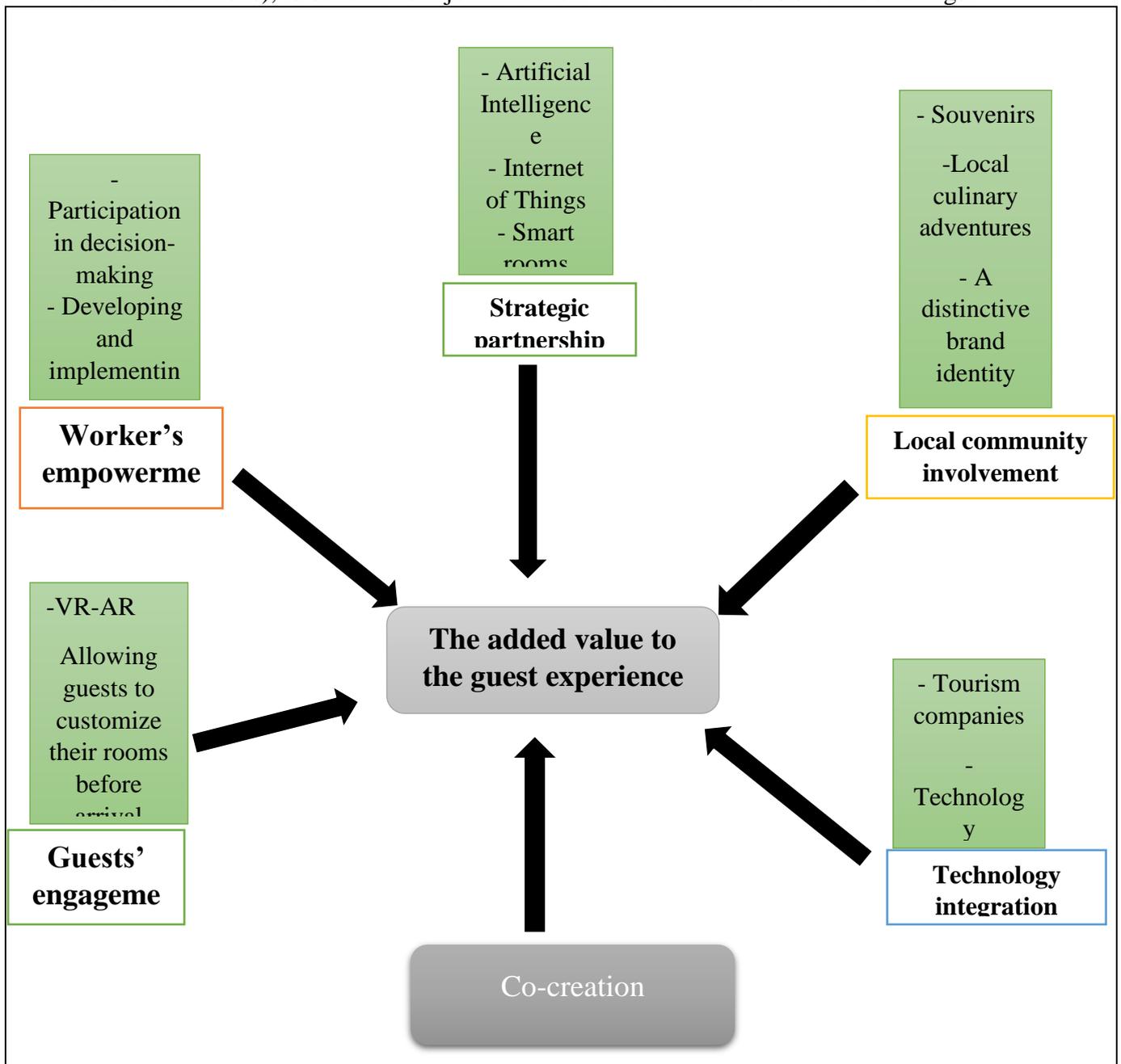
٤- Moreover, the study results indicated a strong impact on the perceived value for customers due to their contributions, which can be summarized in that the money, time, and effort spent in choosing the hotel and staying there were worth it. This finding is consistent with the study by (Ozkan et al. 2019; Buhalis & Sinarta, 2019).

Recommendations

Based on the presented reference studies and the results of the field study, the study recommends:

- 1- The necessity for Egyptian hotels to benefit from modern technology in involving their customers in designing their stay experiences, for example, virtual reality technology.
- 2- Focusing on involving the local community in creating unique experiences for guests, such as (making souvenirs - organizing local culinary adventures).
- 3- Encouraging and motivating employees to develop and implement their ideas to enhance guest satisfaction as an example of co-creation.
- 4- The necessity of adopting artificial intelligence and Internet of Things (IoT) technologies, which make the customer journey smoother.

5- Working on forming strategic partnerships with various sectors, for example (technology companies to develop applications that provide real-time personalized travel recommendations), to benefit from joint creation which enhances its service offerings.



Proposed model for Co-Creation mechanisms to create added value for guests

Limitations and future research

The study contributed to deepening the understanding of the concept of co-creation and identifying the impact of its practices on hotel customers' behavior. However, there are other variables that the study did not address. And which are of great importance in applying broader practices of co-creation, researchers can highlight such as challenges and solutions in co-creative practices, for example (aligning diverse expectations - intellectual property concerns - quality control - balancing creativity and feasibility, as well as cultural and linguistic barriers).

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