The Impact of Reputation Management on Achieving Competitive Advantage for Travel Agencies

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to investigate and examine the role of reputation management on achieving competitive advantage. Reputation management and competitive advantage are two important research trends that have attracted much attention through the past few years. The highly turbulent business environment, increased public expectations, and pressure from different stakeholder groups have all contributed to the increased importance of examining and managing a travel agency's reputation. Distinctive approaches to studies on reputation management exhibit differences in their definitions, units of analysis, and strategic implications; however, none of them can individually explain the whole concept of reputation management. This study seeks to assess the problem of stakeholder heterogeneous perceptions of corporate reputation and identifying key dimensions of supporting a high corporate reputation, look at the importance of stakeholders perceptions management, Also it will examine the impact of corporate reputation management on achieving competitive advantage.

This paper using two scales for measuring both reputation management and competitive advantage in travel agencies, data were collected through a questionnaire distributed to a sample of 450 employees of travel agencies category (A) in Cairo and Alex. A total of 398 responses of travel agencies' employees were collected and analyzed by statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) for Windows v.16.0. Results showed that there is a statistically significant correlation between corporate reputation management factors and competitive advantage dimensions, also confirming the positive relationship between corporate reputation management and achieving competitive advantage.

Keywords: Corporate reputation, corporate reputation management, Stakeholders relationship management, competitive advantage.

1. Introduction

In today's highly competitive dynamic and turbulent business environment, travel agencies strive to differentiate themselves from their competitors and build favorable relationships with their stakeholders. According to Jonge (2007) Reputation is everything, and companies must be prepared to either maintain their reputation and or do damage repairs which is very expensive in a competitive market. Corporate reputation cannot be bought. It is built over time (a good or bad) you are free to do whatever you want to , but you have to bear responsibility in case anything illegal happens. Related to Ott (2013) corporate reputation is also an expectation for future and it represents the effective or emotional reaction with its all sides, for customers, investors, employees and general public. He confirms that corporate reputation is considered a powerful influence on the performance of a travel agency. Gupta (2013) mentioned that in the past, travel agencies applied a passive approach to manage their reputation. Many of them neglected it. He sometimes argued that because it does not create value for the company and for the stakeholders.

Fair reputation is a delicate plant in its nature, and by no means rapid in its growth. With this expression, Ressler (2009) explained that good reputation is not built in a day, it requires time and effort of a travel agency, so it is built on what is evidently known or seen. Therefore, corporate reputation should be perceived equally by different stakeholders only positively or only negatively.

Reputation management is most successful when it starts from internal stakeholders and frequently achieves their needs and expectations of (external) stakeholders. Moreover, it is influenced by the interaction between different stakeholders, most visibly in the relationship between employees and customers (Jonge,2007). Consequently, many travel agencies are increasingly aware of the need to understand and manage the impact of internal behavior on the perceptions held by external stakeholders (Shamma, 2012). The aim of this paper is to explore the impact of reputation management on travel agencies' competitiveness.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 An Overview of Corporate Reputation

Socrates (469 BC -399 BC) " The way to gain a good reputation is to endeavor to be what you desire to appear". An organization's reputation is a reflection of how it is regarded by its multiple stakeholders. Its reputational stance can help the organization obtain trust and credibility in society, which will assist in the achievement of its objectives and goals (Shamma, 2012). Gupta (2013) mentioned that in the past, travel agencies applied a passive approach to manage their reputation .Many of them neglected it. They sometimes argued that because it does not create value for the company and for the stakeholders.

According to Nurn and Tan (2010) reputations are over all assessments of travel agencies by its Stakeholders. It is the aggregate perceptions by stakeholders of travel agency's ability to check their expectations. Iddrisu (2013) defines corporate reputation as "the general assessment of perceptions and experiences favorable or unfavorable that stakeholders have about the activities of a travel agency" (p.13) .Corporate reputation affects the way in which various stakeholders behave towards an organization, and to what extent this influences, for example, employee retention and commitment , stakeholder satisfaction and loyalty (Faber, 2013).

This multidimensional reputation expansion responsibilities comes a more, in the age of globalization giving the strong reputation, top consideration, and the ability to deal with hostile environments. Thus, it forms and represents a means of protection during crises (Shamma, 2012).

2.1.1 Building Reputation

Building a reputation, and having it built is a joint point between a travel agency and its stakeholders. The travel agency's own viewpoint is naturally moderate, but it is not the only one. Ideally, the architecture of reputation is made together with stakeholders (Tapscott and Ticoll, 2003). Reputation building requires sustainable business, which means that the company's operations, products, and/or services are in harmony with both global and local communities, societies, and both political and economic systems.

2.1.1.1 Travel Agency's reputation formation

From stakeholder perspective travel Agency's reputation formation can be represented in:

a) Employees: It's considered one of the most important factors in a travel agency. They look like ambassadors of its reputation through their commitment. Bayoud et al .(2012)mentioned that there is a positive relationship between reputation and employee commitment ,leading to important results in the creation or deletion of other fundamental intangible resources, and may help build a positive image .

b) Customers: A good reputation attracts customers easily and maintains the loyalty of the existing ones besides ensuring the positive spread of "word of mouth" information and to reduce the opportunity to imitate the actions of the travel Agency (Matuleviciene and Stravinskiene, 2016).

c) Investors: A good reputation allows the increase in the price, to attract larger investors, to improve the access to major markets. A high reputation reduces the advertising costs due to a lower investment in communication (Faber, 2013).

d) Suppliers: The reputation of a travel agency increases the average of trust, which is a vital element in any type of relationship. The more the customer trusts a supplier, the higher the perceived value of the relationship is by building a good reputation (Kassim and Abdullah , 2010).

e) Community: A travel agency obtains the support of the community by offering a range of unique products, ensuring the quality of product and services, informing the community about the positive effect of reputation, maintaining socially responsible activities, ensuring communication in media, including community members in the activities of an organization (Aula and Heinonen, 2016).

2.1.2 Benefits of reputation for travel agency:

Travel Agency lives in the belief that being good is a guarantee of long-term success. The thought process is simple: goodness=success. A good reputation is the key to these processes of becoming good and being considered good (Aula and Hejnonen, 2016). According to Tracy (204) there are sectors in the service industry that rely so much on their reputation to attract and retain their customers and investors (banks, hotels, travel agencies, consulting firms, and educational institutions). Also move more easily, can ask a higher price for their products and they more easily attract new sources of financial capital and less likely to find themselves at risk. Jonge (2007) mentions that good reputation has both tangible and intangible benefits. He quoted as saying, it is important for audiences, from customers to employees to customers advocates, to feel good about an organization and it is important to build a good reputation to sustain an organization through the tough times. The importance of good reputation on stakeholders Interaction and Perception is illustrated in Figure (1) :
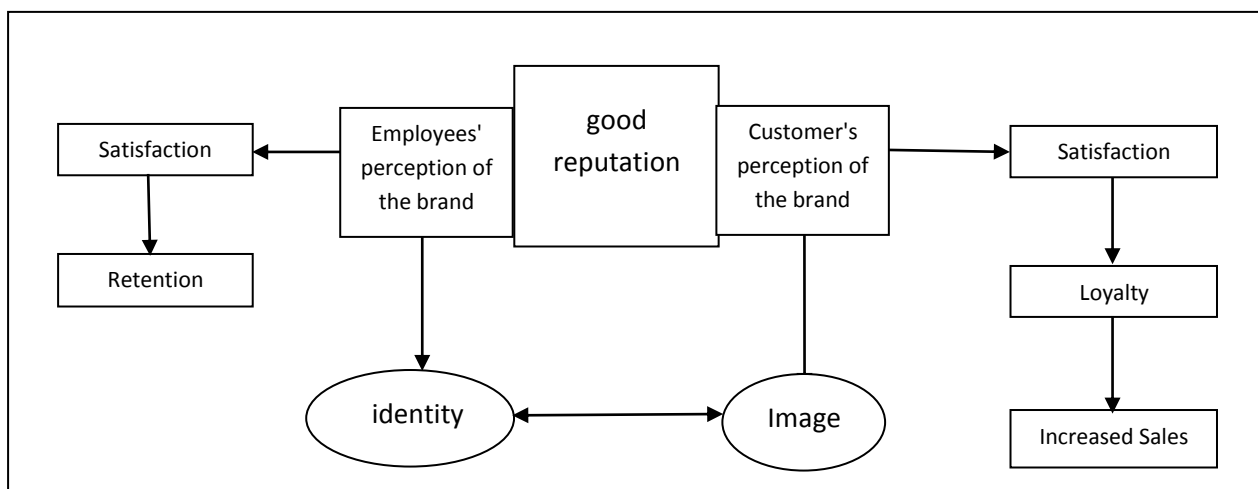
Source: (Nasir, 2004).

Fig 1: Good reputation and interaction between the internal view and the external view

According to this figure the main benefits of a strong TA reputation can be listed as follows:

a) Improving the consumer's perception of the quality of products or services (which allows to charge premium prices): sale increases and positive world-of mouth.

b) Improving the capacity of hiring and retaining qualified personnel in corporations.

c) Raising the morale of employees and in turn productivity.

d) Protecting the value of the enterprise by diminishing the impact of competitive attacks, rise of market value and diminishing risks for the organization.

Many researches mention the benefits of reputation for tourism industry (Aula and Heinone, 2016; Ozturk et al.,2010 and Gupta,2013) as a vital component for the TA success that increase the support of stakeholders and community. Through illustrating how good reputation, perceived is as producing for more quality products; financial structures are more robust, a higher reputation, leads to higher profits for the company. In addition, it explains its role in creating value and measuring performance, functioning as a mechanism which decreases uncertainty for stakeholders and increases marketing effectiveness.

2.1.3 Challenges Facing a Travel Agency's Reputation

Reputation of a travel agency has fundamental current value and shapes stakeholders' behavior to influence future value. It is a collection of perceptions and opinions, past and present, about a travel agency which resides in the consciousness of its stakeholders (Kassim and Abdullah, 2010)).

Bei and Chiao (2006) pointed out that a companies' reputation is fragile and dependent on past actions, so that negative information, might be true or not, can damage reputation. Also the failure to build a culture of attentive engagement can cause severe damage.'' It takes twenty years to build a reputation and five minutes to destroy" (Joosub, 2006, p46) mentioned this words and he states that there are three factors which can weaken the reputation of a company:

a) Poor performance directly connected to products and/or services.

b) Poor performance with respect to achievement of relevant company aims or with regard to relations with various stakeholders, and especially with employees.

c) Value conflicts or violation of specific values (such as social values), a public relations crisis and a fundamental ideological rejection.

Nurn and Tan (2010) added that Many times the constructs used to characterize travel agency reputation do not cover all of its scope and conceptual richness so that , it will lead to a reputational gaps between internal and external stakeholders that have immediate and long-term consequences, affecting the future actions of stakeholders towards the organization. According to Matuleviciene and Stravinskiene (2016) the main challenge facing a travel agency in building its reputation is ethical drift, once it compromise or start to drift from its ethical commitments, dire results can be observed. According to Joosub (2006) Reputational or reputation risk refers to the loss of a good reputation. A decline in reputation will result in both internal and external distrust, raising the costs incurred from customer appeasement as well as the monitoring and control of organizational members.

Reputation crises have one unique characteristic compared to other business crises; the greatest damage is not necessarily caused by the crisis event itself but by the loss of reputation as a result of poor crisis management. An organization will not necessarily be viewed on the basis of the real reason behind the crisis but instead on the basis of how well or badly it handles the crisis (Shamma, 2012).

Joosub (2006) added that Corporate crisis and vulnerability to reputation risk can arise from many sources, including: financial performance and profitability, corporate governance and quality of management, social, ethical and environmental performance, employees and corporate culture, marketing, innovation and customer relations, regulatory compliance and litigation, and communications and crisis management. A weakness in any one of these areas might be enough to significantly damage a reputation, while weakness in multiple areas might cause a company to collapse.

2.1.4 Measuring Travel Agency's Reputation.

Although the concept of reputation has already gone through decades of development, empirical literatures attempting to measure the construct haven't evolved at the same rate Lekhnya (2014). Tracy (2014) mentioned that measuring a travel agency's reputation requires the development or generation of feedback from stakeholders within the environment, in addition to the need for taking a stronger segmentation approach to corporate reputation measurement across a full range of relevant stakeholder.

Chuchen (2011) confirmed that a travel agency may measure its reputation over a period of time, usually for necessary credibility through an external auditor. The most popular measure for corporate reputation is the Reputation Quotient (RQ) that was developed by Rankila (2011), It is a comprehensive method for measuring corporate reputation that was created specifically to capture the perceptions of any corporate stakeholder group, such as consumers, investors, employees, or key influencers.

Reputation Quotient measure: is a good measure for reputation as it is broad and generic enough to make it applicable to most stakeholder groups and many cultural contexts. A multi-dimensional construct is composed of six dimensions that identify the stakeholders' perceptions about the reputation of a company.

Reputation Attributes Based on Harris interactive's (RQ) are summarized in table (2):

Table 1 Reputation Attributes

Attribute	Sub-Attribute
Vision & leadership	Market opportunities, Excellent leadership Clear vision for the future.
Financial performance	Outperforms competitors, Record of profitability Low risk investment, Growth prospects.
Social responsibility	Supports good causes, Environmental responsibility ,Community responsibility.
Emotional appeal	Feel good about admire and respect Trust.
Products & services	High quality, Innovative Value for money, Stands behind.
Workplace environment	Rewards employees, fairly Good place to work, Good employees.

Source: (Harris, 2009)

The results of Moleleki (2011) qualitative study to validate the dimensions of the reputation quotient highlighted that all six dimensions of the Reputation Quotient were supported as relevant for measuring corporate reputation.

2.1.5 Managing Travel Agency's Reputation

"It takes 20 years to build a reputation and five minutes to ruin it. If you think about that, you'll do things differently." (Shamma, 2012). Reputation management was a rather new phenomenon in business (Fu, 2014). Now, some 15 years later, reputation has become part of the daily vocabulary in business media and corporate talk. Achieving a reputation, losing it, and managing it as well as the risks related to it and the values generated by it are subjects that are discussed and written about actively and quite naturally (Aula and Heinonen, 2016). Shamma (2012) emphasized that ,examining and managing corporate reputation is becoming more important today than ever. This is due to many factors such as the increased public awareness about corporate actions and issues, the increased requirement for transparency, higher expectations by multiple stakeholder groups, word-of-mouth and online communication, customer's personal experience with a company's products and services, effect of the influence of opinion leaders, growth in interest groups and increased attention from media have all contributed to the importance of assessing and actively managing a company's reputation. According to Liu (2015) reputation management refers to the set of strategies that companies develop to cope with the expectations of their audiences, manage interpretations those audiences make, and to build favorable regard.

Frencova (2012) illustrated reputation management as the effort individuals make to maintain or obtain a desired reputation so people attempt to control what others think by changing their behavior when others are present to uphold a good reputation. Veloutsou and Moutinho (2009) pointed out the art of reputation management ensures that the stakeholder's experiences are positive and their expectations are well managed all the time. Numerous polls and surveys of executives, investors, analysts and others have turned reputation management into competitive tools, focusing on annual rankings and lists of most and least admired companies. It is a key factor in every travel agency's long-term strategic planning, and executives in virtually all industries are now held accountable for the results Shamma,2012).

Faber(2013|) argued, that reputation is not something that can be managed directly it is the driving philosophy in corporate communication departments. Gupta(2013) added that reputation management should be able to communicate properly in reputational issues that lead to increasing the travel agency's ability to survive crises, positive customer attitude towards the company, enhanced buying intentions, enhanced attractiveness in the capital market, possibility to charge premium prices and in overall financial success.

Gatzert (2015) emphasized that a travel agency's reputation can accurately reflect its history, current market reflection , its internal situation, it also reflects corporate conformance and performance, simultaneously. Thus , without an acceptable reputation it is very difficult for a company to survive or to make progress. A good managing for reputation also allows a company to obtain the loyalty and maintain stakeholder relation through contributing to building a strong relationship with the stakeholder. So a company will succeed and stay competitive in the market throughout having a direct link between consumer brand relationship and brand loyalty. Also Bayoud et al (2012) pointed out to reputation as a result of perceptions from the stakeholders of the important characteristics of companies or brands. So Brand reputation refers to the stakeholders' opinion that the brand is good and reliable.

2.1.6 The Impact of Reputation Management on Achieving Competitive Advantage

In today's fast-paced economy competition and business environment it becomes more and more complex especially in an issue of services and products. Much attention has been directed to a better service and the best product and how this can be achieved through utilizing the management of travel agency reputation (Konecny,2014).

According to Chu Chen (2011) a good managing for reputation helps the companies to get good employees, attract consumers, increase consumers' loyalty, which may be implemented as a factor of competitive performance and useful in obtaining the capital. So, there is increasing interest in the management of reputation as a scarce resource that can influence the sustainability and competitiveness of companies. Ott (2013) said that there is no unique definition of a competitive advantage. All different interpretations of competitive advantage stress that the competitive advantage is a relative measure of the advantage of a company over its competitors. Fu(2014) pointed out that a competitive advantage answers the question (Why should I buy from you?) or (How are you better than my current supplier ?) The term competitive advantage is the ability gained through attributes and resources to perform at a higher level than others in the same industry or market. Vargas(2013) mentioned that the effects of reputation on competitive advantage are arguably strongest in dealing with travel agencies as a part of the service sector which "service" is more commonly used than "product" Its intangibility nature also makes the judgments of quality especially difficult ,so that people skills, information, present to the market in a coherent and strategic manner and know-how to normally depend heavily on their reputations to attract stakeholders. Moleleki(2011) pointed out that reputation as a resource of travel agency could be a source of a competitive advantage if it has four attributes: valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable and organized **(the VRIO)** framework :

Value: Resources must create value for the company. They need to add value for the company, enabling the company to recognize opportunities and neutralize threats. Valuable resources are at the foundation of internal sources of a company's competitiveness.

Rareness: To be a source of competitive advantage, travel agency resources must be rare. They should not be widely available or possessed by numerous competing companies. If a travel agency's resources are valuable and rare, they may enable it to obtain at least a temporary competitive advantage.

Imitability: To provide competitiveness, resources of the firm must be difficult to imitate.

Organization: In order to obtain a competitive advantage, a travel agency must be organized with policies and procedures directed at exploiting resources.

Good managing for these resources affecting the development of a company's return on equity and market value, as well as its financial result, creates additional intangible capital resources, such as reputation capital. **The Main Role of Reputation Management on Achieving Competitive Advantage through creating value summarized in two elements:**

1) Tangible Value

Zhang(2015) explained the role of reputation management in creating a tangible value through employing the resource based view (RBV) that explains the role of reputation management in achieving competitive advantage this theory states that companies are capable of creating competitive advantages in the marketplace from their internal resources (financial capital, physical capital, human capital, and organizational capital). Reputation, as economic resources, generates competitive advantages that enable a company to conceive of and implement strategies for improving its efficiency and effectiveness. Resources, or capabilities, enable it to acquire and develop its assets to achieve a superior performance than competitors (Vargas,2013).Wang(2013) added that an important contribution of the RBV is to clarify the causality relationship between corporate reputation and financial performance which emphasizes that a good corporate reputation is associated with a good financial performance.

2) Intangible Value

Over the time, the importance of corporate reputation has grown, showing that high corporate reputation gives value not only from transactions between an organization and customers, but also from transactions between an organization and other stakeholders This promoted to rise of a new object of analysis an intangible value of corporate reputation (Ferencova,2012).

The Main Intangible Value of Reputation Management can be illustrated through two elements:

a) Reducing Stakeholders' Uncertainty

Uncertainty is a fundamental issue in the capital market, which exposes stakeholders to various risks for their deals. Abdolvand and Norouzi (2012) stated that the uncertainty issue is the fundamental problem when discussing the way of constructing reputation in service –based organizations. According to Aula and Mantere (2008) Reputation is built on trust. They argue that when trust exists between an organization and its public, it is easier to build and maintain reputation. Reputation and trust can also be seen as complementary to each other. Reputation accumulates trust and trust accumulates reputation. On the other hand, from the trustworthiness perspective, reputations are stakeholders' cognitions on different aspects of a company. Such beliefs develop as interactions between stakeholders and the company accumulate.

b) Word of Mouth

Word of mouth is the oldest form of media that spreads information about a firm's products or services among individuals and it is outside the controllable marketing mix (Abdolvand andNorouzi, 2012). Rankila (2011) stated reputation is something that is talked and told about, thus reputation can be linked to word of mouth. Zhang (2008)added that reputation is created when a company and its stakeholders come into contact with each other in various direct and indirect interactive situations. The various parties bring their entire world into these interactions, complete with their own values, cultures, prejudices, knowledge, and created word of mouth. Hillenbrand and Money (2009). proposed that stakeholders with good reputation perceptions would be expected to be more willing to engage in pwom than those stakeholders who do not perceive that the company has a good reputation. This means that companies with good reputations will stimulate positive word of mouth, while companies with poor reputations may stimulate negative word of mouth (nwom). Thus, it is likely that companies with more positive reputations have a greater reservoir of goodwill and their pleased customers will tend to act as company advocates. Based on these assumptions, customers' view of a company's reputation is expected to affect positive word of mouth.

2.1.7 Conceptual Model and Hypotheses

Based on the literature reviewed previously, all the inter-related constructs can be introduced in a model to be tested, this study investigated the impact of reputation management on achieving competitive advantages for travel agencies, fig (2) illustrates the conception model of the study.
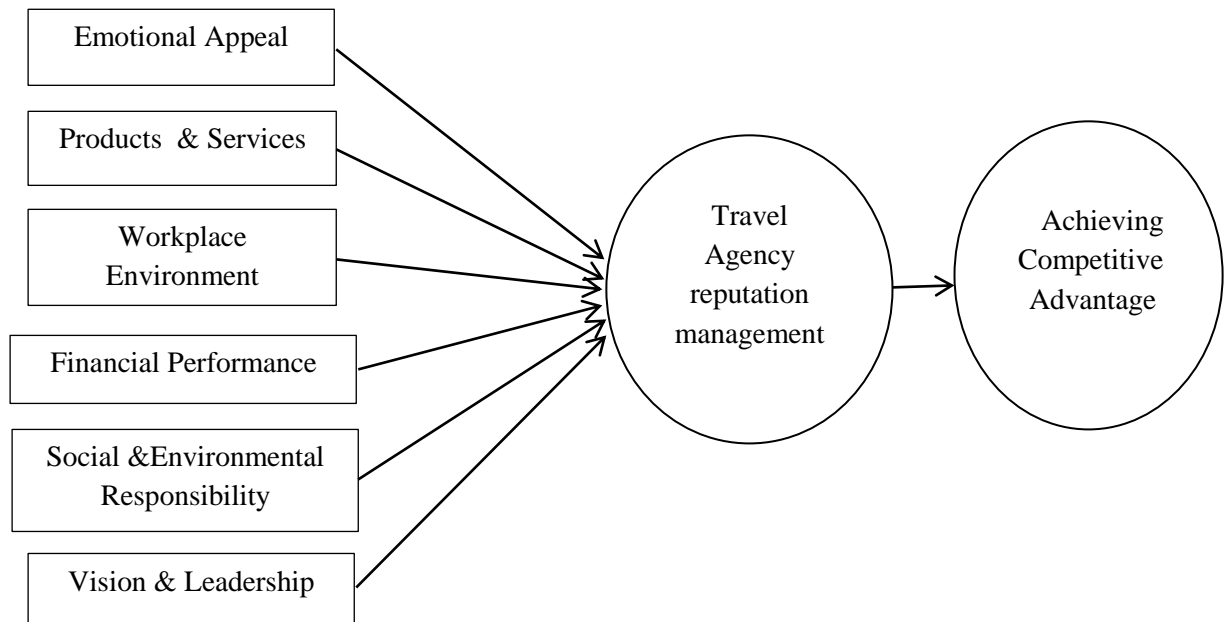

Fig (2) The Conceptual Model of the Study.

The main Hypothesis for the study is: there is a positive relationship between reputation management and competitive advantages that include Sub-hypotheses as following:

H1.a: There is a positive relationship between an emotional appeal of a travel agency and achieving competitive advantage.

H1.b: There is a positive relationship between a travel agency's products and services and achieving competitive advantage.

H1.c: There is a positive relationship between clear vision and leadership of a travel agency and achieving competitive advantage.

H1.d: There is a positive relationship between workplace environment of a travel agency and achieving competitive advantage.

H1.e: There is a positive relationship between Social and environmental responsibility of a travel agency and achieving competitive advantage.

H1.f: There is a positive relationship between financial performance of travel agency and achieving competitive advantage.

3. Research Method

3.1 Sample and Data Collection

Data were collected through a questionnaire distributed to a sample of 450 employees of travel agencies category (A) in Cairo and Alex. Random sample is the used kind in the study in which all members of the population have the same chance of being selected .

A total of 435 responses from travel agencies' employees were collected, then converted into numerical form and statistically analyzed. Likert scale was used to measure the respondents' answers. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) for Windows v.16.0 was used to analyze the data collected, whose statistical processing included Cronbach alpha coefficient to determine the reliability of study tool. Frequencies, means, standard deviations, and percentages to describe the characteristics of the study sample, and to determine the response towards the study dimensions. Correlation coefficient to Spearman shows relationships between the variables of the study and validates hypotheses and is used in the case of non parametric tests, and in the case of ordinal data.

3.2 Measures

This study used measurement items for each construct from the relevant literature. The questionnaire composed of three sections, **The first** section is for measuring factors of corporate reputation through Reputation Quotient (RQ) scale developed by Charles J. Fombrun (Reputation Institute) and the market research institute Harris Interactive which respondents are asked to estimate 20 attributes in six key dimensions including 20 items (Moleleki, 2011).

The second section is for measuring competitive advantage dimensions, by depending on a scale adapted from Li et al.(2006) it identifies five key dimensions of supply chain management practices it also describes the relationship among supply chain management practices, competitive advantage, and organizational performance. **The third** section includes a demographic data survey instrument .The questionnaire was deployed to collect data for final analysis. All responses were collected through a five-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). Table below illustrates Cronbach's alpha coefficient to determine the reliability of study tool.

Table 2 : Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Test

Statement	Cronbach's Alpha
1. Section A: Corporate reputation factors	.969
1.1. Factor 1 : emotional appeal	.948
1.2. Factor 2 : products and services	.924
1.3. Factor 3 : vision and leadership	.890
1.4. Factor 4: workplace environment	.903
1.5. Factor 5: social and environmental responsibility	.860
1.6. Factor 6: financial performance	.870
Competitive advantage dimensions	.962
2.1. Dimension 1 : Price/cost	.874
2.2. Dimension 2 : Quality	.914
2.3. Dimension 3 : Delivery dependability	.892
2.4. Dimension 4 : Product innovation	.891
2.5. Dimension 5 : Time to market	.896

The Cronbach alpha reliability was computed and the tests showed that the reliability for all the instruments were above 0.60 which indicates that the instrument is reliable for being used and gives honest results .

3.3 Results: The questionnaires used for this study included four items concerning the respondents demographics characteristics and other worked related information. The respondents were asked about their gender, age , education level , hierarchical level of their job. This information was useful in understanding the background of the respondents. Results are presented in table 3.

Table 3: the demographic characteristics of the respondents and other work-related information:

Demographic and other Work-related Information	Classes	Freq.	%
1- Gender	1- Male	249	62.9
	2- Female	149	37.4
2- Age	1- Less than 30 years	186	46.7
	2- 30:40 years	176	44.2
	3- More than 40 years	36	9.0
3- Educational Level	1- High School	114	28.6
	2- Bachelor Degree	258	64.8
	3- Master Degree	26	6.5
4- Hierarchical level	1- Top Level	48	12.1
	2- Middle Level	218	54.8
	3- Bottom Line	132	33.2

The data in table 3 indicates that out of the 398 respondents, (62.9%) were male and (37.4) were female. According to the table, the highest percentage of the sample less than 30 years scored 46.7% , followed by a category ranging from 30:40 years scored (44.2%) and finally more than 40 years scored (9%). The data also indicates that only (6.5%) of the respondents possess a master degree, (28.6%) graduated from high school, and a bachelor degree ranked the highest percentage scoring (64.8 %). Also (12.1%) of the respondents belong to a top level, (54.8%) belong to middle level and (33.2%) belong to a bottom line.

Correlation Analysis among Studied Variables

The correlation between two variables reflects the degree to which the variables are related. Spearman's correlation coefficient was calculated. Spearman's correlation reflects the degree of liner relationship between variables .

Spearman Correlation Coefficient between Emotional Appeal and Competitive Advantage Dimensions presented in table (4):

Table 4: Spearman Correlation Coefficient between Emotional Appeal and Competitive Advantage.

Variable		Price/ cost	Quality	Delivery dependability	Product innovation	Time to market	Corporate reputation	Competitive advantage
emotional appeal	Spearman correlation coefficient	.488**	.636**	.665**	.575**	.585**	.870**	.683**
	Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

The result in table (4) illustrates that the sig. value is less than (0.05) and spearman correlation coefficient is (.863) which means that there is a statistically significant correlation between emotional appeal and competitive advantage dimensions that means, increases or decreases in the elements of the first variable are significantly related to increases or decreases in the dimensions of the second variable and support the positive relationship between them.

Spearman Correlation Coefficient between Products and Services and Competitive Advantage Dimensions illustrated in table (5):

Table 5: Spearman Correlation Coefficient between Products and Services and Competitive.

Variable		Price/ cost	Quality	Delivery dependability	Product innovation	Time to market	Corporate reputation	Competitive advantage
Products and services	Spearman correlation coefficient	.467**	.670**	.662**	.622**	.603**	.855**	.697**
	Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

With regard to products and services, table (5), the sig. value is less than (0.05) and spearman correlation coefficient is (. 697) which means that there is a statistically significant correlation between products and services and competitive advantage dimensions that means increases or decreases in the elements of the first variable are significantly related to increases or decreases in the dimensions of the second variable and support the positive relationship between them.

Spearman Correlation Coefficient between Vision and Leadership and Competitive Advantage Dimensions presented in table (6):

Table 6: Spearman Correlation Coefficient between Vision and Leadership and Competitive.

Variable		Price/ cost	Quality	Delivery dependability	Product innovation	Time to market	Corporate reputation	Competitive advantage
Vision and leadership	Spearman correlation coefficient	520[*]	.638[**].	.572[**]	.529[**].	.610[**]	.841[**]	672[**]. [**]
	Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

According to table (6)the sig. value is less than (0.05) and spearman correlation coefficient is (.672) which means that there is a statistically significant correlation between vision and leadership and competitive advantage dimensions that means increases or decreases in the elements of the first variable are significantly related to increases or decreases in the dimensions of the second variable and support the positive relationship between them.

Spearman Correlation Coefficient between Workplace Environment and Competitive Advantage Dimensions illustrated in table(7):

Table 7: Spearman Correlation Coefficient between Workplace Environment and Competitive.

Variable		Price/ cost	Quality	Delivery dependability	Product innovation	Time to market	Corporate reputation	Competitive advantage
Workplace environment	Spearman correlation coefficient	.601[**]	.602[**]	.612[**]	.566[**]	.597[**].	.847[**]	.699[**]
	Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

The data in table (7) clarifies that the sig. value is less than 0.05 which means that there is statistically significant correlation between workplace environment elements and achieving competitive advantage. That means, increases or decreases on elements of the first variable significantly related to increases or decreases in the dimensions of the second variable.

Spearman Correlation Coefficient between Social and Environmental Responsibility and Competitive Advantage Dimensions showed in table (8):

Table 8: Spearman Correlation Coefficient between Social and Environmental Responsibility and Competitive Advantage.

Variable		Price/cost	Quality	Delivery dependability	Product innovation	Time to market	Corporate reputation	Competitive advantage
Social and environmental responsibility	Spearman correlation coefficient	526**.	.634**	.639**	.594**	607***.	777**.	.711**
	Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Table (8)   shows the sig. value is less than (0.05) and spearman correlation coefficient is (.711) which means that there is a statistically significant correlation between social and environmental responsibility and competitive advantage dimensions that means increases or decreases in the elements of the first variable are significantly related to increases or decreases in the dimensions of the second variable and support the positive relationship between them.

Spearman Correlation Coefficient between Financial Performance and Competitive Advantage Dimensions presented in the table(9) :

Table 9: Spearman Correlation Coefficient between Financial Performance and Competitive.

Variable		Price/cost	Quality	Delivery dependability	Product innovation	Time to market	Corporate reputation	Competitive advantage
Financial performance	Spearman correlation coefficient	.592**	.659**	.633**	.606**	.648**	.804**	.729**
	Sig.	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000	.000

Table (9) presents the sig. value is less than (0.05) and spearman correlation coefficient is (.729) which means that there is a statistically significant correlation between financial performance and competitive advantage dimensions that means increases or decreases in the elements of the first variable are significantly related to increases or decreases in the dimensions of the second variable and supported the positive relationship between them.

Spearman Correlation Coefficient between Corporate Reputation and Competitive Advantage Presented in the table(10)below:

Table 10: Spearman Correlation Coefficient between Corporate Reputation and Competitive Advantage .

Variable		competitive advantage
Corporate reputation	Spearman correlation coefficient	$.823^{**}$
	Sig.	.000

All in all the result in table (10) illustrates that the sig. value is less than (0.05) and spearman correlation coefficient is (.823) which means that there is a statistically significant correlation between corporate reputation management factors and competitive advantage dimensions that means increases or decreases in the elements of the first variable are significantly related to increases or decreases in the dimensions of the second variable and support the positive relationship between them.

This supports the main hypothesis

4. Conclusion

The objective of this study is to investigate the impact of reputation management on achieving competitive advantage for travel agencies. Reputation quotient (RQ) is the instrument which is used to elicit the perceptions of the employees about their travel agencies. Five dimensions are used to measure competitive advantage in this study, price/cost; quality, delivery dependability, product innovation and time to market. To identify the impact of reputation management on achieving competitive advantage, the study collected the required data through distributing well- administrated questionnaire forms of 398 respondents "48 managers, 218 supervisors, and 132 frontline workers" responding travel agencies category(A)in Cairo and Alex. The study's findings indicate that there is a statistically significant correlation between corporate reputation factors and competitive advantage dimensions. That means increases or decreases in the factors of corporate reputation are significantly related to increases or decreases in the dimensions of competitive advantage.

Corporate reputation management is now considered as a key variable in improving a travel agency's attractiveness and capacity for retention of their stakeholders, also helping it to measure its performance from inside and outside perceptions.

5. Implications and Further Research

Corporate reputation management is now considered as a key variable in improving a travel agency's attractiveness and capacity for retention of their stakeholders, also helping it to measure its performance from inside and outside perceptions. Any travel agency that ignores reputation management rules will suffer from losing its competitiveness. The knowledge of reputation management in travel agencies in Egypt needs to be beefed up and update to reflect a better understanding of how travel agencies are dependent upon the main resources they have.

The literature of the effect of reputation management on achieving competitive advantage for travel agencies needs much more research to be done. Therefore, it is hoped this study can be taken as an initiative to encourage more future research in Egypt, particularly in corporate reputation management, Stakeholders relationship management and Competitive advantage in travel industry. Also, reputation management is a complicated subject including strategies that companies develop to cope with the expectations of their audiences, to manage interpretations made by audiences, and to build favorable reputation. So, people don't have enough understanding of this field which , in turn affects how interviewees respond to the questions. An observation would be ideal for researches in this field.

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أثر إدارة السمعة علي تحقيق الميزة التنافسية لشركات السياحة

الملخص العربي

تهدف هذه الدراسة إلي تحديد الدور الذي تلعبه إدارة السمعة لتحقيق الميزة التنافسية. حيث تعد كلا من إدارة السمعة والميزة التنافسية من أهم اتجاهات البحث الحديثة والتي جذبت انتباه العديد من الباحثين خلال العقود القليلة الماضية، وهذا يرجع إلي عدة عوامل مثل المتغيرات المتسارعة في البيئة المحيطة، والزيادة المستمرة في توقعات العملاء والتطور السريع في وسائل التواصل الإجتماعي، وهذا بدوره أدي إلي ضرورة اهتمام شركات السياحة بإدارة سمعتها. ولقد أدي اهتمام الباحثين بمختلف مجالاتهم بإدارة السمعة إلي ظهور العديد من المصطلحات والمفاهيم ووحدات التحليل والاستراتيجيات الخاصة بها ولكنه لا يمكن لأي منهم أن يفسر بشكل فردي المفهوم الكامل لإدارة السمعة. هذه الدراسة تسعي إلي تقييم مشكلة اختلاف وتنوع انطباع وإدراك العملاء تجاه سمعة المؤسسة وتحديد المتغير الأساسي الذي يدعم بشكل كبير سمعة المؤسسة تجاه عملائها هذا بالإضافة إلي كيفية إدارة انطباعات العملاء وتحديد دور إدارة السمعة في تحقيق الميزة التنافسية. وقد تم استحدام مقياسين لقياس كلا من إدارة السمعة والميزة التنافسية في شركات السياحة. تم جمع البيانات من خلال استمارة استقصاء تم توزيعها علي عينة عشوائية مكونة من 450 موظف من العاملين بشركات السياحة فئة (أ) في منطقتي القاهرة والإسكندرية، وتم استرداد 398 استمارة وتحليلها بواسطة برنامج (SPSS) ولقد أظهرت النتائج وجود علاقة ذات دلالة إحصائية بين كلا من عوامل إدارة السمعة وأبعاد الميزة التنافسية وهذا بدوره يدعم العلاقة الإيجابية بين إدارة السمعة وتحقيق الميزة التنافسية.