An Analysis Of How Le Meridien Conducts Its Financial Operations And The Operational Challenges To Overcome

By
Rokeya Shamsad Shashee
21104068

A thesis submitted to the BRAC Business School in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Bachelor of Business Administration

BRAC Business School

BRAC University

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Declaration

It is hereby declared that

1.The thesis submitted is my/our own original work while completing a degree at BRAC University.

2.The thesis does not contain material previously published or written by a third party, except where this is appropriately cited through full and accurate referencing.

3.The thesis does not contain material which has been accepted, or submitted, for any other degree or diploma at a university or other institution.

4.I/We have acknowledged all main sources of help.

Student's Full Name & Signature

Rokeya Shamsad Shashee

21104068

Supervisor's Full Name & Signature

Sayla Sowat Siddiqui, PhD

Assistant Professor, BRAC Business School

BRAC University

Acknowledgement

I wish to express my deepest gratitude to Almighty Allah for giving me the determination and patience to complete this report successfully.

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This report is an expression of my family and friends' everlasting love and support throughout this difficult academic journey. My parents, who fostered my interest and encouraged my academic pursuits from the start, have my sincere gratitude.

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Chapter 1: Overview of Internship

1.1 Student Information:

I am Rokeya Shamsad Shashee, and my student ID is 21104068. I am graduating with a Bachelor of Business Administration with a major in finance and a minor in Computer Information Management at BRAC Business School.

1.2 Internship Information:

1.2.1 Period, Company Name, Department/Division, Address

I completed the 12th semester of my BBA on January 18th. After that, on February 3rd, I started my internship in the finance department of Le Meridien Dhaka, which is situated on Airport Road, Nikunja 2, Dhaka 1229, Bangladesh. Throughout my internship, I was mostly assigned to the income audit and accounts payable. The last day of my internship was May 3rd, 2025.

1.2.2 Internship Company Supervisor's Information: Name and Position

The name of my supervisor is Sakibul Alam. He is the Income Auditor at Le Meridien Dhaka at Airport Road, Nikunja 2, Dhaka 1229, Bangladesh.

1.2.3 Job Scope – Job Description/Duties/Responsibilities

Working with the finance team of a five-star hotel was a privilege for me. My tenure was from 3rd February to 3rd May 2025. I was with the team from 9 am to 6 pm, six days a week. Understanding the whole financial operation of the hotel was my responsibility as a student intern. From 9 am to 2 pm, I worked with the Income Auditor, and from 2 pm onwards, I was with the accounts payable team. My duties as a finance intern at Le Meridien are given below-

- ➔ Collect and segregate the night audit paper (Front office and F&B) from the front office.
- ➔ Segregation of all revenue items according to their payment mode.
- ➔ Pull out the A&G checks from the F&B bunch and verify that all the business purposes are on the checks and signed.
- ➔ Then, tally all the MOD revenue reports with system-generated reports.
- ➔ Submit paid out, MOD, A&G, and rebates to the income auditor with backups and reports.

- ➔ If any A&G check is not signed, report it to the income auditor.
- ➔ Submit card reports and settlements that came through the POS machine to accounts receivable for credit reconciliation.
- ➔ Documentation of payment disbursements and balance confirmations.
- ➔ Check and submit on-call workers' documents to the senior accounts payable executive.
- ➔ Employee expense report cross-checking.
- ➔ Wrapping up and storing all the payment-related documents according to their accounts at the end of the month.
- ➔ Inventory visit once a month with the receiving manager.

During my three months of tenure, I have attended multiple training sessions, including MIP-02 (Associate Relationship), AR Internal Control- verify city ledger, concierge/club/executive lounge (control-3), In-house entertainment and meeting charges (reporting-19), and so on.

MIP-02 was about understanding compliance with policies and regulations, both internal and external. They also preached about practicing safe digital footnotes.

In the AR Internal Control session, it was taught why correct billing and collecting timely is important and how to do that. This ultimately helps in finding out discrepancies in folio checks and incorrect or void billing, if there are any. This is important for maintaining a sound cash flow.

The Control-3 training session was all about monitoring premium guest services and recording guest charges accurately.

These training sessions were greatly beneficial for me because they not only introduced me to hotel compliance but also made me aware of accountability and financial discipline. Also, these made my analytical skills stronger by finding out discrepancies in bookkeeping. These practical experiences will be helpful for me when I step into the real-life workplace.

1.3 Internship Outcomes:

1.3.1 Student's contribution to the company

During my internship period at Le Meridien Dhaka, I wanted to contribute as much as possible to the company's success. I was dedicated to completing all my tasks every day properly and efficiently. The tasks that I was assigned were both Excel work and paperwork. I went to the Front Office every morning, where cash and other recorded revenue items were stored in two different vaults. With the supervision of the general cashier, I collected them. I segregated them as soon as possible in the most streamlined way. It took me 3 hours and sometimes more when I started doing it. My ultimate goal was to do it within an hour, and I was able to achieve it, and then I spent the extra hours on financial reporting. This was a part of the credit card reconciliation.

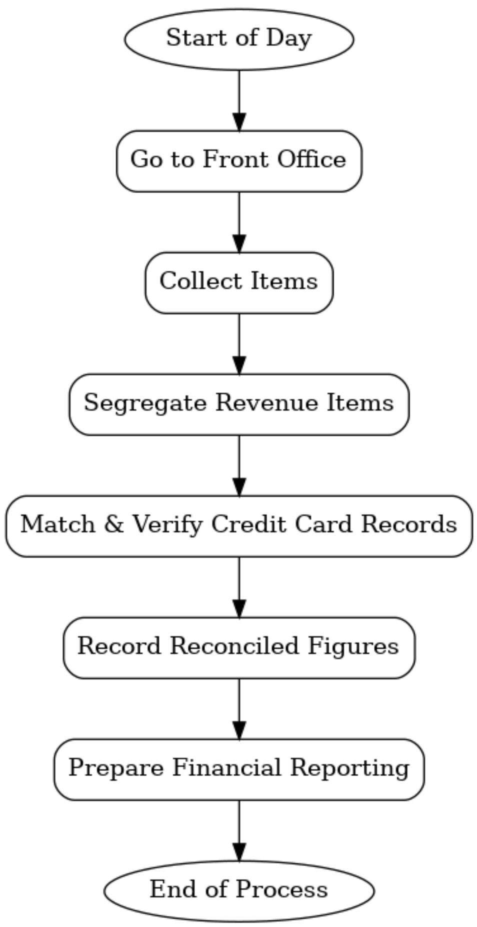


Fig: Credit Card Reconciliation Task

Moreover, I assisted them with invoice processing and sorting, which enabled timely payments to vendors. In addition, accounts payable disburses cheques three times a week, and I helped them with that. I have also prepared the cheque bundle and cross-checked if the vendor came with a balance confirmation or not.

1.3.2 Benefits to the student

This short time at Le Meridien was the most valuable experience for my career. I got to learn reporting and analysis, practically putting my theoretical knowledge to use. This was a tremendous moment for my life as a Business graduate. This exposure helped me understand the hospitality industry and its corporate side. In the future, I plan on continuing my career in corporate finance, so this experience was perfect for me to get an insider's view. Moreover, I have developed problem-solving skills while finding discrepancies. Last but not least, I got to work with professionals of all ages, from chartered accountants to CFA, auditors, and so on in a dynamic workplace that helped me strengthen my communication skills and work in a team.

1.3.3 Problems/Difficulties (faced during the internship period)

Just like any other work, I also had highs and lows during my internship. First of all, it was really difficult for me to gather financial data and information related to the company, as it was recently listed. My supervisor did his primary information gathering and provided me with the data after discussing it with the director of finance. This was not a smooth experience at all.

This was my first ever corporate experience. Adapting to a fast-paced life here was one of the challenges that I had to overcome. I have struggled to get a complete grasp of the software and systems they use at Le Meridien, for example, BirchStreet, Sun, and Opera. Before coming here, I was not familiar with any of them.

On another note, the computer I had on my desk had a keyboard issue. So, I had to work on my colleague's computer sometimes; other times, I worked on the HR training room's computer. Going back and forth between these places was a hassle, and I lost concentration sometimes.

Commuting for four hours every day was the biggest challenge I faced during my internship. My office time was 9 to 6. So, I had to leave my home at seven to reach by nine at airport road and given Dhaka's traffic, I came home at nine pm. I barely had time to spend with my family and to take a rest. These were the challenges I faced during my internship.

1.3.4 Recommendations (to the company on future internships)

Throughout my 12-week internship, I have encountered areas that Le Meridien can improve in. I will explain them below.

- They should hire finance interns more often and not only hire but also integrate them into the team.
- They should provide interns with more hands-on experience and mentorship, and regulate their activities.
- Another thing is the day off. For their permanent associates, weekends are on Fridays and alternate Saturdays, which are not available for interns. For better productivity, they can provide that to interns as well.
- On another note, they can encourage interns to do cross-departmental projects. In that way, we can have a holistic experience.
- There are some IT issues, like keeping up-to-date devices available for everyone.
- Lastly, they should conduct feedback sessions weekly with the interns; that way, it would be a two-way interaction.

Chapter 2: Organization Part

2.1 Introduction

The Internship Program is a mandatory part for every undergraduate student of BRAC Business School. In order to complete the Bachelor of Business Administration, a student must complete 12 weeks of internship in any company. This way, we get to implement our four years of knowledge in a corporate environment.

In the summer of 2024, BRAC University hosted a career fair, where over 50 companies participated in campus recruitment, including Le Meridien Dhaka, and I dropped my CV there. Fast-forward to November, and I got a text message from the LM HR team that I had been shortlisted for the internship. After three steps of interviews and sessions, I finally got here.

This is how I got the opportunity to complete my academic internship in one of the Marriott International properties, “Le Meridien Dhaka”.

2.1.1 Objective(s)

This project's main objective is to gather information related to Le Meridien Dhaka, including their leadership style, recruitment and selection process, training, performance appraisal, and so on. I will also do a SWOT analysis to get a better view of the company’s overall performance. In that process, I will collect data and statistics to analyse their financial performance.

2.1.2 Scope of Study

It is my task to learn about Le Meridien's financial operations and the operational obstacles it faces based on the company's annual report. I had to get the primary data by getting in touch with Sakibul Alam, the Le Meridien Dhaka's income auditor. Later, I collected some secondary data to finish my report.

2.1.3 Methodology

Primary Research: Observation of current financial practices and interviews with the finance department employees. Revenue report, Occupancy rate-related information will be collected from internal sources, more specifically from the income audit.

I have also kept a daily log, which will be used for the day-to-day findings verified by the respective department personnel.

Data Analysis: To evaluate the hotel's financial health, the quantitative data will be examined utilizing trend analysis and financial performance ratios. Over time, trends in sales, expenses, and other indicators will be found using Microsoft Excel or, if necessary, more sophisticated tools such as SPSS. Key employees and managers will be interviewed to assist in identifying operational difficulties for the qualitative portion.

Secondary Research: Major secondary research materials are-

- Historical Data
- Relevant Research Papers, Journals
- Newspaper Articles
- Other papers based on this industry

2.1.4 Significance of the Study

This research has the potential to provide practical advice that can help Le Méridien Dhaka overcome the drawbacks they have in their operations and improve their financial performance. This study's difficulties and evidence-based suggestions could help the hotel gain a competitive edge in Bangladesh's hotel sector. The findings can also assist management in making well-informed choices on cost reduction, planning, and improving guest service.

2.2 Overview of the Company

Le Meridien started its operation at Dhaka on November 15, 2015, and soon enough it had become a sought-after as well as trustworthy name in the hospitality as well as tourism industry. They are said to be committed to providing world-class hospitality by integrating home as well as international cultural traditions in order to entice corporate as well as tourist travelers. The hotel has mastered the art of planning festivities and events that are cross-cultural.

Figure: Hotel Le Meridien

This luxury hotel is situated in the heart of Bangladesh and is owned by one of the pioneers of the hotel sector, Marriott International. This property's home parent brand is Best Holdings Limited (BHL), which debuted on DSE and CSE in February 2024 as the 5th company in the travel and leisure sector.

The hotel Le Meridien is part of an American multinational company, the Marriott International family. It started in 1927 as a root beer shop named Hot Shoppe, in the hands of a newly married couple, J Will Marriott and Alice Marriott. Later, it was passed down to their son, JW Bill Marriott. Almost 100 years later, it is the largest hospitality company in the world, owning 31 hotel brands. Chic, Cultured, and Discovery are their brand values. Here I present the Marriott BonVoy brand portfolio:

Here, Le Meridien falls under the Premium Distinctive property. There are a total of 117 hotels and resorts under this subsidiary.

2.2.1 Vision And Core Value

Le Meridien Dhaka is among the most renowned 5-star hotels in Bangladesh. As a Marriott International member, they strive to revolutionize Bangladesh's hotel industry through sustainability, innovation, and flawless service. They want to surpass everyone's expectations, including guests, associates, and other stakeholders.

The 5 Core values of Le Meridien are

- ➔ Put people first
- ➔ Pursue excellence
- ➔ Act with integrity
- ➔ Serve our world
- ➔ Embrace change

2.2.2 Corporate Mission

Le Meridien's holistic mission is to serve people all around the world while keeping the associates first. Their corporate mission goes by "How we do business is as important as the business we do".

2.2.3 Outlets Of Le Meridien Dhaka

Le Meridien is one of the finest hotels in Bangladesh, situated beside the Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport. This property has 340 all around rooms and various F&B alternatives, several ballrooms, an Italian restaurant, a Turkish restaurant, a rooftop pool with a city as well as airport view, a fitness center, an explore spa, a signature cafe/bar at the lobby, and so on.

15 Above:

15 Above is an English-style pub that offers live music, a perfect blend of charm and warmth of traditional British culture, with premium services in a luxury setting.

The bar is practically next to the diplomatic zone and the soon-to-be prestigious business district of Baridhara, Gulshan & Banani, as well as the Shahjalal International Airport. Both hotel guests and outside customers are drawn to themed nights that include pub quizzes, whiskey tastings, or broadcasting not only cricket or football but also some of the elitist sports like polo matches.

Latest Recipe:

It is a contemporary restaurant with a variety of international cuisines. As soon as someone enters the restaurant, the evidence of "eating with your eyes" is evident.

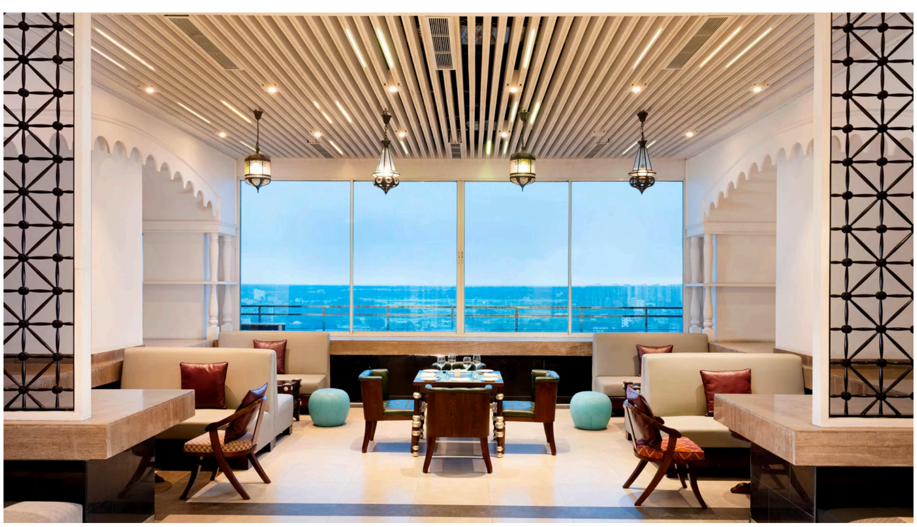
The lively ambiance will captivate the guests right away, as you see award-winning chefs creating colorful meals and live cooking in open kitchens with an extensive assortment of Indian, Chinese, Malay, Japanese, and Western cuisine. It offers 8 live kitchens as well as 10 different buffet stations.

Latitude 23:

It is the coffee shop of the hotel and is situated in the lobby. It offers fresh brewed coffee, juice, and other drinks. It has got sitting arrangement in the lobby area. Overall, a nice area to spend the early morning and a busy evening.

Olea:

It is a Turkish restaurant, a paradise for people who love traditional Turkish food with modern décor, with its classy architecture and cabanas that evoke the splendor of Mediterranean beach resorts (Maisha, 2022). This restaurant has a mood that is perfect for family gatherings and business events. They serve grilled meat, freshly baked bread, traditional Turkish delight, and baklava made from quality



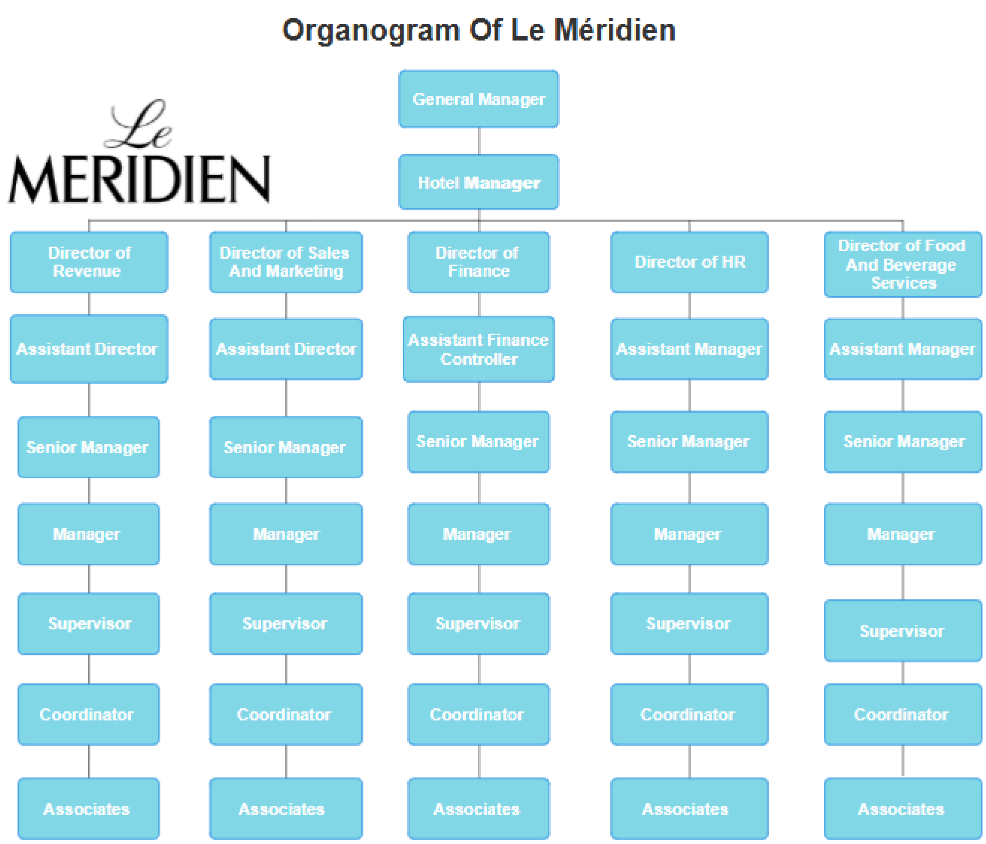
ingredients and an original recipe.

Favola:

This is an Italian restaurant on the 15th floor of Le Meridien with a bird's eye view of Shahjalal International Airport.

The entire restaurant is art when it comes to food, interior, and atmosphere. Their margarita pizza is reputed for being the best pizza in Dhaka.

2.2.4 Company Organogram



Courtesy: Le Meridien HR Team

2.2.4 Major Departments

- Front Office
- Food & Beverage Service
- Housekeeping
- Loss Prevention
- IT
- Finance
- Human Resource
- Sales & Marketing
- Engineering

2.2.4 Upcoming Project

Figure: Marriott Bhaluka

Marriott Bhaluka, which is a 5-star hotel project, is under construction and just 50 km from Hazrat Shahjalal International Airport off the Dhaka-Mymensingh highway. The owner company, BHL, has announced that the project will be invested with BDT 1200 crore. This hotel is aiming to be under the luxury category of the Marriott International properties. According to Amin Ahmed, the chairman of BHL, every year, thousands of foreigners visit this area for business reasons, but there is no luxury hotel accommodation for them, and that is why they can get a competitive advantage from this. Years of experience and the success of LM made him confident enough to invest this much into another luxury hotel.

Figure: Haileybury Bhaluka

His passion for big projects did not stop at just the hotel industry. Haileybury, a premier British boarding school, is now in Bhaluka to cater to Asia's finest students at Asia's finest campus. Haileybury Bhaluka is a top international boarding school that offers kids between the ages of 11 and 18 an outstanding learning experience. Located in Mymensingh, 75 kilometers north of Dhaka, on an 850-acre campus in the picturesque rural area of Bhaluka, the institution in Bangladesh is associated with Haileybury College UK.

2.2.5 Limitations of the Study

I have faced several challenges in data collection, and the following limitations of the research are given below-

- The time allocation for the internship was 12 weeks, which was short.
- Getting a total grasp of corporate life, along with data collection, was tough.

- The company's policy against sharing proprietary information made it impossible to gather further data needed for the report.
- There is very little secondary data available for Le Meridien Dhaka.
- Additionally, limited time alongside an information gap prevented a more comprehensive study.

2.3 Management Practices

Le Meridien is one of Bangladesh's largest five-star hotels, and it did not materialize overnight by luck. One of the key strategies that resulted in vast growth in such a short time is separating their ownership from hotel management. This core value ultimately helped in sustainable leadership throughout the company and resulted in democratic leadership. Core values and culture in a company give the associate an anchor; when things get rough, they know the company's going to treat them fairly (Qubein & Danise, 2023). Le Meridien actively preaches about how important it is to celebrate your people and to take care of your people, and they would take care of the guests.

2.4 Marketing Practices

Marketing genius Philip Kotler states that the internal dynamics and variables that impact a company's capacity to establish and sustain fruitful connections and engagements with its intended clientele comprise the marketing framework of the business. An organization's marketing strategy's success or failure is largely determined by its brand awareness.

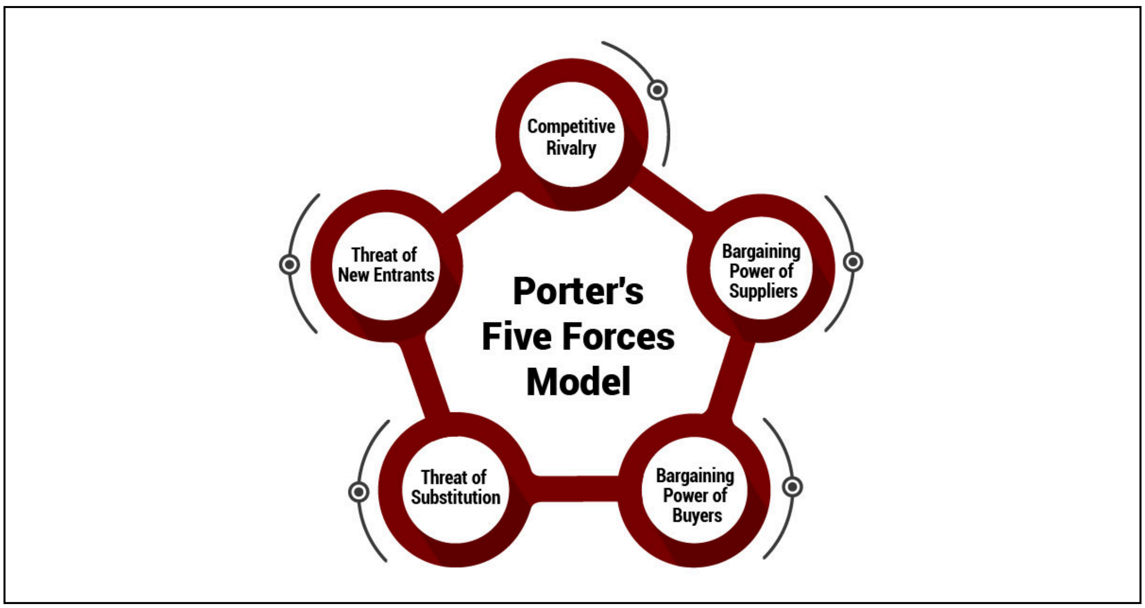
A constantly shifting micro and macroenvironment surrounds the Le Meridien Hotel's operations. It is made up of a few erratic factors that surround the business. The hotel may be threatened or given opportunities by this development. The Director of Sales and Marketing and his team at the Le Meridien Hotel give due consideration to the macro and micro environmental factors that would influence their business before they determine their marketing strategy. It is crucial to their survival and achievement of long-term financial objectives. It also enables business activity within the hotel to operate smoothly without being disrupted.

Le Meridien Hotel's main goal is to present its guests with the best service. Travelers, leisure travelers, couples, families, business travelers, and honeymooners are some of the regular clients the Le Meridien hotel receives. The hotel strives for the highest client satisfaction and builds stable relationships with clients, both of which benefit the business.

In order to build the image of the hotel, marketing staff, led by the director of marketing and communication, use traditional, digital, and social media to share on-brand content with guests. In a bid to improve market share, build customer awareness and preference, expand portfolios, and boost brand awareness, they assist in developing direct marketing campaigns, focused campaigns, and active channels.

2.5 Industry and Competitive Analysis

2.5.1 Porter's Five Forces Analysis



1. <u>**Competition from rival sellers**</u>

- High.
- There are several internationally renowned as well as local five-star hotels like Westin, Intercontinental, Sheraton, and Pan Pacific Sonargaon.
- Intense competition reduces profitability as companies spend more on innovation.
- Le Meridien should enhance its guest experience, constantly innovate, and most importantly, take advantage of its global Marriott Bonvoy Program.

2. **Threat of new entrants**

- Comparatively low.
- The hospitality industry is an industry where starting a new business requires a high capital investment. There are a lot of compliance and regulatory barriers as well.
- However, the new entrants could be Airbnb or boutique hotels, but that is a long way from going into Bangladesh.

3. **Threat of substitutes**

- High.
- Substitutes include not only other 5-star hotels but also Airbnb or other rentals.

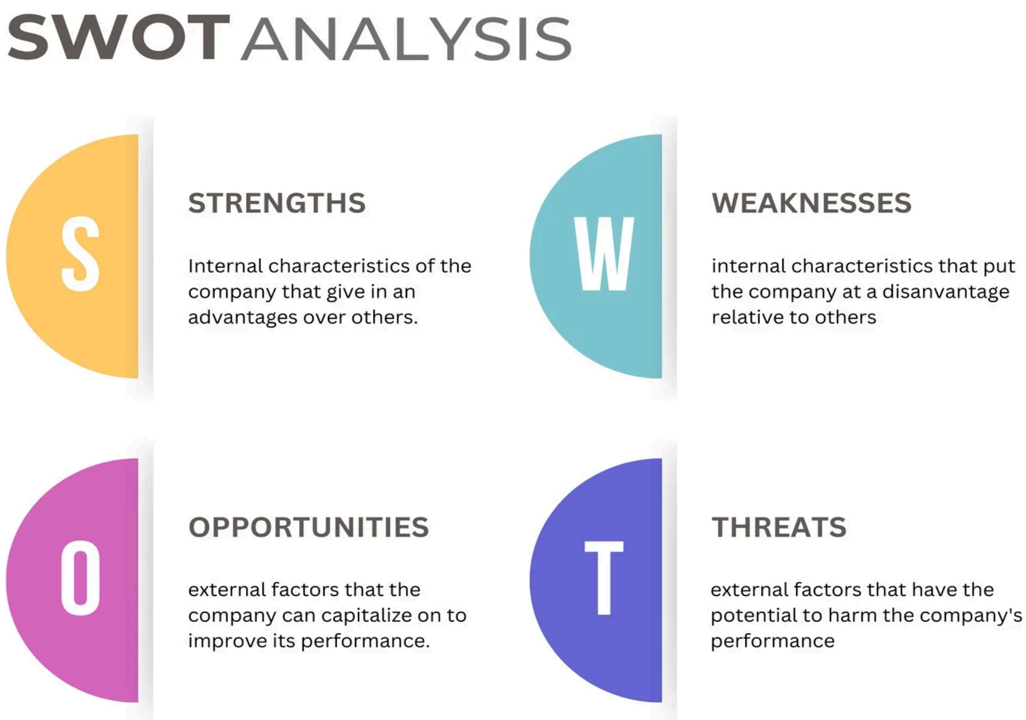
4. **Suppliers bargaining power**

- Moderate.
- Quality homeware, food, beverages, and cosmetics are the essential supplies.
- Since there are imports, their price may vary due to volatile exchange rates and customs clearance.
- Global buying channels for Marriott and long-term contracted supplier arrangements mitigate risk.

5. **Customers bargaining power**

- High.
- Guests can go through available options and compare them on the basis of reviews, location, service, and price.
- Travel agencies and corporate clients demand excellent service standards and bargain for bulk rates.
- Customer control and price awareness are increased via online booking platforms like Booking.com and Expedia.

2.5.2 SWOT Analysis



SWOT analysis, looking at strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats, is a simple but useful structure for examining any situation or event. It could be used on a personal level or a hotel business, or a hotel departmental level.

<u>Strengths</u>

- ➔ The license power from Marriott International gives a competitive advantage to Le Meridien Dhaka.
- ➔ Consistent Quality Standards with a consistent 5-star experience by adhering to worldwide service guidelines.
- ➔ Strong Corporate Clientele, favoured by high-ranking government officials, airlines, embassies, and multinational corporations.

<u>Weakness</u>

- ➔ High compliance and luxury maintenance drive the management cost high.
- ➔ Le Meridien is situated really close to the airport, which geographically makes it more lucrative for foreigners, but Dhaka’s traffic negatively impacts their impression.

- ➔ Localizing the menus is not really possible because of their international authority.

Opportunities

- ➔ Demand is increasing thanks to international business.
- ➔ There is a growing need for space for weddings and other social events for upper-class clients.
- ➔ Investing in mobile concierge services, AI-powered customer support, and contactless check-in are examples of digital transformation.
- ➔ Le Meridien has currently partnered with Saudi, Qatar, and Singapore airlines, and there are opportunities to partner up with more.

Threats

- ➔ There is intense competition from the existing 5-star hotels. But right now, there is a terminal hotel under construction, which is a concern of Crowne Plaza by IHG and that is the biggest threat to Le Meridien.
- ➔ Private room rentals, such as Airbnb.
- ➔ Currency fluctuation.

2.6 Accounting Procedures and Financial Performance

The Hotel Le Meridien does accrual basis accounting for its transactions. The accounting practices here are different due to their operational complexity and the nature of the services nature. The key performance indicators (KPI) here are occupancy rate, average daily rate, occupancy rate, RevPAR and other things.

Last Five Years' Financial Data of Le Meridien Dhaka

Operating Performance	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
Net Revenue	531,878,961.92	848,784,151.91	1860552110	2381296383	2153729884
Cost of Goods Sold	73,633,425.02	118,968,902.71	196764970.9	226589585	203168357.1
Gross Profit	111,592,400.42	284,212,451.48	902211061.5	1225509005	999655025.1
Financial Expense	346,653,136.48	445,602,797.72	761576078	929197793	950906502.1
Reserve	12,095,199.61	-	59017144.54	95251855.31	86149195.38
Profit before Taxes	99,497,200.81	284,212,451.48	843193917	1130257149	913505829.7
After Tax	72,229,623.12	218,296,977.67	673127065.4	913599194.8	716665264.3
Total Current Asset	897,104,725.22	969,350,474.75	1,295,525,832.24	1,680,615,271.38	1,757,047,283.42
Total Liabilities	852,566,990.71	900,099,390.90	1,207,682,424.93	925,718,012.98	898,647,740.90
Total Liabilities and Equity	897,104,725.22	969,350,474.75	1,295,525,832.24	1,680,615,271.38	1,757,047,283.42
Inventory	2,763,543,798.78	3,126,348,401.92	4,559,704,562.11	5,955,445,008.91	5,987,807,114.53
ROA	8.05%	22.52%	51.96%	54.36%	40.79%
ROE	162.18%	315.23%	766.28%	121.02%	83.49%

ROA is a very important measure that provides a ratio of net income divided by the total assets of a company. By having a ratio, we can get insight into what the total assets are required to generate the profit. By being able to put it into a ratio format, it is seen what the profit is relative to the total assets available to the management team to generate that profit. The higher the ROA, in general, the more efficient a company is. Here, in 2020, the ROA is decent considering that it was the time of a pandemic. But Le Meridien is very effective at turning its assets into profit, as we can 2021 onwards. From 8.05% to 22.52% was quite a leap, and after that, it kept growing strongly and sometimes with sustainable growth, as in 2024, we see the growth is less, considering the July 2024 uprising event in Bangladesh. It shows solid management and operation of assets consistently. Although sustainability depends on industry benchmarks as well as their CAPEX.

Just like ROA, ROE also depends on industry benchmarks as well as their risk level. ROE is the net profit that a company has generated during a year, divided by the book value of the shareholder capital that a company owes on the balance sheet date. ROE is an important indicator of the attractiveness of a business to shareholders. It shows if the company generates a good return on the equity that investors have invested in it. In 2020, the ROE was very high, assuming that it was due to low equity, but in 2021 and 2022, it went sky high with 315.14% and 766.15%, respectively. It suggests that they have used aggressive leverage strategies, retaining low equity. When the net income is high but the equity base is low, ROE skyrockets, and that is what happened here. We can see the liabilities here are very high, which suggests the company is heavily financed through debt instead of equity. Now, this information is purely confidential and handled by Le Meridien's parent company, Best Holdings Limited. So I will not write about that. However, I will do a few more financial analyses on **Chapter 3** with the available information to me.

Chapter 3: An analysis of how Le Meridien conducts its financial operations and The operational challenges to overcome

3.1 Introduction

The primary findings of the research conducted for this study have been gathered in this section of the paper. The paper's title suggests that the researcher will look at the company's key performance indicators and the operational challenges that come in the finance department.

3.1.1. Background

The hotel industry in Bangladesh has gone through a few massive challenges in the last few years. It started with COVID-19 and of course, the anti-discrimination student movement last year. In December 2019, lockdowns started in many countries due to coronavirus, and the travel ban has adversely impacted the tourism industry and occupancies of hotels, and tariff cuts across hotel chains. Le Meridien, with higher exposure to foreign tourists and operations in international locations, took a greater hit than the hotels catering to the mid-market segment. They were closing down floors, reducing staff, and the buffet to cut down on the fixed cost. There was a limited scope for cost savings, high cost, and the added cost of sanitization had a substantial impact on the margins. They had to cut down the room rates. Before the pandemic, rooms used to be 300+ USD, but it came down to 150 to 200. For that reason occupancy rate was never down significantly, but the room revenue was a bit less. Some of their outlets were closed for months, but their comeback was stronger than ever.

Then comes the next notable event, the anti-discrimination student movement, in July 2024. During the July-March period of 2024, Best Holdings, the owner of the Le Méridien Dhaka, posted a 32 percent year-on-year profit growth due to a rise in the hotel occupancy rate. Le Meridien had the highest-ever room revenue in May 2024, the general manager Constantinos S Gavriel stated. But just like any other hotel in Dhaka, Le Meridien also slowed down during the July massacre. The occupancy rate was relatively less during this time of national crisis. The occupancy rate declined by 15% during this political instability. Corporate events, weddings, and other social events were either cancelled or postponed until further notice. Monthly revenue was less than the forecasted budget even after months of the revolution, and they finally gained it in January 2025.

Regardless of the micro and macroeconomic factors, Bangladesh's hotel industry is anticipated to grow in the next few years. It is anticipated that this industry will generate US$1.21 billion in sales by 2025.

By 2029, the market is expected to reach a projected volume of US$1.73 billion, with revenue expected to expand at an annual rate of 9.18%. user penetration, the hotel industry is about to have 15.55 million users by 2029. According to Statista, there is going to be a rise in the 6.2% user penetration percentage in 2025, which is forecast to increase to 8.5% by 2029. It is predicted that the average revenue per user will be nearly $110.04. Increased domestic travel and infrastructure investment are driving factors of this expansion.

Le Meridien Dhaka at a glance

Opening Date	November 15, 2015
Total Rooms	340
Occupancy Rate	70% on average
Room Revenue	35% higher than other hotels in Dhaka
Conversion Rate (USD)	130 Taka

3.1.2. Objective(s)

Specific Objectives

This paper's main goal is to research Le Méridien Dhaka's financial performance and operational challenges. The purpose of this study is to evaluate the key performance indicators (KPIs) that are implemented to determine performance in the hotel's finance department and identify the elements that influence Le Méridien's profitability. This part of the research’s objective is to

- To discuss the KPIs of Le Meridien
- Ratio analysis of the property.
- Take a deeper look at the operational challenges and how to overcome them.
- Connect theoretical knowledge with real-world finance practices.
- The fintechs they use and how practical they are.

3.1.3. Significance

This paper has the potential to provide practical advice that can help Le Méridien Dhaka overcome the drawbacks they have in their operations and improve their financial performance. This research will act as a bridge between academic knowledge and real-world business insights in the hotel industry of Bangladesh. This study's difficulties and evidence-based suggestions could help the hotel gain a competitive edge. The findings can also assist management in making well-informed choices on cost reduction, planning, and improving guest service. The first and second chapters of this report focused on the organizational view and my experience of the internship. But now it will take a deeper look into the hotel's operation. Findings of the report may assist Le Méridien Dhaka in identifying problem areas where strategic changes and improvements are necessary. Management can enhance profit margins and service quality by implementing more efficient policies guided by the research, as it uncovers data-driven decisions, revealing financial, resource waste, or chronic operational challenges as inefficiencies. The hotel may also use this data for adopting best practices and benchmarking, thereby ensuring sustained competitive advantage

This study represents a major turning point in my professional career as an intern. It is the result of unbiased investigation, hands-on instruction, and educational research. Direct interaction with the finance division provides experience that enhances future employment opportunities and fosters the development of critical thinking and problem-solving skills necessary in today's industry.

3.2 Methodology

This paper used an exploratory research approach, and my primary purpose is to explore and gain a deeper understanding of the problem or phenomenon under investigation and to generate insights or hypotheses that can be further tested in future research.

Le Meridien Dhaka, finance department has 25 employees in total. The Department of Finance is considered the brain of a hotel. From the finance department, I distributed the questionnaire in a

Google form in the departmental group. For this report, a sizable number of employees have participated. The total population is 25, and the sample size is 17.

In the survey, there were 12 questions in total, which included both open and closed-ended questions, consisting of 3 sections-

Section 1: Employees' sub-department and how long they have worked in this hotel.

Section 2: Departmental practices and the challenges they face.

Section 3: Employee’s recommendations for the operational challenges.

The survey questionnaire is attached in the appendix.

Research Design:

A descriptive analysis of financial records and operating protocols bolsters the qualitative aspect of the study. Exploring trends, finding out the problems, and interpreting can guide future managerial choices and scholarly research are the goals rather than testing a hypothesis. The key performance indicators that were discussed are occupancy rate, average daily rates, revenue as well as some of the ratio analysis.

Primary Data Sources:

- Financial Reports of 2020-2024 (confidential and only shared for academic purposes)
- Observation from the morning meetings and briefings.
- Surveying the employees of the Department of Finance.

Secondary Data Sources:

In order to contextualize the findings and compare them with standard practices, some secondary literature, including research papers and news reports from the tourism sector, has been studied, even though the emphasis is on primary data.

3.3 Results and Analysis

3.3.1 Financial Ratio Analysis of Le Meridien Dhaka

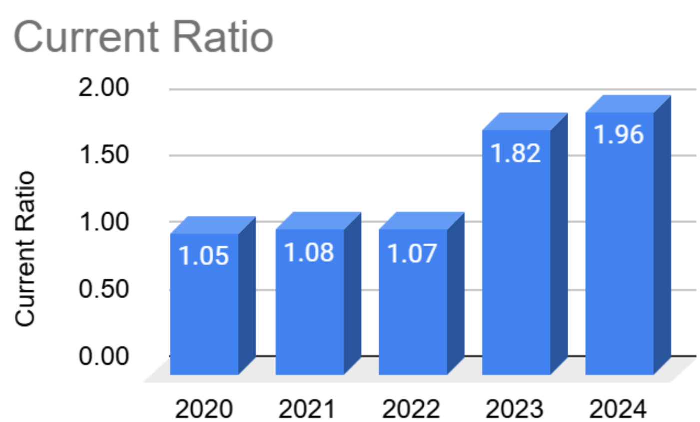
Short-Term Solvency Analysis

1. **Current Ratio = Current Assets/Current Liabilities**

Current Ratios measure how well a business can cover its short-term debt obligations using different assets. Liquidity Ratio is equal to some assets divided by current liabilities. These assets at the top are used to cover a business's short-term debt obligations at the bottom.

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Average
Current Ratio	1.05	1.08	1.07	1.82	1.96	1.4

A ratio over 1 indicates that the current assets are more than the current liabilities, which shows the company is in a liquid position.

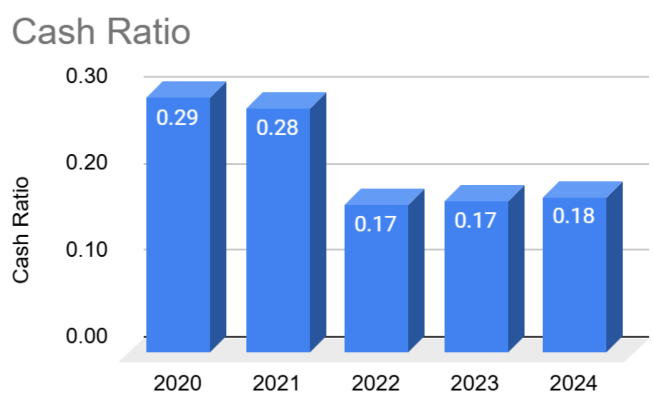


Here, in 2020, the company was just above the water in terms of maintaining short-term solvency. Given that COVID-19 was at its peak, 1.05 was not too bad. In 2021, it recovered a little, 1.08. This slight rise may have been because of the upsurge in reservations and events as the pandemic restrictions started to loosen, stabilizing the operations. The 2022 current ratio of 1.07, which was essentially unchanged from 2021, showed that solvency had declined. According to this steadiness, working capital efficiency did not significantly increase over the year. Le Méridien Dhaka had outstanding short-term financial health in 2023 and 2024, with current ratios of 1.82 and 1.96, respectively, frequently sustaining a sufficient amount of current assets against current liabilities.

2. **Cash Ratio = Cash And Cash Equivalents/Current Liabilities**

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Average
Cash Ratio	0.29	0.28	0.17	0.17	0.18	0.22

During the years 2020 to 2021, their cash in hand was comparatively the highest among the 5 years. they had a conservative liquid position that could meet the operations during a period of uncertainty. Then it started falling to 0.17, 0.17, and 0.18, respectively. It indicates that the hotel might have invested the excess cash in hand in assets or operations.



This trend shows a shift from a defensive cash position to efficient use of cash over time.

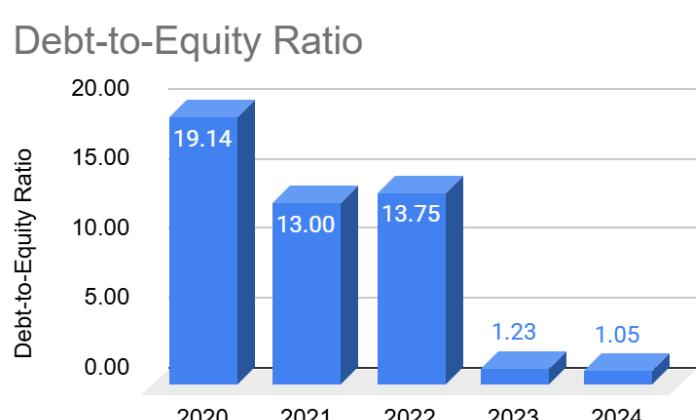
Although, the current ratio trend is uprising, the cash ratio is plummeting here. The only reasonable explanation can be, they might be showing their solvency on paper, but there sure are some cash flow issues.

Financial Leverage or Long-Term Solvency Analysis

1. **Debt to Equity = Total Liabilities / Total Shareholder Equity**

Year	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	**Average**
Debt-to-Equity Ratio	19.14	13.00	13.75	1.23	1.05	9.63

The hotel was run on a highly leveraged financial structure from 2020 to 2022 with debt significantly higher than equity, indicating that they are significantly reliant on debt. However, a wonderful turnaround occurred in 2023 when the ratio fell to 1.23 and further down to 1.05 in 2024.

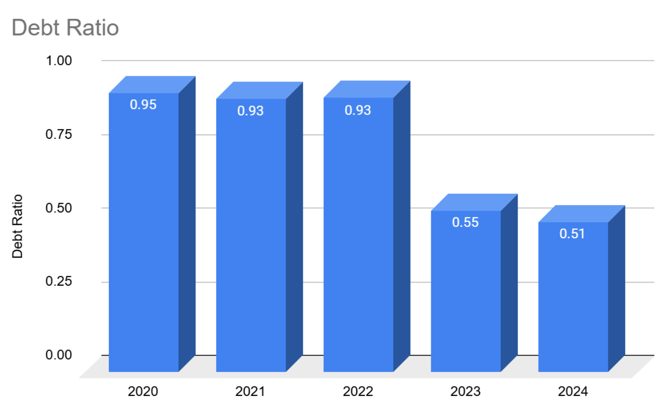


Le Meridien Dhaka has been listed on DSEX since 2024. It seems that this shift from a highly leveraged organization to one with a more balanced capital structure is a calculated step toward becoming public. The money raised from the IPO was probably used by the company to strengthen its balance sheet, lower liabilities, and give investors a more positive impression of its financial situation.

2. **Debt Ratio = Total Liabilities/Total Assets**

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Average
Debt Ratio	0.95	0.93	0.93	0.55	0.51	0.77

Same thing is reflected on Debt Ratio as well. We can see in 2020, around 95%, meaning nearly all of the financing was done through debt, and the trend kept on till 2022. The ratio plummeted to 0.55 and 0.51 in the next 2 years, respectively. Due to a considerable change in the capital structure, the company started depending more on equity financing than debt, which is reflected in this stark fall.



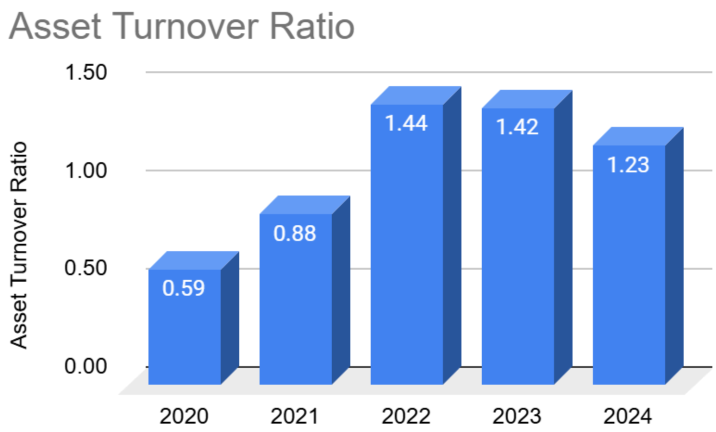
The timing coincides with the hotel getting ready for its 2024 initial public offering (IPO) and stock exchange listing, which probably brought in additional equity cash and assisted in lowering liabilities.

If we look at these graphs, we can say that going publicly listed was probably the best decision for them as it brought their financial model for high risk to more balanced and stable one.

Turnover Analysis

1. **Asset Turnover Ratio = Revenue/ Total Assets**

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Average
Asset Turnover Ratio	0.59	0.88	1.44	1.42	1.23	1.11

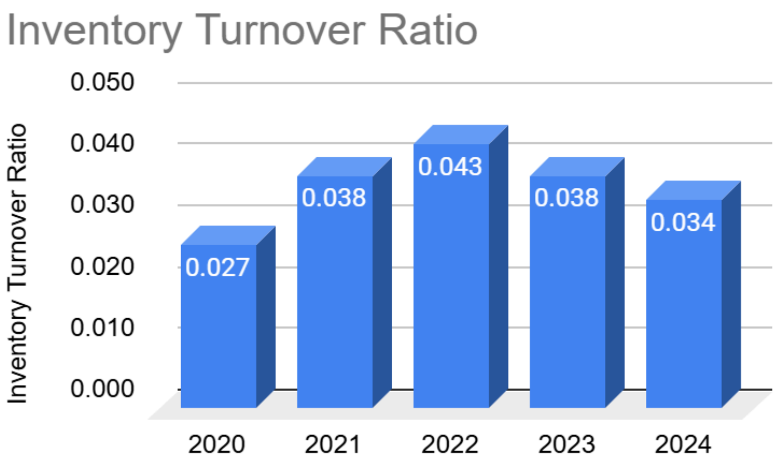


In 2020, the turnover was really less, 0.59, which means they were underutilizing the assets. As we saw in the cash ratio section, Le Meridien was heavily relying on cash in 2020 and 2021.

A significant increase to 1.44 in 2022 denoted a period of great operational performance. This implies that the hotel made a tremendous amount of revenue in regards to its asset base, perhaps as a result of higher bookings, better cost control, and better services on offer. For 2023, the ratio was consistent at 1.42, indicating ongoing efficacy and sustained utilization of assets. However, the ratio dipped slightly to 1.23 in 2024. This might be the result of post IPO asset additions such as capital improvements, expansions, or renovations that momentarily expanded the asset base without immediately increasing income.

2. **Inventory Turnover Ratio = Cost of Goods/Inventory**

Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Average
Inventory Turnover Ratio	0.027	0.038	0.0 43	0.038	0.034	0.036

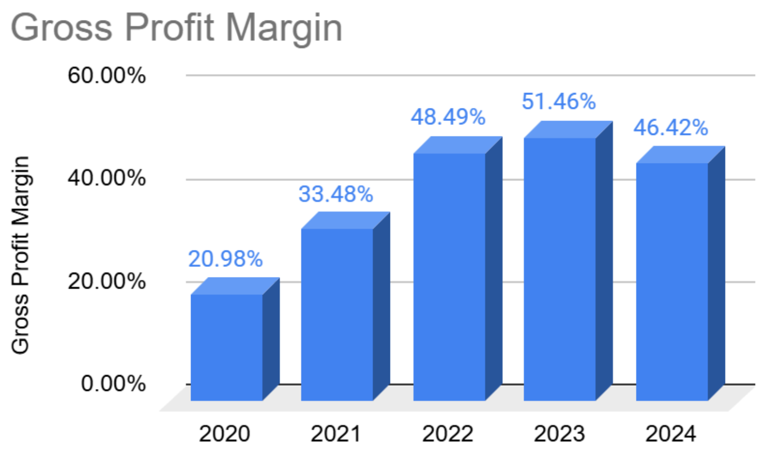


The inventory turnover ratio was very low throughout the last 5 years, and these numbers indicate that the hotel is in a restocking or investment phase. This is very common in luxury hotel, inventories like toiletries and other housekeeping items, imported fruits and other food items, and drinks sits idle for a long period of time which results in huge wastage every year.

Profitability Analysis

1. **Gross Profit Margin = (Gross Profit/Revenue)*100**

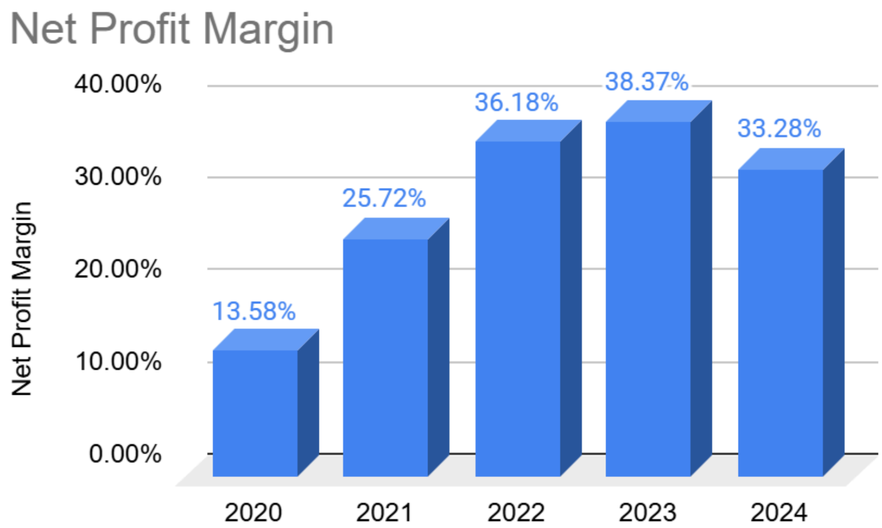
Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	Average
Gross Profit Margin	20.98%	33.48%	48.49%	51.46%	46.42%	40.17%



Gross profit margin has increased steadily from 2020 to 2023. Even though an uptick in the later years illustrated improved cost control, increased occupancy, and improved pricing strategies, the thin profit of 2020 is representative of the pandemic. The hotel had recorded over half of its revenues in gross profit by 2023, which was representative of good fundamentals and good financial health. This was especially important when it was shortly set to go public in 2024. Over all, this gross profit margin throughout the years shows a healthy profitability.

2. **Net Profit Margin = (Profit After Tax/ Revenue)*100**

Year	**2020**	**2021**	**2022**	**2023**	**2024**	**Average**
Net Profit Margin	13.58%	25.72%	36.18%	38.37%	33.28%	29.42%



Just like gross profit margin, Net Profit Margin also dipped a bit in 2024. These two measures show that they have high margins, which indicates that Le Meridien is a strong organization with bottom-line performance.

Both margins should steadily rise or stay at high levels if the business keeps up its good cost control while using fresh funding from the IPO. As a result, Le Méridien Dhaka would be positioned as a high-margin hotel company with steady profitability and rising investor trust. However, Bangladeshi tourists' demand, inflation, and competition in the market will also affect the growth.

Recommendations

- A current ratio of nearly 2 suggests that theres to much cash sitting idle. So, the management committe should think about investing in some low risk short term instruments. But if there is a surplus of inventories they must do regular audits, implement just in time practices to avoid waste.
- They must improve cash ratio to more that .25 to .35 to have a better liquidity cushion.
- They should plan a gradual delevaraging and keep some of the low cost debts for tax benefits.
- Make the best use of the PMS such as micros, sun system by doing predictive analysis of assets and do maintenance based on that.

- Also, focus on maximizing the revenue not only from the existing assets but also introduce some new ones as asset turnover is improving.

3.3.2 KPIs of Le Meridien

KPI stands for key performance indicator, and key performance indicators are values that can be accurately measured to show progress. So it can be used for business, marketing, or even personal life. These are values that will be assessed, and looking at those values over time to see if progress is advancing or decreasing.

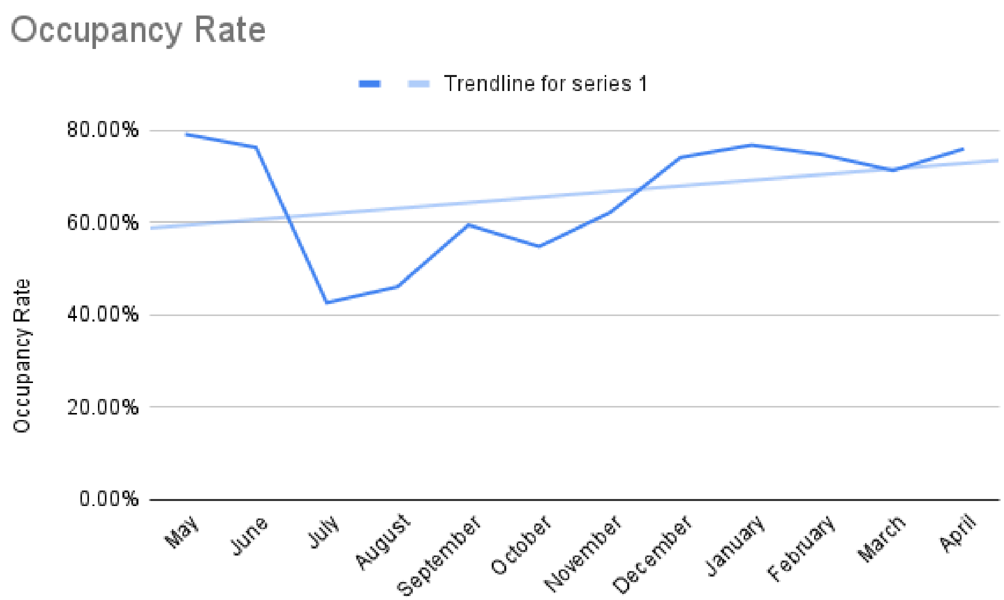
Performance Summary May 2024-April 2025

Reporting Month	Rooms Sold/Month	Average Room Sold Per Day	Room Revenue	Occupancy Rate	ADR	RevPAR
May	7220	241	$1,137,150.00	79.17%	$157.50	$124.69
June	6956	232	$1,095,570.00	76.27%	$157.50	$120.13
July	3890	130	$612,675.00	42.65%	$157.50	$67.18
August	4207	140	$662,602.50	46.13%	$157.50	$72.65
September	5425	181	$854,437.50	59.48%	$157.50	$93.69
October	5000	167	$787,500.00	54.82%	$157.50	$86.35
November	5670	189	$893,025.00	62.17%	$157.50	$97.92
December	6759	225	$1,064,542.50	74.11%	$157.50	$116.73
January	7004	233	$1,103,130.00	76.80%	$157.50	$120.96
February	6814	227	$1,073,205.00	74.71%	$157.50	$117.68
March	6500	217	$1,023,750.00	71.27%	$157.50	$112.25
April	6930	231	$1,091,475.00	75.99%	$157.50	$119.68

Hotel Le Meridien has 304 rooms in total, divided into 11 tiers. They had to cut down the room rates during COVID-19. Before the pandemic, rooms were 300+ USD, but they came down to 150-200. For that reason, the occupancy rate was never down significantly, but the room revenue was a bit less. For the room rate here, I have taken the average of all the packages available for crews, corporate, and others, which is 157.5 USD.

Occupancy Rate

In the period of May-June 2024, the occupancy rate was more stable due to corporate events before budget issuance and celebrating early summer vacation. In May 2024, Le Meridien's occupancy was the highest in the last few years.

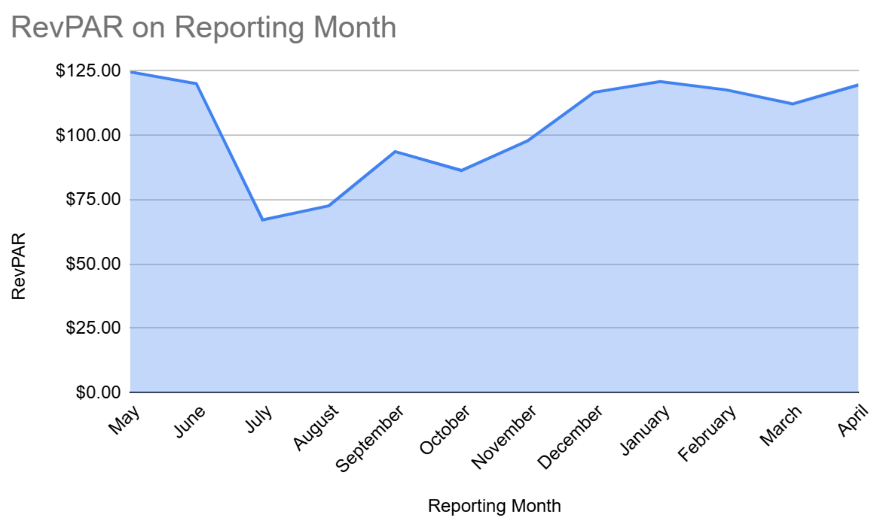


It dropped to below 50% in July as there was political unrest, and the nationwide anti-discrimination student movement sustained till the fall of the government. It disrupted the whole business and tourism industry severely. In August, there was a tiny marginal improvement as the interim government stepped in. Still, the most high-profile corporate events were either postponed or cancelled. After August, there was a positive shift towards 60% occupancy. Gradually, commercial flight travel resumed, and international airlines' and multinational corporations' trust was gained. October- November was mostly the recovery period and getting prepared for the peak season. In January, the occupancy level reaches nearly the pre-political crisis occupancy level. The reason is the wedding season, people celebrating the new year, and good weather for travelling overall. In February, there was a dip of about 2%, but we can overlook that. March was the end of winter, so there will be a decrease inevitably. But in April, they came as strong as peak season, indicating financial closing events of the end of the fiscal year in June, as well as pre-summer vacations.

The average South Asian 5-star hotel occupancy during 2024 was 68-70%, whereas Le Meridien's was 66%. That being said, this 12-month data shows a V-shaped recovery, which typically occurs during economic recessions and subsequent recoveries in macroeconomic factors. The trendline for series 1 indicates that the occupancy rate would be 76%-78 % if this linear trend continues stably.

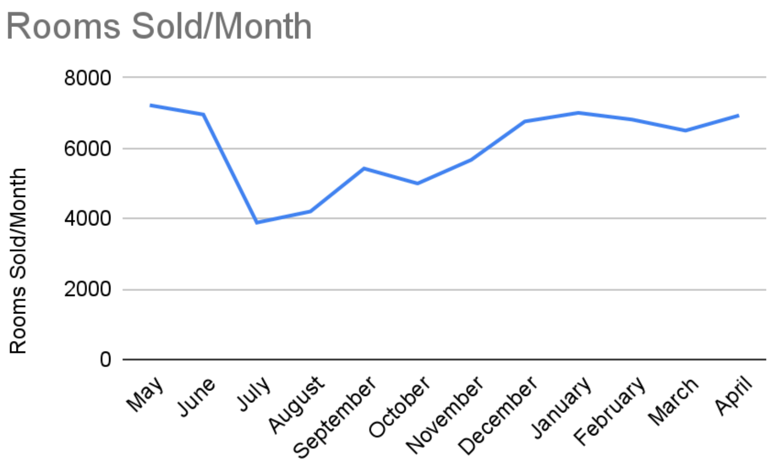
RevPAR

RevPAR is the revenue per available room that gives an insight into a hotel's bargaining power and how efficiently they are occupied. This is the most important metric in assessing profitability or forecasting in the hospitality industry.



There was a sharp decline in RevPAR, from $125 in May to half in July $67. As RevPAR volatility is directly related to the geopolitical environment, this sharp plummet was inevitable. However, they showed a V-shaped recovery by a significant number in January 2025, as we can see almost 77%. Now, the benchmark RevPAR generally is 100-130 USD (CBRE, 2025). Now, Le Meridien strongly aligns with this global standard during Q4 of 2024 and Q1 of 2025.

Average Room Sold per month

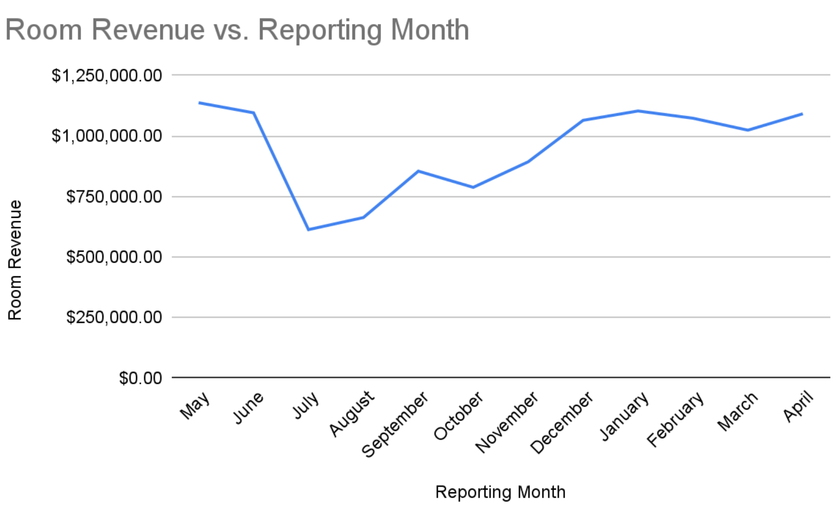


Actual revenue was driven by volume, which is rooms sold per month, although ADR consistency obscured demand volatility.

Weekend versus Weekday Occupancy: Weekday averages are probably higher during the busiest business months (May, March), which are bolstered by government and conference reservations.

Convalescence Following the July crash, speed was steady but incremental, demonstrating Le Méridien's marketing prowess and brand durability.

Room Revenue



Room revenue mirrored the trend of the occupancy rate due to fixed and comparatively high room rates. There was above 1 million USD in Q1 of 2025, and it sustained towards Q2 as well, showing a U-shaped recovery that means there would be an initial drop that will be followed by an extended period of decline and then a slow but eventual rise.

In short,

- ➔ Occupancy Rate dropped in July- August (42.65% & 46.13%) and peak was in May 2024 & January 2025, close to 79%.
- ➔ Average Daily Rate was consistent throughout the year which is $157.50.
- ➔ Revenue Per Available Room (revPAR) was low in July-August and high in May & January directly influenced by the occupancy rate.
- ➔ Rooms Sold/Month followed the same trend, lowest sold in July and May & January had better sale which is more than 7000 rooms monthly.
- ➔ Room revenues reflected the same trend.

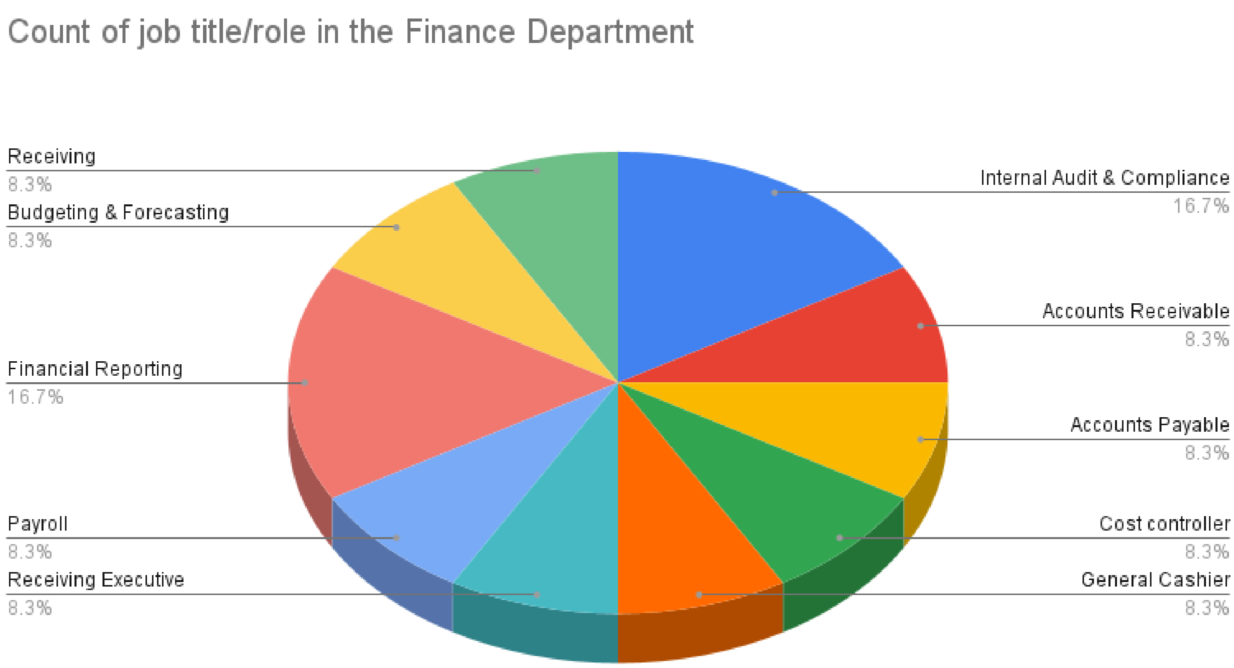
<u>Recommendations</u>

- They should maintain a target occupancy rate for both peak and low season to generate targeted revenue and efficiency. For peak season they can target above 75% occupancy and for low season 60% or more.
- Monthly monitoring of Revenue Per Available Room is necessary to improve room revenue performance. If it drops below $80, suitable advertising tactics or discount offers should be put in place.
- They should consider a dynamic pricing strategy for average daily rate tailored for peak and low seasons rather than having a flat price. Also they can offer packages and discount on low months to lure in more customers.
- Monitor monthly growth and establish percentage increase goals such as 5-10% monthly growth. Plan a cross-reference with events or marketing activities to see what motivates increased occupancy.
- Keep a visual KPI dashboard in the department for employees to follow up.

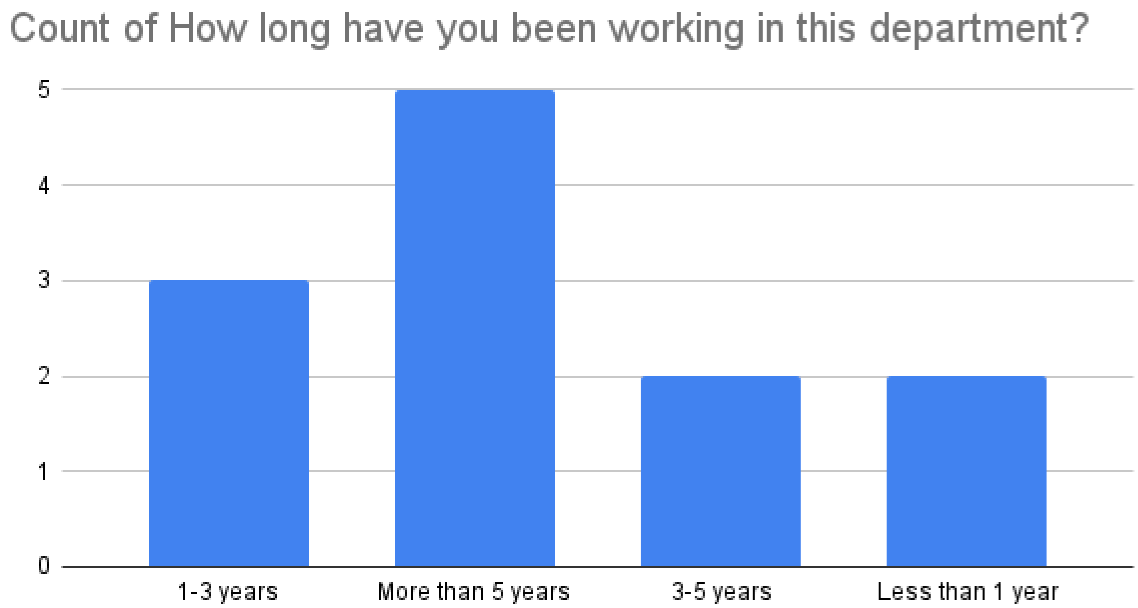
3.3.3 Operational Challenges Faced In Le Meridien Dhaka

To gain a deeper understanding of the operational challenges at Le Meridien Dhaka, I conducted a comprehensive Google Form survey. It was a 12 open and closed-ended questionnaire to get feedback from all the sub-departments of finance, including core finance, receiving, purchase, and accounts receivable.

Thirteen people, or a sizable part of the workforce, responded out of a total of nineteen. Because the respondents were drawn from different Finance sub-departments, the poll was able to collect a range of viewpoints and experiences rather than being restricted to just one. The findings are more reliable because of the high level of involvement demonstrated by the approximately 68% rate of participants.



Out of 19 employees, 13 people participated in this survey. Interestingly, the most participants were from internal audit & compliance and financial reporting which accounted for 16.7%. Internal Auditors assess the accuracy, efficiency, and adherence to relevant laws and regulations of a company's financial controls and record-keeping procedures. Finding and fixing any flaws in the company's financial records before an external audit finds them is the responsibility of the internal auditor and the compliance officers play an important role to monitor the whole system identifying the potential risks and how to mitigate them. For businesses and investors, financial reporting is an essential procedure since it offers vital data that illustrates financial performance over time. To ensure fair trade, remuneration, and financial operations, government and commercial regulatory bodies also monitor financial reporting. All the other departments were evenly represented which is 8.3% per department.



The next question explains how long the employee has been working there. the largest group, which consists of five people, is the most experienced portion and has been with the department for more than five years. This implies that a sizable section of the workforce is familiar with departmental procedures and has long-term institutional knowledge. Some of them are working here from before 2015. With three responders, employees with one to three years of service made up the second-largest category. In the meantime, two employees each represented the three to five year and less than one year category.

This distribution shows that the Finance Department's senior and relatively new employees are evenly distributed. Long-term staff members guarantee continuity and knowledge, while more recent hires offer new insights and flexibility. One may argue that this kind of composition is advantageous for skill development, knowledge transfer, and preserving a vibrant workplace.

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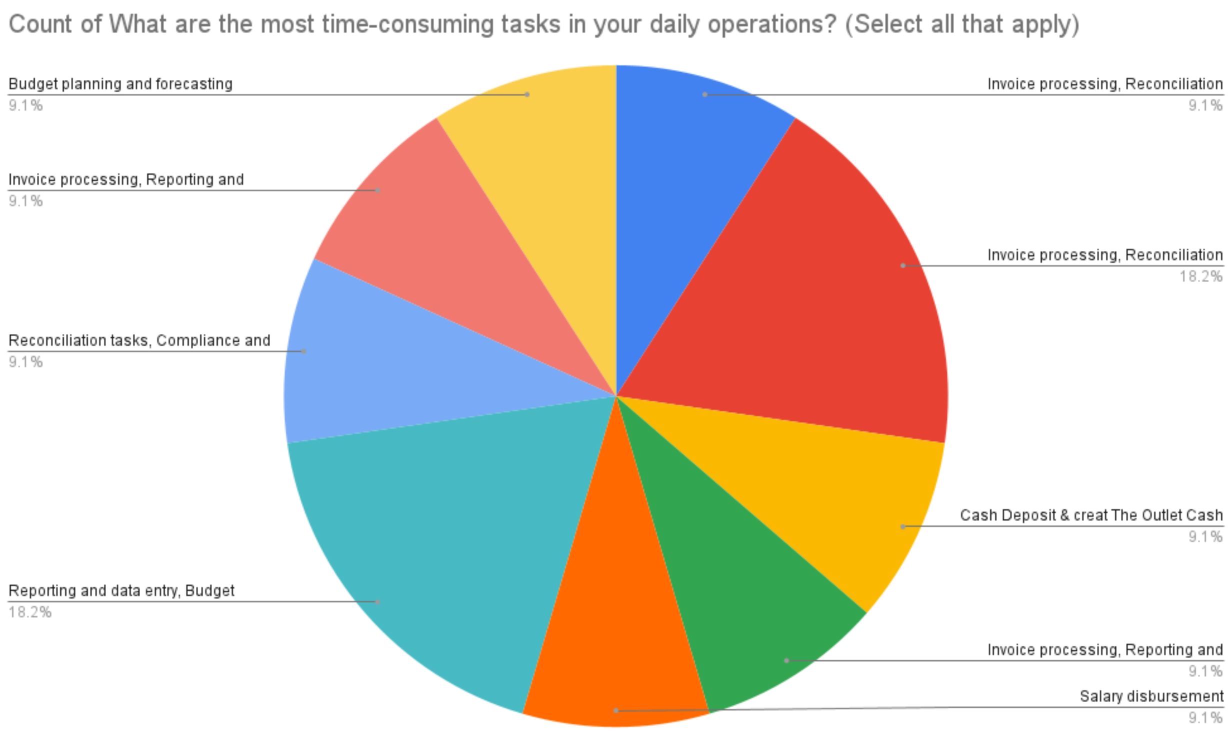
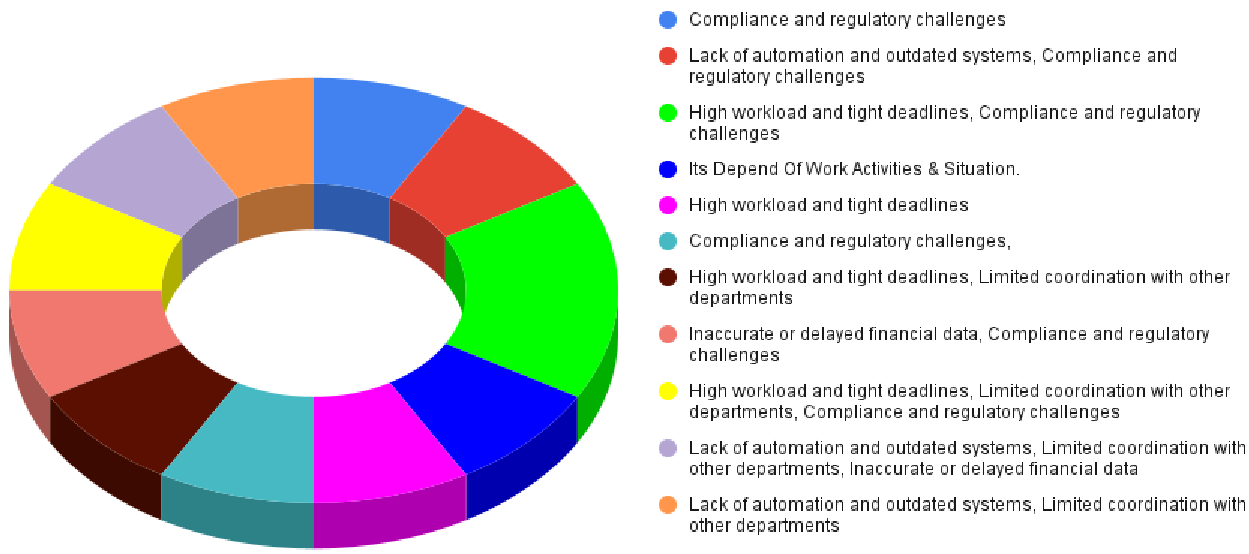


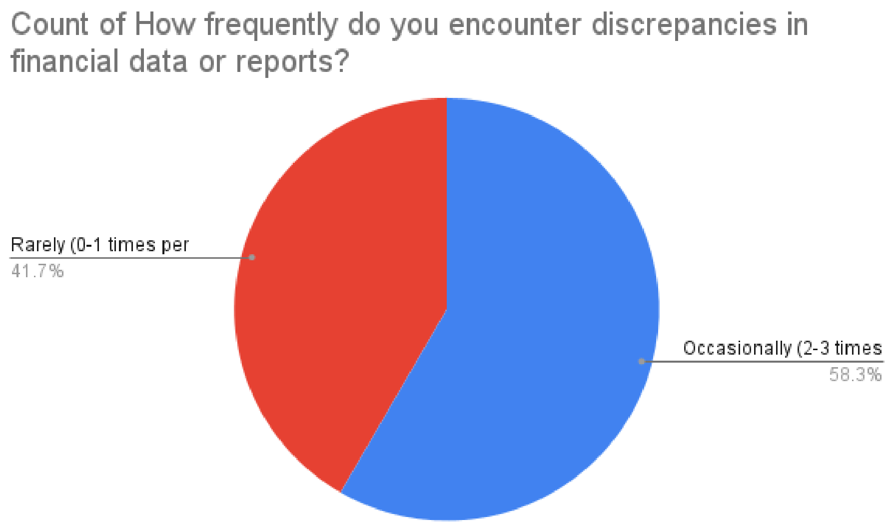
The following question was to enquire about their most time-consuming work. Reporting and data entry (mentioned 6 times), invoice processing (5 times), reconciliation, compliance and audits, and budget planning and forecasting (each of them 4 times) were found to be the most time-consuming activities in the finance department based on survey responses.

The next question was about the biggest challenge an employee faces in the workplace. It is worth noting that the employees were reluctant to answer this question due to the sensitivity of the topic, as they might face judgment and even further consequences from higher authorities.



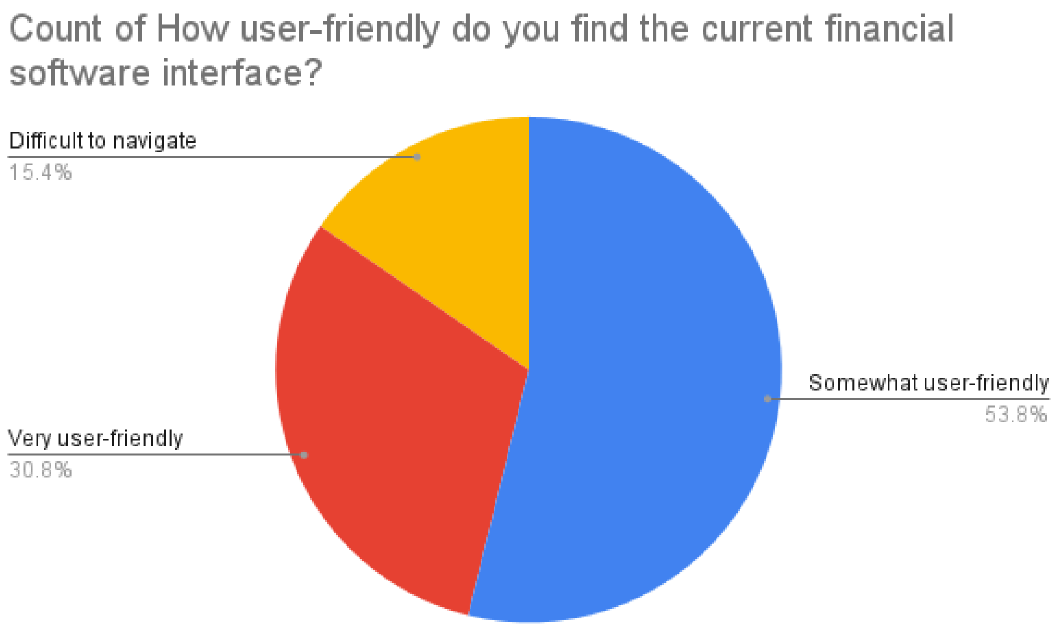
This pie chart illustrates that compliance and regulatory challenges were the most repeatedly mentioned issues, quoted by seven out of thirteen respondents. Tight deadlines and heavy workloads also surfaced as a recurrent issue, illustrating the strain of fulfilling operational needs in constrained amounts of time. The absence of automation or dependence on antiquated technologies, as well as poor departmental coordination, were also noted as obstacles to productive workflow. Now this limited coordination leads to inefficiencies in a workplace by requiring repeated follow-up, sometimes last-minute corrections, which results in a high workload and stress for the employees.

For the next question, I chose the topic of data discrepancies, containing three options they are rarely, which is 0-1 times a month, occasionally, that is 2-3 times a month, and frequently, which means more than 4 times a month.

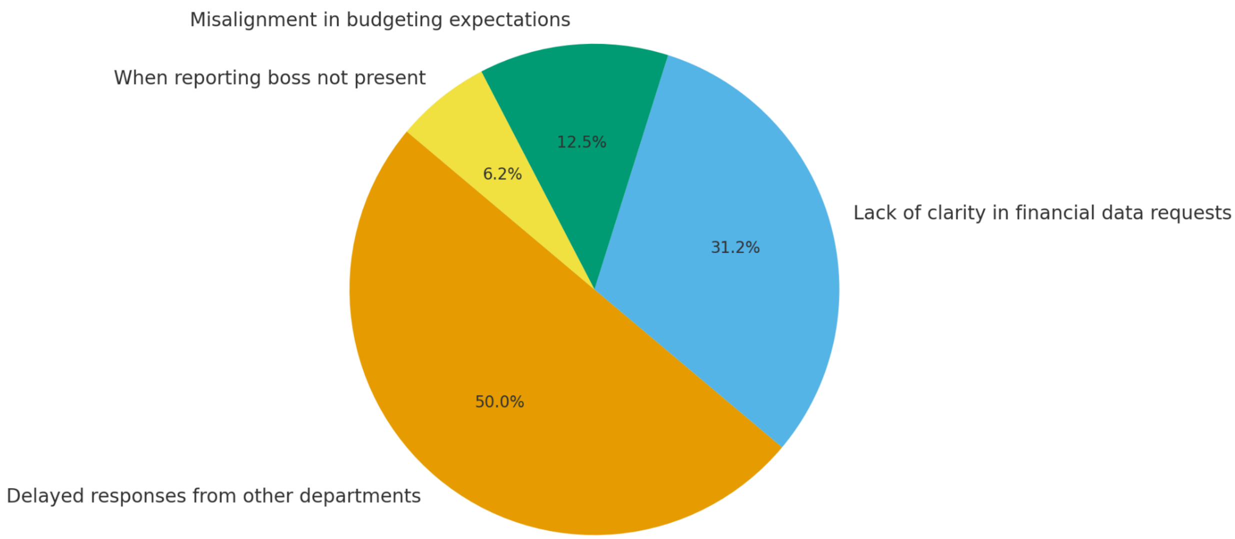


According to the responses, the Finance Department does not frequently experience inconsistencies in data or reports. The majority of the participants said that they see disparities on occasion, usually two to three times a month. Five respondents, on the other hand, stated that differences only happen infrequently, maybe once a month. According to these findings, disparities are rarely encountered and are usually controllable. All things considered, this shows that although data errors or mismatches do exist, they are rare and do not consistently or seriously affect routine activities.

Le Meridien relies on a number of specialized software for its financial activities to run efficiently. Oracle Opera, which is extensively used in the hospitality sector to manage hotel administration tasks like bookings, revenue monitoring, and financial record synchronization, is the primary platform in service. To process accounts payable and receivable, provide financial reporting, and manage general ledgers, the department also utilizes Sun Systems, an accounting program specifically designed for large businesses. Besides connecting to these platforms, staff regularly use Excel-based spreadsheets for evaluation of data, reconciling data, and creating personalized financial statements. My next two questions on the survey were about these financial software and ERPs.



The financial software interface was characterized as "somewhat user-friendly" by most of employees, suggesting that although the systems are functional, they need effort and knowledge to function well. According to four respondents, the program is "very user-friendly," indicating that some staff members have no trouble using the capabilities. Two workers, however, reported that the software was "difficult to navigate," indicating usability issues that may cause work to lag. The use of antiquated technologies and limited automation, which often require more manual labor in Excel, also contributes to these conflicting opinions in the Bangladeshi workplace. The use of antiquated technologies and limited automation, which often require more manual labor in Excel, also contributes to these conflicting opinions in the Bangladeshi workplace. It is made less seamless by connectivity problems and the lack of regional functionality. During my three months of tenure, I have attended multiple training sessions, including MIP-02 (Associate Relationship), AR Internal Control- verify city ledger, concierge/club/executive lounge (control-3), In-house entertainment and meeting charges (reporting-19), and so on. MIP-02 was about understanding compliance with policies and regulations, both internal and external. They also preached about practicing safe digital footnotes. In the AR Internal Control session, it was taught why correct billing and collecting timely is important and how to do that. This ultimately helps in finding out discrepancies in folio checks and incorrect or void billing, if there are any. This is important for maintaining a sound cash flow. The Control-3 training session was all about monitoring premium guest services and recording guest charges accurately. Although the program offers a solid basis for financial operations overall, the results point to the need for enhanced training and system updates that will make it easier to use and more readily available for all staff members.



This question was about communication challenges they face where delayed responses from other departments was the strongest contender. This exposes a chronic backlog that slows down financial procedures and increases the pressure to meet deadlines. The second most commonly mentioned issue is the lack of transparency in financial data needs, indicating that unclear instructions or inadequate information usually lead to misunderstandings and extra work. Budgetary assumptions were not in line, as noted by a smaller number of respondents, suggesting that departments may have divergent objectives or opinions. One comment also highlighted challenges in the absence of the reporting authority, indicating sporadic process disruptions. Overall, the findings indicate that in order to optimize financial operations, interdepartmental collaboration and communication clarity are crucial areas for development.

The last question of the survey was an open-ended one. They were asked what it would be
If they could change one thing about financial operations. Based on the responses, I have picked up a few themes, and these are automation and system improvement-related challenges,

work-life balance-related challenges, and a few of them were about coordination-related challenges.

After spending 12 weeks in the department of Finance in Le Meridien Dhaka, I have observed some challenges as well. I am mentioning them below with an explanation:

- **Crisis Aftermath:** This resulted in fluctuations in the overall standard of services provided during the most hectic period of the year, which is November through January. Additionally, team cohesiveness and service consistency are impacted by high personnel turnover. This resulted from a lack of operational excellence, caused by the resignation of several trained employees who left when the pandemic began and refused to return.
- **Over-reliance on the manual system:** One thing I have noticed during these 12 weeks is the excessive use of the manual system. This results in problems with room availability, reservation inconsistencies, and delayed response times during periods of high occupancy. I've noticed a couple of departmental misunderstandings and delays in banquet hall turnovers in February. There are numerous examples like this one.
- **Supply chain and cost effectiveness:** They have little to no control over their supply chain. For example, Westin does not bring chocolate sauce from outside but makes it from scratch. For fish fillet, they can buy the whole fish and cut it into small pieces of fillet, which can save money since the unit price of fillet is over 600 BDT and the whole fish is under 1000 taka. The hotel can save a lot of procurement costs through adopting policies such as producing in-house items and buying raw materials rather than pre-processed items.
- **Impact of OTA Commission:** Le Meridien kind of hotels are dependent on Online Travel Agencies like Booking.com, Expedia, etc. The guests pay the same amount regardless of booking directly or through agencies. But for the hotel, they earn less when booked through an agency, as they have to pay commission. As a result, there is a reduction in revPAR and overall profitability.
- **ERP Cohesiveness:** One of the biggest challenges the finance department faces is the Micros vs Opera reconciliation. Microsoft closes automatically at 12 am every day, but

Opera closes at 3 am manually. The team tried to bring it in the same period and kept it like that for 2 months. Then Micros got a huge update, and it went back to square one.

- **Maintaining PAR Stock:** They faced this issue the most during Ramadan. From takeaway boxes to ingredients for dessert, everything was below par stock level. This was due to the incorrect forecasting of demand as well as the delayed quotation. Consequently, the procurement team had to rely on last-minute procurement, which was also costly.
- **VAT Issue:** In January 2025, the government decided to make some modifications to VAT. This created confusion among the suppliers. Several suppliers were unclear about the new rates, exemptions, and proper filing and billing processes. Conflicting rates for VAT throughout services and documentation uncertainty resulted from the delayed response. To avoid possible fines, some providers overcharged clients, while others postponed sending VAT-inclusive invoices.

3.4 Conclusion

The 12 weeks internship at Le Meridien Dhaka has been an eye opening experience for me to learn reporting and analysis, practically putting my theoretical knowledge to use. This helped me understand the hospitality industry and its corporate side.

I had the opportunity to do an analysis on the financial performance as well as the operational challenges. The analysis strongly follows that with notable gains in financial stability, solvency, as well as profitability, the analysis shows that the hotel has come out effectively from pandemic-related difficulties.

The survey results offer more information about staff engagement and operational performance. Strong adherence to internal procedures, productive teamwork, and comprehension of performance measurements like budget variation, RevPAR, accounts receivable collection rates, and productivity metrics are among the main takeaways.

Le Meridien Dhaka throughout the years shows a healthy profitability, keeping some factors here and there. But the long term success of the hotel relies on improving their operational strategies, innovation, keeping up with the world and so on. This is merely a report done by an undergraduate student who got to learn by the whole process.

3.5 Recommendation

Le Meridien Dhaka performed within the line of regional luxury standards for hotels, even during the volatile period. There are some recommendations on how they can perform even better.

- Use flexible pricing rather than a fixed daily rate technique based on the following: Demographical Segment (business, crew members, wedding guests, tourists) and reservation window. (Gapper, 2025)
- Take advantage of peak season's upsell opportunities. It can provide premium upper floors, luxury suites, or rooms with an exclusive location at a reduced upgrade cost. For example while booking for a junior suite upgrade to queen suite for $50 extra each night.
- To reduce volatility from political shocks, save aside enough money to cover two to three months' worth of fixed operating expenses. Successful companies keep 5-10% reserves allocated per year to cover these. (Mehta, 2024)
- Improve the way that Excel, Micros, Sun Systems, and Opera are integrated to guarantee more seamless data flow and reduce inconsistencies.
- Conduct frequent cross-departmental meetings, particularly during the cycles of budget planning and reporting. Data based decision-making, transparency, and separate entity dismantling are all made possible by these discussions. Employees exchange ideas, find ways to cut costs and improve effectiveness and promptly handle problems. (Mason, 2024)
- Communicate compliance activities properly with the employees.
- Encourage the staff to stay updated with the latest fiscal and monetary policies.
- Arrange fun pop quiz activities after the training sessions.
- To make reporting more illustrative and cut down on the amount of time processing raw data, increase staff proficiency in data presentation and analysis.

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3.6 Appendix

3.6.1 Survey Questionnaire

What is your job title/role in the Finance Department?

- ☐ Accounts Payable
- ☐ Accounts Receivable
- ☐ Payroll & Taxation
- ☐ Financial Reporting
- ☐ Budgeting & Forecasting
- ☐ Internal Audit & Compliance
- ☐ Other ____________________

How long have you been working in this department?

- ☐ Less than 1 year
- ☐ 1-3 years
- ☐ 3-5 years
- ☐ More than 5 years

What are the most time-consuming tasks in your daily operations? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Invoice processing
- ☐ Reconciliation tasks
- ☐ Reporting and data entry
- ☐ Budget planning and forecasting
- ☐ Compliance and audits
- ☐ Other ______________________

Are there any financial processes that could be automated or improved to enhance efficiency?

- ☐ Yes (please specify)
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not sure

What are the biggest challenges you face in your role? (Select all that apply)

- ☐ High workload and tight deadlines
- ☐ Lack of automation and outdated systems
- ☐ Limited coordination with other departments
- ☐ Inaccurate or delayed financial data
- ☐ Compliance and regulatory challenges
- ☐ Other ________________________________

How frequently do you encounter discrepancies in financial data or reports?

- ☐ Rarely (0-1 times per month)
- ☐ Occasionally (2-3 times per month)
- ☐ Frequently (4+ times per month)

Do you feel that the current financial software/tools adequately support your tasks?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No

What additional resources or training would help improve your performance?

- ☐ Advanced Excel training
- ☐ ERP system training (e.g., SAP, Oracle)
- ☐ Compliance & regulatory updates
- ☐ Financial analysis & forecasting techniques
- ☐ Other ___________________________________

What are the main communication challenges you face?

- ☐ Delayed responses from other departments
- ☐ Lack of clarity in financial data requests
- ☐ Misalignment in budgeting expectations
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Have you encountered issues with data accuracy or software integration with other systems?

- ☐ Yes, frequently
- ☐ Occasionally

- ☐ Rarely
- ☐ No issues

What software features or upgrades would improve your efficiency?

If you could change one thing about financial operations, what would it be?

3.6.2 Excel Sheet of All Raw Data

LM A&L