



**EXAMINING THE PERCEPTIONS OF TOURISM
EMPLOYEES TOWARDS GOVERNMENT POLICIES
FOR COVID-19 RECOVERY PROCESS**

By

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EXAMINING THE PERCEPTIONS OF TOURISM EMPLOYEES TOWARDS GOVERNMENT POLICIES FOR COVID-19 RECOVERY PROCESS

ABSTRACT

In this study is conducted to examining the perceptions of tourism employees in the state of Kelantan towards government policies for COVID-19 recovery process. To obtain the best results, in this study, the researchers stated two objectives : (i) To identify government's policies regarding how to rebuild the tourism industry post-COVID-19 and (ii) To examine government's plans to promote digital transition in the tourism industry post-COVID-19. The researchers will employ a method of in-depth interview sessions with employees of travel agencies located in Kota Bharu, Kelantan. This qualitative data collection method will involve interviews that include some significant questions in order for gaining rich data. Further data analysis will be conducted to achieve the objectives outlined in this study.

Keywords: COVID-19, government policies, tourism employee, travel agency

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ABSTRAK

Kajian ini dijalankan untuk mengkaji persepsi kakitangan pelancongan di negeri Kelantan terhadap dasar kerajaan bagi proses pemulihan COVID-19. Untuk mendapatkan hasil yang terbaik, dalam kajian ini, penyelidik menyatakan dua objektif: (i) Untuk mengenal pasti dasar kerajaan mengenai cara membina semula industri pelancongan selepas COVID-19 dan (ii) Untuk mengkaji rancangan kerajaan untuk mempromosikan peralihan digital dalam pelancongan. industri pasca COVID-19. Pengkaji akan menggunakan kaedah sesi temu bual mendalam dengan kakitangan agensi pelancongan yang terletak di Kota Bharu, Kelantan. Kaedah pengumpulan data kualitatif ini akan melibatkan temu bual yang merangkumi beberapa soalan penting untuk mendapatkan data yang kaya. Analisis data selanjutnya akan dijalankan untuk mencapai objektif yang digariskan dalam kajian ini.

Kata kunci: agensi pelancongan, agensi pelancongan, COVID-19, dasar kerajaan, pekerja pelancongan

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter begins by outlining the background information of the COVID-19 pandemic and tourism. This is followed by a problem statement on the research. Research questions and research objectives will describe the investigation in further details. This chapter will also include the scope of the study and operational definition pertaining to major terms apply in the research study.

1.2 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

According to The United Nations World Tourism Organization (2021), prior to the COVID -19 pandemic, tourism has been one of the industries with the fastest growth of the economy due to factors that give impact such as the sustainable economic growth, air transport liberalization and regional cooperation. Therefore, many countries have acknowledged this tourism in making of a significant contribution to economic growth and then place it high on their list of development goals.

This is particularly true for small countries that have a high potential for tourism but few manufacturing jobs. However, based on world statistics shows that travel crisis is worst in history and now intering its third year. International tourist arrivals fell by 85% between January and May 2021 when compared to the same period in the pre-pandemic year 2019, or by 65% when compared to 2020, as travel restrictions remained tight due to the coronavirus pandemic. This comes on the heels of a 73% drop in 2020, the worst year for tourism in 30 years. Therefore, governments must implement a phased strategy that balances public health and economic requirements for tourism and travel recovery (Orîndaru et al., 2021). In order to increase domestic tourism, easing restrictions on foreign travel would be necessary (Hussain, 2021). Additionally, promoting domestic tourism could begin by promoting in-country travel. Curbing COVID-19 allows countries to consider establishing travel corridors or travel bubbles with other countries that have achieved comparable success. This is

encouraged at the subregional level through bilateral agreements between multiple countries. These agreements can then be extended to include regions in a wider scope of travel restrictions. This is seen in the success of countries like Australia and New Zealand, Hong Kong and Singapore (Xie et al., 2021).

Compared to other industrial sectors, tourism is estimated to raise gross domestic income and make the world the most developed industry in a given year. Compared to other industries in 2020 so far, the travel industry has been hit the hardest by the pandemic COVID-19. To date, Tourism has been one of the industries hardest hit by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the prognosis is bleak (UNWTO, 2021).

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

COVID-19 has had a negative influence on the economy education, agricultural, and tourist sectors. According to United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2021), the pandemic COVID-19 had a significant global economic and social impact. COVID-19 has had a significant impact on many industries, but tourism and hospitality have been among the hardest hit globally.

According to World Health Organization (WHO), coronavirus disease is caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus (COVID-19). The majority of people who become infected with the virus develop mild to moderate respiratory illness and recover without any special treatment. This has caused many premises to close and workers to lose their jobs.

This situation offers a chance to evaluate tourism's future. The travel industry is at a fork in the road, and decisions made nowadays will affect the travel industry of tomorrow. In this situation, the governments need to contemplate long-term effect of the crisis of COVID-19 pandemic while capitalizing on digitalization, as well as promoting the structural change that need to be stronger and more resilient tourism economy. Therefore, the economic transition from low productivity and labor-intensive economic activities to higher productivity and skill-intensive activities is referred to as structural transformation. The driving reason behind structural transformation is changes in the productivity of modern

industrial, service, and manufacturing industries. It is also distinguished by a transition in labor-intensive activities to skill-intensive activities.

Technological resilience is a key factor that will play a role in revitalizing the industry. Digital transition not only offers convenience to customers but also an opportunity to reduce costs, increase the scale of information impact and reach new audiences. According to data released by Statista Digital Market Outlook, the total revenue of mobile applications in the travel segment in 2021 will increase by 38% from the previous year to reach \$296 million.¹

This is owing to the COVID-19 outbreak, the necessity to preserve social distance, and various constraints, which are driving those who enjoy travelling to seek for digital solutions. Due to the losses caused by the lockdown and travel restrictions, expected digital business models have been developed for tourism stakeholders during the lockdown. The changing technology landscape around the world suggests that digital transitions will continue to increase in demand to meet market demands. Additionally, building a mental health response to COVID-19 using digital transition can aid in the recovery process.

Beyond that, we also must look to the future. The current economic recession provides an opportunity to rethink tourism and realign the industry. UNWTO Secretary-General Zurab Pololikashvili said in a statement that tourism continues to recover steadily, but there are still some challenges, from geopolitics to economics. Industry is bringing hope and opportunity back to people around the world. Now is the time to rethink tourism, where it is going and the impact it has on people and the planet. Digitization refers to the process through which innovation and information management are altering our social, economic, and personal institutions. The convergence of advanced technologies and growing social and economic connections in the context of globalization have fueled the drive to adopt digital technologies. Tourism firms of all sizes will define future productivity and social and economic well-being by developing their business models, adopting digital technology to effectively participate in the global value ecosystem, and adopting new data-driven ways of working (Andrews, 2018).

¹ The US dollar (USD) is the official currency of the United States of America. The United States dollar, sometimes known as the US dollar, is made up of 100 cents.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What would be governments policies to Covid-19 with regards to the tourism industry.
2. What are the government plans regarding promoting digital transition in recovering tourism?

1.5 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

Our general objective is to study how the governments rebuild the tourism industry after post-COVID-19.

SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES:

1. To identify government's policies regarding how to rebuild the tourism industry after post-COVID-19.
2. To examine government's plans to promote digital transition in the tourism industry.

1.6 SCOPE OF STUDY

The primary objective of this study is to ascertain policy responses of their effect on recovering industry after COVID-19 and recovery for future tourism rebuilding. The population we choose to study in this research is the employees of travel agencies through interview sessions. The geographical location selected in this research is Kota Bharu, Kelantan.

1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Tourism is a cultural, social, and economic phenomenon in which people go to other nations or places outside of their typical environment for personal enjoyment or business purposes. According to one of the data that we have gathered, tourism industry was believed to be a vital point for many economies around the world have had success. Tourism has the potential to increase the economy's earnings and offer thousands of job opportunities, helping in developing the infrastructure of a country and exchanging culture between the foreigners and citizens (Yehia, 2019). The jobs created by the tourism industry is not just limited to the tourism sector itself but also to other sectors such as the agriculture sectors, education sectors and communication sectors. The government sector will rely on tourism for a large portion of its revenue in order to invest heavily in the country's infrastructure (1bid). They want more visitors to come to their country, which necessitates the provision of safe and modern facilities. As a result, more highways and

roads are constructed, parks are established, public spaces are improved, new airports are developed, and possibly better hospitals and schools are erected. Infrastructures that are both safe and inventive allow for the efficient movement of goods and services. Local residents will also advantage from economic and educational advancement chances.

1.8 OPERATIONAL DEFINITIONS

Tourism - According to UNWTO (2021), people go on trips for a variety of reasons, including business or personal pursuits. These trips are part of tourism, an economic, cultural and social phenomenon. People who travel during these trips are called visitors; residents are people who live in the destination country and tourists live in another country. Tourism is the act and process of traveling outside one's home for entertainment, relaxation, and pleasure while taking advantage of the services offered by commerce. Besides, tourism is the definition of activity of persons visiting locations outside of their normal environment for business, pleasure, or other reasons, or remaining there continuously for less than a year. Tourism is thus a result of contemporary social structures that emerged in Western Europe in the 17th century, albeit there were predecessors in antiquity.

Travel bubbles - Travel corridors also can be referred to as travel bubbles or coronavirus corridors that essentially exclusive partnerships between the two or more countries. Therefore, it has also made notable progress in containing and controlling the COVID-19 pandemic within its borders (Yu et al., 2021). In order to rethink the future of tourism, they use travel bubbles to boost tourism and boost travelers. More than that, travel corridors, or bubbles, should be established to encourage rapid recovery for the safety of travelers. The tourists must observe epidemiological precautionary measures while in the travel bubble and upon departure then return (Hudáková, 2021). Bilateral tourism bubbles are ideal for countries that rely heavily on single-source tourism.

COVID-19 - Coronavirus illness, also known as COVID-19, is a virus-borne infection caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus, according to the World Health Organization (WHO, 2022). The majority of people who become infected with the virus will have mild to moderate respiratory symptoms and will recover without any special treatment. Some, on the other hand, will get very ill and require medical attention. People over the age of 65,

as well as those with underlying medical conditions such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, or cancer, are at a higher risk of developing a serious illness. COVID-19 can infect people of all ages and cause severe illness or death.

Polymaker - According to vocabulary.com (2022) a policy maker is someone who develops ideas and plans, particularly those implemented by business or government. Long-term policy considerations arising from the pandemic crisis include aiding tourism recovery. Restrictions imposed by policymakers, such as lockdowns and social distancing measures, are based on the advice of the government's scientific advisory committee and are backed by scientific evidence.

Travel Agencies - A travel agency is an agency that makes the necessary arrangements for travelers. Travel agencies are among the most prominent private tourism companies, and they play a vital part in the overall process of creating and enhancing in a country or location. It is a travel agency that packages and prepares all of a country's attractions, passageways, facilities, and supporting services for travellers. As a result, travel agents are frequently referred to as "image creators" of a country (Tourism Notes 2020).

Digital Transition -The process of changing an existing analogue system to a digital one is referred to as digital transition. When used without further qualification, the word usually refers to the shift from analogue to digital television, commonly known as the digital television transition. Digital radio services and the conversion of other broadcast standards are two further instances (O'Carroll, 2017).

Recovery - Recovery is a natural healing response. In this result, most of the people usually get better from recovery things. The term "recovery" is used in many meanings in mental health care and clinical practice. This, as a natural healing process, reminds us of the critical importance of resilience in health. However, when the phrase is equated with a "cure" or a return to pre-injury or disease status, the commencement of injury or illness will point to the limitations of healing when applied to those with long-term disorders (Whitwell, 2005). As a result, it underlines the crucial relevance of social justice and civil rights for those suffering from mental diseases when utilised to define a social movement.

Responses -The response may be the result of a subsequent phenomenon caused by another phenomenon. For example, during COVID-19, the response government ordered all citizens to quarantine. Quarantine includes strict home isolation for all households, physical isolation, closure of schools and introduction of work from home, closure of public transport and non-essential commercial establishments, and prohibition of mass gatherings and non-essential public events (Marquez, 2020)

1.9 SUMMARY

Chapter 1 details the background of the current study and the statement of the problem that motivated the researcher to conduct this study. Moreover, the researchers present the study's research objectives, two specific objectives, two research questions, and a word glossary before finishing this chapter.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is about the literature review that includes the explanation of tourism and how COVID-19 will impact the travel and tourism sector. Next is, how to rebuild tourism, and policies made by the government. Besides, it also explains the digital transition which is one way to rebuild tourism. Furthermore, responses on how the governments will rebuild the tourism industry in the future.

2.2 TOURISM

As reported by Dictionary (2022), the activity or practise of travelling, particularly for pleasure, is referred to as tourism. Furthermore, tourism is the business or industry of supplying tourists with information, lodging, transportation, and other services and promoting tourist travel, particularly for commercial objectives. According to Cambridge dictionary (2022), tourism means business of provision of services such as transportation, accommodation or entertainment for holidaymakers.

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defines the term "tourist" as any person traveling for more than 24 hours for recreational, business, study, or health purposes. Visitors come to Malaysia for a variety of reasons, including vacation, visiting friends and relatives, shopping, medical care, business travel, honeymoon, M.I.C.E ²and sports. Today, the tourism industry of one of the world's largest industrial sectors, contributes to economic growth, job creation, social development, and peace.

Tourism is both a cultural and economic phenomenon. It involves people traveling to a place or country outside of their usual environment for personal or business purposes. These travelers are called tourists; they can be professional or amateur tour guides, as well as residents or non-residents of the countries they visit. Tourism also involves making expenditures related to tourism, which can lead to a social, cultural and economic

² Meetings, Incentives, Conventions, and Exhibitions (M.I.C.E.) are a lucrative segment of the global travel mix. MICE is also known as business tourism or business events.

phenomenon. Furthermore, As customer satisfaction, safety, and enjoyment are especially important in tourism, tourism is a dynamic and competitive industry that must constantly adapt to changing customer needs and desires.

2.3 COVID-19

In December 2019, Wuhan, China, experienced a wave of acute atypical respiratory disease. This quickly spread to other areas. It soon became clear that the new coronavirus was to blame. SARS-CoV-2 (2019-nCoV) was named after the novel coronavirus's high homology (80%) to SARS-CoV, which caused acute respiratory distress syndrome (ARDS) and high mortality in 2002-2003. It was thought that the SARS-CoV-2 outbreak began with a zoonotic transmission linked to a seafood market in Wuhan, China. Human-to-human transmission was later discovered to have played a significant role in the subsequent outbreak. The virus-caused disease was dubbed Coronavirus disease 19 (COVID-19), and the World Health Organization declared it a pandemic.

According to Dictionary (2022), Coronavirus disease 2019 is a possibly deadly coronavirus-related respiratory illness marked by fever, coughing, and shortness of breath. The condition can also affect key organs such as the heart or kidneys in some situations. The virus that results in SARS-CoV-2 is the name given to COVID-19. COVID-19 is related but different from virus that caused 2003 SARS outbreak. SARS is more deadly than COVID -19, but it is less contagious. Coronaviruses are RNA-containing, spherical viruses. Under the microscope, the viruses appear to be surrounded by a spiky arrangement that resembles a corona or crown-like shape, hence the name coronavirus. It is believed that the new coronavirus was spread by an animal. Droplets from the mouth and nose of a person with COVID -19 spread the virus when they cough, sneeze, and exhale. Others can become infected with the virus by inhaling the droplets or by coming into contact with surfaces contaminated with the droplets, such as when you touch an object and then touch your face. According to Sigala (2020), tourism is largely a sensual and hedonic experience. Servicescape design has a significant impact on tourism experience by influencing emotions, behavior, attitude and customer service evaluation. Although, the operational standards of the COVID-19 require the service cape to be redesigned, remove or prevent

sensory elements and 'transform' the tourism experience, for example, in restaurants, festivals, and other tourism contexts, social distancing and the number of co-attendance consumers will affect new psychological comfort and acceptable levels of congestion. Raise your voice to create a larger 'moist breathing zone,' boosting COVID-19. Furthermore, the minds and economic system that contributed to pandemic COVID-19 have guided and shaped government, institution, business and individual response and recovery strategies for COVID-19. This has the potential to significantly prolong and repeat the crises because we treat the symptoms not the cause. For example, economic priority in ensuring business continuity and job creation. The recovery of the old "successful economic growth" has prompted government policies and practices such as economic aid, subsidies and tax breaks for businesses and tourism workers. The debate about easing restrictions to reopen and restart the economy at the expense of the second wave and human life is a bad idea.

Relaxing travel restrictions is a high risk critical decision, especially among areas with a higher frequency of cases. Travel bubbles should be regarded as a viable compromise in prevention strategies. The introduction of voluntary quarantine would not be sufficient to prevent subsequent waves of infection, even at an overall rate of 95% (COVID -19). Establishing "travel bubbles" and maintaining them effectively will be a challenge for policymakers. Currently, only countries with similar COVID -19 disease incidence are allowed to travel through travel corridors without quarantine. Travel corridors without quarantine must be implemented only between countries with high COVID -19 disease incidence and the ability to effectively track down and monitor real-time cases of the disease. If COVID -19 prevalence increases, all travel corridors between countries with a higher incidence must be halted. (Journal of Travel Medicine, 2020, Vol. 27, 8). The industry is in disarray as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, so the government needs to rebuild the tourism industry.

2.4 REBUILDING TOURISM

The tourist and leisure industry have been impacted by COVID-19. The most vulnerable people are the most affected by tourism. Therefore, this is also one of the world's most vulnerable industries. Leisure, travel, and inbound tourism suffered the most severe declines, resulting in \$2.86 trillion in losses and accounting for 50% or more of revenue losses. The significance and context of the current pandemic COVID -19 will be determined in the first phase of this research study (Wut et al., 2021). The study investigates how innovation and change can contribute to the revitalization of the tourism and leisure industries to the next normal (Cuomo et al., 2021).

Flexible policy measures are required to assist the tourist industry in dealing with the virus in the short to medium term, there is also a need to look outward and learn from the crisis, which has shown shortcomings in government and industry preparations and responsiveness. Coordination of action is critical at all levels of government and the private sector. This explanation will be expanded upon in Section 2.4, Policy Segments.

Rethinking the future of tourism is a chance presented by the crisis. Policies implemented today will affect tourism in the future as the industry is at a crossroads. Governments must capitalise on digitalization, support the low-carbon transition, and promote the structural transformation necessary to create a stronger, more sustainable, and resilient tourism industry while also taking into account the crisis's long-term effects.

Domestic demand promotion was one of the most popular initiatives of countries to revitalise tourism. Many countries offered two types of initiatives with domestic tourism as a priority such as financial incentives and marketing and promotion. The UNWTO (2021) list includes incentives such as vouchers, tax breaks, and long weekends. In Turkey VAT the tax rate on domestic flights was reduced from 18% to 1% for three months. In order to rebuild the tourism industry, the government needs to play an important role in formulating policies.

According to Reuters (2020), the travel bubble, also referred to as the "Travel Bridge" or "Corona Corridor," is also seen as a viable answer to the present pandemic, particularly the epidemic's prognosis. Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania started the first "travel bubble" destinations. Citizens of these countries are free to travel within the country without quarantine requirements.

Travel bubbles, also known as travel corridors or corona corridors, are essentially exclusive collaborations between two or more states that have made substantial success against the COVID-19 pandemic within their own borders (Yu et al., 2021). These corridors or bubbles should be built to assist speedy travel recuperation.

An answer is a spoken or written response to a query, request, criticism, and allegation. At the same time, a statement is a phrase that is spoken or declared during an oral or written communication to convey information or facts. Other than that, the response may be the result of a phenomenon that occurs after and is caused by another occurrence. According to our topic, the response refers to how the governments will rebuild the tourism industry in the future. Recover tourism in the future, and the response implemented today will be able to stop the tourism industry from being at a crossroads.

According to the International Monetary Fund (2021), Afghanistan has experienced a severe third wave of pandemic infections, with the number of cases and deaths exceeding the peak of the first wave a year ago. Almost one-third of those tested recently had the infection. As a result, the government has closed schools until further notice and is attempting to accelerate vaccinations. Furthermore, they have halted the movement of people across borders while keeping trade and cargo transit open. Domestic activity was disrupted by the containment measures implemented at the start of the pandemic.

The step the government needs to take to build the entire tourism industry is to prioritize domestic tourism. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (2018), domestic tourism contributed 73% of the total Travel and Tourism expenditure in 2017, so it has become the main driver in the tourism sector worldwide. This move will likely be effective when China has been prosperous in fostering domestic tourism up to surpassing other countries in the growth of domestic spending.

2.5 GOVERNMENT POLICIES IN POST-COVID-19

A policymaker is someone who develops ideas and plans, particularly those that are implemented by a company or government. Long-term policy considerations resulting from the pandemic crisis include tourism recovery assistance. Now, Kota Bharu, Kelantan Malaysia is entering a new phase in its fight against the virus, with governments believing that by strengthening monitoring mechanisms, By implementing new measures and policies, tourism and travel can resume as a viable economic activity while removing travel limitations. Political and government-imposed restrictions, such as restrictions and social distancing measures, are based on the advice of the government's scientific advisory body and backed by scientific evidence. However, the best available scientific evidence on COVID-19 remains limited, making government decision-making vulnerable to bias.

Lithuania implemented digital business solutions as part of their Tourism Business Modeling initiative. This new model would encourage people to create new and innovative tourism services and products. They would also fund the creation of e-business solutions via the E-Business Modeling tool. The Retraining of Enterprise Workers tool would fund photography, filmmaking, translation, design, publishing and other services. Additionally, this initiative funded other digital technologies with the purchase of communication, voice reading as well as other services (Ministry of the Economy and Innovation of the Republic of Lithuania, 2020).

Tourism is an essential aspect of many economic systems, and the quick and enormous shock to the tourism industry caused by the coronavirus epidemic is having an effect on the broader economy. Following the COVID-19 pandemic's emergence in 2020, governments all over the world took unprecedented efforts to contain the virus, including stopping immigration, suspending airlines, or restricting traveling, all of which affected the global tourism economy. The demise of the industry has had far-reaching consequences, particularly for small countries that rely almost entirely on it for foreign exchange inflows and a significant portion of their GDP. Many places are now starting a new phase of the virus's combat, believing that by strengthening monitoring mechanisms, they will be able to defeat the virus. Governments in many nations believe that by enhancing monitoring systems, travel and tourism can recover economic activity back as usual, ensuring that travel restrictions are eased through the implementation of new policies

and procedures. These nations are currently entering a new phase in their fight against the virus.

To create a future tourism industry that is more robust and resilient, government policy makers need to be informed about the crisis and the current state of COVID-19. Planning ahead, according to the authors of this study, will highlight some crucial issues for policymakers, including the governments of Kota Bharu and Kelantan, as well as the business community, who need to be better equipped to respond to the post-COVID-19 environment and be able to adapt quickly. The procedures for risk assessment and crisis response in Kota Bharu, Kelantan, will need to be more effective, and coordination will need to be improved.

2.6 DIGITAL TRANSITION

Digital transition refers to the process of transferring an existing analog system to a digital format. In addition, the digital transition is also used loosely. The term usually refers to the transition from analog to digital television and the transition to digital television. Other examples also include digital radio services and the conversion of other broadcasting standards (O'Carroll, 2017). Digital technologies are transforming travel and tourism. As a result, the tourism sector will be transformed by promoting innovation and digital technologies through the development of tourism services and goods. Embracing digital technologies can assist businesses in Kota Bharu, Kelantan Malaysia in remaining open. In locations where tourism has nearly completely replaced agriculture, replaced agriculture as the primary economic activity, assisting businesses in diversifying their operations, guest base, and revenue streams would strengthen their resilience. Furthermore, recent technological advances are making it easier and more reliable for tourists to enhance their ability to explore destinations, while virtual reality devices are increasingly penetrating the tourism industry and tourists are seeking better services to experience them (Akhtar et al., 2021).

2.7 TRAVEL AGENCY

A travel agency is a private retailer or public service that provides travel and travel-related services to the public on behalf of accommodation or travel suppliers, offering different types of travel packages for each destination. Travel agencies help their customers make travel plans. In addition to reservations, they assist customers in choosing destinations, transportation, and accommodations, as well as inform travelers about passport and visa requirements, currency exchange rates, and import duties. A travel agent is someone who fully understands the tourism product such as destinations, travel patterns, climate, accommodation, and other areas of the service sector. He acts in a role for the supplier or principal of the product and receives a commission in return. A travel agent is technically the owner or manager of the establishment. However, other employees are also responsible for advising tourists and selling individual components of travel or tourism products. Furthermore, following the pandemic, travel agencies can continue and expand their marketing efforts. Upgrade the original travel package, for example, or re-plan the package to be suitable for travel after the epidemic.

2.8 SUMMARY

In short, this chapter briefly discussed in more depth with different resources related to tourism, COVID-19, rebuilding tourism, policy, digital transition, travel agency, and responses. Moreover, this chapter also lays out a clear path for the rest of the chapter to follow in order to meet the research objectives.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter will discuss the research design that is being used to carry out this study. This chapter also enlightens on the sampling strategy, data collection method, data analysis process and is closed by the summary of this chapter. In this study, we use qualitative to help researchers understand how research participants think and feel, and to develop an understanding of what people mean about their experiences. In the qualitative data analysis process, methods help researchers make sense of the data researchers collected through respondent interviews, surveys, and feedback.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND STRATEGY

A research design typically specifies how information will be gathered, what tools will be used, how they will be used, and how the information will be interpreted. According to Creswell (2014), research design constitutes types of investigations using quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methods that allow for specific targeting of procedures.

Quantitative research is the procedure of gathering and analyzing numerical data. It can be used to find patterns and averages, to make predictions, to check the validity of causal hypotheses, and to extrapolate findings to larger populations. On the other hand, finding meaningful patterns that are descriptive of a particular phenomenon through the analysis and interpretation of text, interviews, and observations is the process of qualitative research (ISTTS,2007).

Current research design distinguishes three types such as descriptive, exploratory, and casual. Government policies response to COVID-19: perception of travel agencies' employees will employ exploratory research. Exploratory research is defined as research done to investigate an ambiguous question. It is done to learn more about the issues that are currently being faced, but it doesn't produce any concrete outcomes. When conducting such investigations, researchers start with a broad idea and use the study to pinpoint problems that might serve as the subject of further investigation.

3.3 SAMPLING STRATEGY

A sampling strategy is the process of identifying your population and then determining the best way to select a sample from it. Choose a workable plan and recognize the limitations. Residents are not necessarily people. They can be objects such as businesses, countries and parks.

Sampling is a technique used to select individuals or subgroups of a population to make statistical inferences and estimate population characteristics. It is unusual to be able to collect data from every member of a group of people when performing research on them. Instead, you select a sample. A sample is a group of people who volunteer to be a part of a study. To draw appropriate conclusions from your data, carefully consider how you will select a representative sample of the entire group. As a result, this is referred to as the sampling method (McCombes, 2022).

To avoid having to survey the entire population in order to gather insightful data, market research often employs a number of sample approaches. It is also a time and money-saving strategy, making it the core of any research design. Purposive sampling was used to construct the sample for the current study. Sample members are chosen for this method based on their knowledge, relationships, and abilities relating to a research issue.

The sampling methods are divided into two types such as probability sampling and non-probability sampling. In probability sampling, for example, the researcher sets a few criteria and randomly selects members of a population. With this selection parameter, all members have an equal chance of being part of the sample. The researcher selects the members to be studied randomly in non-probability sampling. This sampling approach is not a preset or fixed procedure for selection. As a result, ensuring that every component of a population has an equal probability of being represented in a sample can be difficult. In this case study, the researcher used a non-probability purposive sampling technique. The non-probability approach is a sampling methodology that obtains feedback depending on the researcher's or statistician's sampling abilities rather than a predetermined selection process.

Because the survey was done using an improbable sample, the results are frequently biased and may not correctly reflect the intended target demographic. However, in some cases, such as early stages of study or budget limits for performing research, non-probability sampling will be more valuable than other forms. Non-probability sampling is classified into four types:

convenience sampling, judgemental or purposeful sampling, quota sampling, and snowball sampling.

In this study, the researchers chose snowball sampling. When subjects are difficult to locate, researchers use snowball sampling. It is especially challenging to survey unsheltered people or undocumented immigrants. In such instances, researchers can use the snowball theory to track numerous categories to interview and gather data. Researchers utilise this sampling strategy when the subject is highly sensitive and cannot be discussed openly (Fleetwood, 2018). Surveys, for example, can be used to gather policy information. Many governments are unlikely to respond to the questions. To learn more about the policies, researchers still can approach persons they know or volunteers involved in the cause.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

It is not impossible that the researcher will be able to collect information from all the cases to answer the research question. Consequently, sample selection is necessary. The population is the entire case sampled by the researcher. In order to reduce the number of cases, researchers use sampling techniques because researchers lack the time and resources to analyze the entire population.

The first step is to clearly define the target population. Defining a clear target population is the first step in the sampling process. People who live in a particular country are often referred to as residents of that country. Next is, to select a sampling frame. The list of actual cases from which the sample will be taken is called the sampling frame. The sampling frame should reflect the population. The last step is, to choose a sampling technique. It is important to understand what sampling entails as well as the rationales behind why researchers are likely to choose a sample before examining the various types of sampling techniques. Sampling is the process of selecting a subset from a larger population. Inferences about a population or generalizations in light of accepted theory can both be drawn using sampling. The choice of sampling method essentially determines this.

Non-probability that is used in this study is snowball sampling. With the help of a few cases, a non-random sampling technique called snowball sampling can increase the sample size by persuading additional cases to participate in the study. According to Breweton and Millward

(2001), this method is best suited for small, hard-to-reach populations that are closed off to outsiders, like secret societies and exclusive professions.

The question-based on the data collection is the main component of the qualitative research method known as interviews. The interviewer must be one of two or more participants that will be the one who asks the questions. This survey involves employees working in travel agency companies. Some questions will be asked to employees physically to some travel agency companies around Kota Bharu. Data will be collected throughout the interview session.

In comparison to a possible responder elsewhere globally, the researchers feel that the targeted respondent at this event is more inclined to engage in this study. Additionally, the respondents were informed and educated about the research's goal. To safeguard the respondents' identities, their surnames were omitted.

In this study, the unit of study is a travel agency. We have to conduct face-to-face interviews, which is a cost-effective way to quickly obtain a significant volume of data gathered quickly from a large number of people. We need to spend time finding interviewers and conducting interviews. Hence, this study uses face-to-face interviews to collect data.

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS PROCESS

Researchers can access research participants' feelings and enable the development of an understanding of the meaning people ascribe to their experiences through qualitative research. For example, In the data analysis process, methods help researchers understand the data collected through respondent interviews, surveys, and feedback. However, the researcher only focused on thematic analysis for data collection in this study.

When applied effectively, thematic analysis is one of the most commonly utilised qualitative analytic tools in research. The thematic analysis identifies, analyzes, and interprets patterns in qualitative data. Although thematic analysis looks similar to content analysis, it is conceptually different. Content analysis, which focuses on identifying repeating terms and subjects, is effective for qualitative and quantitative data. Thematic analysis, on the other hand, can only be used with qualitative data and focuses on identifying patterns and 'themes' and requires the researcher to read the data repeatedly to understand the content.

In coding, the researcher categorized the data to obtain themes and patterns. They were using code as well, being able to identify and summarize important concepts in data sets, such as interview transcripts. This is because coding is the basis for themes placed within a data set or a topic or concept that pops up repeatedly throughout the research. Compiling the code into the theme serves to summarize sections of data. It helps to accomplish the study's goals and objectives and provides research answers (Jansen, 2023).

Data is coded into many categories to make it easier to analyze and organize. Categorizing data can also help researchers identify trends or relationships between data points (Mike, 2017). At this part, the researcher goes through the transcript of every interview and highlights everything that jumps out as relevant or potentially interesting because each code describes the idea or feeling expressed in that part of the text (Jack, 2019). The researcher can keep adding new codes by highlighting the phrases and sentences matching them as they go through the text. After going through the text, the researcher collates all the data into code-identified groups. Other than that, these codes allow the researcher to gain an overview of the main points and the recurring meanings throughout the data (Ibid). It begins when researchers have read and familiarized themselves with the data; they can identify an initial list of codes and generate ideas about what is in the data and exciting things (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

A long list of codes was identified across the data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). The codes need to be analyzed and considered how the different codes can be combined to form an overall theme (Ibid). In other words, the primary focus in this part was on the analysis at the broader level of themes rather than codes. Next, the researcher must examine the codes created, identify patterns, and develop themes (Jack, 2019). Themes are generally broader than codes because, usually, several codes are combined into a single theme (Stephanie, 2022). The theme part begins when the researcher has devised a set of themes, which involves refining those themes. In this part, it becomes evident that some candidate themes are not themes if insufficient data supports them or the data are too diverse. In contrast, others might collapse into each other because two different themes might form one theme (Ibid).

3.6 SUMMARY

This chapter detailed the methods employed in the study. It discussed the introduction of methodology, research design and strategy. Moreover, it also discusses sampling strategy, data collection method and data analysis process. In summary, this chapter has offered direction on the study's flow, which aids in the study's comprehension.

In conducting this study, researchers have used a non-probability sampling research method. The primary purpose of the researcher using this method is because this method is easier to implement and able to provide more accurate answers to achieve the objectives set by the researcher. Furthermore, to implement a non-probability sampling research method, the researchers have prepared several questions that will be asked during interview sessions with travel agency employees. Finally, the answer obtained from the interview session will become our data.

CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This previous chapter discussed techniques, or the methods used by researchers to collect data from respondents. In this chapter, the researchers aim to present the results of their discoveries. During the last semester break, the researcher collects data from a few respondents which are from 3 different travel agency companies through interview session face to face.

4.2 DISCUSSION BASED ON RESEARCH QUESTIONS

4.2.1 Participants Expressed Mixed Views

Respondent A1 stated that during the pandemic, travel agencies did not conduct internet commerce or work from home. Instead, they paused operations until authorities permitted them to resume operations. The government helped by paying half of the employees' salary and providing financial aid of RM3000 to keep the travel businesses operational. In order to ensure the safety of tourist areas, travel agencies followed the government's endemic rules, which included vaccination requirements, paperwork filing, immigration cards, and COVID-19 certificates.

Following the impact COVID-19, the majority of travel agencies business comes from foreign countries such as China and Vietnam. Other countries, except these two, would focus on the Chinese market, according to the responder. The government's measures were deemed modestly beneficial in 2023 but insignificant in 2022.

Respondent B2 said "During the pandemic, travel agencies are not closed and are usually online, so the company will promote working from home through social media, which as Instagram and WhatsApp. While travel agencies may have continued to operate online, the decrease in customer demand and restrictions on certain types of travel, like Umrah, posed significant challenges. Many businesses had to adjust their strategies, temporarily pause operations, or explore alternative services to sustain themselves during this period." "Everyone is aware that during Covid-19, we and all travel agency companies are not running, but our company is still running, alhamdulillah..." "During covid-19, we are not closed. We are normally online. Online means work from home."

The next respondent C1 said that “We in the field of tourism want improved infrastructure. Because of the current allocation, the impact we see is very minimal. The government must pump in less money. The old ones need to be updated a little, the ones that want to make new ones require a lot of allocations. So, if we look at the allocation given, we negotiate our allocation to be the lowest. I want to say that what is provided by the government to recover is not much. When opens, people can go for travel. In terms of government policy, the government is not like China, which does not allow any activity in or out. After that, we can all go here and there. So that's where it's good in terms of .. what is this .. in terms of budget, everything doesn't help.”

4.2.2 Significance of Clear Communication and Direction

4.2.2.1 The Importance of Timely and Transparent Communication

Respondent B1 stated that the necessity of following S.O.P. protocols issued by the government is a guideline and safety measure to be implemented by businesses in the tourism industry to ensure the well-being of employees and customers. Then the respondent noted the requirement to follow vaccine protocols and as prescribed number of vaccine doses. Besides, businesses in the tourism sector may have had to seek official authorization to operate and adhere to specific regulations defined by the government.

"We follow the S.O.P. issued by the government 100%."

"He has this S.O.P. from the government, this one place; getting approval from the government means that we can only implement it. We have a package."

"We only have to follow because we want to enter his country, right....so we have to follow the vaccine; how many doses are all..."

Next, respondent A2 said that “We must follow the government's suggestion. For example what?..Saudi Arabia.. Saudi Arabia does not even need a booster when it is not necessary. Our government said it was mandatory in the early days. Even though it's not.. so, we must follow the rules as the rules are still the rules. It means that you must follow the government's recommendation, the KKM has its recommendation. That's what we follow. What else .. want to ensure the level of tourism destinations.”

4.2.3 Concerns about Long-term Sustainability of Government Assistance

Respondent B3 stated that The moratorium indicates that the government has implemented temporary relief measures, such as suspending loan repayments or providing deferred payment options. These measures aim to give businesses relief and breathing room during challenging times. Therefore, governments need to continue monitoring the situation and adapt their assistance programs accordingly to address the evolving needs of companies and employees to support long-term sustainability.

“For example, there is a payment for those who have problems... right, our business is not working, so it is a contribution from the government in terms of finances...”

“Electricity and water bills can be for an extended repayment period, and There is a Moratorium. It helps a lot.”

Next is, said respondent C2 “This country's tourism blueprint needs to be changed by me. Because he doesn't support it. Not supporting entrepreneurs in tourism. Because I asked to go alone. Yes, even if I don't work here, even if I travel, I go by myself if I'm in the country. Because we don't have any problem talking to other locals.. right? .. but you can say that the travel agency asked to make a new blueprint (laughs).. the main market and the main market for Umrah is big. After covid is so big that there are not enough ships. The hotel rose sharply not enough because there are many requests. We have the same newspaper now. We even have Hajj and Umrah. Don't focus on other things. So we can talk about Umrah.. Because this Hajj is not possible, because our Hajj is licensed under the government.”

Researchers have collected data from 3 travel agencies with different respondents:

Themes	Respondent
Participants Expressed Mixed Views	A1, B2, C1
Significance of Clear Communication and Direction	A2, B1
Concerns about Long-term Sustainability of Government Assistance	B3, C2

4.3 SUMMARY

In this chapter will covered about discussion based on research questions. The purpose of the research is to know the result of the respondent given to analyze whether government policies regarding rebuilding the tourism industry after post-COVID-19 and to examine the government's plans to promote digital transition in the tourism industry. The questions given to respondents refer to the research objective in Chapter 1.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter five is about links with previous study, research finding, limitation, recommendation in future and summary. The previous study is related to the research objective and the literature review from past researcher perceptions of tourism employees towards government policies for COVID-19 recovery process. The previous study is related to the research objective and the literature review from past research on tourism employees' perceptions of government policies related to the COVID-19 recovery process. The researcher will come out with the analysis data from research findings after making an online survey which is through an interview session to the owner and staff of the travel agency at Kota Bharu, Kelantan. The researcher also comes out with limitations of study during making the research and collecting data. Lastly, the researcher came out with a recommendation for the future about the research topic which is the perceptions of tourism employees towards government policies for COVID-19 recovery process.

5.2 LINK WITH PREVIOUS STUDY

This section relates to the previous study because it provides essential information regarding tourism employees' perceptions of government policies related to the COVID-19 recovery process. With this information as a guide, the present research further explores the perceptions of those same employees more precisely and sees if any additional factors, such as socioeconomic or cultural differences, play a role in how they perceive the policies resulting from research questions and research objectives. The research questions are as shown following:

1. What would be the government's policies regarding Covid-19 regarding the tourism industry?
2. What are the government plans regarding promoting digital transition in recovering tourism?

Also, this section includes general objective and specific objectives, which are:

1. The general objective is to study how the governments rebuild the tourism industry after post-COVID-19.

Specific objectives:

1. To identify the government's policies regarding how to rebuild the tourism industry after post-COVID-19.
2. To examine the government's plans to promote digital transition in the tourism industry.

Research questions are an integral part of any research project, as they serve as the foundation and starting point for any research (Deeptanshu et al., 2022). Research questions are used to narrow a topic, identify what information is needed, and determine the direction of a study. They usually begin with terms such as who, what, when, where, why, and how, focusing on specific and clearly defined aspects of a topic that research can address (Ibid).

The research objective is to investigate the government's policies for rebuilding the tourism industry after post-COVID-19, including a review of existing policies, programs, incentives, and measures proposed by the government to identify opportunities for the travel & tourism industry. The research also examines the government's plans to promote digital transition in the industry and will evaluate the potential implications of such plans on the industry (Daniella, 2020). The study includes a comparative analysis of similar initiatives in other countries to generate learnings and recommendations (Ibid).

The result begins by looking at the effects of the pandemic on the tourism industry. This includes the impact of the closure of travel borders, travel bans, airline restrictions, and reduced consumer confidence. It examines how COVID-19 has shifted consumer behavior, emphasizing digitalization, e-commerce, and contactless services (Victoria, 2023). The impact of these changes on the industry is discussed in detail. Then looks at how governments can support tourism after the crisis. This includes providing financial aid to companies within the sector, investing in digital tourism services, and introducing marketing campaigns to rebuild consumer confidence and encourage travel (Jagdish N, 2020).

5.3 RESEARCH FINDING

The findings of this qualitative study highlighted several key themes that emerged from the perceptions of tourism employees towards government policies for the COVID-19 recovery process. Firstly, participants expressed mixed views regarding the effectiveness of government policies. Some employees believed that the policies were well-intentioned and necessary to support the industry's recovery, while others felt that they were inadequate or poorly implemented.

Secondly, participants emphasized the significance of clear communication and direction from government officials. They emphasized the importance of timely and transparent communication about policy revisions and protocols in order to promote consistency and reduce confusion among industry players.

Third, employees expressed concerns about the long-term sustainability of government assistance. While they praised financial assistance programmes and job retention initiatives, they also emphasized the importance of long-term plans to aid the industry in adapting to the changing landscape and being more resilient in the face of future challenges.

Participants also identified the need for sector-specific regulations that address the distinct issues that different parts of the tourist industry confront. They emphasized the significance of adapting assistance measures to meet the various needs of lodging providers, tour operators, and food service enterprises.

This research study provides vital insights into the perceptions of tourism employees towards government policies for the COVID-19 recovery process. The findings can be used by policymakers and industry stakeholders to improve policy formulation and implementation, ensuring that they address the concerns and needs of tourist employees. To get a thorough understanding of the recovery process and build informed solutions for future crises, more study is needed to explore the perspectives of other major players in the tourist sector, such as employers and customers.

5.4 LIMITATION

Limitation is an act of something that has its own limit such as period of time. In conducting this research study, researchers have faced limitations such as limited time and limited respondents and limited access to information. This study weaknesses, based on factors that are often beyond your control as the researcher.

Limited time is one of the challenges that researchers have faced during conducting this study. For example, researchers experience time constraints to get feedback from respondents because they did not answer the call or reply to our email after all the information or details given to them. Besides, some of the targeted respondents did not answer the phone call or response through email which caused researchers wasting their time to make a phone call to replace and find another respondent.

Next is, the researcher acknowledges that their study has significant limitations. Due to researcher's targeted respondents, it is only to owner and travel agency employees in Kota Bharu. It is quite hard for researchers to reach out the respondents even though only a few respondents are needed for this research study. This is because some of the respondents could not fully cooperate.

The third is limited access to information. For example, our research is about the COVID-19 policy for the recovery process. Some travel agency staff do not know what other policies are issued by the government. In addition, some information needs to be kept confidential by the owner. For example, in terms of profit or loss owned by the owner during the Malaysian movement control order period.

5.5 RECOMMENDATION

Based on the problem found in this case study, the researcher has listed some suggestion or recommendations to be described in chapter 5 according to researcher perceptions of tourism employees towards government policies for COVID-19 recovery process. It provides essential information regarding tourism employees' perceptions of government policies related to the COVID-19 recovery process. With this information as a guide, the present research further explores the perceptions of those same employees more precisely and sees if any additional factors, such as socioeconomic or cultural differences, play a role in how they perceive the policies resulting from research questions and research objectives. There are three recommendations as suggested by the researcher. The recommendation was also agreed by the 7 respondents which were from 3 different travel agencies companies through interview sessions face to face of travel agencies in Kota Bharu, Kelantan.

The first recommendation or suggestion is that the government should take action by giving more incentives to all travel agencies to revive the tourism industry. It means that, travel agencies hope that the government could provide hiring incentives, probably for a year for them to re-boost tourism to stay in the industry. Since the beginning of the pandemic, many tourism businesses were forced to close as travel restrictions and a series of Movement Control Orders (MCO) were imposed resulting in a critical cash-flow situation. They also hoped that the government would offer utility discounts for tourism businesses which were affected during the pandemic as they were still paying bills while not operating in the last two years. On tourism transportation, the Malaysian government must ramp up its services to stay competitive with other countries although this comes with a cost. This shows that the government should always keep the tourism industry in the national budget as it is a “low-hanging fruit” for the government to drive the country’s economy.

The second recommendation is that the government needs to promote more inbound attraction. They also hoped that the Malaysian government should look into exploring recreation vehicles to attract more tourists to the country as Malaysia has a lot of tourist attractions and wished for the government to provide allocation for tourism players to boost more activities and attractions for visitors. The government will extend the tax exemption for inbound tourism players in the upcoming budget. The tax exemption should continue for the next two or three years, as their

businesses were closed during the pandemic and now, they are trying to recover from those lost years.

The third recommendation or suggestion is that digital transition should be mandatory for travel agencies to attract more tourists using their services. In one sense, the internet has taken the place of word of mouth between friends and acquaintances. After all, in a digital context where peer-to-peer relations are pushed to the maximum, the opinion of those who have already visited a destination has the same weight as advice obtained from a guide or travel agency. In the real travel phase, digital transition is not only manifested in the great use of social media but on the contrary it is one of the other very interesting aspects related to the changes involving the use of smartphones. The digital transition of the tourism industry can also be identified in the selection of smartphones as the tool of choice for tourists who want to go on vacation. In conclusion, it is clear that digital transition has radically changed the tourism industry.

5.6 SUMMARY

The link with previous study because it provides essential information regarding tourism employees' perceptions of government policies related to the COVID-19 recovery process and this information as a guide, the researchers explores the perceptions of those same employees more precisely and sees if any additional factors, such as socioeconomic or cultural differences, play a role in how they perceive the policies resulting from research questions and research objectives. The research findings highlighted several key hermes that emerged from the perceptions of tourism employees towards government policies for the COVID-19 recovery process. Next, in conducting this research study, researchers have faced limitations such as limited time and limited respondents and limited access to information. In addition, the researcher issued several recommendations, namely the government should take action by giving more incentives to all travel agencies to revive the tourism industry, the government should promote more inbound attractions and digital transition should be mandatory for travel agencies to attract more. tourists use their services.

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APPENDICES

The cover of the report features the OECD logo at the top left, with the text 'TACKLING CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19): CONTRIBUTING TO A GLOBAL EFFORT' and the URL 'oecd.org/coronavirus'. A circular graphic with blue and green lines is on the top right. The title 'Rebuilding tourism for the future: COVID-19 policy responses and recovery' is centered in a large, bold font. Below the title, it says 'Updated 14 December 2020'. A short paragraph of text is visible below a horizontal line. At the bottom, there is a footer with the text 'REBUILDING TOURISM FOR THE FUTURE: COVID-19 POLICY RESPONSES AND RECOVERY © OECD 2020' and a small circular logo.

2 |

Key messages: Rebuilding tourism is a priority, but the sector must become more sustainable and resilient in the future

Tourism continues to be one of the sectors hardest hit by the coronavirus pandemic and the outlook remains highly uncertain.

OECD expects international tourism to fall by around 80% in 2020. Destinations that rely heavily on international, business and events tourism are particularly struggling, with many coastal, regional and rural areas faring better than cities.

Encouraging news on vaccines has boosted hopes for recovery but challenges remain, with the sector expected to remain in survival mode until well into 2021.

Domestic tourism has restarted and is helping to mitigate the impact on jobs and businesses in some destinations. However, real recovery will only be possible when international tourism returns. This requires global co-operation and evidence-based solutions so travel restrictions can be safely lifted.

The survival of businesses throughout the tourism ecosystem is at risk without continued government support and although governments have taken impressive action to cushion the blow to tourism, to minimise job losses and to build recovery in 2021 and beyond, more needs to be done, and in a more co-ordinated way. Key policy priorities include:

- Restoring traveller confidence
- Supporting tourism businesses to adapt and survive
- Promoting domestic tourism and supporting safe return of international tourism
- Providing clear information to travellers and businesses, and limiting uncertainty (to the extent possible)
- Evolving response measures to maintain capacity in the sector and address gaps in supports
- Strengthening co-operation within and between countries
- Building more resilient, sustainable tourism

While flexible policy solutions are needed to enable the tourism economy to live alongside the virus in the short to medium term, it is important to look beyond this and take steps to learn from the crisis, which has revealed gaps in government and industry preparedness and response capacity. Co-ordinated action across governments at all levels and the private sector is essential.

The crisis is an opportunity to rethink tourism for the future. Tourism is at a crossroads and the measures put in place today will shape the tourism of tomorrow. Governments need to consider the longer-term implications of the crisis, while capitalising on digitalisation, supporting the low carbon transition, and promoting the structural transformation needed to build a stronger, more sustainable and resilient tourism economy.

This note is an abridged version of the OECD Tourism Paper:
Mitigating the impact of COVID-19 and preparing for recovery: <https://doi.org/10.1787/47045bae-en>

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