

THE EFFECT OF COVID-19 ON TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY: RESURGENCE IN THE POST-PANDEMIC ERA

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The alarming spread of the coronavirus infection (COVID-19) has brought the world to a halt, particularly affecting the tourism and hospitality industries. Unexpected travel restrictions and border closures in most countries have resulted in the loss of millions of livelihoods and jobs. In the tourism and hospitality sector alone, 100 million jobs have already been lost, with an estimated loss of 5.5 trillions of travel and tourism GDP in the current year due to prolonged travel restrictions and Movement Control Order (MCO) imposed by nations.

It has been revealed that when the current COVID-19 pandemic crisis ends, visitors will be less inclined to visit a tourism destination, dine at a restaurant, and stay in a hotel than they were previously. This reflects the fact that we are unable to return to normalcy because the normalcy we had was the source of the problem. If we return to the old normal, the black swan theory would be confirmed. Whenever an unprecedented event of major socioeconomic impact occurs, such as the Covid-19 pandemic, it is inappropriately rationalized, assuming such an occurrence was predictable, and things return to *'business as usual,'* ignoring the benefit of hindsight Kaushal & Srivastava (2021).

According to this viewpoint, the current pandemic crisis will not result in any significant changes to the tourism and hospitality sector's future management, operation, and planning, but rather will continue business as usual in a post-crisis business environment. This is particularly concerning because we must not overlook the fact that the current pandemic crisis has not only exacerbated the tourism industry's decline, but also reflects the global hospitality industry's lack of business resilience and vulnerability Khan & Hashim (2020). Over the last few decades, the industry has been identified as a major agent of unsustainable business practices, such as over tourism, taking sustainability for granted, and conducting business in a neoliberal and capitalistic manner (Batool et al., 2021).

COVID-19 has had a negative impact on the financial, health, and mental well-being of citizens all over the world. Travel and tourism are regarded as the focal points of global economics and the financial backbone. Without it, the global economy will suffer greatly in terms of financial, social, and mental haphazardness in the coming years, according to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). The World Tourism Organization (WTO) highlighted in a report released by the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) that international tourism has shown a 22 percent decline in Q1, 2020, and the estimated trend of decline by the end of 2020 is expected to hit 60 to 80 percent. In comparison to the first quarter of 2019, the industry has already experienced a 67 percent decrease in tourist mobility and a USD 80 billion loss in tourism exports Palmer (1988).

Extensive job loss has exacerbated the workers' sense of injustice, vulnerability, and long-standing challenges in the form of fewer benefits, low wages, and *"right on time"* labor policies in the industry. COVID-19 is regarded as a wake-up call for transforming the tourism and hospitality industries into a more sustainable model that benefits all stakeholders. Tourism has historically demonstrated significant resilience in the aftermath of disasters and crises on a regional and international scale. It was frequently possible as a result of coordinated intervention

from regional, local, and national governments assisting businesses through a series of stimulus packages and incentives such as tax breaks and wage subsidiaries Smith & Goss (1993).

To grow the tourism and hospitality industries in a more sustainable and equitable way. In doing so, it is critical to ensure that tourism destination communities are left with not only net positive economic benefits, but also balance in myriad ecological and social harmony through gender empowerment and marine ecosystem regeneration.

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