

Changes in Global Tourist Behavior During the Covid-19 Pandemic.

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Abstract

Purpose: The Covid-19 pandemic has been a challenge for the world community since its inception in December 2019. The rapid and massive transmission to all corners of the world has forced various parties to implement policies that harm many sectors. This includes the tourism industry sector. The industry is required to adapt to new habits by participating in presenting policies that are able to provide safe and comfortable tourism for tourists. However, after the many pressures and prohibitions faced during the Covid-19 pandemic, it indirectly changed people's behavior as tourists. Therefore, this study aims to find out which direction changes in tourist behavior globally during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Results and discussions: The results of this study indicate that there is a change in tourist behavior related to destination preferences, transportation, and accommodation.

Conclusion: Tourists prefer accommodation in the form of villas and longer duration. Meanwhile, the main priority of tourists during the pandemic is cleanliness and health, so if you want to recover quickly, the tourism industry players from upstream to downstream must be able to present clean and healthy tourism

Keywords: Covid-19, Policy, New Normal, Changes in Tourist Behavior.

INTRODUCTION

Covid-19 is an infectious disease caused by a type of coronavirus. Symptoms in humans Covid-19 causes respiratory tract infections (WHO, 2020). The spread of the Covid-19 virus was first detected in December 2019 and then spread throughout the world in a short period of time. Covid-19 was officially declared a pandemic on March 9, 2020. Various policies were carried out by all stakeholders who have authority related to handling the Covid-19 pandemic. Social distancing, travel restrictions, and lockdowns are enforced in almost all parts of the world to suppress the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic.

The term New Normal was then widely used by various parties as a response to handling the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic, including the tourism sector. Regulations such as Swab Tests before and after tourism trips, restrictions on the number of tourists in one destination, to touchless tourism patterns are carried out to provide safe tourism for all industry players in it. All changes, both physical in nature, such as infrastructure, to non-physical ones, such as regulations and policies, directly change the behavior of tourists in

determining various choices related to tourism activities that they will undergo. Tourists who act as consumers want guarantees of cleanliness, health and safety from infection with the Covid-19 virus.

Based on this background, this research was conducted to identify changes in tourist behavior in the Covid-19 pandemic era so that a good and complete understanding will be obtained, so that the tourism industry players can make the right response in order to survive in the midst of various uncertainties that are currently hitting.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Tourism is a variety of tourism activities and is supported by various facilities and services provided by the community, businessmen, government, and local governments (Law Number 10 of 2009 concerning Tourism). Meanwhile, according to Yoeti in Yulesti (2017) said that tourism is a journey that is temporary and organized from one place to another, with the intention not to earn a living in the place visited, but solely to enjoy the trip.

Today's tourism activities have turned into an essential need for modern society, which has a rhythm of work and high life pressures every day. People who act as tourists certainly have a variety of behaviors. Loudon and Della Bitta (Buchari Alma, 2008) say that tourist behavior is a decision-making process and physical activity that individuals carry out when evaluating, obtaining, using, or ignoring goods and services. According to the theory proposed by Kotler and Keller (2009), there are four factors that influence tourist behavior. These factors are as follows:

1. Cultural Factor

Culture is the basis of a person's wants and needs to obtain values, perceptions, preferences, and behaviors. Cultural factors consist of Culture, Subculture, and social class.

2. Social Factor

Social factors consist of family references, groups, rules, roles, and social status of tourists.

3. Personal Factor

Personal factors are psychological characteristics of a person consisting of age and life cycle, occupation, economy, personality, lifestyle, and self-concept.

4. Psychological Factor

Psychological factors consist of motivation, perception, knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes. Of the several factors that influence tourist behavior, one of the most important factors in changing tourist behavior during the Covid-19 pandemic is motivation. According to McIntosh, Goeldner and Ritchie (1995) motivation or encouragement of a person to carry out tourism activities is divided into four major groups, namely: (1) physical motivation, aimed at relaxation, exercise and refreshment; (2) cultural motivation, tourism encouragement to know local culture, customs, traditions, and arts; (3) social motivation, often referred to as interpersonal motivation, namely the desire to visit friends or family, to escape from a boring situation; (4) status motivation, related to self-development, education, to pursue hobbies.

RESEARCH METHODS

This research will use the descriptive qualitative method. According to Siyoto and Sadik (2015:28), qualitative research methods are methods that emphasize more aspects of in-depth understanding of a problem rather than looking at problems for generalization research. The descriptive method according to Sugiyono (2005:21) states that descriptive method is a method used to describe or analyze a research result but is not used to make broader

conclusions. The reason for using qualitative descriptive methods is because researchers want to describe behavioral changes that occur in tourists during the Covid-19 pandemic in determining their tourism activities in a specific, transparent, and in-depth manner.

DISCUSSION

Responding to the spread of the Covid-19 virus, stakeholders issued policies that had a negative impact on several world industrial sectors, one of which was the tourism industry. Some of the policies that cause the tourism industry to suffer losses are as follows:

1. Lockdown or regional quarantine is a policy carried out to limit the movement of a person in a certain area or region to suppress mobility and transmission of the Covid-19 virus.
2. Travel Restriction. It is a policy imposed by a country to limit who may leave or enter through immigration gates to prevent the spread of the Covid-19 virus.
3. Social/Physical Distancing
This policy is the provision of distance between humans in certain places to reduce the possibility of transmission of the Covid-19 virus from aerosols. The implementation of this policy resulted in the capacity of the place or space could not be maximized to provide a safe distance.

According to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) on its official website, the travel and tourism industry is one of the sectors most affected by the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic. Data compiled by UNWTO shows that in the period January to October 2020 international tourist arrivals worldwide decreased by 72% or 900 million less than the same period in the previous year and resulted in a loss of export revenue from tourism of USD 935 billion or around 13 trillion Rupiah. The decline is equivalent to the normal situation of the tourism industry 30 years ago.



Figure 1. UNWTO Data on International Tourist Arrivals for the January-October 2020 Period
Source : <https://www.unwto.org/impact-assessment-of-the-covid-19-outbreak-on-international-tourism>

Expert opinion from UNWTO considers travel and flight restrictions to be the main barrier weighing on the international tourism recovery by 79%, along with the slow handling of the virus by 68% and low consumer confidence by 31%. The early 2020 period was truly a dark time for the tourism industry around the world.

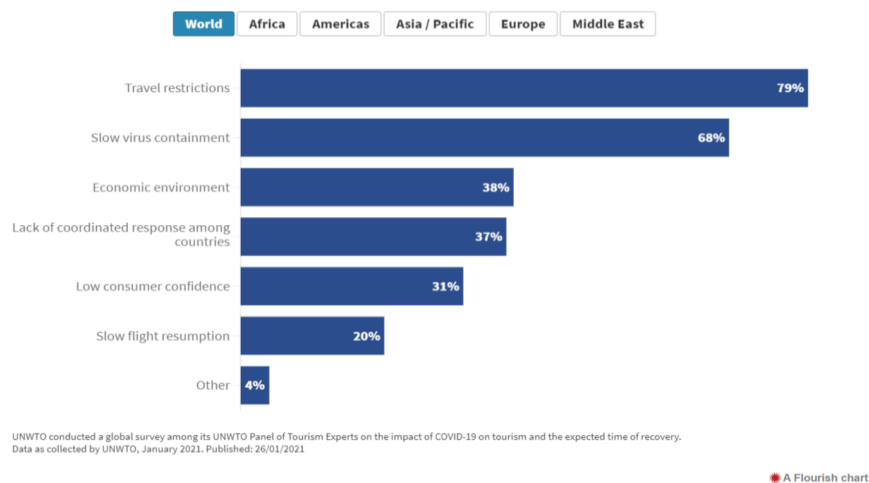


Figure 2. UNWTO Data The Main Factors Inhibiting the Recovery of International Tourism
 Sumber : <https://www.unwto.org/impact-assessment-of-the-covid-19-outbreak-on-international-tourism>

Figure 2. UNWTO Data the Main Factors Inhibiting the Recovery of International Tourism All the loss data presented above are physical and financial losses. There is another loss that is felt by society at large, namely mental loss. It is undeniable that all policies that limit mobility and space for movement will have a negative impact on the psychology of people who act as consumers or tourists. The most common psychological impact encountered by those affected by the Covid-19 pandemic is stress. According to Hawari (2011) stress is the body's response that is non-specific to any burden or demand on the individual.

Data released by the Association of Indonesian Mental Medicine Specialists (PDSKJI) shows that 64.3% of 1,522 respondents experienced anxiety and depression problems after conducting online self-examinations related to mental health as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. Continuous stress, anxiety, and depression encourage a person to have physical motivation to travel as an escape from the boredom and monotonous routine caused by the Covid-19 crisis. But of course with the policies that are still in effect, tourism activities cannot be carried out as usual. Some of these changes can be divided into three broad categories, namely destinations, transportation, and accommodation. Here is the explanation:

1. Destinations

Changes in the choice of destinations by tourists are due to several factors, including mobility policies that are still limited, some countries still close their flagship destinations. Another thing that is considered by tourists to replace their conventional tourist destinations is health reasons. Fear and shifting priorities also influence the choice of tourist destinations. Aspects of cleanliness and security are absolute things that tourists look for to keep themselves safe from the spread of the Covid-19 virus. Not only that, tourists during the pandemic also avoid urban tourism which tends to cause crowds. This is in line with data compiled by iPropertyManagement which shows that 61% of families are more likely to visit rural destinations with an outdoor concept than destinations in urban areas. They want to distance themselves from crowds and crowds that allow the transmission of the Covid-19 virus. This shifts the preferences of tourists to choose urban destinations that are close to the crowd and choose destinations that are quiet and close to nature such as mountains or beaches.

2. Transportation

Similar to destinations, in the choice of transportation the first factor is the mobility policy which is still limited. Some countries still close access to their country by air. This policy applies to countries that are still unable to control cases of Covid-19 transmission. So that the choice of airplane transportation during the pandemic is getting less and less considered by tourists as their mode of transportation. Data from the property management website shows that during the Covid-19 pandemic 59% of families prefer to drive a private vehicle for travel rather than flying by plane. Tourists still do not feel safe with the type of mass tourism that uses public transportation such as planes, buses, or trains. They prefer to use private transportation and drive themselves to local destinations around their domicile.

3. Accommodation

The choice of accommodation is closely related to the choice of destination, when the choice of destination is in a place far from urban areas, the type of accommodation also changes accordingly. From data released by property management, villa and bungalow accommodation types are increasingly in demand by showing an increase in popularity of 60%.

The above argument is reinforced by the opinion of Airbnb CEO Brian Chesky in an interview with Reuters who predicts that travel will change permanently due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Traditional tourism and sightseeing of world-famous destinations will be significantly reduced. Travelers will prefer to drive to smaller destinations or tourist communities and less likely to fly to other cities or countries.

Another opinion Brian Chesky in his interview with CNBC said that the travel business will return again, but as we know that the new tourist trip will not be the same as the tourist trip that we know before. People will stay longer and they will seek a more intimate, authentic experience from whoever provides it.

CONCLUSION

After experiencing a difficult period due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the tourism industry must immediately respond quickly and appropriately to changes. One of them is a change in tourist behavior which is manifested in the preferences and priorities of tourists in traveling. Tourists during the pandemic choose tourist activities that are far from the crowds and close to nature. Transportation options are also to avoid the public and crowded. Tourists prefer accommodation in the form of villas and longer duration. Meanwhile, the main priority of tourists during the pandemic is cleanliness and health, so if you want to recover quickly, the tourism industry players from upstream to downstream must be able to present clean and healthy tourism. The application of appropriate health protocols is an obligation for all industry players, from destinations, transportation, to accommodation.

As a suggestion for destinations, make sure all health protocols for temperature checks, hand washing stations, hand sanitizers are available as basic operational facilities. The arrangement of the queuing system and carrying capacity must also be considered so that there is no mass accumulation and in tourist destinations, there is space to maintain distance. Suggestions for transportation, make sure the health protocols are implemented properly by applying social distancing by emptying the seats crosswise and also tightening the use of masks for passengers. Suggestions for accommodation, ensuring that health protocols are adequate and carried out in an orderly manner. The addition of touchless check-in facilities can add to the feeling of security and comfort for tourists. The addition of a stay package with a long duration of 3-7 days will also add options for tourists who want to stay for a long time to work from the hotel or just run away from a longer routine.

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