



Examining The Impact of The Covid-19 Pandemic on The Economic Performance of The Tourism Industry in Southeast Asia: A Review of The Literature

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Abstract

The ongoing Covid-19 pandemic has dominated most facets of life. It is safe to assume that no economy has escaped the effects of the pandemic. Given the wide scope of the effects and the available research, this paper examined the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the economic performance of the tourism industry in Southeast Asia. This paper focused on four key aspects: the government response and its effects on both amplifying and mitigating the damage caused by the pandemic on the tourism industry, the tourism industry's response to the pandemic through pricing and marketing strategies, the effect of risk perception on people's intention to travel, and the economic performance of the tourism industry in Southeast Asia. This paper found that government policy both negatively and positively affected the tourism industry as it tried to balance public safety and economic necessities. In addition, public fear and uncertainty negatively influenced international travel numbers. The study also found that the tourism industry became more flexible and aimed at covering operational costs. Finally, the economic impact of the pandemic on the tourism industry in Southeast Asia was devastating both in terms of reduced GDP and increases in unemployment.

Keywords: Southeast Asia, ASEAN, Covid-19 pandemic, Tourism, Travel

Introduction

The Covid-19 Pandemic started in late 2019 in Wuhan, China. Up to date, there have been around 185 million Covid-19 cases and over 4 million deaths globally (World Meters, 2021). This unique crisis is felt all over the world. Governments, people, and businesses are all still feeling the effects of the pandemic almost two years after it started. With vaccination campaigns in economically wealthy countries well underway, there is yet to be an unobstructed vision of how

เน้นความเป็นวิจัย ปฏิกิริยาของสังคมรู้ ยึดมั่นคุณธรรมให้เชิดชู เป็นองค์กรแห่งการเรียนรู้สู่สากล



the pandemic will end or how economies will deal with and adapt to its effects. Perhaps the most directly affected sector of the economy is the travel and tourism industry. According to (UNWTO, 2021), while in 2019, 1.4 billion international tourists arrived worldwide, in 2020 there were only 381 million arrivals, which is a decrease of more than 70%. Thus, it is no surprise that the travel and tourism industry has suffered immensely. This review will focus on the literature studying the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the travel and tourism industry in the Southeast Asia region. The Southeast Asia region is part of Asia and the Pacific, which according to (UNWTO, 2021) showed an above average and the highest drop in international tourist arrivals at 84% in 2020.

Since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic, literature has been produced about the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the world economy, with more specific studies about different regions, countries, and industries. However, when it comes to Southeast Asia, there are some gaps in the literature. First, there is scarce literature aimed at studying the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on Southeast Asia. Most studies look at Asia and the Pacific region. This region includes economies such as China, India, Australia, South Korea, and Japan in addition to Southeast Asia and other countries. This categorization can produce general results that may not accurately reflect the impact of the pandemic on Southeast Asian economies (or ASEAN, Association of Southeast Asian Nations). Large economies such as China, Japan, and India can heavily skew the numbers for the whole region and give a different view of Southeast Asia. Southeast Asia as it is referred to in this paper includes Brunei, Cambodia, East Timor, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Myanmar, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. Second, due to the recent and ongoing nature of the pandemic, few studies have been conducted to process the data from 2020, which is the year that shows the impact of the pandemic on economies. Data about travel and tourism exists on the World Tourism Organization website, and ASEAN publishes annual briefings. However, the gap in the literature is such that much of this data is not yet processed or studied. Finally, due to the two mentioned gaps, it is difficult to get a clear understanding of the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the travel and tourism industry in Southeast Asia.

Therefore, this literature review presents the most important findings from the available literature to help better understand how the pandemic has affected the travel and tourism



industry in Southeast Asia. This will be done by looking at four crucial aspects that can put the impact in perspective, namely government intervention, pricing and marketing in the travel and tourism industry, intention to travel and risk perception, and the overall performance of the Southeast Asian travel and tourism industry. It is important that the relevant literature be collected and presented in order to give a clear picture of the situation in Southeast Asia and to serve as a reminder that more research needs to be done focusing on Southeast Asia as an economic block, rather than looking at Asia and the Pacific as one economic region. This is because ASEAN has existed since 1967 (ASEAN, 2021), and trade is encouraged within the ASEAN economies. Therefore, studying Southeast Asia as a one region can help improve the understanding of the causes and effects of global events on the region.

Methodology

This study is a literature review. Both qualitative and quantitative data were reviewed, and the study was conducted while the Covid-19 pandemic was devastating much of Southeast Asia. The study made use of the available previous research that examined the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the tourism sectors of any of the 11 countries of Southeast Asia, namely Brunei, Burma (Myanmar), Cambodia, Timor-Leste, Indonesia, Laos, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam.

This review emphasized on four key aspects that are government intervention, pricing and marketing strategies, intention to travel, and economic performance of the tourism industry in Southeast Asia.

Government Intervention

First, in “The Deployment of Fiscal Policy in Five ASEAN Countries in Dampening the Impact of COVID-19,” (Ridzuan & Abd Rahman, 2021) examined the policies employed by five Southeast Asian governments to mitigate the negative effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the tourism sector among other sectors. The study conducted a review of the available literature, and the five nations that were included in the paper were Indonesia, Singapore, Malaysia, Cambodia, and Thailand. The study concluded that there were two major actions that the governments in Southeast Asian countries have taken that influence the performance of the tourism industry. The government interventions came in the form of restrictions on movement and changes to



fiscal policy. Firstly, the restrictions on movement had a negative impact on the economic performance of the tourism industry as fewer tourists means less revenue for the hospitality and tourism sector (Ridzuan & Abd Rahman, 2021).

Secondly, changes to fiscal policy through tax rebates, tax exemptions, and tax deferments had a positive impact on the tourism industry as these policies helped alleviate some of the financial hardships that the industry faced due to the slowdown of tourist arrivals (Ridzuan & Abd Rahman, 2021).

Second, (Fauzi & Paiman, 2020) studied about the mitigation efforts by Southeast Asian nations to contain the Covid-19 pandemic in their article, “COVID-19 pandemic in Southeast Asia: intervention and mitigation efforts.” The study conducted a review of the available literature, and 10 Southeast Asian countries were included in the study: Singapore, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, the Philippines, Vietnam, Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, and Myanmar. The study by (Fauzi & Paiman, 2020) provided additional proof that the governments of Southeast Asian countries reacted to the Covid-19 pandemic with interventions in the form of lockdowns of varying degrees and fiscal packages to support their economies. Although the tourism sector was not the primary focus of the study, the study acknowledged that the hospitality and tourism sector of the Southeast Asian countries suffered severe negative effects from the lockdown measures imposed by the governments. Additionally, the study showed in detail that the Southeast Asian nations implement new fiscal policies to help soften the economic hardships that resulted from the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020.

Third, in “The end of over-tourism? Opportunities in a post-Covid-19 world,” (Koh, 2020) examined the effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on cities that experienced over-tourism. The study made use of secondary sources, and Bangkok, the capital city of Thailand, was included in the study. (Koh, 2020) found that the Thai government had intervened in two distinct ways to mitigate the negative impact of the Covid-19 pandemic both on the economy in general and on the tourism sector in specific. The first way that the Thai government intervened was two-pronged. It shut down non-essential services, which included the tourism industry, in March 2020, and then it banned entry to tourists in April 2020. The second way by which the Thai government affect the performance of the tourism industry was by implementing a new Covid-19 relief package, which again demonstrated that fiscal policy was one of the preferred ways that governments



come to the assistance of the economy. In this case, the assistance came in the amount of \$58 billion of aid to Thailand's struggling economy.

Last, (Tran, Chen, Tseng, & Liao, 2020) evaluated the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on demand for international tourism services in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) economies in their article, "Tourism under the Early Phase of COVID-19 in Four APEC Economies: An Estimation with Special Focus on SARS Experiences." This study made use of secondary data from the period of January 1, 2020 to April 30, 2020. Thailand was the only Southeast Asian country of the four countries included in the study. The results of the study by (Tran, Chen, Tseng, & Liao, 2020) confirmed that the Covid-19 pandemic had a significant negative impact on tourist arrivals to Thailand, and the study once again showed that the Thai government had reacted to the Covid-19 pandemic by imposing restrictions on international travel into Thailand. It went on to conclude that travel restrictions on international tourists entering Thailand was the most consequential cause of the reduced number of international tourists and the reduced economic performance of the tourism industry in Thailand.

Thus, these studies taken in their totality point to four main findings regarding the actions that the governments in Southeast Asia took as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic. First, governments across Southeast Asia imposed severe travel restrictions on tourists entering their countries to prevent the severity of the Covid-19 pandemic from getting worse in their countries (Fauzi & Paiman, 2020; Koh, 2020; Ridzuan & Abd Rahman, 2021; Tran, Chen, Tseng, & Liao, 2020). Second, the governments of the Southeast Asian nations provided financial assistance to their economies in the form of fiscal policy to help mitigate the negative economic impacts of the pandemic (Fauzi & Paiman, 2020; Koh, 2020; Ridzuan & Abd Rahman, 2021). Third, the travel restrictions on international tourists to these countries caused major financial and economic stress on the tourism industries of the Southeast Asian countries (Fauzi & Paiman, 2020; Koh, 2020; Ridzuan & Abd Rahman, 2021; Tran, Chen, Tseng, & Liao, 2020). Fourth, the financial assistance provided by the governments of Southeast Asia offset some of the economic pain that was felt by the tourism industry, but the assistance did not completely erase the economic hardship felt by the tourism industry as the travel restrictions significantly outweighed the assistance (Fauzi & Paiman, 2020; Koh, 2020; Tran, Chen, Tseng, & Liao, 2020).



Pricing and Marketing of the Tourism Industry

First, in “Managing hotel revenue amid the COVID-19 crisis, (Denizci Guillet & Chu, 2021) examined the role of pricing and marketing in the hospitality and tourism industry during the Covid-19 Pandemic. (Denizci Guillet & Chu, 2021) used primary data that was collected from 26 revenue executives in the industry through interviews between January 2020 and March 2020, and out of the 26 executives, 25 of them were based in Asia, and seven of the executives in total were from Singapore and Thailand. (Denizci Guillet & Chu, 2021) explained that the Covid-19 pandemic had a significant negative impact on hotel profits through lower demand and occupancy rates at hotels but that the industry could use the correct pricing strategies and marketing principles to influence the demand and profit of the industry in a positive way. The first key finding was that businesses in the hospitality and tourism industry were using the lowest available rate and cost-based pricing during the Covid-19 pandemic, and that businesses in the hospitality and tourism industry did so because the lowest available rate and cost-based pricing resulted in a positive effect on demand for hospitality and tourism services in the short term (Denizci Guillet & Chu, 2021). By using the lowest available rate and cost-based pricing, hotel stays became less expensive and more attractive to the small pool of travelers that were available. Additionally, hotels used cost-based pricing, where prices are set just above operating costs, as it was crucially important for hotels to breakeven and maintain their operations during the Covid-19 pandemic. The second key finding by (Denizci Guillet & Chu, 2021) related to the marketing activities of the industry. Some of the executives interviewed indicated that the correct marketing messaging could be used to increase potential customers’ confidence in their offerings. To do so, it was recommended that the industry focus on messaging regarding their generous cancellation policies, Covid-19 prevention measures, and corporate social responsibility projects. This messaging could build trust and decrease the risk associated with travel in the minds of tourists.

Second, (Ghaharian, Abarbanel, Soligo, & Bernhard, 2021) examined the crisis management practices of the hospitality and tourism sector in general and the gambling industry during the Covid-19 pandemic in their article, “Crisis management practices in the hospitality and gambling industry during COVID-19.” Primary data were collected for the study from hospitality and tourism stakeholders through online surveys, and the study included hospitality industry professionals



from Singapore and Vietnam. The first key finding of the study by (Ghaharian, Abarbanel, Soligo, & Bernhard, 2021) was that marketing was a crucially important and often used tool in the industry's efforts to mitigate the negative economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. The second important discovery was that price reductions were also a key tool of the hospitality industry's response against the negative impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the industry's business performance (Ghaharian, Abarbanel, Soligo, & Bernhard, 2021). The paper concluded that marketing initiatives and price reductions could lead to increases in both short-term and long-term demand for the services of the hospitality and tourism industry.

Hence, the two previous studies by (Denizci Guillet & Chu, 2021; Ghaharian, Abarbanel, Soligo, & Bernhard, 2021) showed the responses that the hospitality and tourism industry in Southeast Asia took during the pandemic to deal with the profound negative impact that the Covid-19 pandemic had and was having on the economic activity of the industry. The first key takeaway from the studies was that the hospitality and tourism industry implemented marketing strategies to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic's negative impact on tourist numbers and that some of the most popular marketing strategies focused on reducing the perceived risks of traveling during a pandemic by informing the public about their Covid-19 prevention efforts and their flexible cancelation policies (Denizci Guillet & Chu, 2021; Ghaharian, Abarbanel, Soligo, & Bernhard, 2021). The second key takeaway was that businesses in the industry reacted to the lower number of visitors by implementing pricing strategies that reduced the prices of the services that were offered as the industry tried to lure potential tourists to travel (Denizci Guillet & Chu, 2021; Ghaharian, Abarbanel, Soligo, & Bernhard, 2021). The final key takeaway from the studies was that economic considerations were the driving force for the marketing and pricing strategies that were established during the Covid-19 pandemic as the industry suffered from a huge decline in demand for its services (Denizci Guillet & Chu, 2021; Ghaharian, Abarbanel, Soligo, & Bernhard, 2021).

Intention to Travel Based on Risk Perceptions

There are a few different views and findings in the literature when it comes to the relationship between intention to travel and risk perception. Naturally, it is reasonable to assume that a higher risk perception leads to a lower intention to travel. Most of the literature seems to



agree that risk perception affected people's intention to travel. For instance, (Zenker, Braun, & Gyimóthy, 2021) suggested that even before the Covid-19 pandemic, the global travel and tourism trend was moving toward more health awareness in terms of risk perception. According to (Zenker, Braun, & Gyimóthy, 2021) risk perception is becoming a more crucial factor in making decisions about traveling. The main difference in the literature is that some studies have found that the effect or relation between risk perception and intention to travel is a direct one, while others found an indirect relationship between the two.

In order to understand risk perception, it is important to utilize the existing literature. (Su, et al., 2021) used the Risk Perception Attitude framework and the theory of planned behavior in part to study risk perception. The findings of the study suggested that risk perception is mostly built through information search. Of the studied sources of information that people seek and trust, both informal and formal information sources have an impact on forming risk perceptions. Ranging from watching the news on television to talking to friends and family, all these sources of information help to shape a person's risk perception (Su, et al., 2021)

One of the studies which showed a direct relationship between risk perception and intention to travel was the study by (Farrukh, Shahzad, Sajid, Sheikh, & Alam, 2020). According to the study, one of the most important aspects of tourists' intention to travel is risk perception. In the context of tourism and the current global pandemic, risk perception could simply be explained as the risk perceived by a potential traveler that affected his decision about whether to travel. Moreover, the negative effect of risk perception on travel intention did not only affect the person that holds the perception. (Farrukh, Shahzad, Sajid, Sheikh, & Alam, 2020) suggested that this perception spreads through one of the most effective and trusted ways of information sharing, electronic word of mouth. Online reviews, ratings, and experience sharing by travelers had as much of an effect on risk perception as official communications from governments and television news outlets. However, it is important to note that risk perception is only one of several factors that make up a destination's image and thus the intention to travel (Farrukh, Shahzad, Sajid, Sheikh, & Alam, 2020).

On the other hand, (Su, et al., 2021) found an indirect relationship between risk perception and intention to travel. More specifically, risk perception is more connected to self-efficacy, which in turn affects the intention to travel. Other literature that supports this view claimed that even



the elimination of risk perception was not enough to change a tourist's intention to travel (Tran, Chen, Tseng, & Liao, 2020) during a pandemic. However, while it was not much help during a pandemic, (Tran, Chen, Tseng, & Liao, 2020) suggested that lowering risk perception can help countries' tourism industries recover more quickly after a pandemic has been brought under control. In part, this is because risk perception is trumped by more concrete actions, such border closures, travel restrictions, and reductions in global GDP, which negatively affect tourism and travel. Thus, risk perception would play a more crucial role once borders are opened and travel is allowed (Tran, Chen, Tseng, & Liao, 2020).

ASEAN Tourism Industry Economic Performance

The effects of the Covid-19 pandemic worldwide are undeniable. According to (Lenzen, et al., 2020), the global economy suffered an approximate \$4 trillion loss in consumption, which is roughly 4% of global GDP. However, this global loss was not distributed evenly; the literature agreed that some sectors suffered more significant impacts than others did. For example, (Lenzen, et al., 2020; Ridzuan & Abd Rahman, 2021) suggested that tourism and travel are among the hardest hit sectors of the economy worldwide. (ASEAN Policy Brief, 2020) suggested that ASEAN is among the most effected regions for a few reasons. First, even before any of the ASEAN countries were locked down, their primary trading partners, China and the United States, saw soaring Covid-19 cases, which negatively affected the ASEAN economies. Prior to the Covid-19 outbreak, the average annual GDP growth for 2020 in ASEAN was forecasted at around 4.5%. After taking the pandemic into account, the revised forecasts reduced the annual GDP growth to as low as 1.2%, with many ASEAN countries such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, and Singapore predicted to have negative growth depending on how the pandemic progressed (ASEAN Policy Brief, 2020). Alternatively, The World Bank provided grimmer numbers forecasting a reduction of up to 10% in Thailand and the Philippines and 6% in Malaysia.

Tourism and travel have been one of the hardest hit sectors. There were 143 million visitors to ASEAN in 2019 with Thailand being at the forefront attracting nearly 40 million visitors (ASEAN Stats Data Portal, 2019). The travel and tourism industry accounted for 12.6% of ASEAN's total economy in 2018 (ASEAN Policy Brief, 2020) and for around 42 million jobs in 2018 (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2021). While the tourism and travel numbers for 2020 have not been widely studied, (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2021) suggested that travel and tourism's



contribution to GDP decreased by around 52% in the region in 2020 (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2021). This number is very comparable to the global economy where travel and tourism accounted for 10% of global GDP in 2019 and decreased to 5.5% in 2020 (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2021). Additionally, around 7 million travel and tourism jobs were lost in the region between 2019 and 2020, an approximate loss of 16% of the total number of jobs in the travel and tourism sector. This number is also similar to the global number, where a total loss of 18% of jobs were seen in the sector between 2019 and 2020 (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2021).

Research has already showed that ASEAN countries, such as Thailand and Vietnam, which have the highest number of visitors, are the most affected by movement control orders that severely limit people's movement and travel (Ridzuan & Abd Rahman, 2021). The Philippines has also felt the impact of travel restrictions as it relies on its citizens being foreign workers and sending money back to the country (Ridzuan & Abd Rahman, 2021; Koh, 2020) suggested that 90% of the world is under some degree of travel restriction. Another important aspect of the effect of travel and tourism is the difficulty in making accurate forecasts due to the unpredictable nature of the pandemic. As is evident in a few sources including (ASEAN Policy Brief, 2020), governments have had to create several different projections about their economies and the travel and tourism sector based on different pandemic scenarios.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study was conducted to determine the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the tourism industry of Southeast Asian nations. The study made use of the previous literature regarding this topic. It is important to note that this study was completed while the Covid-19 pandemic was still causing much havoc around the world, and as such, it offers a “real-time” look at the effects of the pandemic on the tourism industry of Southeast Asia. The researchers found that the economic performance of the tourism industry of Southeast Asia was affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and that government interventions, the industry's marketing and pricing strategies, and risk perceptions among tourists were key factors that influenced the economic performance of said industry.

Regarding government interventions, the previous studies by (Fauzi & Paiman, 2020; Koh, 2020; Ridzuan & Abd Rahman, 2021; Tran, Chen, Tseng, & Liao, 2020) show that there were two



ways that governments of Southeast Asian countries reacted to the pandemic. First, governments placed severe restrictions on who was allowed to enter their countries. These actions had a negative effect on the tourism industry of the region as tourist numbers suffered greatly. Second, governments moved to help offset the negative economic impact of the travel restrictions by implementing fiscal policies that supported the tourism industry through tax exemptions, tax rebates, and tax deferment. Importantly, the literature also shows that travel restrictions had a much larger impact on the economic performance of the tourism industry in Southeast Asia than did the fiscal policies. As such, government interventions resulted in a net negative impact on the tourism industry in Southeast Asia.

Another key result of the Covid-19 pandemic in Southeast Asia was that the hospitality industry in the region implemented new pricing and marketing strategies to offset the negative impact that the Covid-19 pandemic was having on its business (Denizci Guillet & Chu, 2021; Ghaharian, Abarbanel, Soligo, & Bernhard, 2021). Regarding the pricing strategies that were employed, the industry reduced its prices for two purposes. First, executives in the industry believed that lower prices would lead to increases in demand. Second, the industry lowered its prices as a way of prioritizing the coverage of operating costs over profit maximization. Executives in the industry believed that if their companies were able to cover their operating costs, they would survive the crisis and focus on profits after the crisis had passed. Regarding the marketing strategies that were employed in the tourism industry in Southeast Asia, marketing activities were seen as a crucially critical component of remaining liquid during the pandemic. In general, the industry implemented marketing activities to attract travelers. There were three key messages that the industry focused marketing activities on, namely flexible cancelation policies, Covid-19 prevention measures, and corporate social responsibility activities. It was found that by focusing on these three messages, the industry believed that it would reduce travelers' risk perception, increase their confidence and trust in hospitality establishments, and increase demand in the industry. It was clear from the studies that survival of the harsh economic consequences of Covid-19 was the driving force for the pricing and marketing decisions that were made.

Aside from government interventions and pricing and marketing strategies, a key theme that emerged from previous studies was the role that risk perception played in tourists' intention to travel. As it related to the Covid-19 pandemic, both direct and indirect effects were mentioned



in previous research. For the direct effect, it was found that when risk perceptions increased due to the Covid-19 pandemic, intention to travel decreased (Farrukh, Shahzad, Sajid, Sheikh, & Alam, 2020). For example, when people believed that the chance of catching Covid-19 was high, they were less likely to travel. Changing the negative perception was possible to a degree through messaging that made people feel safer to travel. Both governments and the tourism industry could create messages that communicated a lower risk of traveling. For the indirect effect of the Covid-19 pandemic on intention to travel, it was found that people had a reduced intent to travel as a result of factors that did not relate to the risk of getting sick with Covid-19 (Su, et al., 2021). For example, being made redundant and the closure of borders discouraged travelers from making trips. Although joblessness, border closures and other restrictions might not affect risk perceptions, they had a strong impact on intention to travel as these indirect effects made travel to the region impossible at times and difficult at other times.

The final important theme throughout the previous literature regarding the impact of Covid-19 on the economic performance of the tourism sector of Southeast Asia was the very real economic hardship that was felt within the industry. The research showed that there were two key economic variables in the industry that were negatively impacted by the pandemic. The first one relates to the tourism industry's contribution to the gross domestic product (GDP) of the region. For example, it was shown in the literature that Southeast Asia's tourism industry's contribution to GDP fell by approximately 52% in 2020 relative to 2019. The other economic indicator that showed the tough economic situation of the hospitality industry in Southeast Asia was the employment figures. The employment statistics of the tourism industry in the region decreased by 16% in 2020 relative to 2019 (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2021). One finding that was abundantly clear from the previous literature is that the Covid-19 pandemic was a painful blow to the economic performance of the tourism industry in Southeast Asia (ASEAN Policy Brief, 2020).

Limitations of the Study

As this study was not conducted free of limitations, the on-going nature of the Covid-19 pandemic at the time of the study features as the main limitation. This research was conducted while the Covid-19 pandemic in Southeast Asia was at the highest level of severity. As such, the



full effect of the pandemic on the tourism sector of Southeast Asia could not be known at the time of this study. The studies that were available to the researchers were limited in scope as the pandemic was still relatively new and the impact of the pandemic had not been fully experienced. Indeed, some of the previous literature that was used in this study examined data that was only from 2020 or only from certain periods of 2020. Thus, it is reasonable to expect that studies conducted post-pandemic will provide additional insights into this topic.

Further Research

This study focused on the “real-time” impact that the Covid-19 pandemic had on the economic performance of the tourism sector of Southeast Asia, and it is proposed that additional research be undertaken in two areas to further the collective knowledge of this topic. First, an examination of the relationship between the Covid-19 pandemic and the economic performance of the tourism sector of Southeast Asia may be conducted once the pandemic has ended. Additional studies at that time will undoubtedly result in a more complete understanding of the pandemic’s impact as the full data set will be available to researchers after the pandemic. Second, an analysis of the long-term effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the economic performance of the tourism industry of Southeast Asia may be conducted to add clarity as to what negative and positive changes persist in the industry long after the pandemic is brought under control.

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