

Examining Intention to Visit Malaysia in the Post-Pandemic Era: A Survey-Based Inquiry into Tourist Perspectives

Irene Halim

School of Marketing & Management,
Asia Pacific University of Technology and Innovation, Bukit Jalil, Malaysia

Ng Kok Meng*

School of Marketing & Management,
Asia Pacific University of Technology and Innovation, Bukit Jalil, Malaysia
david.ng@apu.edu.my

Abstract

The travel industry has been profoundly affected by the COVID-19 pandemic, resulting in worldwide border closures and travel restrictions. As vaccines become more accessible and restrictions ease, there is an anticipated gradual resumption of travel. Nonetheless, lingering concerns about the ongoing pandemic have left many individuals hesitant to travel. This study focuses on analyzing the factors influencing Indonesian tourists' decision to visit Malaysia during the post-pandemic period. To verify the proposed hypothesis, a quantitative method using correlation analysis was employed in this research. The findings showed that factors such as fears about exposure to the virus, the possibility of new variants emerging, uncertainty around travel regulations and quarantine requirements, and economic concerns had a significant impact on travel intention to visit Malaysia. Through a literature review and analysis of relevant data, this paper aims to provide insights into the potential barriers to travel in the post-pandemic era and offer recommendations to help address these issues.

Keywords: *Post Pandemic Travel, Malaysia, Indonesian Tourists, Travel Intentions*

1.0 Introduction

The global COVID-19 outbreak, which originated in 2019, has had a profound impact on various industries worldwide, particularly the tourism sector. Travel bans, lockdowns, and international border restrictions have significantly impeded people's ability to travel internationally, leading to substantial losses for businesses operating within this sector, such as airlines, hotels, restaurants, travel agencies, and others. One of the most severe consequences is the reduction in a country's GDP and a lower growth rate for its economy.

Malaysia's tourism industry is greatly affected by the COVID-19. According to the Tourism Malaysia portal, it was reported that the tourism sector itself contributed a total of RM 86.14 billion to the country's economy in 2019 with approximately 26 million tourists visiting Malaysia (Tourism Malaysia, 2020). It is also the biggest source of employment in Malaysia where 3.1 million people are employed covering 9.5 percent of the overall workforce. However, the sudden spread-out of the

disease (when the COVID-19 restrictions were implemented) resulted in only 4.3 million tourists visiting Malaysia in 2020 (Hamid, Hashim, Shukur, & Marmaya, 2021). The impacts were not only reflected in the lowest number of tourists scored but also resulted in a high number of closure rates of businesses in the country.

In 2022, as many countries lifted their COVID-19 restrictions, Malaysia followed suit and reopened its international borders in June of the same year. This move presented an opportunity for Malaysia to rejuvenate its struggling tourism industry, which had been experiencing a downturn for the past two years. Nevertheless, various studies have indicated that disease outbreaks in a country can continue to impact tourist arrival rates even during the post-pandemic period. Similar instances have been observed in Europe during the foot and mouth disease outbreak and in other countries facing outbreaks of diseases like dengue, yellow fever, malaria, and Ebola (Hanafiah, Zain, Azinuddin, & Shariffuddin, 2021). Researchers argue that people's perception of risk plays a crucial role in their decision-making, particularly in regard to travel during a pandemic. Many individuals deem it too risky to travel due to concerns such as the possibility of contracting COVID-19, spreading the virus to family and friends, and incurring medical expenses in case of illness (Hanafiah et al., 2021). Consequently, even with lifted restrictions, people may still hesitate to travel as safety and health concerns persist.

In the Southeast Asia region, Indonesian travellers have shown significant interest and a positive outlook on travelling after the pandemic, as highlighted in a study by Susanto, Amelia, Amadea, and Hendriana (2021). Another research reveals that many Indonesians express a strong intention to embark on trips as soon as the pandemic subsides. Surprisingly, even with a sharp increase in confirmed COVID-19 cases, many Indonesians continue to venture out on trips, visiting family or going on vacations.

A study investigating the impact of COVID-19 on Indonesian travellers' intentions during the post-pandemic period indicated that both affective and cognitive perceived risks have little influence on their willingness to travel again. The researchers attribute this trend to the cultural values of Indonesians, who tend to adopt a middle-ground approach when dealing with uncertainties. According to <https://www.hofstede-insights.com/> (accessed: September 2021), this adaptability to future possibilities and the uncertainty surrounding the end of the pandemic have made Indonesians less risk-averse. Consequently, despite the pandemic, Indonesians generally remain active in travelling and maintain a positive attitude towards it.

While various articles have explored travel motivation in general, none of them has specifically examined the intentions of regional tourists travelling to Malaysia during the post-pandemic era. Therefore, the primary objective of this study is to gain insights into the travel behaviours and preferences of regional tourists, particularly those from Indonesia, who plan to visit Malaysia after the pandemic. Particularly, the researchers aim to answer the following research questions:

- What factors contribute to the decisions of Indonesian tourists to refrain from travelling to Malaysia during the post COVID-19 pandemic era?
- How has the perception of safety and security, hygiene, and health protocol in Malaysia been impacted by the pandemic, and how does this impact Indonesian tourists' decisions to visit?

2.0 Literature Review

2.1 Tourists' Travel Intentions to Malaysia during COVID-19

Intention refers to a plan or determination to carry out a specific action (Tran, Nguyen, Nguyen, & Cuong, 2021). It plays a vital role in predicting an individual's actual behaviour. In the context of marketing, the strength of one's intention often determines whether one will engage in the intended action. In the case of tourists, travel intention relates to the likelihood of an individual choosing to travel to Malaysia during the COVID-19 pandemic. Numerous factors can influence the strength of tourists' travel intentions, as previous studies have indicated. For example, factors like the perceived safety of travel, travel attitudes, and the fear of COVID-19 health risks can all impact tourists' intentions to visit a country.

According to Hanafiah et al. (2021), both perceived health risks and travel attitudes influence travel intentions during COVID-19. Similarly, Luo and Chi (2020) demonstrated that the perception of travel safety also affects travel intentions during COVID-19. These findings establish a relationship between these factors and travel intentions during the pandemic.

Since the onset of the pandemic, many tourists have expressed concerns about the safety of facilities in their destination countries. Numerous studies have highlighted that the COVID-19 virus can spread through infected surfaces, close contact with infected individuals, and airborne transmission. As emphasized by Nazneen, Hong, & Din (2020), safety during COVID-19 encompasses worries about the hygiene standards of hotels, recreational sites, and public transport.

Additionally, Abraham, Bremser, Carreno, Crowley-Cyr, & Moreno (2020) draw attention to the rise in hate crimes directed at people of Asian heritage and Chinese nationals, which has been extensively covered in media reports related to the COVID-19 outbreak. Instances of hate crimes against Asians have been reported in various countries, including Italy, the USA, France, and the UK, with over 200 cases reported in the UK alone within three months. Consequently, Asian tourists may perceive travel as unsafe due to the association of racism with the COVID-19 virus, impacting their willingness to travel.

The cleanliness and safety of tourism infrastructures have become crucial factors considered by tourists. The study conducted by Nazneen et al. (2020) revealed that respondents place significant importance on the cleanliness and safety of public transportation, hotels, and recreational sites. These perceptions of safety and hygiene play a pivotal role in influencing travel decisions. To boost tourism demand, governments are encouraged to uphold safety and hygiene standards in tourist infrastructures and attractions.

Furthermore, other researchers have observed that the intolerance towards Chinese citizens and the Chinese government due to the COVID-19 pandemic has adversely affected tourists' travel intentions to China (Abraham, et.al., 2020). The hate crimes targeting individuals of Asian or Chinese descent have created an atmosphere of insecurity when travelling, leading to a reduction in travel intentions to countries where such hate crimes have occurred.

However, no data shows how the safety of travel affects tourists' travel intentions to Malaysia. The current literature and hence it is important to identify the relationship between travel safety among Indonesian tourists' intention to visit Malaysia during post-pandemic travel.

H1: There is a relationship between safety of travel and tourists' travel intention to Malaysia during COVID-19

2.2 Indonesian Travel Attitudes

Azjen (1991) defined attitude as the extent to which an individual holds a positive or negative judgment or viewpoint about a particular behaviour (Liu, Li, Yen, & Sher, 2018). Similarly, Hanafiah, et.al., (2021) described travel attitude as the psychological changes reflected in a tourist's positive or negative evaluations.

Regarding Indonesian travellers, a study exploring their intention for domestic travel after the pandemic revealed that most Indonesians hold positive views about travelling to the destinations they had planned to visit following the COVID-19 pandemic (Pahrudin, Chen, & Liu, 2021). Another study focusing on Indonesian tourists' future behaviour after COVID-19 indicated that the majority of respondents reported reduced travel anxiety and increased enthusiasm for travelling after the pandemic.

Hanafiah et al. (2021) again demonstrated a relationship between travel attitudes and travel intentions. Their findings indicated that most travellers were cautious about travelling even after the pandemic subsided, and the majority were not eager to resume travel. Similarly, Liu et al. (2018) researched Muslim Friendly Tourism and found that tourists' attitudes towards destinations positively influenced their travel intentions. Furthermore, a study by Hui and Fumin (2020) exploring rural tourism intentions in China revealed that risk aversion had a significant negative impact on travel intentions in the context of rural tourism.

The studies mentioned showed that there are consistent results regarding how travel attitudes can affect travel intentions. Attitudes can be influenced by the risk knowledge of COVID-19 where if someone knows the dangerous health risk, a negative travel attitude will likely be developed and discouraging to travel, hence leading to lower travel intention.

H2: There is a relationship between travel attitudes and tourists' travel intentions to Malaysia during COVID-19

2.3 Fear of COVID-19 Health Risk

Fear can be defined as a state of emotion that is a reaction to risk, discomfort, or harm (Luo & Chi, 2020). Marques et al (2020), Wong and Alias (2021) and Chua et al. (2021) claim that the mental health of travellers influences their travel attitudes toward outward travel and their mental health could be influenced by strong emotions such as fear. Since COVID-19 started, people have become aware of the health risks that it comes with. Heavy health effects such as loss of smell and taste, shortness of breath, chest pain and the death tolls caused by it have made people fearful of getting affected by COVID-19. In addition, Rubin and Weasley (2020) asserted that COVID-19 is attached to negative stigma, anxiety, and stress due to news reports and social media that exaggerate information and spread false news regarding the disease. This factor can also cause panic and inflict fear on a lot of people around the world.

Previous studies have examined the relationship between fear of COVID-19 health risk and travel intentions. Hanafiah et al. (2021) conducted a study among Malaysian travellers where they analysed the respondents' view on travelling post-pandemic and their travel intentions in the future. She found that the majority of people are nervous about travelling due to a high number of COVID-19 cases and they are not willing to take the risk of getting infected by the virus through travelling.

Another study conducted by Chew and Jahari (2014) also emphasized that an individual's perceived risk plays a crucial role in influencing their decision-making process when selecting a travel destination. The research further revealed that intentions to cancel travel plans or avoid certain destinations are closely linked to health concerns associated with travelling in open or closed environments.

These studies consistently demonstrate a strong relationship between the two variables, indicating that an individual's perception of the health risks of travelling during COVID-19 can significantly impact their travel intentions. The findings suggest that the higher the level of fear regarding COVID-19 health risks, the lower the travel intention towards a specific destination. The level of fear can vary based on individual perspectives but may also be influenced by the perceived safety of the destination. For instance, if a country has a high number of COVID-19 cases, travellers' fear levels may increase accordingly (Wachyuni, S. S., & Kusumaningrum, D. A., 2020).

While previous research has established a relationship between the fear of COVID-19 health risks and tourists' travel intentions during the pandemic in general, there is currently no specific study that examines how it impacts the travel intentions of Indonesian tourists specifically towards Malaysia.

H3: There is a relationship between fear of COVID-19 health risks and tourists' travel intention to Malaysia during COVID-19

2.4 Cost of Travel

In their study on countries' economic losses and travel costs after being affected by COVID-19, Roman, Bhatta, Roman, & Gautam (2021) discovered that a majority of respondents agreed on the overall increase in travel expenses. This indicates that the impact of COVID-19 on the economy has led to a rise in the cost of travel compared to pre-pandemic times. Additional expenses may include mandatory seven-day quarantines, travel insurance, and COVID-19 tests imposed by some countries. Even though certain countries, including Malaysia, have lifted mandatory quarantines and testing requirements, the high demand for tourism has contributed to increased travel costs. As travel restrictions eased in many countries, a surge in tourist activity has resulted in higher demand for hotel accommodations and flight tickets (Gupta, 2021), driving up their prices and thus raising the overall cost of travel.

Truonga and Shimizu (2017) emphasized the significant role that travel costs play in influencing the number of people interested in visiting a particular destination (Yuni, 2020). This perspective is further supported by a study among Indonesian tourists regarding their travel preferences after the COVID-19 pandemic, where the majority of respondents (71.3%) considered price as the main factor when deciding whether to travel post-pandemic (Yuni, 2020).

Likewise, a study conducted by the US market research firm Destination Analysts on American travellers' sentiments revealed that 53% of respondents planned to travel within the next three months but expressed concerns about the rising travel prices, with 42.7% stating they refrained from travel in the last month due to this reason (Gupta, 2021).

These studies indicate that price is a major factor that affects travel intention. The increase in the cost of travel due to the effect of COVID-19 can cause tourists to become hesitant to travel to some destinations hence their travel intention will decrease, especially since some people are still recovering from the economic losses they suffered from COVID-19; hence a lot of people are still cautious with their spendings. Although previous research has shown the relationship between the

cost of travel and tourist intention, there is limited research that covers how the cost of travel affects travel intention to Malaysia specifically.

H4: There is a relationship between cost of travel and tourists' travel intention to Malaysia during COVID-19

2.5 COVID-19 SOP

COVID-19 has compelled countries to enforce strict standard operating procedures (SOPs) for both locals and tourists to curb the spread of the virus within their borders. Naciye & Adem (2020) highlighted that various restrictions have been imposed on tourism-related activities due to the pandemic. Public spaces have been closed, regulations have been placed on public transportation, and citizens are advised to maintain social distancing in crowded areas (Hao, Bai, & Sun, 2021). However, with the increasing prevalence of vaccinations, several countries, including Malaysia, have relaxed their SOPs. For example, Malaysia no longer requires pre-departure or arrival COVID-19 tests for entry, the mandatory quarantine policy has been lifted, and the country welcomes visitors regardless of vaccination status (Majlis Keselamatan Negara (MKN) Malaysia, 2022).

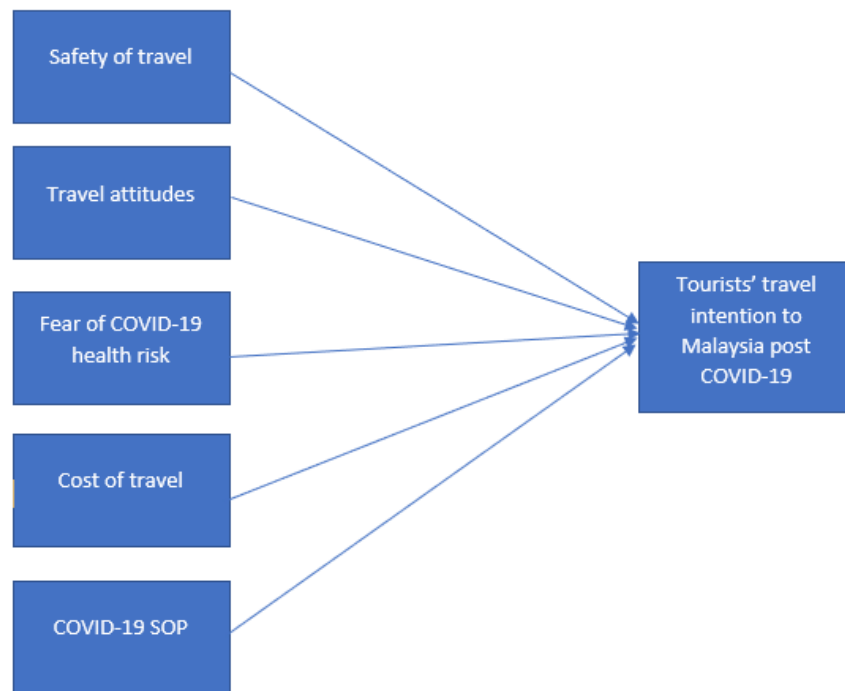
According to Naciye & Adem (2020), the implementation of COVID-19 SOPs has led to certain rules and procedures that limit the number of visitors and reduce the available operating hours for some tourist attractions, thereby decreasing the supply of tourist spots to visit (Hao, et.al., 2021). Consequently, this may cause a decline in tourist travel intentions as they may not be able to fully enjoy various tourist attractions and activities due to the restrictions in place.

On the other hand, the implementation of COVID-19 SOPs may also increase travel intentions for some tourists who prioritize safety in their travel destinations. As discussed earlier in the section on "Relationship Between Safety of Travel and Travel Intention," Nazneen et al. (2020) found that many travellers prioritize the cleanliness and safety of public transportation, hotels, and recreational locations. Thus, the implementation of COVID-19 SOPs, such as the mandatory mask rule in public transportation, could increase the demand for tourism in a destination, particularly among safety-conscious travellers.

Overall, previous studies have shown the relationship between COVID-19 SOP and travel intention, however, there are limited studies that cover Indonesian tourists and Malaysia as a travel destination specifically.

H5: There is a relationship between COVID-19 SOP and tourists' travel intentions to Malaysia during COVID-19

Figure 1: Research Framework



3.0 METHODOLOGY

This research uses the deductive approach to develop hypotheses. Researchers applied the simple random sampling method to collect data. A total of 200 self-administered questionnaires were used to collect primary data and distributed through the internet (social media platform) throughout the month of June 2023. The questionnaire was divided into five sections. The first section (Section A) examines the respondent's profile and general questions and the rest of the section will be the variables: travel intention, safety of travel, travel attitudes, fear of COVID-19 health risk, cost of travel, and COVID-19 SOP. The variables were quantified using a 5-point Likert scale which ranged from strongly disagree to strongly agree labelled from 1 to 5 (Joshi, Kale, Chandel, & Pal, 2015). The questions in the questionnaire are original and not taken from any existing questionnaire.

The self-administered questionnaires were distributed to respondents through the internet and intranet-mediated platform where respondents will receive a link to the Google Docs questionnaire. Target respondents were contacted by researchers through social media platforms such as Instagram and Twitter and personal messages. The responses were determined by the participant's interest in the research topic and their motivation to fill out the questionnaire. The secondary data, on the other hand, is existing data collected by other researchers for different purposes. Secondary data can be derived from various sources such as official data archives, journal articles, websites, books, etc. The secondary data collected from this research will mainly be from journal articles found on websites (Hox & Boejie, 2005).

According to M. Saunders, P. Lewis, & A. Thornhill (2016), there are nine strategies that a researcher can utilize which are survey, narrative inquiry, case study, experiment, action research, grounded theory ethnography, and archival research (Melnikovas, 2018). For this study, the survey is conducted where researchers asked a series of questions to respondents and is normally used in quantitative studies, the survey allows data to be easily analyzed and interpreted. The survey method

was chosen because it allows large data to be collected effectively and is cost-friendly to researchers Saunders et al. (2016).

In this study, SPSS version 28 software was used. Descriptive statistics was used to measure central tendency and spread of data using quartiles, standard deviation, range, and variance. On the other hand, inferential statistics, allow researchers to make inferences about the populations from which the samples were collected using these samples. In this study, parameters and statistical hypotheses will be tested (Laerd Statistics, 2020).

4.0 Research Findings

4.1 Demographics Profile

The pie charts and tables below show the demographic characteristics of 158 respondents. All respondents are Indonesians who have travelled overseas. The age and gender groups are the main demographics since this research was aimed towards Indonesian travellers. The gender that participated in this survey was dominated by females with 55.1% (87 respondents) and the rest 44.9% were male (71 respondents). The age group was divided into 5 categories which are, below 18, 18 to 30, 30 to 45, 45 to 60, and above 60. It can be seen that the majority of respondents are aged between 18 to 30 years old with 63.3% (100 respondents). This is followed by 24.1% of respondents (38 respondents) between 45 to 60 years old. Respondents aged 30 to 45 cover only 15% of the chart (15 respondents) and only 3.2% of respondents are below 18 (5 respondents).

4.2 Correlation Testing

Sekaran & Bougie (2013) stated that the Pearson correlation matrix will assess the significance of the bivariate relationships, direction, and strength of the relationship between pairs of variables (Saman, 2017). According to Sedgwick (2012), the scale of the coefficient value measured will range from -1 to 1. A positive value indicates a positive correlation. In contrast, if the value is negative, it indicates a negative correlation (Sedgwick, 2012).

Table 1 displays the results of the Pearson Correlation test between Tourists' travel intention and Malaysia (DV) with Safety of Travel (IV1), Travel Attitudes (IV2), Fear of COVID-19 Health Risk (IV3), Cost of Travel (IV4), and COVID-19 SOP (IV5).

Table 1: Pearson Correlation test

		Correlations					
		Travel Intention	Safety of Travel	Travel Attitude	Fear of COVID-19 Health Risk	Cost of Travel	COVID-19 SOPs
Travel Intention	Pearson Correlation	1	.657**	.656**	.318**	.289**	.429**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	158	158	158	158	158	158
Safety of Travel	Pearson Correlation	.657**	1	.623**	.577**	.360**	.578**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001		<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	158	158	158	158	158	158
Travel Attitude	Pearson Correlation	.656**	.623**	1	.365**	.287**	.516**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001		<.001	<.001	<.001
	N	158	158	158	158	158	158
Fear of COVID-19 Health Risk	Pearson Correlation	.318**	.577**	.365**	1	.442**	.608**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001		<.001	<.001
	N	158	158	158	158	158	158
Cost of Travel	Pearson Correlation	.289**	.360**	.287**	.442**	1	.447**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001		<.001
	N	158	158	158	158	158	158
COVID-19 SOPs	Pearson Correlation	.429**	.578**	.516**	.608**	.447**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	<.001	
	N	158	158	158	158	158	158

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

5.0 Discussion

Hypothesis 1 suggests that there is a relationship between the safety of travel and tourists' travel intention to Malaysia post COVID-19. The findings of this study indicate that the safety of travel exerts the strongest impact on tourists' travel intention to Malaysia post COVID-19. With a significant value of 0.001, which is lower than 0.05, the independent variable demonstrates a significant positive relationship with tourists' travel intention to Malaysia. The variable also holds the highest beta value of 0.453, signifying that the safety of travel is the most influential factor for tourists' travel intention to Malaysia in this research.

The results of this study align with the research conducted by Nazneen et al. (2020) mentioned in Chapter 2, which focused on the COVID-19 crisis and tourists' risk perceptions. The study revealed that COVID-19 has raised tourists' concerns about safety and hygiene. Similarly, a study on customer behaviour impact on international tourists' travel intention due to COVID-19 by Riestyaningrum (2020) also indicated that safety in travel has the most significant effect on travel intention due to COVID-19 (Riestyaningrum, Ferdaos, & Bayramov, 2020). The paramount importance of safety in travel is evident as it minimizes the risk of COVID-19 infection and its potential impact if contracted. In conclusion, the safety of travel emerges as one of the most crucial factors influencing tourists' travel intention post-pandemic. Therefore, Hypothesis 1 is supported, indicating a relationship between the safety of travel and tourists' travel intention to Malaysia post COVID-19.

Hypothesis 2 posits that there is a relationship between travel attitude and tourists' travel intention to Malaysia post COVID-19. The outcomes of this study demonstrate that travel attitude indeed influences tourists' travel intention to Malaysia post COVID-19. With a significant value of 0.001, which is lower than 0.05, the independent variable exhibits a significant positive relationship with tourists' travel intention to Malaysia. Moreover, the variable has a beta value of 0.512, which is the second highest among all five variables.

This finding aligns with the results of a study conducted by Hanafiah et al. (2021) discussed in Chapter 2, where they found that travel attitude significantly impacts tourists' future travel intention. The COVID-19 pandemic had initially lowered travel attitudes due to the perceived risk of COVID-19, leading to a decline in travel intentions. However, in the post COVID-19 era, as perceived COVID-19 risks diminish, people become more likely to travel, leading to positive travel attitudes among respondents in this study. Hence, Hypothesis 2 is supported, indicating a relationship between travel attitude and tourists' travel intention to Malaysia post COVID-19.

Hypothesis 3 suggests a relationship between fear of COVID-19 health risks and tourists' travel intention to Malaysia post COVID-19. However, the results of this study do not support this hypothesis. The significant value for this variable is greater than 0.05, indicating that it has no significant relationship with tourists' travel intention to Malaysia. Additionally, it has a negative beta value of -0.120, signifying that fear of COVID-19 health risk does not significantly impact tourists' travel intention to Malaysia post COVID-19.

This finding is supported by Zheng et al. (2021), whose study regarding COVID-19 event strength for employees in the tourism industry revealed that fear of COVID-19 has no direct impact on travel intention (Yin & Ni, 2021). With most people having accepted the reality of COVID-19 and being aware of the perceived risk, they believe they can take care of themselves by adhering to health protocols and maintaining hygiene. Furthermore, vaccines have minimized the risk of COVID-19 infection and its associated health risks. As a result, fear of COVID-19 health risk has decreased for

many individuals. This conclusion is consistent with the high vaccination rate in Indonesia as of January 2022 (Cabinet Secretariat of the Republic of Indonesia, 2022). Therefore, the majority of people have less fear of COVID-19 health risks due to the presence of vaccines. Hence, Hypothesis 3 is not supported, indicating no significant relationship between fear of COVID-19 health risks and tourists' travel intention to Malaysia post COVID-19.

Hypothesis 4 proposes a relationship between the cost of travel and tourists' travel intention to Malaysia post COVID-19. However, the results of this study do not support this hypothesis. The significant value for this variable is greater than 0.05, indicating that it has no significant relationship with tourists' travel intention to Malaysia. Additionally, it has a weak beta value of 0.061, suggesting weak importance in this study.

The findings of this study do not align with the results of Yuni (2020) discussed in Chapter 2. The cost of travel may not be a significant factor for many people in the post-pandemic era, as they are eager to travel after a long period of restrictions and have saved up money, enabling them to afford more expensive vacations. Additionally, due to the lockdowns that restricted foreign travel, individuals are now travelling for longer periods and more frequently, a trend known as "revenge travel," which gained popularity on social media in 2021 and continues into 2022 as a response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the travel limitations of 2020 and 2021 (Lanckbeen, 2023). This is supported by a survey from Skyscanner (2022), which found that the majority of people (77%) are willing to spend the same or more on overseas travel than they did in 2022 (Lanckbeen, 2023). Consequently, the hypothesis that posits a relationship between the cost of travel and tourists' travel intention to Malaysia post COVID-19, Hypothesis 4, is not supported, indicating no significant relationship between the cost of travel and tourists' travel intention.

H5: Relationship Between COVID-19 SOPs and Tourists' Travel Intention to Malaysia post COVID-19
Hypothesis 5 suggests a relationship between COVID-19 SOPs and tourists' travel intention to Malaysia post COVID-19. However, the results of this study do not support this hypothesis. The significant value for this variable is greater than 0.05, indicating that it has no significant relationship with tourists' travel intention to Malaysia. Additionally, it has a weak beta value of 0.009, signifying minimal importance in this study.

The lack of alignment with the findings of Bruin et al. (2020) and Nazneen et al. (2020) discussed in Chapter 2 may be attributed to a decrease in tourists' fear of COVID-19 health risks, as indicated in the findings of Hypothesis 3. As most people are no longer afraid of the health risks associated with COVID-19 due to the availability of vaccines, they may not perceive the implementation of COVID-19 SOPs as essential. Furthermore, Malaysia and many other countries have lifted most COVID-19 SOPs, with businesses, restaurants, stores, and tourism spots operating normally. Mandatory mask policies in public transport, healthcare facilities, and other public places have also been recently lifted (Haizan, 2023). Consequently, COVID-19 SOPs may no longer be considered a relevant factor influencing travel intentions.

Based on these considerations, it can be concluded that Hypothesis 5 is not supported, indicating no significant relationship between COVID-19 SOPs and tourists' travel intention to Malaysia post COVID-19.

5.1 Conclusion & Recommendation

The findings of this study can provide valuable and relevant insights to stakeholders interested in the Malaysian tourism industry and the study of tourists' travel intentions. The pandemic has significantly impacted tourists' travel behaviour to Malaysia, and even post-pandemic, their travel behaviour may continue to differ from pre-pandemic times due to various influencing factors. This research offers valuable information that can aid the Malaysian government in understanding the determinants of tourists' travel intentions to Malaysia and help them devise strategies to bolster their tourism industry. Moreover, the study's outcomes will be beneficial to businesses operating in the tourism industry, including travel agencies, hotels, and airline companies. Understanding the factors that influence tourists' travel intentions will enable these businesses to tailor their services to meet the specific needs and preferences of travellers. This, in turn, can lead to an improved customer experience and increased satisfaction among tourists visiting Malaysia.

The research findings emphasize the importance of the safety of travel and travel attitude in influencing tourists' travel intentions. To capitalize on these insights, both the Malaysian government and tourism businesses should prioritize the implementation of stringent safety measures and make them visible to potential tourists. This entails regular sanitization of public facilities, adherence to strict health and hygiene standards, and effective communication of these efforts to reassure tourists about the safety of visiting Malaysia.

Additionally, it is crucial to conduct effective marketing campaigns to shape a positive travel attitude towards Malaysia. Leveraging social media, advertisements, and collaborating with influential travel bloggers can help portray Malaysia as a safe and appealing tourism destination. By showcasing the beauty and unique experiences the country has to offer, potential travellers can be enticed to choose Malaysia as their next travel destination.

Overall, a combination of robust safety measures and compelling marketing strategies will contribute to attracting more tourists and boosting the Malaysian tourism industry. This research serves as a valuable resource for shaping and enhancing the Malaysian tourism industry and meeting the evolving demands of tourists in the post-pandemic era.

In terms of research limitations, this study encountered several limitations during its conduction. Firstly, as we are still in the early stages of the post COVID-19 era, there remains limited research on the tourism industry's dynamics during this period. This scarcity of existing literature may have constrained the depth of analysis in some aspects. Secondly, the sample size employed in this study may have been relatively small, and the use of a simple random sampling method might have introduced some inaccuracies in the research. The random selection of participants could lead to variability in the data collected, potentially affecting the study's overall accuracy.

Thirdly, the research was conducted in a specific geographical area, with a focus on Jakarta, the capital city of Indonesia. This geographical limitation may not fully represent the travel intentions of people from other cities or regions within Indonesia, which could exhibit different preferences and behaviours. Fourthly, the questionnaires used in the study were self-administered, without the presence of the researcher. This setup may have resulted in respondents answering questions carelessly or misunderstanding certain aspects, potentially introducing bias and inaccuracies in the results.

Lastly, the research only investigated five specific factors influencing tourists' travel intentions, leaving out other potential factors that could have significant impacts on travel decisions. Additionally, the study solely focused on Indonesian tourists, overlooking the perspectives of tourists from other

countries. These limitations should be acknowledged to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the research outcomes and to guide future studies in addressing these potential constraints. To obtain more accurate and robust results, future researchers are advised to enhance the sample size, which will facilitate more comprehensive and in-depth analyses. Increasing the number of participants will lead to greater precision in the findings and enable a more thorough exploration of the research variables.

Additionally, it is recommended to broaden the scope of the study beyond Indonesia and include participants from various other countries. Conducting a comparative study can provide valuable insights into how travel intention and attitudes differ among different nationalities and how perceptions of safety, cost, COVID-19 health risks, and other factors related to post COVID-19 travel vary across countries.

Incorporating qualitative methods, such as interviews or focus groups, can offer a deeper understanding of the emotional factors that influence travel intention. These methods can help researchers gain more profound insights into how the safety of travel, travel attitude, cost of travel, and other factors impact tourists' decision-making processes. By implementing these recommendations, future studies can enrich our understanding of the complexities surrounding post COVID-19 travel intentions and contribute to more informed decision-making for both the tourism industry and policymakers.

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