



ORIGINAL ARTICLE

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Exploration of consumer behavior changes post-pandemic in the tourism sector

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Abstract

Purpose - The purpose of this research is to identify new behavioral patterns that have emerged post-pandemic, particularly focusing on how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted consumer behavior in the tourism sector.

Methodology/Design/Approach - The study examines changes in consumer behavior following the COVID-19 pandemic, specifically looking at the increased interest in domestic travel, preferences for nature and outdoor tourism, and heightened awareness of health and safety protocols while traveling.

Finding - The study found that there has been a noticeable shift in tourism dynamics, with consumers now prioritizing sustainable travel, safety, flexibility in cancellations, and environmental sustainability. These changes have forced tourism industry players to adapt to new consumer preferences, requiring them to develop more flexible strategies to meet the emerging trends.

Originality/Value - This research highlights the need for the tourism sector to adapt its marketing and service strategies to accommodate the post-pandemic shift in consumer behavior. By understanding these new preferences, the industry can better retain and attract consumers in the evolving tourism landscape.

Keywords: changes in consumer behavior, post COVID-19 pandemic, tourism

Introduction

In early 2020, the world was shocked by the arrival of the corona virus outbreak originating from Wuhan, China which caused a fever outbreak in China and spread to all countries until now. As a result, many small, medium and large companies were forced to temporarily close their businesses (Pradana & Mahendra, 2021).

The spread of the new coronavirus has a major impact on people's behavior, especially consumer behavior. Consumer behavior is a form of activity that we often do, especially related to searching for information on goods and services, purchasing, using products and disposing of goods and services that have been consumed (Cholilawati & Suliyanthini, 2022). In the current COVID-19 pandemic situation, this has caused changes in consumer behavior. People's consumption habits have also changed. Changes in consumer behavior automatically affect people's purchasing power.

The pandemic has had an impact on the tourism sector, considering that the government has imposed various measures such as lockdowns and large-scale social restrictions (PSBB) in connection with COVID-19, which have also had an impact on the flow of people (Andira et al., 2021). This has caused a decline in visitors to tourist attractions, which has also affected the revenue sector (Sucipto & Nurohman, 2021). This directly affects tourists' decisions in choosing tourist destinations and carrying out activities during their

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trip. In addition, tourists are also more aware of health risks, so they tend to avoid crowds and are more careful in interacting with others during their trip. Changes in tourist behavior and tourism activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic have had a significant impact on the tourism industry (Salimah et al., 2023).

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought major changes to various sectors, including tourism, which has been directly impacted by social restrictions and restrictions on people's movements (Pradana & Mahendra, 2021). These sectors face significant challenges due to reduced demand, travel restrictions, and changes in consumer preferences when using services. After the pandemic, consumers showed different behavior compared to the previous period, both in terms of shopping habits and preferences in choosing tourist destinations.

Facing the decline in the tourism industry which has implications for the hampered development of other sectors and paying attention to the sustainability of the workforce involved in tourism activities, the government has taken a role in maintaining the country's economy by easing community activities to revive the economy. Tourism has reopened, but the "new normal" health protocol continues to be adjusted to the industrial and tourism sectors. To date, state, local, city, and district governments have worked together to overcome the crisis in the tourism industry caused by the COVID-19 pandemic (Kartiko, 2020). Matching funds during emergencies, matching programs during recovery, and matching promotions with joint events have been tried to accelerate the handling of the crisis phase in the tourism sector (Saraswati & Afifi, 2022). The recovery phase strategy, normalization phase and rebuilding brand recognition of the tourism sector are strategic and synergistic steps taken by the government (Kartiko, 2020).

This research aims to explore changes in consumer behavior in the tourism sector and post-pandemic. The main focus of the research is to understand how factors such as technology, security, and global trends influence consumer decisions and preferences, and how the industry can adapt to maintain business sustainability in the future.

Method

This study uses the Systematic Review (SR) method or generally called Systematic Literature Review (SLR). Systematic Literature Review (SLR) is a systematic technique used to collect, critically test, integrate the results of various previous research studies on research questions or topics to be explored further. This research begins by looking for articles related to the research topic to be studied.

Systematic review is a method of reviewing a problem by knowing, evaluating, and selecting a problem by asking questions that will later be resolved according to predetermined criteria. This research consists of several stages, namely:

To enter the reference source unless modified. The explanation of the method is presented in detail and clearly so that the used research/study method can be repeated by other researchers and reproduce the results. The methodology section typically has the following sub-sections:

1. The research question is how has consumer behavior changed in the tourism sector and after the COVID-19 pandemic?
2. The data taken in this study are several journals related to changes in consumer behavior after the pandemic in the tourism sector. This study began by searching for data on Google Scholar which was searched using the publish or perish (PoP) application. The keywords of this study are changes in consumer behavior, post-pandemic, tourism and retail sectors. The articles used were from 2020 to 2024.
3. After searching for various articles. Researchers found 230 articles related to changes in consumer behavior after the pandemic in the tourism sector. Then in the introduction, researchers found 12 relevant journals regarding changes in consumer behavior after the pandemic in the tourism sector, 6 journals relevant to variable 1, namely consumer behavior, 5 journals relevant to variable 2, namely the Covid pandemic, then in variable 3, researchers found 7 relevant journals, namely tourism. So the total of the journals that have been searched is 30 articles related to the research topic from the 230 articles

Findings and discussion

Consumer behavior changes

Consumer behavior is the study of how a group of individuals or groups make purchasing decisions from preparation to evaluation of the products they buy to meet their needs and desires (Nurfadilah, 2021). According to Schiffman and Kanuk, the study of consumer behavior is a study of how an individual makes decisions to allocate available resources (time, money, effort and energy) (Muhammad Alwi et al., 2023). In simple terms, consumer behavior research includes what consumers buy, why they buy it, and when, which includes whether (and when) to buy, Where can I buy it? How often do you buy it? How often do you use it? (Yusup et al., 2020).

In studying consumer behavior, marketers do not only stop at consumer behavior alone but also need to link it to the marketing strategy that will be prepared (Farahdiba, 2020). There is also a motivation that drives someone to behave in a certain way, and consumer behavior is a manifestation of their internal motivation, which can be observed from product selection decisions to meet consumer needs and desires (Yusup et al., 2020). Cultural (culture, sub-culture, social class), social (reference groups, family, roles and status), personal (age and stage in the life cycle, occupation, economic situation, lifestyle, personality and self-concept), psychological (motivation and perception) these 4 things are indicators of consumer behavior (Muhammad Alwi et al., 2023).

Conditions that can influence changes in consumer behavior include when the price of a product increases, consumer demand decreases, Availability of goods that can influence changes in consumer behavior if customers who usually do not like a brand can buy it if the product is not available, there are changing market conditions when customers find or change their purchasing plans if a new product or brand enters the market (Adha, 2022). Before the digital era, consumers tended to rely on information from TV advertisements, newspapers and magazines, or recommendations from friends and family to make purchasing decisions (Dewi et al., 2022). However, thanks to advances in digital technology, consumers now have access to wider and faster information about products and brands via the internet and social media. According to Hanaysha (2022), social media platforms allow brands to communicate directly with consumers, either through posted content, responses to comments or direct messages (Yuningsih et al., 2024).

Covid-19 Pandemica

The outbreak of the Corona virus (Covid-19) from Wuhan, China, at the end of December 2019, and continued to spread to many countries, including Indonesia, made the government issue a policy to stop the spread of the virus by one of the ways social distancing or physical distancing (Tambunan, 2020). The impact is that all countries in the world are currently struggling to suppress the spike in death rates, besides that there is no reliable vaccine that can neutralize the presence of this virus (Farah & Nasution, 2020). With the presence of the Covid 19 virus, community activities are limited and the government has appealed to always stay at home so that many entrepreneurs, some of whom have closed and some remain open, the government has also appealed to close their businesses for several weeks (Nurlaela & Haryono, 2022).

The COVID-19 pandemic that occurred in 2019 has had a significant impact on changes in people's lifestyles, ranging from changes in work patterns to a decrease in work intensity which has caused a decrease in income in several industries in Indonesia (Anggoro et al., 2023). Therefore, the government, both at the central and regional levels, has issued various policies to tackle the spread of COVID-19 as well as policies that are intended to address the social and economic impacts of this pandemic (Vhikry & Mulyani, 2023).

All areas of economic, social and cultural activities collapsed due to the impact of the pandemic, starting from the trade sector, land, sea and air transportation sector, education sector and development sector including the tourism sector, especially tourism (Chrysnaputra & ..., 2021). The tourism industry is one of those that has also experienced paralysis due to this pandemic, where all tourist destinations must temporarily close for an unpredictable period, in order to anticipate the spread of the corona virus or covid19 (Walakula, 2020).

Tourist

Tourism in Indonesia according to Law No. 10 of 2009 concerning Tourism, Article 1 (5) is everything related to tourism and related businesses in the field (Sukmadi, 2021). The Ministry of Tourism reported that Indonesia has been recognized as the world's best halal tourism destination in 2019, based on the Global Muslim Travel Index (GMTI) 2019. The Ministry of Tourism has designated Penyengat Island as a pilot project for halal tourism destinations in the region. Due to its strategic location as a gateway for foreign tourists, Kepri is considered suitable for encouraging the development of halal tourism. (Destiana et al., 2020).

Tourism development strategies that can increase tourist interest and provide facilities for tourists must start from the community around the tourist attraction. Community-based tourism development or Community Based Tourism (CBT) is the main principle in advancing the potential of tourist attractions by mobilizing the surrounding community to care and work together to develop tourist attractions (Bagasta et al., 2021). Community-based tourism development (CBT) is the main principle that promotes the potential of tourist attractions by mobilizing the surrounding community to care and collaborate in developing tourist attractions (Umam et al., 2022). The role of stakeholders in efforts to manage tourism destinations is an important element in maintaining competitiveness and is a major factor in surviving the dynamics and developments of the current tourism market (Masrurun & Nastiti, 2023). Destinations that can maintain a competitive advantage will be more likely to adopt innovative practices in competitive strategies and will attract tourist visits.

Sustainable tourism if planned and managed properly can be direct and positive, including poverty reduction, rural development, cultural and community preservation, gender equality, environmental protection, climate change mitigation and show beneficial impacts on climate change mitigation (Titing Koerniawati, 2022). Raising awareness that the impact of tourism is not entirely beneficial to destinations and their residents is a challenge and opportunity for the global tourism industry considering that the traditional model of tourism growth coincided with the beginning of the pandemic (Vhikry & Mulyani, 2023). The Covid-19 pandemic has disrupted the global supply chain, domestically, financial markets, consumer demand and has had a negative impact on key sectors, one of which is travel and tourism. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on all tourism value chains, small and medium-sized companies in the tourism sector and the creative economy (Sugihamretha, 2020).

Conclusion

From the explanation above, it can be concluded as follows:

1. There are four indicators of consumer behavior, namely cultural, social, personal and psychological.
2. If the price of a product increases, consumer demand decreases. Product availability can affect consumer behavior when customers who usually dislike a brand can buy the brand when it is not available. New products and brands enter the market. Conditions where customers find or change their purchase intentions when offered. This is a condition that can affect changes in consumer behavior.
3. The tourism industry has also been paralyzed by this pandemic, as all destinations have had to be temporarily closed for an unpredictable period of time to prevent the spread of the coronavirus or novel coronavirus.
4. The tourism industry has also been paralyzed by this pandemic, as all destinations have had to be temporarily closed for an unpredictable period of time to prevent the spread of the coronavirus or novel coronavirus.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a serious impact on the entire tourism value chain, small and medium enterprises in the tourism sector, and the creative industry. The coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic has brought about significant changes in consumer behavior in the tourism sector. Social restrictions and reduced mobility of people have caused changes in consumer behavior. Consumers are increasingly aware of health risks, avoiding crowds and preferring online transactions. To overcome these challenges, the tourism

and retail industries must adapt by considering factors such as technology and safety and developing community-based strategies to increase tourist appeal. Meanwhile, the government plays an important role in the recovery of the tourism industry and the gradual reopening of tourist destinations by implementing health protocols. This approach is expected to restore consumer confidence and stimulate the economy.

Acknowledgment

For the completion of this article, we thanked to Universitas Catur Insan Cendikia for their cooperation and support during the interview activities in the field.

Declaration

Ethics approval and consent to participate

Not applicable.

Consent for publication

Not applicable.

Availability of data and materials

The data presented in this study may be obtained on request from the corresponding author.

Competing interests

Not applicable.

Author contributions

NH and MAS conceptualization, methodology, validation, formal analysis. RANR and MRP investigation, data curation, writing - original draft preparation, writing. YY review and editing, supervision. AA project administration. All authors have read and agreed to the published version of the manuscript.

Funding

Not applicable.

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Received: 14 November 2024

Accepted: 20 Februari 2025

Published online: 27 Maret 2025

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