

## COVID-19 TRAVEL INTENTION AND VACCINATION WILLINGNESS OF LOCAL TOURISTS IN THE PHILIPPINES

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The COVID-19 pandemic has paralyzed the tourism industry and has influenced the tourists' intention to travel for leisure. COVID-19 has brought changes in destination choice, duration of the trip, and how people travel (Donaire et al., 2021). Studies have shown that recovery after a pandemic is slow and laborious (Novelli et al., 2018; Bidder et al., 2021). To reboot the tourism industry, recovering the intentions to travel and purchase tourism products are needed (Kim & Liu, 2021).

Several studies have emerged as tourism stakeholders have scrambled to restart and keep people interested in travel and destinations to stay a safe image. At this unprecedented time, tourism research should focus on measuring and predicting tourism impacts and on looking for the underlying relationships and changes brought by the pandemic (Gosling et al., 2021; Zenker & Kock, 2020). Travel intention is defined as the person's perceived likelihood of traveling or visiting a place at a given time (Hashim et al., 2018). Travel, on the other hand, can expose individuals to diseases such as COVID-19. According to the WHO (2021), a vaccine reduces the risk of contracting a disease by building resistance using the body's natural defenses. Consequently, vaccines create herd immunity. However, some individuals intentionally choose not to get vaccinated (Adongo et al., 2021).

According to the WHO (2020), there are different drivers for the uptake of vaccine such as political decision-makers, community, and religious leaders, and even health workers. These drivers can either encourage or discourage vaccinations. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, studies on willingness to get vaccinated has been conducted (e.g., Adongo et al., 2021; Gursoy et al., 2021; Li & Giabbanelli, 2021). The availability of vaccines and the vaccination status of a destination can influence tourist's behaviors. For example, Reisinger and Mavondo (2005) stated that tourists tend to cancel plans to destinations with diseases, primarily if the tourist destination is known to have scarcity in antiviral drugs and vaccines. The seriousness of COVID-19 pushed the tourism industry and travel resumption rely on the achievement of herd immunity. According to Gursoy and Chi (2020), COVID-19 vaccines will create hope for recovery due to their ability to lower transmission of the virus and help attain herd immunity. It was supported by Li and Giabbanelli (2021), saying that with the availability of COVID-19 vaccines, demand for tourism products will improve.

Vaccination levels must be increased for the economy's recovery (Gursoy et al., 2021). However, it has been noted in studies like Sallam (2021, as cited in Gursoy et al., 2021) that many individuals may be unwilling to get vaccinated. The survey of Gursoy et al. (2021) is the opposite of what the proposed study aims for since Gursoy and his colleagues have assessed the influence of vaccination on travel plans. Results have shown that travel intention increased as the number of people being vaccinated increased.

Getting vaccinated against COVID-19 is now being considered a precondition to travel by international tourists (Radic et al., 2021) which was first introduced by Gosling et al. (2020). Saga Cruises is now requiring cruise passengers to be fully vaccinated. Qantas on the other hand, is the first airline to announce its vaccination requirement and call it its "vaccination passport" (Radic et al., 2021; Suess et al., 2021). In the study of Bechini et al. (2021), 86% of the respondents from their survey adhere to COVID-19 vaccination. The remaining 14% refused vaccination due to the lack of knowledge on vaccine-associated diseases. This study of Suess et al. (2021) supports the results, wherein respondents believed the vaccine against COVID-19 has its benefits and has elicited willingness to get vaccinated before travel.

There are vaccination concerns related to anxiety, uncertainty, fear, morality, and worry (Adongo et al., 2021). Everyday worries in vaccination include cost, accessibility, time, and safety. According to Crockett and Keystone (2005), the safety concerns for vaccination is manifested through fear of injection, mistrust of the vaccine's efficacy, and fear of vaccine side effects. However, it was found that people will be convinced to get vaccinated if it is mandated by authorities (Suess et al., 2021). On the other hand, eighty percent of the Israeli respondents are willing to get a COVID-19 vaccine if there is a high level of positive benefits reported.

A total of 684 responses were gathered through snowball sampling from December 2021 to February 2022 in the Philippines. Snowball sampling solicited responses from people residing in the region through social media and email and asked them to share the survey questionnaire with their peers. The study employed a survey questionnaire with all except questions for the demographic characteristics in a five-point Likert scale, from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree).

The collected data were analyzed using IBM Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). First, a descriptive statistical analysis was employed for the demographic profile of the respondents. Next, the data has undergone a principal component analysis (PCA) to reduce the dimensionality of the datasets. The PCA was done to ensure that analyzing the data will be easier and faster through simplicity.

Then to determine the relationship between the variables, Spearman rank-order correlation and multi-regression analysis were used. Spearman's Rank-Order Correlation measures the strength and the direction of association between the variables.

Results show that the relationship between perceived risk of traveling towards attitude has a strong positive correlation (0.650) and perceived behavioral control (0.691) and is highly significant at a 1% level. These findings correspond to Hansen et al. (2018), showing the perceived risks can affect the TPB variables. However, contrary to previous findings, there is a strong positive correlation between perceived COVID-19 risk and attitude and PBC of tourists of Eastern Visayas. Therefore, results suggest that regardless of the high perceived risk of COVID-19, people's attitude towards traveling is also high. The findings are conflictive with some literature, such as Seong and Hong (2021), stating that COVID-19 risk perception has a negative effect on attitude and perceived behavioral controls, both psychological variables. Due to the positive relationship of the perceived risk of COVID-19 and attitude and PBC towards traveling post-pandemic, it can be assumed that people will continuously travel for leisure, regardless of the risks. Furthermore, during data collection (December 2021-February 2022), the COVID-19 cases in Eastern Visayas reached a peak at a 69% positivity rate, resulting in the region being put on Alert Level 3, which further supports the results.

The results were unexpected since the assumption would be that the higher the perceived risk of COVID-19 while traveling will deter people from traveling. Nevertheless, the results align with studies of Williams et al. (2022) and Lou et al. (2020), who found that the perceived risk of COVID-19 is not crucial in determining travel intention. This positive relationship can be explained by one limitation of the study: not considering people's willingness to take risks, risk tolerance, or the individual's capacity to manage risks (Williams et al., 2022). In the study of Williams (2022), it was noted that individuals are more likely to postpone long-haul travel than short-term travel by uncertainties and that intolerance of risk can lead to people having a positive attitude towards traveling. More distant destinations pose more uncertainties, thus higher risk. According to Ajzen (1991), a person will have a confident attitude if they know the pros and cons of engaging in the behavior. It also conforms to the study results by Lou et al. (2020), wherein fear of COVID-19 has no significant effect on traveling intention, which means that there is no substantial evidence to suggest that fear COVID-19 can reduce the intention to travel. Instead, media influence and risk aversion can mediate perceived risk and travel intention (Jiang et al. 2022). With more and more destinations in the region opening their borders for tourism, marketing campaigns are becoming more dominant in social media. The attitude and PBC of the tourists could have been greatly affected by these, which led them to be more positive despite their perceived risks.

Results showed that attitude, perceived behavioral control, and subjective norms are positive and highly significant factors of travel intention. These results support that there is a relationship between attitude, perceived behavioral control, and subjective norms towards travel intention. A unit increase in attitude is associated with a 0.33 increase in Travel Intention and is highly significant at 1%. Consistent with previous research (e.g., Rahmafritria et al., 2021; Tran et al., 2021), attitude positively influences the travel intention of tourists. This result means that local tourists of Eastern Visayas' positive attitude have consequently increased their travel intention.

On the other hand, a unit increase in perceived behavioral control is associated with a 0.423 increase in travel intention and is highly significant at a 1% level. The positive and highly significant influence of the PBC means that as local tourists of Eastern Visayas assessed themselves as capable of traveling after the pandemic, it has increased the travel intention. As shown in the table below, perceived behavioral control contributes more to travel intention than the other predictors. According to Ajzen (1991), strong PBC induces solid behavioral intention. This conforms to previous studies (e.g., Liu et al., 2020), such that PBC contributed more to determining intention to travel than attitude and subjective norms. Therefore, if the individuals have the resources and opportunities (e.g., money and time) to travel, the intention to travel will increase. Therefore, the intention to travel of tourists of Eastern Visayas' takes more consideration of their resources when planning to travel. It negates the statement of Dai & Jia (2020), wherein PBC has little influence due to the uncertainty of what is to come.

The unit increase in subjective norms is associated with a 0.206 increase in travel intention and is highly significant at a 1% level. This positive relationship suggests that the opinions and judgment of people close to the respondents influence their decision to travel. It means that family members, friends, and the government can influence their travel decision. Compared to Indonesian's subjective norms substantially impact their intention to travel (Rahmafritria et al., 2021), the subjective norms of tourists from Eastern Visayas do not contribute better than other predictors.

Lastly, the relationship between travel intention towards willingness to get vaccinated prior to traveling post-COVID-19 was measured. The relationship between travel intention towards willingness to get vaccinated prior to traveling post-COVID-19 has a strong positive correlation (0.691). The result shows that a strong intention to travel will increase the willingness of tourists to get vaccinated prior to traveling. The result of this study conforms to the study by Ekinci et al. (2022), wherein the higher the desire to travel, the stronger the intention to get vaccinated. Furthermore, according to Radic et al. (2021), mass media messages to encourage vaccination positively correlate with willingness to get vaccinated before traveling internationally.

Keywords: Theory of Planned behavior, travel intention, willingness to vaccinate, perceived risk, COVID-19 pandemic

## **LIVED EXPERIENCE OF LOCAL BACKPACKERS DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC: BASIS FOR ENHANCED SOLO TRAVEL PURCHASE BEHAVIOR MODEL**

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The study aims to light up solo travelers, all of whom have been put aside and stigmatized by the majority of the people in society for going out alone; to them equates to being sad or lonely. Furthermore, the study aims to help tourism professionals by letting them know the behavior and purchase decision process of these types of travelers to better accommodate and cater to the needs of backpackers in the future. The following statements of the problems are the essential aspects in the succession of the study: (1) How are the local backpackers motivated toward solo travel? (2) How are the local backpackers categorize their travel experience? Moreover, (3) How do local backpackers decide on purchasing tourism services? The study's design is a descriptive - qualitative phenomenological research design since it aims to know and understand the lived experiences of local backpackers, what type of tourists they are, and their purchase behavior towards tourism products.

The significant findings revolved around how much solo traveling has impacted the said respondents, like how it gave them the freedom, independence, and opportunity to discover themselves along their travels. It shows that, without a doubt, solo travelers have experienced life-changing encounters with themselves or with other strangers that vary from one person to another solo traveler. The researchers have concluded that solo travelers have the means to escape personal/social pressures and many more other aspects of their behavior. Furthermore, results have shown how they use traveling as an outlet to discover themselves, improve parts of their personality, hobbies, and more that concerns their well-being. Lastly is the part which talked about what makes them say that the travel they have had is worth it; according to them, if they were able to obtain an improved notion of learning and adventure.

Since the very beginning of tourism, traveling has been seen as something done with friends, loved ones, or with just people that one knows per se. A travel activity will never be fun and exciting without someone to share it with. These are moments that require a companion every step of the way. This is a different story for other people who enjoy being alone or find peace and happiness in solitude. In a spectrum of travelers, it does not only talk about group travelers. That being said, solo travelers or specifically backpackers also do exist and have been contributing a lot to the industry. But still, they are somehow put aside while tourism focuses on mass travel. Backpackers have been largely ignored by tourism organizations in favor of tourists with high spending power. However, backpackers often spend the same amount of money as mainstream visitors but do this over a longer period distributing money into areas off the main tourist route (New Zealand Tourism Board, 1996). The majority see traveling as an activity done with other people or as a group that triggers the tourism industry to ignore or give less attention to solo travelers. For the past years, studies or articles have shown how solo travelers experienced discrimination, inequality, and lack of attention that may have been resolved if they were only understood more. Through understanding can the tourism industry know more about them in order to fully grasp everything that they need as contributors to the travel sector like other types of travelers. The study utilized a descriptive - qualitative phenomenological research design since this study aims to know and understand the lived experiences of local backpackers, what type of tourists they are, and also their purchase behavior towards tourism products. The respondents are composed of 10 out of 15 participants of backpackers who are a part of a local backpackers organization. An Individual In-depth Interview was set by the researchers to identify the Lived Experiences of Local Backpackers during the COVID-19 Pandemic. For the Qualitative Data Gathering, to conduct the study, the use of Thematic Analysis will help to identify the meaning of their experiences while backpacking. The researchers came up with the results that backpackers call for authentic travel experiences, flexibility, and adaptiveness in their future travels, and travel where they can tailor their own adventure based on their desires. In this respect, the study was able to produce a solo travel purchase behavior model.

This study utilized a descriptive - qualitative phenomenological research design since this study aimed to know and understand the lived experiences of local backpackers, what type of tourists they are, and also their purchase behavior towards tourism products. In order for the researchers to have the best result out of this study, a non-probability sampling technique should be utilized. Then the thematic analysis was used for the actual focus of individual discussion. In a sample size of 15 local backpackers from the chosen organization, all of them were considered as participants in the Individual In-depth Interview. The respondents consisted of 10 out of 15 participants of backpackers who are a part of a local backpackers organization. The responses from established respondents were gathered inside the vicinity of Metro Manila. The researchers used Individual In-depth Interview as the main procedure in gathering and collecting data. The discussions were through an online recorded video-communication in which the researchers used Google meet or messenger video chat as options for the interview in order to get direct information and real time question and answer portion with the respondents about their experiences in solo traveling during the COVID-19 pandemic and understanding their motivations as backpackers.

The whole conceptual framework is grounded by the Lived Experience of Local Backpackers during COVID 19 Pandemic. Following it are the two independent variables both of which aim to identify the lived experience of the local backpackers. The first one is How do the local backpackers motivate themselves toward solo travel with the variables: (1) Escape from social pressures, (2) Social Recognition, (3) Socialization, (4) Self-esteem, (5) Learning, (6) Regression, (7) Novelty and (8) Travel Elements. Next is How do local backpackers categorize their travel experience with the variables: (1) Allocentric, (2) Psychocentric, and (3) Mid-centric.

Connected to these two variables is another independent variable which is How are local backpackers decide in purchasing services for tourism with the variables: (1) Problem/Need Recognition, (2) Information search, (3) Evaluation of Alternatives, (4) Purchase Decision and (5) Post-purchase behavior. Lastly, is the dependent variable which is the output of the whole study which is the Solo Travel Purchase Behavior Model.

The findings on how local backpackers are motivated toward solo travel or backpacking led to breaking away from the standard settings, knowing that everyone is facing the pandemic and has been isolated for a long time, enduring mental health issues. These reasons led to different motivations for backpackers to travel and to experience new and meet new people that can help to improve them in return. Knowing more about themselves and realizing the things that they do not know because of the chance to self-discover, an experience that could help them discover and have no limitations in seeking knowledge in every destination as they travel. The admiration for backpacking becomes wider and shifts everyone's viewpoint to see them from a better point of view, while some are concerned and worried about being alone. Furthermore, backpackers have the freedom to select their destination and itinerary. Saving more time for themselves is one of the primary reasons these people tend to travel solo and have the freedom to determine their wants and needs. Many people still do not know what a backpacker is. However, when they allow themselves to know more about backpacking and appreciate everyone's objective, it is exciting to know their intentions and motivations. Before anything else or before backpackers begin an excursion, it is known that they cannot travel without money and motivation, but first is having the inspiration to travel, and it all follows. Maintaining motivation and passion for backpacking is extremely important because they are not just traveling to fulfill their desire, but also to have an opportunity to have self-reflection, chill, relax, and most importantly is being optimistic during hard times. Traveling, mainly for backpacking or traveling solo, is not simple because not all the time there are people who can look after a backpacker. Being physically, mentally, emotionally, and financially prepared is a must when backpackers travel. Backpackers need to be physically prepared, in a way that hiking mountains is not that easy, especially when encountering a slippery slope or experiencing bad weather. Hiking brings tiring situations physically and emotionally in the sense that solo travelers nearly give up because of exhaustion climbing mountains. So being a backpacker is not simple or easy as one has to consider every step that he or she will put up with. Selecting a destination is particularly important. Backpackers have to be aware of the language and culture of their chosen destination to adapt and communicate well. Being ready or prepared is important all the time and having a flexible travel personality is a must.

The findings on how local backpackers decide on purchasing services for tourism show how personally backpackers become attached to that destination and their willingness to visit that particular place of choice. Some of the respondents want a spontaneous trip having an unplanned travel trip with no itineraries and chosen destination. Every backpacker has a travel choice and motivations to pursue a backpacking trip. Some of them select the mountains and some of the time choose beaches. Online platforms have a huge impact on everyone. Solo travelers base what they discover on social media, particularly Facebook, YouTube, and many others. But these backpackers are wise; they check the reviews of that spot so that they have a basis if that place is worth visiting. The destination has a huge impact on why a backpacker is committed to reaching that destination. Maybe it is for self-improvement, soul searching, searching for peace; it is likely more on self-development. Growing as a person through experiences and getting knowledge from the community they encounter during the travel every chosen destination has a story to tell. Being independent during the journey has a big help. And being kind and understanding in every aspect of life, particularly during backpacking, respecting each destination's culture is a must.

The backpackers-respondents used different means to escape the usual setting that was caused by stress and pressure brought by the pandemic. It is proven that traveling to different places has given the opportunity to backpackers to freshen up their minds and get away from the problems they encounter everyday. Moreover, traveling or solo backpacking during this pandemic allows the backpacker to develop and transform themselves into discovering their personal, emotional and physical issues. Considering various alternative motivations like traveling to meet new other people, getting out of the usual setting, improving mental well being, and discovering themselves were set by the backpackers as their reasons to do backpacking to relieve their feeling of being stressed or pressured.

Based on the information gathered, they prefer categorizing their travel experiences into being the allocentric, midcentric and psychocentric type of travelers to experience different types of activities like visiting cultural or heritage sites. According to the respondents, in order to travel, a backpacker must be ready for the mental, physical, emotional and financial aspect of a traveler to fulfill their needs and wants during and after the travel to a certain place. Additionally, backpackers were motivated to go to a certain destination due to their desire to unleash their inner adventurous personality and escape from the reality of life, to breathe for a moment and enjoy the beauty of the place without worrying about anything in life.

The respondents also mentioned that their way of traveling to a destination gives them the satisfaction of learning and engaging themselves from the place and people. Despite knowing the perceived risks of traveling alone, they still continue to engage themselves into doing solo backpacking. Basically, backpackers have the personality and tendency to be an impulsive traveler as they go with the flow and do not research the place they are going to. When visiting a certain destination, they only depend on online reviews, opinions, rumors and word of mouth. Respondents realized that as they continued to travel, they were able to acknowledge a lot of things regarding how a traveler must and should be in order to fulfill their curiosity along the way. Backpacking became their break from any problems and an open door for their personal self reflections and discovery.

Based on the findings from the provided results, the solo travelers travel for many different reasons, may it be for developing self independence, self improvement, self development, self discovery and self fulfillment. This gives them the chance to engage themselves with other people and learn from their culture and traditions, without thinking of anything or anyone. Furthermore, backpackers used this opportunity to enjoy themselves, pursue their hobbies, soul searching and free their minds from any distractions brought by the pandemic and problems in their lives. It was concluded that the use of search engines (Google), advertisement, word of mouth and an online review are the great platforms to inform the travelers on how to search for their desired destinations and what are the information and things they needed for the trip, and has the greatest impact on how do tourists prepare themselves from the trip. Also, the respondents perceived that traveling to an unfamiliar place is a plus point for them when traveling to a certain destination as they have the tendency to explore and acknowledge new things they wanted to experience and try. Solo travelers tend to go to mountains to immerse themselves and connect to nature, beach for aesthetic purposes, heritage and cultural sites to learn more about our history roots, and province for volunteering to help other people from rural places. Lastly, according to the respondents, they can say that the trip they had was worth it if they were able to obtain an improved notion of learning and adventure.

Keywords: backpacking, solo traveling, travel purchase behavior, descriptive - phenomenological qualitative research

## **PANDEMIC TRAVEL INTENTIONS OF LOCAL VISITORS IN INTRAMUROS, MANILA: INPUTS FOR TOURISM SITE RECOVERY PROGRAM**

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The COVID-19 outbreak has had a significant impact on the tourist sector as well as on individuals. This virus claimed many lives, forced businesses worldwide to close, and caused enormous difficulty in the tourism industry, particularly in destinations with extensive quarantines, health and safety standards, travel restrictions, and limits on all feasible ways to prevent COVID-19 spread. As a result, all tourist attractions and sites were closed for the time being. Ten months is not enough time to rebuild global tourism. It requires time and effort to continue adjusting and evolving. Tourism was formerly one of Asia's fastest-growing sectors, but due to the pandemic, it is now struggling due to a drop in visitor numbers. This resulted in a decrease in demand for many tourism businesses, led to millions of layoffs of jobs and economic difficulties as well as the closure or shutdown of a number of businesses, particularly micro, small, and medium-sized businesses.

Intramuros, Manila is one of the Philippines' most famous and treasured cultural heritage sites. It has been disclosed that Intramuros, Manila attracted 3.7 million tourists in 2019, shattering its previous record of 2 million visits in 2018. Every day in 2019, between 1,200 and 1,300 tourists visited this walled old, one-of-a-kind city. Intramuros, Manila is visited by large quantities of tourists every year which greatly contributes to the country's economic welfare. However, because of the pandemic and the swift installation of customized lockdowns, Intramuros locked its gates to reduce viral transmission, forcing local businesses to close and tourists to be denied entry. This has caused a huge toll on the visitor rate of Intramuros, Manila. Furthermore, in compliance with COVID - 19 health and safety regulations and IATF criteria, signage, and teaching materials were strategically placed in high-traffic areas. The government implemented quarantine restrictions on March 17, 2020, and introduced the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) where all non-essential businesses were forced to close including tourist attractions. The General Community Quarantine, which was later implemented, gave hope because this allowed 50% capacity inside local businesses and attractions. Tourist sites and establishments including Intramuros, Manila were allowed to operate but there were strict restrictions and health and safety protocols to be followed like wearing of face shield and facemask and social distancing, etc. Presently, the tourism industry has taken its first steps in the post-pandemic era with the loosening of strict protocols in different areas, along with Intramuros, Manila, local visitors' intention to travel to the tourism site has been re-awakened during this pandemic, but why?

The intention to travel is the result of thinking that leads to action and it turns into a motivation to do a behavior or action. It is critical to assess someone's travel intentions in order to predict their future behavior. As a result, travel intention is a key antecedent of travel behavior. The process of converting travel motivation into travel behavior is known as travel intention. Travel intentions can be formed from the perspective or viewpoint of a destination; the visitor's travel behavior always includes travel intention to a destination. Travel intentions of local visitors of people going to certain destinations are a way to know why they want to travel to attractions or places. This study aimed to determine the level of intentions of local visitors on why they still travel to Intramuros, Manila despite the pandemic that is why this paper made use of and was anchored on Ajzen's Theory of Planned Behaviour (1991) since this theory can help the researchers determine why visitors still intend to travel to Intramuros, Manila which explains that there are three constructs to determine intention that will lead to behavior or action. This theory predicts the behavior that will happen in the future with the help of three constructs namely: Attitude, Subjective Norms, and Perceived Behavioural Control. In order to come up with strategies under the tourism site recovery program from the findings of this research paper, the researchers ought to utilize the theory of Ajzen's (1991) The Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) with three constructs Attitude, Subjective Norms and Perceived Behavioural Control this theory helped the researchers in finding out why tourist still have the intention in visiting Intramuros, Manila. TPB will serve as a backbone of the study as the variables were constructed to the statement of the problem of this research.

To better explain and understand the travel intention of the local visitors of Intramuros, Manila the researchers made use of the descriptive mixed-sequential research method. The primary purpose of this study is to know why local visitors residing in the cities of the National Capital Region (NCR) intend to travel to the mentioned tourism site despite the pandemic. This allowed the researchers to analyze and interpret the gathered data from the respondents. Since this study is sequential, the researchers first used the quantitative approach The researchers first conducted surveys with the respondents who are local tourists who have visited Intramuros, Manila, during the pandemic and while for the qualitative method, the structured interview collected and understand the effects of the health and safety protocols to the travel intentions of the visitors and how do the feedback and travel experience of past visitors during the pandemic affect the travel intention of people who are planning to visit Intramuros, Manila this pandemic the key informants are employees of the Intramuros Administration under the Tourism Promotions Division and Office of the Administrator. In line, the study used the same sampling techniques for both quantitative and qualitative which is non - probabilistic purposive sampling. This research has garnered a total of three hundred eighty-five (385) respondents for the survey and three (3) key informants. The data gathered was tabulated, analyzed, and interpreted using the following statistical tools: (1) Frequency and Percentage distribution was used in the demographic profile (2) Mean and Standard Deviation was used in order to analyze the level of travel intention of local visitors this pandemic in terms of Attitude, Word of Mouth, and Risk Perception; (3) Pearson's-r correlation and coefficient was used in analyzing the significant relationship between the respondents demographic profile and their level of travel intention and lastly (4) Thematic analysis was used to treat the data gathered from the key informants with regards to the statement of the problem "How do the health and safety protocols affect the travel intentions of local visitors of Intramuros, Manila?" and also to the statement of the problem "How do the feedback and travel experience of local visitors during the pandemic affect the travel intention of people who are planning to visit Intramuros, Manila this pandemic?".

This paper identifies the travel intentions of the respondents to the specified site during this pandemic. Most of the local visitors based on the findings are in the age range of 21-30 years old; they were mostly females and with a civil status of single. The respondents of the study were mostly residing from Manila City which is also where Intramuros, Manila is located. In terms of the respondent's Monthly Gross Income level, most of our participants had answered Php 0 - 10,000. Lastly, in terms of Frequency of Travel, most of the respondents have visited Intramuros, Manila 1-3 times this pandemic. The level of travel intention of the respondents in visiting Intramuros, Manila in terms of attitude, word of mouth, and risk perception had a verbal interpretation of Very High Intent they intend to travel to Intramuros, Manila because they want to see how attractive it will be, and also because they will be enriched when visiting. They heard from past travelers that this is one of the best attractions because of its beauty thus concluding they had the intention of visiting it because of word of mouth. The pandemic did not stop them from visiting this attraction because they know what to do to prevent getting infected. They practice preventative measures and the site also has implemented the IATF health and safety protocols which make them feel safe and at ease when visiting. The researchers found out that the local visitors' level of travel intentions and residence has a significant relationship also the r value for the overall is .162 which indicates that there is a weak relationship between their level of travel intentions and their residence and lastly based on the interviews the researchers have made themes with the use of thematic analysis and these are: (1) New Normal of Travel with the subthemes Compliance with the Health and Safety Protocols and Adapting to the Preventative Measures (2) Advantages of the Health and Safety Protocols with the subthemes Sense of Security, Lessen the Fear and Safe to Visit (3) Development of Destination Awareness with the subtheme Updated information about the destination and lastly (4) Driving Factors to Influence to Travel this Pandemic with the subthemes Positive Travel Feedback/Experience Confidence and Encouragement, Assurance of Safety to Visit and Creates Attraction of the Destination to Visit.

The findings of this study will benefit or be significant to Intramuros, Manila because the result of the study will determine why local visitors travel to the specified site and this will provide data on the travel intentions of local visitors that can enable Intramuros to help somehow increase visitors again and also what to enhance and maintain when the COVID-19 health and safety protocols are easing. That is why the researchers have made three program strategies under the tourism site recovery program and these are: Enhancement Strategies for Increased Satisfaction of Local Visitors in Intramuros, Manila, Increase Visibility or Electronic word-of-mouth promotions of Intramuros Manila, Mitigating the risk of COVID -19 inside Intramuros Manila these program strategies are the output of this research and this can be implemented by the tourism site which can help them to attract more visitors again when the health and safety protocols are loosening.

Keywords: Travel Intentions, Cultural Heritage Tourism Site, Descriptive Mixed Sequential Method, Theory of Planned Behavior

## **INFLUENCE OF TRAVEL EXPERIENCE ON BEHAVIORAL INTENTION IN PURCHASING ONLINE TOUR PACKAGES AMONG GENERATION Z DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC**

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COVID-19 pandemic provided a significant problem to the tourism industry, resulting in tourists' restrictions on mobility from their respective nations and locality vis a vis. Following all of the catastrophic events which hindered the growth of travel and tourism industry, the Department of Tourism was still looking to develop the best alternative choices for the sector's survival through interzonal travel or travel bubble. The easing of travel restrictions started when the national alert level of the COVID-19 pandemic in the Philippines was lowered down by the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-EID) through Resolution No. 115-A which started last May 15-30, 2021. Furthermore, it is noteworthy to point out that the repercussions of the current COVID-19 pandemic on the future directions of tourism are unknown in terms of consumer behavior during the initial stages. Generation Z are more inclined with the use of technology who are nowadays called as digital natives. In contrast to other generations, this group is more sensitive in terms of character, equality and career. Due to the early exposure to social media, there are a lot of factors that contribute to how Generation Z had different perceptions in life. As a result, the level of awareness in different issues contradicts opinion and views. Considered as more educated, creative and innovative, these people have progressed with coping mechanisms. The availability of different social media platforms and information influenced the progress of capabilities of Generation Z in this modern time. When it comes to travelling, the members of this generation are meticulous when it comes to budgeting their travels and prefer spontaneous trips. Affordable travel costs attract the interest and attention of these groups because the considerations in the travel experiences of Generation Z also includes the resources needed for the travel experience. In addition, the tourism industry will definitely follow the trends according to the needs and wants of this age group where in that case, the future of the tourism market will depend on the constant change in Generation Z's consumer behavior.

The study identifies how Generation Z, ages 18-24 years old, assessed their travel experiences based on different types of travel experience from the tourism experience model. This study aimed to describe the behavioral intention of the respondents in terms of purchasing online tour packages. The researchers identified if travel experiences exert significant influence on the behavioral intentions of the respondents in purchasing online tour packages as well as to identify what intervention may be introduced to enhance the travel experiences of tourists.

The current study bridges several gaps in research such as contradictory, population, and methodology gaps. There is a contradictory gap in literature because in the research of Sitinjak et al. (2021), the study concluded that travel experiences quality has positive influence on behavioral intentions but according to Li (2007), the travel experience does not exert significant influence on behavioral intention. Additionally, there is no updated study that contradicts the findings of Sitinjak et al. (2021). Similarly, the two studies mentioned in the contradictory gap are conducted before the pandemic whereas in this study, it is conducted by researchers during the COVID-19 pandemic era. Additionally, the methodology gap can also be found in previous research because most of the researchers used Partial Least Square (PLS) - Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) in the interpretation of their findings but in this study, the researchers used correlation and regression to explain the results of the study.

There is also a population gap because previous studies used only respondents between ages of millennials and Generation Y but in this study, the researchers used Generation Z as the respondents. The study utilized a descriptive-correlational research design. A self-made instrument was used that is congruent to the research questions that underwent content validity using Cronbach alpha for internal consistency that yielded 0.98 equivalent to excellent.

Correlation and regression was used to assess if the travel experience of the respondents has a significant influence on the behavioral intention in terms of purchasing online tour packages. The travel experiences of the respondents were measured using a four point Likert Scale.

The study is descriptive-correlational design. Descriptive study is defined by Nassaji (2015) as a study used to explain an event particularly in terms of its characteristics. This type of research focuses more on the concept of what instead of how or why such an event occurred. Furthermore, this type of method is efficient in this study because the researchers used correlation and regression methods which Atmowardoyo (2018) also described as a method used to identify the correlation index between two variables. Additionally, to make it more effective, the use of correlation and regression method is to further determine the influence of the travel experiences on behavioral intention in terms of purchasing online tour packages among Generation Z specifically from the City of Manila.

The research study will be beneficial in regard to the area of understanding consumer behavior in tourism development which is a topic needed to be addressed to the future of the tourism industry. It will also contribute knowledge and understanding on how travel experience influences the behavioral intention of Generation Z in purchasing online tour packages during the time of COVID 19 pandemic.

Findings in the study showed that there are four sub-variables of travel experience which are travel experiences in terms of pure pleasure or egoistic pleasure seeker; rediscovery; existentially authentic exploration and knowledge seeker. Out of the four presented sub-variables, variables such as the experience as pure pleasure or egoistic pleasure seeker, rediscovery, and existentially authentic exploration was found to be insignificantly influence the behavioral intention. These three sub-variables correlate with the behavioral intention but not to a significant extent which means that the three travel experience sub-variables do not collectively influence the behavioral intention of Generation Z in purchasing online tour packages except the factor of travel experience as knowledge seeker. Among the four sub-variable of travel experience presented in this study, the results from the data indicated that knowledge seeker is the only variable that influences the behavioral intention of the respondents. This sub-variable recorded a 0.326 coefficient with associated probability less than the significance level set at 0.05 that shows that this variable correlates to the behavioral intention of the respondents to a significant extent. This study concludes that travel experience as a knowledge seeker is the best predictor of behavioral intention of Generation Z in purchasing online tour packages.

Keywords: behavioral intention, COVID-19 pandemic, Generation Z, online tour packages, travel experience

## **THE EFFECTS OF PANDEMIC TRAVEL ANXIETY TO THE RE-RISING PHILIPPINE TOURISM**

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This research was inclined to the Development of a Pandemic (COVID-19) Anxiety Travel Scale (PATS) by Sebastian Zenker, Erik Braun and Szilvia Gyimothy (2021) and Mental Health and Travel Behavior by Roger Mackett (2021).

Zenker et al. (2021) believes that tourism industry is greatly affected by the pandemic. The behavior of the travelers is also affected by the global pandemic (Covid-19). The COVID-19 pandemic has brought devastating impacts of an unprecedented scale to tourism due to governments instituting mobility restrictions and business closures worldwide (Hu Et Al, 2021). Travel fever stems from the simultaneous anticipation or longing for the unknown and the fear of temporarily leaving a safe home environment. When this pandemic occurs a lot of people worries not only for the well-being of themselves but also for the people around them, making them more anxious.

Zenker Et Al (2021) Measuring pandemic changes in tourist beliefs and travel behavior requires the development of robust, context-specific structures that can effectively capture the individual fears of travelers facing a pandemic. Additionally, according to Sherman A. Lee "Mental health concerns of people impacted by the coronavirus pandemic have not been adequately addressed" (2020) the researcher conducted a study focusing on the effects of the Pandemic Travel Anxiety to the re-rising Philippine Tourism.

People with mental health conditions have difficulty travelling because of various barriers that they face (Macket, 2021). Travelling is one of the best ways to cope up with your Mental Health, but during a Pandemic with all the restrictions and probations it is also affecting your Mental Health, hence affecting also your Travelling Behaviour. Tourism is extremely sensitive when it comes to changes in safety and health. Roger Macket (2021) states that the biggest cause of travel anxiety was interacting with fellow travelers. Increased travel anxiety as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic risk is one of the primary variables impacting tourists' travel planning and implementation.

The COVID-19 pandemic has brought devastating impacts of an unprecedented scale to tourism due to governments instituting mobility restrictions and business closures worldwide (Hu Et Al, 2021). When people are picking where they will travel, safety is a major consideration, as is the respect for social distance. When choosing a travel destination, people will think about the effects of the COVID-19 in that location. The emergence of the COVID-19 pandemic has sparked widespread concern, owing to its ease and rapid spread around the world. Travelers developed this fear as a result of the virus' ease of transmission and long incubation period. Bratic Et Al (2021) states that when there are risks associated with travel, anxiety levels rise. Tourists' vacation plans and destination behaviors change in high-risk situations. Health-related risks, such as the risk of viral infection, have a significant impact on the selection of a destination and a tourism provider.

Anxiety, in a broad sense, is an emotional reaction to stress, potential risks, or actual risks. Anxiety, according to Gudykunst and Hammer, is defined as a fear of negative consequences. Dowling and Staelin contended that when people make a risky purchase, the unknown outcome causes anxiety. This definition was expanded by McIntyre and Roggenbuck to include the sensations of being nervous, apprehensive, stressed, vulnerable, uncomfortable, disturbed, scared, or panicked. Hullet and Witte expanded the definition to include frustration and awkwardness (Luo and Lam, 2020). As the world begins to open up again, some therapists are seeing an increase in people experiencing travel anxiety. According to experts, the trend is understandable given the trauma of the pandemic and being told for a year or more that home is the safest place to be (Joni, 2021). Luo and Lam (2020) said that fear of COVID-19, travel anxiety, and a risk-taking attitude all have a negative impact on travel intention. Furthermore, travel anxiety and risk attitude mitigate the indirect effects of COVID-19 fear on travel intention. Individual traveler decisions about so-called non-essential travel for leisure purposes are fraught with uncertainty, with many people preferring to wait until an effective vaccine appears on the horizon before considering a return to travel.

The objective of this research is to answer the following questions that depicts the effects of Covid-19 pandemic to the level of anxiety of Travelers from Valenzuela City when it comes to travel and to to answer the questions that depicts the effects of Pandemic Travel Anxiety to the re-rising Philippine Tourism. 1) What is the Demographic profile of the respondents; 2) What is the level of travel anxiety of the respondents during the Covid-19 Pandemic?; 3) Is there a significant difference between the effects of Covid-19 Pandemic to the level of travel anxiety of the respondents during pandemic?; 4) What are the effects of the Pandemic Travel Anxiety to the re-rising Philippine Tourism?

Quantitative descriptive type will be used in this study. Descriptive research aims to accurately and systematically describe a population, situation or phenomenon (Nassaji, 2020). It answers what, when, where, and how questions. Furthermore, Quantitative approach is categorized with descriptive research; it collects numerical data in order to explain, predict and or control phenomena of interest (Apuke, 2017).

Prior to the conduct of the study the researchers will ensure research ethical compliance from the Research Ethics Committee of the university. Hence, the study will involve individual who possessed moral and ethical characteristics. The researcher assures to get inform consent from all the participants and warrants that the research respondents must be fully informed about the study procedures. The consent will be in an explicit form and participants will be given opportunity to refrain from taking part with the survey. The respondent's Autonomy, integrity, freedom and right of co-determination will be respected by the researcher. The researchers will make sure of the confidentiality of the answers of the participants, the only people who will have access in the participant's information will be the researchers and the professor involved in the study.

The proponents decided to use semi structured survey to assess the impact of Covid-19 on the travel anxiety of the students. 5 items from the Pandemic Anxiety Scale by Zenker. et. al (2021) will be adapted to determine the travel anxiety among the participants. The scale was proven reliable and valid in measuring travel anxiety caused by the pandemic. Specifically, the research tool will comprise of three parts. The first part seeks to gather the profile of the respondents and the second part composed of the Pandemic Anxiety Scale five items. The last part will be the semi structured questionnaires.

The data will be interpreted using the following statistical tools such as frequency and percentage, mean, and raw scores. Frequency count and percentage will be used to know the profile of the respondents while mean will be utilized to determine the impact of Covid 19. Raw scores will be used to assess the travel anxiety among the participants.