



E-PROCEEDING HOTWEC 6.0

THE GAME ON 2022:

THE FUTURE IS  
BRIGHT

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# **E-PROCEEDING HoTWeC 6.0**

**THE GAME ON 2022:  
THE FUTURE IS BRIGHT**

**FACUTLY OF HOSPIATLITY, TOURISM AND WELLNESS,  
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA KELANTAN**

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# Perception of Health and Safety Precautions for Post-Pandemic Malaysia Domestic Travelling Decision

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## ABSTRACT

Covid-19 has produced conditions that impact all countries and individuals worldwide, causing society to adjust their political, economic, and social behaviour on an unprecedented scale in the contemporary age. The researchers wanted to research whether the independent variable (destination choice, accommodation hygiene, and group size) and the dependent variable (decision-making) were related. 384 questionnaires were distributed to those travelling during the post-pandemic era. The researcher conducted questionnaires through social media such as WhatsApp, Instagram and Twitter. Descriptive analysis was used to describe the respondent's demographic and to study the relationship between Independent Variables (IV) and Dependent Variable (DV) by using Pearson correlation. A pilot study was used to measuring the reliability of the questionnaire. The researcher conducted a pilot study with 30 respondents before conducting the questionnaire. Data for pilot tests were conducted using Cronbach's Alpha analysis to ensure the internal reliability of the information. This research will also benefit future research to further studies related to this topic.

**Keywords: Destination choice, Accommodation hygiene, Group size, Decision making.**

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## INTRODUCTION

The spread of the Covid-19 pandemic has affected the entire world and, at the same time, forced a change in political, economic and social behaviour in society. This change is a large-scale and unprecedented change in today's modern era. Due to that, some countries are tourist havens feeling the effects of the Covid-19 epidemic. Among them are the U.S.A., United Kingdom, France, Spain, Belgium, South Africa, Norway, Italy and Sweden. Since travel is required for tourism activities, any factors that hinder travel may profoundly impact the tourism industry (Verma et al., 2020). The Covid-19 epidemic has changed many aspects of human life, and business, including tourism management, as almost half of the global population adopts movement restrictions on a large scale (Rahman, Gazi, Bhuiyan, & Rahaman, 2021).

Safety and health measures are a priority when travelling. Safety and health precautions can protect individuals from the threat of disease or danger that can invite harm. Every tourist has risks in terms of health, especially children, pregnant women and the elderly, due to having weakened immunity. Therefore, the Ministry of Tourism, Art and Culture Malaysia (MOTAC) and the Ministry of Malaysia must provide health accreditation programs to the tourism industry covering the aviation, hotel, transportation and shipping operations sectors (Idris, 2020). Through this accreditation, the tourism sector that passes the assessment from the Ministry of Health MOTAC is given a special badge as a health and safety certification. With this assessment, individuals with weak immunizations can travel safely during the post-outbreak.

The destination is the main thing in making vacation planning. Therefore, before planning a vacation, individuals need to make the right destination selection so that the intended destination is safe from Covid-19 infection during the vacation. Tourism destination decision-making has been extensively explored, and many variables have been recognized as explanatory variables of destination choice (Alom et al., 2019). For destination selection, tourists prefer destinations that are not crowded with other tourists to avoid congestion (Rahman, Gazi, Bhuiyan, & Rahaman, 2021). In addition, accommodation hygiene is the

second thing in making holiday planning. This is because the cleanliness of the accommodation is essential during the holiday so that tourists feel comfortable, and safe and do not worry about the epidemic infection. The Covid-19 infection rate is low when the accommodation is clean because of frequent cleaning.

Moreover, tourists will seek safe accommodation with proper social spacing and sanitation as a precaution (Awan, Shamim, & Ahnn, 2020). Once travel decisions have been made, group size is also an essential element during a post-pandemic vacation. Traveling in a small group can prevent the transmission of Covid-19 infection because there are not many at once. Therefore, tourists can keep their distance from other tourists. Traveling in larger groups is prone to infection and complicates the situation when miscommunication and schedule conflicts occur (Su, Cheng, & Huang, 2021). Decision-making also influences tourists to decide to travel.

This study examines the perception of health and safety precautions regarding post-pandemic Malaysia domestic travelling decisions. Decision-making also influences tourists to decide to travel. Tourists do not want to risk of traveling during the post-pandemic because of safety and health concerns. Therefore, industry players in tourism need to adhere to prevention protocols and Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) and SOP compliance to tourists to curb the spread of Covid-19 infection. There are three objectives in this research:

1. To identify the relationship between destination choice and the post-pandemic Malaysia domestic travelling decision.
2. To examine the relationship between accommodation hygiene and the post-pandemic Malaysia domestic travelling decision.
3. To determine the relationship between group size and the post-pandemic Malaysia domestic travelling decision.

### **Significance of the Study**

#### ***Academic***

This study focuses on the perception of health and safety precautions regarding post-pandemic Malaysia domestic travelling decisions. The findings from this study can help future researchers in making studies related to taking health and safety measures when travelling during the post-pandemic. The ideas presented or future researchers can use the findings from this study as reference data in conducting new research or in testing the validity of other relevant findings. This study will also be a cross-reference to future researchers who will provide background or an overview of the perception of health and safety precautions for post-pandemic Malaysia domestic travelling decisions. Future researchers may also be interested in this study. It can be a guide for future researchers to gather information, and that information can be a building block to have a more extensive study.

### ***Practical***

The findings of this study will benefit the community, namely tourists and the tourism industry, such as travel agencies, hospitality establishments and MOTAC organisations. This is because this study focuses on selecting tourism destinations that prioritize health and safety during the post-pandemic. Therefore, the relevant tourism industry can benefit from this study by prioritizing health and safety measures to the destination choice and accommodation hygiene when travelling the post-pandemic. This is to attract tourists because destinations that prioritize health and safety features are the leading choice of tourists in the post-pandemic to protect themselves from the threat of disease and danger.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Safety and Health**

Several countries' regulations and travel restrictions have impacted the perception of tourist tourism during and after a pandemic (Wachyuni & Kusumaningrum, 2020). Whereas travel was once considered a personal option, it is now restricted by government regulations regarding access, promotion, safety, immigration, customs, disease prevention, and even foreign policy (Richter, 1999). COVID-19's global pandemic has disrupted not only entire socio-economic institutions but has also presented a threat to globalisation and enterprise global operations.

According to another study, tourists' views of safety and health concerns can influence their perceptions of tourist locations, making them more likely to seek out tourist destinations with the quantity and quality of facilities that correspond to the required health regulations (Wachyuni & Kusumaningrum, 2020). Tourists will indeed conduct a safety and health examination of the tourist attraction. Tourists desire as much information as possible about the destination where they plan to spend their vacation to avoid risk and uncertainty about service quality and safety. Tourists gather information about destinations, modes of transportation, and lodging options, compare prices and services, and see photographs and videos from these locations.

### **Destination Choice**

A tourist destination is where people or groups travel to visit (Rashid, 2013). According to Saito and Strehlau (2018), the individual's location selection is influenced by four factors: internal, external, nature, and travel experience. Apart from that, choosing a tourist destination is indeed a difficult task because there are so many variables to consider while making a decision (Karl, Reintinger, & Schmude, 2015).

Since the COVID-19 crisis, tourism operators have been fighting hard to get tourists back to travel. According to Garci, Juaneda, Raya, and Sastre (2015), there is a link between destination choice and post-pandemic travel decisions. Furthermore, behaviour in determining which tourist destination to visit is always linked to the risk of travel; for now, COVID-19 is considered the biggest travel risk (Garg, 2015). Therefore, the post-pandemic of Covid-19 is expected to significantly impact tourists' perceptions of health risks and may alter travel patterns in the long run (Karl, Muskat, & Ritchie, 2020).

### **Accommodation Hygiene**

Accommodation, according to Ramyar, Zaheer, Halim, and Ghasemi (2020), is an establishment that provides travellers with rooms or a place to stay while on vacation. According to Nutsugbodo (2016), tourist accommodation provides a psychological platform for travellers who are temporarily away from home. The accommodation facility's cleanliness standards and customer health protection are the components that attract travellers to stay during the pandemic.

Besides, Riestyaningrum, Ferdaos, and Bayramov (2020) discovered a significant partial association between hygiene and safety on travel intention due to COVID-19. Therefore, the customers' lodging preferences will impact their overall trip plans (Pappas and Glyptou, 2021). A previous study also discovered that accommodations had a largely favourable impact

on traveller satisfaction, and satisfaction has a strong positive association with the intention to revisit the same accommodation (Abdullah & Lui, 2018; Handriana & Putra, 2019).

### **Group Size**

Group size influences group decision-making in the tourist business. For example, group size influences trip mobility patterns, tourism product choices, and expenditures (Su et al., 2021). According to Su, Cheng, and Huang (2021), group size influences group decision-making in the tourist business, ; for example, trip mobility patterns, tourism product choices, and expenditures are all influenced by group size (Su et al., 2021).

Furthermore, Su, Cheng, and Huang (2021) stated that larger groups frequently experience coordination issues such as miscommunications and scheduling obstacles, as opposed to small groups, which have fewer concerns because travel is more accessible, and it is easier to oversee every movement of the group members. The size of a group can have a favourable impact on the closeness and collaboration amongst members of a travel group, which is significant in tourists' evaluations of tourism experiences (Su et al., 2021).

### **Decision Making**

Decision-making is the process through which an individual, group, or organisation decides what future activities to pursue given a set of objectives and resource constraints (Schoemaker et al., 2014). Internal reasons such as stress and panic, fear of being contaminated, or dread of catching an illness by finding oneself in a crowd, surrounded by countless people whose health status is unknown, are reasons for oneself to avoid travelling (Chebli, Amina & Ben, 2020).

Besides, travelling to less-congested regions, as the results demonstrate, maybe the next trend (Shamshiripour et al., 2020). Then, on the future trip, the tourist will be more concerned about the cleanliness of airports, public spaces, hotels, restaurants, tourist attractions, and everyday requirements, as well as the location's accessibility and quality of care (Allam et al., 2014). Other than that, Metro Online (2021) reported that Malaysians would continue the desire to travel in small groups with family and friends for a more relaxing vacation and to visit rare natural areas.

### **Research Hypothesis**

The literature review highlighted that the independent variables, destination choice, accommodation hygiene and group size, affect the post-pandemic Malaysia domestic traveling decision. Therefore, the study planned to examine the effect level among these variables. Therefore, the hypotheses of this study were represented in the following manner based on the literature discussed:

- H<sub>1</sub>**        There is a significant relationship between destination choice and post-pandemic Malaysia domestic travelling decisions.
- H<sub>2</sub>**        There is a significant partial relationship between accommodation hygiene and post-pandemic Malaysia domestic travelling decision.
- H<sub>3</sub>**        There is a significant relationship between group size and post-pandemic Malaysia domestic travelling decisions.

### **Research Framework**

Figure 1 below shows the research framework used for this study



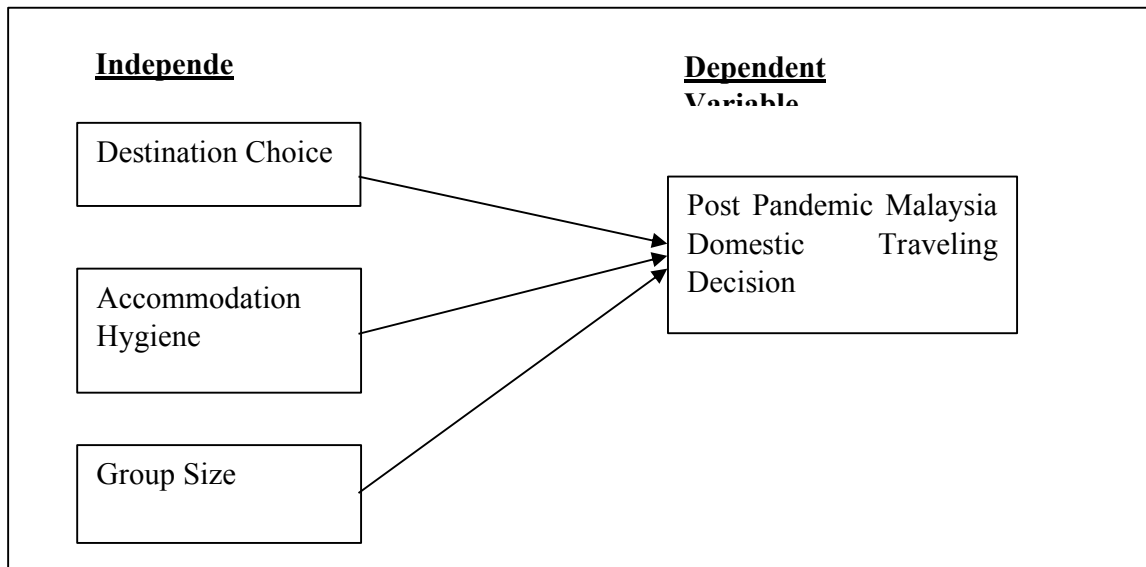


Figure 1: Research Framework

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Research Design**

The research design describes the type of study to be conducted and the expected outcome of the project. The main objective of research design is to guarantee that the information obtained throughout the research answers the research questions. The relationship between destination choice, accommodation hygiene, group size as independent variables, and perception of health and safety precautions toward post-pandemic Malaysia domestic travel decision as a dependent variable, is conducted in this study. The researchers use quantitative to study the respondents involved in Malaysian domestic travel decisions during the Covid-19 pandemic. This is because the result is numerical and measurable.

### **Data Collection**

Pilot study was used to measure the reliability of the questionnaire. The researcher conducted a pilot study with 30 respondents before conducting the actual questionnaire. Data for this pilot test were conducted using Cronbach's Alpha analysis to ensure the internal reliability of the information.

An online questionnaire is used to collect data for this study. The research utilizes Google Forms because it is simpler to reach respondents all around Malaysia due to the rapid rise of social media. Furthermore, the fact that the total number of samples is 384 is one reason why the researchers cannot employ other methodologies such as surveys due to the large sample size. Then, the researchers will distribute the complete questionnaire via social media such as WhatsApp and Instagram to reach out to the respondents for this research. The questionnaire is likely to be distributed in 2022. The researchers use the Google Form because it is a free web tool that enables the rapid and easy data capture. Moreover, the researchers can create surveys in minutes with Google Forms to collect information from clients or collaborators about products or services.

### **Sampling**

In this research, the researchers used non-probability sampling. Non-probability sampling is a method of collecting samples based on the researcher's subjective judgement rather than random selection. As a result, the researchers decided to conduct this study using purposive sampling to investigate the phenomenon of post-pandemic Malaysia domestic travel decisions among the study's population. Judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling are all terms used to describe sampling techniques. As a result, for a member of the population to participate in the survey, the researchers have provided some requirements. Only individuals who meet those

criteria can then fill out the questionnaire. Furthermore, by setting certain judgments on public members, the researchers will be able to achieve their research objectives.

### Data Analysis

The data analysis used for this research is descriptive, reliability test and Pearson correlation analysis. The researchers used the statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) application to analyse the data obtained from the questionnaires.

### FINDINGS

#### Result of Reliability Analysis

Table 1 below shows the result of the reliability analysis.

Table 1: Reliability Analysis

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach Alpha
Destination Choice	5	0.883
Accommodation Hygiene	5	0.842
Group Size	5	0.955
Decision Making	5	0.920

According to Table 1, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for destination choice is 0.883, which indicates well. Cronbach's alpha coefficient for accommodation hygiene is 0.842, indicating good reliability, while the group size is 0.955, indicating excellent reliability. Meanwhile, Cronbach's alpha coefficient for decision-making for the dependent variable is 0.920, which is excellent. Because Cronbach's alpha was more than 0.8, the questionnaire was reliable and the respondent understood each item well.

#### Result of Frequency Analysis

Table 2 below shows the result of the frequency analysis.

Table 2: Frequency Analysis

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	120	31.3
Female	264	68.8
Age		
Below 21 years old	46	12.0
22 to 31 years old	255	66.4
32 to 41 years old	60	15.6
42 to 50 years old	23	6.0
Race		
Malay	307	79.9
Chinese	52	13.5
Indian	24	6.3
Others	1	0.3
Marital Status		
Single	253	65.9
Married	126	32.8
Others	5	1.3
Income		
Less than RM 2000	345	89.8
RM 2000-RM3999	32	8.3

RM4000-RM5999	6	1.6
RM6000-RM6999	1	0.3
Education Background		
High school	80	20.8
Certificate/ Diploma	116	30.2
Bachelor Degree	176	45.8
Master	6	1.6
Others	6	1.6

This study gathered data from 384 people. Based on Table 2, females accounted for 68.8% (n = 264) of the respondents, while male accounted for 31.3 percent (n = 120). 66.4 percent (n = 255) of those who responded were between the ages of 22 and 31. With 15.6 percent (n = 60) of respondents, those between the ages of 32 and 41 are the second most frequent. Followed by the age below 20 years old with 12 percent (n = 46). At the same time, the lowest number of respondents are from 42 to 50 years old, with 6 percent (n = 23). According to the result for the race, more of the respondents were Malay, with 79.9 percent (n = 307). For marital status, a total of 65.9 percent (n = 258) reported that the respondents were single. At the same time, the remaining total of respondents, 32.8 percent (n = 126), were reported married at the time of the survey. The respondents for others with 1.3 percent (n = 5). The highest income among respondents was below RM2000 with 89.8 percent (n = 345). The lowest income group were RM 6000 to RM 6999 with 3 percent (n = 1). The majority of the respondents were Bachelor's Degree which contained 45.8 percent (n = 176).

### Result of Descriptive Analysis

Table 3 below shows the result of the descriptive analysis.

Table 3: Result of Descriptive Analysis

Variable	Items	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Destination Choice	I agree that post pandemic Covid-19 will affect my destination choice	4.63	0.71
	My destination choice will be cancelled because of post-pandemic Covid-19.	4.44	0.80
	I agree to travel domestically rather than abroad because of Covid-19.	4.57	0.65
	I agree that travelling domestically is safer in the future.	4.52	0.68
	I think most people prefer to select destination with previous experience of hygiene or health safety	4.58	0.62
Accommodation Hygiene	I require the Covid-19 specific safety or security concerns of the hotels to take care of property during a pandemic.	4.50	0.66
	I need hotel rooms, private areas or public areas that are clean or sanitized.	4.58	0.60
	The automation or contactless service systems attract me for booking post pandemic.	4.48	0.63
	I require the hotel to show the cleaning or sanitizing standard of the hotel through a 360° video view.	4.44	0.68

	I need the safety or security of the hotels is maintained with CCTV surveillance	4.54	0.62
Group Size	I agree that group size effects to tourist's movement patterns while travelling.	4.51	0.65
	I think most people travel with family members and close friends when considering group travel.	4.49	0.63
	I believe the risk for Covid-19 infection is greater when travelling in a larger group compared to travelling in a small group.	4.57	0.67
	I agree the group travel choices are determined by activity, cost, travel timing, transportation, safety or travel distance.	4.54	0.66
	I believe travelling in a small group has a higher value of travel satisfaction compared to travelling in a larger group.	4.55	0.69
Decision Making	I will avoid travelling in large groups due to the Covid-19 pandemic.	4.63	0.60
	I will avoid unnecessary interaction with crowds in public spaces.	4.55	0.65
	I will avoid overpopulated destinations because of Covid-19.	4.54	0.66
	I will select a destination with no Covid-19 deaths.	4.48	0.69
	I will avoid travelling in areas that do not emphasize safety or hygiene.	4.57	0.65

Table 3 shows the data for the mean and standard deviation for each item in each variable. The highest mean of decision-making is 4.63 (std. Deviation= 0.71) for item question 1. Otherwise, the lowest mean, 4.44 (std. Deviation= 0.80), was for item question 2. The highest mean for accommodation hygiene is 4.58 (std. Deviation= 0.60) for question 2. The highest mean for group size is 4.57 (std. Deviation= 0.67) for question 3. The highest mean for dependent variable (decision making) is 4.63 (std. Deviation= 0.60) for question 1.

### Result of Pearson Correlation Analysis

Table 4 below shows the Pearson Correlation Analysis

Table 4: Pearson Correlation Analysis

Hypothesis	Independent Variables	Correlation Coefficient (r)	P-Value	Result (Supported/Not Supported)
H <sub>1</sub> : There is a significant relationship between destination choice and post pandemic Malaysia domestic traveling decision.	Destination choice Decision making	0.736 (High positive correlation)	<0.01	H <sub>1</sub> is supported

<b>H<sub>2</sub>:</b> There is a significant partial relationship between accommodation hygiene and post pandemic Malaysia domestic traveling decision	Accommodation hygiene▼ Decision making	0.740 (High positive correlation)	<0.01	H <sub>2</sub> is supported
<b>H<sub>3</sub>:</b> There is a significant relationship between group size and post pandemic Malaysia domestic traveling decision.	Group size▼ Decision making	0.736 (High positive correlation)	<0.01	H <sub>3</sub> is supported

Based on Table 4, the p-value for each independent variable is less than the significant level of 0.01. As a result, the independent variables (destination choice, accommodation hygiene, and group size) and the dependent variable (post-pandemic Malaysia domestic travelling decision) have a relationship. All independent variables have a high positive correlation, and all the hypotheses are supported.

## DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The discussion aims to resolve the questions and address the hypotheses as stated in the first chapter of this study. This study has extensively examined the perception of health and safety precautions regarding post-pandemic Malaysia domestic travelling decisions. Based on the findings of this study, the current study will provide some suggestions for future researchers further to expand the scope of this study to international tourists. Apart from that, some suggestions are also given to industry players to provide the best service to tourists.

The recommendation of this study is to conduct more research on the perception of health and safety precautions towards post-pandemic because this study only focused on the decision to travel domestically during the post-pandemic. The second recommendation of this study is that future researchers will not only focus on the field of hospitality alone. This study researcher discussed only the perception of safety and health precautions towards post-pandemic Malaysia domestic travelling decisions in the hospitality field. The third recommendation of this study is that future researchers may need to expand the scope of the study for international tourists to see their perception of travelling in post-pandemic Malaysia.

The other recommendations are through industry players on the perception of health and safety precautions towards post-pandemic Malaysia domestic travelling decisions. The study findings show that accommodation hygiene has a greater correlation with travelling decisions compared to other independent variables. Therefore, the tourism industry that provides accommodation services such as hotels, motels, hostels, homestays and others need to provide good Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) to protect tourists' well-being. The other recommendations are industry players need to limit the number of tourists in a place so that tourists believe that the destination is safe from crowded areas. The other recommendations are that industry players need to provide family vacation packages suitable for all ages.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study has been accomplished to discover the perception of health and safety precautions regarding post-pandemic Malaysia domestic travelling decisions. Three independent variables, namely destination choice, accommodation hygiene, and group size, have been chosen to examine their relationship with the dependent variable, which is decision-making for the perception of health and safety precautions towards post-pandemic Malaysia travelling decisions. Overall, based on Pearson correlation analysis, the correlation coefficient,

destination choice and group size have the same value of 0.736. For accommodation hygiene, the correlation coefficient value is 0.740. Therefore, destination choice, accommodation hygiene and group size significantly correlate with the post-pandemic Malaysia domestic travelling decision.

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