



# E-PROCEEDING HOTWEC 7.0

**SUSTAINABLY NURTURING  
TOURISM,  
HOSPITALITY AND WELLNESS INDUSTRY  
FOR A BRIGHTER TOMORROW**

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Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Title: E-Proceeding Hotwec 7.0 Sustainably Nurturing Tourism, Hospitality and Wellness Industry For A Brighter Tomorrow

e-ISBN: 978-629-489-007-7

Published by:

UMK Press

Universiti Malaysia Kelantan

Office of Library and Knowledge Management

16300 Bachok

Kelantan

(Member of Malaysian Scholarly Publishing Council (MAPIM))

(Member of Malaysian Book Publishers Association (MABOPA))

Membership Number: 201903)

In Collaboration:

Faculty of Hospitality, Tourism and Wellness Universiti Malaysia Kelantan (UMK), Kampus Kota Pengkalan Chepa, 16100 Kota Bharu Kelantan, Malaysia.

# EXPLORING THE POTENTIAL OF STAYCATION MAKING TO TRAVEL DURING AND AFTERMATH OF THE COVID-19

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## **ABSTRACT**

Globally, tourists have become more anxious to travel overseas due to increased uncertainties posed by disastrous global-scale incidents. The uncertainty crisis outbreak has significantly impacted on triggering important changes in tourism mobility and tourism. As a result, people have significantly changed their long-term traveling into near-term travel decisions. Therefore, this research aims to explore the new concept of staycation motivators by Malaysian vacationers on tourism mobility. The research employs an exploratory method with initially in-depth interviews by using a semi-structured set of questions. Data will be collected Globally; tourists have become more anxious to travel overseas due to increased uncertainties posed by disastrous global-scale incidents. The uncertainties crisis outbreak has significantly impacted on triggering important changes in tourism mobility and tourism. As a result, people have significantly changed their long-term traveling into near-term travel decisions. Therefore, this research aims to explore the new concept of staycation motivators by Malaysian vacationers on tourism mobility. The research employs an exploratory method with initially in-depth interviews by using a semi-structured set of questions. Data will be collected until it reaches saturation points. Thematic analysis will be conducted using Atlas.ti. There are seven vacationers involved as interviewees. There are four main elements in staycation concepts, which are 1) time period; 2) types of activities; 3) distance; and 4) place. The main limitation of this study is that the sample was small, but nevertheless, some interesting results were obtained.

**Keywords:** Crisis, Staycation, Experience, Qualitative

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## **INTRODUCTION**

Since the Covid19 outbreak in late 2019, global disruptions in global flows and mobility have led to economic loss to the tourism industry, affecting human freedom and well-being. Tourists face high risks due to health hazards and government limitations. The shutdown of numerous communities and the implementation of major restrictions on border crossings has virtually eliminated the tourism economy in communities throughout the world (Goodwin, 2020). Places, which only a few months ago were suffering from extreme problems of over-visitation (Milano et al., 2019) are presently eerily quiet (Kimmelman, 2020). This is because the tourism industry has been severely damaged due to travel being regarded as a high-risk activity. Worse still, due to the uncertainty and misleading information about epidemics in social media, tourist perceptions, and behavior changes in traveling have led to significant reductions in travel demand (Romagosa, 2020).

According to Romagosa (2020), the Covid-19 outbreak has already had a very significant impact on tourism, triggering important changes in mobility, social behavior, consumption patterns, and leisure. This is based on the proposition that the increase in social and environmental concerns

(Lew 2020) will encourage post-crisis tourists to choose destinations closer to where they live and move to travel within their area, which is called a staycation. Staycation is a new tourism trend, especially for city dwellers, because of changing lifestyles and work-life balance preferences. Staycation has become a complex cultural phenomenon and is essentially a holiday spent close to home but creating a traditional holiday environment. Being a tourist is the result of an informed decision, based essentially on the way individuals determine what they perceive as being unknown to them and how they decide to discover that context (Diaz-Soria, 2017).

Currently, some people are spending their holidays locally (Jeuring and Haartsen, 2017) and favor a staycation, where the number of staycation offers is increasing in popularity during COVID-19. Millennials are significant consumers of staycation packages, which involve staying home and participating in leisure activities within day-trip distance of their residence without overnight accommodation. This type of domestic tourism is increasingly popular due to their interest in new activities and travel. Millennials' staycation experiences during COVID-19 may differ from conventional travel experiences, as staycations involve staying at home or near home while creating the ambiance of a standard vacation (Besson, 2017).

## **Problem Statement**

Domestic tourism has been understudied in literature, but its economic importance has been underestimated (Stylidis, Belhassen, & Shani, 2017). During Covid19, people are increasingly spending their holidays locally (Jeuring and Haartsen, 2017) and favouring staycations. This trend has become popular due to mobility constraints and border lockdowns. The staycation concept has gained attention due to the ongoing pandemic (Wong, Lin and Kou, 2021), but limited studies have considered it as a study object and potential empirical source of data.

During the Covid19 pandemic, the literature on staycation concepts has been limited (Knezevic Cvelbar & Ogorevc, 2020), raising questions about tourists' experiences, well-being, and psychological outcomes. A staycation can promote recuperation and recovery from daily exhaustion, replenishing resources, and potentially prevent severe health problems like depression, stress, trauma, and fear. However, there are limitations to staycation impact, as it has less pronounced effects on wellbeing than vacations spent outside one's usual living environment. Despite these limitations, the concept of staycation has the potential to offer recovery experiences and prevent severe health problems during this challenging time (de Bloom, Nawijn, Geurts, Kinnunen, & Korpela, 2017, p. 574).

Millennials are a significant consumer group for staycation packages (Barclays, 2019), seeking quality of life and meaningful experiences (Sethi et al., 2018). They are technologically savvy, trend-conscious, and open to trying new things. Staycations are locals who transform into domestic tourists due to their familiar surroundings but experience unique emotions, resulting in an extraordinary feeling of wonderment in their regular surroundings. Existing studies on staycations often overlook the younger consumer segment. James and colleagues (2017) study identifies four types of staycations: socialites, adventurous eaters, and culture enthusiasts. Therefore, this research aims to explore the concepts of staycation among Malaysian Millennials and drivers that push tourists to travel in the short-term period, staycation.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The goal of this research is to investigate the need for a millennial staycation in the tourist business, with an emphasis on aspects such as the distance that can influence millennials' staycation,

as well as social experiences on millennials' staycation that can enhance their motivation when working. The study's focus is on millennials' opinions of staycations. For millennials, quality of life and enjoyable experiences are more important than for older generations (such as baby boomers), who prioritize their careers more. Millennials may find staycations appealing as a new norm because they are open to new experiences and trend conscious (Dabija et al., 2018; Ketter, 2020; Siegel and Wang, 2019). According to Bowen and McCain (2015) and Williams and Page (2011), millennials are also sensitive to current events and potential future developments. Millennials' behaviors are primarily influenced by actual events in their lives.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **The Crisis Of Covid-19**

The tourism industry has been significantly impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic due to reduced tourist flow, travel plans, unemployment, and business investment. Health outbreaks such as foot-and-mouth disease, the SARS epidemic, and the Avian Influenza pandemic have also caused a decline in demand in multiple tourism sectors (Borzyszkowski, 2013; Herbane, 2013; Calgaro, Lloyd, & Dominey-Howes, 2014). The COVID-19 pandemic has had a more devastating impact on international travel and tourism, with international arrivals plunging by 97% in April 2020 to levels not seen since the early 1990s, resulting in a more than tenfold loss of international tourism revenue (Romagosa, 2020).

Staycations have grown rapidly during the COVID-19 pandemic and have become part of the emerging customer behavior inspired by the epidemic. Several countries have started the staycation initiative to encourage visits to local destinations, such as Ireland, Iceland, Italy, Poland, Slovenia, Lithuania, South Korea, and Thailand. The tourist industry has been one of the most impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, with an estimated RM3.37 billion between January and February 2020. Decision-making is a complex and dynamic process that is influenced by variables from both socio-psychological and non-psychological perspectives. Research is needed to understand and describe the dynamic nature of the decision itself, as it is expected to be influenced in different ways by different situations like COVID-19 and different generations.

### **The Concept Of Staycations**

A staycation, sometimes known as a holiday or a mix of the words "stay" and "vacation," is a period when a person or family stays at home and engages in leisure activities that are easily accessible by day trip and do not necessitate overnight housing. (Sanchez-Rebull et al., 2022). By taking a holiday at home rather than abroad, the phrase has gradually evolved in British English to indicate domestic tourism. Staycation activities include using a home pool, visiting neighbourhood parks and museums, and attending fairs and theme parks. Some staycationers choose to follow a set of rules to replicate the experience of a traditional vacation. Setting a start and end date, making ahead arrangements, and avoiding routine are all examples of these rules (Wong, Lin & Kou, 2021).

The Covid-19 crisis has led to the development of proximity tourism, which is a form of domestic tourism with shorter length and proximity. A staycation is a vacation spent at or near one's home, creating a traditional holiday environment while enjoying everything that home and one's home ambiance have to offer (Rosu, 2020). According to Germann Molz (2009), staycations were represented through stillness and as 'undesirable' in the media, "a form of consumer mobility or as a failure of mobility" (p.282). In this manner, it was demonstrated how representations of mobility are constructed. Furthermore, staycation has been one of few concrete and feasible adaptations of tourism and hospitality activities factoring in the restrictions of mobility and access due to Covid-19, as against the immature recovery schemes such as the "tourism bubble," which has been nothing but disenchanting (The Strait Times, 2021).

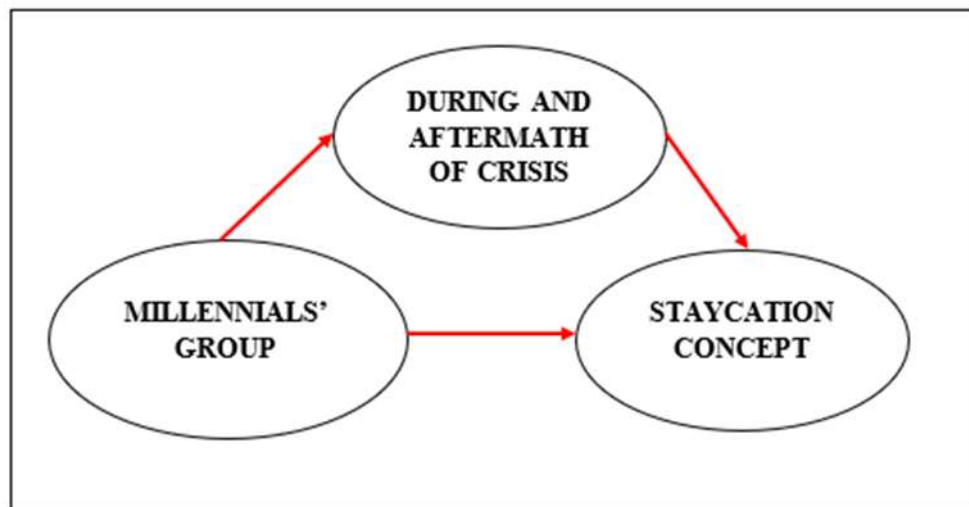
## Millennials Group

Millennials, also known as Generation Y or Gen Y, are the generation in the West that comes after Generation X and before Generation Z (Saghiani, 2010). Researchers and the general public use the early 1980s as the starting birth years and the mid-1990s to early 2000s as the ending birth years when referring to the generation, which is typically defined as people born between 1981 and 1996. The millennial generation is a significant new market segment in the tourism industry. They are technologically savvy, open to trying new things, and have a lot of money to spend (Siegel and Wang, 2019). They prioritize the quality of life and meaningful life experiences and are one of the main consumers for staycation package items. Staycations are locals who transform into domestic tourists while on vacation because they are familiar with the surroundings but experience an extraordinary feeling of wonderment.

## RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

A theoretical framework is a network of linkages between variables that are logical, explicable, and elaborated with respect to the issue. The association between staycations and millennials from the workplace is important to comprehend for this study. The study aims to identify the factors that cause millennials to take a staycation from the workplace, whether short or long distance affects travel for vacation, and whether the experience while on vacation can improve performance or motivation when working, as shown in Figure 2.1 below.

**Figure 2.1:** The conceptual framework of the staycation concept among millennials group during and aftermath of the crisis.



## METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

The research design involves choosing between quantitative and qualitative analysis methods. A qualitative approach summarizes phenomena based on numbers, while a quantitative approach is used to explore behavior, perspective, feelings, and experiences in real-life events. Researchers have chosen a case study as a qualitative research approach to investigate real-life events. A case study is an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its natural context. There are three types of case studies: exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory.

The exploratory approach is preferred in this study, as it focuses on the potential of staycations among Millennials as a preferred travel choice during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. The case study's focus on examining the potential of staycations among Millennials as a preferred travel choice is relevant to this study.

### Data Collection

Data collections are the process of collecting, measuring, and analyzing research insights using proven techniques. They can be divided into primary and secondary data, with primary data being the original data collected for research purposes, and secondary data being data gathered by another source. Data collection is a critical stage in conducting research, starting with deciding the type of data needed and selecting a sample from a specific population. For case study approaches, various techniques are used, including documentation, archival records, interviews, direct observations, participant observation, and physical artifacts. Data collection aims to achieve research objectives and answer questions, with the interview method being the most appropriate research approach for this study.

| Research questions  | Research approach         | Respondents         |
|---|---------------------------|---------------------|
| 1. What are the concepts of staycation used among Millennials?                          | Semi-structured interview | Millennial's people |
| 2. What are the drivers that push Millennials to make staycation?                       |                           |                     |
| 3. Can staycation be one travel choice made during and in the aftermath of the Covid19? |                           |                     |

Table 3.1: Questionnaire exploring the potential of staycation as one preferred destination to travel during and aftermath of the covid-19.

### Sampling

Purposive sampling, a common method in qualitative analysis, is chosen for this study, as it aims to select informants with the best knowledge and experience regarding the research topic. The sample size for this study is based on millennials in Malaysia, with a focus on age (born between 1981-1994) and professional type (lecturers). The sample size is among millennial groups in Kelantan.

## DATA ANALYSIS

Within the qualitative method, there are a variety of data analysis techniques from which to choose (Creswell, 2011; Patton, 2015). The available tools include content analysis, constant comparison, successive approximation, thematic analysis, domain analysis, ideal type, event structure analysis, matrices, grounded theory, and other analytical methods (Silverman, 2006). However, choosing an appropriate technique depends on many factors, including the nature of the data and the type of research questions to be addressed.

Normally researcher frequently uses content analysis and thematic analysis. The content analysis uses a descriptive approach in both coding of the data and its interpretation of quantitative counts of the codes (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). Conversely, the thematic analysis provides a purely qualitative, detailed, and nuanced account of the data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). However, both of these analyses are sets of techniques and systematic processes to analyze textual data, coding, and creation of theme (Forman, Creswell, Damschroder, Kowalski, & Krein, 2008; Vaismoradi, Jones, Turunen, & Snelgrove, 2016). For the purpose of the study **thematic analysis** was used to analyze the qualitative data analysis.

## FINDINGS

Respondents were asked about their understanding of the concepts of staycations and the purposed of staycation. Most respondents expressed a positive reaction to staycation, as it is essential in everyday life and has both positive and negative effects.

### The Concept Of The Staycation Among Millennial Groups In Malaysia

After seven interviews, four themes were identified: duration, type of activity (leisure activities and visiting family), place (hotel or resort), and distance (near to home). Most respondents understood the concept, with the duration being a short period, the type of activity being leisure activities, the place being a hotel or resort, and the distance being near to home.

Table 4.2 shows the summary of the result analysis.

| Theme                   | Sub Theme        | Example Of Responses   |
|-------------------------|------------------|--|
| <b>1. Duration</b>      | Short Period     | R1: "A person who leaves home to go somewhere with a purpose in a short period of time."<br><br>R3: "... a staycation can be defined is a short stay or less than three days." |
| <b>2. Type Activity</b> | Leisure Activity | R2: "Independence Day celebrations, went camping, and even participated in a concert"  |



|                    |                  |  |
|--------------------|------------------|--|
|                    | Visiting Family  | R3: “Visiting parents and relatives, traveling to new places, and trying new foods.”<br><br>R4: The purpose for a staycation is to visit family, and spend time with family” |
| <b>3. Place</b>    | Hotel or resort  | R3: “every time they visit their parents, usually opting for a 2-day 1-night or 3-day 2-night stay at a hotel.”<br><br>R1:” Resorts and pools with beaches.”                 |
| <b>4. Distance</b> | Nearby from Home | R3: “The respondent's staycation location is to visit family but stay at a hotel or homestay for privacy because of their kids”  |

According to table 4.2, there were four main themes to explain the concepts of staycation among respondents. This study found a staycation can be referred to “*the activity of making a vacation out of staying at home*” (Sharma, 2009) and the new term was first used by Massey (2003). In general, the concept of a staycation refers to traveling to destinations closer to home within the context of tourism.

### TYPES OF PLACES FOR STAYCATION

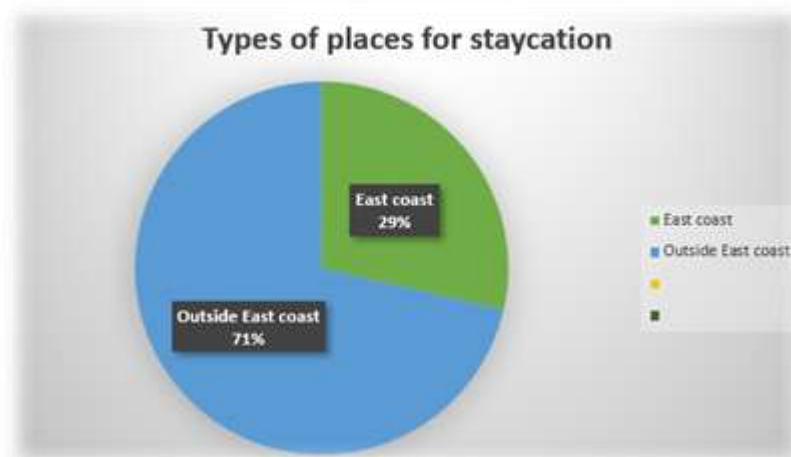


Diagram 4.1: Types of places for a staycation

The chart above depicts several types of destinations for staycation, which is an overview provided by multiple responders. The chart depicts the numerous locales that are suited for their staycation lodging. The described location is divided into two parts, the east coast, and the outside east. Based on their tastes and interests, responders can enjoy a wide range of venues in this situation.

According to the graphic, many respondents choose to spend their staycation somewhere other than the East Coast. This is owing to a number of external attractions located outside of the East Coast.

For example, R2 and R6 identified Kuala Lumpur as their ideal destination for a staycation, and R5 mentioned Penang as one of the intriguing places to visit. While R3 and R1 chose a location outside of Kelantan to see their families in their homeland and look for a beachfront hotel resort. This finding is supported by Rosu (2020) that found the length of a staycation is often short, as it mostly pertains to excursions within driving distance from home. Rosu (2020) interpreted that staycation as a temporary vacation spent at home or in one's hometown.

## PURPOSE OF STAYCATION

Table 4.3 shows the purpose of a staycation.

| Purpose Of Staycation     | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------------|----------------|
| ➤ Spend time with family. | 45%            |
| ➤ Release stress          | 30%            |
| ➤ Lifestyle               | 25%            |

Most of the respondents explained their purpose of staycation. For instance, R1 explained based on her experience, *“Staycation is to release stress, spend time with family, and find resorts and pools with beaches”*. R2 said.

*“She is a married couple (Long Distance Learning). They plan to go on vacation together during holidays to spend quality time with their family...”*

In terms of releasing their stress, R4 stated that *“staycation can release stress from work and wants to spend time with the family, looking for a 'viral' food port is also a cause for a staycation and finally the children also influence for staycation”*. R5 stated that *“He makes a staycation to desire to unwind after a long day of work, relax, lose their desire to work, shop, and find tasty cuisine”*. This finding of the staycation purpose is supported by Pawłowska-Legwand and Matoga (2016) that found a staycation is a new tourism trend, especially for city dwellers, because of changing lifestyle and work-life balance preferences. People might tend to avoid spending much time planning and waiting all year for a vacation, which makes them feel fatigued and focus on it with great expectations.

## IMPACT OF CRISIS ON A STAYCATION

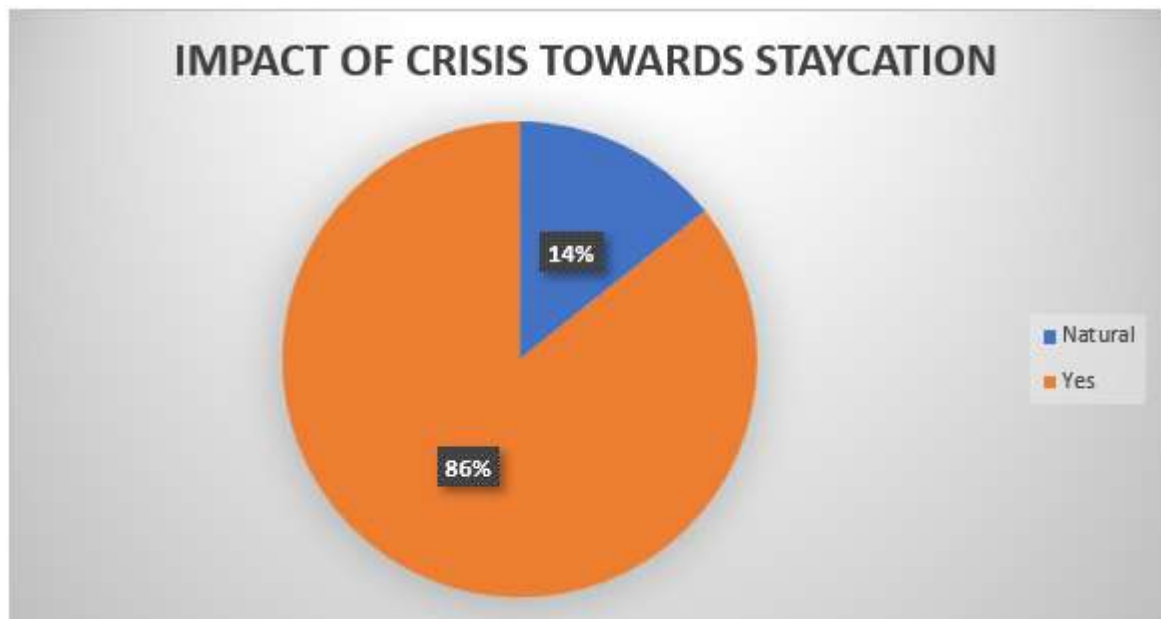


Figure 4.2: Impact of crisis on staycation

The graphic above depicts the impact of the crisis on staycation, it is apparent that daily living has an impact on the crisis. This is due to the fact that staycation has had a big impact since the crisis. Staycations, spent at home or in one's local neighborhood, have become a popular option for people wishing to get away from their routine without traveling far. This circumstance is demonstrated by the responses given to two groups, namely "natural and yes.

## LEVEL STRESS BEFORE AND AFTER STAYCATION

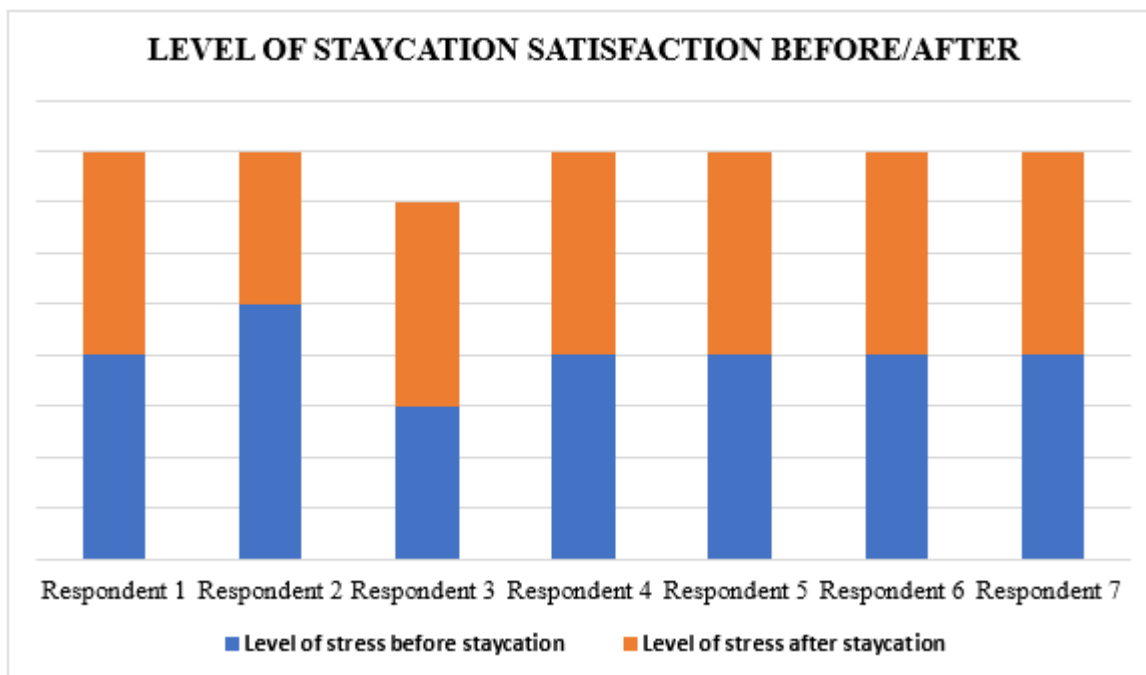


Figure 4.1: Level of staycation satisfaction before and after the crisis

## DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATION

### Discussion

Tourist well-being is influenced by the concept of staycation, which promotes recuperation and recovery from daily exhaustion. Staycations can help prevent severe health problems like depression, stress, trauma, and fear during the pandemic. Factors influencing Millennials' decision to staycation include stress relief, family time, and lifestyle changes. Staycation, a term used by Millennials, refers to leisure activities within driving distance of home, without overnight accommodation. This trend is popular among tech-savvy individuals who are more likely to try new things and travel. This finding result is supported by Pawłowska-Legwand and Matoga (2016), a staycation is a new tourism trend, especially for city dwellers, because of changing lifestyle and work-life balance preferences. Staycations are often shared with friends and family through social media platforms like Instagram, allowing them to experience the local area as a tourist without the time and expense associated with long-distance travel.

Staycation has become a popular trend during the Covid-19 pandemic, with studies showing short durations, leisure activities, and a focus on places. This trend has been particularly popular among city dwellers due to changing lifestyles and work-life balance preferences. The pandemic has imposed travel restrictions, forcing tourists to choose nearby destinations and avoid crowded places. Staycation has become a viable adaptation of tourism and hospitality activities, addressing mobility and access restrictions, and addressing immature recovery schemes like the "tourism bubble." "Millennials' staycation experiences during COVID-19 may differ from traditional travelers, as they explore local hotels and attractions in a restricted setting. This can lead to a shift in social circle behavior, as they assume the role of tourists exploring the neighbourhood. The pandemic has impacted millennials' decision to have a staycation, as the increased stress levels and lack of travel opportunities have led to a higher desire to release stress through staycations.

## **Recommendation**

Staycations have become increasingly popular as an alternative to typical holidays, particularly in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. However, particularly in the academic environment, there is still a considerable gap in academic research on the consequences and outcomes of staycations. Qualitative research can help future researchers investigate the aspects and dimensions of staycation experiences. Through in-depth interviews, focus groups, and observation, researchers can collect extensive, nuanced data on the elements that contribute to tourist happiness during staycations. They can look into the several parts that constitute the staycation concept, such as relaxation, local discovery, cultural immersion, and tailored experiences. Using qualitative approaches, researchers can dive into the subjective impressions, motives, and actions of staycationers, providing significant insights into their preferences and expectations.

After qualitative research has identified the important features of staycation experiences, quantitative research can be done to evaluate these factors and analyze their impact on tourist satisfaction. Surveys and questionnaires can be used by researchers to obtain quantitative data on a broader scale, allowing them to quantify and examine the correlations between different factors. Researchers, for example, can investigate the effect of hotel quality, proximity to attractions, leisure activity availability, and affordability on tourist satisfaction during staycations. By combining qualitative and quantitative methodologies, researchers can acquire a more thorough and solid knowledge of staycations.

While quantitative research allows for statistical analysis and variable measurement and provides empirical support for the conclusions, qualitative research dives into the components and dimensions of staycation experiences. By presenting a more comprehensive understanding of staycations, this mixed-methods approach can assist destination managers, policymakers, and stakeholders in designing and promoting fun and fulfilling staycation experiences.

## **CONCLUSION**

To conclude, considering a staycation is defined as "a vacation in which the vacationer stays at home, or near home while creating the ambiance of a standard vacation" in this section, millennials' staycation experiences at COVID-19 may differ from those of traditional travellers. A person on a staycation explores the local hotel's physical surroundings and visits nearby attractions rather than traveling to another region. Millennials' decisions to have a staycation are impacted by several circumstances or reasons, especially during the pandemic.

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