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New Era in the Tourism Sector Post Covid 19: A Study of North Cyprus

Covid-19 Sonrası Turizm Sektöründe Yeni Bir Dönem: Kuzey Kıbrıs Örneđi



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Abstract

Covid-19 has attracted a great deal of attention from scientists over the years, mainly due to its impact on tourism and the economies of countries, but several studies have been conducted focusing on the impact of COVID-19 on tourism and the economy of North Cyprus. Extensive research has been conducted on the lack of tourists, the lack of local tourist visits and the economic problems that arose during this period, but also on the post-COVID-19 period and the measures taken to recover the tourism sector in North Cyprus. Cases in North Cyprus are rare. Therefore, this research aimed to investigate the measures taken to revive and boost revenue, manage resources, cost efficiency, and operational efficiency, and increase tourist arrivals, contributing to the existing knowledge about the tourism industry post-COVID-19 on thriving and survival after its reopening. This topic addresses areas such as the impacts of post-COVID-19 on businesses, the development and changes in the industry, the strategies each of the businesses has adopted to keep the business running, and how they have been able to create interest in the tourists' and customers' minds whilst ensuring future growth. In this research, data were collected through face-to-face interviews with owners and managers operating in popular cities in North Cyprus via a qualitative research approach. This study contributes to the existing literature concerning thriving and surviving in the tourism and hospitality sector post-COVID-19 using North Cyprus as a case study. The world is struggling with this disease and similar diseases from time to time, which strongly affect the tourism industry. For this reason, this research will guide all future tourism-related industries regarding how to survive the negative effects of post-COVID-19 on these sectors. Therefore, the originality of this research is to give further knowledge to the hospitality sector in North Cyprus (a Mediterranean island) regarding how to cope with extraordinary situations in order to survive in the tourism industry.

Keywords: Tourism, Covid 19, Hospitality Sector, Boost Revenue, Research Management, North Cyprus.

Highlights

- This study examines the key impacts of the post-Covid-19 period on hotel, restaurant, and travel agency operations in Northern Cyprus.
- The research is based on a qualitative case study conducted with 16 managers and business operators from tourism enterprises across different regions of the country.

Citation Information/Kaynakça Bilgisi

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- The findings indicate that social media use, advertising, pricing strategies, and service quality have emerged as the main recovery strategies.
- The results show that visitors increasingly prefer open spaces, tranquil environments, and cultural experiences in the post-pandemic period.
- The study reveals that current practices in Northern Cyprus remain limited, highlighting the need for multi-channel strategies, technological adoption, and product diversification to support sustainable growth.

Öz

COVID-19, özellikle turizm ve ülke ekonomileri üzerindeki etkisi nedeniyle yıllar boyunca bilim insanlarının yoğun ilgisini çekmiştir. Bununla birlikte, COVID-19'un Kuzey Kıbrıs turizmi ve ekonomisi üzerindeki etkilerine odaklanan çalışmaların sayısı sınırlıdır. Bu süreçte turist sayısındaki azalma, yerel turist ziyaretlerindeki düşüş ve ortaya çıkan ekonomik sorunların yanı sıra COVID-19 sonrası dönemde turizm sektörünün toparlanmasına yönelik alınan önlemler üzerine çeşitli araştırmalar yapılmıştır. Ancak Kuzey Kıbrıs bağlamında gerçekleştirilen vaka temelli çalışmalar oldukça sınırlıdır. Bu nedenle bu araştırma, turizm sektörünü yeniden canlandırmak, gelirleri artırmak, kaynakları etkin bir şekilde yönetmek, maliyet etkinliğini ve operasyonel verimliliği geliştirmek ve turist gelişlerini artırmak amacıyla alınan önlemleri incelemeyi amaçlamaktadır. Ayrıca çalışma, COVID-19 sonrası yeniden açılma sürecinde turizm endüstrisinin gelişmesi ve sürdürülebilirliği konusundaki mevcut bilgi birikimine katkı sağlamayı hedeflemektedir. Bu araştırma; COVID-19 sonrası dönemin işletmeler üzerindeki etkileri, sektörde meydana gelen gelişme ve değişimler, işletmelerin faaliyetlerini sürdürebilmek için benimsedikleri stratejiler ve gelecekteki büyümeyi güvence altına alırken turistlerin ve müşterilerin ilgisini nasıl çekebildikleri gibi konuları ele almaktadır. Araştırmada veriler, Kuzey Kıbrıs'ın önde gelen şehirlerinde faaliyet gösteren işletme sahipleri ve yöneticileri ile gerçekleştirilen yüz yüze görüşmeler aracılığıyla ve nitel araştırma yaklaşımı kullanılarak toplanmıştır. Bu çalışma, Kuzey Kıbrıs'ı bir vaka çalışması olarak ele alarak COVID-19 sonrası turizm ve konaklama sektöründe gelişme ve sürdürülebilirlik konusundaki mevcut literatüre katkı sağlamaktadır. Dünya zaman zaman turizm sektörünü güçlü biçimde etkileyen bu ve benzeri hastalıklarla mücadele etmektedir. Bu nedenle söz konusu araştırma, COVID-19 sonrası dönemde sektörlerin karşılaştığı olumsuz etkilerle nasıl başa çıkılabileceğine ilişkin turizm sektörü paydaşlarına yol gösterici nitelikte olacaktır. Bu bağlamda araştırmanın özgün katkısı, Kuzey Kıbrıs'taki (bir Akdeniz adası) konaklama sektörüne turizm endüstrisinde sürdürülebilirliğin sağlanabilmesi için olağanüstü durumlarla nasıl başa çıkılabileceğine ilişkin ek bilgiler sunmasıdır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Turizm, Covid-19, Konaklama Sektörü, Gelir Artırma, Kaynak Yönetimi, Kuzey Kıbrıs.

Öne Çıkanlar

- Bu çalışma, Kuzey Kıbrıs'ta COVID-19 sonrası dönemin otel, restoran ve seyahat acentesi operasyonları üzerindeki temel etkilerini incelemektedir.
- Çalışma, ülkenin farklı bölgelerinde faaliyet gösteren turizm işletmelerinden 16 yönetici ve işletmeci ile gerçekleştirilen nitel bir vaka çalışmasına dayanmaktadır.
- Bulgular, sosyal medya kullanımı, reklam faaliyetleri, fiyatlandırma stratejileri ve hizmet kalitesinin toparlanma sürecinde öne çıkan başlıca stratejiler olduğunu göstermektedir.
- Sonuçlar, pandemi sonrası dönemde ziyaretçilerin açık alanları, daha sakin ortamları ve kültürel deneyimleri giderek daha fazla tercih ettiğini göstermektedir.
- Çalışma, Kuzey Kıbrıs'ta mevcut uygulamaların sınırlı kaldığını ve sürdürülebilir büyümeyi desteklemek için çok kanallı stratejilere, teknolojik adaptasyona ve ürün çeşitlendirmesine ihtiyaç duyulduğunu ortaya koymaktadır.

1. INTRODUCTION

The outbreak of the post-COVID-19 period has dramatically affected many businesses globally, with studies showing that the tourism and travel sector has been hit the hardest not

just on a global scale but has also affected the local markets of countries.^{1,2} In North Cyprus, the tourism market was primarily affected; the borders and businesses were closed, bookings were canceled, and there was a loss of staff due to businesses not being able to pay staff due to a lack of guests and customers.³

Studies show that some tourism industry sectors have taken long- and short-term measures to survive and secure growth, such as cost reduction, revenue increment, and the development of automated machines and multi-business-channel platforms.^{4,5}

The reason for choosing this topic was that in North Cyprus, the tourism industry is one of its economic pillars, comprising hotels, restaurants, and travel agencies. Many tourists come to the country each year, especially after the pandemic. In North Cyprus, there have been adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on specific tourism and hospitality operations, and this study shows how businesses have coped with and responded to these challenges and provides knowledge about how sectors were thriving a year since COVID-19. In addition, a study conducted by and aimed to examine the impacts of COVID-19 on tourism from the stakeholder perspective in the case of Famagusta town in North Cyprus.^{6,7}

The above-mentioned research participants were academicians, travel agents, taxi operators, hotel owners, and so on. The research focused on exploring the impact on hospitality operations (restaurants, travel agencies, and hotels) and investigating the measures taken to revive and boost revenue, manage resources, improve cost efficiency and operational efficiency, and increase tourist arrivals, thereby contributing to the existing knowledge about the tourism industry in the post-COVID pandemic period on thriving and survival after its reopening, using the hospitality sectors of North Cyprus as a case study. This study brings to light what businesses in the tourism sector of North Cyprus and those overseas are doing to manage the situation post-COVID-19, while also adding to the body of knowledge concerning this area. These measures will help businesses in the tourism sector adapt and set up sustainable business models to manage the situation. This topic was chosen because the island has the tourism and hospitality industry as one of its economic pillars, and

¹ Hüseyin Araslı et al., "Hearing the Voices of Wingless Angels: A Critical Content Analysis of Nurses' COVID-19 Experiences", *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 17/22 (2020).

² Weng M. Lim - Wai-Ming To, "The Economic Impact of a Global Pandemic on the Tourism Economy: The Case of COVID-19 and Macao's Destination and Gambling Dependent Economy", *Current Issues in Tourism* 25/8 (2022), 1258-1269.

³ Kaveh Jafari et al., "Hospitality and Tourism Industry Amid COVID-19 Pandemic: Voices From Small Mediterranean Town", *International Hospitality Review* 37/2 (2021), 243-264.

⁴ Raju Majumdar, "Surviving and Growing in the Post-COVID World: The Case of Indian Hotels", *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes* 13/5 (2021), 584-598.

⁵ Carlos Yopez - Walter Leimgruber, "The Evolving Landscape of Tourism, Travel, and Global Trade Since the COVID-19 Pandemic", *Research in Globalization* 8 (2024).

⁶ Murude Ertac - Erel Cankan, "Creating a Sustainable Tourism Model in North Cyprus During the Uncertainty of the COVID-19 Pandemic", *Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism Themes* 13/4 (2021), 488-497.

⁷ Jafari, *International Hospitality Review*, 243-264.

any negative effect (as this subject has been discussed in numerous articles) in the sector directly affects the island as a whole. The negative impacts of COVID-19.⁸

Thus, this research aimed to investigate and examine the measures adopted to revive the North Cyprus tourism sector post-COVID-19. The measures were taken to revive and boost revenue, manage resources, cost efficiency, and operational efficiency, and increase tourist arrivals. To do this, the researchers of this study collected and analyzed data on: (1) the impact of post-COVID-19 on businesses, (2) the development and changes in the industry, (3) strategies used to ensure operational efficiency and increase customers' purchases, and (4) measures taken to ensure future growth.

The study reveals that despite the industry businesses taking steps to curb the situation, they are doing the bare minimum when compared to what is being done overseas and would need to study and adopt some measures, such as multi-business, multi-channel platforms, such as offering rooms as service apartments, considering the use of technology while maintaining a human touch, postponing capital expenditure, conserving energy, and increasing product diversity.

Ethics Statement: This study was conducted in accordance with all ethical standards. The information and findings presented in this article have been written in accordance with the principles of honesty and transparency. The authors have not compromised scientific integrity and objectivity at any stage of the research. In addition, all sources used in this study have been properly cited.

The ethics committee approval includes following information and the ethics committee document has uploaded to the system.

Committee Name: Rauf Denktas University Ethical Committee

Date of Decision: 10.03.2025

Document Number: ETK00-2024/25-0002

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review section examines the main themes related to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the hospitality and tourism industry. It discusses first the global effects of COVID-19 on hospitality management operations, including business closures, reduced tourist demand, and operational disruptions. Secondly, it reviews how the hospitality sector managed the crisis through strategies such as cost reduction, operational adjustments, and innovation. The section also addresses the role of social distancing and health-safety measures in shaping tourism promotion and customer behavior in the post COVID period. Finally, it explores the importance of multi-business and multi-channel platforms,

⁸ Nafiya Güden et al., "Covid-19 Salgını Öncesi ve Sürecinde Ziyaretçi Sayılarında ve Tercihlerinde Oluşan Değişiklikler: KKTC'yi Ziyaret Eden Yabancı Turistler Üzerine Bir Çalışma", *Journal of Tourism & Gastronomy Studies* 9/3 (2021), 1787-1799.

highlighting diversification strategies and the increasing role of digital technologies in hospitality operations.

2.1. Impact of COVID-19 on Hospitality Management Operations

The recent outbreak of the coronavirus disease COVID-19 did affect lots of businesses around the world, leading to bankruptcy, businesses closing, and lots of businesses struggling to keep up, most especially with the lockdown imposed by the government. Travel tourism and the hospitality sector were not left out but were among the sectors affected the most, as these sectors are characterized by human movement, interaction, and spending capacity, which were put on hold due to government restrictions to curb the spread of the disease.⁹

The government put in place measures such as lockdowns, travel restrictions, and the closing of borders, and there were cuts in salaries, considerable reductions in hotel revenues and tourist arrivals, and losses of jobs and livelihoods happening at the same time, throwing the world and the sector at large into imbalance.^{10,11} Various governments have also developed COVID-19 response strategies for people to get tested. They also encouraged and made it mandatory for members of society to pay attention to health regulations and tests. Ghana had the highest number of patients that tested positive in sub-Saharan Africa; the government, by taking these measures, got its community leaders, faith organization leaders, and stakeholders to educate their members and members of society at large on the impact of not adhering to these health rules or taking the test. They have also developed central systems to manage data, keep information, and help inventory test equipment and other materials. There was also the use of applications to keep track of citizens, find those disobeying rules, and track those not tested. In order to create awareness and circulate information, public health communication forms were used to inform and enlighten people about the virus, and measures and regulations were put in place to curb the spread of the virus.¹²

In the tourism and hospitality sector, all stakeholders in the industry were affected. Following the restrictions on travel and social distancing in place, the desire and access for tourists to travel were significantly reduced, leading to cancellations in travel plans and hotel reservations, with adverse effects on employees' jobs and sources of livelihood.¹³ The restaurant sector also suffered significant losses due to the lockdown and the colossal drop in hotel occupancy rates.¹⁴ On the hotel side, there was a sharp reduction in labor and stock in the hotel sector. In the first quarter of the pandemic, China experienced a significant loss in revenue of 42.3% in 2020. There was also a reduction of international tourists by 78%, causing

⁹ Majumdar, "Surviving and Growing in the Post-COVID World: The Case of Indian Hotels", 584-598.

¹⁰ Yenez - Leimgruber, Research in Globalization.

¹¹ Tianh Wetzler, *Food Delivery App Boom Continues Following Lockdown-Driven Growth*, (Accessed Nov 2, 2021).

¹² Solip Ha et al., "COVID-19 Testing: A Qualitative Study Exploring Enablers and Barriers in the Greater Accra Region, Ghana", *Frontiers in Public Health* 10 (2022).

¹³ Lim - To, *Current Issues in Tourism*, 1258-1269.

¹⁴ Jafari, *International Hospitality Review*, 243-264.

a loss in export revenue of US\$1.2 trillion, the most considerable reduction of tourism jobs since the effect of the 9/11 event.¹⁵ Malaysia also experienced a remarkable fall in revenue of RM24.91 million in losses because of 61,859 bookings being canceled during the outbreak period.¹⁶ However, after international efforts to contain the pandemic, booking cancellations in the hospitality sector once again became the norm. Another impact on the hotel sector was the reduction of labor. The Malaysian hotel sector was severely hit, reducing its workforce, as the staff was asked to take unpaid leave, workers' salaries were reduced by 9%, and some staff were laid off. Another tourism sector that was significantly affected was the aviation sector, as it experienced a massive drop in revenue due to travel restrictions and a reduction in passenger demand due to fear of contracting the virus. Because of this, some countries gave their staff unpaid leave.¹⁷

In the hospitality sector, because of the pandemic, there were restrictions on hotel operations, restaurants, holiday homes, and cafes, loss of staff due to no motivation to work, and the lack of international guests from Europe and the Middle East. In addition, research on the post-COVID-19 period in the tourism sector has been carried out in other parts of the world, but very little research has been done on the subject, especially on a small Mediterranean island.^{18, 19} Not only did the pandemic affect businesses, but people's lives were greatly affected. People lost their means of livelihood, and shops and private businesses were asked to close. People became unemployed, making it difficult to afford rent and food, and they were not able to maintain their well-being. Business owners were also forced to lay off their workers, and about 40% of the staff traveled to Türkiye to be with their families there.

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2.2. How the Hospitality Sector Managed the Crises

China was the first country to be hit; the hotel sector developed strategies and measures to manage the crisis at the time; initially, they put a hold on the development of new projects and the selling of non-core assets to keep the business running efficiently, they

¹⁵ World Tourism Organization – UNWTO, *COVID-19 and Tourism*, (Accessed June 30, 2020).

¹⁶ Wasiul Karim et al., “The Movement Control Order (MCO) for COVID-19 Crisis and Its Impact on Tourism and Hospitality Sector in Malaysia”, *International Tourism and Hospitality Journal* 3/2 (2020), 1–7.

¹⁷ Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development – OECD, *COVID-19 and the Aviation Industry: Impact and Policy Responses* (2020).

¹⁸ Erdiñ Çakmak et al., “Changing Practices of Tourism Stakeholders in Covid-19 Affected Destinations”, *Tourism Culture & Communication* 25/2 (2025), 290–291.

¹⁹ Shiki Zhang, et al., “The COVID-19 Pandemic and Tourists’ Risk Perceptions: Tourism Policies’ Mediating Role in Sustainable and Resilient Recovery in the New Normal”, *Sustainability* 15/2 (2023).

²⁰ Rami K. Isaac - Wahba Abuaita “Can You Imagine Bethlehem Without Tourism: The Impacts of COVID-19 on Bethlehem, Palestine”, *Current Issues in Tourism* 24/24 (2021), 3535–3551.

²¹ Ryan Peterson – Robin B. Di Pietro “Exploring the Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on the Perceptions and Sentiments of Tourism Employees: Evidence from a Small Island Tourism Economy in the Caribbean”, *International Hospitality Review* 35/2 (2021), 156–170.

laid off staff performing poorly, closed some of their properties and parts of the hotels.²² As the weight of the pandemic continued to rise, they made use of a defensive approach, which included cost reduction and cutting such as reductions in working hours, increases in unpaid leave, and the reduction of services being outsourced, and when businesses began to open, they used innovations like service automation, diversification of revenue, technological upgrades, and service innovation.²³ However, the hospitality industry in India developed leadership strategies challenges to deal with this crisis, including ensuring cash reserves, managing employee stress, making customers and employees feel safe, and optimizing operations.²⁴

In the European countries, the various states gave financial incentives, and individual businesses also implemented saving actions such as operational cost reduction, changes in marketing campaigns, the use of their facilities for quarantine centers and providing medical facilities, and the holding back of minor expenses.²⁵ Government practices, marketing practices, operational practices, cost reduction practices, and pricing practices are five categories of crisis management practices developed in the Greek region that the hospitality industry can use for its recovery.²⁶ The hospitality industry in the Lebanese region has concentrated on ensuring transparency with the workforce, providing adequate information, and decentralizing power to departmental levels to deal with the effects of COVID-19, to help developing nations like North Cyprus manage this crisis. Operationally, hotel managers emphasize the importance of local tourists rather than total reliance on foreigners as a source of revenue and shift their focus toward more safety-conscious operations across all departments. They are also increasing flexibility in bookings and cancellations to entice customers.

Changes are anticipated to increase the focus and alignment of hotel operations with technology. Business model innovation (BMI) was created by the hospitality industry in Austria because they thought it might help them recover from and effectively navigate the COVID-19 crisis.²⁷ Additionally, certain hospitality businesses prepared for the COVID-19 virus by keeping an eye out for early warning signals, practicing emergency plans, prioritizing crises, and preparing for the unexpected.²⁸ In addition to the digital and intelligent

²² Fei Hao et al., "COVID-19 and China's Hotel Industry: Impacts, a Disaster Management Framework, and Post-Pandemic Agenda", *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 90 (2020), 102636.

²³ Majumdar, "Surviving and Growing in the Post-COVID World: The Case of Indian Hotels", 584-598.

²⁴ Balvinder Shukla et al., "Leadership Challenges for Indian Hospitality Industry During COVID-19 Pandemic", *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Insights* 4/4 (2022), 1502-1520.

²⁵ Jose M. Rodríguez-Antón - Maria D. M. Alonso "COVID-19 Impacts and Recovery Strategies: The Case of the Hospitality Industry in Spain", *Sustainability* 12/20 (2020).

²⁶ Odysseas Pavlatos et al., "Crisis Management in the Greek Hotel Industry in Response to COVID-19 Pandemic", *Anatolia* 32/1 (2021), 80-92.

²⁷ Matthias Breier et al., "The Role of Business Model Innovation in the Hospitality Industry During the COVID-19 Crisis", *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 92 (2021).

²⁸ Abu Elnasr E. Sobaih et al., "Responses to COVID-19: The Role of Performance in the Relationship between Small Hospitality Enterprises' Resilience and Sustainable Tourism Development", *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 94 (2021).

technologies, the main driver of digital transformation is the change in consumer demand. Customers in the current scenario have developed a new desire for contactless services supported by digital platforms and sophisticated technologies. These services are expected to continue even after the epidemic.²⁹ In an increasingly competitive business environment, starting the digital transformation of the hotel industry can bring several benefits, including eliminating human errors, increasing service efficiency, stabilizing service quality, and improving customer satisfaction and hotel performance.

Studies also show that some hotels adopted short- and long-term measures to manage the crisis. The short term includes revenue management, reduction in cost (food delivery service with discounts, group bookings) and the management of resources (energy consumption, labour costs), while long-term measures (focus on domestic tourists, maintaining a human touch) are aimed at future growth.³⁰

2.3. The Use of Social Distancing Promotion Posts COVID

Before the COVID-19 outbreak, the use of offers such as discount packages was used to influence customers' purchase intentions of customers and guests, but this changed during the reopening and recovery stage post-COVID-19, when people's primary concern became their health. Therefore, the promotion of social distancing and safety measures were used to bring in customers to restaurants and hotels. Design changes were made in the product to identify and make changes according to customer needs. The need for health and sustainability management in the post-COVID-19 era has led to the design of rooms, fitness centres, offices, and balconies in one space to reduce interpersonal contact.³¹

2.4. Multi-Business and Multi-Channel Platform

The hotel sector not only focused on rooms and food services but diversified to increase revenue; they adopted businesses like the use of their space and rooms for public renting for exhibition shows, etc., and food delivery services, both online and offline services bringing about the use of their logistics. As customer needs and demands changed in this pandemic, the hotel industry should respond by innovating its services, products, and marketing strategies. The hotel industry can also implement reforms to enable multi-business, multi-channel platforms. For example, hotels can maximize their space for enhanced security and outdoor public activities such as conferences, events, and public meetings. Hotels should also strive to upgrade their channels for customer contact, attraction, and sales by entering the online and e-commerce tourism market.³²

²⁹ Poppy L. Rini - Muhammad A. Fikri, "Building Supply Chain Resilience Amid Covid-19: Post-Pandemic Strategies for Hotel Industry", *Asian Management and Business Review* (2022), 39-52.

³⁰ Majumdar, "Surviving and Growing in the Post-COVID World: The Case of Indian Hotels", 584-598.

³¹ Rii Y. Kim - Anyu Liu, "Social Distancing, Trust and Post-COVID-19 Recovery", *Tourism Management* 88 (2022).

³² Rini - Fikri, "Building Supply Chain Resilience Amid Covid-19: Post-Pandemic Strategies for Hotel Industry", 39-52.

3. IMPACT OF COVID 19 IN CYPRUS; THE CASE OF NORTH CYPRUS

North Cyprus is situated beneath Turkey on the map and is sometimes referred to as Northern Cyprus in Turkish. Most people in North Cyprus speak English in addition to Turkish, despite the latter being the country's official language. North Cyprus' official currency is the Turkish Lira (TL). The services sector, which comprises government, business, tourism, and education, dominates the economy of North Cyprus.³³

The island thrives primarily from tourism through its sea, sun, and sand, and mass tourism generated 11.7% of the total GDP in 2019.³⁴ The island has 5-star hotels with luxury services, casinos at breathtaking seaside locations that allow it to function in any season, numerous historical sites, special interest tourism such as bird watching, cultural tourism involving Turkish cuisine and Cypriot dances, paragliding, etc. Its primary support is from tourism, education, and the government, with more than one hundred and fifty tourism and hospitality businesses such as hotels, casinos, restaurants, etc.³⁵

The dependency of North Cyprus on tourism despite the adverse effects it has had on the island, such as overpopulation, swift development, and social issues shows that the tourism sector cannot be overlooked; hence, the need to explore plans and systems put in place for its development post- COVID-19.³⁶ The entire island is recognized for its sun, sea, and sand tourism, but North Cyprus features the most alluring and suitable beaches for 3S tourists. Additionally, unlike the island's southern sector, the majority of the North coast's beaches and coastal areas have avoided overdevelopment. North Cyprus' 3S tourism image is crucial for attracting visitors back to the island.³⁷

North Cyprus' economic pillars – the international hospitality and educational sectors, supermarkets, and taxis – were incredibly hit. The travel sector is being blamed for the spread of the disease internationally. It experienced a considerable decline as Cyprus experienced lots of cancellations, closed borders and airports, resulting in a reduction of international tourists and hotel guests by 75.1% in October 2020 when compared to the previous year, with no travel within the city and into the country. It was recorded by the North Cyprus public information office in 2020 that there was a cutback in the number of passenger arrivals from 1,472,155 in 2019 to 366,003 in 2020. Comparing the number of arrivals in the peak season from 2019 to 2020, there was a vast reduction of 92.7% in the country, showing the destructive impact of the pandemic on the tourism sector. The effect of COVID-19 on the North Cyprus economy is severe. A huge reduction in international tourism

³³ Douglas Lockhart - Sue Ashton, "Tourism to North Cyprus", *Geography* 75/2 (1990), 163-167.

³⁴ North Cyprus Public Information Office, *The Number of International Arrivals*, (2020).

³⁵ Ertac – Cankan, "Creating a Sustainable Tourism Model in North Cyprus During the Uncertainty of the COVID-19 Pandemic", 488-497.

³⁶ Maryam A. Seyedabolghasemi, et al., "Residents' Perceptions of Sustainable Tourism Destination Recovery: The Case of North Cyprus", *Land* 11/1 (2022), 94.

³⁷ Habib Alipour et al., "Behavioral Responses of 3S Tourism Visitors: Evidence from a Mediterranean Island Destination", *Tourism Management Perspectives* 33 (2020), 100624.

of 75% between October 2019 and 2020 was recorded, and efforts should be put into restarting and reviving the industry sustainably.³⁸

4. RESEARCH METHODS

The Research Methods section briefly explains the qualitative case study design of the research. It describes the data collection process through semi-structured interviews with tourism business managers, the purposive sampling strategy used to select participants from hotels, restaurants, and travel agencies, and the basic procedures applied to analyze and interpret the collected data.

4.1. The Case Study Technique

The qualitative approach requires studying things in their natural settings with uncontrolled observation, interviews, conversations, photographs, and recordings, providing realistic and rich data.³⁹ For this research, the qualitative method is used as it will allow the researchers to understand the nature of the research and the participants' mental and emotional states towards their businesses and the country as a whole more clearly. For the research, permission from the RDU ethics committee (reference code ETK00-2024/25-0002) was obtained.

Several methods in this research helped with a comprehensive understanding of the topic based on the analysis. These included observation, interviews, documentary research, etc. In getting data, qualitative researchers mostly used the non-probability form of sampling, meaning that the information obtained is not generalizable.⁴⁰

Using North Cyprus as a case study, the researchers will be able to get information through semi-structured interviews using a composed set of open-ended questions that covers every aspect of this topic and will allow for detailed responses through recording and handwritten notes.⁴¹ During the data collection process, meetings were held by appointment. To ensure reliability, interviews were conducted in person in the boardroom. Responses to the research questions were recorded. Research questions were formulated in multiple languages for foreign and Turkish directors and asked in English to foreign managers and in Turkish to Turkish managers.

4.2. Sample Strategy and Analyses

Sampling involves a set of interviewees (people) from a more enormous population to make an analysis.⁴² For this study, the purposive/judgmental sampling method was used, which falls under non-probability sampling. Purposive sampling, also known as judgmental

³⁸ Ertac – Cankan, “Creating a Sustainable Tourism Model in North Cyprus During the Uncertainty of the COVID-19 Pandemic”, 488-497.

³⁹ John W. Creswell – Cherly N. Poth, *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among Five Approaches*, Sage Publications, (2016).

⁴⁰ Gina M. A. Higginbottom, “Sampling Issues in Qualitative Research”, *Nurse Researcher* 12/1 (2004), 7-19.

⁴¹ Shazia Jamshed “Qualitative Research Method: Interviewing and Observation”, *Journal of Basic and Clinical Pharmacy* 5/4 (2014).

⁴² Fridah W. Mugo, *Sampling in Research*, (2002).

sampling, involves selecting subjects intentionally to be included in the research. Considering the many options available for purposive sampling strategies, this study used a critical case sampling technique and focused on tourist facilities in Famagusta, Nicosia, and Kyrenia in North Cyprus. The sample size was relatively limited, but the non-probability nature of the sampling allowed for selecting the most appropriate respondents.^{43,44}

In recruiting the participants for the current research, a purposive sampling method was used with a total sample of N = 16 (fifteen males and one female) indigenes of Famagusta, Nicosia, and Kyrenia in North Cyprus. Among the respondents, eight restaurant owners directly served both local and international tourists, six respondents were department heads of boutique hotels, and two respondents were from travel agencies. All respondents have had at least 10 years of experience dealing directly with local and international tourists. Defining a target population in research is essential because it helps determine whether the samples are appropriate for analysis. As mentioned above, the sample forms a part of the population under study. Thus, the present study sample consisted of 16 participants from different organizations in tourism in the cities of North Cyprus, as depicted in Table 1.

In this study the researcher selected owners, heads of departments, and owners of travel agencies to understand the research objective based on management perception. The research questions are shown below;

- What is the impact of post-Covid-19 on the business?
- What are the new developments and changes in the tourism sector?
- What strategies are adopted to restore revenue, conserve resources, and increase operational efficiency?
- What are the measures taken to ensure future growth?

The participants then take turns sharing their experiences and observations regarding the study subject.

Table 1: Demographic data of the research participants

Participants	Gender M/F	Age (n)	District
R1	M	54	Famagusta
R2	M	51	Famagusta
R3	M	45	Nicosia

⁴³ Patrick Crookes – Sue Davies (ed.), *Research into Practice: Essential Skills for Reading and Applying Research*, (London: Balliere Tindall, 1998).

⁴⁴ Anna Farmaki et al., "Impacts of COVID-19 on Peer-to-Peer Accommodation Platforms: Host Perceptions and Responses", *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 91 (2020).

R4	M	28	Famagusta
R5	M	42	Nicosia
R6	M	57	Famagusta
R7	M	38	Kyrenia
R8	M	42	Kyrenia
R9	M	36	Kyrenia
R10	M	45	Kyrenia
R11	M	47	Nicosia
R12	M	42	Nicosia
R13	M	47	Nicosia
R14	M	34	Famagusta
R15	M	42	Famagusta
R16	F	45	Nicosia

In Table 1, it was seen that only one female participant had managerial status, and 15 participants were male. Each researcher independently coded the materials and interviews to eliminate bias. The two coders then discussed their coding findings and resolved any questions.⁴⁵

This information was examined using the interview method (one-to-one interviews); the possibility that the answers were erroneous or lacking was minimized through this strategy. To guarantee the highest validity, there must be a one-to-one correspondence between the questions asked and the key competencies.⁴⁶ In the analysis and data presentation, each participant was assigned a code from R-01 to R-16.

5. RESULTS

The main problem of this study is to critically examine how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected the tourism sector, with a particular focus on its economic, operational, and behavioral impacts, and to analyze how these effects have reshaped travel patterns, industry resilience, and future tourism development. Therefore, the main research question of the study is: “What are the effects of the COVID-19 process on the tourism sector?”.

⁴⁵ Isabel Canhoto – Liyuan Wei, “Stakeholders of the World, Unite!: Hospitality in the Time of COVID-19”, *International Journal of Hospitality Management* 95 (2021), 102922.

⁴⁶ Jennifer R. Burnett et al., “Interview Notes and Validity”, *Personnel Psychology* 51/2 (1998), 375–396.

Table 2: Category, Sub-Category and Responses

Category	Sub-Category	Responses
1. Impact on Business	Businesses Closed	<i>“During the COVID-19 period, our hotel was closed due to government regulations, and we did not operate throughout the pandemic” (R4).</i>
		<i>“We nearly closed our business for one and a half years before reopening. Unfortunately, during that period people were not traveling, and the pandemic continued to affect our business. We only had a very small number of guests, mostly on weekends and mainly from Kyrenia” (R1).</i>
	Product Price	<i>“COVID-19 affected all sectors, including ours. Although we reopened after one year, the effects continued. However, our catering services for hospitals and prisons helped us remain operational during this difficult period” (R2).</i>
		<i>“The pandemic created economic problems in the destination, and product prices increased significantly, which also affected hotel rates. To attract customers, we offered special discounted packages to increase occupancy” (R8).</i>
Loss of Tourists / Fewer Customers	<i>“COVID-19 affected the entire world. Restaurants were closed for several months. When we reopened after six or seven months, we had fewer customers because international tourists could not enter the country, so we mainly served local guests” (R7).</i>	
2. Changes and Development	Negative Change – Bad Economy	<i>“After the pandemic, the number of guests decreased due to rising costs and economic difficulties. Although people want to travel, many are still cautious and reluctant to spend money” (R11).</i>
	Travel Ticket	<i>“Hotel prices increased due to the economic conditions of the country, and travel tickets also became more expensive. However, we observed pent-up demand for travel, especially during the high season” (R7).</i>

Category	Sub-Category	Responses
	Positive Change – Take-Away Services	“After COVID-19, we observed that people used social media more frequently, so we introduced take-away services, which helped increase our revenue and survive during the pandemic” (R3).
	Use of Social Media	“Social media usage increased significantly in the sector. It allows businesses to stay updated with trends and innovations in accommodation and gastronomy” (R15).
	Awareness of Cultural Beauties	“After the pandemic, guests started requesting quieter environments and cultural locations rather than crowded facilities” (R1).
	Sitting Outside Preference	“After the pandemic, customers preferred outdoor seating. We rearranged our restaurant layout and introduced a barcode menu system to minimize contact” (R2).
	New Tourism Types	“The development of cultural tourism, eco-tourism, and bee tourism could attract more guests, as post Covid tourists prefer calm environments” (R5).
	Focus on Local Tourists	“During the pandemic, we focused more on domestic customers since international visitors could not travel to the country” (R13).
3. Strategies to Restore Revenue and Efficiency	Increased Advertising	“We started using social media platforms and joined Booking.com to increase our visibility and attract more guests through online reservations” (R6). “We invested more in advertising and used social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram to promote our restaurant” (R3).
	Quality of Service	“We focused on improving service and product quality to regain our lost customers and maintain guest satisfaction” (R2).
	All-Inclusive Strategy	“We provide high service standards and organize events and entertainment to attract both local and international guests” (R6).

Category	Sub-Category	Responses
	Business Expansion	"We opened a new restaurant in Nicosia to increase our customer base and revenue" (R3).
	Price of Service	"We maintained moderate prices so customers could afford our services and we could continue operating" (R1). "We lowered hotel prices to attract more customers" (R3). "Due to rising costs, we had to increase prices to maintain service quality" (R12).
4. Future Growth	Quality	"Our boutique hotel has only 20 rooms, so maintaining service quality is more important than expanding capacity" (R4).
	Employees' Attitude	"Employee professionalism and positive attitudes are essential because staff members are the first point of contact with guests and strongly influence customer satisfaction" (R5).

Source: Authors own work

Impact on Business in North Cyprus: Based on the responses of those interviewed, it is clear that COVID-19 has an imprint on all the sectors of this research. Like the rest of the world, Famagusta, Nicosia, and Kyrenia cities in North Cyprus also had a lockdown after the evidence of a high possibility of the virus being transmitted, putting a stop to entry to and exit from the country, and as such businesses also had to close for about 2–3 months while solutions were found to fight the disease. The study agrees that the tourism and travel sector was the most affected by the pandemic, directly affecting supply and demand.⁴⁷ Interviews were held with restaurants, hotels, and travel agency owners or department managers operating in Famagusta, Nicosia, and Kyrenia to identify findings regarding the impact of COVID-19 on businesses. Findings from the answers given show that businesses experienced more negative effects.

Bankruptcy of sectors: The analysis reached data saturation with the answers given by 8 out of 16 respondents who said their businesses were put on hold for 8 months as instructed by the government, while some businesses shut down due to bankruptcy. To support this, participants' R1 and R4 responses are shown in Table 2.

The participant stated that Respondent R2 stated that COVID-19 affected all sectors, so they closed their businesses for one year, but the negative effect continues. The sector

⁴⁷ Maria Nicola et al., "The Socio-Economic Implications of the Coronavirus Pandemic (COVID-19): A Review", *International Journal of Surgery* 78 (2020), 185–193.

manager stated that the food and beverage industry has an advantage. He stated that they serve institutions such as hospitals and prisons as a catering business.

Product Price: Participant R8, on the other hand, stated that the most affected sector was the tourism sector because customers did not come due to travel restrictions, so businesses were closed. However, some hotels were used for quarantine during this period, so they earned little income during this period. He stated that another harmful effect was the increase in the price of everything, including hotel prices, as shown in Table 2.

Loss of Tourists/fewer Customers: With the restriction orders, restaurants and hotels around the world were closed. Hotel reports showed low occupancy and room rates.⁴⁸ This was also the case in North Cyprus, as the restrictions reduced and hotels mainly catered to residents who were returning and quarantining visitors; however, they still experienced a very low number of guests and sales. 4 out of 16 respondents reported fewer customers during the COVID-19 pandemic and even after the opening due to fear and the lack of tourists in the country. The responses are shown in Table 2

New developments and changes in the tourism sector: The findings also include the developments and changes in the industry, which were positive and negative. Most respondents spoke more about the negative changes, and 3 out of 16 said there was no development in the country's sector.

Negative Change: It was found that the economy is in bad shape (said 8 out of 16 respondents) with the increase in market prices, continuous increase in the dollar exchange rate, and increase in rent.

Price of Travel Ticket: 2 out of the 16 travel agency respondents reported that ticket prices were expensive and the difficulty of coming to the country due to restrictions.

Positive change: 4 out of 16 respondents from the restaurant sector reported some increase in the number of customers recently.

Increased awareness of Take-away service: 4 out of 16 respondents discussed introducing and increasing take-away services to keep the business running. COVID-19 and subsequent lockdowns caused many restaurants to limit capacity or close entirely, and millions of people ordered food online for the first time. This increased demand pushed the food and drink delivery, resulting in performance years ahead of projections.

The use of Social Media: 5 out of 16 respondents reported using social media platforms to create more awareness about their businesses.

Preference for cultural places: What are the new developments and changes in the tourism sector? The answers to the question stated that people needed quieter places after

⁴⁸ Ishmael Mensah, "Unpacking the Impacts of COVID-19 on Tourism and Repackaging the Hotel Service", *Hospitality Net*. (Accessed July 30, 2021).

the COVID-19 pandemic. They stated that cultural venues were preferred. The anecdotes the researchers (n=8) revealed regarding this finding are shown in Table 2.

An increased habit of sitting outside: Other participants stated that their customers preferred to sit outside after the pandemic, so they rearranged their restaurants and started using the barcode system.

New tourism: In the hotel sector, 1 out of the 6 respondents from the hotel sector spoke about the development of cultural, eco, and bee tourism to attract guests and the change in tourist preferences for a quiet environment.

Focus on local tourists: 3 out of 6 respondents from the hotel sector said they are focusing on local tourists/guests rather than international tourists.

Strategies Used to Restore Revenue, Operational Efficiency and Increase Customer Purchase: The findings of this study identify strategies to restore revenue, conserve resources, increase operational efficiency, and increase customer interest. More of the respondents from the hotel sector talked about their focus on locals, advertisements, and the use of take-away services.

Increased Advert: During the pandemic, social media was being used by the masses to stay sane and be informed. The hospitality businesses leveraged these platforms to increase awareness and networking opportunities. Because social media gives businesses direct interaction with their customers as well as monitoring customers' feedback for services, Ghana, for example, is leveraging the use of social media to connect to the masses through the use of hashtag campaigns to show Ghana's delicacies, the use of media influencers for promotion as well as the use of virtual tourism.⁴⁹ 4 out of 16 respondents discussed using social media platforms, collaborating with international booking sites like “booking.com” and joining trend topics to create more awareness.

Quality of Service: 6 out of 16 respondents said they are more focused on the quality of their service and products as a way to keep guests coming back.

All/Ultra Inclusive: 2 out of the 6 respondents from the hotel sector talked about offering all-inclusive services to keep the cash coming from every aspect.

Business Expansion: As seen in the literature review, the hotel and restaurant sector began to diversify to increase revenue through the introduction of online and offline food delivery services, bringing about the use of their logistics. 1 out of the 8 restaurant sector respondents talked about opening new restaurants in different cities to attract more guests and maintain their name. 3 out of 8 respondents from the hotel sector reported starting delivery services to keep the business running.

⁴⁹ Esi A. Mensah - Kwaku A. Boakye, “Conceptualizing Post-Covid 19 Tourism Recovery: A three-Step Framework”, *Tourism Planning & Development* 20/1 (2021), 1-25.

Price of Service: To keep the business running, businesses created special offers and discounts to maintain cash flow. The Indian hotel industry provides delivery services, discounts, and reduced group booking prices.⁵⁰ 5 out of 16 respondents spoke about pricing. 3 out of 8 respondents from the restaurant sector say they keep their prices at an average level where customers can afford it, and they still make what they lose during the COVID-19 pandemic. 2 out of 6 respondents from the hotel sectors said they lower their prices to attract customers. Moreover, 1 respondent from the restaurant sector said they increased their price along with the increase in the price of things in the market because they offer good services.

Preparations for Future Growth: We also identified findings on the plans they have to ensure future growth. We found they are focused on quality and more expansion and want the government to intervene in the economy to solve the transportation issues of getting to the country.

Quality: One respondent from the hotel industry mentioned that the quality of the sector is the most important aspect to raise revenue.

Employees Attitude: One of the hotel sector owners in the Famagusta region stated that employees' attitudes are important for sustaining customers' visits.

6. DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic have been a crisis that has dramatically affected the tourism sector, as in every field. All available studies reveal managerial implications for policymakers, tourism industry workers, and managers. First of all, the measures taken to revive the post-COVID-19 tourism sector of North Cyprus, as well as to increase revenue, manage resources, ensure cost-effectiveness and operational efficiency, and provide touristic needs for the sector to survive and develop after the post-COVID-19 reopening, are discussed. Some results were obtained in the study in which the measures taken to increase entry to the country were investigated.

A qualitative research method was used to reach these results. The curfew decision was taken after it was determined that the COVID-19 pandemic and its effects on the tourism sector were high in the cities of Famagusta, Nicosia, and Kyrenia in North Cyprus, as well as in the whole world. With this decision, hotels, like all businesses, had to close. Therefore, the results obtained from our study revealed that the tourism and travel sector is one of the sectors most affected by the pandemic, which directly affects supply and demand.⁵¹

The study concluded that the developments and changes in the sector were negatively triggered, and the sector regressed. In addition to the increase in the main markets, it is seen that the economy was poorly affected by the increase in the dollar exchange rate and rents. It seems that some new strategies need to be used to restore

⁵⁰ Majumdar, "Surviving and Growing in the Post-COVID World: The Case of Indian Hotels", 584-598.

⁵¹ Maria Nicola et al., International Journal of Surgery, 185-193.

revenue, increase operational efficiency, and increase customer purchases. Using these strategies to recover revenue, conserve resources, increase operational efficiency, and increase customer interest will be beneficial. In addition, focusing on local people, advertisements and take-away services will be effective. The increase in customer purchases, operational efficiency in the service sector affects the recovery of revenue and the increase in customer interest. Therefore, considering the research supporting the study's results,^{52,53} the implications of the research are as follows:

This research demonstrates the ways the business sectors of the North Cyprus tourism industry and overseas have taken to cope with crises, including cost reduction and other measures that limit resource involvement in working capital, multi-business and multi-channel platforms, and the use of technology as a sign of the future change of its application in the industry. The results of this study also provide insights to the owners and managers of the hospitality industries, focusing on how to help individuals in North Cyprus. Firstly, hotel managers should work with all-inclusive packages to raise customer numbers. All-inclusive vacation packages have economic advantages for both tourists and hotels. Especially for the hotels, this implies bringing in more tourists, which will raise hotel revenues and profits. So they can increase their cash flow efficiently. Secondly, the restaurant sector should focus on an innovative strategy: a food delivery system; each restaurant should develop its own delivery system.

After the post-pandemic, offering food delivery services has become the new normal, so each restaurant should develop its food order application; with this, customers can see their food and purchase it confidently. Managers in North Cyprus should expand their knowledge, adapt their findings, and set models that will help their businesses currently while preparing them to deal with future challenges if they occur again. One of the significant changes after COVID-19 is that customers prefer to sit outside. So, managers and owners should invest in quality outside sitting areas. In addition, this study demonstrates the value of local tourists to the area. A more sustainable tourist model for the island of North Cyprus should be the emphasis of sector managers instead of a considerable reliance on international tourism, as this will significantly lessen the impact of any other global crises on the island. This study highlights the significance of hotel, restaurant, and travel agency staff attitudes. Therefore, managers in the hotel industry should concentrate on bringing in people with a positive attitude and an open mind to new ideas.

CONCLUSION AND LIMITATIONS

From the findings, the researchers observed that all sectors in the tourism industry were greatly affected, leading to businesses being shut down, some businesses closing

⁵² Ananya Bhattacharya et al., "Building Resilience for Food Service Businesses in Times of Crisis: A Four-F Action Plan", *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management* 33/10 (2021), 3400–3441.

⁵³ Anna R. Pop et al., "Food Retail Resilience Pre-, During, and Post-COVID-19: A Bibliometric Analysis and Research Agenda", *Foods* 13/2 (2024), 257.

permanently as a result of bankruptcy, fewer customers as a result of the bad economy and recession, and fewer tourists and guests in the country due to the travel restrictions to North Cyprus. The study shows us that two years after COVID, the sector is still trying to recover; coupled with the poor economy and fluctuations in foreign currencies, the recovery is prolonged and difficult.

One key finding is the current state of the economy, which is bad at the moment. The findings show that businesses are reducing and increasing the prices of their food and services to survive due to the outrageous increase in market prices to remain and survive in the business. As seen with previous studies, we also note some positive changes such as the increase in the number of customers resulting from the return of customers due to the lifting and cancellations of outdoor restrictions, but this is not the same for the travel agencies, as prices of tickets are still on the high side, and travel has been extremely slow, thus limiting the number of tourists coming into the country.

The studies show us that the major problem is the state of the economy concerning the fluctuations in foreign markets and currency. The restaurant and hotel sectors adopted and increased their food delivery services to increase profit by reducing the number of employees to manage resources and develop strategies to build resilience during times of global crises such as takeaway service. Another notable development is the development of eco, cultural, and alp tourism and the shift in focus from international to local tourism to keep the market moving. Furthermore, to increase awareness, the findings show that hotels collaborate with international companies, using booking websites, social media platforms, and trend topics. Furthermore, the hotel sectors are offering ultra-all-inclusive packages to the guests, ensuring revenue from every aspect of the hotel, with all sectors focusing on the quality of service to maintain and increase the customer/guest base. In addition, to ensure future growth, the researchers find that travel agencies are doing the bare minimum due to the lack of competition and because they are well known. The studies show us that a stable economy is needed to ensure future growth, and there is much reliance on the government for stable growth.

The tourism sector has been badly impacted by the COVID-19 crisis, and being an economic pillar of the island, the industry has been in survival mode for the past two years. This study focuses on the tourism industry in North Cyprus, including the hotel, restaurant, and travel agency sectors, to find out how they are coping with and recovering post-COVID and the strategies they have in place for the industry's growth. Our findings suggest that the three sectors have adopted some measures to enhance cash flows and conserve resources to cope with the crisis. Cash flow increase measures include the startup of food delivery systems, the focus on locals, the adoption of ultra-inclusive packages, and the reduction in room prices. The labor cost was reduced by half. Enhancing growth includes product diversity and measures targeted at domestic tourists. The limitations of the research are as follows:

Though the sample size was drawn from tourism businesses in North Cyprus, due to restrictions and the cost of transportation, interviews were only carried out in specific hotels, restaurants, and travel agencies in Famagusta, Nicosia, and Kyrenia in North Cyprus. Still, access was not granted to top managers and some specific departmental heads. A further study should include a stronger sample size comprising representation from all cities and sectors on the island. So, future research could explain the same topic with a longitudinal design to confirm research findings. Another limitation concerns the data being collected in the island's official language (Turkish). However, although attention was given to accurate translation and interpretation of the experiences of those who participated, it is possible to some extent that some data were lost during the translation process. A study conducted and presented in the official language is most likely to communicate to a great extent the effect of COVID-19 on the hospitalit sector.

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