

The Pandemic Effect on The Perception of Ilocano Tourists in Ilocos Norte About Travel Risk and Management

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Abstract

This study investigates the Covid-19 pandemic effect on Ilocano tourists' travel risk and management perceptions. The study participants were Ilocanos residing at Ilocos Norte, and they were chosen using a sample size of 384 respondents. This study explores Ilocano tourists' travel risk and management perceptions and their influence on society in the context of the pandemic's effects. The data was obtained through an online survey utilizing google forms and shared through Messenger, using a proportional stratified sampling technique, and analyzed using the WarpPLS-SEM version 7.0 tool. The study employed a descriptive-causal research approach and quantitative research design to measure the Covid-19 pandemic effect on Ilocano tourists' travel risk and management perceptions. The data indicated that it significantly impacts Ilocano tourists' travel risk and management perceptions. Travel risk and management perception are significantly associated with risk management, service delivery, transportation patterns, distribution channels, avoidance of overpopulated locations, and hygiene and safety. The findings also revealed the effect of travel risk and management perceptions. The study's findings contribute to the province of Ilocos Norte's tourism dilemma. It gives future study insights into the travel and tourism industry and responses to changing tourists' travel risk and management perceptions in the gradually accepted new normal period.

Keywords: *Ilocano tourists, travel risk, management perceptions, pandemic effect, tourism industry*

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Introduction

Travel and tourism have increased as the number of confirmed cases has decreased and stabilized as a result of the safety protocol and vaccination rollout. The limits on movement were also eased. After more than a year after the first shutdown in Ilocos Norte and being placed under the strictest community quarantine classification more than twice, it was interesting to investigate how Ilocano tourist travel risk and management perceptions have altered. The study purpose was to examine the pandemic effect on Ilocano tourists' travel risk and management perceptions within the province of Ilocos Norte in the pandemic period. This investigation also examined the effect of the pandemic in the provincial tourism industry in Ilocos Norte, including travel movement and the economy. Finally, it attempted to identify the alternatives and solutions that Ilocano tourists in the province were adopting to travel in this pandemic and thus, accepted as the new normal.

Methodology

This study is a descriptive-causal research design described as a research approach that describes two closely related variables: the Covid-19 pandemic effect and tourist perceptions of travel and risk management. The study participants were local tourists residing from Ilocos Norte who were chosen using a proportional stratified sampling technique. These local tourists were ages from 18-65 years old who are fully vaccinated. Used with Raosoft's sample size calculator, with a 5% margin of error and a level of confidence of 95%, and a total population of three provinces of 161,750 (PhilAtlas, 2021), the total sample size was 384. An elaborate statement was used to examine respondents' responses to the given Covid-19 pandemic characteristics, tourists' travel risk and management perceptions, and their social qualities. This study's measurement was pretested to ensure the survey instrument's validity. Data from a self-administered assessment adopted from Rahman et al. (2021) was collected to analyze the conceptual model of this study. The relationship between perception of the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and Ilocano tourists' travel risk and management was determined using structural equation modeling in WarpPLS version 7.0.

Findings

The findings showed hypothesis relationships, indicating that the Covid-19 pandemic is related to travel risk and management perceptions. As a result, it suggests that the spread of the Covid-19 outbreak across the Philippines, causes most regions to impose short-term travel

restrictions and safety health protocols to suppress the widespread fear. The present study results revealed that the Covid-19 pandemic significantly affected risk management, service delivery, travel patterns, distribution channels, avoidance of overpopulated destinations, and hygiene and safety perceptions among Ilocano tourists' travel risk and management. Ilocano tourists believe that the Covid-19 outbreak has increased travel risk and management perception, causing them to restrict their plans to travel to destinations. The data analysis in this study shows that Ilocano tourists' perceptions of travel risk and management are strongly related to risk management. Moreover, this research revealed that Ilocano tourists' perceptions of travel risk and management are strongly connected to their avoidance of overcrowded destinations.

Conclusion

The travel risk and management perception has a beneficial influence on hygiene and safety. In the scope of service research, hygiene and safety evaluations have been identified as an essential component influencing people's safety and security toward service businesses or consumers' buy intentions of goods and services given by firms or service organizations (Rahman M.K., et al., 2021). When arranging a vacation, Ilocanos can acquire travel insurance to provide coverage in the event of illness, including Covid-19. Potential Ilocano tourists are usually interested in hygiene, safety, security, cleanliness, medical facilities, and population density when individuals decide to visit a destination. The COVID-19 pandemic influences the ability to accept tourists for tourism. Travel risk and management perceptions considerably affect local tourists' decision to travel destinations. To sum it up, there is a significant relationship between the Covid-19 pandemic effect on the perception of Ilocano tourists about travel risk and management and its hypothesis.

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