

The Study of Covid-19 Impact on Four Season Resort, Langkawi Malaysia

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The Covid 19 outbreak is spreading across the globe, affecting the health of thousand people and creating shocks in almost all industries due to restrictions and policies to work from home (self-quarantine) to break the chain of virus spread. The consequences of steps taken by the countries of the world to curb the pandemic have a huge impact on the global economy. Four Season Resort Langkawi Malaysia is an international luxury hotel and resort. However, the Covid 19 pandemic has had a negative impact on the sustainability of this industry. Therefore, this study aims to understand the performance and investigate the problem faced by Four Season Resort Langkawi Malaysia.

Keywords: Covid-19 Outbreak, Four Seasons Resort Langkawi Malaysia, Global Economy, Impact, Sustainability

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INTRODUCTION

Four Seasons Resort Langkawi is an extraordinary haven of luxury situated within the pristine natural landscapes of Langkawi Island, nestled amidst the tranquil beauty that Malaysia has to offer. The resort boasts an exquisite beachfront location that affords guests breathtaking views and a sense of serenity. The lush tropical gardens surrounding the property complement the overall ambiance, creating an idyllic escape for travelers in search of tranquility and sophistication. Notably, Four Seasons Resort Langkawi excels in offering impeccable service, ensuring that guests' needs and desires are met with the highest level of hospitality and attentiveness.

The resort's accommodations are nothing short of well-appointed, promising a comfortable and indulgent stay. Furthermore, the diverse array of amenities provided caters to a wide spectrum of guest preferences. Whether one seeks relaxation at the spa or engages in thrilling water sports adventures, the resort delivers an all-encompassing experience. What sets Four Seasons Resort Langkawi apart is its seamless integration of nature and opulence, where guests can revel in the splendor of the surrounding environment while indulging in luxurious comforts. This balance makes it an ideal retreat for both couples seeking romantic getaways and families in pursuit of quality time. While it is true that the resort's high-end status is reflected in its price, the experience it affords is truly exceptional, making it an enticing choice for those in search of a lavish and rejuvenating escape amidst the allure of a tropical paradise.

The Four Seasons Resort Langkawi stands as an exceptional and opulent destination, gracefully nestled within the pristine natural beauty of Langkawi Island in Malaysia. Its remarkable beachfront location affords guests with stunning vistas, offering a haven of tranquility and elegance for those in pursuit of a distinctive getaway. The lush tropical gardens surrounding the property enhance its appeal, culminating in a picturesque escape for travelers who crave serenity and refinement. Notably, the resort places a significant emphasis on delivering impeccable service, ensuring that guests' every need and desire is met with the highest degree of hospitality and attention to detail.

What truly distinguishes this resort is its masterful fusion of the natural world and luxury, forging an ideal retreat that caters to both couples seeking romantic seclusion and families in pursuit of quality bonding time. The well-appointed accommodations and world-class dining options add to the allure, promising a comfortable and indulgent stay. Moreover, the array of amenities, including a spa and thrilling water sports activities, caters to a wide spectrum of guest preferences, making it a comprehensive and inclusive experience for all. While it's undeniable that the resort's high-end reputation is reflected in its price point, the extraordinary experience it provides makes it an irresistible choice for those yearning for a sumptuous and revitalizing escape amidst the tropical paradise of Langkawi Island.

The Four Seasons Resort Langkawi can bring several benefits to the government. Firstly, it contributes to the local economy by generating employment opportunities for the residents and supporting local businesses through its supply chain. Additionally, the resort enhances tourism in the region, attracting international travelers and contributing to increased foreign exchange earnings, which can be significant for the country's balance of payments. Moreover, it plays a part in promoting Langkawi as a tourist destination, thereby boosting the island's visibility and appeal on the global stage. This increased tourism activity generates tax revenues for the government, which can be reinvested into local infrastructure, education, and public services. Furthermore, the resort may engage in sustainability and community development initiatives, aligning with government goals for responsible and eco-friendly tourism. Overall, the Four Seasons

Resort Langkawi has the potential to be a valuable partner in driving economic growth, tourism development, and sustainable practices in the region, thereby benefiting the government in various ways.

Four Season Resort Langkawi is located in TanjungRhu, Langkawi, Malaysia. It is a luxury hotel chain of Four Seasons hotel Limited, was founded by Isador Sharp in 1960, headquartered in Toronto, Canada. Four Seasons hotels do not own any of their property. It operates on behalf of the owners of real estate and the developers. For example, Silverstein Properties owned New York Downtown Hotel, and its Las Vegas hotel, is part of the Mandalay Bay complex. Four Season focuses their business model on four pillars, which are Quality, Service, Culture, and Brand. Four Season Resort Langkawi started operating in 2005 and has always provided quality service to their customers. Therefore, it made Four Season received the AAA (American Automobile Association) five diamond award for seven consecutive years (2015 to 2021) and was named the highest-ranking Resort in Malaysia by the Conde Nast Traveller's 2020 Readers Award. It is the most famous international publication in the travel industry.

This research paper aims to navigate staff and customers' perception in the ongoing Covid-19 pandemic of Four Season Resort Langkawi. The hospitality industry plays a very important role in the economy. The hospitality industry contributes significantly to job creation, employing a vast and diverse workforce, from hotel staff and chefs to event planners and tour guides, thus bolstering local and national employment rates. Additionally, the industry stimulates economic growth by attracting tourists and business travelers, leading to increased spending on accommodations, dining, and various services, ultimately generating substantial revenue for local businesses and governments. Within the framework of global trade, tourism can be perceived as a multifaceted phenomenon encompassing both economic and social dimensions, having undergone substantial transformation to emerge as a pivotal and influential catalyst, playing a central role in generating essential income for a multitude of developing countries (Ciochină, Iordache, & Sîrbu, 2016). The focal point of the economic development transformation lies in the augmentation of both the foreign exchange value derived from tourism and the additional value attributed to the creative economy, underlining the pivotal role that these aspects play in reshaping and advancing economic prosperity and sustainability (Putri, Zamheri, Ridho, Paisal, & Africano, 2022).

According to WTTC, the Asian Pacific Tourism and Hospitality industry contributes Gross Domestic Product as much as 10.3% and providing as many as 330 million jobs. Due to the outbreak of coronavirus in the Asia Pacific region, there were the largest decline in the industrial sector, starting with the enactment of travel restriction in China. The alarming spread of the Covid-19 pandemic has led to the imposition of unforeseen travel restrictions and extensive border closures in numerous countries worldwide, resulting in the loss of millions of livelihoods and jobs, particularly within the tourism and hospitality industry (Khan & Hashim, 2020). The hospitality industry recorded a major decline in available global revenue, Asia as much as 67.8% and Europe as much as 61.7%. Global occupancy in countries decreased significantly in March 2020, from 20% to more than 70% worldwide (UNWTO, 2020). Four Seasons is an exclusive hotel with 4.8% global demand (Digital Luxury Group, 2013). Moreover, Four Seasons derived 69% of its sales from business and group travellers, and 31% from the leisure sector (Timetric, 2013).

Due to the inter-district and inter-state travels bans (Yunus & Basyir, 2021), hotels were forced to close, many reservations and bookings were cancelled, and this led to drop in tourist rates and drop in revenue. During the period spanning from January 11, 2020, to March 16, 2020, a total of 170,084 hotel room reservations were canceled, leading to a substantial financial setback amounting to RM68,190,364 in lost revenue (Foo, Chin, Tan, & Phuah, 2020). In addition, the awareness of tourist regarding their health and safety is also one of the main factors contributing to the decline in tourist rates. Amid the challenging circumstances posed by the ongoing global pandemic, it is imperative for the international travel and tourism sectors to maintain a high level of vigilance and accord utmost importance to matters concerning health and safety, necessitating a dedicated focus on preparedness and responsiveness geared toward mitigating the concerns and anxieties of tourists with the primary objective of effectively managing the ebb and flow of tourist visits (Chua, Al-Ansi, Lee, & Han, 2020).

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Malaysian government has been proactive in implementing a diverse range of measures in response to the pandemic outbreak, all aimed at the overarching goal of mitigating the spread of the virus and safeguarding the public's well-being. These measures encompass a comprehensive set of actions, including the imposition of stringent lockdowns, travel restrictions, and the rollout of extensive vaccination campaigns. While these actions are undeniably essential for public safety, they have had a substantial impact on Malaysia's tourism industry. The closure of international borders, coupled with a significant decline in both international and domestic travel, resulted in the temporary suspension of various tourist attractions, posing formidable challenges to the tourism sector. Consequently, numerous establishments within the hospitality industry, including hotels and airlines, as well as businesses closely tied to tourism, have grappled with financial hardships. These combined circumstances have led to a noticeable reduction in tourist arrivals and a consequent loss of revenue. In recognition of the hardships faced by the tourism industry, the government has taken proactive steps, including providing financial assistance packages and focusing on the promotion of domestic tourism as a means of compensating for the absence of international visitors. The pandemic's impact on the tourism sector underscores its vulnerability to global health crises, emphasizing the need for heightened adaptability and resilience as the industry navigates the post-pandemic era.

In addition to the immediate implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Malaysian tourism industry, the government's response underscores the significance of strategic measures taken to address the evolving landscape. By prioritizing public health and safety, implementing lockdowns and travel restrictions, and investing in mass vaccination campaigns, the government has played a critical role in curbing the spread of the virus. However, these actions have, understandably, had a profound impact on the tourism sector, with border closures and travel limitations leading to significant disruptions and financial difficulties for businesses within the industry. To mitigate these challenges, the government has stepped in with support in the form of financial assistance packages and a targeted promotion of domestic tourism. The pandemic has highlighted the tourism industry's susceptibility to global health crises and emphasizes the necessity for resilience and adaptability in its long-term strategies.

On the front lines of the battle against the pandemic, the Malaysian government has been resolutely engaged in a multifaceted response, characterized by a series of comprehensive measures designed to curtail the transmission of the virus and prioritize the safety and health of its citizenry. This concerted effort has encompassed a suite of strategies, ranging from the enforcement of stringent lockdowns to the imposition of

travel restrictions and the rollout of extensive vaccination campaigns. While these actions are unequivocally vital for the protection of public health, they have cast a profound and far-reaching impact on Malaysia's tourism industry. As international borders were shuttered, international and domestic travel saw a marked decline, and various tourist attractions temporarily halted operations, the tourism sector grappled with a host of formidable challenges. Hotels, airlines, and other businesses intertwined with tourism found themselves confronting significant financial hardships, and the industry as a whole bore witness to a pronounced drop in both tourist arrivals and revenue. Recognizing the severity of the situation, the government has undertaken measures to lend support to the beleaguered industry, encompassing financial aid packages and a strategic push to boost domestic tourism to compensate for the absence of international visitors. The pandemic's toll on the tourism sector underscores its vulnerability to global health crises and underscores the imperative of cultivating adaptability and resilience as the world navigates the post-pandemic landscape.

Due to the rapidly increasing cases of COVID-19 in Malaysia, the Malaysian government commanded the Movement Control Order (MCO) from 18 March to 31 March 2020, later extended to 14 April 2020, which ultimately lead to the cancellation of hotel booking and reservations. As per an Oxford Economics study, Asia is expected to be the worst affected, and data analysis shows the tourism and hospitality industry could take many months to recover (Dogra, n.d.). The current study attempts to fill the research gap by investigating staff and customers preferences with Four Season Langkawi during COVID-19, as well as evaluating the safety and precaution strategies bought by Four Season Langkawi to increase its tourism at the time of the pandemic.

According to Malaysia's 2019 Tourism Statistics, the Tourism Ministry had set an ambitious target of welcoming 28.1 million tourists to the country during that year. However, the actual number of tourist arrivals fell short of this goal, with only 26.1 million tourists visiting Malaysia in 2019. This disparity between the target and actual arrivals indicates that the country faced some challenges in achieving its tourism objectives for that year. Several factors could have contributed to this gap, including global economic conditions, geopolitical issues, and perhaps competition from neighboring destinations. Despite falling short of the target, it's worth noting that Malaysia remained an attractive tourist destination, offering a diverse range of attractions, from cultural heritage sites to stunning natural landscapes. The government and tourism industry likely continued to work on strategies to boost visitor numbers and enhance the overall tourist experience, emphasizing the importance of adaptability and resilience in the face of fluctuating tourism trends and global circumstances. This statistical information serves as a valuable reference for tourism planners and stakeholders in assessing and adapting their strategies for future growth and development of the tourism sector in Malaysia. Moreover, travel restrictions have halted the movement of most tourists both domestically and abroad, the sector has arguably been one of the hardest hits by the crisis to date, as Covid-19 is highly contagious through person-to-person transmission. Moreover, according to data base of World Health Organization, people have been urged to decrease personal contact and increase physical distance.

Faced with the perception of an external danger of covid-19, the tourist adopts new consumer practices, which has been illustrated in several cases: more trip cancellations, more car trips, preventing intense contact with people and favouring outdoor activities (Wen, Huimin, & Kavanaugh, 2005), more last-minute reservations, and more concern for hygiene, more attention to ecotourism (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2020). The preference among individuals to stay at home instead of opting for hotel stays has had a noticeable impact on both the tourism industry and the hotel's revenue. This shift in consumer behavior, which leans towards choosing home-based or alternative

accommodation options, has posed challenges to the traditional hotel business model. As a result, the hotel industry has experienced a decrease in visitor numbers and subsequent revenue, requiring hoteliers to adapt to changing preferences and market dynamics to remain competitive and sustainable in the evolving travel landscape. Even worse, Amidst the extended duration of the Covid-19 pandemic, a considerable number exceeding 10% of the hotels situated in Malaysia found themselves compelled to cease their operations as a strategic measure aimed at mitigating the financial losses incurred due to the protracted and challenging circumstances brought about by the pandemic (Nair et al., 2022).

RESEARCH METHOD

For the data collection, qualitative approaches have been adapted. Acknowledging that qualitative paradigm is expected to give a wider point of view in multi-perspective way. In the instances of newer problems for which understanding needs to be developed, qualitative methods can offer critical insights (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The primary data has been collected through a structured questionnaire and online surveys conducted through google forms. The survey conducted through google form in which descriptive method was used. Descriptive method used to measure the significance of the results on the overall population, as well as the changes of respondent's opinions, attitudes, and behaviours over time. The questions asked are based on knowing consumers' perspectives regarding hotel visit during the ongoing covid-19 pandemic.

Additionally, the secondary data has been collected through various online sources and articles available on various websites. As, the use of the web as a source of information in the academic discipline of tourism has proven to be a reliable alternative because it is more convenient and less costly than primary field data (Wood, Guerry, Silver, & Lacayo, 2013).

Given the circumstances, it was deemed appropriate to take a qualitative research stance, as the data collection method was conducted through email interview with the Manager of the Four Season Langkawi. Email interviews are becoming commonplace in qualitative research and in the current state where social distancing has become widely practiced. In addition, e-mail interviews are also cost effective when compared to telephone or face-to-face interview, but in can produce in-depth information from the participants (Ratislavová & Ratislav, 2014). The questions asked were generally related to the covid-19 impact on hotel and what safety measures have been taken by the hotel to overcome the crises.

For which the response got from Learning Manager of Four Seasons Resort Langkawi, was Covid-19 has negative impact on the hotel. The closure of international borders has led to the absence of international guests, simultaneously causing a notable impact on the local market due to the restrictions imposed on cross-state travel. In addition, travel ban also lead to the cancellation of reservations and reduction in income. The data provides much clearer understanding of the COVID-19 impact on the Four Season Langkawi. Moreover, Manager stated that to overcome the crises and to handle the situation Four Seasons Resort Langkawi has adapted the hygiene practice under lead with care. It is a Four Seasons health and safety program collaborated with the John Hopkins University. In addition, the hotel also has adapted the face mask policy, high traffic area sanitization to ensure the guest's safety. The information provided by the manager was considered fair and gave a brief overview of the hotels plan to overcome losses.

RESULTS

Table 1. Profiles of Respondents

| Respondent | Frequency | Percentage % |
|----------------------|------------------|---------------------|
| <u>Gender</u> | | |
| Male | 34 | 33.7% |
| Female | 67 | 66.3% |
| <u>Age</u> | | |
| 11 – 20 | 40 | 39.6% |
| 21 – 30 | 57 | 56.4% |
| 31 – 40 | 2 | 2% |
| 41 – 50 | 2 | 2% |

Table 1 represent the descriptive statics data of respondents' profiles. As many as 101 respondents have participated, where the majority of respondents are female (66.3%) and male (33.7%). Respondents' age ranged from 11 to 50 years old and most of the responses were given by the age group of 21-30 (56.4%).

Table 2. Summary of Respondents' Personal Preferences for Travels and Hotels

| Response | Frequency | Percentage % |
|--|------------------|---------------------|
| <u>Are you a travel enthusiast?</u> | | |
| Yes | 54 | 53.5% |
| No | 20 | 19.8% |
| Maybe | 27 | 26.7% |
| <u>How often do you visit hotels?</u> | | |
| Very seldom | 26 | 25.7% |
| Seldom | 40 | 39.6% |
| Often | 25 | 24.8% |
| Very often | 10 | 9.9% |
| <u>Do you prefer the hotel that offers a fully contactless service?</u> | | |
| Yes | 75 | 74.3% |
| No | 26 | 25.7% |
| <u>Which type of check-in method do you prefer if you are staying in hotel?</u> | | |
| Online check-in | 76 | 75.2% |
| Physical check=in | 25 | 24.8% |

Table 2 is a static view of people's personal preferences. The questions highlight the psychological perspective of varying consumers' preferences. As many as 53.5% of people are fond of travelling, while 39.6% of respondents rarely visits hotels. In addition, as many as 74.3% respondents prefer hotels offering fully contactless service and 75.2% respondents prefer online check in methods.

Table 3. Summary of Respondents' Opinion to Tourism and Hospitality during Pandemic COVID-19

| Response | Frequency | Percentage % |
|--|------------------|---------------------|
| Do you feel safe to visit hotel after pandemic COVID-19 | | |
| Yes | 17 | 16.8% |
| No | 47 | 46.5% |
| Maybe | 37 | 36.6% |
| Did COVID-19 lead to your change in preferences about the hotels and resorts that you visit? | | |
| Yes | 53 | 52.5% |
| No | 25 | 24.8% |
| Maybe | 23 | 22.8% |
| Do you think COVID-19 will bring a different in-house experience for the guest after the pandemic? | | |
| Yes | 64 | 63.4% |
| No | 6 | 5.9% |
| Maybe | 31 | 30.7% |
| Refer to the question above; do you think that the in-house experience is a good experience or a bad experience after the pandemic? | | |
| Good experience | 56 | 55.4% |
| Bad experience | 24 | 23.8% |
| Others | 21 | 20.8% |
| What is the reason for you to visit a hotel after a pandemic? | | |
| Low room rate | 24 | 23.8% |
| Time to enjoy | 66 | 65.3% |
| Other | 11 | 10.9% |
| Do you think that the hotel safety precaution will ensure your safety when you visit the hotel after the pandemic? | | |
| Yes | 47 | 47% |
| No | 14 | 14% |
| Maybe | 39 | 39% |
| Do you trust the knowledge of the hotel's employees to handle the known of Covid-19? | | |
| Yes | 40 | 40% |
| No | 17 | 17% |
| Maybe | 43 | 43% |

Table 3 measures the consumers' behaviour at post covid-19 situation. The majority of respondents (46.5%) feel unsafe to visit the hotels after the pandemic COVID-19, while 36.6% respondents feel unsure about it. There are only 16.8% respondents who feels safe to visit the hotel. Besides, Covid-19 leads as much as 52.5% respondents to change their preferences in hotel visits, while as much as 63.4% respondents think that COVID-19 will bring different in-house experience for guests after the pandemic. Furthermore, the reason behind respondents visiting the hotel after the pandemic was noted as time

to enjoy (65.3%). As much as 47% respondents assume that hotel safety precaution will ensure their safety when visiting the hotel after the pandemic, whereas 43% respondents are unsure of the knowledge hotel's staff have in dealing with the covid-19 crises.

The Summary of Respondents' Opinion on the Safety Precaution Should be Taken by the Hotel to Protect the Tourists

The majority of the responses were related to the application of SOP, the use of masks, social distancing, sanitizing and body temperature checking. Several responses indicated the formulation of strict SOP in the hotel and sanctions will be given if there are violations. The response further stated, hotel managers and staff should be trained to avoid the spread of the Covid 19 crisis. In addition, the hotel must maintain medical records and travel history of tourist. The hotel must provide hand sanitizer, alcohol and masks that have received medical certification and try their best to provide contactless service. Some respondents suggested, after check-out, the room should be sanitized. Hotel Manager must ensure that their staffs are disinfected and clean every corner such as elevator buttons, escalators, tables, chairs and doors handlers. Further Respondents stated that hotel's manager must ensure that their employees are negative from Covid-19. All employees should make the test to ensure the safety of tourists.

DISCUSSION

The responses gathered indicated that during the pandemic, people prefer contactless service, the online check in method is considered more convenient and secure. The emergence of the coronavirus has engendered a multitude of risk perceptions, encompassing apprehensions related to human interaction, and as a consequence, individuals have increasingly inclined toward the preference for contactless services whenever and wherever such options are available (Kim, Kim, & Hwang, 2021). As much as 75.2% respondents prefer online check in over offline check in to avoid the spread of the coronavirus. Technology adoption can be used to establish virtual connection to minimize physical contact between individuals. Therefore, several contactless services are applied in almost all transactional method such as QRIS and digital wallet. In response to the apprehension stemming from the spread of Covid-19, a prevalent and discernible trend has emerged among individuals, wherein they exhibit a reluctance towards physical transactions and instead gravitate towards the use of electronic wallets for making contactless payments, reflecting a widespread shift in payment preferences and behavior driven by health and safety concerns associated with the pandemic (Kee et al., 2022).

The majority of responses were related sanitation and maintaining hygiene. Some research show that customers are influenced by hygiene condition when making a decision to buy or stay in a particular place or environment (Choi, 2019; Hecht and Martin, 2006; Vilnai-Yavetz & Gilboa, 2010; Zemke, Neal, Shoemaker, & Kirsch, 2015). Therefore, when predicting recovery of the hotel industry post Covid 19, cleanliness should be the focal points, given the severe impact of this pandemic and the extremely high safety expectation of hotel guests during travel.

As the cleaning of rooms after check-out of every guest were also seen. As Guestroom cleanliness (e.g., of bedrooms and bathrooms) is a core component of hotel reputation (Gu & Ryan, 2008). Many studies have considered overall hygiene and cleanliness as a principal determinant of travelers' hotel choices (Lockyer, 2005), guest satisfaction (Gu & Ryan, 2008), guest delight (Magnini, Crotts, & Zehrer, 2011), and guest loyalty (Barber and Scarcelli, 2010). As noted, hotel surfaces receiving frequent human contact are more likely to be contaminated through touch (Park, Kline, Kim, Almanza, & Ma, 2019) and become sources of transmission of infectious diseases such as COVID-19 (Chen et al.,

2020). Areas that are out of hotel guests' reach, such as the central air conditioning system, may also facilitate aerosol transmission of viruses (Zhang et al., 2020).

It seems clear that there is a need to formulate national standards for tourism, hospitality companies, and their implementation must be carried out effectively. The need for national standards is also in line with the recommendation made by Wen, Huimin, and Kavanaugh (2005). One such standard practice could be mandatory temperature checks, social distancing and workplace record keeping at entry and exit points.

As much as 46.5% of the responses indicated the number of people visiting hotels after the pandemic would not increase because they still feel unsafe, while 63.4% respondents thought that Covid 19 would bring them different in-house experience. In addition, the discount provided by hotel and time for leisure are seen as the main reasons behind hotel visits (Tanford, Raab, & Kim, 2012). Price reduction and giving discounts affect customer interest in using hotel services.

Moreover, Four Seasons limited derives 69% of its sales from business travellers and groups and 31% from the leisure sector. As most of the consumers visiting the hotel are business travellers the Four Season Langkawi can adapt the MICE tourism. Because of the growing importance of MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferences, and Exhibitions) tourism, most business people are paying attention to tourists' branded places to conduct their meetings, conference, exhibitions, etc. The media sources must be used more effectively and efficiently to grab the attention and provide knowledge to more and more potential tourists (Sharma, 2013).

CONCLUSION

The global outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic has exerted a profound and highly disruptive influence on the functioning, and in numerous instances, the very viability, of hotels across the world. The hospitality industry, with hotels as a prominent sector, has been particularly susceptible to the adverse effects of pandemics, highlighting the urgent need to examine how hotels can proactively establish contingency plans for effective infectious disease control. In the face of a constantly evolving situation, hotels must also cultivate a high degree of adaptability to navigate the frequent changes and challenges presented by pandemics and public health crises, recognizing that stringent safety precautions have become an absolute necessity. By effectively implementing strategies that prioritize safety and health, hotels can significantly mitigate the risks of financial losses, concurrently enhancing their reputation in the market and building tourists' confidence in their brand, ultimately attracting more visitors. Adapting to the evolving expectations of travelers is paramount to a hotel's ability to recover from the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, and this research underscores the critical impact of the pandemic on the hotel industry. Moreover, it highlights the importance of considering consumer perceptions to inform strategic planning and the essential organizational development required to weather such challenging times.

This research is in purpose to navigate staff and customers' perception during the Covid-19 pandemic of Four Season Resort Langkawi. The data were gained through email interview with the Manager of the Four Season Langkawi. The questions were generally related to the effect of covid-19 on hotel and what safety measures have been taken by the hotel to solve the problem. The information from the manager was considered fair and gave an overview of the hotels plan to overcome losses. The customers are preferring to choose contactless service, online check in method which is more convenient and secure during the pandemic outbreak. Of the surveyed participants, 46.5% expressed the view that the volume of individuals visiting hotels post-pandemic would remain unchanged due to lingering concerns about safety, whereas 63.4% of the

respondents believed that the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic would usher in novel in-house experiences for them. It is clear that there is the need to formulate a national standard in terms of hospitality and tourism which should be implemented effectively.

In addition to the immediate implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on the hotel industry, the research discussed in this article offers insights into the long-term strategies that hotels should consider in light of the ongoing digital transformation of the hospitality sector. As hotels seek to address the ever-increasing reliance on technology and data-driven decision-making, future studies should explore the utilization of big data and analytics, particularly in the context of artificial intelligence, hygiene protocols, and healthcare in hotels and other segments of the broader hospitality industry. A proactive approach to leveraging technology and data-driven insights will be instrumental in helping hotels navigate the ongoing digital transformation, enhance their operational efficiency, and better respond to the dynamic challenges presented by public health crises and shifting consumer expectations.

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