



## **Tourism with Measures Taken Post-COVID-19 Outbreak: Probable Scenarios**

**Meltem ALTINAY ÖZDEMİR<sup>a</sup>**

<sup>a</sup> Muğla Sıtkı Koçman Üniversitesi, Fethiye A. S. M. K. Meslek Yüksekokulu, Muğla, Türkiye.(meltemozdemir@mu.edu.tr).

### **Extensive Summary**

The COVID-19 pandemic, which shook all sectors, is in a different dimension than the previous SARS outbreak (Lai et al., 2020). The outbreak came to Turkey at the beginning of March (11th) in 2020 and caused 110 thousand cases and 2805 deaths in six months. However, It is possible to say that these numbers changed slightly optimistically with measures taken and the number of recovered cases. The continuation of such a pandemic that has never been seen before, both globally and nationally, may trigger future anxiety of people and countries. It would not be wrong to say that especially human-centered industries find it difficult to coordinate this pandemic process. When it comes to tourism industry, which has a production and consumption center-based service, the question of “How will this situation be assessed?” brings to mind a different uncertainty and a separate set of possibilities. COVID-19 has a significant impact on economic development in the world. Large-scale quarantines, travel restrictions and physical distance measures lead to a sharp decline in consumers and investments, creating global economic recession. However, measures taken by the country's governments to reduce spread of outbreak ensure protection from pandemic, while also leading businesses to lose their income and workers' jobs.

According to a 28 April 2020 report by the World Council on Travel and Tourism (WTTC) on economic impact of COVID-19 pandemic on tourism, this pandemic's impacts are eight times greater than impacts of 2008 global economic crisis. This is due to a 31% decline in employment in tourism industry in 2020, meaning that 100 million people lost their jobs and a 30% loss of US dollars in tourism revenue to 2.7 trillion U.S. dollars. WTTC describes this as “unprecedented losses for 2020”. However, as Bakar and Rosbi (2020) have discussed in their work on tourism demand and supply, tourism demand will decrease significantly at the end of pandemic as it is flexible, and there will also be reductions in the supply balance (Bakar and

Rosbi, 2020). A study asked people if they were interested in tour offers from travel agencies, and participants often answer that they were not interested in tours or would be interested next year (Ekstein, 2020). This suggests that panic wave caused by outbreak has an impact on tourism (Bakar and Rosbi, 2020) and will cause some changes in tourism. In this context, the study tries to explain with probable scenarios the changes to be experienced in tourism industry post-outbreak, dominated the world in 2020. The research, which is based on an exploratory method, aims to explain changes that will occur in tourism industry as a result of measures taken with probable scenarios.

The study, which was discussed using secondary and primary resources, was benefited from both future forecasts and expectations of public institutions and tourism enterprises as well as potential tourists' perspectives. The press releases made by the tourism enterprises and the public institutions related to tourism in news bulletins were also taken into consideration. Research data were obtained by using document review and interview technique from qualitative methods.

As a result of the information obtained from secondary sources with document review, first, probable scenarios in tourism industry post-outbreak have been reached with measures taken in terms of supply. Then, according to the purposeful sampling, an open-ended questionnaire was applied to 63 potential local tourists who went on holiday at least once a year. Thus two ways were adopted to monitor the impacts of outbreak on tourism in the study. These are; (1) to reveal probable scenarios with measures taken in post-outbreak tourism and (2) to determine of possible type of tourism that tourists will tend to prefer post-outbreak.

Although it is too early to fully see impact of the outbreak on tourism, it is worth noting that uncertainty waiting for tourism has already left many small and medium-sized tourism businesses in a difficult position. At this point, the question that is curious about is whether the COVID-19 affecting every segment will change the understanding of tourists travel and holidays, or how tourism industry will change? This question, which also constitutes the subject of the study, was tried to explain the study in various scenarios. However, the most striking point in the study is that tourism businesses that will be subject to the biggest change post-outbreak will be accommodation businesses.

The main reason is that the outbreak leads to significant costs in accommodation enterprises. The accommodation enterprises, which were suddenly exposed to pandemic while preparing for 2020 summer season, were caught unprepared for this crisis and caused their expectations to end in despair for next summer. Travel agencies, another business affected by the outbreak,

have been plagued by pre-bookings. For this purpose, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism has introduced credit for early booking advances repayment financing and support packages such as on-the-job loans. In addition, implementation of the “Coronavirus Certificate to Tourism Enterprises/Facilities” for accommodation businesses expected to open at the end of May 2020 is one of decisions taken to reduce impacts of pandemic. Outbreak’s impacts on tourism businesses are felt directly in this way; the indirect effect of changing tourists’ preference is not known definitively and clearly. However, the findings suggest that this change will be in the direction of nature-based tourism. If the post-outbreak scenario is aimed at alternative tourism, it is likely that there will be tourism mobility in rural areas. Therefore, it can be said that interest in nature-based tourism types such as highland tourism, eco-tourism and rural tourism, small-scale accommodation businesses will increase even more, travel with few groups will be made, transportation vehicles will serve as same size but low capacity. However, it is noted that responsible and sustainable tourism will increase with consideration of applications such as hygiene, cleaning and sanitation.

The study addresses probable tourism change as a result of measures taken post-outbreak. Based on a conceptual assessment as well as a short field research, the study is limited because it is in an explorative direction. It is thought that more comprehensive results will be obtained by obtaining data from more samples in studies on the subject. Since impacts of the outbreak will vary in the future, it is recommended that this situation be re-evaluated in the future and compare these results. Therefore, if a similar study is carried out later, different results will be obtained or different applications may be seen in tourism.