FACTORS AFFECTING CHINESE TOURISTS' DECISION TO TRAVEL ABROAD
AFTER THE CHANGE OF POLICIES

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Abstract

The COVID-19 epidemic has seriously affected the development of global tourism. Chinese tourists' decision-making to travel abroad has been greatly affected, which has also led to a reshuffle of the tourism industry. To deeply understand the influencing factors of Chinese tourists' decision-making to travel abroad. The analysis is divided into the two parts.: the first part studied the traveling abroad behavior of Chinese tourists, and another part examined factors affecting Chinese tourists' decision to travel abroad. The study had a sample size of 400 consumers. This study is a quantitative, research. The research tool was questionnaire, that has been analyzed by using statistical methods such as percentage, mean, and standard deviation. and multiple regression analysis, The results of this study showed 1) most of the sample were Male aged between 25 and 44 years old, resided in the cities of Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Shenzhen, average salary ranging from 10,001 to 20,000 Yuan, obtained a bachelor's degree, engaged in freelance work. Following the outbreak of the emergency pandemic, a significant majority of the sample indicated a reduction in their income ranging from 31% to 50%. 2) In terms of consumer purchasing behavior, it found that most of them prefer to travel abroad. Each outbound trip lasts for more than six days. The purchase was 1-2 times per month. The most traveled place was Southeast Asia. 3) The study found that the main factors affecting Chinese tourists' decision to leave the country were: Under government policy condition factors demand conditions. The results were acceptable. Occasion events. lated industries and corporate strategies rejected through the research, We can better understand the current situation and future trends of tourism development. In the future, researchers should explore the impact of the COVID-19 epidemic on the development of tourism, put forward more policy recommendations and practical significance, and contribute to the sustainable development of tourism.

Keywords: Chinese tourists; decision-making; outbound tourism; COVID-19 pandemic

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Significance of the Research Problem

Since the reform and opening China's tourism industry has developed rapidly. Globalization and localization have rapidly changed the distribution pattern of China's tourism industry, and at the same time promoted the rapid movement of tourism flows and their associated flows. At present, China is also the world's largest outbound tourism market. In the past two decades, China's outbound tourism has grown at a high speed, with an average annual growth rate of about 15%. Outbound tourism has become a way of life for more and more Chinese people (Li et al, 2020). Before the pandemic, Chinese tourists were eager travelers. Mainland China had the largest outbound travel market in the world, both in several trips and total spending (UNWTO, 2021). In 2019, Mainland Chinese tourists took 155 million outbound trips, totaling $255 billion in travel spending. China is also an important source market for some major destinations. For instance, Chinese travelers made up 28 percent of inbound tourism in Thailand, 30 percent in Japan, and 16 percent of non-EU visitors to Germany (UNWTO, 2021).

As COVID-19 spreads across the world, many countries are instituting short-term travel restrictions to control the outbreak. When COVID-19 was at its peak, Chinese citizens were essentially forced to protect themselves against COVID-19 by staying close to home, limiting social contact, and wearing protective masks when going out in public. The occurrence of COVID-19 has brought a heavy blow to the outbound tourism industry. The impact of the pandemic on China's outbound tourism has far exceeded the impact of the severe acute respiratory syndrome outbreak in 2003. As the world's largest source of outbound tourists (Huang and Lu, 2017), the post-pandemic recovery of the Chinese outbound tourism industry is critical to the sound development of tourism globally. Therefore, it is necessary to study the factors that impact the COVID-19 pandemic outbound travel intentions of Chinese residents.

According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), it is estimated that the number of tourists in 2020 will be 20%-30% lower than in 2019, and international tourism revenue will be reduced by US$300 to 450 billion. Another recent report by the World Tourism Council predicts that 75 million tourism jobs are threatened because of the pandemic, and the output value of the tourism industry is expected to lose US$2.1 trillion in 2020. Mobility has become one of the most important human-social phenomena of human activities in the era of globalization and has had an important impact on the Chinese natural environment of human existence, social and cultural environment, and regional socio-economic spatial structure.

To return to China or travel abroad and visit friends when the new policy took effect, they spent thousands of dollars more in ticket change fees. Furthermore, some countries, such as Japan, the United States, Italy, and India, have imposed nucleic acid testing requirements on passengers departing from China. Relatively few flights still cost tens of thousands of air tickets to return home. Therefore, it can be seen that spending thousands of dollars more on Air ticket change fees after COVID-19 has had a significant impact on the outbound tourism decisions of Chinese tourists.

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Thus, this research takes the post-epidemic era of the COVID-19 epidemic as the research background from the theory of Porter's diamond model that include the government policies variables, chances events variables, factors conditions variables, demand conditions variables, related industries variables and corporate strategy variables (Sunil- Tiwari et al, 2023), (Xu, J. 2019), (Luo, X, 2019),(Yuhang , Li et al, 2019), (Wang Li et al, 2019) and the theory of tourism decision-making behavior to build a model of influencing factors for Chinese tourists to travel abroad (tourism market research website, 2023; Fernando, 2021).

Objectives

1. To study the traveling abroad behavior of Chinese tourists.

2. To examine factors affecting Chinese tourists' decision to travel abroad.

Hypothesis

According to the theory of Porter's diamond model, we believe that tourism competition is mainly affected by the following six assumptions:

H1: Government policies affect Chinese tourists' decision to travel abroad.

H2: Chances events affect Chinese tourists' decision to travel abroad.

H3: Factors conditions affect Chinese tourists' decision to travel abroad.

H4: Demand conditions affect Chinese tourists' decision to travel abroad.

H5: Related industries affect Chinese tourists' decision to travel abroad.

H6: Corporate strategy affects Chinese tourists' decision to travel abroad.

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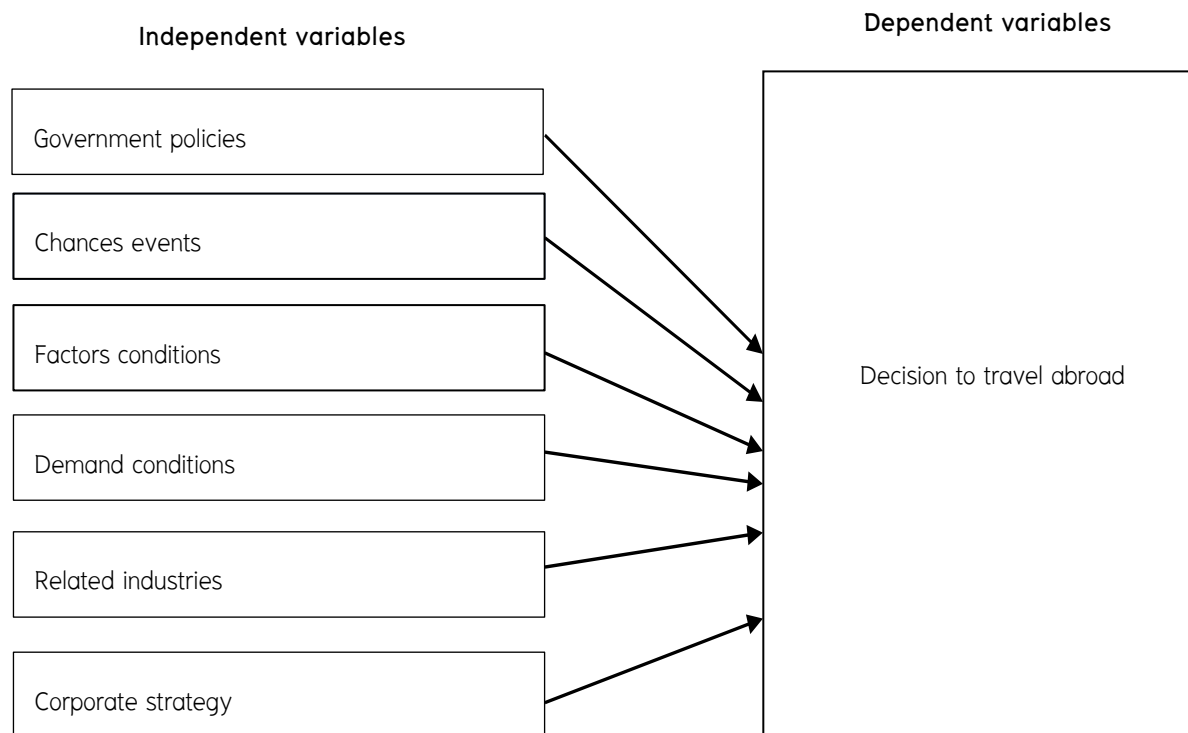
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Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 Conceptual framework

Methods

This research is quantitative research. Porter's Diamond Model Theory has 6 variables that affect the decision to travel abroad and other characteristics of the research population. The two objectives of the study were then stated. and use quantitative methods to collect and analyze online data.

Population and Sample Size

This research is aimed at Chinese outbound tourists who will travel abroad after the Chinese government changes policies. According to the Thai Ministry of Culture and China's Tourism In 2019, Mainland Chinese tourists took 155 million outbound trips (Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2023).

According to Yamane's (1973) formula is shown as below:

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$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

$$n = \frac{155{,}000{,}000}{1 + 155{,}000{,}000(0.05^2)}$$

$$n = 399.94$$

Where :

n = sample size

N =

Population

e = Allowed

error (%)

The result of this calculation is 399.94, so the sample size of the study is 400.

Research Instruments

The questionnaire was developed from past research through a literature review. A conceptual framework and hypotheses were created in English and then translated into Chinese before administering the questionnaire. A face validity test was conducted to test the questionnaire with three professional hospitality management instructors involved in this research. The research tools included: 1) Questionnaire, consisting of part 1, general status of Respondent It is a survey, part 2, a questionnaire on the behavior of Chinese tourists traveling abroad. It is a rating scale with 5 levels and part 3, comments and other suggestions are open-ended. The researcher has brought a questionnaire to find out the quality of the tool, including 1) The questionnaire met with a consultant and was revised according to the recommendations. 2) The revised questionnaire was presented to 3 experts to check the consistency of the content by estimating the consistency of the objectives with the questions (Index of Item– Objective Congruence: IOC) was found to have an IOC value between .80–1.00 and 3) testing the tool with a non-sample population of 30 sets. The evaluation results had discriminatory power between .25–0.75 and the reliability of the questionnaire was determined by Cronbach's method (1951, p.274; Cited in Bunchom Srisa-at, 2015), which the confidence evaluation results have a confidence value of .95.

This questionnaire consists of four parts:

Section 1: Demographic Information

Section 2: Travelling abroad behavior of Chinese tourists.

Section 3: Factors affecting Chinese tourists' decision to travel aboard

Section 4: Decision to travel aboard of Chinese tourists

Data collection

During collection data, the questionnaires were used to collect online data on WeChat, Sina Weibo, and QQ platforms. The sample was 400 Chinese tourists aged 18 or above who have experienced traveling abroad more than once times or who plan to travel abroad after the Covid-19 epidemic, the period on August 2023.

Data analysis

Data were analyzed using a statistical program to analyze the statistics, including descriptive statistics, means, factor analysis, correlation analysis, and regression analysis.

First, the data was subject to descriptive statistics to analyze the basic information of the respondents, the importance of Porter's diamond model: government policies, chances events, factors conditions, demand conditions, related industries, and corporate strategy, and the decision to travel abroad after the Covid-19 pandemic change policies.

Secondly, independent samples are used to test the hypothesis, which aims to test the relationship between Porter's diamond model with six variables and the decision to travel abroad after the COVID19 pandemic change policies.

Third, the relationship between Porter's diamond model with six variables and the decision to travel abroad after the COVID-19 pandemic change policies was tested through correlation analysis.

Finally, regression analysis was conducted to explore the relationship between Porter's diamond model with six variables and the decision to travel abroad after the Covid-19 pandemic change policies.

Results

The presentation of the research results has been divided into three parts as follows;

1) General information of the respondents

The findings of the research study about socio-economic Characteristics of Sample Chinese Tourists information. A study conducted on a sample of 400 Chinese tourists revealed that most of the sample 97.5% of the total were between 25 and 44 years old, while 1.5 percent were between 18 and 24 years old. The survey further indicated that a significant majority of the sample, specifically 51.3% of the respondents were male, while 47.5 percent were female and 1.25 percent were LGBTQ+. Most tourists, 90.7% of the total, resided in the cities of Beijing, Shanghai, Guangzhou, and Shenzhen.

On average, most of the sample, specifically 90%, exhibited an average salary ranging from 10,001 to 20,000 Yuan. Most of the sample, specifically 53.7%, were found to be unmarried individuals who had obtained a bachelor's degree. Furthermore, in most of the sample, 53.5% of the respondents were single, while 23.5 percent were married with no children. The distribution of occupation among Chinese visitors revealed that 30.75% were engaged in freelance work, and 30.5% were employed by the government.

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Following the outbreak of the emergency pandemic, a significant majority of the sample, specifically 95.75%, indicated a reduction in their income ranging from 31% to 50%, while 95.75%, indicated a reduction in their income ranging less than 10%.

2) Travelling abroad behavior of Chinese tourists

Before the outbreak, most Chinese tourists traveled abroad 3-4 times a year, accounting for 93.1% of the total, but after the emergency pandemic, outbound travel by Chinese tourists decreased significantly. After the outbreak of the epidemic, 94.3% of Chinese tourists only travel abroad once or twice a year. After the COVID-19 pandemic, a study found that the vast majority (59.75%) of consumers tend to be conservative in their consumption attitudes toward travel. In addition, a survey on the behavior characteristics of Chinese tourists shows that the vast majority (93.6%) travel exclusively on public holidays.

Among the Chinese surveyed, a large proportion (38.9%) reported traveling with family members, the vast majority (53.60%) specifically traveled with a group, and the vast majority of travelers (83.8%) relied on social media platforms as the main source of travel-related information.

Chinese tourists most often choose to visit capital cities in other countries, accounting for about 22.33% of the preferred locations.

Asia was the main choice for Chinese tourists, with 62.71% choosing this location. The investigation of the behavior characteristics of Chinese tourists shows that Thailand is the first choice of the vast majority of Chinese tourists, accounting for as high as 73.65%. The vast majority (53.60%) of trips abroad were specifically for leisure travel, and the study found that after the COVID-19 pandemic, the average length of each trip abroad examined was 3-5 days, accounting for 66.58% of the total, or 6-9 days, accounting for 27.79% of the total. The total time was 10-12 days, accounting for 5.63% of the total number of groups.

3) Analysis results of factors affecting Chinese tourists' decision to travel abroad have been divided into seven parts as follows;

3.1) Government Policies

The predominant determinant of international travel choices was mostly based on chance factors connected to transit and internal defense against returning tourists (mean value = 4.09), closely followed by the strict limitation of outbound travel due to applicable visa restrictions (mean value = 4.02). The outbound tourism company is effectively regulated by implementing measures to restrict the passenger load factor, which received a mean value of 3.97. Conversely, the prevention and control requirements for customs service personnel ranked worst with a mean value of 3.94.

3.2) Chances events

Chinese tourists recognize that chance events influence their decision to take on international travel. The attitude of local tourism service workers towards Chinese tourists received a rating of a mean value of 3.85, while the attitudes of ordinary local citizens toward Chinese tourists were rated at a mean value of 3.70.

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3.3) Factors conditions

The analysis revealed that Chinese tourists recognized the main reason for their decision to travel abroad as the excellent tourism experience and satisfaction provided by China's estates. Additionally, the high level of community participation in tourism activities and the resulting benefits received by the tourists were also considered significant factors, with a rating mean value of 3.95. Following closely behind, the facilitation of tourism experiences and related activities by China's estates received a rating of mean value of 3.85. China's real estate sector and tourism industry are actively supporting the constant demonstrations, with a rating of mean value of 3.83.

3.4) Demand conditions

Given the fact that the emergency pandemic is over, it is hypothesized that there will be a notable rise in the demand for outbound tourism (mean value of 4.35). Tourists, regardless of their nationality, have a preference for engaging in outward tourism and seeking unique experiences (mean value of 4.29. Additionally, outbound tourists predominantly prioritize the acquisition of authentic experiences through their participation in various tourism activities (mean value of 4.29).

3.5) Related industries

Chinese tourists reveal that the main factor influencing their decision to travel abroad is the improved service level in the transportation infrastructure of the destination (mean value of 4.3). This is closely followed by the improved service level in tourism amenities (mean value of 4.2), tourism environment (mean value of 4.17), and accommodation infrastructure (mean value of 4.15).

3.6) Corporate strategy

Chinese tourists recognized a variety of tourism promotion activities (mean value of 4.36) as the primary corporate strategy influencing their decision to travel abroad. This was closely followed by the availability of rich, novel, and interesting tourism activities (mean value of 4.24). Additionally, the presence of many tourist service agencies to choose from (mean value of 4.03) and the availability of diverse tourist service options (mean value of 3.95) were also considered influential factors.

3.7) Regression analysis of Chinese tourists' decision to travel abroad after the change of policies.

The variables that exhibit a statistically significant and positive effect on the decision of Chinese tourists to travel abroad include Chance events, related industries, and corporate strategies, with a confidence level of 95%. Conversely, chance events have a negative influence on this decision, also with a confidence level of 95%. There is a lack of evidence to suggest that government policies, factor conditions, and demand conditions have a substantial influence on decisions to travel abroad.

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Table 1 Regression analysis of Chinese tourists' decision to travel aboard after the change of policies

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients
	B	Std. Error	Beta
1 (Constant)	2.048	.268	
gov_policy	.015	.031	.038
chance_events	−.057	.035	−.152
factor_cond	.032	.041	.126
demand_cond	.076	.065	.189
related_ind	.068	.056	.206
corperate_sta	.159	.047	.369

The variables that exhibit a statistically significant and positive effect on the decision of Chinese tourists to travel abroad include demand conditions, related industries, and corporate strategies, with a confidence level of 95%. Conversely, chance events have a negative influence on this decision, also with a confidence level of 95%. There is a lack of evidence to suggest that government policies and factor conditions have a substantial influence on decision to travel abroad as present.

Discussion

The results of this research could be summarized and discussed as follows,

Hypothesis 1: Government Policies

Based on the available evidence, it can be concluded that one independent variable can serve as a predictor for the dependent variable. Government policies significantly do not affect Chinese tourists' decision to travel abroad, as supported by the p-value of 0.538. The finding from previous research also supports the current research finding that government policies are not one of the variables that are important in creating the travel abroad intention of Chinese tourists (Liu, Y. 2021). China's government policies cannot enhance or hinder the competitiveness of any industry with diverse roles within the system. Hence, it can be seen that the changed policy of the Chinese government after COVID-19 has not had a significant impact on the outbound tourism decisions of Chinese tourists. Within the face of the "New Normal", almost all of the policies and regulations should be re-addressed, and novel regulations would be imposed on local industrial development, protecting the infant industries, venture creation, and destination image building.

Hypothesis 2: Chance events

Based on the available evidence, it can be concluded that one independent variable can serve as a predictor for the dependent variable. Chance events significantly affect Chinese tourists' decision to travel abroad, as supported by the p-value of 0.02. The finding from the previous research also supports the current

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research finding that affective image reflects the tourist's feelings about the destination (Chen et al., 2016. Affecting the image of the destination Relevant local tourism service agencies provide Chinese language services and general residents' positive attitude towards Chinese tourists is expressed through words with emotional content such as excitement and enjoyment. and relaxation (Stylos et al., 2016)

Hypothesis 3: Factor conditions affect Chinese tourists' decision to travel abroad.

From the available evidence In summary, There is one independent variable that can be used as a predictor of the dependent variable. Conditional factors do not have a significant impact on Chinese tourists' decision to travel abroad. This is supported by a p value of 0.101. Unfortunately, the results of this finding show that Chinese tourists have negative opinions about their travel experiences and tourism-related activities (Fernando, 2021), which is similar to Results of Khaosaard (2020) Chinese tourists have a negative opinion that tourism officials Support demonstrations organized for tourists. This remains a challenge for the government. Local government agencies and other public and private organizations are also facing.

Hypothesis 4: Demand conditions

Based on the available evidence, it can be concluded that there exists at least one independent variable that can serve as a predictor for the dependent variable. Demand conditions significantly do not affect Chinese tourists' decision to travel abroad, as supported by the p-value of 0.056. The findings of previous research also support the current research finding that demand factor conditions are not one of the important variables that affect Chinese tourists' willingness to travel abroad (Liu, 2021). According to Lu, J. (2023), the existence of large growth segments creates favorable demand conditions within a country, while niche segments also have their value creation. Due to the COVID19 pandemic is over, the favorable demand for outbound tourism will also increase.

Hypothesis 5: Related industry

Based on the available evidence, it can be concluded that there exists at least one independent variable that can serve as a predictor for the dependent variable. Related industries significantly affect Chinese tourists' decision to travel abroad, as supported by the p-value of 0.01. The finding from the previous research also supports the current research finding the structure of the firms, interconnecting service level strategies, and rivalry focus on attitudes of the local governments, tourism policymakers and entrepreneurial predilection (Lin and Juan, 2010) will way forward the industry. Some scholars stressed (Fernando, 2021) that the tourism leakages within the service experience value delivery network are substantially high in most of the developing tourism countries.

Hypothesis 6: Corporate strategies

Based on the available evidence, it can be concluded that there exists at least one independent variable that can serve as a predictor for the dependent variable. Corporate strategies significantly affect Chinese tourists' decision to travel abroad, as supported by the p-value of 0.000. The finding from previous research also

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supports the current research finding where corporate Stratagem is one of the variables that are important in creating the travel abroad intention of Chinese tourists (Tirumalaisamy et al. 2023). The reason behind this contradictory result is this facet of the Diamond model is focused on the structure of the industries and strategy of the various firms with their interconnectivity and rivalry. This is further emphasized by different scholars, whereas the existence of rich local activities and natural resource endowments no longer makes it more "competitive" whereas the "competitive strategy" might do (Fernando, 2015).

Suggestions

1. Research Result Suggestions

To further develop the Chinese tourist market and attract more Chinese tourists first choice visit, this study puts forward the 4 parts following suggestions and suggestions from the perspective of the government, tourism authorities, tourism providers, and marketers as follows.

1) This research study provides some suggestions for destination governments. Some emergency preventative measures should be implemented at the destination and all measures should be communicated to Chinese tourists to ensure a sense of safety. The destination government ought to have prepared measures in case a visitor gets positive for emergency tests while traveling. Within this notion, the Public health. The Pandemic is considered an external environmental shock that affecting highly for the world economy by destroying human mobilization, social functions and entertainment, leisure, and pleasure of society, and foreign income earnings. Further, the obstacles might be worse due to the vulnerability of the sector and the dependency of most of the developing economies on the tourism industry.

2) The destination authorities should improve the talent incentive mechanism, deepen the reform of the income distribution system, use innovation ability and management performance as important ways to measure work performance and give financial and technical support for talent training. In addition, the government should also create a strategy to encourage foreign trade, set up a diversified investment and financing system, expand the culture industry development funds by increasing the government's financial investment, encourage and support private and foreign capital to enter the cultural market and build a bank–enterprise financing platform for the cultural industry through concession loans and other preferential policies.

3) This research study provides some suggestions for key stakeholders and hospitality tourism related industries. Hotels should offer a hygienic environment that is safe and secure as well as high quality services. The management of crowds at tourist destinations should be reasonable, and information should be promptly updated online to allow visitors to modify their travel plans in response to the real situation.

4) To effectively reduce Chinese tourists' perception of emergency risk, local governments should strengthen tourism–related public health safety management and establish a mechanism for the prevention and control of post–pandemic normalization. Tourism managers should make full use of social media to publicize

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the safety and quality of the local tourism environment. When communicating with tourists, tourism operators should consistently inform them of health and safety measures taken by the government and tourism sector as a whole, in addition to the effectiveness of local medical and health systems in responding to the spread of infectious diseases in an updated and transparent manner.

2. Suggestions for the Following Research

The researcher used the analysis data to summarize and discuss the results to answer the prescribed research objectives including suggestions offered from the research and recommendations for the next research as follows.

1) Due to the limited number of questionnaires and the collection of convenience sampling, the results could not cover all Chinese tourists in other destinations. For many Chinese tourists, using only 400 questionnaires as a research sample is not comprehensive enough.

2) This study only focused on Chinese tourists. In the future, the object of research can be expanded to more countries or regions to explore the differences in the impact of tourists from different countries on the effect of their perception of the pandemic on their outbound travel intentions.

3) The questionnaire collection and research were conducted in a relatively short period, whereas the international pandemic situation remained severe. As time passes, and as the alert level decreases, the effect of tourists' perception of the pandemic on their post-pandemic outbound travel intentions may change. Therefore, future studies can consider collecting multiple sets of data covering a longer period for longitudinal comparative analysis.

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