

STAY LOCAL, SERVE GLOBAL

SUSTAINABLE HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM THROUGH STAYCATIONS | PART 2



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Stay Local, Serve Global: Sustainable Hospitality and Tourism through Staycations

(Part 2)

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Preface

The global tourism and hospitality industry is undergoing a profound transformation. The convergence of technological innovation, changing consumer preferences, environmental consciousness, and unprecedented global disruptions has redefined how people perceive travel. Among the most significant outcomes of this transformation has been the emergence of staycations—localized travel experiences that encourage individuals to explore destinations within their own regions while embracing sustainability, authenticity, and community engagement. Once considered merely an alternative during periods of economic uncertainty or travel restrictions, staycations have evolved into an important component of contemporary tourism strategy and a catalyst for resilient destination development.

Stay Local, Serve Global: Sustainable Hospitality and Tourism through Staycations (Part 2) presents an international scholarly exploration of this evolving tourism phenomenon. Building upon the growing global discourse on sustainable and responsible tourism, this volume examines how staycations are reshaping hospitality businesses, destination marketing, consumer behaviour, technological innovation, and local economic development. The chapters collectively demonstrate that localized tourism is not simply about travelling shorter distances; rather, it represents a paradigm shift towards more meaningful, environmentally responsible, and socially inclusive travel experiences.

One of the defining characteristics of this volume is its strong emphasis on technology as an enabler of sustainable staycation experiences. Across diverse geographical contexts, contributors investigate the transformative role of digital platforms, artificial intelligence, virtual reality, augmented reality, smart accommodations, social media, mobile applications, data-driven marketing, and digital customer engagement in enhancing visitor experiences. These technological innovations are increasingly allowing destinations and hospitality providers to deliver personalized, seamless, and immersive experiences while simultaneously improving operational efficiency and supporting sustainable resource management.

The book also recognizes that staycations have become closely linked with broader societal changes. The rise of remote working, flexible lifestyles, wellness tourism, digital nomadism, and experience-driven consumption has significantly expanded the appeal of localized travel. Concepts such as workations, hybrid leisure experiences, smart hospitality, and community-based tourism illustrate how tourism continues to adapt to changing economic realities and evolving traveller expectations. These developments challenge conventional understandings of tourism mobility and encourage scholars and practitioners to reconsider destination competitiveness through the lens of proximity, accessibility, and sustainability.

An important contribution of this volume lies in its diverse international perspectives. Drawing evidence from Nepal, Malaysia, the Gulf Region, India, the Philippines, Kazakhstan, China, and other emerging tourism destinations, the chapters provide valuable comparative insights into how different regions are responding to similar challenges through context-specific innovations. These case studies demonstrate that while cultural, economic, and institutional settings differ considerably, common themes of resilience, technological adaptation, local participation, and environmental stewardship remain central to successful staycation development.

The volume further highlights the interconnectedness between staycations and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). By encouraging shorter travel distances, supporting local enterprises, generating community employment, promoting responsible

consumption, preserving cultural heritage, and reducing environmental impacts, staycations contribute directly to sustainable economic growth and inclusive destination development. The discussions presented throughout this book illustrate how governments, destination management organizations, hospitality businesses, and local communities can collaboratively design tourism systems that are economically viable, socially equitable, and environmentally responsible.

This collection adopts a multidisciplinary approach by integrating perspectives from tourism studies, hospitality management, information technology, consumer behaviour, destination marketing, sustainability science, and strategic management. Consequently, the volume serves not only as an academic reference but also as a practical resource for policymakers, tourism planners, hospitality professionals, destination managers, entrepreneurs, researchers, and students seeking to understand the future direction of localized tourism.

The editors sincerely acknowledge the outstanding contributions of all chapter authors whose scholarly work has made this volume possible. Their diverse expertise, rigorous research, and international perspectives have enriched the book and strengthened its contribution to contemporary tourism literature. We also extend our appreciation to the reviewers for their constructive comments and academic guidance, and to the publishing team for their professionalism and commitment throughout the editorial process.

As the tourism industry continues to navigate the challenges of climate change, digital transformation, changing traveller behaviour, and sustainable development, staycations are expected to become an increasingly important element of destination strategies worldwide. Rather than representing a temporary response to global crises, they offer a long-term pathway towards building more resilient, inclusive, and sustainable tourism systems.

It is our hope that this volume will stimulate further academic inquiry, inspire innovative industry practices, and encourage policymakers to integrate localized tourism into broader sustainable development agendas. Above all, we hope that readers will recognize that meaningful travel does not necessarily require crossing international borders; often, the most enriching experiences begin by rediscovering the extraordinary opportunities that exist close to home while contributing to global sustainability through local action.

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CHAPTER 1

The Role of Technology in Enhancing Staycation Experiences in Nepal

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Abstract: Just after the global pandemic of COVID-19, one of the sectors in the country gained global popularity: staycations—a vacation spent at or close to home or in one's home country. Due to technology improvements, staycations in Nepal have become significantly easier and more pleasurable. Websites such as Yatra Nepal and Booking.com provide abundant information on accommodation, transit, and local attractions, enabling travellers to make well-informed decisions without the need to physically leave their homes. Language translation and personalized recommendations are also included in apps like Google Maps and TripAdvisor for travel app users. Nepal's hotel sector is being revolutionized by “smart accommodations” that offer new touchless amenities and eco-friendly energy choices. Both businesses and people utilize sites like Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube to record and share information about eco-tourism destinations, cultural vacations, and lesser-known attractions. Individuals can enhance the accuracy of their holiday planning by utilizing user-generated material and real-time feedback. This also motivates people to explore unconventional tourism itineraries. Virtual events, such as Zoom, Google Meet, and specialized cultural programs, enable those who are far away to engage in real-time festivals, cultural events, and guided hiking excursions. There are fewer chances these days for remote workers to miss out on business opportunities due to the availability of high-speed internet connectivity. They can explore remote regions of Nepal without compromising their capacity. Contemporary tourism places great importance on sustainability, and online technologies empower environmentally concerned tourists to choose eco-friendly hotels. Apps like EcoTrip are crucial for monitoring carbon emissions and generating funds for conservation efforts in Nepal. After the pandemic, the focus has shifted to prioritizing the welfare and safety of travellers. Applications such as Nepal COVID-19, which monitor health conditions, provide temperature screening systems, and offer contactless check-ins, are all available to provide assistance in this regard. Telemedicine apps and online health consultations provide reassurance to travellers exploring distant or mountainous regions.

Keywords: AR, Digital insights, Innovations, Staycation, VR.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, especially during the global pandemic, the idea of a “staycation,” or vacation in one's own country or area, has become more popular. Nepal is known for its rich cultural history, beautiful landscapes, and diverse biological zones. The staycation trend gives both locals and tourists a chance to rediscover the country's secret gems. The rise of digital technologies has greatly changed staycation experiences, making travel easier, more personalized, and more available than ever before. Tourists in Nepal can now plan and book their staycations more easily and with more confidence thanks to digital platforms, apps, and smart technology. Online booking sites like Booking.com and Airbnb have made it easier to find a wide range of places to stay, from hotels in cities to eco-lodges in the mountains. These services let people book in real time, leave reviews, and take virtual tours, which helps travellers make choices based on their needs and interests. Also, mobile apps that offer handpicked travel suggestions, personalized itineraries, and insider tips about the area make staycations much more fun, letting tourists see both well-known sites and lesser-visited spots.

Also, technology has changed the way people think about hospitality in Nepal. Many hotels now use smart technologies to make their guests more comfortable and easier to reach. Technology, like AI-powered butler services and keyless room entry, has improved vacations, making them more appealing to tech-savvy tourists. Staycation trends are heavily influenced by social media and influencers. For example, visual content on Instagram, Facebook, and YouTube showcases Nepal's hidden gems, cultural experiences, and ecotourism opportunities. Technology has also made staycations in Nepal safer and more environmentally friendly. Ecotourism-focused apps and platforms give travellers ideas for environmentally friendly trips, while healthcare and health-monitoring apps make sure that travellers stay healthy and safe on their trips. Virtual and augmented reality technology have added a new dimension to travel by letting people enjoy cultural sites, events, and natural wonders from afar or engage more through digital experiences. There is no doubt that technology has made staycation trips better in Nepal. Technology has changed the way people plan trips by streamlining processes and making vacations more personalized, environmentally friendly, and safe. This has made it easier for people to experience the country's many cultural and natural settings (Li *et al.*, 2023). . As the trend of “staycations” continues to grow, new technologies will make it easier for people who want to explore Nepal while still at home.

DIGITAL PLATFORMS: A GATEWAY TO SEAMLESS TRAVEL PLANNING

Through how consumers plan, book, and enjoy their trips, digital platforms have transformed the travel and tourism sector. For staycations, both visitors and companies in Nepal now rely heavily on these sites as they simplify the process, provide real-time data, and generate tailored recommendations. Planning trips and enjoying staycations across Nepal's several regions have become simpler thanks to digital tools such as smartphone apps, online travel agents, and social media. This section will explore how digital platforms simplify travel planning, therefore improving the general quality of staycations in Nepal.

Evolution of Digital Platforms in Nepal's Travel Industry

Nepal's travel and tourist business has expanded greatly as internet platforms have gained appeal. Conventional travel planning—using travel agencies or asking friends for recommendations—has rapidly and significantly transitioned into digital channels. Knowing they can reach more people and provide better services, local tourism companies have begun implementing digital tools (Kurniati & Suryanto, 2023). By allowing visitors to easily locate and reserve hotels, transportation, and activities all throughout Nepal, sites including Booking.com, Agoda, Airbnb, and regional websites like Yatra Nepal have provided guests with additional choices. For “staycationers,” or those who like to have a vacation within their own nation without flying too far, the move to digital platforms has been especially beneficial. These sites provide Nepali people and residents with a range of resources to learn about their nation’s natural beauty and past as domestic tourism increases. Travel is more accessible, and individuals from all walks of life have more options for staycations since these services may be accessed online from both cities and rural locations.

User-Friendly Interfaces and Personalized Travel Planning

Online platforms are fantastic as their simple interfaces make trip planning easier. Choosing filters based on price range, geography, home type, and amenities helps guests make their staycations more distinctive on websites like Airbnb and Expedia. These filters simplify the search for the ideal location to spend a staycation in Nepal, where visitors may choose from a broad spectrum of experiences, including cultural sites and mountain resorts. A couple looking for a romantic escape in the Nagarkot mountains to view all of their options or a family seeking a peaceful lakeside resort in Pokhara could spend minutes on these platforms. Apart from lodging bookings, these services usually provide recommendations for surrounding eateries, attractions, and guided trips, hence enhancing the staycation experience. Digital platforms combine transportation,

CHAPTER 2

Role of Technology in Staycation and Tourism in the Gulf Region: Opportunities and Challenges

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Abstract: Staycations are revitalizing tourism in the Gulf region by encouraging people to explore local destinations and boosting domestic travel. This trend supports the local economies of different countries in the Middle East by directly spending on nearby businesses, holiday parks, and hospitality establishments. Staycations offer a cost-effective alternative to international travel, making vacations more accessible and reducing the carbon footprint associated with long-distance travel. Additionally, it promotes year-round tourism, helping to stabilize income for local businesses even outside peak seasons. When IT (Information Technology) is combined with staycations, it fosters a deeper appreciation for local culture and attractions, enhancing the tourism industry's resilience and sustainability at the global level. With the help of technology, staycations gain momentum. Technology enhances staycations by making planning and experiencing local getaways more convenient and enjoyable. Online booking platforms and mobile apps simplify finding and reserving accommodations and activities. In this book chapter, all the paradigms of staycation are discussed, where IT, along with AI, can play a major role for improvement. In the last part of the chapter, AI-driven recommendations are compared, which personalize experiences based on user preferences, ensuring memorable stays through different means, *i.e.*, app or chatbot. Additionally, challenges are also highlighted, focusing on their existing solutions (to date) for better research in the future in this direction.

Keywords: AI, Digitalization, Heritage tourism, Rural tourism, Staycation, Tourism.

INTRODUCTION

A staycation is a vacation spent at home or near one's home, involving leisure activities that one would normally do on a holiday, without the need for extensive travel. The term is a blend of “stay” and “vacation,” emphasizing relaxation without leaving one's local area. The concept of a staycation is not new, but it

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gained significant traction during the late 2000s, particularly around the 2008 financial crisis. As economic pressures grew, many people sought more affordable alternatives to traditional vacations. Staycations allowed individuals and families to save on travel costs, accommodation expenses, and other associated fees while still enjoying a break from their routine (De Man, A., 2020).

Growth and Popularity: In the years following, the popularity of staycations continued to rise, influenced by various factors:

- **Economic Factors:** The ongoing economic uncertainties and rising travel costs made staycations an attractive option for budget-conscious individuals.
- **Environmental Concerns:** Growing awareness of environmental impact led many to opt for local holidays to reduce their carbon footprint.
- **Technological Advancements:** The rise of digital entertainment, such as streaming services, virtual tours, and online gaming, provided ample opportunities for entertainment at home.
- **Health Crises:** The COVID-19 pandemic further propelled the staycation trend. With travel restrictions and health concerns, people turned to local adventures and home-based relaxation as safe alternatives (Aburumman, A. A., 2020).

Activities and Benefits

Staycations have emerged as a popular alternative to traditional travel, offering numerous benefits that extend across financial, environmental, social, and personal dimensions. As individuals increasingly seek meaningful and sustainable ways to relax, staycations provide the perfect blend of convenience, affordability, and enrichment. One of the most significant advantages of staycations is the cost-effectiveness they offer. Traditional vacations often involve substantial expenses related to airfare, long-distance transportation, accommodation, and dining. In contrast, staycations eliminate or drastically reduce these costs. By exploring local attractions, parks, cultural sites, and nearby recreational spaces, individuals and families can enjoy memorable experiences without straining their budgets. This financial flexibility allows more frequent breaks throughout the year, making vacations accessible to a wider demographic, including students, young families, and those with limited resources. Environmental sustainability is another key benefit of staycations. Long-haul flights and lengthy road trips contribute substantially to carbon emissions, placing a heavy burden on the planet. By choosing to travel close to home, individuals reduce their ecological footprint and support responsible travel practices. Staycations often encourage the use of eco-friendly modes of transportation such as walking, cycling, or public transit. This shift aligns with global sustainability goals and highlights the growing importance of conscious tourism. Additionally, staying local reduces the strain on over-

touristed destinations, helping to preserve fragile ecosystems and cultural heritage sites. Staycations also strengthen local economies by encouraging residents to spend within their communities. Local restaurants, cafes, craft shops, entertainment venues, and small businesses benefit directly from staycationers looking for unique experiences nearby. This not only circulates money within the local economy but also creates opportunities for small and medium enterprises to thrive. Many communities have responded to this trend by enhancing their recreational offerings, improving public spaces, and hosting cultural events, all of which contribute to regional development.

On a personal level, staycations offer numerous wellness benefits. They allow individuals to recharge without the stress often associated with long-distance travel—such as packing hassles, airport queues, jet lag, and travel fatigue. Because staycations involve minimal planning and travel time, individuals can focus more on relaxation and leisure. Engaging in activities like visiting local nature reserves, practicing outdoor yoga, camping, or exploring hiking trails can promote physical well-being and reduce stress. Without rigid itineraries or travel constraints, people have the freedom to design their staycations in ways that nurture their mental health and emotional balance. Staycations also strengthen social connections. Families and friends can spend quality time together without the pressure of long travel schedules or high expenses. Shared activities—such as picnics, museum visits, adventure sports, or cooking at home—create lasting memories and encourage meaningful bonding. Even solo staycationers benefit from the chance to reconnect with themselves through reflective activities, reading, creative pursuits, or peaceful local exploration.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Most of the research papers provide an overview of tourism statistics in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, including the number of tourists, their spending, and hotel performance indicators. It also explores inter-tourism between GCC countries. Another talks about how sustainable tourism can be achieved as staycations are gaining recognition. This paper investigates strategies of differentiation to establish a competitive identity in tourism in the Gulf countries. Few papers talk about the staycation and relations with industrial growth (Alseiari, H. *et al*, 2019). This study explores the relationship between tourism and economic growth in the GCC, analysing the impact of inbound tourist arrivals and receipts on key economic indicators. It provides insights into the role of foreign investments and political alliances in fostering tourism. It examines how branding as sustainable tourist destinations is embedded in these strategies.

CHAPTER 3

A Study on Enhancing Hospitality Experiences through Virtual Tours and Augmented Reality in Staycations

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Abstract: This study examines the relevance of virtual tours and Augmented Reality (AR) in enhancing hospitality experiences, with particular emphasis on how these technologies can foster more engaging and sustainable guest experiences within the context of staycations (Bendle *et al.*, 2019; Sigala, 2020). Using a qualitative research design, the study incorporates both a literature review and case study analysis; the literature section explores existing research on virtual tours and AR in hospitality (Kim & Hall, 2019; Liu *et al.*, 2021), while the case studies identify real-world examples that demonstrate how these technologies can be applied to staycation settings. This combined framework provides practical insights into current developments and highlights opportunities for integrating virtual tours and AR into staycation-oriented hospitality products. The findings indicate that these technologies significantly enrich staycation experiences by enabling virtual access to local attractions, facilitating interactive learning, and deepening guests' engagement with their immediate surroundings (Gretzel *et al.*, 2015; Fuchs & Weiermair, 2020). Moreover, the study underscores environmental benefits, such as encouraging reduced long-distance travel and supporting regional tourism development (Hall & Page, 2019). The research offers implications for sustainable hospitality by demonstrating how emerging technologies can support greener and more immersive staycation offerings, providing valuable guidance for practitioners aiming to design innovative experiences and establishing a foundation for further academic inquiry into technology's role in hospitality (Buhalis & Amaranggana, 2015). Overall, the study contributes to sustainable hospitality literature by presenting a synergistic approach that integrates virtual tours and AR to enhance consumer satisfaction while promoting environmental sustainability.

Keywords: Augmented reality, Environmental sustainability, Guest experience, Staycations, Sustainable hospitality, Virtual tours.

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INTRODUCTION

The past few years have seen a rapid evolution of the hotel industry as a result of digital technology advancements, which have transformed consumer demands as well as the provision of services. A notable trend in this regard is the growing trend of staycation – visiting places as a vacation but not outside one’s country due to the worldwide shift to environmentally friendly travel. In recent times, particularly after the pandemic, travel in the form of staycations has become increasingly more attractive as a less risky form of travel compared to international travel, while at the same time supporting local enterprises. The main focus of such youth growth is on the viewpoint of the technologically advanced methods of vivid images and virtual tours, which make it possible for people to be placed in active environments without having to move a lot, making them suitable for all ages. 360-degree views and interactive tours of the hotels or historical or artistic places nearby have recently become one of the effective ways to market the properties. Such experiences allow clients to plan their trips while still at home and learn about the property and the area it is located in, but without the need to physically be there first. Not only does this enhance pleasure in the pre-arrival phase, but it also improves booking choices, such that, in this way, tourists are able to make wiser choices. Augmented Reality (AR) provides users with the ability to interact with their environment by adding digital information to it in real time. Using AR technology, guests can find their way around in a more interesting and individual way, using local guides, online interactive maps, or cultural narratives. The tourism industry has employed virtual tours and augmented reality to improve hospitality by displaying locations vividly and connecting visitors with the locals. Further, staying indoors and including virtual touring or augmented reality into staycations goes in line with broader efforts in the sector to promote tourism that is ecologically responsible. Such technologies bear promises to not only eliminate the need for travelling long distances, thus reducing transport-related carbon emissions, but also foster travelers’ respect for and interaction with local cultures and landscapes. Those who are willing to pay extra can use virtual tours to visit previously inaccessible places like cultural and natural sites without harming vulnerable regions or further stressing the environment.

Such a change to virtual and augmented experiences can play an important role in safeguarding local cultural resources, as well as promoting green tourism. Technological advancements have further given rise to smart tourism and sustainable hospitality, portraying technology as a key driver in enhancing convenience while encouraging and promoting responsible tourism. For instance, virtual tours are an augmented reality that provides a healthy interface of technology and conservation as hoteliers address the necessary concern for the current market to deliver unique experiences supplemented by technology while

tackling environmental concerns. Some of these technologies offer guests the opportunity to customize how they would like to experience their stay in a hotel in response to how different people like to travel, from outdoor enthusiasts worried about green issues to tech-savvy travelers who want more interactivity from the world around them. In addition, the increasing body of research on smart technology in tourism (Kim & Hall, 2019; Liu *et al.*, 2021) shows that AR applications can indeed influence the customer engagement process and the level of the customers' loyalty attributes. Such visitors tend to indulge in and even create content, reaching out to wider audiences regarding that place, making it an effective word-of-mouth marketing for that hotel and the tourist attractions in that area. There are also educational benefits in the use of such technologies, and as such, they provide guests with the opportunity to learn about the heritage, animals, and the people within the vicinity, hence making their holiday both fun and even more informative.

Background and Significance of the Study

This is most relevant when discussing sustainable tourism, where the use of these tools provides a deeper understanding of the local cultures, hence encouraging the visitors to practice a more responsible tourism while on their stay. In this context, the aim of this study is to evaluate how virtual tours and augmented reality change hospitality experiences within the scope of staycations. This project will analyze in detail how the efficient implementation of virtual tours and augmented reality can enhance customer satisfaction, create new experiences, and support the promotion of sustainability. The results of this research will be of high relevance for managers in the hotel industry who wish to implement digital technologies into their operations and for researchers who study the relationship between technology and sustainability in tourism. Along with the development of the hospitality industry, the effective use of virtual tours and augmented reality technology in presenting unique and environmentally friendly experiences will promote the sustainable development of the tourism industry. This research contributes to the discussion on the promotion of sustainable tourism, as it highlights the opportunities of virtual tours and augmented reality as tools that can potentially enhance the tourist experience without jeopardizing the environment. In an industry where fun and safety often work against each other, these technologies present a win-win situation. This proposal analyses how advanced technology-based staycations may offer a new form of travel that is green and economical in the years to come.

CHAPTER 4

Enhancing Staycation Experiences through Digital Technologies: The Role of Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality

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Abstract: In the context of rapid technological development, digital technologies have gradually become an indispensable part of our daily lives. In recent years, staycation has emerged as a popular vacation option, gaining increasing favor among consumers. Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR), as core representatives of digital technologies, have demonstrated great potential in enhancing the staycation experience. This study aims to explore the specific applications and impacts of VR and AR technologies in optimizing staycation experiences. By reviewing the definitions, basic principles, and application scenarios of virtual reality and augmented reality, this paper reveals that VR primarily creates immersive virtual environments, providing users with an experience akin to physical presence. It has been widely applied in fields such as virtual tourism, virtual museums, and virtual theme parks, offering staycation users a rich virtual travel experience. Moreover, VR has significant advantages in enriching home entertainment and educational resources. On the other hand, AR enhances users' perception and interaction with the real world by overlaying virtual information onto reality, showing extensive application prospects in home entertainment, interactive games, augmented reality shopping, and indoor navigation. This paper further discusses the change proposed in the application of VR and AR technologies, such as high technical costs, user acceptance, and content diversity, and proposes corresponding coping strategies. Finally, looking into the future development trends of VR and AR technologies, we believe that as these technologies continue to innovate and mature, they will play an increasingly important role in enhancing the staycation experience, providing more diverse and personalized service experiences. Through this analysis, this study aims to provide a theoretical foundation and practical reference for the application of digital technologies in the staycation market.

Keywords: Augmented reality, Digital technology, Staycation, User experience, Virtual reality.

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INTRODUCTION

Research Background and Significance

Research Background

With the rapid development of information technology, digital technologies have been widely applied across various industries, significantly transforming people's lifestyles and consumption habits. In recent years, the swift advancement of Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR) technologies, particularly in the fields of entertainment, education, and healthcare, has revealed the growing potential of digital technologies in the tourism industry (Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009). Staycation, as an emerging vacation mode, relies on the interaction between at-home leisure and technology to compensate for the inability to travel for various reasons (Bujisic & Lee, 2018). In staycation experiences, VR and AR technologies offer immersive sensory and interactive experiences, becoming key methods for enhancing the quality of staycations (Egger & O'Connor, 2021).

From a macro perspective, the global tourism market was severely impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, with global tourism revenue plunging by 57.8%. Large-scale travel restrictions and lockdown measures prompted people to seek alternative travel options (Pan & Zhang, 2018). According to data from the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the number of global international tourists decreased by 74% in 2020, a drop of approximately 1 billion trips compared to 2019. Against this backdrop, staycations have gradually gained popularity as a safe, economical, and convenient vacation alternative (Li & Wang, 2021). From a micro perspective, in modern society, consumers increasingly pursue personalized and high-quality life experiences, and digital technologies have become essential tools for meeting these demands (Xie & Li, 2022). VR and AR technologies, through realistic simulations and augmented reality, allow users to experience the unique customs and natural beauty of various global destinations without leaving their homes (Bujisic & Lee, 2018). This immersive experience not only satisfies the need for sensory stimulation but also offers richer interactive features and educational value. For instance, with a VR headset, users can tour world-renowned museums and even interact with virtual guides. Through AR glasses, users can enjoy foreign concerts in their living room as if they were at the live performance (Egger & O'Connor, 2021). Moreover, technological advancements are a key driver of VR and AR applications in staycations. In recent years, with improved hardware performance and the maturation of software technology, the cost of VR and AR devices has gradually decreased, and market penetration has significantly increased (Freina & Ott, 2015). According to an IDC

report, global shipments of AR/VR headsets reached 11.2 million units in 2021, representing a 92.1% year-on-year growth. Advances in hardware technology, such as high-resolution displays, lightweight designs, and enhanced interactive features, have greatly improved the user experience. The widespread rollout and adoption of 5G technology, enabling high-bandwidth and low-latency networks, have ensured real-time data transmission and high-definition rendering for VR and AR applications (Xie & Li, 2022; Guo Tao, Jiang Lingang, & Zong Xiaomeng, 2024). Furthermore, policy and industry developments have positively contributed to the application of VR and AR in staycations. Several countries and regions have introduced strategic plans to support the digital economy and innovative technologies, encouraging companies to develop and apply cutting-edge technologies. For example, China's 14th Five-Year Plan explicitly emphasizes accelerating the development of the digital economy and supporting the promotion of emerging technologies such as virtual reality and augmented reality. These policy measures have provided a favorable environment and abundant resources for the growth of the VR and AR industries (Xia, Xu, & Xu, 2020).

Staycation, as an emerging vacation mode, has shown broad development prospects in the global tourism market, thanks to the support of VR and AR technologies (Bujisic & Lee, 2018; Li, Zhao, & Zeng, 2023). With continuous technological advancements, policy support, and changes in consumer demand, the application of VR and AR in staycations is expected to become more widespread and mature, further enhancing the staycation experience (Egger & O'Connor, 2021).

Research Significance

In the current societal context, the rapid development and widespread application of digital technologies have brought unprecedented opportunities for enhancing the at-home vacation experience (Li, Zhang, & Qin, 2017). At-home vacation refers to engaging in vacation and leisure activities at home or nearby, which has become an important vacation mode in recent years due to factors such as pandemic control (Savills, 2023). Virtual Reality (VR) and Augmented Reality (AR), as two leading digital technologies, hold great potential in enhancing the at-home vacation experience (Yang & Kou, 2022).

Exploring the role of VR and AR technologies in at-home vacations holds several significant research implications. First, VR and AR technologies can enrich the forms and content of at-home vacations. Faced with the limitations of traditional travel, VR and AR can create immersive virtual environments, allowing users to virtually tour, visit museums, and enjoy natural landscapes without leaving their

CHAPTER 5

Workation Trends Towards the Staycation Demand in Malaysia

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Abstract: This study examines workation and its implications for the staycation industry demand in Malaysia. As work options have become more flexible due to technology and the recent global pandemic, work and travel patterns have been altered, and we have seen a rise in workation practices and how they affect staycation decisions. More recently, the Malaysian government has launched the DE Rantau Program – a thriving environment for a new generation of workers who can work remotely and travel, which has only intensified this process. Primary data was obtained through structured questionnaires administered to various professionals involved in workations. Demographic data, frequency of workations, and destinations of choice were obtained, as well as factors that affected those choices. SPSS and the PLS-SEM were used to analyze the collected data to understand trends and correlations of workation practices in the staycation industry development. The factors that brought about this trend suggest that staycation has benefited from workation, as many people choose domestic travel that creates the right setting for work and play. The research finds that the introduction of the workation is altering the dynamics of traditional staycation in Malaysia and offers fresh opportunities for the hospitality industry to address the demand for work and recreation together. The implications and recommendations for industry stakeholders are to improve infrastructure for remote workers and to create effective marketing messages promoting the workation model. This paper adds to the knowledge base on the workation phenomenon and offers insight into the potential and future growth of the staycation sector in Malaysia.

Keywords: Local tourism, Remote work, Staycation, Travel preferences, Workation trends.

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of ‘Workation’ has become a way to work remotely and contributes to the digitalization of work and its flexibility (Voll *et al.*, 2022). According to Vogl and Micek (2023), workation refers to a combination of work and vacation. They can be limited to short breaks, monthly breaks, or an extended weekend where individuals schedule a couple of extra workdays from another location to visit a place (Chevtaeva *et al.*, 2024). This idea is beneficial for integrating pleasure into productivity and works to encourage excellence without compromising between work and family life (Tjiptono *et al.*, 2024). This also enables those fortunate to attend virtual workplaces to balance their working time and leisure, enabling them to have flexible, healthy lives and increased job satisfaction. The extension of workation was further encouraged because the COVID-19 global health crisis created digital nomads, employees who do not need to work face-to-face in a digital ecosystem (Hermann & Paris, 2020). As it has been observed that the travel industry, on its own, has gone through multiple changes because of the global shutdowns and restrictions, the World Tourism Organization mentioned that the sector is one of the most impacted by the pandemic (Ross, 2021). When the lockdown was lifted, several accommodation industries, including hotels, resorts, service apartments, Airbnb, and other lodging businesses, struggled to search for ways of coping with the losses from COVID-19 impacts. One of the usual options that every accommodation sector provides is the so-called staycation, especially for those who continue to work remotely. By promoting staycations, domestic tourists were, in a way, encouraged to stay over the weekends and enjoy domestic holidays rather than traveling to other cities (Tjiptono *et al.*, 2024). Workation travelers would potentially exist in Malaysia since the country is culturally diverse and has beautiful tourist sites.

This workation is expected to remain a travel trend in the future, according to the advancement of technological solutions and the increase in organizations’ usage of remote environments (Shin *et al.*, 2024). Malaysia's government agencies and personalities promoted converting hotels into workations to boost local and global tourists (Sinnappan, 2021). This is why, even though the phenomenon of workation has become increasingly popular, the needs of tourists and their demands have shifted significantly. As for the workation travel experience and travel component of the workation travel experience for some travelers, the workation travel experience also seemed different. As can be seen, some workation travelers may have more flexibility in travel time as they work and live in a particular destination for a longer time (Shin *et al.*, 2024), which gives them time and opportunities to observe the local views, taste food, and embrace the culture of the location. However, accessibility, types of accommodation and facilities offered, and safety measures also influence the selection of travel

elements for workation travelers. Malaysia has seen different hotels, resorts, and other lodgings that offer packages that shape travelers' perceptions and encourage them to work while being offered accommodation in the hotel. For instance, Eastin Hotel Petaling Jaya provides multiple work-from-home flexible packages such as rooms, lunch, coffee, and tea (Minion, 2020).

Given that workation is the new trend in the travel industry, the definitional and research properties of the workation travel experience and travel element have not been well-developed. Moreover, little is known regarding these trends' impact on staycation demand within Malaysia. Some people now prefer places where they can work and have fun at the same time, and it is important to identify which aspects of the workation travel experience and travel elements make a destination suitable for such two-natured travel. This is important as the travel experience may result in the creation and improvement of staycation demand by determining the factors affecting the traveler's choice and satisfaction. Further, it enables hospitality providers to segment their services and special requirements and engage those who travel more often. Sharma *et al.* (2022) have noted that in most tourism works, it has been confirmed that tourists' satisfaction has a positive relationship with their intention to visit certain destinations.

The objective of the present research is to investigate workation travel experience and staycation requirements in Malaysia (*e.g.*, traveler satisfaction and word-of-mouth). Furthermore, this work will examine the demographic features and key workation travel chains factors, such as accessibility, accommodation, attraction, and safety, that determine staycation choices. To this end, this research defines the attributes of workation travel experience and elements of workation travel based on statistical results from SPSS and PLS-SEM analysis. The data collected included demographic data, workation frequency, most popular staycation locations, and the factors determining the workation selection. Collecting the relevant data will help establish the important patterns and relationships between workation practices and the growth of the staycation market. In addition, the outcomes of this research can also help tourism marketers gain more useful information about the workation trend that will support and improve a better understanding of the future development of the staycation industry in Malaysia.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Workation, which forms from work and vacation, refers to working while on holiday, meaning one must work and take a vacation simultaneously. According to Bassyiouny and Wilkesmann (2023), it is a new form of tourism that involves a combination of business and pleasure through sophisticated technology. This concept, designed to serve two purposes, has greatly changed, especially after the

CHAPTER 6

Marketing of Staycations**Pratim Narayan Moitra^{1,*}**¹ *Amity Institute of Travel & Tourism, Amity University, Noida, Uttar Pradesh, India*

Abstract: Staycations have become more popular as an alternative to traditional vacations as people look for more eco-friendly ways to travel. Staycations encourage people to visit places close to home, which is good for the environment because they cut down on pollution. This chapter specifically examines how effectively short-form content, such as blogs, movies, and social media posts, serves as a marketing tactic to encourage people to staycation. This chapter will discuss how digital marketing may help individuals learn more, become involved, and make informed decisions regarding sustainable, local travel experiences. Researchers will analyze how short-form statistics impacts people's behaviour, how staycations boost local economies, and how communities can achieve their sustainability goals.

Keywords: Digital marketing, Local tourism, Marketing strategies, Short-form content, Staycations, Sustainability.

INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents the rise of staycations and how digital marketing has shifted to support this trend in eco-friendly travel. Recently, people have been travelling more in their own country. This is owing to the rising costs of foreign travel, greater concern for the environment, and a desire for easier, shorter vacations. Staycations fit into the larger social trends towards sustainable living, in which people try to lower their carbon impacts by going less, which uses a lot of resources. Staycations are a big part of the global shift towards responsible travel because they encourage people to buy things locally and live in ways that do not harm the environment.

DEFINITION AND CONCEPT OF STAYCATIONS

Staycations are local leisure experiences that have become popular due to travel restrictions (Germann Molz, J., 2009). They have unclear definitions, types, and

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benefits, which require more research for better understanding and development. Staycations are becoming more popular for a few reasons. Rising international travel costs make local options more attractive. As sustainable tourism increases, travelers are becoming more mindful of their carbon footprint and are choosing nearby options. Staycations are convenient and offer flexible, shorter getaways, making them a popular choice for many.

ECO-FRIENDLY NATURE OF STAYCATIONS

Staycations help the environment by reducing carbon emissions from air travel and long-distance travel. When travelers choose local trips over international ones, they use less fuel-intensive modes of transportation, such as flights, long train rides, or fuel-heavy road trips. This option reduces air pollution and lowers carbon footprints, making staycations a responsible choice for the environment. Staycations help the environment and support local tourism by promoting eco-friendly travel. People can enjoy leisure activities that are eco-friendly and support local economic growth. Staycations offer a sustainable vacation option, supporting the environment and local economies (Fig. 1).

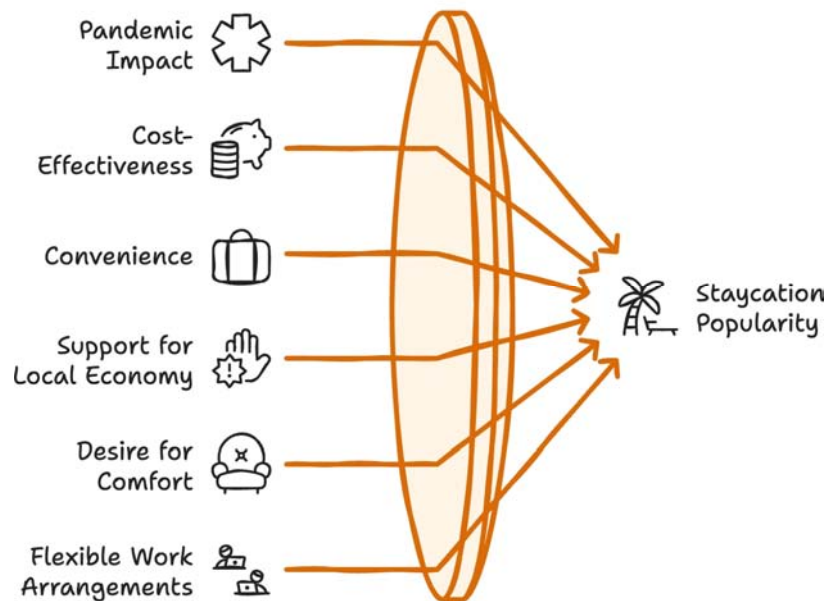


Fig. (1). Factors in driving staycation popularity.

PURPOSE OF THE CHAPTER

This chapter examines how short digital content—like blogs, social media posts, and videos—affects the marketing of staycations. Today, consumers prefer quick

and engaging content, making these platforms essential for attracting attention and promoting local travel options. Online content moves quickly, helping businesses reach many people and highlight the advantages of staycations compared to traditional vacations. This chapter aims to show how digital marketing can promote sustainable local travel by highlighting the benefits of staycations. Businesses can use creative campaigns to showcase the eco-friendly benefits of staycations, attracting travelers who want responsible travel options. Marketers can use digital platforms to promote staycations as a convenient and sustainable option for travelers. This chapter looks at sustainability and digital marketing, providing insights into tourism marketing on how businesses can align their strategies with consumer trends. This method helps eco-friendly tourism and gives marketers clear advice on promoting staycations to today's audience.

THE RISE OF STAYCATIONS

Staycations are becoming more popular, especially after the pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic led many to rethink long-distance travel, making staycations a safer and more practical choice. Travellers started looking for eco-friendly options due to a greater focus on sustainability. Local trips are easy and quick, making staycations a popular option for those seeking fast getaways. Staycations have changed from a temporary option during the pandemic to a lasting trend in travel preferences in many countries. This trend shows changing consumer values, with a focus on sustainable, affordable, and easy travel experiences. As staycations continue to gain popularity, they provide an ideal balance between leisure and environmental responsibility, appealing to travelers who prioritize both relaxation and eco-conscious choices. Staycations are eco-friendly because they reduce the need for high-emission travel like flights or long drives. Choosing local travel options helps reduce carbon footprints and supports sustainable tourism. A 2021 study by the Global Sustainable Tourism Council (GSTC) found that local trips can cut travel-related carbon emissions by up to 55%. Staycations have a positive environmental impact and are important for greener travel practices. Staycations help local economies and have environmental benefits. Travellers visiting nearby places spend time on places to stay, food, and local activities, helping small businesses grow. This support boosts local pride, promotes investment in culture, and enhances the link between tourism and community health. Staycations support sustainable travel and benefit local communities, promoting responsible tourism (Fig. 2).

Marketing a Staycation: Strategies and Insights

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Abstract: This chapter examines the growing popularity of staycations and the marketing strategies that have contributed to their rise in the hospitality and tourism industries. As a convenient and cost-effective alternative to traditional travel, staycations have emerged as a significant market segment, appealing to a diverse range of travelers seeking local, affordable, and sustainable options. The chapter explores the key drivers of this trend, including financial savings, convenience, and the desire for eco-friendly travel experiences. The review analyzes various marketing strategies that have proven effective in promoting staycations, such as highlighting local experiences, leveraging digital marketing and social media, creating themed packages, and emphasizing safety and convenience—factors that have become increasingly important in the post-pandemic landscape. Additionally, the chapter presents case studies, including Baguio City’s staycation boom and the rise of urban retreats in Manila, which illustrate successful marketing practices tailored to local markets. The chapter also addresses challenges faced by businesses in marketing staycations, such as shifting consumer perceptions and maintaining competitive pricing. Looking to the future, it suggests that integrating personalization, embracing new technologies, and maintaining a strong focus on sustainability will be key to shaping the evolution of staycation marketing. This comprehensive review provides valuable insights for hospitality businesses and marketers looking to capture and expand their share in the growing staycation market, offering practical strategies and examples that bridge the gap between theoretical knowledge and real-world application.

Keywords: Marketing strategies, Staycation marketing, Staycation trends.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the global tourism industry has undergone a noticeable transformation, with domestic tourism—particularly staycations—taking center stage as a major trend. Staycations, where people choose to spend their vacations close to home instead of traveling abroad, have surged in popularity for a variety of reasons. Rising travel costs, heightened health concerns, increased environmental awareness, and the overall convenience of staying local have all

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played a role in this shift (Heo & Lee, 2018). In response, the hospitality industry has embraced this trend, developing innovative marketing strategies to cater to this new type of traveler.

This chapter delves into how businesses in the hospitality and tourism sectors have adapted to the growing demand for staycations, using creative approaches to attract a diverse range of customers. Staycations, which offer a more affordable and convenient alternative to traditional vacations, have become a crucial market segment. They allow businesses to appeal to local travelers who are eager for meaningful and memorable experiences without the complexities of international travel (Chen & Peng, 2020). The discussion focuses on the main drivers behind the staycation trend, such as affordability, convenience, and sustainability, and how businesses can capitalize on these factors through effective marketing (McKinsey & Company, 2021). Strategies like promoting local attractions, collaborating with neighboring businesses, and utilizing digital marketing platforms have enabled hotels, resorts, and other establishments to transform staycations into a desirable and even luxurious alternative to faraway vacations (Tourism Promotions Board Philippines, 2022).

This chapter also takes a closer look at how safety and convenience have become top priorities for travelers in the post-pandemic era. As health and hygiene concerns have grown, the hospitality industry has been forced to rethink its offerings to align with these evolving expectations (Philippine Hotel Owners Association, 2022). The chapter explores the impact of technology and personalization in staycation marketing, providing examples of how businesses have used digital tools to connect with local audiences and enhance the customer experience (Statista, 2023). To bring these concepts to life, the chapter features case studies highlighting successful staycation campaigns in the Philippines. These include Baguio City's thriving staycation market and the reimagining of luxury urban retreats in Manila. By examining these examples, readers can gain a deeper understanding of how targeted marketing strategies have revitalized local tourism, creating opportunities for collaboration between local businesses, tourism boards, and hotels to craft staycation packages that appeal to various customer groups (Dizon, 2021). Finally, the chapter not only reviews the current state of staycation marketing but also looks ahead to its potential future. Personalized experiences, the integration of new technologies, and a stronger emphasis on eco-friendly practices are poised to shape the next wave of staycation marketing (Gössling & Hall, 2021). For hospitality businesses looking to remain competitive in this expanding market, the strategies and insights shared in this chapter offer a practical roadmap for success. By combining theoretical knowledge with real-world examples, this chapter equips businesses with the tools they need to thrive in the ever-evolving landscape of staycation tourism.

KEY AREAS OF FOCUS

Understanding the Staycation Market

Staycations have broad appeal, attracting a diverse range of travelers. Families often see them as a cost-effective way to enjoy a vacation without the logistical hurdles of long-distance travel. Couples value staycations for offering intimate, hassle-free getaways that require little planning, while solo travelers appreciate the opportunity to relax and explore their surroundings at their own pace. These preferences are rooted in key motivators: affordability, convenience, and the chance to enjoy a change of scenery without leaving the comforts of home. For marketers, understanding these motivations is essential to tapping into the staycation market effectively.

Key Segments in the Staycation Market

- **Families:** Families prioritize accessibility and affordability, seeking vacations that minimize the challenges of traveling with children while maximizing quality time.
- **Couples:** Couples look for romantic escapes that are short, convenient, and stress-free, focusing on relaxation or shared experiences.
- **Solo Travelers:** Solo travelers enjoy staycations as an opportunity for self-care, personal discovery, or simply unwinding without the complexities of traditional travel.

Marketing Strategies for Staycations

Successful staycation marketing relies on showcasing the unique features, attractions, and cultural richness of local destinations, emphasizing experiences that resonate deeply with travelers seeking meaningful and accessible getaways. Highlighting hidden city gems, vibrant local cuisine, historical sites, and authentic cultural activities allows marketers to portray staycations as enriching alternatives to long-distance travel. Hotels and resorts often collaborate with local tourism boards to create value-added packages that include guided city tours, museum passes, dining discounts, or special access to events, making the staycation experience more appealing and immersive. Digital marketing and social media play a central role in this process, as platforms like Instagram, Facebook, and TikTok enable destinations to reach wide audiences quickly through visually engaging content. Influencers who share authentic narratives about their staycation experiences can inspire potential travelers, while user-generated content—photos, videos, and reviews from previous guests—fosters a sense of community, trust, and credibility that motivates others to consider local travel. Themed packages further enhance marketing effectiveness by catering to niche

CHAPTER 8

Marketing Local Escapes: Curating Sustainable Staycation Experiences

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Abstract: The chapter focuses on the marketing prospects for staycation experiences. The chapter begins with an explanation of the growing need for staycations. The chapter looks towards exploring the marketing of staycations in ways that their convenience, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability can be highlighted. It looks at the growing demand for post-pandemic local tourism, a demand driven by increasingly high levels of eco-consciousness, budget constraints, and a heightened desire for wellness and relaxation. This research focuses on which types of urban professionals, wellness seekers, and eco-friendly travelers can be targeted for staycations and sheds light on which businesses will use which strategy in their marketing. The chapter further holds discussions on the application of the 7 P's of destination marketing in terms of product, price, place, promotion, people, processes, and physical evidence as a strategic approach to enhancing the appeal of staycations. Examples of successful sustainable staycation marketing can be seen in case studies such as CGH Earth and The Roseate Hotels & Resorts. The challenges of these staycations include international travel, limited adventure, and seasonality, which must be targeted by the right blend of marketing to attract the local values, sustainability, and novel experiences that result in memorable stays. At the end, a conclusion is drawn for the chapter.

Keywords: Destination marketing, Local, Staycation, Staycation marketing, Sustainability.

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INTRODUCTION

The Rise of Staycations and Marketing Opportunities

Staycations are an alternative form of tourism that corresponds with the slow tourism trend, encouraging people to take their time, explore neighbouring landscapes, and reconnect with nature. Staycations originally began in the United States after the 2008 financial crisis, and are holidays taken in or near one's home rather than traveling to another location. This environmentally responsible vacation cuts pollution, saves money, and avoids the havoc that affects some of the world's most visited tourist destinations. The word “staycation” is an amalgamation of two words: stay and vacation (Goncalves, 2020). It provides a form of relaxation and escape from daily routines, allowing people to explore new or undiscovered places. It can involve sightseeing one's city or neighbourhood, making new or renewing connections with family, friends, and neighbours. Staycation can be connected with various types of environmental, cultural, and special tourism (Pawłowska & Matoga, 2016).

Global Context

The travel and hospitality industry has seen a significant shift towards local tourism, particularly post-pandemic, driven by the need for safe, short-distance travel, eco-conscious travelers, and economic factors. Staycations have gained global traction, particularly after the COVID-19 pandemic, as people explore local attractions and accommodations instead of long-distance travel. Economic factors like rising inflation and increased travel costs have prompted many to opt for staycations, with 20% of British residents planning staycations in 2022. Staycations are budget-friendly and environmentally sustainable, contributing to a reduced carbon footprint by minimizing travel distances. They support local economies by increasing spending on nearby hotels and restaurants and allow for greater flexibility in planning.

Marketing Perspective

The marketing perspective of staycations focuses on promoting local tourism as an appealing alternative to traditional vacations, particularly in the post-pandemic landscape. Staycations are preferred due to their convenience, allowing travelers to enjoy a change of scenery without extensive travel time or costs. They cater to a desire for relaxation and safety, as many people seek to avoid crowded tourist spots while still enjoying leisure activities. Effective marketing strategies for staycations include highlighting unique local attractions, offering special resident rates, creating tailored packages, and leveraging digital platforms for promotion. By emphasizing community engagement and personalized experiences,

businesses can attract locals looking to rediscover their surroundings and enjoy a vacation close to home.

Why Staycations are Important for Urban Areas?

Cities attract the most tourists, reflecting the expansion of tourism offerings. The global financial crisis influenced tourism, causing people to cut down on spending and postpone their trips, resulting in staycations. Changes in lives and working ways also contribute to this trend, as individuals swap longer vacations for shorter ones and choose closer destinations. As a result, single vacations are becoming less common, and individuals in urban cities are looking for places to escape stress and their daily lives. City breaks, as well as spa and health packages, are becoming increasingly popular (Pawłowska & Matoga, 2016). According to previous studies (Pawłowska & Matoga, 2016) (Chan & Tung, 2023) (Rosu, 2020) (Do, 2024) , the reasons for the Urban population opting for staycations are as follows:

- **Urban Lifestyle and Stress:** For people living in densely populated urban areas, staycations offer a much-needed respite from the stresses of city life. The fast pace, long working hours, and frequent traffic congestion create a demand for easily accessible, short-term getaways.
- **Limited Time and Flexibility:** Urban professionals, especially those balancing demanding jobs and family life, often do not have the luxury of planning long vacations. Staycations provide flexibility with weekend trips or spontaneous escapes, reducing the hassle of extensive travel planning. A lot of people who are into corporate jobs, business, *etc.*, find it difficult to take out time for long vacations. Due to the limited availability of time and flexibility of nearby destinations, people choose staycations.
- **Cost-Effective Travel:** The idea of staycation started in the US during the economic crisis. Saving money on transportation and short duration were key points of a staycation. With rising costs of international travel, urban dwellers are increasingly seeking affordable alternatives. Staycations allow them to save on flight expenses and other logistical costs while enjoying luxurious and meaningful experiences close to home.
- **Traveling with pets:** It is very difficult to travel with pets to faraway destinations, and it is even more difficult to find pet-friendly properties. Thus, staycations are important for pet parents, and they do not have to leave their fur babies behind for a vacation.
- **Mental Health and Wellness:** The rising awareness of mental health and wellness has also contributed to the popularity of staycations. Many urban residents seek quick, relaxing retreats to recharge without the stress of long journeys, fitting within their limited schedules.

CHAPTER 9

Do We Choose to Travel Because of Social Media Messages? Exploring the Impact of Social Media Information on Potential Tourists' Travel Intentions for Staycations

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Abstract: To this end, there is still little research on the staycation travel intentions of potential tourists in the context of social media. For this study, a quantitative study design is utilized to better understand how social media information influences potential tourists' staycation travel intentions in terms of desire, trends/fads, and experience. Using the S-O-R theory, this study generates a novel framework that provides a more in-depth view of the dynamic interactions between social media information and staycation destination choices. The study empirically validates, based on 1250 potential tourists, that the influence of social media information (e.g., value, self-congruence, preference), particularly its reliability, on travel intention is established by mediating the effects *via* cognitive image.

The findings are useful to fill gaps in theory underlining staycation tourists' behavior and provide actionable recommendations to industry stakeholders. In addition, this study offers practical insights for both tourism practitioners and policymakers on harnessing social media as a strategic tool for staycation destination marketing and management. By exploring these complex dynamics through an interdisciplinary approach, this study makes a significant contribution to the academic discourse on staycation tourism marketing and consumer behavior in the digital age.

Keywords: Cognitive image, Information value, S-O-R theory, Social media information, Staycation travel intentions.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, cultural and tourism departments across China have been showcasing their unique features on social media to increase tourist popularity and interaction data and enhance the visibility of tourist destinations. This practice is referred to as 'checking in.' Many official tourism influencers use social media to highlight the unique landscapes and cultures around the world, shaping the travel decisions of many travelers. For example, in 2022, Xie Wei, the Director of the Tourism and Culture Bureau of Suizhou, went viral on Douyin with a short video of himself dressed in traditional Chinese attire. More and more official media outlets began using social media to promote tourism, leading to a surge in the popularity of local tourism influencers and local specialties like 'Zibo barbecue,' 'Tianshui spicy noodles,' and 'Liuzhou snail noodles,' which became trending topics, attracting tourists from all over the country to 'check in' and creating a nationwide frenzy. Tourism departments across the country have also collaborated with top influencers to launch a series of events, such as 'The Zibo Tour,' 'The Hangzhou Tour,' and 'The Hong Kong Tour' through the Douyin platform, showcasing a new model of staycation and tourism integration. Thus, the integration of social media and the staycation tourism industry continues to break boundaries, creating new opportunities for tourism development.

The rapid expansion of the internet, digital platforms, and social media has prompted individuals to abandon traditional communication methods and adopt more effective online communication methods (Viñán-Ludeña & de Campos, 2022). By December 2023, China is estimated to have 1.09 billion internet users (Xinhua, 2024). With the emergence of social media in the digital age, travel opinion leaders have taken on the responsibility of creating electronic word-of-mouth (eWOM) for travel enthusiasts.

For destination marketers, understanding this phenomenon and integrating it into their promotional strategies is imperative (Chen, 2024; Abbasi *et al.*, 2023; Saini *et al.*, 2023). The surge in the use of TikTok has boosted tourism growth, as many influencers and bloggers leverage their influence to promote local tourism (Zhou *et al.*, 2023); at the same time, Xiaohongshu (Little Red Book)'s popularity among young people stems from its functionalities, visual appeal, and minimal advertising content. Before embarking on a trip, people often seek travel advice on Xiaohongshu regarding delicacies, natural landscapes, and attractions to enhance their travel experience (Su *et al.*, 2023). Despite the significant progress of social media in China, research on its impact on the tourism industry remains relatively scarce (Zhai & Luo, 2023), especially regarding its influence on potential travelers' tendency to staycation.

However, tourists' search and processing of information are diverse, and different tourists have different cognitions of the same social media information, which in turn affects their tourism behavior. There has been little research that delves deeply into how tourists form staycation intentions based on social media information and clarifies the mechanisms underlying this process. To address the aforementioned knowledge gap, the current study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the interaction between social media information and potential tourists' staycation travel intentions through perceptions of destination image. This study develops a novel framework based on the S-O-R theory to capture the dynamic interactions among stimuli, personal perceptions, and behavioral responses in the context of social media in the selection of staycation tourism destinations.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In the age of rapid social media advancement, individuals use online platforms to acquire knowledge and share their life narratives, embodying a crucial aspect of their digital presence (J. Han & Balabanis, 2024). Tourism, as a form of conspicuous consumption, plays an important role in social media content (Lin & Rasoolimanesh, 2024). Professionals in the tourism industry disseminate travel-related information on these platforms, while tourists share their experiences through textual narratives, images, or videos during or after their journeys. Advancements in communication technology have transformed the presentation of information on social media from static text and imagery to live broadcasts (Zheng *et al.*, 2023).

Consequently, tourism sharing has evolved into a more immersive and vivid experience, continuously enhancing potential travelers' perceptions of staycation travel destination imagery and exerting new influences on their decision-making processes. Therefore, the impact of social media on tourist behavior remains a focal point of attention for government agencies, professionals in the tourism industry, and academia.

Staycation Travel Intention

In recent years, the global economic downturn and the pandemic have prompted more people to embrace staycation travel—a term introduced by Massey (2003) in the context of economic crises, highlighting the shift toward more affordable and local vacation options. This trend encourages individuals and families to spend their vacations at home or within their local area, instead of traveling to distant, expensive destinations, with staycations becoming increasingly popular due to cost savings, convenience, and a growing interest in exploring the local environment.

CHAPTER 10

The Impact of Paralympic and Olympic Broadcasts on Viewer Engagement: The Role of Television in Shaping Staycation Trends in India

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Abstract: Sports broadcasting's impact on viewer engagement is a multifaceted topic that encompasses factors such as viewer preferences, audience carryover, social media participation, and the effects of in-the-moment events and nation-related values on viewer attention. The way the Olympic and Paralympic Games are televised shapes attitudes and perceptions of athletes and people with disabilities, with substantial effects on spectator engagement. The 2020 Tokyo Games, as well as the 2024 Paris Games, broke all broadcast viewership records for the number of broadcasters, viewers, and live events. It was hailed as noteworthy for its massive media coverage, which helped promote the disability athletic movement. Through passionate narrative, Paralympic broadcasts run the risk of perpetuating stereotypes, even though they can also encourage empathy and social transformation. Viewers' perceptions of the credibility and athleticism of Paralympic sports compared to Olympic sports are influenced by how these events are portrayed. Distinct categories of sports enthusiasts include information searchers, entertainment seekers, common spectators, and ardent supporters. In contrast to comedies or dramas, sports programs are mostly chosen by ardent fans and have less of an impact on broader audiences. All things considered, the media is extremely important in either supporting or contradicting society norms and prejudices towards disability and sports.

Keywords: Olympic broadcast, Paralympics, Sports tourism, Viewer engagement.

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INTRODUCTION

Sports development in India is expected to propel the country to the forefront of the sporting globe, boosting all parts of the industry and preserving the popularity of sports viewing on television. The live coverage of sporting events on television, radio, and other broadcast media is referred to as broadcasting (or sportscasting). Sports tourism is a new and emerging concept in India, which may be introduced properly. It may also act as a catalyst for promoting and channelling the Olympic and Paralympic Movement (R Gupta, 2017). Since India has performed well in international competitions, there has been a general increase in interest in sports, which has resulted in a rise in viewership and the trend of staycations in the country. In the last few years, there has been a dramatic shift in media consumption in India, and sport is not immune to these changes. The broadcasting of Olympic and Paralympic spectacles on television for Indians has had implications for national well-being, lifestyle, and health (Ghosh & Chatterjee, 2023). An intriguing dimension of this shift in viewing practices relates to how these broadcasts have also affected staycation practices in India. The increased visibility of global sporting mega-events on television invites armchair audiences to engage in immersive vicarious participation without the need to travel; it also brings to the fore some otherwise invisible entities linked to them.

This chapter investigates the intersection of Paralympic and Olympic television broadcasts with Indian viewer interaction, and how this interaction feeds into an increasingly prevalent pattern of staycation. Through an analysis of the central importance of television in contemporary global sport, this chapter aims to illuminate how televised sport as leisure not only acts as a catalyst for participation in sport and physical recreation but also helps stimulate a way of life based on leisure and non-or slow-speed movement from place to place.

EVOLUTION OF SPORTS BROADCASTING IN INDIA

India's tryst with televised sports began in the 1980s, when cricket broadcasts began, but it has come a long way since then. With global sporting events like the Olympics and Paralympics beamed on Indian television, we now have democratic access to a wide range of sports and athletes from across the world. It is not just sport; these are cultural events that people come together to watch in every corner of this nation.

Olympic Broadcast and Its Reach

The Olympic Games, with their innumerable sports, constitute a major public event with mass appeal. The television-mediated coverage of the games, however,

has not only made a number of minority sports better known but also increased the salience of the games as a cultural event. In India, where sport is doggedly parochial and regional loyalties run deep, the Olympics telecasts in multiple languages so fans across geographies can cheer for favored athletes and teams.

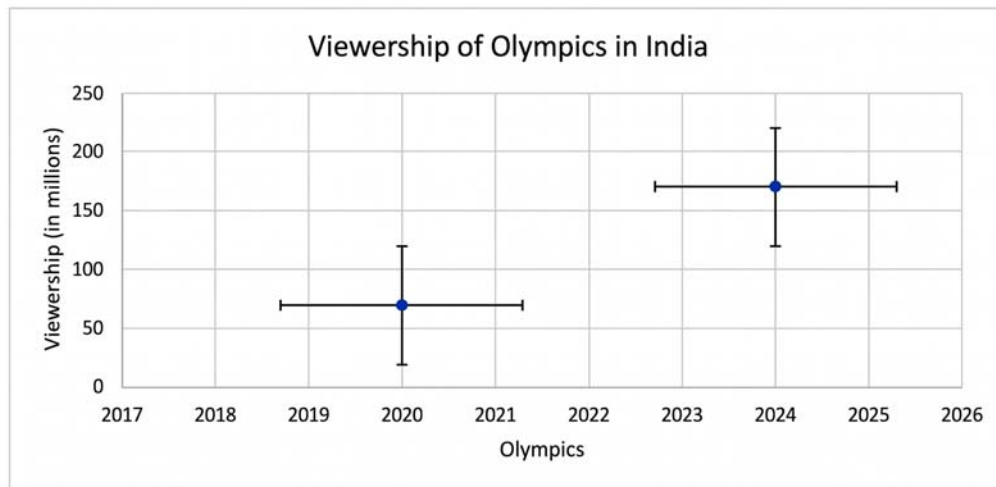


Fig. (1). The raised viewership of the Olympics from Tokyo, 2020 to Paris, 2024 in India.

Athens' viewership statistics are not as well known, although India's interest in the Olympics remained somewhat specialized, fuelled primarily by hockey and shooting competitions involving Indian competitors (Fig. 1). At this point, digital platforms played a limited role. In Beijing, viewership rose in 2008 owing to Abhinav Bindra's gold in shooting, India's first-ever individual Olympic gold medal. This prompted increasing attention toward the Games, while internet interaction remained minimal.

2012 Olympics in London: TV viewership of the Games increased after India won six medals, including the bronze in boxing by Mary Kom and the silver in wrestling by Sushil Kumar. The event also saw early phases of digital involvement with streaming services gaining momentum in India.

Rio Olympics 2016: The country's two major medals—P.V. Sindhu's silver in badminton and Sakshi Malik's bronze in wrestling—led to a notable boost in Indian viewership. Comparing this to the following Olympics, the total viewership was still very small. Remarkably, Rio's viewership was lower than that of Tokyo 2020 (Nair, 2024).

2020 Tokyo Olympics: Tokyo signalled a significant increase in Indian TV and digital viewing. In just the first week of the competition, 69 million people

CHAPTER 11

Adventure Sports: A New Way to Staycation

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Abstract: Adventure sports staycations are transforming the way people experience recreation by combining adventure, natural beauty, and the convenience of local travel. This chapter explores the growing trend of adventure-oriented staycations and highlights how locally based adventure activities offer not only thrilling escapes but also meaningful personal and environmental benefits. At their core, staycations are inherently sustainable, reducing the need for long-distance travel and significantly lowering carbon emissions. By choosing local destinations over air travel or long road trips, travelers contribute to environmental conservation while supporting responsible tourism. These choices also strengthen local economies, as small businesses—from gear shops to homestays and cafés—benefit directly from increased regional visitors. Beyond sustainability and economic impact, adventure sports staycations create profound human connections and enriching experiences. Activities such as rock climbing, kayaking, and hiking test physical endurance, improve mental focus, and deepen one's understanding of nature. They foster personal growth by transforming ordinary surroundings into spaces of challenge, discovery, and resilience. Moreover, the success of such staycations depends on thoughtful planning, including selecting environmentally responsible operators, ensuring safety, using proper equipment, and informing others about travel plans. These practices enhance both the safety and sustainability of local adventures.

Ultimately, this chapter encourages readers to rediscover their immediate environment as a landscape filled with possibilities. Through adventure sports staycations, individuals can achieve excitement, reflection, and meaningful engagement with their communities while embracing a more balanced, authentic, and connected approach to leisure. Adventure, as this chapter shows, is not distant—it begins right at home.

Keywords: Adventure tourism, Adventure sports, Staycation.

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INTRODUCTION

Staycations—combining the ideas of “stay” and “vacation”—have emerged as a contemporary way of exploring familiar surroundings. Instead of travelling to distant destinations, individuals now rediscover the beauty of their own locality or region through nearby leisure and recreational activities (James *et al.*, 2016). Their rise did not happen overnight; the COVID-19 pandemic prompted a shift in mindset, encouraging people to embrace local tourism and uncover hidden gems within their immediate environment (Lin *et al.*, 2021). Additionally, rising travel costs have made staycations an appealing option for budget-conscious travelers, transforming once ordinary places into exciting opportunities for exploration and enjoyment. Within this trend, adventure sports have begun reshaping the staycation experience by offering thrilling activities without requiring long-distance travel (Mackenzie & Brymer, 2018). The stereotype that adventure is found only in remote, exotic destinations is fading as communities recognize their own potential for adrenaline-filled recreation. Urban climbing walls, nearby hiking trails, and calm waterways ideal for kayaking are just a few examples of accessible adventure opportunities (Lynch *et al.*, 2012). This growing trend challenges traditional notions of adventure and demonstrates that local exploration can be equally, if not more, rewarding than faraway escapades (Chi, 2020).

THE APPEAL OF ADVENTURE SPORTS IN STAYCATIONS

Adventure sports bring an electrifying dimension to staycations, offering a surge of endorphins and a strong sense of accomplishment as individuals navigate physical and mental challenges (Carnicelli *et al.*, 2009). Activities such as scaling rock faces, trekking through rugged landscapes, or kayaking across serene lakes transform familiar surroundings into extraordinary adventure spaces. Their accessibility further enhances their appeal, with nearby hiking trails, climbing gyms, and local waterways providing opportunities suitable for both beginners and seasoned thrill-seekers (Slentz & Chase, 2003). Beyond the excitement, adventure sports offer substantial physical and mental benefits. Engaging in demanding pursuits improves cardiovascular health, muscular strength, and overall endurance (Teodorescu & Șerbănoiu, 2013). The natural settings in which these activities occur also promote serenity and stress relief, allowing participants to experience mindfulness and temporary escape from daily pressures (Wolsko *et al.*, 2019). By challenging individuals to stay focused and present—whether while climbing, paddling, or hiking—adventure sports cultivate mental clarity and resilience. As a staycation experience, they uniquely combine thrill, wellness, and local exploration. Incorporating adventure sports into staycations enables people to reconnect with nature, challenge themselves, and enjoy meaningful, memorable experiences without travelling long distances (Slentz & Chase, 2003). These

pursuits foster personal growth and a deeper connection with the environment, allowing individuals to return feeling refreshed, accomplished, and more attuned to their surroundings (She *et al.*, 2019; Carnicelli *et al.*, 2009).

HEALTH AND WELLNESS: ADVENTURE SPORTS AS A WELLNESS ACTIVITY

Adventure sports contribute significantly to overall wellness by enhancing both physical fitness and mental well-being. Physically, activities such as hiking and cycling offer dynamic and engaging ways to strengthen the body. Hiking improves cardiovascular health by requiring the body to navigate uneven terrain, climb slopes, and sustain movement over long distances, all of which elevate heart rate and strengthen the heart and lungs (Eigenschenk *et al.*, 2019; Mitten *et al.*, 2016). Cycling, whether on trails or roads, similarly boosts endurance and lung capacity while engaging leg muscles and improving overall strength through its rhythmic, sustained motion. Beyond physical benefits, outdoor adventure sports also promote mental health and stress relief. Activities like kayaking and climbing in natural environments have been shown to reduce anxiety, elevate mood, and create a sense of tranquility (Buckley *et al.*, 2018). Exposure to sunlight, fresh air, and physical activity further alleviates stress and enhances relaxation (Weng & Chiang, 2014). Mastering difficult tasks builds confidence, resilience, and mental clarity, adding to the psychological benefits of adventure participation (Mackenzie & Brymer, 2018). As wellness tourism continues to grow, adventure sports are becoming central to the experience. Unlike traditional wellness practices such as spa treatments, adventure activities blend physical exertion with mental rejuvenation, offering a holistic approach to well-being (Kelly, 2012). Integrating adventure sports into staycations enables individuals to feel refreshed, empowered, and more connected to themselves and their surroundings, positioning staycations as a uniquely accessible and enriched form of leisure that bridges excitement with self-care (Lin *et al.*, 2021).

SUSTAINABILITY AND ADVENTURE SPORTS STAYCATIONS

Environmental Benefits of Local Adventure Sports

Opting for local adventure sports during staycations satisfies the thrill-seeker's desire for excitement while aligning closely with sustainable tourism ideals. Long-distance travel, especially air travel and extended road trips, contributes substantially to carbon emissions and increases the ecological burden of conventional vacations (Filimonau *et al.*, 2013). By choosing to explore nearby landscapes, individuals consciously reduce their carbon footprint and support environmentally responsible travel. The localized nature of such adventures relies on existing infrastructure, reducing the need for new developments that could

CHAPTER 12

Navigating Experiences and Challenges in the Rise of Staycations in the Philippines

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Abstract: Redefining the concept of a ‘staycation’ to suit modern millennials, staycations in the Philippines have emerged as a popular trend among local tourists and travelers. Staycation culture booms as life resumes. This article talks about the struggles of tourists and hospitality providers amid the growing staycation trend in the country. It discusses the key factors behind the staycation spike, including convenience, affordability, and health concerns, and looks at changing preferences among local travelers. This study investigates the unique challenges the hospitality industry faces in adapting to the rapid emergence of staycations using qualitative (interviews) and quantitative (surveys of hotel operators and staycationers) approaches. The study notes that staycations are the salvation for domestic tourism, but there are also obstacles to surmount, including limited amenities, mustering guest demand, rebuilding post-COVID, *etc.* Maximizing the long-term staycation experience and the best guest experience through these tips will help make staycationing in the Philippines the most memorable experience.

Keywords: Domestic travel, Hospitality industry, Philippine tourism, Post-pandemic tourism, Staycation, Travel trends.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism in every country has been heavily affected by the pandemic, and the Philippines is no exception, experiencing negative implications due to limited local and international travel (Lasarte, 2020; Reyes, 2022). Hence, the staycation concept began to develop as an alternative form of tourism, creating opportunities and challenges for the sector (Jesus *et al.*, 2021; Gutierrez *et al.*, 2021). To harness the best of staycation as a travel opportunity, policymakers and industry stakeholders must deliberate on the features and intricacies underpinning this transformed tourism landscape.

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The concept of staycations has also become a hit in the Philippine travel scene, especially among many Filipinos who prefer short trips to long-distance ones. This surge aligns with global travel trends and is propelled by economic drivers, safety concerns, and heightened demand for domestic destinations (Muritala *et al.*, 2022). Staycations have gained tremendous global popularity as a safe, convenient, and affordable travel option among people during the COVID-19 crisis (Karim *et al.*, 2022; James *et al.*, 2017; Khatiwada, 2022). This automotive dependence, however, has its perils, such as balancing preparedness of the built environment, environmental conditions, and the profitability of regional tourism sites. (Štreimikienė *et al.*, 2020). Topics such as overcrowding, keeping the numbers and claims to local resources in check, and the need for better accommodation for various tourists all loom large. However, they also highlight the potential for developing countryside tourism.

It may just be the staycation boom in the Philippines. However, it shows a need for a better understanding of the specific and desired travel preferences of local travelers, and the ways they can guide travel and tour business owners to uphold them in the long run. While staycations have uplifted local economies, only some studies on effective destination management exist, which are crucial for these businesses' long-term success. This gap needs to be bridged to ensure that the tourism industry and the livelihood of the local people can be sustained with better experiences for both locals and visitors.

This paper aims to explore the rise of staycations in the Philippines and identify the opportunities and challenges that consumers and accommodation owners experience in active engagement with this evolving travel market. When rating these sustainable tourism practices, you must also be familiar with the nuances of staycationing — another way to generate revenue from lodging that is an increasing trend among Filipinos. It begins by looking at what local travelers experience, what they look for when traveling for leisure, and what hospitality providers are doing to meet these needs. This includes implementing cost-saving measures but still delivering customer satisfaction, reallocating resources, and making other changes to provide value for money for staycations (Saidin *et al.*, 2024).

Second, this research investigates what drives the growing popularity of staycations. These include a desire for authentic local experiences, accessibility, and economic factors. This is why it is so easy to understand why many Filipinos prefer domestic over international travel nowadays. The study also examines local travelers' staycation preferences based on desired amenities, destination type, and service expectations. This study enhances service practices for hospitality firms

by highlighting the components that contribute to and detract from the staycation experience when considering these preferences.

In addition, this study seeks to shed light on the pros and cons of the staycation trend (Moon & Chan, 2022) as it responds to the existing service and infrastructure gaps and analyzes potential areas for growth. We want to assist them with practical guidance that will help them further develop their staycation propositions and ensure that they align with visitors' preferences. Not only is this a smart way to lay the groundwork for sustainable domestic tourism, but it could also serve as a measure to boost the local economy and offer memorable experiences for local travelers eager to explore.

The rise of staycations in the Philippines indicates the need for more knowledge regarding the interests and expectations of domestic travelers and the obstacles experienced by local travel agencies to sustain the domestic tourism boom (Andulana *et al.*, 2021). As staycationing is a more regional activity, this gives insight into how to boost local economies. However, research is still underway to assess whether public sector initiatives in managing tourist destinations are effective, particularly in the long term. Addressing this gap is critical to promoting sustainable tourism behavior that benefits tourists and local communities. By recognizing the interrelation of these variables, the study intends to offer a relatable view of the staycation experience in the Philippines.

There are many reasons this research is needed. It gives stakeholders plenty of data for improving the staycation experience through valuable insights into internal tourism preferences and habits. Finally, the study adds to the emerging sustainable tourism literature, specifying how better-tended regional tourist enterprises might be achieved. Ultimately, the outcomes aim to assist travel agencies in facilitating an invaluable and sustainable staycation holiday in the Philippines that could help anticipate resilient tourism growth in the future.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The present study used a mixed-methods design integrating quantitative and qualitative methods to discuss local tourists' perceptions, experiences, challenges, motives, and preferences toward staycation in the Philippines. A descriptive correlational design was used for the quantitative part to determine the associations among the variables. Furthermore, qualitative data from semi-structured interviews further provided insights into the lived experiences and perspectives of tourists and hospitality providers. The combination of qualitative and quantitative methods allowed insight into the numerics and context.

CHAPTER 13

Problems and Prospects of Tourism in Kazakhstan: The Situation During and After the Pandemic

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Abstract: This book chapter examines the challenges and opportunities confronting the tourism industry in Kazakhstan in light of the pandemic and its aftermath. Through a detailed exploration of the evolving tourism landscape, the chapter reveals emerging trends and shifts in tourist behavior. Notably, it highlights a notable transition towards residential tourism and wellness-focused travel, indicating changing preferences in the post-pandemic era. The research's originality lies in its comprehensive analysis of statistical and literary sources, providing valuable insights into the scale of the crisis facing Kazakhstan's tourism industry. Furthermore, the chapter discusses new opportunities and challenges arising from this significant ordeal for the entire tourism market. It underscores the accelerated processes of digitalization in tourist services and the active integration of modern technologies as critical factors in adaptation. Kazakhstan's tourist industry has shown significant room for expansion in the globalized world, underscoring the need for creative solutions to counteract the COVID-19 pandemic's widespread disruption of the world travel and tourism industry. The chapter also looks at specific government assistance programs for the nation's tourism industry, emphasizing how successful these programs could be in helping the industry make a respectable transition out of its current condition.

Keywords: COVID-19, Domestic tourism, International tourism, Kazakhstan, Problems, Prospects, Tourism.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a thriving and successful economic sector in many nations, accounting for 10.4% of the global GDP and creating one of every four new jobs globally (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2021). Kazakhstan is home to three social legacy sites and two standard legacy sites inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List. In any case, the allure of the tourism industry is characterized not

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only by excellent natural scenery and historical sights but also by created frameworks and administrations, transportation availability, and security. The onset of the coronavirus pandemic in early 2020 catalyzed a seismic shift in the global economy, particularly within the tourism sector, comparable only to the disruptions witnessed during World War II. The repercussions of this crisis reverberated across all corners of the globe, including Kazakhstan, where the flow of tourists came to a halt as countries implemented stringent measures to curb the spread of the virus, including border closures and lockdowns. Individuals retreated to the safety of their homes, leading to a dramatic downturn in international travel.

However, amidst the adversity unleashed by the pandemic, a silver lining emerged—a catalyst for innovation and transformation within the travel industry. The crisis brought a new era of digitization in tourism services and hastened the adoption of digital technologies. Kazakhstan, in particular, witnessed a surge in domestic tourism, signaling an opportunity for the industry to pivot towards serving local travelers and exploring new avenues for growth. As a result of the pandemic's challenges, governments everywhere, including Kazakhstan, have taken various support measures to help the affected tourism sector. These interventions ranged from financial aid to tax relief for tourism operators, aiming to mitigate the economic fallout of the crisis and pave the way for a sustainable recovery. Economic downturns and job losses have occurred in many tourist-dependent locations. The severe travel and tourism industry crisis has not been seen since World War II. In that challenging year, the flow of tourists around the world literally stopped, and Kazakhstan was no exception. Although the industry had grown steadily over the preceding ten years, the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 presented severe difficulties for the travel and tourism industry. Understandably, in an effort to protect themselves from virus infection, people were forced to stay at home, and the authorities closed the borders between countries. Restrictions on the development of tourism due to COVID-19 have a negative impact on Kazakhstan's inbound traveler stream. Still, they also allow the redirection of the outbound traveler stream toward household tourism. This helped analyze the industry's activities, identify gaps in the adequacy of tourism activities, and coordinate the efforts of state administrative bodies and private speculators to solve the most severe problems and identify additional needs for the development of Kazakhstan's tourism industry (Yanshin, 2022). The purpose of this chapter is to analyze most of the issues in the tourism industry of Kazakhstan and to help master figures of the industry improve their performance. The confinements related to COVID-19 can be considered not only as a figure incidentally limiting the advancement of the sector but also as a constrained “break,” permitting the evaluation of the potential and selection of a technique for improving the industry.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The COVID-19 pandemic had a tremendous impact, and adjustments were made to the activities of the tourism sector of Kazakhstan. During the pandemic, tourism and many other activities suffered significant damage. Contributions from authors such as Yanshin (2023), Aktymbayeva (2023, 2020), Aimen and Atasheva (2021), and Kainazarova and Baimagambetova (2023) collectively illuminate the challenges and opportunities faced by the sector. Their research highlights economic effects, adaptation strategies, resilience of tourism markets, financial impact, historical context, and growth of domestic tourism. Uppink and Soshkin (2022) emphasized the resilience of tourism markets post-crisis, attributing this to the predominance of Small and Medium-Sized Enterprises (SMEs) in the industry. They discussed the ability of SMEs to adapt quickly to external changes, contributing to the recovery of the tourism sector, and analyzed the financial losses incurred by the tourism industry in Kazakhstan due to the pandemic, including decreased profitability for tour operators and travel agents. They also highlighted efforts by airlines and hotels to address refund policies and support recovery. Aimen and Atasheva (2021) provided a historical perspective on the resilience of the tourism industry to crises, noting previous downturns and the industry's ability to rebound given appropriate measures and adaptation. Kainazarova and Baimagambetova (2023) focused on the growth of domestic tourism in Kazakhstan, highlighting its potential for revenue generation and the need to address obstacles to further development. They emphasized the importance of adapting to new realities, including safety measures and online payment systems. Moreover, US News & World Report provided insights into the historical context of the crisis, noting that the tourism sector had not faced such a significant crisis since World War II. The report emphasized the unprecedented nature of the challenges due to the COVID-19 pandemic, with widespread travel restrictions, border closures, and lockdown measures disrupting international travel and tourism activities globally. Authors such as Issakov *et al.* (2023) discussed infrastructure improvements. The Government of Kazakhstan highlighted initiatives like EXPO-2017, and the National Bureau of Statistics outlined GDP targets and addressed the pandemic's potential impacts. This underscores the need for informed decision-making and collaboration in addressing tourism challenges and opportunities in Kazakhstan.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study utilizes a combination of both quantitative and qualitative approaches, such as chi-square tests, drawing insights from a diverse array of secondary sources, including statistical data, scholarly literature, and industry reports spanning the last five years. The research's significance lies in its contribution to

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