

## SURVIVING STRATEGY OF TOURISM SECTOR WORKERS IN BANDUNG DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

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**Abstract.** The Covid-19 pandemic has had an impact on social and economic life, especially in Indonesia. In the city of Bandung itself, this impact is felt for workers in the tourism sector such as travel business owners, tour leaders, tour guides and tourism bus drivers. The writing of this research was carried out with the aim of knowing the negative impacts felt by tourism sector workers in the city of Bandung during the Covid-19 pandemic. In this study, the authors used a direct interview method using a semi-structured interview guide instrument, with the direction of the interview aimed at: 1) Knowing the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic felt by tourism workers. 2) Knowing the survival strategies carried out by tourism workers during the Covid-19 Pandemic. From the two subtitles, it can be seen that the direct impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on tourism business actors in the city of Bandung is seen from the income aspect. Most tourism workers in Bandung City have lost their livelihoods during the Covid-19 pandemic. So that requires tourism business actors to change professions in order to survive, such as: a) Selling used cars. b) Selling designs online. c) Selling catering. d) Changing the vehicle business unit from tourism buses to inter-island buses. e) Become a private driver or online. f) Selling used clothes online. g) Selling juice and hydroponic vegetable cultivation. h) Opening employment opportunities for other affected tourism business actors in the form of local courier applications in the city of Bandung. i) Selling frozen food.

**Keywords:** tourism; tourism sector workers; bandung city; impact of the covid-19 pandemic; survival strategy

### I. INTRODUCTION

In March 2020, the Corona Virus Disease 19 or Covid-19 outbreak entered the territory of the State of Indonesia. The World Health Organization (WHO) has officially announced that Covid-19 has been a world pandemic since March 11, 2020. Until now, the Covid-19 pandemic is still ongoing in various parts of the world. The pandemic has a very bad impact on the human and social dimensions which causes disruption in the global economic chain. Even the negative impact of this pandemic has caused a country's economy to enter a period of crisis. This statement is based on the uncontrolled spread of the Covid-19 outbreak in various countries around the world [1].

In Indonesia, the economic sector declined until a crisis occurred due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Various economic sectors were significantly affected, one of which was the tourism travel agency business. Where most companies are estimated to be highly affected [2]. This is very important to be in the spotlight because the tourism sector has an important role for the Indonesian economy and involves a lot of workers involved in it [3]. Tourism workers immediately cannot do much to anticipate the improvement in the economy due to the surge in positive cases of the Covid-19 virus [4].

Many tourism workers have lost their jobs because the companies they work for closed their businesses due to a lack of income during this COVID-19 pandemic. It is possible for tourism business owners to lose money due to lack of income [5]. This is a direct impact felt by tourism workers. If the Covid-19 pandemic cannot be controlled

until next year, it is not impossible that there will be more businesses in the tourism sector which are increasingly losing money and will even close their businesses [6].

The reduced turnover caused by the COVID-19 pandemic has forced many companies to work hard to avoid prolonged losses resulting in company closures. The temporary solution taken by some travel business actors is to require employees to take unpaid leave for at least 1 week. This situation will of course have a bad impact on tourism workers. By looking at the ongoing conditions, of course, a strategy is needed for tourism workers in dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic crisis in order to minimize the negative impacts and be able to bounce back from a crisis situation [7]. Thus, if this pandemic continues, tourism workers should have prepared business unit innovations and appropriate strategies to survive in a situation like this [8]. By writing this article the author will analyze the impact of the covid-19 pandemic for tourism actors in the city of Bandung. The spread of the Covid-19 virus has an impact on workers in the tourism sector in Indonesia. The Covid-19 pandemic has made tourism sector workers in the city of Bandung themselves starting to feel restless. Various strategies need to be carried out by workers in the tourism sector to maintain economic sustainability [9]. A survival strategy that is carried out by a person in meeting his needs by utilizing or managing assets owned through an activity he chooses.

The survival strategy is actually built at the individual level, but the goal is to gain resilience and stability for household survival. An activity can be said as a survival

strategy when the activity is directed at the needs needed to maintain and continue its existence. Through the strategies carried out by tourism sector workers, the goal is to be able to increase income or income through the use of assets or by reducing the use of goods and or services in their lives [10]. As for those who carry out survival strategies by adding jobs and changing their livelihood patterns.

Survival strategies in overcoming economic shocks and pressures can be grouped into three categories, namely active strategies, passive strategies and network strategies. An active strategy is a survival strategy that is carried out by utilizing all its potential. An active strategy is a strategy carried out by poor families by optimizing all the potential of the family [10].

Next is a passive strategy which is a survival strategy that is carried out by minimizing household expenditures by selective means, applying a frugal lifestyle, not being wasteful in managing financial expenditures. The last is a network strategy that can be done by utilizing social networks [10]. The network strategy is usually done by utilizing social networks that are owned, such as borrowing money from relatives, banks and utilizing other social assistance.

The concept of strategy in a company is often related to the focus or key direction of its area of operations. The survival strategy of small industries depends on the degree of adaptation. Adjustments are especially suitable for small industries because of the uncertainty and risk they face. Uncertainty arises not only because of the environment but also from the ability to seize the opportunities that exist. Adaptation is defined as the action of entrepreneurs and their groups in processing information that comes from their environment and making adjustments quickly for feedback [10].

Adaptation affects changes in strategic behavior, increases competition, and encourages organizational alignment with its environment. No organization is static all the time. Adjustments, changes or improvements will be in line with the company's operations. The degree of adaptation that arises and the results of adaptation always vary between companies. Organizational adaptation emerges as a form of coalition to manage the needs of the organization in order to survive [10].

Smaller businesses suffer more from environmental threats especially in terms of financial capacity and connections in obtaining debt loans. Small businesses are often very dependent on production limits so that these businesses tend to be based on a niche customer. Many small companies suffer because their presence in the market is highly dependent on fluctuations in demand and aggressive attacks from competitors. These difficulties are challenges that small industries always have to face, thus forcing them to innovate quickly, not paying too much attention to the target for the amount of profit earned, having employees who do not have a strong sense of vested interest in resource allocation, and there is no proper distribution of resources. clear relationship between managers and employees. It can be concluded that small industries with their entrepreneurs

can be more flexible in adapting to competitive options and are easy to make adjustments over time [10].

These plans and strategies place more emphasis on robust and transformative financial aid policies and specific economic situation strategies for a healthy turnaround during the Covid-19 pandemic. However, if someone has already set the steps for making a surviving strategy, you cannot fully hope in the practice of a surviving strategy to neutralize the catastrophic impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic.

#### *Covid-19 and the Crisis Impacting Tourism*

In a previous study conducted by [11] regarding the "Impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic on West Sumatran Tourism" stated that Corona Virus Disease 19 or Covid-19 had an impact on social life and the global economy. The tourism sector is one of the many economic sectors in Indonesia that has the most significant impact. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on West Sumatra tourism can be seen through the losses and business income experienced by all tourism actors. The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic shows that tourism has links with other supporting sectors that are very vulnerable to disasters such as disease outbreaks or pandemics.

Apart from Covid-19, things that have an impact on the economy and tourism in Indonesia, one of which is the occurrence of acts of terrorism in the Bali Bombing I in 2002 which claimed hundreds of lives from several countries in the world [12]. As a result, Indonesia has suffered losses in the tourism sector due to a decrease in the number of visits by local and foreign tourists, low levels of regional income, the number of workers in the tourism sector and the problem of foreign investment in Indonesia. The Bali bombings were not only the largest act of terrorism in Indonesia's history, but also had a major impact on tourist destinations in the Southeast Asia Region. For tourists, the main thing in carrying out tourist activities in a destination is a matter of security and safety. Based on data from the Indonesian Central Statistics Agency in 2001 [13], it was explained that Bali could generate more than 25% of Indonesia's foreign exchange earnings and the economy in Bali contributed 1.3% of the national economy. However, after the first bombing on October 12, 2002 many countries issued warnings to their citizens planning to travel to Bali. Thus, the impact was felt on the Indonesian tourism sector, especially Bali, which experienced a very significant decline.

## II. RESEARCH METHODS

The method used in this paper is a qualitative approach to explore the survival strategy of tourism business actors during the Covid-19 pandemic. The subjects studied were ten people who are tourism workers who work as travel business owners, tour leaders, tour guides and tourism bus drivers in the city of Bandung. The resource persons were chosen because they are tourism sector workers who were affected by the Covid-19 pandemic situation. Interviews were conducted for two weeks with each subject one day, taking place in the office where they each worked. During

the interview process, the interviewees were very conducive and cooperative, this could be seen in the answers they gave during the interview process. The tool used during the interview was to use recorded media from the researcher's cellphone.

This research was conducted by direct interview method using a semi-structured interview guide instrument. The grid of interview instruments is as follows: 1) What is the condition of the travel business where you work during the covid-19 pandemic? 2) What is the impact of the pandemic on you? 3) Have you prepared an emergency fund to deal with a situation like this? 4) What do you do when the company where you work has to close? 5) Why did you choose this type of business? 6) Since when did you start your new business? 7) How do you feel after the government enacted a new policy that allowed tourism activities to resume despite the restrictions on the number of tourists and by having to comply with stricter health protocols? 8) When tourism recovers, will the new business continue or will it stop and then resume the travel business? The reason why?

From the eight interview instruments, it can be summarized in the direction of the interview, which aims to 1) Knowing the impact of the Covid-19 Pandemic felt by tourism workers. 2) Knowing the survival strategies carried out by tourism workers during the Covid-19 Pandemic.

### III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The spread of Covid-19 causes foreign tourists and domestic tourists who have limitations to visit tourist destinations in Indonesia. Including West Java Tourism, especially Bandung City, which feels the impact due to restrictions on community mobilization to visit Bandung. This has a negative impact on business and also the sustainability of tourism business actors in the city of Bandung.

#### *The Impact of Tourism Workers During the Covid-19 Pandemic*

The results of interviews with interviewees argued that the direct impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on tourism business actors in the city of Bandung can be seen from the income aspect. Most of the tourism business actors in the city of Bandung suffered heavy losses and even had an impact on closing their businesses. The speakers explained various reasons such as the absence of tourist consumers during the Covid-19 pandemic, cancellation of product purchases, services offered and operational costs that must be borne even in the absence of business income.

The Covid-19 pandemic, which began in March 2020, had never been thought of before by tourism business actors, because previous crises had never lasted this long. These resource persons did not prepare an emergency fund at all to deal with this kind of situation. They explained that some of their assets had to be sold to meet their daily needs. The slowdown in the economic sector caused by the Covid-19 pandemic also has an impact on employment conditions for tourism business actors in the city of Bandung.

In order to maintain their business, the informants were forced to reduce office operating hours, reduce employee salaries and incentives and even stop all business activities. This condition makes tourism workers survive and develop independently. In an effort to control the transmission of the corona virus, the government has issued a ban on the opening of public facilities related to tourism, such as tourist destinations. At the time of entering the new normal era (adaptation of new habits), domestic flights, hotels, tourist destinations and other public facilities began to reopen with the implementation of health protocols to prevent the transmission of COVID-19.

Nevertheless, tourism business actors are still facing the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. Because in this new normal era, tourism consumers prefer to carry out their own tourism activities rather than using the services of a travel agency and they prefer to use online travel agents to transact with the reason that there is no direct contact with tourism business actors.

#### *Surviving Strategies Performed by Tourism Business Actors during the Covid-19 Pandemic*

During the Covid-19 pandemic, the tourism sector experienced a significant decline. At the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic, the tourism sector such as travel bureaus was paralyzed due to the closure of tourist destinations, travel restrictions and cancellation of purchases of products offered by related business units. The decline in the level of demand for the tourism sector was due to restrictions on community activities outside the home.

From the Covid-19 pandemic, tourism business actors in the city of Bandung have felt the impact. Thus making tourism business actors switch professions in order to survive. The surviving strategies carried out by the speakers in dealing with the Covid-19 pandemic situation were different, such as: a) Selling used cars. b) Selling designs online. c) Selling catering. d) Changing the vehicle business unit from tourism buses to inter-island buses. e) Become a private driver or online. f) Selling used clothes online. g) Selling juice and hydroponic vegetable cultivation. h) Opening employment opportunities for other affected tourism business actors in the form of local courier applications in the city of Bandung. i) Selling frozen food.

Based on the results of this study, there were several resource persons who did not switch professions directly. However, they were at the point of freezing moment for a while to think about which profession they would choose during this Covid-19 pandemic. Because some sources are optimistic that this pandemic will not last long. However, in reality the Covid-19 pandemic has not yet ended. Since the enactment of government policies that loosen restrictions on community activities, slowly there is a demand from the community to carry out tourism activities, even though on a small scale.

The positive impact of the Covid-19 pandemic has given rise to new business ideas and ideas for entrepreneurs in their survival strategy. Every opportunity continues to be

tried, including MSMEs other than travel as mentioned by the sources above.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

From this research, it can be concluded that Corona Virus Disease (Covid-19) has a major impact on almost all aspects of life, one of which is the tourism sector. With the implementation of various new regulations from the government in terms of travel restrictions, large-scale social restrictions and even lockdowns have a negative impact on tourism business actors. The big losses received by tourism businesses in the city of Bandung resulted in a decrease in income levels, termination of employment, no transactions and not a few of these business people closed their businesses due to difficulties in financing the company's operations. Most of the tourism business actors in the city of Bandung suffered heavy losses and even had an impact on closing their businesses. Reasons such as the absence of tourist consumers during the Covid-19 pandemic, cancellation of product purchases, services offered and operational costs that must be borne even in the absence of business income. The slowdown in the economic sector caused by the Covid-19 pandemic also has an impact on employment conditions for tourism business actors in the city of Bandung. In order to maintain their business, the informants were forced to reduce office operating hours, reduce employee salaries and incentives and even stop all business activities. When entering the new normal era (adaptation of new habits), slowly domestic flights, hotels, tourist destinations and other public facilities began to reopen with the enactment of certain requirements that prioritize health aspects.

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that the active strategy is a survival strategy that is carried out by utilizing all the potential and resources possessed by individuals and family members as is done by the main informant or souvenir trader, namely by opening a side business such as a) Selling cars used. b) Selling designs online. c) Selling catering. d) Changing the vehicle business unit from tourism buses to inter-island buses. e) Become a private driver or online. f) Selling used clothes online. g) Selling juice and hydroponic vegetable cultivation. h) Opening employment opportunities for other affected tourism business actors in the form of local krier applications in the city of Bandung. i) Selling frozen food. and vary the products sold and take advantage of the savings they have to meet their daily needs. The passive strategy is a survival strategy carried out by souvenir traders by implementing a frugal lifestyle. Passive strategies can be done by reducing family expenses such as expenses for clothing, food, transportation, education and daily needs. In this case, souvenir traders maintain life during the Covid-19 pandemic by implementing a frugal lifestyle, namely by saving family expenses. Network strategy is a survival strategy that is carried out by establishing relationships, both formally and with the social environment and the institutional environment (eg borrowing money from

neighbors, borrowing from a shop or shop, taking advantage of poverty programs, borrowing money from moneylenders or banks and so on). Network strategy occurs due to social interactions that occur in society, social networks can help when you need money urgently.

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