

THE IMPACTS OF COVID-19 ON THE DEVELOPMENT OF NINH BINH PROVINCIAL TOURISM

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Abstract

Since 2019, the world has been facing one of the greatest threats - COVID-19 epidemic causing serious damages not only human health but also the global economy. As an important part of the economy, the tourism industry was not an exception to COVID-19. In fact, COVID-19 has brought impacts reversing decades on progress of tourism development. According to scholars, although tourism is vulnerable, it could adapt quickly and bounce back to the new normal situation if there is a proper strategy to recover. Using secondary data with desk research method, this paper investigate how COVID-19 impacts on the wellbeing of tourism industry by taking an example from Ninh Binh - a growing and attractive destination in Vietnam. After comparing the performance of Ninh Binh tourism before and during COVID-19, this paper illustrates the impacts of the pandemic to the development of tourism and demonstrates difficulties that destination has suffered. Also, it pointed out strategies for 03 key stakeholders of Ninh Binh provincial tourism including local government, tourism business (both direct and indirect business) and local community. At last, there 06 main suggestions are synthesized from these strategies to assist destination recover soon from COVID-19, namely, (1) preventing COVID-19 from spreading it out into the community; (2) issuing and implementing effectively policies to support businesses and locals; (3) Improving regional linkages, collaborations inside and outside destination; (4) Applying digital transformation on tourism operation and development (5) Encouraging hotels to transform into high quality quarantine places during COVID-19 period; (6) Improving people trust on local government and encouraging for the development of social cohesion among government, businesses and locals.

Keywords: *COVID-19, impacts of pandemic, Ninh Binh tourism, Strategies for recovering*

1. Introduction

Tourism is one of the most important global economic sectors, being the world's third-largest exporter (after fuels and chemicals), contributed 7% of global trade in 2020 (UNWTO 2021). Acknowledging the role of tourism in socio-economic development, promoting Vietnamese nature, culture as well as the country's image, Vietnamese

government has issued policies that encourages and supports the national tourism industry. According to VNAT (2020), in 2019 the country welcomed 18 million visitors with revenue of about VND 755 trillion, accounting for 9.2% of the national GDP, with stable and sustainable growth indicators in the last 10 years and tourism has become an economic key of Vietnam nowadays.

Understanding that tourism will be an economic development trend soon and taking advantage of the provincial natural and cultural resources, Ninh Binh provincial economy has been shifted from heavy manufacturing industries to the tourism economy in recent times. Nowadays, Ninh Binh has become one of the most attractive places in Vietnam and played a significant role in the National Tourism Development Plan of Vietnam. However, the occurrence of COVID-19 pandemic has caused great disruptions throughout the provincial economy and its tourism industry was not an exception. Therefore, it is necessary to research what the impacts COVID-19 has on destinations are and how destination can overcome the pandemic.

The purpose of this research is to investigate the impacts of COVID-19 has on tourism industry and suggest strategies that destination could implement to recover and adapt to the pandemic. Using desk research method using secondary data, this article will compare the situation before and after the pandemic to identify the difficulties, challenges and opportunities that COVID-19 brings to Ninh Binh tourism; at the same time, proposing solutions and strategies to overcome difficulties, contribute to the recovery process Ninh Binh provincial tourism during and after the pandemic.

2. Literature Review

2.1. The COVID-19 pandemic and Global tourism

a. The outbreak of COVID-19

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is an infectious disease caused by Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome Coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2). COVID-19 has been traced back on November 2019 by the first case detect in Wuhan City, Hubei province, China. COVID-19 defined as an infectious disease caused by a new virus which was spread very fast and until May 2020, the total confirmed cases of COVID-19 worldwide are more than 158 million cases with nearly 3.3 million of deaths (World Health Organization, 2021). COVID-19 spreads primarily through contact with an infected person when they cough or sneeze. According to Bakar and Rosbi (2020), the pandemics spreads when a person touches a surface or object that has the virus on it, then touches their eyes, nose, or mouth. COVID-19 virus can live up to 72 hours. COVID-19 has given significant impact on the economic development worldwide. With the large-scale quarantines (about 14 and some countries require more than 14 days), travel restrictions, and social-distancing measures drive a sharp fall in consumers, business expenditure, and tourism demand. This situation was created

economic recession globally. However, many efforts have been done by governments to reduce the spread of COVID-19 virus. For example, a few countries were performing a lockdown approach for movement control order (MCO). Although it might stop spreading out the virus, the impacts of this approach are consumers stay at home, businesses lose revenue and lay off workers and unemployment levels rise sharply.

b. Covid-19 and its impacts on global tourism

Tourism is one of the world's major economic sectors. In 2019 it received 1.5 billion visitors, an increase of 3.8% compared to 2018, contributed impressive \$8.9 trillion to the world's GDP accounted for 7% of global trade and it was the 10th consecutive year, the number of visitors has increased positively (UNWTO, 2020). According to the International Labor Organization (2020), tourism created about 330 million direct and indirect careers worldwide, equivalent to 10.3% of total global employment and 1 in 10 jobs globally. However, with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, the world economy and the global tourism industry have faced one of the greatest threats. Countries such as the U.S., Europeans, South American countries have millions of cases with thousands of deaths; many countries and cities must impose lockdowns, the traveling is restricted, and people are required to stay home. As a result, tourism industry is freeze, destinations are blocked and locked down, international flights are canceled, tourism laborers lose jobs, and visitors' traveling is limited, and all parts of tourism vast value-chain have been affected and delayed. According to UNWTO, export revenues from tourism could fall by \$910 billion to \$1.2 trillion in 2020. This will have a wider impact and could reduce global GDP by 1.5% to 2.8%. As many as 100 million direct tourism jobs are at risk, in addition to sectors associated with tourism such as labor in accommodation, food services and transportation industries that employ 144 million workers worldwide. Small businesses (which shoulder 80% of global tourism) and countries where tourism is the key economic factors are the ones receiving the most negative impacts from COVID-19.

To limit and prevent the negative influences of COVID-19 to global tourism, OECD (2020) suggested policies to governments, including: restoring travelers confidence; supporting tourism businesses to adapt and survive; promoting domestic tourism and supporting safe return of international tourism; providing clear information to travelers and businesses; and limiting uncertainty (to the extent possible); evolving response measures to maintain capacity in the sector and address gaps in supports; strengthening co-operation within and between countries; building more resilient, sustainable tourism. Due to international travelling restriction, many countries encourage domestic travel (Sigala, 2020) to help destination survive through COVID-19 period. Besides that, to incentive international travel, especially between countries which have stable COVID-19 situation, the term "Travel bubble" is established. According to Lou and Lam (2020), "travel bubble" is a program that allows tourists to travel to countries nearby without quarantine requirement.

Since the beginning of 2021, many travel bubble relationships are implemented such as Austria – Germany, Denmark – Norway, Australia – New Zealand, China – South Korea, Singapore – China, Indonesia – China, South Korea, Japan, Australia. However, these travel bubbles are mostly for either diplomatic or business purposes, not leisure and the bubbles could be burst anytime, depending on the pandemic situation.

2.2. COVID-19 and its impacts on Vietnam tourism

As soon as the occurrence of the epidemic, Vietnam's tourism industry has suffered heavy losses including domestic tourism and international tourism. The travel restriction has been imposed on all tourist attractions and Vietnam restricted the entry of overseas tourists since April 2020. Industry such as, hospitality, hotel, restaurant, and transportation sectors were mostly postponed, and tourists' attractions were closed due to nationwide social distancing. The number of international visitors is only available in January and February, from March 2019 there are almost no visitors. Domestic tourists also feel sharply due to the complicated developments of the epidemic and Vietnam's social distancing. Tourism businesses faced with difficulties, causing many tourism industry employees to lose their jobs, even without income ... According to VNAT (2021), international visitors to Vietnam in November 2020 were estimated at 17.7 thousand people, up 19.6% over the previous month but down 99% over the same period last year; however, these are international workers or experts who works in Vietnam. In the first 11 months of 2020, international visitors to our country were estimated at 3.8 million, down 76.6% over the same period last year. Total visitors in the first quarter of 2020 reached 3.7 million visitors, down more than 18% over the same period; revenue from accommodation and dining services in the period was estimated at VND 126,200 billion, equivalent to 10% of the total revenue of commercial and service activities of the country, down 9.6% compared to the first quarter of 2019; Tourism revenue in the first quarter of 2020 was estimated at VND 7,800 billion, accounting for 0.6% of the total and down 27.8%. About 80-90% of small and medium-sized travel enterprises suspend their operations or activities.

Some important economic sectors related to tourism such as transportation are also seriously affected, in which, air transport is greatly affected by international passengers using Vietnam's aviation accounting for nearly 80%. Road and rail transport services also suffered negatively when trade and tourism activities declined, festivals and events are canceled. Transportation support services also decreased such as flight management services, airport services were all affected. Some other industries such as agriculture (agricultural production to serve visitors); banking and finance (restaurants, hotels without guests resulting in inability to pay bank debt); small craft industry (producing souvenir items for visitors) are seriously affected.

For recovering soon from the second COVID-19 epidemic, the tourism industry continues to launch the domestic tourism stimulus program towards improving safety and

attractive factors. The Vietnam National Administration of Tourism has issued a set of criteria for tourism safety and launched the application “Safe Vietnam Tourism”, “Vietnamese travel in Vietnam”. Traveling businesses also generated collaborations to make affordable deals and enhance service quality. Although there are certain achievements on domestic tourism, Vietnam’s tourism industry is still facing many difficulties due to the potential risk of epidemics, vaccines have not been produced and globally have not achieved community immunity, so the response and adaptation to COVID-19 of the tourism industry will continue in the near future.

2.3. Overview of the Ninh Binh tourism (before COVID-19)

According to the Ninh Binh Department of Tourism (2019), Ninh Binh has an area of 1,390 square kilometers and a population of nearly 1 million, currently possesses 01 World Heritage Site, 1,499 cultural and historical relics, of which 79 were classified at the national level and 235 were classified at provincial level. Especially, the Trang An Scenic Landscape Complex was recognized as world natural and cultural heritage by UNESCO in 2014. Favorable nature along with the rich history has created many scenic places and historical and cultural relics in Ninh Binh. Most of Ninh Binh's tourists attractions have a combination of natural resources and humanities resources.

In terms of natural resources, Ninh Binh’s topography is divided into three distinct areas, the hills in the west and northwest, the plain in the east and the coastal area in the south. Three-fourths of the area is hilly and mountainous, diverse karst topography is a base for the development of flora and fauna, forming many tourist destinations with beautiful natural scenery that attracts to tourists, especially the cave complex such as Trang An, Tam Coc - Bich Dong, Van Long Wetland Nature Reserve, Van Trinh Cave, Dich Long Cave, Thien Ha Cave.. . The forest ecosystem in Ninh Binh is very distinctive, with Cuc Phuong National Park, a typical tropical forest with an area of over 22,000 ha, home to nearly 2,000 species of higher plants and about 2,600 species of animal; The Van Long nature reserve, which is featured fourth largest wetland ecosystems in the Red River Delta (about 2,643 ha). In addition, Hoa Lu Special-use Forest and Kim Son coastal mangrove forest have a rich ecological system and landscape with many rare and precious plant and animal species listed in the Red Book of Vietnam and the World. Ninh Binh has about 18km of coastline in the new land Kim Son.

Besides scenic places, cultural and spiritual tourism is also a strength of Ninh Binh, promoting the advantage of a sacred land which was the capital of three dynasties: Dinh, Early Le, Ly, associated with the great changes of the national history. It is also a place of convergence and development of many religions, especially Buddhism and Christian. Ninh Binh has a large number of religious and cultural architectural works that have historical value, such as, Phat Diem Stone Church, Hoa Lu Ancient Capital, Bich Dong Pagoda, Bai Dinh Pagoda, etc. The historical and cultural relics in Ninh Binh mainly associated with the

Dinh, Early Le and Ly Dynasty. In addition, Ninh Binh is one of the locals who still preserve many folk festivals. At present, the province has 74 festivals, some festivals have become the tradition not only of local people but also of the whole province and attract the attention of domestic and international visitors such as, Hoa Lu Festival, Thai Vi Temple Festival, Duc Thanh Nguyen Temple Festival, Trang An Festival, etc. Moreover, regarding gastronomy culture, Ninh Binh cuisine has many famous dishes such as goat meat (Thit De), burned rice (Com Chay). The beautiful nature, historical-cultural relics and delicious dishes of this land known as "Miniature Vietnam" will certainly leave many unforgettable impressions in the heart of visitors.

Taking advantage of the diverse tourism resources as well as the supporting and leading from the Central Committee Party and Government, the visitors to Ninh Binh has been increasing in the period of 2010-2019 (Table 1). In 2019, the province welcomed 7.65 million visitors, of which: domestic visitors: 6.68 million visitors, international visitors: 970 thousand visitors (with the average growth in number of visitors is 12%, annually), tourism revenue reached VND 3,600 billion, the service industry accounted for 46.2% of the GRDP structure of the province (Ninh Binh Provincial People Committee, 2020). Many investors in the field of tourism services inside and outside the province have come and invested in Ninh Binh. Up to now, the province has issued investment certificates for 36 investment projects on tourism, with a total investment of VND 16,212 billion. Along with the rapidly increasing number of tourists coming to Ninh Binh, the development of tourism has created many jobs for local people. If in 2010 Ninh Binh had 8,550 workers both directly and indirectly in this field, by 2019 this number increased to 21,500 people, the average labor growth rate in the last 9 years is 25.9% per year. In addition, traffic infrastructure such as national highways, health system, Internet facility and accommodation infrastructure such as restaurants, hotels, homestays, entertainment areas, walking streets, supermarkets, shopping centers are being invested which contributes to promoting the tourism and service sector of the province, creating jobs for locals; therefore, poverty is alleviate and socio-economic is able to develop effectively and efficiently.

Table 1: Overview of Ninh Binh tourists 2010 – 2019

	Year	2010	2015	2019	2020
International tourists	Total number of international tourists	663,3	600,6	915,0	196,0
	Percentage compared to the total number of guests	21,4	10,0	11,96	7,47
	Average length of stay (by day)	1,99	1,52	1,8	1,0
Domestic tourists	Total number of domestic tourists	2.433,3	5.392,6	6.735	2.429

	Year	2010	2015	2019	2020
	Percentage compared to the total number of guests	78,58	89,98	88,04	92,53
	Average length of stay (by day)	1,55	1,28	1,85	1,0
Total number of visitors		3.096,6	5.993,2	7.650	2.625,3

Source: Ninh Binh Tourism Department, 2020

2. Method

2.1. Research method

To investigate what the impacts of COVID-19 and figure out the strategies and solutions for overcoming the COVID-19, this research uses secondary research which is also known as desk research. According to Smith and Smith (2008), secondary research is a common approach to a systematic investigation in which the researcher depends on existing data or secondary data on research process. This research design involves organizing, collating, and analyzing these data samples for valid research conclusions. Secondary research is also known as desk research since it involves synthesizing existing data that can be sourced from the internet, peer-reviewed journals, textbooks, government archives, and libraries. What the secondary researcher does is to study already established patterns in previous researches and apply this information to the specific research context.

2.2. Data collection and analyze

In this research, the data is collected from sources such as journal article, report from international organizations, non-government organization, Vietnamese government and Ninh Binh local government achieves. To find out the impacts of COVID-19 on tourism, this research takes the example of Ninh Binh provincial tourism and compares the tourism performance before and after the outbreak of COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, based on the current situation of Ninh Binh destination and its strengths as well as weaknesses, this research will suggest strategies that can assist the destination to survive and adapt to COVID-19.

As an attractive destination of Vietnam, Ninh Binh was not an exception to COVID-19. International tourists couldn't arrive, the number of domestic tourists went down, traveling is restrictions directly damaged seriously provincial tourism. As a result, many hotels, restaurants, areas, and tourist attractions must remain closed, and tourism revenue has plummeted. In 2020, Ninh Binh tourism not only failed the target of 7.0 million visitors, but also, 2020 has been the worst year in terms of development since 2010. The recovery of

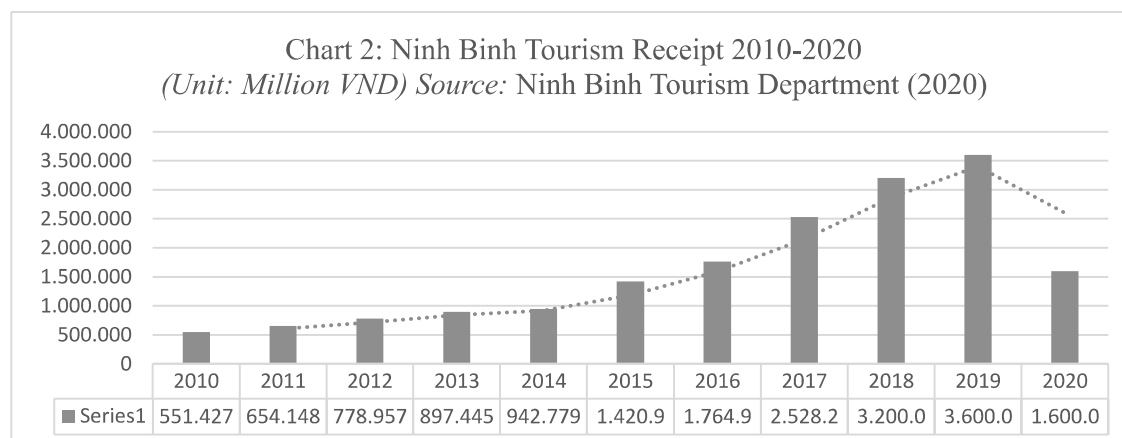
Chart 1: The number of Ninh Binh tourists 2010 – 2020
(Souces: Ninh Binh Tourism Department, 2020)



Ninh Binh tourism must depend about COVID-19 of Vietnam and the effectiveness of future COVID-19 vaccines. All the data about tourism performance was collected in government public data and will be analyzed in the next paragraph.

In terms of economic impacts of the pandemic, according to the Ninh Binh Tourism Department (2020), the total number of tourists coming to Ninh Binh in 2020 reached 2.8 million, only 37% compared to 2019, of which domestic visitors 2.6 million were only 39% compared to 2019, international visitors only reached 200,000, only 21.4% compared to

Chart 2: Ninh Binh Tourism Receipt 2010-2020
(Unit: Million VND) Source: Ninh Binh Tourism Department (2020)



2019. Tourism workers in 2020 decreased from 21,500 to 14,000 workers, which means 7,500 careers were lost. As it shown on the Chart 1, comparing before and after the launch of COVID-19, the performance of Ninh Binh tourism in 2020 seems to be taken back into 2010. With the downward number of tourists, as it is indicated in Chart 2, the total tourism receipt also is negatively impacted. In 2020, total tourism revenue is 1.600 billion VND, equal to 44% comparing to 2019 and less than the total tourism revenue in 2016. International tourists are restricted to entry Vietnam, domestic tourists fear the spreading of pandemic; as a result, many hotels, restaurants, tourists' attractions must remain closed causing loses on the tourism revenues. Furthermore, many tourism businesses went bankrupt because they cannot pay for bank interests leading tourism workers lost jobs. Also, not only tourism businesses have suffered, tourism supplying business are negatively impacted by COVID-19. In terms of social impacts, although the negative impacts of COVID-19 to the economy and tourism of Ninh Binh is obvious with strong evidences from statistics, the social risks are also very high. For instances, Ninh Binh tourism workers are mostly from low-income households and they are vulnerable with the damages of COVID-19. Losing jobs can change their livelihoods, loss income and make their lives harder. Moreover, loss tourism revenue can cut the budget to conserve the environment and historical relics heritage causing negative impacts on the environmental and cultural heritages.

3. Results

As it is discussed above, there are disadvantages that COVID-19 brings to economic and social well-beings of Ninh Binh province. To prevent the spreading of COVID-19, people are encouraged to stay home and keep distances between each other; therefore, people could not go anywhere and tourism services must be closed. Damages are obvious and significant; however, it still has chances for Ninh Binh to overcome. First of all, on the Chart 1, domestic tourists are the main tourists in Ninh Binh and international tourists only takes a small number on the total tourists in the period 2010-2020, therefore, if Ninh Binh target the domestic tourists effectively during the pandemic, tourism businesses and workers would have opportunities to recover the pandemic. Secondly, due to the downward on tourists, the environment receives less impacts from tourism activities, the air will be clean as people do not travel. According to Rosbi and Bakar (2020), since people cannot travel for a long time because of the pandemic, once the COVID-19 is controlled worldwide, the tourism demand will raise remarkably and destinations like Ninh Binh province would prepare to be ahead for the future trend. In the next section, based on the results of this research, there are strategies suggested for Ninh Binh tourism to overcome the pandemic and adapt to the new normal situation.

The strategies to recover from covid-19 for ninh binh province

According to Sigala (2020), tourism is the industry most affected by the pandemic but also one of the most recoverable industries. Therefore, if the destination can catch on to the new tourism trend, Ninh Binh will have breakthrough opportunities, so the management,

local government, businesses and locals need to be prepared so that as soon as the epidemic passes, the tourism market will flourish, there will be suitable products for tourists and be ready for the development in the “new normal situation”.

As stated above, compare the situation before and during COVID-19, evidences are showing that these impacts of COVID-19 bring to Ninh Binh social-economic development and its tourism industry disadvantages. To overcome the disaster, this article will point out strategies implemented by 03 groups of stakeholders, namely, the local government (Ninh Binh Provincial People Committee), the businesses and locals to overcome the pandemic. Dabphet (2012) stated that these 03 groups are the key stakeholders that determine the development and performance of a destination. Due to the social-political specifics of Vietnam, local government plays a significant role in the plan and issues strategies, yet it must be along with the assists and involvement of the business and local people to be effective.

Local government

During the COVID-19 epidemic, the priority concern of local government is to keep the situation stable without new infections and must acknowledge that “do not to trade health and community benefits to achieve economic benefits”.

Guiding businesses and people; strengthening inspection, supervision and propagating the observance of basic principles of epidemic prevention; transparency of information about the pandemic, prevention of fake news causing confusion for locals and visitors about the epidemic situation.

Based on the actual situation of the locality, imposes policies to support and promote the tourism industry, focusing on exploiting the domestic tourist market. For example: Promulgating policies to support bank loan interest rates for tourism enterprises and enterprises in tourism value chain, especially small and medium-sized enterprises (categorizing businesses by sector to have specific preferential rates); reducing land rents for tourism service projects; providing funding support for individuals and households unemployed due to epidemic. Discounted fares or free fares at government-managed tourist attractions.

Due to the epidemic situation, revenues from tourism activities to reinvest in the protection of ecosystems, preservation of cultural and historical relics are affected; therefore, local governments need to involve and spend money on activities of protecting ecosystems, preserving relics, cultural and historical heritages.

Re-planning tourism development policies, with an increased focus on improving the resilience of tourism destinations and community to overcome and adapt with pandemic; catching the trend of the domestic and international tourism industry, proposing to apply tourism industry solutions such as vaccination passports, travel bubble, and so on.

Inviting and facilitating for event companies or reporters, newspapers on reporting and filming about the natural and cultural attractions in Ninh Binh; enhancing the promotion of images, building promotional videos on websites, digital platforms with diverse content and forms, subtitled in many foreign languages.

Coordinating with other provinces and destination to develop regional links and collaboration, create conditions for businesses inside and outside the province to cooperate closely with each other, build multi-provincial tours to serve tourists.

Continuing to invest and improve facilities of relevant sectors such as health, education, telecommunications, transport infrastructure to serve tourism. Prioritizing the construction of telecommunications infrastructure to accelerate digital transformation because digital transformation is one of the effective tools to adapt and recover from the COVID-19 pandemic.

The businesses

Follow the guidance of the management agency (from the government) on COVID-19 prevention, especially accommodation service must not accept to accommodate in cases where foreigners enter illegally or do not present documents about equal and valid quarantine.

Priority on developing the brand and promotion strategy, ensuring service businesses can provide their services in a new development environment. Many companies and businesses mainly focus on attracting international customers need to change marketing methods, attract domestic visitors to suit the actual situation.

Strengthening the collaboration and cooperation with companies and businesses inside and outside the province to create regional links. Promoting cooperation and links to build new tours and tourism products, share peak season visitors or improve service quality is one of the methods for the tourism industry to adapt to COVID-19

Building tourism products that express local culture, in accordance with Vietnamese customs and provincial customs to attract domestic tourists; producing promotional videos with subtitles in many languages, using advertising tools on social networking to promote to domestic and foreign tourists.

Encouraging hotels to transform their accommodation business to a high-quality quarantine area to maximize profits and generate income during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The local people

Supporting for the governments and businesses, well-implemented the guide to prevent the COVID-19 pandemic from authority, and try not to let the epidemic spread within the community

Responding to the movement launched by the local government or the General

Department of Tourism: “Each citizen is a tourism ambassador”, promoting beautiful images of people, lifestyle, cultural traditions of Ninh Binh people

Raise awareness of protecting ecosystems and environment, preserving cultural and historical relics; diversify income, livelihoods and avoid over-dependence on the tourism industry

Expressing the rights, obligations, responsibilities and voices of the people through giving opinions on the planning development of the tourism industry of the province, in particular, the Tourism Plan is necessary to focus on sustainable development, exploiting economic benefits but must priorities with environmental protection, preserving indigenous cultures and traditions and ensuring the rights and interests of the community.

According to McGehee et al (2010), local people play an important role in tourism resilience. Many destinations and countries tend to reinvest in facilities (e.g., rebuild roads after a disaster) or focus on promoting tourism product to attract visitors back to their destinations after a disaster. However, social capital, community cohesion, or the solid relationship among communities, businesses and local government is one of the most significant factors for the adaptability of the destination (McGehee et al 2010). Therefore, people must unite to overcome these difficulties, trust in the leadership of the government to adapt to the “new normal situation” during COVID-19 period.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

COVID-19 epidemic not only causes harm to human health, moreover, the rapid spread of nCovi virus also causes the collapse of the health system and the collapse of the economy. To limit the spread of the COVID-19 epidemic, all economies were shut down, people restricted travel to avoid exposure to COVID-19. This is the premise that causes world tourism to suffer, many destinations fall into crisis. As commented above, COVID-19 brings challenges, difficulties and opportunities for growth and breakthrough. In Ninh Binh province, although the economy is also heavily influenced by the COVID-19 epidemic, with the determination and participation of the whole political system, the consensus of businesses and people, the economic sector in general and the tourism industry has made certain achievements. For the effective adaptation of the provincial tourism in the new normal situation, the article has shared several strategies for three main groups of stakeholders, including local government, the business and local community. In general, the strategy to be effectively implemented, the tightening coordination of 03 stakeholders is a must; in which, attention should be paid to the following 06 focus points: (1) ensuring a good disease prevention, preventing epidemic diseases from spreading out into the community; (2) issuing and implementing effectively policies to support businesses and people to overcome the epidemic; (3) Improving regional linkages, linkages between companies, businesses and local authorities, promote promotion and cooperation activities for mutual development inside and outside destination; (4) Applying digital transformation, continuing

to promote on social media with subtitle on many languages to attract international attentions (5) Encouraging hotels to transform into high-service quality quarantine zones to maximize profit during the hard time of COVID-19; (6) Improving people trust on local government, as well as enhancing social cohesion among the community. Besides that, although there are losses and damages caused by COVID-19, the tourism of Ninh Binh still have chances to breakthrough and recover fast because their main visitors are domestic visitors. Therefore, if the situation within Vietnam is stable, the tourism has opportunities to resist with COVID-19 and still be a key economic factor.

In the following years, the world could never be the same as before (Sigala, 2020). COVID-19 has caused significant disruptions and damages to the socioeconomics in general and tourism in particular. However, as it stated, tourism and the community in destinations have its own resilience and adaptive capacity. The government, businesses and people around the world will acknowledge and figure out strategies to survive and transform in order to adapt to the “new normal situation”, yet the effectiveness of strategies will highly depend on the effectiveness of vaccines. Regarding Ninh Binh tourism, as domestic is the main source of tourists, it still has chances to take economic and social advantages from tourism activities by applying 06 suggestions listed above. However, the whole tourism industry needs to wait until COVID-19 pandemic is under control to be truly recovered from the disaster. Any solutions for developing tourism in COVID-19 period is temporary and the tourism activity could be shut down any time to prevent spreading the virus.

To sum up, as it is stated above, belongs with the negative impacts, there would be positive impacts and the target of destination to take the advantages, catch the new trend, transform, and adapt with the new situation. This report discusses the impacts COVID-19 has on the tourism industry with the focus on Ninh Binh province in Vietnam. To sum up, there are 07 main suggestions for local government, businesses, and the local community to follow and recover from the pandemic. In the future, for a research paper, it should figure out the factors that help destination over the pandemic or what are the factors that make tourism resilient with the COVID-19 to help destination could effectively survive through the pandemic.

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