

Narrative analysis of media coverage of Philippines's tourism policies during the Covid-19 pandemic (2020-2021)

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ABSTRACT:

The primary objectives of the study are to investigate the manner in which the media in the Philippines covered the Covid-19 outbreak and to investigate the effects that the outbreak had on the public policy of the country with regard to the tourism industry. For the purpose of this study, examples were drawn from various news articles published on CNN Philippines, Inquirer.net, and pna.gov.ph that covered the years 2020 and 2021. The analysis makes use of the Nvivo software to produce a Word Cloud, which is a list of the terms and keywords that occurred the most frequently over the specified time period. Additionally, the percentage of variable analysis, also known as the percentage of media reporting narratives against predetermined variables, was also calculated. The variables that were used in this study were UNWTO recommendations that were compiled in relation to the tourism sector as a response to the impacts caused by the Covid-19 pandemic. The media has assumed a prominent position during the epidemic as a result of the value and utility it serves in today's modern society. The role of the media in society is also on display during the pandemic, as evidenced by the media's constant dissemination of pandemic-related information and the creation of hospitable conditions in the community at large, particularly in the tourism sector, where it plays an active role in disseminating crucial information to the various actors in Indonesia's tourism industry. The media's role in society is also on display during the pandemic, as evidenced by the media's constant dissemination of pandemic-related.

Keywords: Tourism, Covid-19, Media, Policy

ABSTRAK

Tujuan utama dari penelitian ini adalah untuk menyelidiki cara media di Filipina meliput wabah Covid-19 dan untuk menyelidiki efek wabah tersebut terhadap kebijakan publik negara tersebut terkait dengan industri pariwisata. Untuk tujuan penelitian ini, contoh diambil dari berbagai artikel berita yang diterbitkan di CNN Filipina, Inquirer.net, dan pna.gov.ph yang mencakup tahun 2020 dan 2021. Analisis menggunakan perangkat lunak Nvivo untuk menghasilkan Word Cloud, yang merupakan daftar istilah dan kata kunci yang paling sering muncul selama jangka waktu tertentu. Selain itu, persentase analisis variabel, juga dikenal sebagai persentase narasi pemberitaan media terhadap variabel yang telah ditentukan, juga dihitung. Variabel yang digunakan dalam penelitian ini adalah rekomendasi UNWTO yang disusun terkait dengan sektor pariwisata sebagai respon atas dampak yang ditimbulkan oleh pandemi Covid-19. Me-

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dia telah mengambil posisi menonjol selama epidemi sebagai akibat dari nilai dan utilitas yang dilayaninya dalam masyarakat modern saat ini. Peran media dalam masyarakat juga terlihat selama pandemi, terbukti dengan terus-menerus disebarluaskan informasi terkait pandemi dan penciptaan kondisi yang ramah di masyarakat luas, khususnya di sektor pariwisata, di mana ia berperan aktif berperan dalam menyebarkan informasi penting kepada berbagai pelaku industri pariwisata Indonesia. Peran media dalam masyarakat juga terpampang di masa pandemi, terbukti dengan terus gencarnya sosialisasi media terkait pandemi.

Kata Kunci: Pariwisata; Covid-19; Media; Kebijakan

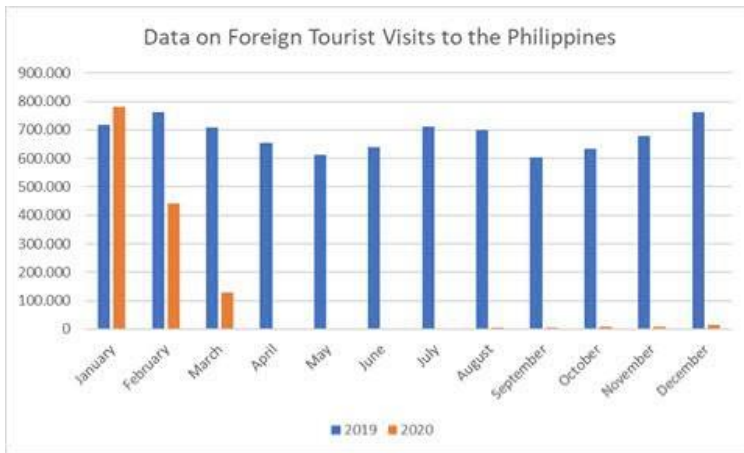
INTRODUCTION

Recently, a worldwide pandemic caused by coronavirus (also known as COVID 19) has spread to every country on Earth. The SARS-CoV-2 virus, which causes COVID-19, may infect a wide variety of vertebrate and avian hosts ([Jones & Comfort, 2020](#)). The virus has disrupted social, political, and economic activities, making many countries more unstable than they were before the outbreak. Some of the methods taken by the authorities to prevent the spread of the virus include lockdown, social isolation, physical distance, mask use, suspending schools and public spaces, canceling concerts and festivals, and restricting assembly ([Gössling et al., 2020](#)). Since its discovery in October 2020, the Covid-19 virus has spread to nearly every country around the world, with the Delta and Omicron versions becoming the most frequent form of the disease among new cases. There has been independent confirmation of this mutation, and it is being treated as potentially more hazardous than any previously identified Covid-19 variant mutations ([Wang & Han, 2022](#)).

The hotel industry has also been severely impacted by the pandemic. Because of measures taken to prevent the spread of disease, a significant drop in tourism-related earnings has occurred ([Uđur & Akbýyyk, 2020](#)). As a result of the epidemic, international travel has dropped by 78%, costing the economy \$1.2 trillion and causing the loss of 120 million jobs around the world ([Sigala, 2020](#)). The archipelagic country of the Philippines has been severely impacted by the spread of the Covid-19 virus because of its reliance on tourism. The tourism sector in the Philippines is highly lucrative because of the country's exceptional

beaches. 8.26 million tourists brought in \$9 billion in revenue for the Philippines in 2019, said the country’s tourism bureau ([Opiniano et al., 2021](#)). Furthermore, the jobless rate in the Philippines is expected to reach 10% in July 2020, up from 5.4 percent in the same month a year ago ([Andulana et al., 2021](#)).

Figure 1. Data on Foreign Tourist Visits to the Philippines



(Source: <http://www.tourism.gov.ph/>)

Since the ban on the entry of migrants from abroad was enforced, the number of international visitors has continued to fall. On January 30, 2020, the first case of Covid-19 was discovered in the Philippines. By March 7, 2020, the disease had spread locally and was beginning to affect other areas ([Era & Rosario, 2020](#)). Since then, the government has taken measures to halt the spread of the Covid-19 virus, including the imposition of restrictions on the freedom of the general public, such as the recent ban on leaving one’s residence ([Ciotti et al., 2020](#)). By contrasting the numbers from March and April, we can see that visitor traffic has dropped dramatically (-312,131 in this case). The stringent stance that banned foreigners from entering the nation in May led to a record low of 357 tourists. From June to December, arrivals increased again, showing that the government has begun to loosen restrictions on foreign tourists, albeit under

certain conditions and with restrictions on which regions can be visited.

The tourism industry in the Philippines has also been hammered hard. To make up for the 279.5 billion pesos the Philippine government lost due to the tourism business in the first quarter, the Philippine Department of Tourism has begun advertising to Filipinos abroad before the local isolation has been lifted (Centeno & Marquez, 2020). Firefighters who tested positive for COVID-19 while on a visit to Boracay led to the dismissal of the fire chief and raised concerns about the spread of the virus among locals during the early phases of the advertising campaign (Bantugan & Mahusay, 2021). Since President Duterte began pushing domestic tourism in February in response to COVID-19 fears, this puts him in an uncomfortable place. Furthermore, many tourism-related businesses in the Philippines have decided to suspend operations during the pandemic. Seventy-eight percent of the Philippine tourism industry decided to tem-

Figure 2. Actions Taken by the Philippine Tourism Industry in Facing the Covid 19 Pandemic



(source: pwc.com)

porarily halt its operations because of the government's stringent measures in response to the pandemic, and 61 percent of the industry did the same thing because of the drop in business brought on by the absence of visitors ([Disimulacion, 2021](#)). For more details, see the graph (*Figure 2*).

In response to the emergence and subsequent widespread spread of the Covid-19 virus, the Philippine government has established a number of regulations. In response to the Covid-19 outbreak and in an effort to restore national stability, Philippine President Rodrigo Duterte signed the Bayanihan to Heal as One Act (Republic Act No. 11469) ([De Vero et al., 2021](#)). Additionally, the law grants the President of the Philippines the right to enact short-term emergency measures to cope with the COVID-19 problem, such as providing "COVID-19 special risk benefits" to all public health employees and making sure they have access to food and water. by instituting steps to regulate and limit the operation of private or public transport across land, sea, and air, etc., in order to facilitate and/or minimize disruptions to the supply chain. As part of the process of readjusting to the new norm, new health regulations and visitor control laws have been implemented. In order to play, athletes must first pass a Covid-19 virus test, keep their distance from one another, refrain from exchanging money, etc. By doing so, it is hoped, the local economy and the tourism industry can be reinvigorated and reopened.

There has been a major disruption to our regular schedule because as much as 70% of the world is on lockdown because to the COVID-19 pandemic. But we know that quarantine is the only way to stop the spread of the virus in a community. Since it is now possible to work and study from anywhere with access to the internet, more and more educational institutions are making their resources available online, for free, to students and educators in all corners of the globe ([Adawiyah & Kadir, 2020](#)). There is no way for us to continue living without the media's presence. During a pandemic, the media is a vital source of information for the general people because it reports on the newest updates

to the situation at the national and state levels, as well as the government's response. People's subjective realities in their interactions with others are shaped by the media they consume, which in turn impacts their worldviews ([Khatimah, 2018](#)). This demonstrates the media's active role in disseminating information to the general population.

What we now call "mass media" includes both established and up-and-coming channels of print, broadcast, and online news and information distribution. Print media includes things like periodicals and books, whereas electronic media includes things like radio and television. On the other hand, "online media" encompasses any and all content delivered via the world wide web. Unlike social media platforms, the distribution of media airtime is regulated ([Rajagukguk & Olilia, 2020](#)). From a legal standpoint, it must be a legitimate business or have endorsement from linked parties in order to operate a website. Because news, rather than general information, is the primary focus of most media-based websites.

The media facilitates dialogue and understanding among disparate members of a society. People's ideas and behaviors are influenced by what they see and hear in the media, whether or not they are aware of it. The health problem linked with the growing epidemic resulted in enormous conjecture and news that entered the public arena, and neither the internet nor the press can be blamed for its role in spreading this information ([Anggraini & Saptatia, 2021](#)). Since communication messages in the media function are crucial since they can effect behavior and actions, this study aims to examine the role of the mass media in responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and how the mass media are entrusted with disseminating information related to government policies in this process, particularly in the tourism sector.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND RESEARCH FOCUS

During the current Covid-19 pandemic, the media plays a crucial role in society by: providing a platform for the public to

express their concerns about the spread of the virus and its effects on society; informing (to inform) in the sense of “surveillance” or “monitoring” what is occurring in the community; educating (to educate) about the meaning and benefits of the facts while maintaining their objectivity in analyzing the facts; in addition, the media has the ability to serve as a channel for the benefit of empowering the community by spreading information from the government about how and strategies for the community to avoid this Covid-19. This is done in the hopes that the community will continue to feel secure in going about its daily business in accordance with the health protocol recommended by the government through the Task Force for the Acceleration of Handling Covid-19 ([Rajagukguk & Olilia, 2020](#)). In the opinion of the study’s author, the media’s role in informing the public about the ongoing epidemic and how to take precautions against contracting it was critical to putting a halt to the disease’s spread ([Rajagukguk & Olilia, 2020](#)). Similarly, the researcher hypothesized that the media would move people to alter their attitudes and actions. The media should continue to focus on the dangers posed by the COVID-19 epidemic until it is contained.

The next point is to investigate the role of international media in the containment of the Covid-19 virus. Media coverage of the COVID-19 pandemic in England and Germany was crucial in alerting the public to the impending health crisis, as discussed by Rizky Anggraini and Henny Saptita (2021). Germany has been heralded as a country that effectively handles pandemics since the emergence of COVID-19 in Western Europe, while Britain has been condemned for its tardy response to the outbreak ([Anggraini & Saptatia, 2021](#)). The study’s research object is a comparison of English and German online news sources, which have been chosen because of their contrasting tones. British and German national news outlets present the story from opposing angles. Media outlets in Germany, meanwhile, have concentrated on how the COVID-19 epidemic will effect the country’s economy

and population's health, despite the prevalence of stories on health laws and medical reports in British media coverage of the pandemic ([Anggraini & Saptatia, 2021](#)). Differently framed stories in the British and German media can help curb the spread of the COVID-19 epidemic in certain nations. During the COVID-19 pandemic emergency, the two media outlets informed the public accurately by tailoring their coverage to local priorities and reacting to residents' concerns.

The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) has issued a number of recommendations that will be utilized as variables in this research to determine how each country is dealing with the Covid-19 outbreak in the travel and tourism business. The purpose of this proposal is to provide a realistic framework to aid countries in mitigating the effects of the current crisis on travel and tourism, to stimulate recovery efforts, and to steer the sector toward long-term growth and sustainability. For UNWTO's first proposal, titled "Managing the Crisis and Mitigating the Impact," the factors were: Incentivize job retention, sustain the self-employed and protect the most vulnerable groups; Support companies' liquidity; Review taxes, charges, levies and regulations impacting transport and tourism; Ensure consumer protection and confidence; Promote skills development, especially digital skills; Include tourism in national, regional and global economic emergency packages; and Create crisis management mechanisms and strategies ([UNWTO, 2020](#)).

Similar to 2020, the UNWTO suggestions issued since then will be the deciding element in how the country reacts to pandemic situations. Unlike the previous phase, which focused on the tourism industry's potential resilience in the face of a pandemic, this one is devoted mostly to reinvigorating that sector. In this section, where the focus is on "Providing Stimulus and Accelerating Recovery," factors such: Provide financial stimulus for tourism investment and operations; Review taxes, charges and regulations impacting travel and tourism; Advance travel facilitation; Promote new jobs and skills development, particu-

larly digital ones; Mainstream environmental sustainability in stimulus and recovery packages; Understand the market and act quickly to restore confidence and stimulate demand; Boost marketing, events and meetings; Invest in partnerships; Mainstream tourism in national, regional and international recovery programmes and in Development Assistance ([UNWTO, 2020](#)). This study will describe the extent to which Philippines media contributes to providing information relevant to efforts to deal with the Covid-19 outbreak, based on some of the variables mentioned above and also how the media informs the government's role with its policies to deal with the pandemic.

RESEARCH METHOD

This study is classified as qualitative research because of the methods used for data gathering and analysis. Qualitative research can be understood as a framework for inquiry where the data is actively constructed for the purpose of acquiring insight into its significance. To better understand a phenomenon, qualitative studies are undertaken in carefully chosen settings. We'll be using a "going exploring" approach to our research, which means we'll be digging deep into the topic at hand and looking at it from every angle possible ([Muhammad Raharjo, 2011](#)). Secondary source is what has to be gathered. Since the focus of the research is on news stories, the data comes from many news sources. However, the researcher also gathered information from secondary sources like books, journals, and government records. CNN Philippines was selected to represent the mainstream media and Inquirer.net was selected to represent the digital media. Given that the topic at hand was tourist policy, the researchers also drew comparisons from news or press releases released by the Department of Tourism, Philippines News Agency (<https://www.pna.gov.ph/>) in the hopes of bolstering the findings of future studies.

After data is collected, especially news media data, it will be coded using the Nvivo 12 Plus software to help researchers dis-

cover important components of the study they did in 2020 and 2021. To determine the government's response, the data will be analyzed. How the media, rules, circulars, etc., are used to communicate with those in the tourism business who may have been impacted by the pandemic. The Nvivo 12 plus tool will analyze the data and provide a Wordcloud and quantitative results based on the amount of coverage given variables receive in the media. Here we may observe the year's most prominent news stories by looking at a word cloud generated from the most frequently used words in 2020 and 2021 media coverage. How frequently variables associated with policies implemented in response to the Covid-19 pandemic were covered in the news yields the number in question.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Before the epidemic hit the Philippines and the rest of the world, 2019 saw the biggest peak in the number of arrivals. As you can see from the graph above, there was a noticeable increase between 2018 and 2019, with 1,092,446 more foreign visitors in 2019. In 2019 there were many events that attracted the attention of foreign travelers, some of which were music concert events held throughout 2019 in the philippines. Many singers, bands, or even Korean girl groups are holding concerts in the Philippines. Several singers and bands such as Maroon 5, Shawn Mendes, Rita Ora, A\$ap Rocky, Troye Sivan, and others, to Korean girl groups such as Blackpink, Twice, Gfriend and others. Concerts that bring in famous artists who have fans, especially with the Korean girl group, which has a very large fan base, will make many fans from other countries come to watch their favorite singers.

The 30th Southeast Asian Games, also known as the 2019 SEA Games, was hosted in the Philippines in 2019 in addition to music festivals. The SEA Games themselves are a biennial multisport competition with competitors from the existing 11 Southeast Asian nations. The largest sporting event in South-

east Asia is undoubtedly significant and has the potential to draw many sports fans from across the world, particularly from South-east Asia, to the Philippines to watch and support their home nations in the variety of sports that will be featured at the SEA Games.

In 2019, the Philippines Department of Tourism revamped their branding campaign, repurposing the slogan “It’s More Fun in the Philippines” to encourage ecotourism. The national launch was held in the National Museum of Natural History, while the international celebration was held in Berlin at the Internationale Tourismus-Borse. Also The Philippines’ Department of Tourism has launched a campaign called “Save Our Spots” to support the country’s new approach to sustainable tourism by encouraging all tourists to be conscientious and respectful of locals and visitors alike.

With most nations enforcing travel bans and other forms of lockdown in the first quarter of 2020, international tourist arrivals decreased by 22%, costing the global tourism industry an estimated US\$80 billion ([Lew et al., 2020](#)). At the time, 39 countries were actively enforcing border closures, 65 countries had suspended all or some international flights, and 97 countries had restricted travel to foreigners in some capacity. With the ban on out-of-town travel and large-scale public meetings as the policy’s first two targets, people’s freedom of movement has been severely restricted. As a result, many would-be tourists have put off trips to a wide range of countries’ most popular tourist spots. In an effort to contain the spread of the Covid-19 virus, the administration of local tourist attractions has issued a blanket ban on all visitors, domestic and foreign alike. The travel and tourism industry is a major role in many areas, including the economy, the environment, the local population, and the activities of tourists.

The consequences of COVID-19 on tourism are shown in the decrease in domestic and international visitor arrivals. The worsening of the transportation, accommodation, and food and beverage service sectors is the first sign of the tourism industry’s

overall decline in working conditions ([Kim L C & King, 2020](#)). A reduction in income and bankruptcies caused by insufficient corporate income have made it difficult for businesses to fund their services in the tourism industry. The tourism industry and the many subsectors it relies on are especially vulnerable to disasters like infectious illnesses and pandemics ([Lew et al., 2020](#)). Whereas in the Philippines, Visitors (non-locals) brought in PHP132.59 billion in 2020, down from PHP600.08 billion in 2019, according to the PSA's Philippine Tourism Satellite Accounts (PTSA) for that year ([Ilarina, 2020](#)). The PTSA analysis found that all industries dependent on inbound tourism declined in 2020, but the industry hit the most, falling by 80.5%. The services of leisure and recreation providers and accommodation establishments came in first and second, respectively, with negative 80.6 and 80.4 percent, respectively.

The efforts taken to contain the COVID-19 virus have impacted negatively on the Philippine travel industry. Many countries in the region rely heavily on tourism; for example, in the Philippines, it accounted for 12.7% of GDP in 2019 and employed 14% of the workforce, or 5.7 million people. However, projections for the first three months of 2020 indicate a 35% drop in foreign tourist revenue as a result of the pandemic ([Andulana et al., 2021](#)). A number of months after quarantine and stay-at-home restrictions were implemented, travel in the Philippines is still unpredictable. The industry will come to an end as travel restrictions and limits on human interactions are expected to endure for a long time.

The first Chinese tourists arrived in the Philippines in January of 2020. In January of 2020, the Philippines reported what is believed to be the first ever case of COVID-19. The group included a Cebuano youngster of five years old and his mother, who had just arrived in the Philippines on January 12. Between January 22nd, when the Philippines first began investigating Covid-19, and March 1st, when 633 suspected Covid-19 cases were confirmed, a 39-year-old woman was the first confirmed

case of Covid-19 in the Philippines, and her 44-year-old male partner became the second incident of the virus there ([Saphire et al., 2020](#)).

In the early 2020s, the proportion of Filipinos infected with the Covid-19 virus was low enough to be effectively managed. Despite the lack of a formal government health policy, the Philippines' Department of Tourism (DOT) released a cautionary statement asking locals and tourists to take efforts to minimize the spread of the Covid-19 virus in accordance with existing recommendations ([Montemayor, 2020](#)). All Chinese tourists have been barred from visiting the Philippines ever since the first case of Covid-19 was detected, although the effects of Covid-19 are serious, the Department of Tourism (DOT) maintains that some foreign visitors may still feel secure visiting the Philippines for vacation ([Rocamora, 2020d](#)). DOT assures travelers that they need not worry about visiting any of the country's top tourist destinations because the government is keeping a close eye on the situation. For this reason, the DOT will not change its aim of 9.2 million tourists in 2020, even though Chinese citizens are restricted from visiting. As of November, it is expected that 1,626,309 people from China visited Manila this year, up 40.2% from the same period last year.

The travel prohibition to South Korea, Hong Kong, China, and Macau was one of the steps used to stop the disease from spreading throughout the country. The Department of Health (DOH) escalated to "Code Red Sub-Level 1" on March 7, 2020, and requested that a "public health emergency" be declared by the President of the Philippines so that it may acquire safety equipment and implement preventative quarantine measures with the resulting funding. With the COVID-19 virus spreading rapidly across the country, President Rodrigo Duterte declared a public health emergency on March 9 and a "Code Red Sub-Level 2" on March 12. After 30 days of partial closure, Metro Manila has reopened. President Rodrigo Duterte of the Philippines proclaimed a national disaster on March 17. The disaster will last for

six months. By April, COVID-19 had spread over all 17 regions.

Since the announcement of the Covid-19 disaster emergency, the Philippine government has been hard at work to aid the local community, tourism employees, and even visiting tourists.

This support has been especially strong from the Department of Tourism. The tourism and hospitality industries receive funding from a few of them. The Department of Transportation assures its tourism industry partners that it will continue offering assistance in order to mitigate the effects of the current crisis. The Department of Tourism (DOT) is in contact with the Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) and the Land Bank of the Philippines (LBP) to provide rehabilitation financing support to tourism enterprises that have been severely affected by the coronavirus disease 2019 outbreak. The Land Bank of the Philippines will also assist tourism stakeholders through its program named Rehabilitation Support to Cushion Unfavorably Affected Enterprises by Covid-19 (I-RESCUE) Lending Program (Covid-19). The DOT has also pushed for the postponement of employee contributions to the SSS, Pag-IBIG Fund, and PhilHealth in the tourism industry ([Rocamora, 2020c](#)).

The Department of Tourism (DOT) also launched an online training program to help the tourism industry stay informed, deal with the challenges posed by the global pandemic, and aid in the industry's eventual recovery. The curriculum focuses on the following two areas: 2) The Filipino brand of service, which incorporates the seven Filipino principles, or "7Ms," that define Filipino hospitality, and whose success depends on constant monitoring, measurement, and learning from past and present events to enable stakeholders to better plan for the future ([Rocamora, 2020b](#)). The Board of Investments (BOI) also granted financial tax incentives for tourism businesses that renovate and upgrade their facilities for health and safety reasons. A three-year income tax vacation is also included in the tax relief, as well as duty-free importation of capital equipment for MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences, and exhibits) facilities and other qualify-

ing tourism firms (Rocamora, 2020e). The Department of Tourism (DOT) is assisting with the needs of tourists who have been forced to remain in the country due to the Covid-19 outbreak. The Department of Transportation (DOT) coordinates with other government agencies to ensure the safe return of 35,502 tourists (26,550 international and 8,952 domestic) through land, sea, and air (Rocamora, 2020a).

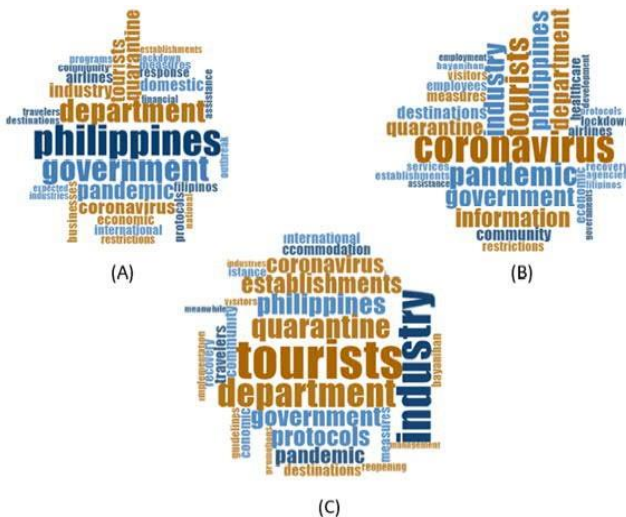


Figure 3. (A) Word Cloud CNN Philippines news keywords about Covid-19 in 2020, (B) Word Cloud Inquirer.net news keywords about Covid-19 in 2020, (C) Word Cloud Philippines News Agency news keywords about Covid-19 in 2020 (Processed using Nvivo).

There are a number of keywords that predominate the reporting from the three media mentioned above—CNN Philippines, Inquirer.net, and the Philippines News Agency—according to the coding results. When I examine the three media more closely, we can observe that they are comparable based on the words that frequently appear in the news, such as “government,” “department,” “pandemic,” “coronavirus,” “industry,” etc.

There are several dominant words in figure 3 which are taken from the CNN Philippines media narrative throughout 2020

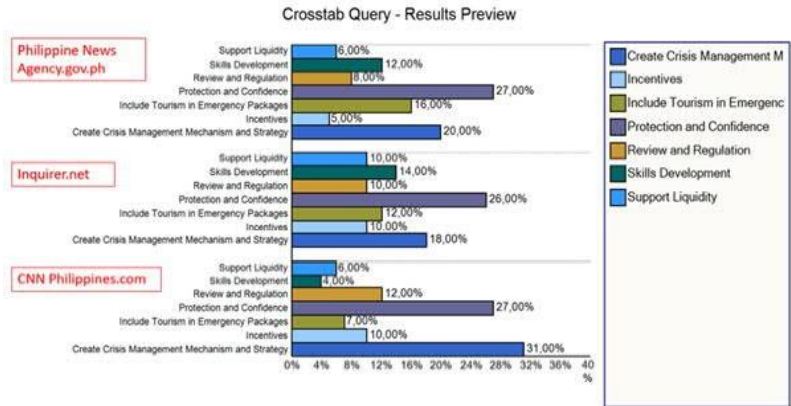
related to tourism: Philippines (96 times), Government (78 times), Department (69 times), Pandemic (51 times), Quarantine (41 times), etc. No country has taken the required safeguards or implemented the appropriate regulations in response to this man-made tragedy, and it appears that no country is ready to handle this epidemic on its own. Because it is transferred so easily from person to person, many nations are trying to find a cure. One such step is temporarily cutting off these links. Among the most searched terms for the year 2020 is the phrase “Quarantine,” which will occur in numerous narratives. Since March, the Philippines has been under an international quarantine known as the Enhanced Community Quarantine (ECQ) ([Bantugan & Mahusay, 2021](#)).

From the data in Table 3 (B), we can see that in 2020, topics like “coronavirus” (mentioned 64 times), “pandemic” (48 times), “tourists” (47 times), “industry” (41% of all searches), “government” (39% of all searches), and “transportation” (27%) were among the most popular search terms on Inquirer.net. The government of the Philippines has been helping both locals and tourists who became stuck as a result of the pandemic’s adoption of regional quarantines around the country. A P275 billion contingency fund has been approved by the government, the primary function of the budget is as a stimulus package for the population, medical services, and hospitals ([Estadilla, 2020](#)). In recent report, the president details how the country’s budget is being spent, with the vast majority of the money—more than P140 Billion—going to the Department of Social Welfare and Development (DSWD) to be distributed to the poor society, every low-income family will be given P8,000 at the outset of the lockdown or Enhanced Community Quarantine program, with the possibility of further funding if necessary (ECQ) ([Vallejo & Ong, 2020](#)). For those international tourists, knowing the current situation is vital in figuring out what they can do, whether they can return home or must stay in the Philippines, whether they are being offered support, and so on. As a result, the term “tourists”

appears frequently in 2020 news reports because media outlets like Inquirer.net and the media in general are vital to the information flow for tourists.

There are a number of dominating terms in the content of the Word Cloud derived from the Philippine News Agency (Table 3 (C)), including tourists (78 times), industry (67 times), department (54 times), quarantine (44 times), and government (37 times). The government plays a crucial role in averting the collapse of the tourism industry, despite the fact that we know that the tourism industry and the tourism sector are ultimately badly affected by this disease. The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) estimates that the global epidemic, as the first of its intensity in a modern age of interconnection, has put the security of 100 million employment in jeopardy. The majority of these positions are available in micro, small, and medium-sized businesses, which have a disproportionately high number of female workers because women make up 54% of the workforce in the tourism industry ([Sharma et al., 2022](#)). There is a risk of losing between one hundred and one hundred and twenty million jobs that are directly tied to tourism. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) forecasts a drop in global gross domestic product (GDP) of between 1.5 and 2.8 percent as a result of the impact of climate change ([Davahli et al., 2020](#)). The government has a responsibility to help those impacted by this pandemic through its various policies, since the main goal of public policy is a collection of actions meant to attain particular objectives expected by the public as the government's constituency ([Anggara, 2014](#)). The Philippine government has taken a number of actions in this issue, including regulating the cost of basic goods and commodities, offering interest-free loans, allocating compensation for front-line medical workers, etc ([Saphire et al., 2020](#)).

Figure 4. Results of Variable Analysis of News Media in Philippines in 2020 Using Nvivo



Because of the epidemic, a great number of people were forced to leave their employment, the majority of whom were in the tourism industry and related fields. During the period of the quarantine, the only businesses that are permitted to continue operating across the entirety of the country are those that provide goods and services that are considered necessary. A decrease in demand has been experienced by the tourism industry as a direct result of regulations and concerns around health and safety. In order to assist those who have been negatively impacted by the epidemic, it is vital for the government to implement programs that provide incentives, financial support, and tax relief. During an outbreak, the protocols that are in place for health have a significant influence on the convenience and safety of vacationers. To ensure that guests have a pleasant and worry-free experience while they are staying at your establishment, it is imperative that you adhere strictly to all of the established hygiene and safety procedures. Other precautions that have been taken include the distribution of protective masks, the monitoring of food safety, the tracking of the health of staff, and full-scale cleaning (Andulana et al., 2021).

Everybody in the tourism industry needs to be able to adapt and be ready for digitization. Since the surge in smartphone ownership and internet access among individuals reflects the increased need of customers in the digital age, the sector understands the importance of providing smart services to boost the industry's demand and supply ([Yeh, 2020](#)). To date, the digital network and state-of-the-art technology have supported the development of contactless systems. Though each nation faces unique challenges, they must all take similar measures to deal with the current crisis: develop a comprehensive exit strategy and recovery plan for their tourism sector; and, at the very least, implement a number of strategic initiatives as part of their national tourism policy ([Kreiner & Ram, 2020](#)). Therefore, it is important to start thinking about proper crisis management processes and techniques as soon as possible.

The findings presented in figures 4 are the conclusions drawn from an examination of the narratives presented by the various forms of media in relation to the factors described in the prior paragraphs. It is able to be seen from a number of processed news articles, percentages that describe how the government manages the Covid-19 pandemic in their various countries. Two of the most important variables that are utilized in the Philippines are "Create crisis management systems and tactics" and "Ensure customer protection and confidence." Health policies such as health protocols and policies to limit community mobility and regional quarantine are carried out in order to reduce the spike in the transmission of Covid-19 ([Rocamora, 2020c](#)). This is in accordance with government policies that focus on maintaining the health and safety of citizens and tourists first. When entire neighborhoods are forced to pick up where they left off, the risks take on a whole new dimension. The working population and the educational community must return to their regular schedules, companies and their workers generate the goods and services that keep an economy running, people can put money toward long-term goals like health and education when

they have a stable income. The reopening of the economy in general and tourism in particular, in particular in the National Capital Region (NCR) through the easing of ECQ restrictions is a very serious matter, as is the risk assessment as COVID-19 has affected every aspect of life in the Philippines and has essentially brought the economy to a halt, science and policy decisions rely heavily on epidemiological models, this becomes the basis for the government in responding to crises that occur in society ([Vallejo & Ong, 2020](#)).

National Economic Development Authority (NEDA) recommended a three-phased program of interventions that would help offset the social and economic impact of COVID-19, one of the many measures made by the Philippine government to assure security and comfort. In Phase 1, the government's health care intervention to the pandemic is prioritized; this response is broken down into three sub-phases: (a) the medical response, which is concerned with how the entire healthcare system handles the health situation; (b) the health service reaction, which is concerned with how the public cooperates with the IATF's guidelines; and (c) the short-term cybernetic enhancements of healthcare system capacity, which is concerned with how the health care services are readily available to the public ([Estadilla, 2020](#)). Phase 2 focuses on restoring consumer and corporate confidence by demonstrating the effectiveness of the country's upgraded health services; phase 3 aims to return the economy to its pre-pandemic state of activity.

In 2021, the Philippines will once again be open to visitors from other countries. The Department of Tourism has been working together with local governments, other national government agencies, and local tourism players to gradually reopen the sector while emphasizing the strict adherence to health and safety protocols. In spite of the ongoing spread of the Covid-19 virus, the Philippines is ready to work with its neighbors to create a "international travel bubble" that will encourage tourism and allow for international travel ([Cruz, 2021](#)). The pandemic is still

present, thus new and updated health protocols will continue to be used. As stated in the Inter-Agency Task Force on the Handling of Emerging Infectious Diseases (IATF-MEID) Resolution No. 97 dated January 28, 2021, the Ministry of Tourism (DOT) is putting together a new protocol for incoming travelers in response to the agency's decision to lift the travel ban on people arriving from nations that have reported cases of the new variant of Covid-19 ([Philippines Department of Tourism, 2021c](#)). Foreign nationals will be permitted to re-enter under specific restrictions as of February 1, 2021, with the lifting of travel restrictions in nations having the new variant of COVID-19.

In addition to reopening the airport to passengers, the Philippine government is continuing its efforts to help those whose lives have been disrupted as a result of the recent outbreak of the disease. These efforts include assisting workers in the tourism industry as well as tourists who have been detained there. Recovery flights, transportation, meals, and lodging are some of the forms of assistance that the government offers to domestic and international travelers whose flights are disrupted as a result of the implementation of social lockdowns across the country. In addition, the government continues to mount recovery flights, expand the capacity for transportation to international and local gateways, and increase the number of staff members in the airports so that they can better meet the needs of travelers who are waiting to board their flights ([Philippines Department of Tourism, 2021d](#)).

Efforts are being made by the government to revive the tourism industry by lowering domestic and international travel regulations. Among the steps taken is a push to attract more domestic tourists to well-known landmarks across the country. The continued spread of COVID-19 in the Philippines has discouraged out-of-country visitors, who are instead planning to spend their money on a trip to the Philippines. The government's Tourism Office is constantly working to streamline domestic travel policies and procedures ([Cruz, 2021](#)). Traveling in the new normal

period will be more comfortable thanks to the simplification of entry regulations, which will also assist prevent people who fabricate documents from entering by using universal verification procedures ([Philippines Department of Tourism, 2021a](#)). In addition to federal guidelines, states and local governments are free to develop their own passenger screening policies. The Department of Tourism issued a statement on February 27 in response to the Inter-Agency Task Force for the Management of Emerging Infectious Diseases' (IATF-EID clearance) standardized travel safety procedures for all LGUs. In it, the DOT reminded stakeholders and visitors to take the most basic health and safety measures, such as using a mask and face shield, keeping a safe distance, washing hands often, and only scheduling operations with enterprises that had been approved by the DOT ([Rocamora, 2021b](#)).

On March 1, 2021, the Philippines began a nationwide vaccination effort after receiving 600,000 doses of the Sinovac vaccine. About 50,000 service men and 250,000 medical professionals will make up the first wave ([Philippines Department of Tourism, 2021b](#)). Despite this, elected government leaders are inoculated in order to bolster public confidence in the vaccination. Despite the fact that an immunization program is already in place, the Department of Transportation (DOT) has once again announced an effort to reduce the length of time that travelers who have been vaccinated are required to remain in quarantine ([Rocamora, 2021a](#)). Immunization is critical to the eventual resurrection of the sector because safety and health are the major elements affecting travel decisions among tourists once activities have fully resumed. DOT also repeatedly stresses the importance of the Covid-19 vaccination for people employed in the tourism sector. Local government units in the Philippines have allocated funds to purchase their own supply of COVID-19 vaccines in order to ensure rapid distribution to their communities and industrial workers. Traveler interest could help speed up the process of reopening well-liked landmarks.

Figure 5. (A) Word Cloud CNN Philippines news keywords about Covid-19 in 2021, (B) Word Cloud Inquirer.net news keywords about Covid-19 in 2021, (C) Word Cloud Philippines News Agency news keywords about Covid-19 in 2021 (Processed using Nvivo).

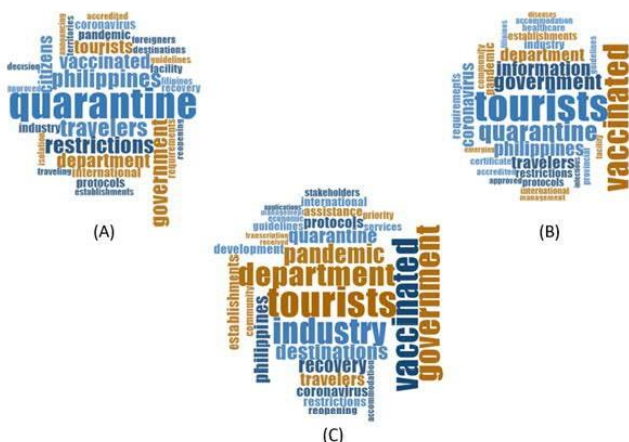


Figure 5 (A), displays the Word Cloud of CNN Philippines' 2021 coverage keywords. Quarantine (used 68 times), Travelers (33 times), Restriction (31 times), Government (30 times), Vaccinated (26 times), and so forth are some of the frequently used keywords. The phrase quarantine becomes more prevalent in the news story from CNN Philippines in 2021 compared to 2020, and the words vaccinated and restrictions are also on the list of dominant keywords. As news outlets like CNN Philippines continue to provide updates on the requirements that potential tourists must meet, the words quarantine, restriction, and vaccinated—which are components of the conditions to be able to return to vacation in the Philippines—become dominant. This is related to the news regarding the re-opening of the Philippines for tourists to visit.

The Covid-19 pandemic has resulted in significant involvement from the state on the part of virtually all governments, regardless of the political orientation of those countries. Many have been left behind by the fast growing economy of globaliza-

tion, and now might be the moment for even more government involvement in many areas, including tourism and issues related to over-tourism. The Covid-19 pandemic may prove to be a turning point event in history, where governments begin to deal with a greater role in healthcare, education, and job creation ([Koh, 2020](#)).

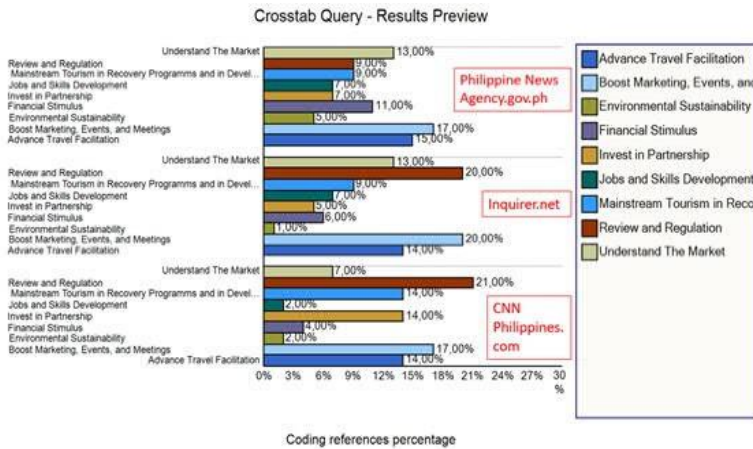
The Word Cloud of news terms from Inquirer.net in 2021 is shown in Figure 5 (B). Tourists (used 149 times), Vaccinated (113 times), Quarantine (87 times), Government (69 times), and Information are some of the frequently used words (60 times). According to the government's intention to revive the tourism industry, a lot of news from Inquirer.net in 2021 was about travelers, both actual and future visitors who might be taking a trip to the Philippines. This relates to helping tourists in the Philippines who are affected by the pandemic and to government policies that continue to ease entry requirements as well as assistance for potential tourists like lodging subsidies, waivers for SWAB and PCR Test fees, and other benefits to draw in both domestic and international tourists.

No matter how much technology is improved, however, it cannot support the quantity of tourists who visit every day. Visitors may skip the lines at popular tourist destinations including the Louvre Museum in Paris, the Grand Palace in Bangkok, and Hong Kong Disneyland by making reservations in advance digitally ([Zhang et al., 2021](#)). A daily quota in terms of visitorship might be set, which would make the journey much more joyful for all if these locations and attractions could go further and compel all visitors to acquire tickets online and do deal with on-arrival ticketing. Expanding holding areas, enhancing tourist travel demand (for a better tourism activities), and cordoning off the site to prevent pollution are all options the local administration could explore in order to better manage crowds (to improve the living environment for residents) ([Gutierrez, 2021](#)). These may necessitate more personnel for management on the ground. An option is to establish tourism police units, like those in the Philippines,

which maintain peace and order in crowded public spaces. Both tourists and locals would feel more at ease knowing that they are there, and everyone’s safety wellbeing would improve as a result.

Figure 5 (C), shows the keywords from the Philippine News Agency’s coverage from 2021. Tourist (53 times), Vaccinated (44 times), Industry (43 times), Department (42 times), Government (41 times), and so forth are some of the terms that frequently appear in news stories in 2021. The word “vaccine” is a further new keyword in 2021, similar to the previous media. The vaccination is significant in 2021 because it portends the resurgence of ailments that were dormant in the previous year. The Philippine government continues to conduct projects to restore the tourism industry and report on the state of the government’s immunization program through the Philippine News Agency.

Figure 6. Results of Variable Analysis of News Media in Philippines in 2021 Using Nvivo



Giving monetary aid, providing tax breaks, and developing the skills of workers in the tourism business, particularly in the area of digital literacy, are all things that have something in common with one another. But at this point in time, the government needs to do more than just train individuals for jobs in the digital tourism industry; it needs to really create job possibilities.

To attract back tourists, information that is consistent, dependable, and readily available must be provided regarding travel restrictions and the lifting of such restrictions; hence, the flow of information must be managed in order for public policy to be carried out in an effective manner ([Gössling et al., 2020](#)). Through all possible methods of communication, this information should be made available to the market and consumers.

Incentives, investment strategies, and cash set aside specifically for environmental protection all need to incorporate environmental stewardship practices. As a consequence of this, the industry is in a position to improve the environmental sustainability of its operations by putting into place measures such as more effective waste management and increased energy performance (including greater energy and water efficiency) ([Anowar et al., 2020](#)). It'll also make it easier for the tourism industry to work with overseas funders that care about sustainability and who are willing to help revitalize the sector on a broader scale. Domestic tourism is crucial to the recovery of national economies, thus I encourage you to go on vacation within your own country. Plans should be established for promotional campaigns and prizes that will promote longer stays and ease domestic travel as it is expected that domestic guests will travel again first and rekindle demand ([Andulana et al., 2021](#)). These can be in the form of lower prices, one-of-a-kind discounts, or even company-sponsored vacations, which are especially advantageous for those who live in or near popular tourist sites because of their proximity to those locations. In addition, set aside funds specifically for the purpose of fostering the economic revival of less developed areas, organize international conferences, and organize regional activities ([Lew et al., 2020](#)).

The study of the story or media coverage taken from the Philippines is presented in figures 6. The analysis is based on specified variables, and as a result, we are able to calculate, from the graph that is located above, how large of a percentage of how the government is addressing the Covid-19 pandemic based on the

news that is reported in the media. The phrases “Review taxes, levies, and laws impacting travel and tourism” and “Boost marketing, events, and meetings” are going to be the two most important variables in 2021. The government is continuing its efforts to reopen the nation’s tourism industry by establishing necessary legislation or policies that will promote the acceleration of the sector’s recovery ([Ocampo & Yamagishi, 2020](#)). This can be accomplished in a number of ways, one of which is by planning a variety of events and activities that are geared toward encouraging tourists to take their vacations in the nation in question. This is evidenced by the fact that the Covid-19 vaccine is currently on the market.

In addition, the government’s dedication to its own regulations to create a sustainable tourism sector is an important factor that must be taken into account as the industry is rebuilt. Sustainable tourism is described as tourism that considers the economic, social, and environmental implications of its current and future operations while also meeting the requirements of all parties involved (tourists, the tourism industry, the environment, and the communities that host them) ([Gutierrez, 2021](#)). In the Philippines, the passage of Republic Act (RA) 9593 formally acknowledged the importance of the tourism industry as a driver of social economic advancement and social assertion, with the potential to attract foreign investment, increase domestic income, create new jobs, and foster a stronger sense of national pride ([Zhang et al., 2021](#)). By boosting sustainable tourism embedded principal in the national history, heritage, and natural inheritances and safeguarding the preservation, and promotion of these resources, the act provides the national roadmap for constructing an integrated ST action plan for the country and establishing the country as a popular tourism hub in Asia and a center of world conventions and conferences ([Sharma et al., 2022](#)).
CONCLUSION

The spread of the COVID-19 coronavirus around the world has accelerated at an unprecedented rate during the past few

years. Authorities are making a concerted effort to stem the spread of the sickness by employing a wide variety of measures, including lockdowns, social isolation, physical distance, mask wearing, suspending schools and public areas, postponing concerts and festivals, and limiting gatherings. The global epidemic has also had a significant impact on the travel and hotel industry. When popular tourist spots were closed, visitors fled out of fear for their health. As a result, the tourism industry experienced a significant income decline. This research uses several UNWTO recommendations as independent variables to assess how nations are responding to the Covid-19 pandemic's impact on the tourism industry. Ensure consumer safety and confidence; stimulate firm liquidity; examine taxes, levies, levys, and regulations that effect transportation and tourism; safeguard the most vulnerable; and incorporate tourism into national, regional, and global economic emergency packages. A lot rides on the UNWTO's post-2020 recommendations, just like in 2020. The present phase is focused on reestablishing the tourism industry, as opposed to the previous one which studied its resilience in the face of a pandemic. In this section, we will go over some of the topics included in the "Stimulating and Accelerating the Tourism Recovery" chapter, such as: providing financial stimulus for tourism investment and operations; reviewing taxes, fees, and regulations that affect travel and tourism; facilitating advanced travel; promoting new jobs and skill development, particularly in the digital sphere; integrating environmental sustainability into stimulus and recovery packages; knowing the market and acting swiftly to restore confidence and optimism; and so on.

The media serves as a conduit for communication between many sectors of society. Media content influences audiences whether or not they are consciously aware of this fact. The internet and the press cannot be ignored in their role in disseminating information about COVID-19, as the health crisis associated to the growing epidemic has resulted in tremendous speculation and news entering the public arena. Finally, the media has the

ability as a channel for the public's benefit during the current Covid-19 pandemic by providing a platform for the public to express their concerns about the spread of the virus and its impact on society. This is because the media has the ability to inform in the sense of "supervision" or "monitoring" what is happening in the community; to educate (educating) about the meaning and benefits of facts while maintaining objectivity in analyzing facts. The results show that the media plays a crucial role in reporting on the tourism sector during the Covid-19 pandemic. This includes reporting on the status of popular tourist locations, such as whether they are open or closed, as well as reporting on any changes to standard operating procedures. In the years 2020 and 2021, health, government, protocol, and other related topics will inevitably follow the most prominent phrases in the news story about tourism. It could have an impact on the travel and leisure sector. When the danger of a pandemic has passed, media coverage of the tourism industry's recovery efforts can reassure tourists and encourage them to resume their journey

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