

Trends in Tourist Services in the Context of the Pandemic

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Abstract

The problems imposed by the physical distance between people and by the hygiene rules, change the structure of the tourism services. These services are in an interdependence with other services such as transport, cleaning or artistic services. The impact of the pandemic on this area can be for an indefinite period of time in some respects and reversible in others. This paper presents the main trends in tourism services and a possible structure of the future models.

Key words: tourist services, pandemic

J.E.L. classification: Z30, Z32

1. Introduction

The tourism services sector is one of the most affected sectors of the economy by the COVID-19 pandemic. Like any economic system, the tourism sector has a response to disturbances. The response of any system depends on its mathematical model and the nature of the disturbances – in this case the COVID-19 pandemic. The size of the disturbance and its duration determines the future response of system, the result being either long-term or temporary changes.

Also, this situation has an impact on the nature of investments.

2. Literature review

In the literature on the impact of crisis situations on tourism, the factors lead to the decrease of tourism caused especially by natural disasters, pandemic diseases and terrorist activities have been studied (Eugenio Martin, Sinclair and Yeoman, 2005).

Any events such as: economic recession, final crisis, pandemic diseases or political problems affected the confidence of tourists to travel to a destination with problems, thus disrupting the functioning of the tourism industry (Hall, 2010).

Tourist destinations that have suffered from crisis have always benefited from a recovery and sometimes even an increase in previous activity two years after the crisis (Wang, 2009).

Until the COVID-19 pandemic, the tourism as a system was resistant to the external shocks. In case of the COVID-19 pandemic, the impact and the recovery are unprecedented.

The relationship between the pandemics and the travel is important for understanding the health security and the global change (Burkle, 2006).

It is necessary for the global tourism system to be reinvented. It is necessary for the global tourism system to be reinvented. The pandemic caused the problems for low income countries, the tourist impact being expected to be considered the problems for low income countries, the tourist impact being expected to be considerably disproportionately higher (Gosling G. et al, 2020, Mair, 2020, McKinsey, 2020).

This tragedy should be a collective challenge to transform the tourism into a sustainable one. Our paper tried to answer some questions related to the COVID-19 crisis in tourism.

3. Research methodology

Methodological approach - To determine the structure of mathematical models, the elements within the structure of these models were identified. For this purpose, qualitative sizes were established as follows:

- Input variables described qualitatively (independent variables) - represented by physical distancing and hygiene rules imposed;
- Output variables described qualitatively (dependent variables) - represented by the services quality and solutions for the development of tourism services;
- Intermediate variables (state - dependent variables) - represented by the chain of intermediate implications. The quality of services is also an intermediate variable due to its indirect imposition by distance restrictions and hygiene.

All these variables are reflected in the diagrams that were made.

Methods of data collection - The data were based on a series of reports at national and international level on measures taken and their effects. Priority was given to official announcements both in terms of restrictions and future solutions announced for the reopening of tourism services.

Methods of analysis - Qualitative methods, based on language and observations, were used to identify the elements involved. The identified elements were put together in diagrams. Arrows were used to highlight the relationship between the elements and the cause-effect direction.

Justification of the chosen methodology - These methods were chosen due to the type of problem treated. The advantage of the approach is the possibility of adaptation and development as new data appear. As statistics appear, quantitative variables may be added. After identifying the model structure; it can be completed either by classical methods or by non-standard methods in the area of expert systems.

4. Context of analysis

It is necessary to know the orientation of tourism in conditions when significant investments are needed in this field. Many existing investments must be redistributed. Before the COVID-19 pandemic, the investments were made in large tourist complexes – the tourist complexes with a high density of tourists.

The new rules require very large investments in such complexes. The question is whether such investments remain profitable in these new conditions. Perhaps, the investments need to be reoriented in agro-tourism or in rural areas with small accommodation entities, where there is already met the social distance requirement.

In order to make such an analysis, it is necessary to develop the mathematical models. We will have the data for these models only after the relaunch of the tourism activity. The first step in the development of some evolution models is based on the delimitation of systems and the establishment of input and output variables for each system/ subsystem.

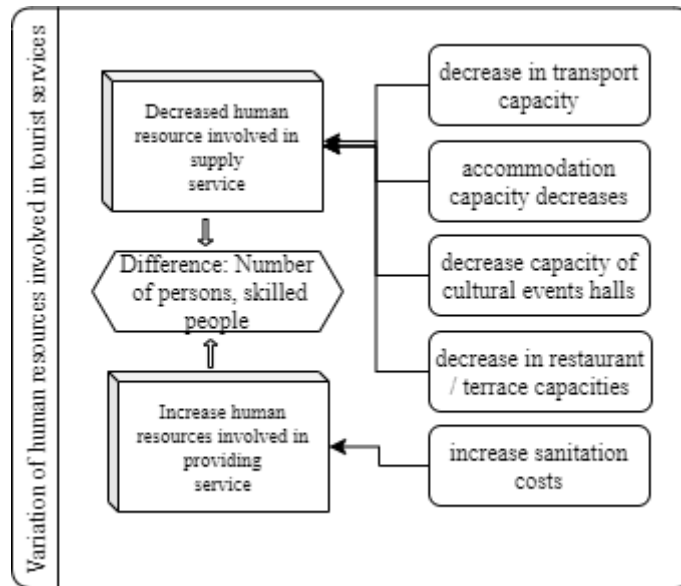
5. Possible evolutions

For a limited capacity, the physical distance measures, in most cases, will generate a decrease in the number of tourists and finally a decrease in the number of employees in the tourist units. On the other hand, the increased sanitation measures lead to an increase in the time allocated for cleaning and, possibly, an increase in the number of employees involved in these activities.

The capacity of the tourist services is also influenced by the capacity of the other related services such as transportation, medical services and others.

All these aspects are shown in Figure 1.

Figure no. 1. Variation of human resources involved in tourist services



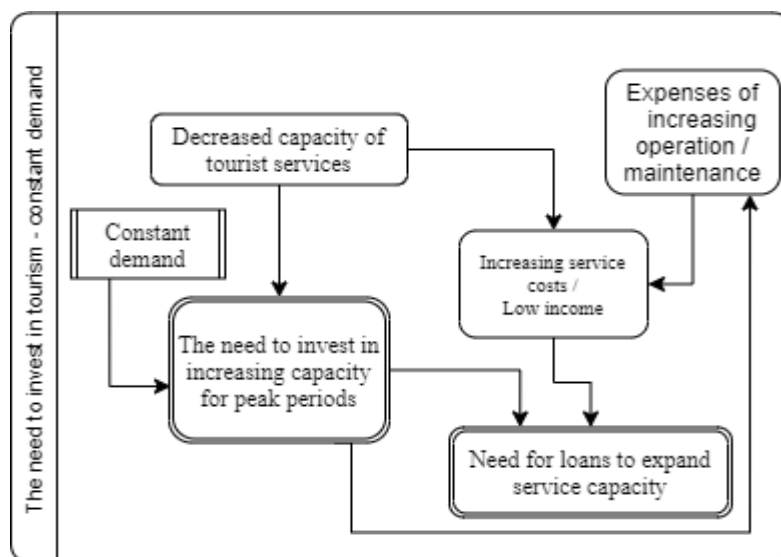
Source: Own sources

A possible model is: $SF(SI, NPI, NPO, NHI, NHF)$ with:

- SF – final number of employees (after the COVID-19 pandemic)
- SI – initial number of employees
- NPI – initial capacity of the tourist services
- NPO – final capacity of the tourist services
- NHI – initial capacity of the tourist services
- NHF – final capacity of the tourist services

The need to invest in tourist services is established according to the new demands. People can travel less than before the COVID-19 pandemic or they can travel even more. Thus, a constant demand for the tourist services involves only investments to cover the peak periods, an aspect highlighted in Figure 2.

Figure no. 2. The need to invest in tourism - constant demand

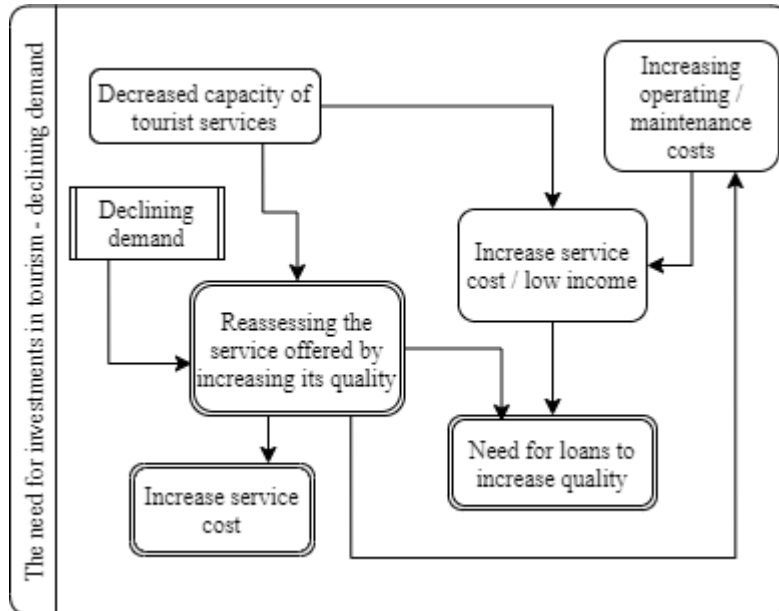


Source: Own sources

The existing capacity of tourist services is satisfactory when the number of tourists is lower than it was before the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, the number of tourists is reduced and the costs of sanitation are high. Thus, the prices of tourist services increase.

In order to increase the prices of the tourist services, in the context of competition, it is necessary to increase the quality of the offered services. These aspects are presented in Figure 3.

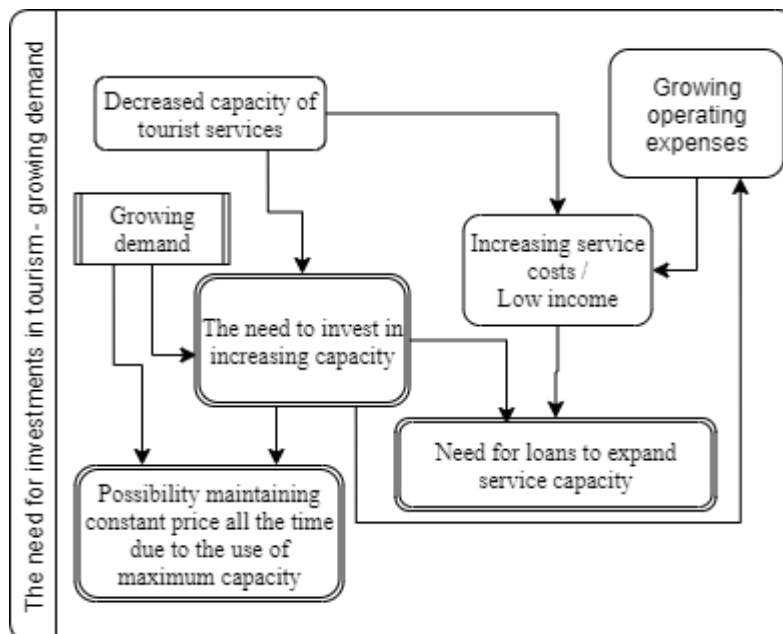
Figure no. 3. The need for investments in tourism - declining demand



Source: Own sources

The measures after the COVID-19 pandemic lead to a decrease of the accommodation capacity. An increase in the demand for tourist services requires a significant increase in the investments. Thus, the small capacities of tourist services become unprofitable. These aspects are presented in Figure 4.

Figure no. 4. The need for investments in tourism - growing demand



Source: Own sources

A possible model is: NIF (DD, NII) with:

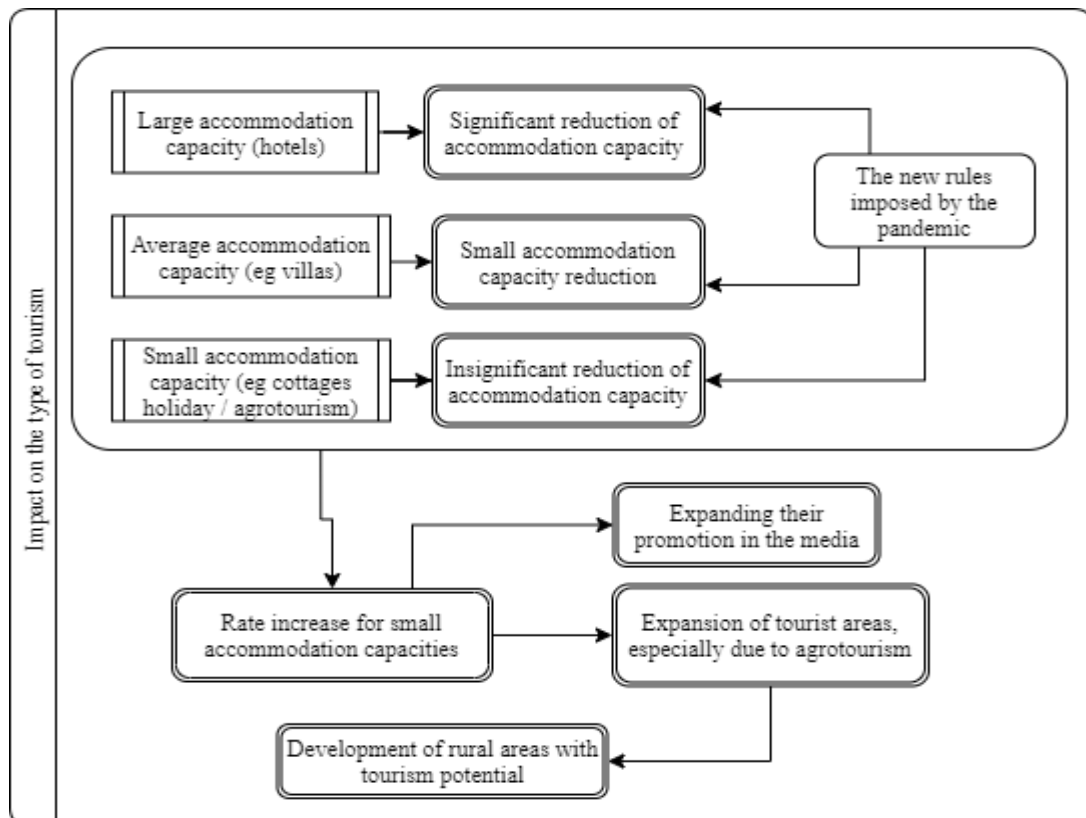
NIV – final investments level (after the COVID -19 pandemic)

DD – dynamics of decreasing the capacity of tourist services

NII – initial investments level (before the COVID-19 pandemic)

The large accommodation units with a high density of tourists are the most affected, they are forced to reduce their capacity – some of their facilities cannot be expanded. The least affected tourist services are those in the rural areas, especially the agritourism services – these are often limited to a single family. With the expansion of small entities in tourism, their advertising on the social network and in the media will increase. A beneficial effect of the development of small rural entities consists in the development of rural tourist areas, many unknown to tourists. These aspects are presented in Figure 5.

Figure no. 5. Impact on the type of tourism



Source: Own sources

The changes induced in the sphere of tourism services also lead to the modification of other services. The dynamics of tourism services influence the dynamics of seasonal transport. It also influences the cleaning / sanitation services offered by third parties.

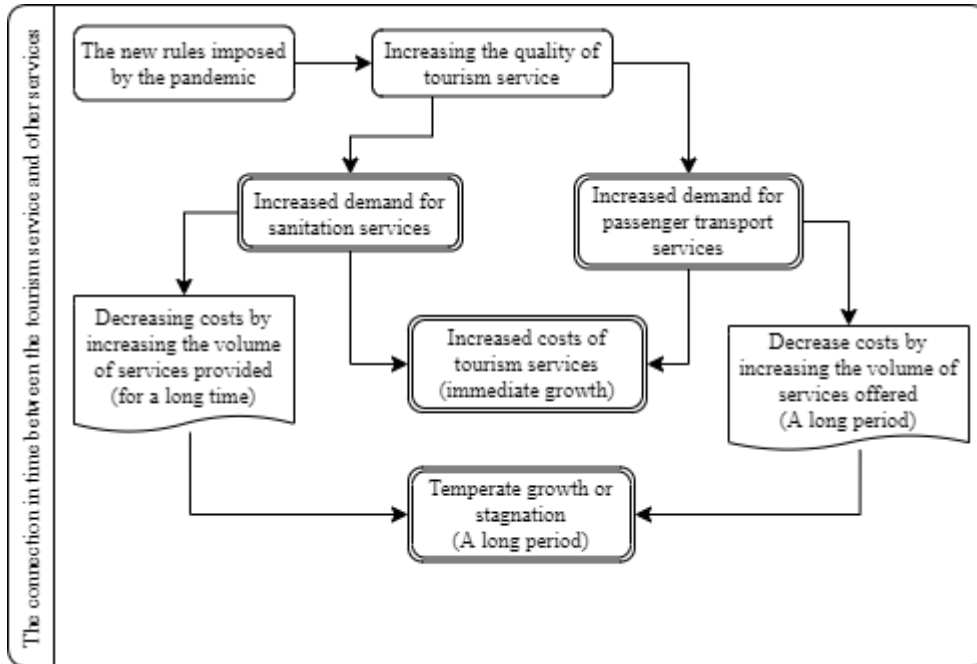
In the short term, the costs of tourist services will increase. In the long term, a high demand for the services on which the tourism depends might decrease the prices for them (by increasing their volume) and finally to ascertain a moderate increase in costs for the tourist services or even a stagnation of them. These aspects are presented in Figure 6.

The short-term model is: CSTF (CSTI, CS_AUXI, CS_AUXF), with

- CSTF – cost of the final tourist service (after the COVID-19 pandemic)
- CSTI – cost of the initial tourist service (before the COVID-19 pandemic)
- CS_AUXI – cost of the initial auxiliary service (eg. touristic, sanitation etc)
- CS_AUXF – cost of the final auxiliary service

The long-term model is: $CSTF(CSTI, CS_AUXD(\dots))$ with CS_AUXD – function gives the cost of the auxiliary service.
 At a time, the auxiliary services also depend on the tourist services.

Figure no. 6. The connection in time between the tourism service and other services

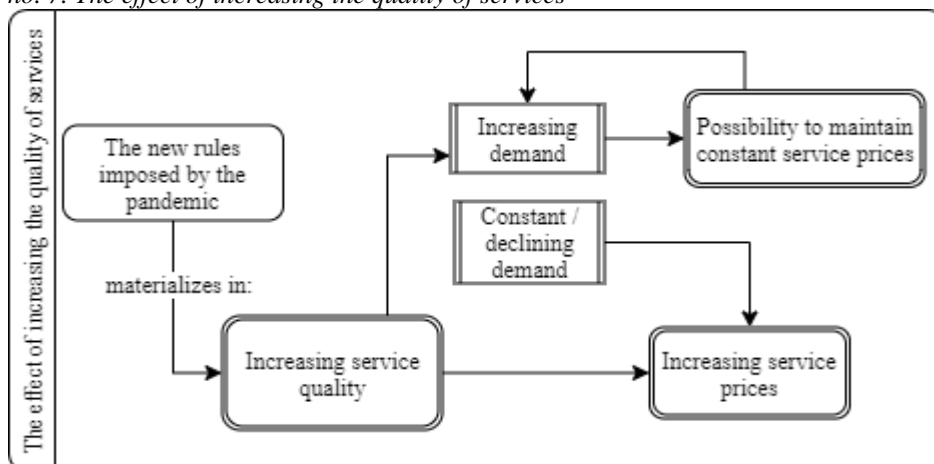


Source: Own sources

6. Conclusions

The moment of the pandemic brings irreversible changes related to the tourist services. The rules regarding the physical distance and the improvement of the sanitation services lead, in the end, to an increase in quality of the tourist services. Most of the time, the increase in quality leads to the cost increase of the tourist services, but the increase in quality can also lead to an increase of the demand of the tourist services, aspect that in the long run can contribute to a stabilization of the costs of the tourist services. These aspects are presented in Fig.7.

Figure no. 7. The effect of increasing the quality of services



Source: Own sources

7. References

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