

A Comparative Study of Tourism Recovery Policies Between China and the Philippines: A Case Study of COVID-19

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Abstract: The global impact of COVID-19 has caused a huge impact on the Philippine tourism industry. Due to flight restrictions, entry restrictions and other epidemic prevention measures, the number of foreign tourists to the Philippines has plummeted, resulting in a precipitous drop in the overall revenue of the Philippine tourism industry. The Philippine government has introduced emergency economic measures and policies for tourism, catering and entertainment industries, which have been hit hard by COVID-19, but they have had little effect. In view of China's experience in this regard, the Philippines should take measures to promote high-quality development of its tourism industry through transformation and upgrading.

Keywords: Recovery Policy; Covid-19; TourismIndustry

1. Research background

One of the main sources of income for the Philippines is tourism. It is operated directly by the Ministry of Tourism, established in 1972. "The president and the entire cabinet agreed that tourism should be one of the foundations of our economy," said Jose Aspiras, the tourism minister, explaining the creation of the ministry. The facts show that the establishment of the ministry is advantageous. The Department of Tourism of the Philippines was established on May 11, 1973. Although most of the organizations are government-sponsored, the private sector is also involved and the tourism service industry attracts many visitors. In 1972, there were 170,000 tourists, which resulted in a significant increase in the country's revenue. In recent years, the Philippine government has taken tourism as one of the key industries to develop. Tourism accounted for more than 12 percent of the country's GROSS domestic product in 2019, according to the Philippine Bureau of Statistics. You can see the importance of tourism in the Philippines. The recent COVID-19 pandemic has also hit the Philippine economy hard, with tourism, the mainstay of the Philippine economy, almost wiped out.

As for the research on tourism in the Philippines, the latest domestic research literature basically stays at around 2000, and the research results are relatively old in today's update. Few scholars are willing to focus on the study of Philippine tourism, so this field has a blank in the academic circle. I think it is necessary to supplement this gap, on the basis of learning from the successful experience of other countries, so that the Philippine tourism industry can recover.

2. The impact of COVID-19 on tourism in the Philippines

2.1 The decrease of foreign tourists, domestic tourism consumption is weak

The most immediate impact of COVID-19 on tourism in the Philippines is the loss of visitors. Affected by the epidemic, many countries have taken measures such as restricting flights, strengthening quarantine and entry control. Due to the epidemic and policy restrictions in the Philippines and other countries of origin, the number of foreign tourists to the Philippines has decreased sharply. According to statistics released by the Philippine Department of Tourism on January 12,

2021, the number of foreign tourists visiting the Philippines in 2020 was 1.32 million due to the COVID-19 pandemic, a nearly 84 percent decrease from 2019.

Philippine Tourism Secretary Bernadette Romulo-Puata said in a statement that the country's tourism industry suffered an "unprecedented blow" in 2020 as a result of border closures and enhanced quarantine measures taken by the Philippine government following the outbreak. According to statistics, more than 5 million tourism workers in the Philippines lost their jobs or saw their income decrease in 2020, with international tourism revenue falling to US \$1.7 billion, down 83% from 2019. Romulo-puata said that in 2021, the Philippine government will focus on attracting domestic tourists in order to promote the resumption of tourism on the basis of complying with quarantine regulations.

2.2 Tourism related industries are impacted

COVID-19 will not only affect tourism companies, but also the entire travel industry chain. The main components of tourism form are very wide, including travel agencies, scenic spots, hotels, transportation, etc., and related to agriculture, landscape, insurance, communication and other auxiliary industries. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected a wide range of tourism companies and their affiliated companies. After the Philippine government declared a state of emergency, many companies are not only short of operating revenue, but also face difficult problems such as bearing operating costs, paying employees' salaries and repaying loans in the early stage. The capital chain of small and medium-sized enterprises with low risk resistance is very likely to break and cannot continue to survive. Especially after the epidemic became more and more serious in the Philippines, the government adopted compulsory closed policies such as ECQ and MECQ, which paralyzed the Economy of the Philippines as a whole. At the same time, the decrease in the number of tourists will directly lead to a sharp drop in tourism revenue, and the long-term continuation of the epidemic will seriously affect the willingness of domestic and foreign tourists to travel, reducing the confidence of tourism. Consumers' requirements for safety and hygiene will greatly increase. Even after the epidemic ends, the fear and anxiety of consumers who had planned to travel will to some extent restrain their travel behavior and affect their choice of travel mode.

2.3 Damaged image of safe travel destination

Since the outbreak of COVID-19, the Philippine government's response strategy has been met with some skepticism. As the Philippines itself is an economically underdeveloped country, its tourism resources mainly rely on island Tours, casinos and so on. Its urban tourism develops slowly, and its urban traffic is underdeveloped, social security is chaotic, and there are often drive-by robberies and other incidents. So in foreign tourists, such as the country's tourism destination image is inherently bad, and now because of the new crown outbreak, it is to go further by calling for a public places such as the Philippines improve entry and scenic spot detection ability, passenger source of risk discrimination, passenger information document to return ability and action after the passenger entry trajectory tracking ability. In the post-epidemic era, in order to ensure the personal safety of tourists and residents, it is necessary to do a good job of disinfection and sanitation in public places and epidemic prevention. Whether these works are perfect or not will greatly affect the tourists' judgment of the country's image as a safe travel destination.

3. Coping strategies of the Philippines during the epidemic

As of September 2021, the cumulative number of confirmed COVID-19 cases in the Philippines has reached 2,509,177 and 2,313,412 have been cured, with a cure rate of 92.2%. However, due to the recent surge in COVID-19 cases, the country has put a new level 4 alert into effect since September 16, with local authorities implementing elaborate lock-downs in some areas as needed. According to the ministry of Interior, one of the 17 municipalities in the Capital region were at level 5, two were at level 3, and most were at level 4. In order to avoid too much confusion, the decision to implement a unified level four epidemic alert. Under the policy, the majority of people were basically kept indoors and the country was in lockdown. In terms of tourism, the Philippines has stopped issuing all foreign visas, including tourist visas, work visas, business visas, etc., and all foreigners are not allowed to enter the Country, which also makes the tourism industry in the Philippines worse. The Philippine government has little policy to deal with the country's tourism industry, apart from the closure, the opening of

Boracay's casinos has been the only move. Some residents and business owners on the island, however, objected to Mr. Duterte's decision to allow Boracay to have casinos. "Why not focus on vaccinations? This way, we can welcome tourists, especially international tourists, sooner."

4. China's response strategies during the epidemic

4.1 Government-led strategy

The intervention programs initiated by Wuhan's government to fight the effect of global pandemic to the tourism industry. In order to deal with COVID-19, on the basis of the preferential tax policies for tourism enterprises issued by the State Council during the epidemic period and the temporary withdrawal of the deposit for tourism service quality issued by the Ministry of culture and tourism, a series of supporting policies are timely issued in terms of financing, labor, subsidies and insurance. Such as: Provide credit and discount support for tourism enterprises with good credit status; Delaying payment of social security and provident fund for employees of tourism enterprises; Establish epidemic situation support fund and policy insurance for tourism industry. Besides, government encouraged the development of online tourism; trial online research and learning travel; developing e-commerce business of tourism cultural and creative products; research and development of tourism products; make online training; optimize tourism service, etc.

4.2 The subjective coordination strategy of tourism enterprises

Strategies implemented by travel and tours companies in Wuhan. In order to deal with COVID-19, all enterprises took different measures, and the researchers identified measures that had a high adoption rates and took them as representatives from all the measures. In these several measures with high probability of adoption, the proportion analysis is carried out again. According to the survey sample, the most common measures taken by all enterprises include: establish epidemic crisis management project team; cash flow first and encourage the development of online tourism; developing e-commerce business of tourism cultural and creative products; research and development of tourism products; set up sales assessment index and reward and punishment standard and optimize tourism service; make good use of various financial instruments; trial online research and learning travel and chain transformation and upgrading, by doing bigger and stronger brand. Among them, "encourage the development of online tourism", "developing e-commerce business of tourism cultural and creative products", "research and development of tourism products", "make good use of various financial instruments" and "trial online research and learning travel" are all come from government policy. It can be seen that the government's response measures are still highly adopted by major enterprises.

Conclusion

Compared with China's economic recovery policies during the pandemic, the Philippine government has been ineffective in this regard. These Chinese interventions have been very effective in helping the industry recover. The government's inclusive and differentiated policy support relieves the financial pressure of tourism enterprises and reduces their costs and layoff risks. It can be seen from the data related to the May Day holiday and Spring Festival tourism released by the government that these measures and strategies have a positive effect on the recovery of China's tourism economy. However, the tourism industry in the Philippines has been in a standstill for more than two years since the outbreak, which shows that the recovery strategy adopted by the Philippine government has not been effective. As can be seen from China's response to the epidemic, to revitalize the tourism industry after COVID-19, the government needs to introduce strong support policies, guide all parties to actively respond to the epidemic, formulate a plan for the recovery of the tourism industry in a timely manner, and restore the confidence of workers. This is something the Philippine government needs to learn from.

To sum up, COVID-19 is not only a crisis and challenge, but also an opportunity and development for Philippine tourism. By seizing the opportunity of the "pause button" pressed by the epidemic, China's tourism industry should learn

from its post-COVID-19 coping strategies to constantly improve its shortcomings, further optimize the service facilities of scenic spots, improve the level of tourism reception, and improve the tourism service supply chain. It is possible to turn the crisis into a driving force, thus promoting the transformation and upgrading of the tourism industry and realizing the high-quality development of the Philippine tourism industry.

Administrator

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