



## Research Article

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# Covid-19 and the Tourism Industry: Critical Overview, Lessons and Policy Options

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## Abstract

Coronavirus pandemic has enormous impacts on the entire socio-economic structure of countries worldwide. It accounts for the epileptic service delivery of many enterprises globally. The pandemic has massive consequences that have to reshape the present and future landscape of the tourism industry. Thus, this paper critically examines the impact of nCOV on the aviation, cruise-shipping, and hospitality components of the tourism industry. It investigates why the tourism industry is the first and the most hit sector by Covid-19. In light of these, the paper provides an in-depth discussion on how Covid-19 affects jobs, man-hours, revenue, income, and livelihood of workers, as well as owners of the tourism industry. Discussions were also channelled on how the impacts of the pandemic on the tourism industry affect global GDP and foreign exchange earnings of countries whose economy relays significantly on tourism. The study concluded that with the prolonged lockdown, the tourism industry would continue to experience a large slide down. The paper posits that urgent policy remediation is necessary to revamp the sector and rescue it from imminent collapse and extinct.

**Keywords:** Covid-19, tourism industry, health crisis, lockdown, job loss, livelihood

## 1. Introduction

Covid-19 that started in the small city of Wuhan in China has spread through globalising tools to become a pandemic and global health challenge affecting diverse sectors of countries. In this paper, we intend to make sense of the Covid-19 pandemic by framing the “symptomatic-problematisation” effect on the transport (aviation, cruise-shipping) and hospitality components/ frames of the tourism industry. There are good and logical reasons to believe that such analysis, as proposed here, will have a consequential drive for shaping decisions and palliative measures aimed at rescuing the tourism industry and economies dependent on this industry from total collapse and “suspended-paralysis.” It is evident that the health sector is multi-sectorial in that it affects diverse areas such as education, communication, religion, agriculture, security, banking, politics, tourism, etc. Covid-19 pandemic has thought nations – developed and underdeveloped, that the health sector is a core and critical industry

that must not be compromised but adequately funded and developed.

The above observations provide a point of departure. It is essential to ask, what changes and transformations has the Covid-19 pandemic brought on the tourism industry in the area of aviation, cruise-shipping, public transportation, and hospitality? Why is the tourism industry the first and the most hit sector by Covid-19? To what extent does Covid-19 affect jobs, man-hours, revenue, income, and livelihood of workers in the tourism industry? What is the impact of the nCOV on the tourism industry, and how does this affect global GDP and foreign exchange earnings of countries whose economy relays significantly on tourism? Addressing the above question will substantially provide the compass and steady the discussion that follows in the paper.

Consequently, the paper provides an x-ray of the dynamics orchestrated by the Covid-19 in the aviation, cruising-shipping, and hospitality components of the tourism industry. Specifically, the paper engages in discussions that reflect on the impacts on nCov on job-cut, employees' layoff, and man-hours lost in some actual units of the tourism industry. Concerns were also on how the lockdown measures adopted to curb coronavirus are affecting incomes, revenues, and livelihood in the tourism industry. Although discussions and concerns on these topics have been ongoing, this study provides a critical and in-depth overview to make policy suggestions for revamping the tourism industry and preparing its future in the post-COVID-19 world.

## 2. Conceptual Elucidation of Covid-19

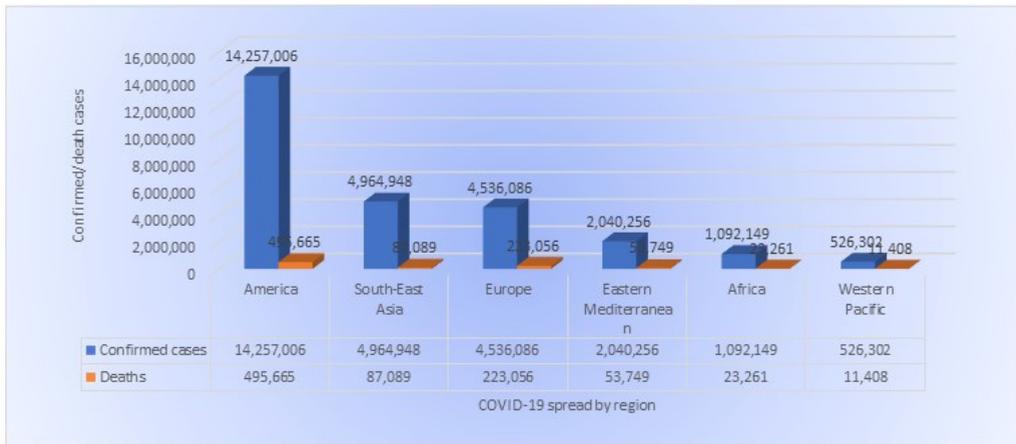
Covid-19 is an infectious disease caused by a novel coronavirus (World Health organisation – WHO, 2020<sup>a</sup>). It is a mild to spartan respiratory sickness that is caused by a unique coronavirus and is transmitted basically by contact with the respiratory droplets on materials, surfaces, and objects by a causative virus and is branded mainly through cough, shortness of breath and fever, which may advance to lung inflammation and respiratory failure (Merriam Webster, 2020). It is a "highly infectious respiratory" illness caused by a distinct coronavirus (Dictionary.com, 2020). Some cases of Covid-19 are mild; however, it can cause illness that becomes serious, leading to death. The mortality rate also associated with Covid-19 suggests that the virus is more deadly than influenza. Officially, WHO on February 11, 2020, named the novel coronavirus Covid-19. COVID here refers to the short form of coronavirus disease, while the number 19 is an indication that the disease was first detected in humans in 2019. The novel coronavirus can also be abbreviated as nCOV.

Most infectious diseases are identified based on their symptoms (Osuchukwu, Agba & Emeh, 2017); however, common symptoms associated with Covid-19 are sore throat, fever, congested nose, muscle pain and chills. Others are breathlessness, headache, body pain, loss of taste and smell, and repeated shaking with chills (Medical News Today, 2020). Covid-19 symptoms are, therefore, similar to that of a common cold. Thus, coronaviruses belong to a large family of zoonotic viruses responsible for a range of illness, including common cold to severe acute respiratory diseases. The zoonotic family here, suggests that these viruses can be transmitted from animals to humans, and Covid-19 is the most novel to make such jump from animal to humans (Lab Manager, 2020). According to WHO (2020<sup>b</sup>), depression and anxiety are becoming common symptoms also associated with Covid-19.

## 3. Origin, Spread and Theories of Covid-19

Covid-19 also known as coronavirus disease was first detected in Wuhan, China on December 31, 2019 (Dictionary.com, 2020) on a patient Wei Guixan and by March 2020, the virus has spread to over 60 countries including the United States of America (BBC, 2020). Covid-19 started as an epidemic in Wuhan, China, because of its worldwide spread, WHO on March 11, 2020, declared the new coronavirus a pandemic (WHO, 2020<sup>c</sup>). Covid-19 was labelled first as an epidemic because it has been spreading among many people in many communities, at the same time. It was upgraded to the status of the pandemic, indicating that the virus has officially spread across the world at alarming rates (United Nations Economic Commission for Africa, 2020). Covid-19 is confirmed to have spread to more than

100 countries across six continents with 27,416,747 confirmed cases, 894,228 deaths as of September 9, 2020 (WHO, 2020<sup>d</sup>).



**Figure 1:** Regional spread of Covid-19

**Source:** WHO (2020<sup>d</sup>) Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Dashboard Data last updated Sept. 9, 2020

Regional spread of the virus as depicted in Fig. 1 revealed that America is topping the chart, followed by South-East Asia and then Europe. Western Pacific is the least ranked, followed by Africa and Eastern Mediterranean. In like manner, countries with the highest cases of the coronavirus as depicted in Fig. 2 shows that USA is leading with over 188,172 deaths and 6,248,9 confirmed cases. Followed by India, Brazil, Russia Federation, Columbia, South-Africa, Mexico, Peru, Spain, Argentina, Chile, Iran, United Kingdom, France, Italy, etc.



**Figure 2:** Countries with the highest cases of coronavirus

**Source:** WHO (2020<sup>d</sup>) Coronavirus Disease (COVID-19) Dashboard Data last updated Sept. 9, 2020

Covid-19 is common in animals such as cattle, camels, bats, etc. however, its transmission to humans is rare. Although some studies traced the virus origin to seafoods and animal market in Wuhan, it remains unclear how this new strain first spread from animal to humans. According to Beaumont

(2020), the origin and spread of Covid-19 are "increasingly contentious", with the United States of America and its allies alleging that China has not shown transparency about the outbreak of the virus. Consequently, several theories have emerged, the wildest and perhaps the populist suggests that scientists at the Wuhan Institute of Virology (WIV) (a biosecurity level 4 facility) and Wuhan Centre for Disease Control (a biosecurity level 2 facility) were involved in experiments with bat coronavirus, from where the nCov escaped and infected humans. Studies by Andersen, Rambaut, Lipkin, Holmes, and Garry (2020) however debunked this theory, by stating clearly that the genetic composition of Covid-19 irrefutably revealed that the virus "is not derived from any previously used virus backbone".

The second theoretical position suggests that Covid-19 is an accidental escape of the wild sample of the virus from Wuhan Lab because of poor safety practices. The theory argues that in 2018, the Washington Post expressed great concerned over insecurity and poor management of the Wuhan Lab to United States of America embassy officials who visited the lab. However, prove that the Lab or WIV is responsible for the outbreak is inconclusive and highly circumstantial (Beaumont, 2020). This is because, there are claims by some scientists that the WIV maintain comparable safety, quality, and transparent standards comparable to that of the United States of America and Europe. Despite these theoretical positions, the reality is that Covid-19 is spreading and is claiming lives across the world. According to Global Solutions (2020), nCov does not regard local and national boundaries in its spread.

#### 4. Impacts of Covid-19: An Overview

The impacts of Covid-19 are grievous on individuals, families, and the socioeconomic fabrics of society. The intensity of nCov on humans and social institutions made United Nations Development Programme – UNDP (2020) to posit that the pandemic is the greatest global health crisis and a defining challenge the world has faced since World-War II. Covid-19 is moving like a wave crashing on those who are least able to protect themselves and cope. The pandemic is more than a health crisis since it stresses countries and has great potentials of creating devastating economic, social, and political crises. Similarly, Chakraborty and Maity (2020) observe that nCov is the most crucial global calamity of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Covid-19 as of September 9, 2020, accounts for some 894,228 deaths globally (WHO, 2020<sup>d</sup>). Apart from deaths, the human consequence of coronavirus is enormous. As businesses shutdown to prevent the spread of Covid-19, job losses and financial concern become the first impact of the virus. Financial market, manufacturing, travel and hospitality industries, are among the most vulnerable, and their closure, affects SMEs and risk millions of jobs globally. For instance, the impact of Covid-19 on tourism and travel obstructs about 10 per cent of global GDP and some 50 million jobs worldwide. The self-employed and employees working in the informal environment with least-pay are the foremost affected by the business closure (World Economic Forum, 2020).

According to World Bank (2020), apart from the immediate impact of Covid-19 on health outcomes, it is crystal clear that nCov outbreak will have long-lasting socio-economic impacts worldwide. Sharp slides in domestic demand and supply of goods and services, is forcing many countries and regions to revised downward their GDP projects. Similarly, the International Labour Organisation – ILO (2020) observe that lockdowns adopted by countries and regions to mitigate Covid-19 have vastly affected the production of non-essential goods and services. It accounts for the reduction in work hours and job losses globally. The fall in the prices of export commodity worldwide has weakened the economy of exporting countries and reduced employment in these sectors.

Covid-19 is exacerbating existing global unemployment situation as it affects vulnerable workers, including women, older workers, workers in the informal economy, and the self-employed. Workers also affected by nCov are young workers, micro-entrepreneurs, migrant and refugee workers. Trade imbalance and the massive outflow of capital as a result of Covid-19 have led to huge currency devaluations making debt servicing and the import of essential goods and services an uphill-task for governments especially in developing economies (ILO, 2020). In the same vein, Covid-19 affect human rights and the rule of law worldwide. The fight against nCov requires restrict measures that infringe on

human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the right to privacy and data protection. Covid-19 renders individuals and groups extremely vulnerable to cybercrime as authorities in many countries are unable to fully engage and detect malicious actors who exploit the current situation to their selfish advantage (Council of Europe, 2020).

Covid-19, therefore, have a wide range of consequences far beyond the mere spread of the virus itself; it impacts on political institutions, education, equality, psychological, religious, human freedom, and the family. It accounts for the largest global recession in human history. According to UNESCO, Covid-19 alters the existing culture and our total way of life. It accounts for the closure of cultural institutions, World Heritage sites, and suspension of community cultural practices. It also obstructs cultural tourism worldwide.

#### 4.1 *The tourism industry and its global impacts*

Tourism is a set of interconnected activities, including the act and process of taking time away from home in pursuit of pleasure, recreation and relaxation while utilising commercial facilities and services (Encyclopedia Britannica, n.d). It is the act and process of travelling and touring (Market Width, n.d). It is the movement of persons from their homes to other places for the sole purpose of catching fun, pursuit of leisure and pleasure. According to World Tourism Organisation – WTO (1993), tourism is a chain of activities of persons including travelling and staying in environments outside their usual place of residence for the purpose of business and leisure, and not more than one successive year. Tourism industry therefore comprised of activities people and organisations involved in the production and provision of services for individuals on tour or holidays.

The tourism industry is an embodiment of all companies and organisations which provide the services, and products used by tourists at different stages of their travelling and touring (Markey Width, n.d). It is an entity, equipped to provide services, produce products and infrastructure that facilitates travelling for leisure, business and other purposes. The industry provides necessary and remarkable assets to tourists during their travelling. According to Camilleri (2017), the tourism industry comprises of four main units – accommodation, transportation, sales and distribution, as well as ancillary services.

The transportation sector of the tourism industry includes – airline industry, water transport, car rental, railway, coach services, and spacecraft. Food and beverage sector includes restaurants, catering, nightclubs, bars, and cafes. Accommodation sector of the tourism industry includes hotels, shared accommodation, camping, cruises, time-share accommodation, and farmhouse accommodation. The entertainment sector comprised of the casino, tourism information, shopping and tourists guides and tours. Connected sectors include financial services, tour operators, online travel agencies, travel agents, and tourism organisations (Market Width, n.d). The tourism industry can also be classified under recreational, sports, health, incentives, and cultural (Tourismnotes Educational Portal, n.d).

The tourism industry is one of the largest and fast-growing industries in the world (Agba et al., 2010; Attah, Agba & Nkpyoen, 2013; Manzoor et al., 2019). According to United Nations Conference on Trade and Development – UNCTAD (2013), the tourism industry accounts for an estimated 5 per cent of global gross domestic product (GDP) and creates 6 to 7 per cent of the overall global jobs. The sector directly contributes to GDP, foreign exchange earnings, employment and income, with developing countries that are largely dependent on tourism benefiting the most. It generates about 10 per cent of the GDP in countries where tourism is a vital pillar of the economy. Richardson (2010) posit that the tourism industry contributes to economic growth, ensures food security and increase countries participation in the global economy. It contributes significantly to the world's growing service sector. This is apparently true in Africa, where tourism accounts for an estimated 55 per cent of the overall service sector exports yearly.

#### 4.2 Covid-19 and the aviation industry

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a catastrophic impact on the tourism industry. The tourism industry is driven by aviation, the cruise-shipping industry, accommodation, public transport industry, banking and financial sector, and the security industry. These drivers are considered as networking-infrastructural facilities affecting the growth and development of the tourism industry. We are indeed by this analysis, creating logic and sense out of a situational challenge by “framing” it in some way (Schon & Rein, 1994 Cited in Hoppe and Colebatch, 2018). The aviation industry is a strategic driver of the tourism industry. International and domestic tourist and tourism workers running in millions are customers of the aviation sector. It is estimated that about 4.72 billion air passengers worldwide will patronise the aviation sector in 2020. This estimated figure is before the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic.

On the other hand, the projected and estimated revenue globally from the aviation industry before the Covid-19 outbreak is put at 581 billion United State Dollars. With the spread of Covid-19 globally, it is estimated that Airlines Worldwide will cause a loss in revenue of about 314 billion USD in 2020 (Mazareanu, 2020). The analysis is corroborated by another analytical source – ICAO. ICAO observe that the Covid-19 pandemic has led to the collapse of international passenger traffic with an unprecedented historical decline (-44% to -80%). As the graphic illustration (Fig. 3) below depicts, the Covid-19 pandemic’s effect on international passenger traffic is more drastic than the impact of the 1973 oil crisis, 1981 Iran-Iraq war, Gulf crisis of 1991, the Asian crisis of 1996, 9/11 terrorist attack of 2000, SARS outbreak of 2003, and financial crisis of 2008 (ICAO, 2020).

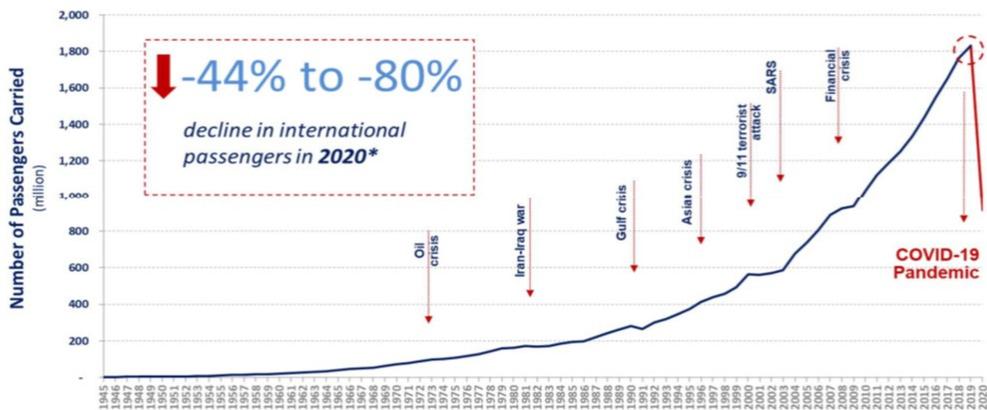
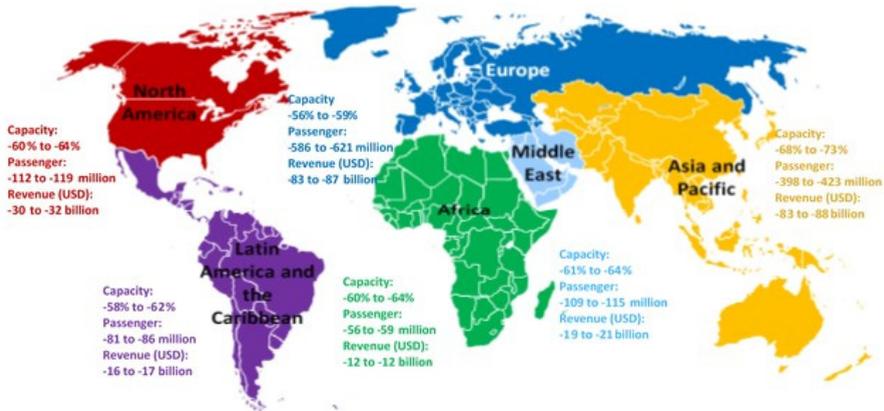


Figure 3: World international passenger traffic evolution 1945 – 2020\*

Source: ICAO Air Transport Reporting Form A and A-S plus ICAO estimates

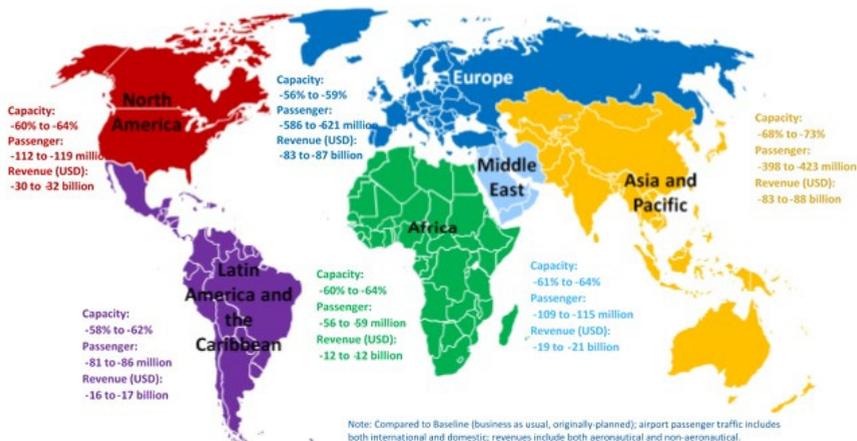
Since the rapid spread of Covid-19 pandemic from China to other parts of the world, countries have placed travel restrictions allowing only air-lifting of only palliative measures like medical personnel, drugs, nationals wishing to return to their country of origin, food items and medical equipment. About 96% of worldwide tourists destination have travel restrictions (UNWTO, 2020). Regions of the world (North America, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe, Middle East, Asia and Pacific, and Africa) have experienced in the last nine months of 2020 a rapid and drastic drop in international passengers, airport passengers, traffic and revenue from the aviation industry. The estimated loss in each region as the geographical map below show runs in millions in terms of passengers.



**Map:** Showing aviation industry loss for each region

**Source:** ACI Advisory Bulletin – Economic Impact Assessment of COVID-19 on the Airport Business (dated 9 Sept. 2020)

Similarly, each region has lost billions of USD from the aviation sector due to travel restrictions caused by Covid-19 pandemic. The worst-hit region in passenger and revenue loss in the statistics presented in the maps in Europe followed by Asia and the Pacific region. Any remedial measure to salvage and resuscitate the tourism industry must incorporate the aviation and transport sectors as cardinal measures to ease the movement of tourists, tourism workers and tourism goods to target destinations. It is for this reason that Higgins-Desbiolles (2020) argues that the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic possess the capacity to revolutionise the tourism industry and the contextual environment it is operated. This point of observation is not different from the opinion of Hall, Scott, and Gossling (2020) to the effect that, pandemics and diseases outbreaks have played a significant role in driving societal and economic changes. As they further argue, these changes could be selective, minimal in some cases and at other times unplanned and yet possessing the capacity of significantly reinforcing contemporary paradigms.



**Source:** ACI Advisory Bulletin – Economic Impact Assessment of COVID-19 on the Airport Business (dated 9 September 2020)

It is globally accepted that the Covid-19 has brought economic and financial human capital loss on the entire world; however, the degree of the loss is largely dependent on the region. As stated earlier in the paper, countries within the European and Asia Pacific regions seem to have significantly suffered the most in revenue loss in the aviation industry and passengers traffic. Post Covid-19 changes are expected in the travel and tourism industry, given the strategic role of the sector in the economies of many countries. For instance, the travel and tourism industry contributes about 10.3% of the global Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and 1 out of every 10 jobs (330 million) held on the planet comes from the sector (travel and tourism) (WTTC, 2020). WTTC (2020) has further argued that collaboration and alignment are important measures in ensuring the survival of the sector, thus, positioning the travel and tourism sector as a powerful transformational vehicle to drive recovery after the Covid-19 pandemic. Recovery measures in the travel and tourism sector should revolve around the following key deliverables (WTTC, 2020):

- (i) Safe and seamless traveller experience which must have the following new normal variables – health, security, technologies, sustainability, and the future of work in the sector.
- (ii) Mapping signposts directed at recovering through creating a dashboard supported by qualitative and quantitative data (travel and tourism data, micro and health-related data).
- (iii) Defining and institutionalising through collaborative effort what the “Global standards for the New Normal” should be.
- (iv) Sharing experiences such as success stories and best practices and drawing lessons from the past aimed at formulating and implementing supportive policies in the travel and tourism industry.

**Table 1:** The regional performance of the travel and tourism industry in 2019 (before the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic):

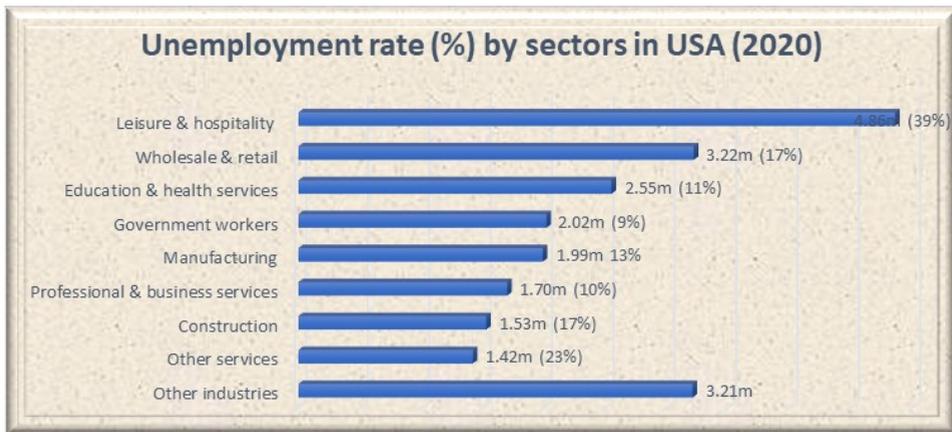
Region	Total GDP contribution (USD)	% whole economy GDP	% travel and tourism GDP growth
North America	2.1TN	8.8%	2.3%
Caribbean	59BN	13.9%	3.4%
Europe	2.6TN	9.1%	2.4%
Latin America	299BN	8.8%	1.6%
Africa	166BN	7.1%	2.2%
Middle East	245BN	8.6%	5.3%
North East Asia	2.1TN	9.8%	6.4%
South Asia	234BN	6.6%	4.5%
South East Asia	380BN	12.1%	4.6%
Oceania	197BN	11.7%	1.2%

Source: WTTC (2020).

Statistical data on the table above shows, in summary, the strategic role of the travel and tourism industry in the economic life of developed and undeveloped nations of the world. The total GDP contributions of the sector run in trillions of United State Dollars across three regions of the world (North America, Europe, and North-East Asia). In the other seven regions presented in the table, the total GDP contributions of the travel and tourism industry in 2019 is out in Billions of United States Dollars (South East Asia – 380 Billion, Latin America – 299 Billion, Middle East – 245 Billion, South Asia – 234 Billion, Oceania – 197 Billion, Africa – 166 Billion, and Caribbean – 59 Billion).

Comparatively, the performance of the travel and tourism industry in 2020 has plummeted greatly occasioned by the impact of Covid-19 pandemic. According to Agba, Ocheni and Agba (2020), the COVID-19 has altered the work dynamics of industries and economies across the world; not sparing the tourism and travel industry where there have been recorded loss of jobs and, consequential

demands for relief and palliatives measures to alleviates the negative effect of the pandemic on nations, families, organisations and communities. In the United States of America, descriptive statistics shows that the leisure and hospitality sector has become the hardest hit by the Covid-19 pandemic. With most outlets like restaurants, bars, hotels closed due to the lockdown, the unemployment rate in the sector is about 39% (4.86 million persons without jobs in the sector) at the end of April 2020 (Richter, 2020). The chart presented below gives further details in descending order the industries in the United States of America that were heavily affected by the impact of Covid-19.



\*This include persons with no previous work experience and persons whose last job was in the U.S. Armed Forces

Figure 4: Unemployment rate (%) by sectors in USA (2020)

Source: USA Bureau of Labour Statistics (2020); Richter (2020).

Unemployment generated crisis created by Covid-19 pandemic is not only peculiar to the United States based industries as the statistics in Fig. 5 below shows. Statista (2020) has revealed an alarming rate of loss of job in airline-related industries in six regions with Asia/Pacific mostly affected and followed by Europe.

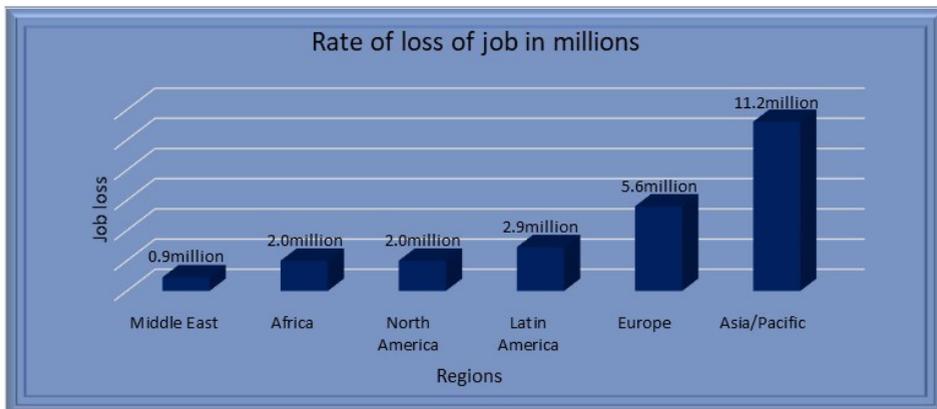


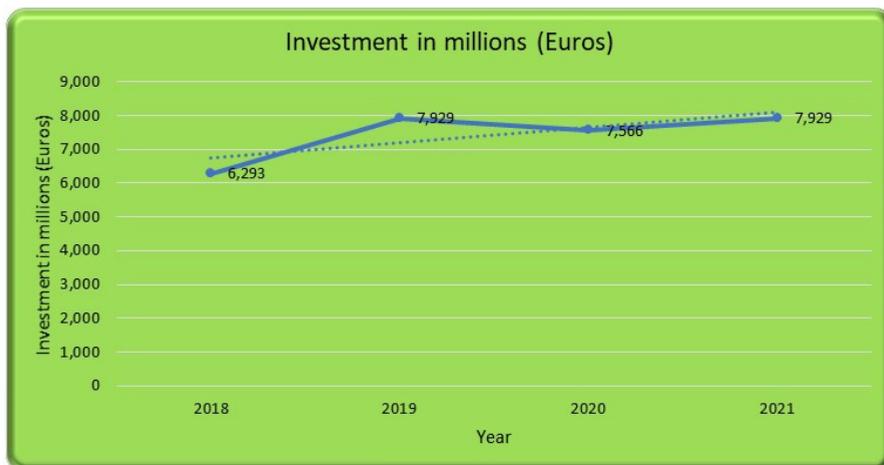
Figure 5: Loss of job in airline-related industries due to Covid-19 pandemic

Source: Statista (2020).

Unemployment and loss of job occasioned by Covid-19 pandemic have become not just a country/regional problem but a global challenge. The rapidity at which the rate of loss of job increases on a weekly and monthly basis is associated with disastrous consequences on the individual, society, and the economy. Loss of job carries with it multifaceted consequences: devastating effect on people's lives, lowers living standards, for parents who have lost their job, it can damage the prospects of future generation; loss of respect in the family and community, loss of vital productive resources to the economy, and reduction in the spending ability of family (Australia Government House Committee, n.d). In most developing countries like Nigeria, loss of job and enforcement of lockdown measures to curtail the spread of Covid-19 pandemic is associated with an increase in crime rate. For instance, the lockdown enforced by the Lagos State Government in the months of March, April and May 2020, raised robbery attacks from a criminal gang called "One Million Boys (OMBs)" have resulted in the loss of lives and properties (in one of the one million boys attack, they killed one airport taxi driver) amounting to millions of naira (Punch Interview, 2020; Eligiator, 2020; Oyeleke, 2020). The question is, how can tourism be promoted in the face of insecurity.

#### 4.3 Covid-19 pandemic and cruise-ships industry

The cruise shipping industry is operationalised in this paper as constituting an important component of the tourism industry. Thus, this attempt to examine how the Covid-19 pandemic has affected the cruise-ship industry. Investment in cruise ship runs in billions of dollars and Euros, making it an industry with great economic and investment prospects. According to Luty (2020), actual and projected investment in cruise ship orders for the period 2018 to 2021 exceeds 29.5 billion Euros. In terms of growth, the cruise-ship industry is rated as one of the fastest-growing sectors of the travel industry with a 20.5 per cent increase in its demand in the past sixty months (5 years). It is estimated that about 26.7 million persons patronised in 2017 and 28.5 million opted to patronise the cruise-ship industry in 2018 (CLIA, 2018; Clyde & Co, 2020). It is estimated that in 2016, the cruise-ship industry generated about 126 billion USD in total output worldwide and employed more than a million workers who earned 41 billion USD as income (CLIA, 2018). The table below shows the breakdown of the total investment on an annual basis.



\* Chat modified with some essential features for clarity purpose.

**Figure 6:** Annual investment in cruise-ship orders scheduled for delivery worldwide (2018-2021)

**Source:** Statista (2020).

Covid-19 pandemic impact on the cruise ship industry is here considered at multiple levels: cruise ship

workers; government revenue through the impact on tax revenues from the cruise ship industry; investors on the cruise-ship industry; and global ocean cruise passengers, cruise ship manufacturers. Investment in cruise ship involves huge capital outlay as figure 6 suggests. Financial recovery and profitability from the sector, therefore depend on a consistent flow of business operations in the sector. This is so important because investment in the sector can be regarded as a type of capital expenditure with huge financial outlays running up to 1 billion dollars (Kizielewicz, 2017). The cruise-ship market is highly competitive, compelling cruise-ship owners to invest heavily in cruise latest technologies to meet changing expectations of customers preferences in the industry (Kizielewicz, 2017). The cruise ship market and industry are seeing this huge investment, and huge capital outlays being threatened in the Covid-19 pandemic outbreak.

The Covid-19 pandemic has laid waste and led to the suspension of most operations in the cruise industry. Several cruise passengers got infected by the virus leading to some death. Cruise passengers have been compelled to be quarantined on an unprecedented scale in isolation centres or their rooms immediately they disembarked. The rapid decline in the capital outlay of some cruise companies has forced them to suspend dividend payment in 2020. Before the Covid-19 pandemic crisis, expected cruise passengers patronage for 2020 was put at 32 million. Without a promise from government financial support as a palliative measure, the cruise industry will experience a great paradigm shift in its changes. This shift will see cruise companies reducing cruise tickets when the Covid-19 pandemic is over as a means of attracting customers (Sigalos, 2020).

Three major cruise companies are currently facing legal battles for the improper management of the Covid-19 outbreak in their cruise ships which cost the death of some of their passengers and thousands of them being infected with the virus. As one of the lawyers handling the case of his client against a major cruisetine, alleged, the cruise-company put money above the wellbeing of its customers (Rasheed, 2020). This is a major setback for an industry that has contributed positively to the overall growth of the global economy and projected to have had 30 million passengers patronage in 2019 (CLIA, 2018). The Covid-19 pandemic has brought a great setback in revenue generation for an industry that employs millions of workers and pays billions of USD as income to its workers. The table below shows employment and income/wages paid by the cruise-industry for several years.

**Table 2:** Employment and income/wages paid by the cruise-industry (2013-2018)

Year	Number of employees	Amount paid as income/wages	Total output worldwide
2013	900,000 jobs	38 Billion USD	117 Billion USD
2016	≥1000000 employees	41.0 Billion USD	126 Billion USD
2017	1,108,676 jobs	45.6 Billion USD	134 Billion USD
2018	1,177,000 jobs	50.24 Billion USD	150 Billion USD

**Source:** CLIA, 2017; 2019, CLIA Alaska (2015)

#### 4.4 Impact of Covid-19 pandemic on the hospitality industry

Historically speaking, hospitality deals with the idea/effort of strangers and guest in a spirit of goodwill. For a memorable experience, it is done within the atmosphere of respect, protection, warmth, understanding and appreciation. This has been modernised to refer to a segment of the service industry which include, among others - hotels, sporting events, restaurants, entertainment (Kendall College, 2020). The hospitality and lodging industry is one of the major drivers of economic growth and social development in developed and developing countries. Its contributions to Gross Domestic Product (GDP), job creation, community development, and provision of social services to customers is not in doubt. Before the outbreak of Covid-19 pandemic, the hospitality and lodging industry is said to have contributed significantly to the economic, social and cultural development of host communities (Go, Pine & Yu, 1994). Establishing a synergy between the hospitality and lodging industry and economic

and social development of host communities, Tsai, Song and Wong (2009) observe that hospitality and lodging industry profit from community development and destination's stability and economic growth through "pull facilities" like entertainment facilities, retail malls, supermarkets, and office buildings which act as drivers and pull factors to draw businessmen/women and leisure travellers and aid in the accentuation of the demand for hotel rooms.

Documentary evidence has also shown the economic potentials of the hospitality and lodging industry to countries. For instance, Go, Pine and Yo (1994, p.50) noted that in 1993, an estimated number of 7.2 million international visitors visited Hong Kong, spending about 6.8 billion USD, which represents 6.5 per cent of the Gross Domestic Product of the territory. To increase the economic potentials and sustainability of the hospitality and lodging industry, technological innovations are harnessed by investors in the industry to enhance customers' experience. According to Salaza (2018), bed sensors are now used to know when customers in a hotel room are awake, asleep and adjust/regulate the room lightening and temperature to suit the needs of the customers. This author also noted that the internet is now used to send messages of a reminder to regular customers and make reservations for them.

One of the importance of the hospitality and lodging industry refers to the revenue-generating potentials of the industry. According to Kendall College (2018), the hospitality industry helps in the direct generation of revenue for local and domestic economies when monies are spent by tourists on hotels, entertainment venues and restaurants. The industry also contributes indirectly to community development through infrastructural development like roads, public transportation, communication network, electricity, public water supply, street lights. In 2017, it was estimated that the hospitality and lodging industry created 313 million jobs worldwide. This contribution translated to 9.9% of the total employment in the world and 20% of all net jobs created in the past ten years. The industry is said to have aided job creation in the arts, culture, theatres and festival industries (Kendall College, 2018).

With the outbreak of Covid-19 and the consequential bans on international and local travels, embargo placed on public gatherings, social distancing, and lockdowns on states and regions, things have devastatingly change in the hospitality and lodging industry. As Gossling, Scott and Hall (2020:1) pointedly note, "tourism largely ceased in March 2020". They further observe that patronage in the accommodation sector dropped drastically by 50 per cent or more due to the Covid-19 pandemic. In Norway, the drastic impact reflect a significant temporary layoff of staff in the hospitality and lodging industry.

Norway's impact is not different from the impact of Covid-19 has on the hospitality and lodging industry in the United States of America. In the United States of America, 7 out of 10 hotel rooms were found to be empty in May 2020. In addition, thousands of hotels were closed down. In terms of revenue loss, about 23 billion USD in room revenue was lost in the United States between February and May 2020. Estimated daily revenue lost to hotels was put at 400 million USD. The workforce in the hospitality and lodging industry also experience significant layoffs. About 2.4 billion USD as weekly wages/earnings of hotel staff is lost as a result of Covid-19 impact on the industry (American Hotel and Lodging Association, 2020). Hospitality outlets like restaurants, hotels, cafes, clubs, beach bars, etc. are becoming empty with some of the hotels donated as accommodation for medical personnel and patients not infected with the virus. Some hotels use part of their workforce to cook for medical personnel (Djeebat, 2020). To revamp the sector from the impact of Covid-19 will entail confidence-building measures. For instance, building customers confidence in the services rendered may involve transparent government certification and clearance and the maintenance of strict environmental cleanliness around and within the sector's facilities.

In Africa, hotel owners are offering their facilities as isolation centres and medical facilities for the treatment of Covid-19 patients. Regaining public confidence in such facilities after the outbreak will involve, among others. Certification of such hotels for safe public use by the government and associated professional bodies. As a prognosis for addressing the Covid-19 pandemic and global solidarity actionable measures has been recommended by scholars (Hanaba, Mysechko & Bloshcynskiy, 2020). This could take the form of information-sharing on how best to address the pandemic, exchange

medical and health professionals and financial support among countries from private organisations and non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to families and states. The global and solidarity effort will only succeed when it is transparently executed without a hidden agenda.

## 5. Policy Options for Revamping the Tourism Industry

Covid-19 has no doubt changed the socio-economic structures and operations of many enterprises, especially in the tourism industry. The industry was indeed the first economic casualty of Covid-19. Charting a new course for the industry is important to avoid emanate collapse of the sector. Also, the fact that the tourism industry, like many others, will never be the same again makes policy uptake to reinventing the sector in a post-COVID-19 era very important and inevitable. The first measure towards revamping the tourism industry is to rebuild tourist and stakeholder's confidence in the sector. Governments through publicity campaign must rebuild public trust on the company. Layoff workers and intending ones must be assured of job security I the tourism industry.

The financial commitment is also necessary to recapitalised stakeholders and supports the operations of the industry. This will enable them to call back layoff staff, pay outstanding wages, renovate and service existing facilities and machines/equipment. It will also help operators of tourism industry slide down charges, thereby stimulating huge travelling and leisure-seeking behaviour among tourists where lockdown are relaxed. Collaboration between operatives, government, and donor agencies is necessary to meet the financial obligations of the industry after the lockdown. Collaboration here should go beyond finance to sharing of ideas and strategies on how to better the industry and survive in the face of future challenges. Economic and social policies that support these collaborations and cooperation among stakeholders should be put in place by governments worldwide.

Safety policies should also be put in place to secure group tours. For instance, most Chinese tourists, students and people in the same profession prefer travelling together to share the experience (Bhaya, 2020), and this is not likely to stop because of Covid-19. Therefore, post Covid-19 tourism policies worldwide should include measures to protect this set of tourists.

Advanced telecommunication technology should be adopted in the tourism industry. "Cloud-based property management systems" that reduces the social presence and promote efficiency should be adopted in the industry. This will promote remote working or teleworking, reduce cost and promote social distancing in case of future occurrence of epidemic or pandemic. Operators of tourism industry can manage their operation or business anywhere anytime with ease. This will also help build psychological confidence in tourists in the area of health safety and security.

Meal and service delivery should be encouraged. Hoteliers and restaurants should focus on delivery meals to customers who may still be afraid of mixing freely with others despite safety precautions or measures provided by government and operators of the hospitality industry. This suggests that the tourism industry should adopt non-contact order and service delivery, including ordering through apps and e-payment systems.

Since the average recovery time for tourists to visit destinations according to World Travel and Tourism Council (2020) is usually 19 months, countries who rely heavily on foreign tourism for revenue will be most hit. Consequently, World Bank and other international financial organisations should engage such countries by providing low-interest loans and financial aids that will enable them to survive the 19 months waiting period and still return to their tourism business after Covid-19. It will help affected countries to offset the damage of the pandemic on their tourism industry and meet their immediate financial need.

## 6. Conclusion

The tourism industry is the worst-hit sector amid the nCov crisis. And remarkable evidence and predictions abound which suggests that the global pandemic could have a long-lasting impact on the industry. As Covid-19 continue to hit the industry hard from all over the world, there is apparently

blunt future for the sector. Meaning, more job cut, loss of revenue, income and livelihood globally. The opportunity to revamp and return the industry to normal levels depends strongly on policy options adopted by stakeholders. It requires a tri-partite action of the government and its agencies, operators of the tourism industry, and international monetary and donor organisations. Also, governments in different countries should as a matter of urgency make policy that rebuilds the public, workers and operatives' confidence in the tourism industry. Again, strategic cooperation among stakeholders should be encouraged. Note sharing that encourages the utilisation of advanced technology in the industry should be supported.

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