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WAQF and Tourism Industry Sustainability: Post-Pandemic COVID-19

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Abstract: This study attempts to address whether waqf fund, social-cultural, or transversal pillars can contribute to tourism industry sustainability after the COVID-19 pandemic for both Malaysia and Indonesia. Questionnaires were distributed online to the employees who work in the tourism industry. The result indicates that the social-cultural pillar should be the focus of Malaysia and Indonesia for the tourism industry's sustainability after the COVID-19 pandemic. The responses obtained reveal that the respondents believed that better local facilities and infrastructure could improve the social-cultural pillar; therefore, it can pull tourists to travel again. This study contributes to the body of knowledge by conforming that the social-cultural pillar is essential for the tourism sector's Sustainability in both countries. This idea benefits the policymakers, the tourism industry itself, and other stakeholders because it provides an improved understanding of the importance of the social-cultural pillar for the Sustainability of the tourism industry. This study offers useful insight into waqf and tourism industry sustainability in the post-pandemic COVID-19 in Malaysia and Indonesia.

Keywords: *COVID-19; waqf; tourism; social-cultural pillar; survey.*

1. Introduction

Travel and tourism play a crucial role in the economy by making substantial direct and indirect financial contributions. Their contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of numerous countries globally is significant. In the case of Malaysia and Indonesia, the economies are mostly reliant on the tourism sector. Nevertheless, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant adverse effect on the tourism industry. As a consequence of the implementation of travel restrictions and the closing of tourist borders, Malaysia's tourism sector had a significant decline in tourist expenditure amounting to around RM45 billion during the initial six months of 2020 (Perimbanayagam, 2020). Furthermore, this downturn resulted in the loss of 12,000 jobs, which accounts for approximately 6% of the industry's total workforce (Ganesan, 2021). The worldwide quarantine measures implemented in response to the COVID-19 pandemic have had significant repercussions on individuals' means of livelihood and the global economic landscape (Ocheni, Agba, Agba & Eteng, 2020).

The COVID-19 pandemic has led to restrictions on travel as a consequence. The increasing prevalence of newly identified cases of COVID-19 has led to constant changes in policies and shifts in individual behavior (Hao, Bai, & Sun, 2021). Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about a health and economic catastrophe that poses numerous unforeseen challenges for the tourism sector, encompassing the management of operations and the sustainability of the enterprise in the long run. The tourism industry has always been impacted by natural disasters and health emergencies, but these effects have usually been minor and controllable. However, the global scale of the COVID-19 pandemic has initiated a chain reaction that has had a profound and widespread influence on the whole industry. Fighting against these effects is no longer an option (Ocheni, Agba, Agba & Eteng, 2020).

The post-COVID-19 pandemic necessitates the implementation of proactive measures by both Malaysia and Indonesia to revive their respective tourism sectors and regain their positions as industry leaders. Nevertheless, this demands a rise in governmental expenditures. Hence, a potential approach to mitigate the challenges related to expenditure is to incorporate effective waqf frameworks that could offer support to this sector. This is because the funds of the governments might be allocated towards essential public projects. Waqf, or "religious endowment," is recognized by Islamic law. Cizacka's (2000) analysis emphasizes the potential of the waqf model to effectively mitigate government expenditures, thereby minimizing the need for borrowing to finance various projects. The efficacy of Waqf has been substantiated across various industries,

yielding various benefits. The primary objective is to enhance the well-being of individuals through the enhancement of the economy (Htay, Rashid, Adnan & Kameel, 2012).

Despite the numerous steps undertaken to bolster the tourist sectors of Malaysia and Indonesia, there remains ample potential to further boost their contributions. For instance, industries such as food service and hospitality establishments. Therefore, the government must maintain the many tourist attractions, facilities, and services provided to both domestic and international visitors to ensure the long-term viability of the tourism industry, which may result in an escalation of government spending. While tourism contributes to economic revenue, it is important to note that government spending on this sector tends to rise. Hence, to alleviate the financial strain on the government and promote the long-term viability of the tourism sector, the implementation of Waqf should be considered. Malaysia and Indonesia have significant potential for the application of waqf, as highlighted by Megat Abd. Rahman and Othman (2006). However, it is worth noting that waqf remains largely underutilized, particularly in the context of managing the tourism industry. Presently, waqf has been employed in various sectors, including agriculture, education, and the health business (Othman, 2017). The study conducted by Yakubu and Aziz (2019) demonstrates the apparent and expansive role of waqf in providing support to financial institutions, facilities, and various other sectors.

The study of tourism sustainability encompasses an examination of the social-cultural pillar (Boksberger & Laesser, 2007) as well as the transversal pillars (Nunkoo, 2017). Buonincontri et al. (2017) analyzed the co-creation process experience in tourism destinations, specifically focusing on the social-cultural pillars. Balbi et al. (2013) have investigated major techniques to adjust to the changing demands in the tourism business. Furthermore, the study conducted by Lee and Hsieh (2016) examined sustainable tourism indicators through a social-cultural lens, specifically focusing on the aspects of the environment and stakeholder relationships. The primary objective of any sustainable community is to advance the overall welfare of individuals within their surrounding environment. Lastly, in the context of the tourism business, it is imperative to direct attention towards the significant concern of disasters. Khazai et al. (2017) have presented a framework for disaster recovery, where the prioritization of the social-cultural pillar is evident.

The transversal pillars of governance, safety and security, destination planning, infrastructure services, and user intensity are crucial components for the development of tourism. To ensure the sustainable development of the sector, it is necessary to properly integrate the management process and planning, as highlighted by Riensche et al. (2019). Tourism, in particular, has been shown to attract rapid media attention. Consequently, any negative impact on the security reputation of a tourist-generating location is likely to have subsequent repercussions on tourism activity. In the event that media coverage of civil disturbance leads to violence in a particular location, there would likely be a decline in both tourist arrivals and revenue generated. Nevertheless, both factors play a crucial role in enhancing the tourism business, ensuring safety, and maintaining security.

Hence, the present study endeavors to investigate the potential contribution of waqf funds, social-cultural factors, and transversal pillars to the viability of the tourism business in Malaysia and Indonesia in the aftermath of the COVID-19 epidemic. This study aims to provide valuable insights by examining the essential components of the waqf fund and assessing the perceptions of stakeholders in the Tourism industry regarding its potential. The aforementioned findings have the potential to provide valuable insights for future study endeavors related to the intersection of waqf and tourism. Such investigations hold promise for the advancement of both the countries under consideration as well as their neighboring counterparts. Assume that the waqf fund can be used; the government's expenditure structure stands to benefit from the generation of sustainable long-term income through tourism services and infrastructures. This would enable the government to allocate more resources towards other crucial sectors.

The structure of the paper is organized into five distinct sections. The research commences with an introductory section followed by a comprehensive examination of the existing literature. Subsequently, the subsequent parts will present the technique employed in the study as well as the research findings obtained. The last part provides recommendations.

2. Literature Review

Sustainability of the Tourism Industry: The significance of tourism in Malaysia and Indonesia is undeniable, as it has been recognized as a crucial catalyst for growth in the service sectors (Adinugraha et al., 2021; Chin-Hong et al., 2018). The sectors are recognised as significant drivers of economic expansion. It also serves as a stimulus for economic growth and makes a significant financial contribution to the nation. Tourism functions grow for environmental restoration, urban growth, and biodiversity conservation (Parlindungan, Sukwika, & Manurung, 2021; Elliott & Mann, 2005). In addition, it is also for the development of rural areas and infrastructure (Parlindungan, Sukwika, & Manurung, 2021; Elliott & Mann, 2005). Bhatia (2004) emphasized the importance of efficient tourism management skills in achieving maximum economic impacts on the tourism industry.

Tourism is widely seen as a significant global priority, as it contributes significantly to the economic prosperity of various countries. Tourism is intrinsically connected to the concept of long-term sustainability. The COVID-19 pandemic, as documented by Niewiadomski (2020), brought an abrupt halt to activity within the tourism sector for a prolonged period of time. The post-pandemic era will witness a notable divergence from the pre-outbreak period. The concept of sustainable development has been emphasized by many experts for a long time. In 1987, the World Commission on Environment and Development raised the issue when it proposed the idea of the economy's development and its relationship to the environment in the long run. Sustainable growth entails a process of transitioning that involves implementing structural enhancements, harnessing resources through exploration, advancing technological capabilities, and making investments in alignment with societal demands. The creation of sustainable tourism aims to enhance the value of all facets of the tourism business.

Moreover, sustainable tourism can be defined as a framework for the growth of tourism that guarantees the long-term availability of economic resources, natural resources, and social-cultural aspects for the benefit of future generations. Sustainable tourism, in turn, has the ability to provide long-term support for both the local social culture and economy, encompassing both present and future advantages. This can be achieved while simultaneously addressing the essential needs of the communities and the tourism industry. The concept of sustainable tourism encompasses several essential aspects, including social culture, economy, transversality, and climate, which must be harmoniously aligned with one another.

Waqf Fund: The term "waqf" refers to the act of halting, containing, or safeguarding something, and its etymology may be traced back to the Arabic root verb (Çizakça, 1998). The considerable endowment resources of waqf led to the establishment of several programs that were financed through waqf, encompassing infrastructure projects such as highways, residential developments, and numerous other initiatives. It has been proven that in many Middle East cities, their services were established using waqf. It can be viewed that it has generated economic activity while, at the same time, the communities will benefit from it (Alhabshi, 1991).

The components of waqf consist of The Donor or Endower (Waqif), the Beneficiaries (Mawquf Alayh), the Waqf institution or Trustee (Mutawalli), and the Corpus/endowed property (Mawquf). A contributor, who decides to give his wealth as Waqf for a specific purpose is called 'Waqif'. The original capital (property or cash Waqf) given by the Waqif is called 'Mawquf' (corpus/endowed property). Waqif strictly specifies how the corpus should be used or spent. The amount of the principal capital, corpus, and the reason for which it is endowed and the wide range of various states of the board are enrolled in a deed of endowment submitted to the authorities. Thus, the privately gathered wealth of a devout Muslim turns into God's property. The Waqif carefully specifies how the yearly income of the Waqf should be spent. This income (usufruct) might be dispensed totally for a devout reason, or to a group of recipients (beneficiaries). The administration of the Waqf is endowed to Waqf institutions or trustees, 'Mutawalli' who oversee the Waqf property to the wellbeing of the 'Mawquf Alayh' (recipients). The main duty of Mutawalli is to preserve the property and maximize the revenues of the beneficiaries.

The economic significance of travel and tourism is substantial, as it exerts a notable direct impact on the economies of numerous countries globally. The combined effects of indirect and induced impacts resulting

from travel and tourism have made a significant contribution to the overall Gross Domestic Product (GDP). According to Obaidullah and Khan (2008), the waqf model has been identified as a potential novel approach for financing the tourism industry, offering an alternative to reliance on government finances. The utilization of waqf has demonstrated its significance as a crucial approach for ensuring the long-term viability of constructed projects. In Malaysia, a total value of US$58 million has been directly contributed by 24 waqf projects implemented by JAWHAR and the Yayasan Wakaf Malaysia. Among the total of 24 projects, the majority, specifically 19 projects, related to physical development initiatives, while the remaining 5 projects were categorized as non-physical endeavors. The establishment of the JAWHAR project has demonstrated its efficacy in supporting the government's efforts to enhance the nation's economy through targeted interventions in five key domains: education, economy, healthcare, faith, and shelter (hospitality).

The Waqf institution assumes a significant role in facilitating an equitable distribution of wealth and income within the economy. According to Nik Hassan (2008), the Waqf fund has the potential to facilitate the equitable allocation of income by means of voluntary contributions from the affluent towards public objectives. The efficacy of voluntary solutions surpasses that of tax allocation and government transfer spending due to the higher costs associated with implementing tax instruments. The government will face undue burdens as a result of inadequate tax formulation, leading to increased costs associated with tax collection. Moreover, the transfer of government funding incurs significant costs. Conversely, the costs associated with collecting in the form of waqf are expected to be minimal, often requiring no expenditure at all. According to Baskan (2002), the Economic Theories of Redistribution distinguish redistributive agents within the community into two distinct kinds. Numerous economic theories align with the aforementioned category, although with a scarcity of theories that explicitly acknowledge individuals and private entities as agents involved in the process of redistribution.

Furthermore, the vitality of the waqf system and its mechanism is likely to make significant contributions to economic development in the near future, while also helping to limit government participation in the economy during the COVID-19 recovery period. The more waqf monies gathered for community development projects, the less government engagement will be required for those projects (Mohammad Arif, 2014). Therefore, the following hypothesis is developed:
H1: There is a significant relationship between the waqf fund and the Sustainability of the tourism industry in the post-pandemic COVID-19.

Social-Cultural Pillar: In a social-cultural pillar, Lee and Hsieh (2016) focus on stakeholder-environment relationships. The fundamental goal of any sustainable community is to improve human well-being by enhancing both the standard of living and the environment. That is the priority of the cultural pillar as art, culture, and heritage are significantly important in infusing beauty into daily lives. In addition, they also help to foster individual and community identity, social cohesion, and the creation of "social capital." A community is who shares a similar culture, principles, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status and lives in the same geographical area (Pacione, 2009). Community participation in heritage conservation can help communities resolve issues between their needs and interests, resulting in improved economic expansion and quality of life (Sirisrisak, 2009). Furthermore, participation by communities enhances their feeling of belonging, fosters social networks, and teaches a greater knowledge and community value appreciation (Jaafar et al., 2015; Nicholas et al., 2009).

Tourism provides both direct and indirect job opportunities, such as accommodations, food outlets, airline companies, and cruise ships, which employ people directly by interacting with tourists and providing services to them. It is unique among major industries in terms of job creation, and resistance to downturns in the economy, and offers a significant source of employment for youth, females, and minorities. This situation happened because it employs people of all skill levels, and the travel and tourism industry has been established to be a reputable potential job source for anyone in the community (Page, 2005; Harsel, 1994). Tourism can generate three types of jobs (Harsel, 1994). For starters, direct employment is formed as a result of visitor spending, and tourism activity is directly supported. Employments are created in hotels as travellers and tourists stay there and need to be served. Second, indirect employment refers to jobs that are created within the tourism source segment but are not directly related to the tourist industry. These could be service providers who offer a service or suppliers delivering goods to a tourist destination.

Induced employment refers to the generation of employment opportunities that arise from the expenditure associated with tourism, wherein communities allocate the funds gained from tourism-related activities. This relates to the practice wherein a resident of the immediate vicinity engages in the sale of mementos to visiting travelers, subsequently diverting the proceeds into alternative expenditures. The travel and tourism industry is predominantly comprised of small firms, a fact that holds significant importance for local communities. Van Harsel (1994) asserts that a significant proportion of the 14 million travel and tourism-related businesses, specifically 98 percent, are comprised of small enterprises. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound impact on individuals, significantly changing their everyday routines and causing considerable exhaustion. Firms cannot continue with their regular operations as a viable choice. One potential approach is to initiate the formulation and execution of a comprehensive strategy aimed at helping personnel, which aligns with the most stringent regulations and has predefined benchmarks for policy modifications. Certain businesses are actively engaging in the practice of comparing their endeavors with those of their competitors, to ascertain optimal policies and levels of support for their personnel. The hypothesis is as follows:
H2: The social-cultural pillar has a significant relationship with the Sustainability of the tourism industry in the post-pandemic COVID-19.

Transversal Pillar: The Transversal Pillar plays a crucial role in bolstering the economic, social-cultural, and environmental pillars through governance, security and safety measures, destination planning, and infrastructure development. Governance must be understood as a system involving collaboration, teamwork, and stakeholder collaboration to make sure that tourism's social and environmental development has multiplier effects on the local economy (Pulido-Fernández, & Merinero-Rodrguez, 2018). Tourism governance is a multi-faceted concept (Chaperon, 2017) that explains the different techniques used to consider the essence of tourism governance and, secondly, how to effectively manage the tourism industry.

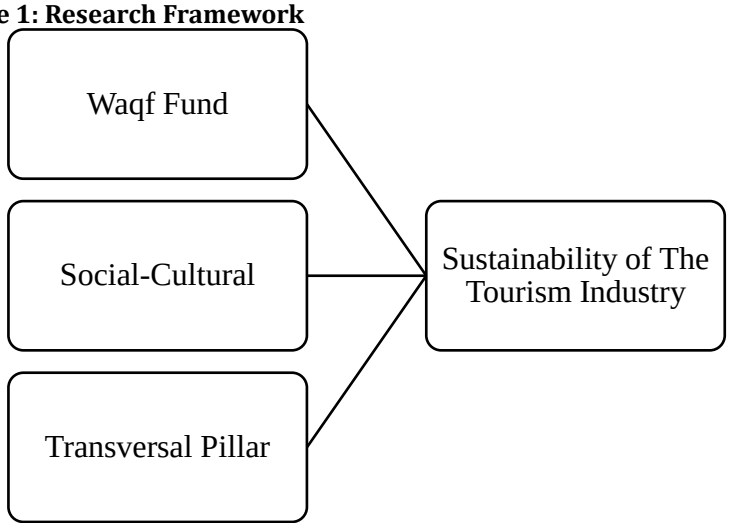
The concept of governance encompasses a broader scope than the mere execution of legislative activities or the establishment of governing entities, such as destination management agencies, national tourism offices, and national and municipal governments (Castelnovo et al., 2016). In recent years, the field of tourism governance has experienced increasing complexity due to the intricate relationships among various stakeholders, including community members, corporate entities, and other relevant parties (Hall, 2011). To ensure the sustainable management of tourism across different destinations, it is imperative to foster collaboration among travellers, local communities, corporations, and traditional state organizations with vested interests in the tourism sector. Over tourism, portfolio management, tourism regulation, capability research, service quality, traveller satisfaction, performance, environmental effects, digital transformation, the smart economy, and related topics can be discussed in this context. Effective governance is a prerequisite for long-term tourist destination development.

Tourism security is a convergence of safety, security, reputation, and economic viability. Furthermore, security is meant to reduce the chances of a negative event happening. Protection and security, according to Zainal et al. (2012), were identified as critical factors in improving tourism activities in the new century. As tourism has become one of the world economy's primary sources, such factors indicate that safety and security concerns must be prioritized. In this new era, the following five factors have been recognized as having a major effect on the tourism industry: crime, violence, food security, well-being, and natural disasters (Breda & Costa, 2005; Haralambopoulos & Pizam, 1996).

The tourism business has faced many limitations during the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition, the outbreak has had a significant influence on other aspects of the tourism business, including transportation, service quality, facilities safety, and health conditions. For example, according to de Bruin et al. (2020), there are limitations on the utilization of both public and private vehicles, closures of several public spaces, and the requirement for individuals to adhere to a prescribed distance from one another in public settings. Hence, the hypothesis is being proposed:
H3: There is a significant relationship between the transversal pillar and Sustainability of the tourism industry in the post-pandemic COVID-19.

Research Framework: This study derives the framework from the past literature review. Figure 1 shows a framework of the hypothesized relationships investigated in this study.

Figure 1: Research Framework



3. Methodology

The present study utilized a quantitative strategy, employing a survey questionnaire as the method for data collection.

The sampling methodology employed in this study is purposive, as it was chosen to specifically target particular groups and individuals possessing specific attributes (Etikan, 2016). Within the framework of this research, the participants consist of individuals employed within the Tourism Industries of Malaysia and Indonesia. According to Zikmund (2003), it is necessary to have a sample size greater than 30. However, Sekaran (2003) suggests that the sample size should fall within the range of 30 to 500. Hence, a cumulative of 84 samples were gathered and thereafter employed for subsequent analysis.

The study utilized online survey questions, specifically delivered through Google Forms, as the chosen method for data collection. The survey questionnaire was structured into five primary components, commencing with the demographic characteristics of the participants. The subsequent parts consist of inquiries pertaining to the elements that exert influence on the sustainability of the tourism business in the aftermath of the COVID-19 epidemic. These aspects include the waqf fund, the social-cultural pillar, and the transversal pillar. Following Kasri & Chaerunnisa (2021) and Shukor, Anwar, Aziz, & Sabri (2017), the questionnaire employs a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 represents strongly disagree, 2 concurs, 3 is neutral, 4 represents agree and 5 concurs strongly agree.

The data collected from personnel in the Tourism Industries of Malaysia and Indonesia were subjected to analysis using SPSS 27. To simplify the abundance of data and facilitate the presentation of quantitative descriptions reasonably, the researchers conducted both frequency and descriptive analyses (Sharma, 2019). The researchers employed frequency analysis to obtain percentage-based data regarding the respondents' country, age, gender, employment experience, and involvement in the tourism business. Additionally, descriptive analysis was conducted to calculate the mean and standard deviation for each variable. In addition to this, a reliability test and regression analysis were performed to examine the internal consistency of the items and to assess the hypotheses that were stated previously in this study.

4. Results and Discussion

Table 1 highlights the profile of respondents. 63.1% are from Indonesia, while 36.9% are from Malaysia. 50.0% of the respondents are female, and 50.0% are male. Twenty-six employees are aged between 34 and 41 and 9 are between 18 and 25. They have working experience between 11 and 15 years (26.2 percent), while the least working experience is between 6 to 10 years (11.9 percent). Out of 84 respondents for tourism industry involvement: 20 respondents are from recreation and entertainment, 23 respondents are from

accommodation, 19 respondents are from travel services, 18 respondents are from food and beverages services and four respondents are from transportation.

Table 1: Profile of Respondents

		Frequency	%
Nationality	Malaysia	31	36.9
	Indonesia	53	63.1
Gender	Male	42	50.0
	Female	42	50.0
Age	18 to 25	9	10.7
	26 to 33	14	16.7
	34 to 41	26	31.0
	42 to 49	21	25.0
	50 years and above	14	16.7
Working experience	Less than 1 year	4	4.8
	1 to 5	20	23.8
	6 to 10	10	11.9
	11 to 15	22	26.2
	16 to 20	14	16.7
	21 years and above	14	16.7
Tourism industry involvement	Accommodation Industry	23	27.4
	Food and beverage service industry	18	21.4
	Recreation and Entertainment Industry	20	23.8
	Transportation Industry	4	4.8
	Travel services Industry	19	22.6

Next, for the descriptive results (Table 2), firstly, regarding "sustainability," the item "better infrastructure could improve the tourism industry" obtains the highest mean of 4.4643, and "the tourism industry can protect the environment" has a mean of 3.8214. It shows that "better infrastructure could improve the tourism industry" has the strongest influence on the Sustainability of the tourism industry.

For the "waqf fund," "waqf enhances the activities for the tourism industry" obtains the highest mean of 3.7857. It specifies that "waqf enhances the activities for the tourism industry" and has the most substantial influence on the Sustainability of the tourism industry. The mean of 3.7857 on a 5-point scale for the "waqf fund" toward the Sustainability of the tourism industry indicates that employees agree on the waqf fund for the Sustainability of the tourism industry.

Thirdly, the variable of "social-cultural" indicates that "preservation of cultural heritage is a need in tourism" obtains the highest mean of 4.3929, whilst "cross-cultural exchange should be practiced in the tourism industry and able to diversify the foreign language in communication" has the lowest mean of 4.2500. This explains that the "preservation of cultural heritage is a need in tourism" has the strongest influence on social culture for the Sustainability of the tourism industry. The mean of 4.3929 for "social-cultural" shows that employees at least have the social-cultural toward Sustainability of the tourism industry.

Furthermore, the variable of "transversal" shows that "better infrastructure services will increase the number of tourists" has the highest mean of 4.4048 and "effective management can boost the tourism industry" has 4.3095. It postulates that "better infrastructure services will increase the number of tourists" has the strongest influence on the Sustainability of the tourism industry. The mean of 4.4048 on a 5-point scale for "transversal" indicates that most of the respondents are positive about the Sustainability of the tourism industry.

Table 2: Descriptive Results

Variables	Items (Summary)	Mean	SD
Sustainability of the tourism industry	The tourism industry can benefit the economy of a country.	4.4286	0.89558
	Cultural exchange experience happens in the tourism industry.	4.2976	0.88875
	The tourism industry can protect the environment.	3.8214	1.05466
	Security and safety can help to enhance the tourism industry.	4.2500	0.98023
	Better infrastructure could improve the tourism industry.	4.4643	0.91106
Waqf fund	Can be used to develop the tourism industry.	3.5595	1.23553
	Can help in reducing government expenditure.	3.7381	1.21357
	Future investments could utilize the Waqf fund.	3.5595	1.19589
	Provide facilitates to reduce financial dependence on the government.	3.7381	1.15246
	Prevents the deficit in the tourism industry development.	3.5595	1.11237
	Enhances the activities of the tourism industry	3.7857	1.00686
Social-cultural pillar	Preservation of cultural heritage is a need in tourism	4.3929	0.95713
	The tourism industry also provides opportunities for education	4.3095	0.91804
	The tourism industry helps to increase the quality of people's lives.	4.3095	0.93107
	Cross-cultural exchange should be practiced in the tourism industry.	4.2500	0.94263
	Able to diversify the foreign language in communication.	4.2500	0.98023
	The tourism industry helps to promote social interaction	4.3452	0.95051
	The tourism industry - local communities - strengthens cultural identity.	4.3690	0.88875
Transversal pillar	Effective management can boost the tourism industry.	4.3095	0.89141
	Tourists prefer safety and security	4.3452	0.88487
	Planning the destinations is essential for tourists.	4.3571	0.84515
	Better infrastructure services will increase the number of tourists.	4.4048	0.89334

	Innovation helps to improve the tourism industry.	4.3571	0.90037
	Good business ethics is vital for tourists	4.3571	0.90037
	Successful management - advanced planning strategy	4.3452	0.91169
	Good quality tourism experiences	4.3333	0.89622

The results of reliability tests are presented in Table 3. It highlights Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients such as the Sustainability of the tourism industry, waqf fund, social-cultural pillar, and transversal pillar. The results show that all variables are above 0.90. The result concerning the measurement of Sustainability is 0.915 and is considered excellent according to Sekaran and Bougie (2010). Next, the result concerning the measurement of the waqf fund is 0.939 social, cultural pillar is 0.966, and the transversal pillar is 0.974, which are all also considered excellent.

Table 3: Reliability Results

	α	Items
Sustainability of the tourism industry	0.915	5
***Waqf* Fund**	0.939	6
Social-Cultural pillar	0.966	7
Transversal pillar	0.974	8

Table 4 demonstrates the regression results. The Waqf fund does not have a significant relationship with the Sustainability of the tourism industry (t = 1.579, p = 0.118). This indicates that according to respondents, the waqf fund is not a predictor in explaining the Sustainability of the tourism industry. Hence, H1 is not supported. However, the social-cultural pillar is found to have a significant relationship with the Sustainability of the tourism industry (t = 3.856, p = 0.00). The finding suggests that social-cultural is an important factor for the Sustainability of the tourism industry. Hence, H2 is supported. Furthermore, transversal is found to have an insignificant relationship with the Sustainability of the tourism industry (t = 1.331, p = 0.187). It specifies that transversal is not a predictor in clarifying the Sustainability of the tourism industry.

Table 4: Multiple Regression Result

		B	t-test	p-value	Decision
H_1	Waqf fund and sustainability of the tourism industry.	0.151	1.579	0.118	No
H_2	Social-cultural pillar and sustainability of the tourism industry.	0.518	3.856	0.000	Yes
H_3	Transversal pillar and sustainability of the tourism industry.	0.175	1.331	0.187	No

Discussion of Results

The findings of the current study have substantiated a noteworthy correlation between the social-cultural pillars and the sustainability of the tourism sector in the aftermath of the COVID-19 epidemic. The findings of the analysis align with the results reported in prior scholarly works, including the investigations conducted by Lee and Hsieh (2016) in Taiwan and the USA, as well as the research conducted by Gursoy et al. (2002). The present study has shown significant dimensions pertaining to the sustainability of the tourism business, specifically highlighting that enhanced local facilities and infrastructure have the potential to positively impact the social-cultural pillar. Therefore, an enhancement in the social-cultural aspect can potentially lead to improved career prospects, more income, enhanced education, and greater access to healthcare. Therefore, when social and cultural conditions improve, they will increasingly contribute to the sustainability of the

tourism business. Hence, both Malaysia and Indonesia must strategize and implement an increased number of cultural and social events as a means to stimulate their respective businesses in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Through engaging with tourists from other backgrounds and lifestyles, local communities have the opportunity to acquire knowledge and insights that can contribute to the enhancement of their lifestyles and practices.

Both governments must also prioritize the establishment of the tourism sector as a primary source of income and employment prospects in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. Furthermore, it is plausible that this phenomenon could potentially assist in the long-term alleviation of poverty if increased involvement of local people in economic endeavors becomes more prevalent. Moreover, with regard to the socio-cultural relevance, the sustainability of the tourism business must uphold the social authenticity of local communities, which includes the preservation of historical landmarks and buildings. In addition, it is possible to integrate further value-added activities, such as the inclusion of agrotourism and homestay programs.

Therefore, as a result of the ongoing COVID-19 epidemic, Malaysia and Indonesia must prioritize and effectively leverage domestic tourism as a means to mitigate the adverse effects of travel limitations. Domestic tourism can serve as a supplementary means to bolster international tourism, thereby fostering the expansion of the tourism economy and facilitating development. Additionally, this document could serve as a valuable resource for the Ministry in overseeing stimulus packages, incentives, and tourism policies, to strengthen and encourage participation from local industry stakeholders and other relevant parties. As a result, it will contribute to the improvement of both the economy and the industry.

Both Tourism Malaysia and Indonesia should prioritize the cultivation of an environmentally conscious mindset within the tourism industry to ensure long-term viability. This measure will contribute to the preservation of natural resources and the sustenance of vital ecological processes. In addition, the local authorities and communities should also demonstrate a strong commitment to implementing recycling programs, engaging in beach care activities, promoting zero litter practices and cultivating other positive attributes that are essential for the sustainable development of tourism.

5. Conclusion

This research investigates the potential contribution of waqf funds, social-cultural factors, and transversal pillars to the viability of the tourism business in Malaysia and Indonesia in the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. A substantial correlation was observed between the social-cultural pillar and the sustainability of the tourism business in the aftermath of the COVID-19 epidemic. This study adds to the existing body of information by affirming the significance of the social-cultural aspect in ensuring the sustainability of the tourism sector in both countries. This concept offers advantages to policymakers, the tourist industry, and many stakeholders by enhancing comprehension of the significance of the social-cultural pillar in ensuring the sustainability of the tourism sector. The findings of the current study further validate the notion that there is an insignificant relationship between waqf funds and the sustainability of the tourism sector. The present outcome appears to contradict the conclusions of a previous study that suggested the potential of utilizing waqf as a means to finance the tourism sector independently from government resources (Ismail, 2021; Obaidullah and Khan, 2008; Budiman, 2014). Similarly, the present study's findings also confirmed that transversal pillars have an insignificant relationship with the tourism sector's sustainability. This result seems opposed to Pulido-Fernández and Merinero-Rodríguez's (2018) findings that the more effective the transversal applied, the more sustainable the tourism industry. Future studies are suggested to tackle these and further investigate factors contributing to its findings. Several constraints can guide future researchers in this particular field. Firstly, it is important to note that the sample size utilized in this study is relatively small. Subsequent investigations could explore supplementary variables that exert an impact on the long-term viability of the tourism sector, encompassing elements related to economic and environmental aspects. Despite its limitations, this study highlights the significance of the social-cultural pillar in ensuring the sustainability of the tourism business in the aftermath of the COVID-19 epidemic.

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