Book Review

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Review of Tourism and COVID-19: Impacts, Responses, and Realignments
by: Richard Butler (Editor)
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Introduction

As a Post-Doctoral researcher at NHL Stenden (NL), my work focuses on resilience, adaptation, and flexibility in hospitality and tourism-based communities during crises. Given my research interest in the long-term effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism and hospitality industries, *Tourism and COVID-19: Impacts, Responses, and Realignments* offers a timely collection of perspectives. This review evaluates the book's content, structure, and overall contribution to the field while addressing its strengths and areas for improvement.

Overview of the Book

The book is structured into three sections:

1 the Impacts of COVID-19: Selected Examples

2 COVID-19 Pandemic Responses by the Tourism Industry

3 Post-COVID-19: Adjustments and Realignments.

Part I: The Impacts of COVID-19

The first section presents a range of case studies examining the immediate disruptions caused by COVID-19. Chapter 1 (Butler) provides an introduction to the book's objectives but would benefit from a stronger theoretical foundation to frame the discussions that follow. Chapter 2 (Benfield) explores the challenges faced by garden tourism, particularly botanical gardens, due to declining visitor numbers and financial constraints. Chapter 3 (Laws et al.) examines the crisis in elephant tourism, highlighting the economic struggles of mahouts alongside ethical concerns regarding captive

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elephants. Chapter 4 (Maheshwari and Singh) assesses the resilience of artists and craftspeople, though the chapter could offer a more in-depth analysis of long-term sustainability. Chapter 5 (Seymour and Fouseki) investigates heritage business models, with a focus on the Victoria and Albert Museum, though a broader discussion of museum-sector trends would have provided additional context. Chapter 6 (Mohanty et al.) discusses challenges in event and festival management, reflecting on the transition towards sustainable models. Chapter 7 (Liutikas) offers insights into pilgrimage tourism, providing a niche perspective.

Part II: COVID-19 Pandemic Responses by the Tourism Industry

Section 2 shifts focus to how the tourism industry responded to the pandemic. Chapter 8 (Chatibura and Motshegwa) discusses the rise of virtual tourism as an innovative response, though a more critical discussion on its long-term sustainability would be useful. Chapter 9 (Shirsat and Hoffman) highlights labour shortages in hospitality due to wage and working condition concerns, a critical issue that remains unresolved in the sector. Chapter 10 (Maitra and Roy) examines digital engagement strategies, though the long-term impact of these efforts could have been further explored. Chapter 11 (Chhetri and Kumar) analyses waste management practices before and during the pandemic, offering insights into evolving sustainability efforts. Chapter 12 (Nghiem-Phu and Tran) assesses public perceptions of quarantine hotels, raising important ethical considerations regarding corporate social responsibility. Chapter 13 (Malthus et al.) examines resilience strategies adopted by adventure tourism businesses.

Part III: Post-COVID-19: Adjustments and Realignments

The final section considers post-pandemic shifts within the tourism industry. Chapter 14 (Diaferia et al.) discusses sociocultural resilience within European tourism destinations, though expanding the analysis beyond Europe would enhance its applicability. Chapter 15 (Butler) examines evolving tourism development strategies, particularly the shift from “Please Come” to “Please Go” and back to “Please Come Back,” offering one of the more critical assessments of tourism demand post-pandemic. Chapter 16 (Harrison) presents a forward-looking analysis, though additional empirical support would provide a more robust foundation. Chapter 17 (Andriotis) introduces the concept of degrowth, advocating for resilience planning. Chapter 18 (Sharpley, King and Dieke) discusses uncertainty in tourism development, focusing primarily on macro-level trends but offering limited insight into community-level implications. Chapter 19 (Butler) provides concluding remarks.

Reflections

Butler references Yeoman’s (2020) assertion that “COVID-19 means the future of tourism is a blank piece of paper.” This encapsulates the uncertainty surrounding the industry’s future and highlights the opportunity for reinvention. The book effectively contributes to this discussion by offering a diverse range of case studies that showcase

how different sectors have adapted and evolved post-pandemic. Recent research further supports the importance of strategic foresight and resilience in tourism recovery. Studies highlight that post-pandemic tourism requires a shift beyond immediate responses to long-term, adaptive policy measures (Postma et al., 2024).

Tourism and COVID-19: Impacts, Responses, and Realignments provide a valuable compilation of case studies, offering insights into how the pandemic affected various tourism sectors. It successfully highlights the resilience, adaptability, and creativity displayed by industry stakeholders in the face of unprecedented challenges.

While each chapter provides valuable individual insights, the book as a whole would benefit from a clearer synthesis of key themes to highlight the broader implications for the tourism industry. A common limitation across the case studies is the absence of a broader analytical framework that links these disruptions to long-term systemic change. Instead of presenting standalone discussions, integrating common themes or interconnected trends across tourism sectors would have helped create a more cohesive understanding of the pandemic's industry-wide impact.

Despite these limitations, the book serves as a loaded source of knowledge, offering diverse perspectives on how different segments of the tourism industry responded to and adapted during the crisis. The inclusion of various case studies allows readers to reflect on both the immediate impacts of the pandemic and the ongoing transformations within the industry.

Furthermore, the book underscores the need for continued research on strategic policy recommendations, crisis management, and long-term industry resilience. The importance of industry-wide workforce adaptation strategies and sustainable business models has been emphasised in recent literature (i.e., Postma et al. (2024), reinforcing the necessity of proactive planning. Butler's book provides a foundation for scholars and practitioners to build upon, ensuring that lessons learned from COVID-19 inform future preparedness efforts.

Conclusion

Overall, *Tourism and COVID-19: Impacts, Responses, and Realignments* align with broader discussions in the field, reinforcing key themes of industry resilience and transformation. While a stronger focus on strategic foresight and scenario planning would enhance its applicability, the book remains an critical resource for understanding the evolving landscape of global tourism post COVID. It can be a recommended read for those seeking to understand both the challenges and opportunities that have emerged in the wake of the pandemic.

References

Postma, A., Hartman, S. and Yeoman, I. (2024) *Scenario Planning and Tourism Futures: Theory Building, Methodologies and Case Studies*, Channel View Publications, Bristol, UK.

Yeoman, I. (2020) 'Editorial', *Journal of Tourism Futures*, Vol. 6, No. 2, p.119.