

## Research Article

Ferika Ozer Sari\*, Nilgün Avcı, Murat Nazlı, and Samet Can Curkan

# Impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Academic Travels

<https://doi.org/10.2478/ejthr-2023-0002>

received January 18, 2022; accepted November 25, 2022

**Abstract:** The purpose of this research is to reveal the impacts of the COVID-19 outbreak on the domestic and international travel activities of Turkish academicians for academic reasons and to get insights into academicians' opinions about how this pandemic would affect academic studies by preventing travel and socialising. An email interview technique is used. Collected data were analysed by using MAXQDA Analytics Pro 2020. As a result of content analysis, 70% of the respondents declared that their academic travel plans were cancelled due to this pandemic. The study emphasised that virtual travels seem to increase accessibility and equality for many academicians, especially those with travel restrictions.

**Keywords:** Tourism and travel; Academic travels; Academic events; COVID-19 pandemic; Virtual events

## 1 Introduction

The current global coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic emerged from a food market in Wuhan, China, and spread worldwide (World Health Organization, 2020). From 31 December 2019 until 10 June 2021, 174,032,728 cases of COVID-19 were reported, including 3,738,030 deaths all around the world (European Centre for Disease Preven-

tion and Control, 2021). Many countries validated travel-related cases, including Australia, Canada, Germany, France, Japan, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, the United Arab Emirates, the United States, and Vietnam (Phelan et al., 2020). As travel-related cases of this novel coronavirus increase, countries implemented border screening. Multiple countries such as Australia, Thailand, South Korea, Japan, India, Italy, Singapore, and Malaysia started temperature screening, symptom screening, and surveys for incoming travellers from China. The US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention started screening travellers from Wuhan at 20 major airports (Phelan et al., 2020). Wuhan, China is a large hub connecting the regions of China via railways and major international airports. Several countries, including the United States, Australia, Russia, and Italy, restricted air travel and changed their travel policies to take precautions. Starting in February 2020, 59 airline companies suspended or limited flights to China (Chinazzi et al., 2020). Suspension of public transport services across the border in Hong Kong (BBC, 2020) restrictions on airline services in the United States (Leary & Abbott, 2020), and aviation restrictions in many countries in Europe (Phelan et al., 2020) changed people's travel behaviour. The academic travels of academicians were curtailed by this outbreak.

The global spread of COVID-19 influenced domestic and international travel (Cranford, 2020). Ivanova et al.'s (2021) study investigated the effect of COVID-19 on travel behaviour. Participants in Bulgaria determined that they would prefer destinations with the most reliable health systems and reliable disinfection systems in the accommodation facilities of the destination. Neuburger and Egger (2021) also revealed that there is a strong relationship between the perception of this pandemic, travel risk perception and travel behaviour among travellers in the DACH region, consisting of Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. Thus, if people tend to travel despite the pandemic, reducing travellers' perception of risk is important (Sánchez-Cañizares et al., 2020). Concordantly, the current pandemic affected the travel behaviour of academicians (Cranford, 2020). According to a report of the International Congress and Convention Association (2020), the

\*Corresponding author: **Ferika Ozer Sari**, Yaşar University, School of Applied Sciences, Department of Tourism Guidance, İzmir, Turkey, ORCID: 0000-0001-9899-256X, Email: ferika.ozersari@yasar.edu.tr  
**Nilgün Avcı**, Ege University, Çeşme Tourism Faculty, Department of Accommodation Management, İzmir, Turkey, ORCID: 0000-0003-4746-8762

**Murat Nazlı**, İzmir, Turkey, ORCID: 0000-0003-0335-1706

**Samet Can Curkan**, Ege University, Çeşme Tourism Faculty, Department of Travel Management, İzmir, Turkey, ORCID: 0000-0002-7245-4103

total number of cancelled and postponed global meetings was 376 for the first half of 2020 due to the influences of the pandemic. In addition to this, academics with few opportunities to travel find themselves at a disadvantage in terms of career advancement and promotion (Shelley-Egan, 2020), which also affects how academicians create and value knowledge (Parker & Weik, 2014).

Next, we present the theoretical basis and a literature review of academic travels within the entire travel and tourism industry. The following sections cover the method, analyses, findings, and results from our collected data. We then present our conclusion.

## 2 Academic Travels in the Tourism Industry

Academic travels consist of academic work-related travels. Academic travels can be described as domestic and international travels of academicians to participate in scientific meetings, such as conferences, seminars or lectures, congresses, and symposiums. Academicians can get the benefits of learning from peers, networking opportunities, and the experience of professional development by means of these travels. Sometimes travel is necessary for social activity, enabling connections between colleagues (Urry, 2003). What Bourdieu (1975) called scientific capital is seen as a way of gaining prestige by academicians being visible and participating in academic meetings. Conferences provide delegates with time and space to build friendships and network, which can continue after the conference (Mair & Frew, 2018). Academic travel is an important mechanism for accessing scientific resources and ‘know-how’ and ‘know-who’, which is critical to scientific success (Mahroum, 2003). According to the general literature, international and domestic participation in scientific gatherings is necessary for academic career advancement (Hopkins et al., 2016). However, in Wynes et al.’s (2019) study, no relationship was found between academic travels and academic achievement, and the authors stated that no significant relationship was found between the h-indexes of academicians and their pro-

fessional travels. Additionally, they indicated that these results might have emerged because academic success is measured only with the h-index, and results might differ for patents, research funds, and projects.

Academic travel has social, environmental (Beaverstock et al., 2009), and economic costs. Although it is accepted that academic travels have benefits for academicians, many sustainability studies focus on the negative effects of air travel on the environment (Glover et al., 2018; Hall, 2007; Hopkins et al., 2016; Wynes et al., 2019). Social costs include the traveller’s social problems during travel and social problems with their families (Espino et al., 2002). The economic costs of academic travel include expenses for travel, accommodation, and conference fees. There seems to be a pressure in the literature about reducing academic travels due to the desire to protect the natural environment. Although it is not possible to eliminate academic travels completely for the development of science, it is a fact that the frequency of face-to-face meetings with faraway peers can be decreased and academicians should take responsibility (Caset et al., 2018). Holding meetings digitally can reduce the economic, environmental, and social costs of academic travels. The carbon footprint of science can be controlled by decreasing air pollution caused by travels (Achten et al., 2013). There will be no need for travel expenses when participating in digital meetings (Bidmon et al., 2020). Similarly, social costs arising from academic travel, such as family problems, might be eliminated. Travel-free meetings will also have positive effects in terms of work–life balance. The choice of digital solutions should be supported, as they save time and reduce one’s carbon footprint.

## 3 Academic Travels During the COVID-19 Pandemic

According to data gathered by the World Tourism Organization (2020), international tourist arrivals (overnight visitors) declined by 72% in between January and October 2020 when compared to the same period in 2019. Correspondingly, the international meetings industry suffered

**Table 1:** Impacts of COVID-19 pandemic on global meetings

Number of cancelled meetings	Number of postponed meetings	Number of meeting places changed to other cities
128	248	17

*Note:* Data from International Congress and Convention Association (2020).

from this sharp fall caused by the global COVID-19 pandemic. Table 1 demonstrates the overall impacts of this pandemic on international conferences between February and June 2020 (International Congress and Convention Association, 2020).

From a sociological point of view, participating in meetings is important for increasing social capital (Urry, 2002). However, under current circumstances, new tools should be created to increase social capital. Meetings, seminars, lectures, and symposia can be held virtually. Although virtual travel does not completely eliminate the need for physical participation in face-to-face meetings (Urry, 2002), during the height of the COVID-19 outbreak, the role of travel in spreading the virus created a discussion and generated pressure on the volume of academic travel. The COVID-19 pandemic directs that virtual and digital alternatives should be developed as an alternative to physical travel for academic purposes. Researchers have strengthened the physical dimension of mobility with other forms of virtual communication that enable networks to develop (Ackers, 2008). Many digital platforms and applications have been implemented to carry out academic activities without interruption. These practices should be made available to academicians by academic event organisers. Physical and digital meetings should be used in combination to maintain academicians' research quality post-COVID-19 (Smidvik *et al.*, 2020).

As Cohen *et al.* (2018) highlighted, many business travellers will welcome fewer flying opportunities. As a positive effect of COVID-19 on academic travel, meetings can be held by video-conferencing, thus reducing the carbon footprint of academic travel. According to Gössling *et al.* (2021), COVID-19 has provided striking lessons about the effects of global change.

## 4 Methodology

In this study, a qualitative research approach was used to determine how the COVID-19 pandemic has affected academicians' travel activities for academic purposes. Because the qualitative method is suitable for exploring, understanding, comprehending, and interpreting the subject deeply, it is thought to be appropriate for discovering the impact of an epidemic that affects the whole world at the same time. Figure 1 demonstrates the implementation stages of this research.

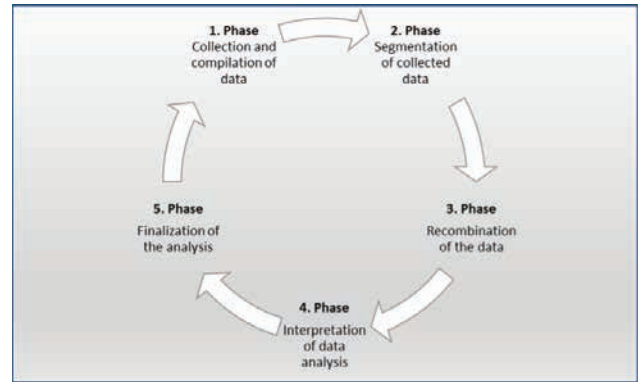


Figure 1: The methodological scheme of the research

### 4.1 The Objectives of the Study

This is an exploratory study that aims to discover the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on the activity of Turkish academicians travelling domestically and internationally for academic reasons. Besides that, it aims to get insights into academicians' opinions about how this epidemic would affect and change academic studies by preventing travel and increasing social and physical distances.

### 4.2 Research Method and Sample

In parallel with the purpose of the research, the case study method is used. The most important characteristic of the case study method is the thorough examination of an event or a situation (Davey, 1991). According to another definition, a case study is a thorough examination to explain a certain situation (Gerring, 2007). Empirical studies are used for making comparisons and testing hypotheses, and case studies are undertaken for explorative reasons. The main purpose of case studies is to define categories of behaviours and events (Hancock & Algozzine, 2006).

After deciding on the method for the specific case of the global COVID-19 pandemic, the second phase was to define the case study pattern. There are several categorisations in the literature (Lee & Saunders, 2017). In this study, the exploratory case study is used. The exploratory case study tries to answer 'what' questions in general (Yin, 2014). The main reason for choosing such a method is that exploratory studies are usually focused on new topics (Stebbins, 2001). Because there are very few studies concerning the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on academic travel activities, an exploratory case study was chosen as the most appropriate method.

#### 4.2.1 Development of Data Collection Tool

For case analysis, data were collected from the participants by email interview technique. Interview questions were prepared to collect the required data to understand the impact of the COVID-19 outbreak on academic travels. Because there were few studies concerning the effects of COVID-19 directly on academic travel activities during the literature review and questionnaire development stages of this study, the authors worked together on the formulation of the interview questions and decided on the appropriate questions. In addition to the demographic questions (e.g. gender, age, academic title, university, and faculty or department the respondents work at), five open-ended interview questions including the inspirational studies are presented as follows:

1. Did you cancel any of your academic travel plans abroad after the COVID-19 outbreak started? Please explain how you made that decision (personal preferences or forced choices) (Glover et al., 2018; Smidvik et al., 2020).
2. Did you cancel any of your academic domestic travel plans after the COVID-19 outbreak started? Please explain how you made that decision (personal preferences or forced choices) (International Congress and Convention Association, 2020; Smidvik et al., 2020).
3. Has the academic activity you planned to join been cancelled or postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak? If not cancelled or postponed, have you been offered a solution for your remote participation? Did you accept it (Neuburger & Egger, 2021)?
4. If your answer to the previous question is 'yes', would you please tell us what their suggestions were, and would you share your experiences with us?
5. How do you think this epidemic will affect and change academic studies by preventing travel and increasing social distances? What sort of solutions would you recommend for today and for the future (Hall, 2007; Smidvik et al., 2020)?

#### 4.2.2 Sample

Due to the fact that the academicians travel frequently for academic purposes to participate in events and meetings all around the world, the population of the study consisted of academicians at universities in Turkey. The cri-

terion sampling technique is used among the purposive sampling techniques. Contact people by email is an efficient way to ask questions to large populations (Hunter et al., 2013). For this reason, Survey Monkey was used for data collection in this study, also owing to the current pandemic. The Survey Monkey link for the interview questions was sent to 450 academicians' email addresses previously listed for congress announcements in April 2020. The answers given within 3 weeks were examined, and the form was closed where the sample reached 89 academicians.

#### 4.2.3 Data Analysis

In this study, collected data were analysed using MAXQDA Analytics Pro 2020, which is a common content analysis program. The aim of using the content analysis technique is to reveal to what extent is the COVID-19 pandemic affected academicians' travel activities for academic purposes. Texts drawn from Survey Monkey are imported into the MAXQDA Analytics program for analysis. An inductive approach was adopted in the analysis of the data transferred to the MAXQDA 2020 program. The data were read repeatedly and the first codes were generated. Codes related to each other were grouped under themes and named. In this context, there were four themes and four categories, with 20 different codes created under these themes and categories. Within the scope of the study, five different variables were defined: title, age, gender, university, and department.

Content analysis is used to refer to any qualitative data reduction and interpretation attempts to determine basic consistencies and meanings by assessing voluminous qualitative material (Patton, 2002). To achieve this, notes were examined, themes were searched, complex settings developed in the data were checked, data sources and findings were cross-validated, and connections were made between the various parts of the data. The most frequently used words together were determined and the relationships among them were investigated. After determining the relationship between the words, we formed codes and categories. The categories were evaluated according to internal homogeneity and external heterogeneity criteria. Finally, the themes are defined according to the categories.

## 5 Findings and Discussion

The Appendix emphasises and summarises 89 respondents’ demographic characteristics. At the end of the analysis, the content is divided into four main themes as depicted in Figure 2: academic travels, academic events, digitalisation, and suggestions.

### 5.1 Academic Travels

The first theme of the study is academic travels, which is divided into two categories—domestic and international—by the respondents (Figure 3). The codes are cancellation and no plan based on the respondents’ (R) comments.

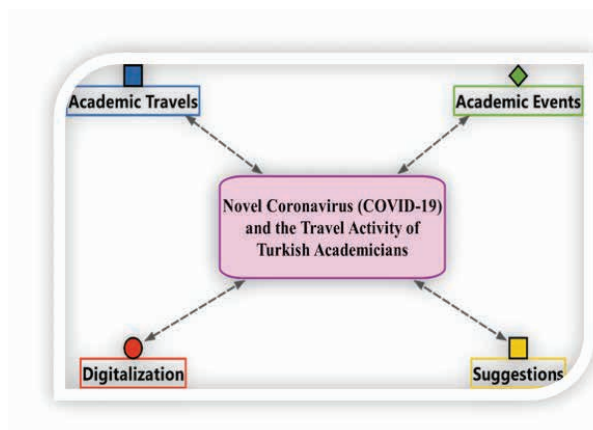


Figure 2: The themes related to COVID-19 and the travel activity of Turkish academicians

Some respondents expressed their opinions about the cancellation situation as follows:

I was obliged to cancel my domestic flight due to the epidemic precautions in our country. (R1)

Some respondents stated that they did not have any domestic travel plans. For example, one respondent stated:

I did not have domestic, academic travel plans, so, I did not cancel it. (R73)

The respondents used the same codes—cancellation and no plan—for the international category. Most respondents indicated that they did not have international travel plans using the code no plan.

R10 stated:

Yes, my trip to Bosnia is cancelled. I was going to teach there as part of the Erasmus program, but I could not go there, which is an obligatory choice.

Some respondents declared that they did not have any international travel plans:

I did not have any academic plans abroad this year. (R13)

The respondents largely emphasised international travel cancellations under the code of cancellation. The reasons for cancellation were both mandatory and personal. Here are some examples:

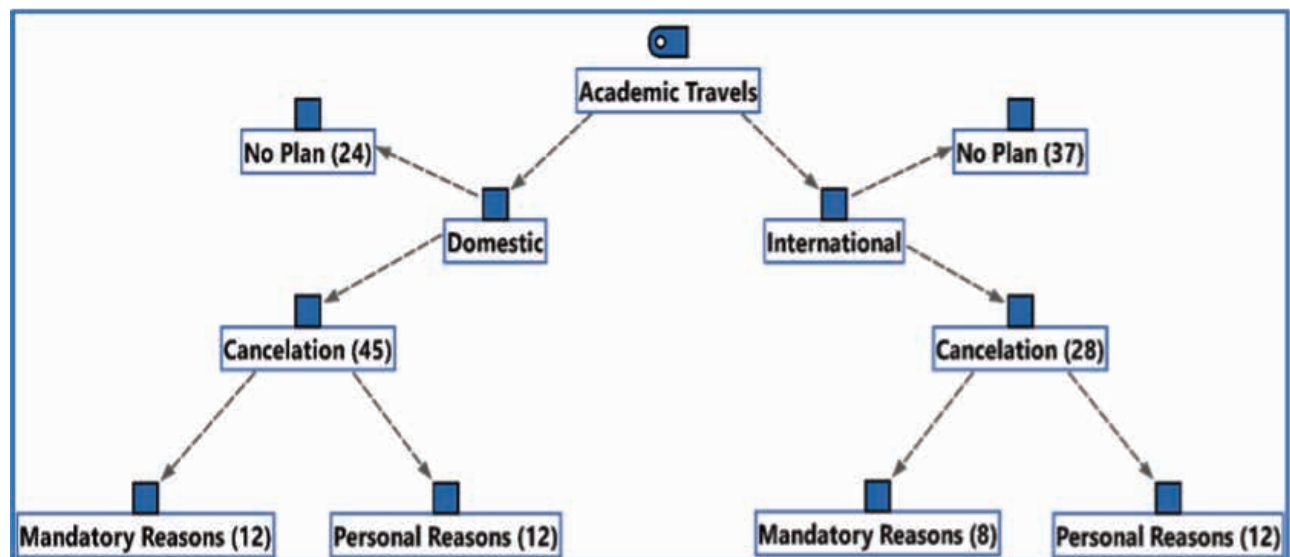


Figure 3: Theme and code model of academic travels



The conference was cancelled on the day when the World Health Organization declared the coronavirus as a pandemic. (R11)

The conference, which will be held between 9 and 11 March, is cancelled. Later, cancellation mails related with other conferences in June and July came out. (R85)

### 5.2 Academic Events

In regard to our third interview question, ‘Has the academic activity you planned to join been cancelled or postponed due to the COVID-19 outbreak? If not, have you been offered a solution for your remote participation?’, two main topics (postponement with no alternatives and postponement with online participation alternative) were specified by the participants (Figure 4).

Along with the postponement of the majority of respondents’ events, some of them were offered an online participation option, although others mentioned not having any alternative for the continuation of events.

In total, 62 participants stated that their planned academic event was cancelled, and only eight of them stated they were offered an online participation alternative. The remainder were offered no alternative conference participation. This is an example of those statements:

Two national conferences we plan to attend with my students in April and May are postponed. One international conference in May is postponed to September. Until now, I have observed events are postponed in similar situations and online choices not offered. (R43)

### 5.3 Digitalisation

Digitalisation as the third theme of the study is presented in Figure 5. This theme is separated into two categories based on the interview question, ‘How do you think this epidemic will affect and change academic studies by pre-

venting travel and increasing social distances?’ A total of 16 respondents stated that digitalisation due to social distances would have positive impacts on academic studies, whereas 18 respondents believed that it would have negative impacts. Some of the respondents believed that there would be an increase in participation in academic events through digitalisation:

I believe that the participation in international activities will increase via the Internet. Especially for the countries where the COVID-19 outbreak goes on, digitalisation could help academicians to participate in meetings. (R32)

Seven participants indicated that new study areas and new methods could be discovered along with digitalisation. Here is one example:

Travel restrictions and social isolation are important at this time. New technological opportunities for the academia will not reduce the academic productivity except some special areas. I believe that new opportunities will be discovered and offered. (R24)

In addition to the preceding participant comments, eight academicians stated that digitalisation would be beneficial for efficient time management (Figure 5). For example, R19 expressed that

Digitalisation is an opportunity for my academic studies. The majority of the universities provide online access to information, if you have Internet access you can study very effectively.

The second category of digitalisation, negative impacts on academic studies, has four codes: limitations for data gatherings, unfavourable home conditions, limited social interactions, and problems of resource access. Ten respondents believe that the application of field research processes, such as conducting a survey or collecting data,

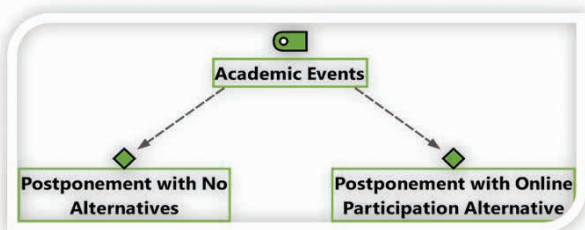


Figure 4: Theme and code model of academic events

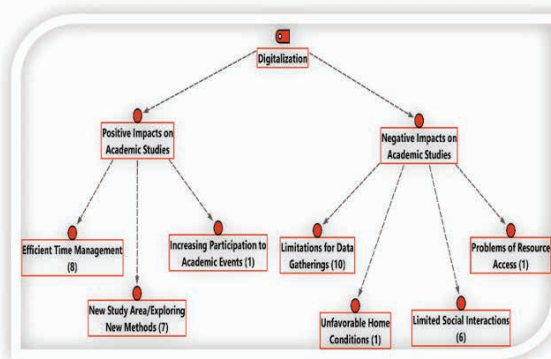


Figure 5: Theme and code model of digitalisation

will be difficult in some areas. Moreover, six respondents stated that digitalisation would have negative impacts on academia in terms of limited social interactions. One remarkable statement follows:

Symposiums, panels, congresses, and other related activities are important for witnessing the discussions that contribute to the literature. These activities let the academicians from various fields meet and socialise. Digitalisation won't help in this matter because social interaction is limited. (R6)

One of the respondents underlined the negative impacts of unfavourable home conditions:

During this pandemic, you stay at home all the time and if you have children, studying is really hard. I believe that the productivity will decrease. (R72)

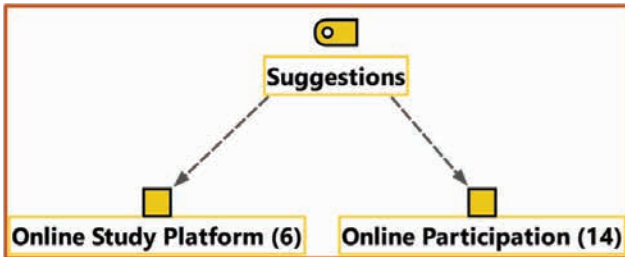


Figure 6: Theme and code model of suggestions

### 5.4 Suggestions

The suggestions theme is divided into two parts as a result of the responses of 20 participants to the interview question, ‘What sort of solution would you recommend for today and for the future?’ As demonstrated in Figure 6, 14 of those participants underlined the necessity of online participation in meetings, and six of them suggested that online study platforms should be developed for academic gatherings. Some quotes are as follows:

The development of online platforms in new structures will be beneficial for the academic congresses and related events. (R70).

My suggestion would be about arranging presentations and proceedings book via Skype and providing a digital participation certificate. (R7)

### 5.5 Discussion of the Results

In this study, relational analyses emerged from the convergence of the views given by the respondents. For instance, when the respondents shared their opinions about digitalisation, they also presented their suggestions for the future of academic studies and travels (Figure 7). As a

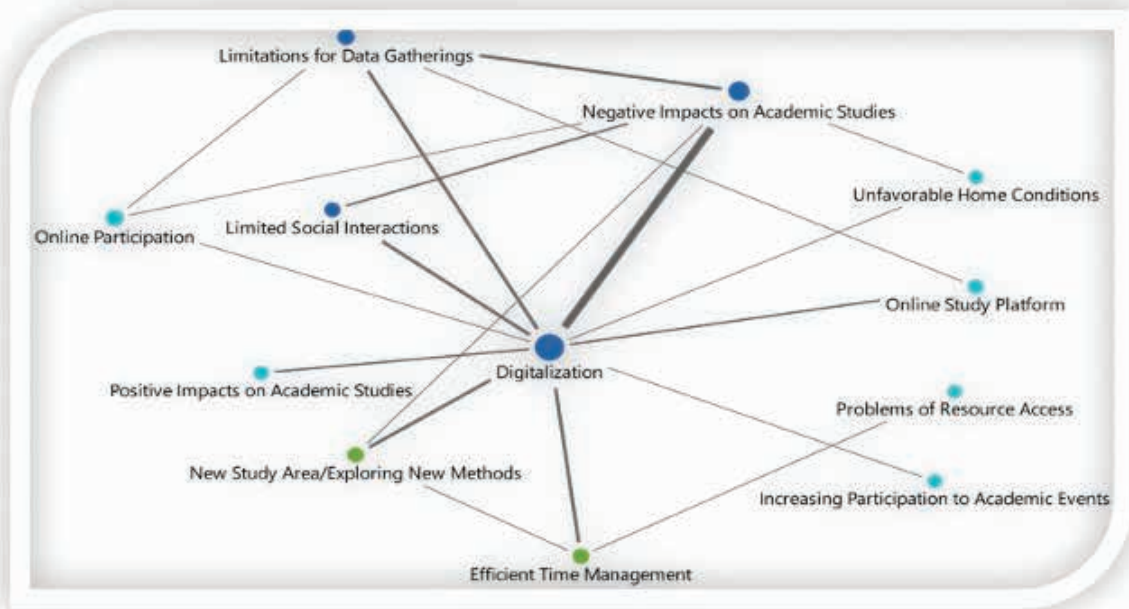


Figure 7: Relational analyses on the impacts of COVID-19 to academicians' travel activities

combination of the suggestions theme and digitalisation theme, Figure 7 depicts both the positive and negative aspects of digitalisation in meetings, along with the suggestions related to developing online study platforms for academic gatherings. Research findings show that the participants have different views on social distancing, travel restrictions, and digitalisation caused by the pandemic. Negative explanations include limitations for data gatherings, unfavourable home conditions, limited social interactions, and problems of resource access.

On the other hand, positive statements addressed the opportunities for academic studies, such as new study areas, increased participation in online events, and more efficient time management. Figure 8 displays the most conspicuous phrases as a code cloud pointing out the effects of the global COVID-19 pandemic on the travel activity of academicians.

As further discussion, the study revealed that 70% of the respondents' academic travel plans were cancelled due to the pandemic, confirming that the COVID-19 pandemic served as a booster for shifts toward more online gatherings and virtual meetings. Eventually, this might lead meeting organisers to adapt more quickly to use technology for digital events and online platforms.

Additionally, this study illuminated that participating an online conference might increase the integration of those people who, for various reasons, could not otherwise participate in a physical event, in parallel with the study of Jackle (2021). Partially, the study findings of Smidvik et al. (2020) are parallel to this study's results in terms of the requirements of specific activities such as spontaneous discussions and networking to meet and socialise in person rather than the digital events.



**Figure 8:** Codes concerning the effects of COVID-19 on the travel activity of academicians

## 6 Conclusion

As a major contribution, this study revealed how the academic travel activities are influenced by the COVID-19 pandemic and how current travel restrictions will affect academic activities under today's exceptional circumstances. Because there are only a few studies concerning the effects of COVID-19 directly on academic travels (Jack & Glover, 2021; Klöwer et al., 2020; Schwarz et al., 2020; Smidvik et al., 2020), this study contributes to the literature and to practice, as well.

Research participants stated that their academic travels for events such as meetings, conferences, lecturer mobility programs, and so on, were negatively influenced by the global COVID-19 pandemic. Although respondents acknowledged that some types of meetings can be held on digital platforms, they maintained that academic networks, workshops, and especially field work were adversely influenced by the pandemic. Additionally, when the research participants discussed the negative impacts of digitalisation, they pointed out that they could have difficulties in collecting data and limitations in socialising with colleagues, as well. They also expressed support for the possibility of new study areas and methods that would be explored as a result of travel limitations. This study revealed that the travel restrictions due to COVID-19 will cause problems, especially in field work. Concordantly, in Smidvik et al.'s (2020) research, field work stood out as the least suitable activity to perform digitally. Similarly, the study of Schwarz et al (2020) pointed out that digital forms of interaction have difficulty in reproducing social interactions such as informal discussions, raise new concerns about data security, and cause higher stress levels due to blurring of the boundaries between business and private spheres. Although travels for other academic activities can be substituted, no adequate solution has yet been found for field work.

As another distinctive contribution of this study, respondents emphasised that it is difficult for them to physically participate in every congress, conference, or symposium; therefore, it would be easier to participate in virtual events. Likewise, in the study of Jack and Glover (2021), one of the clearest advances in digital conferencing is the reduction of barriers to entry—both financial and temporal—with early evidence increasing both the number and diversity of academic conference attendees.

In conclusion, research findings indicate that very few alternatives were offered to academicians whose academic travel plans were cancelled or postponed by the institutions or organisations that organise academic congresses, conferences, and symposiums. This could indi-



cate that those organisations need to get better equipped with adequate information technology infrastructure so that they will be able to react quickly to offer alternatives during such pandemic conditions. It is strongly recommended that the travel industry and meeting organisers accelerate their adaptation process in terms of digitalisation and technology to be able to organise virtual events for both academic and other purposes. As Klöwer *et al.* (2020) suggested, universities and others should reallocate conference funding, from travel and accommodation to virtual hosting costs, including investment in virtual technologies, technical support, and conference social media engagement. Academic travels certainly will not be the same post-COVID-19 and this study emphasised that virtual travels seem to increase accessibility and equality for many academicians, especially those under travel restrictions. Moreover, virtual meetings seem to be more environmentally friendly (DeWeese *et al.*, 2022; Jack & Glover, 2021) than face-to-face meetings. Academics and meeting organisers should support virtual meetings, which could help reduce carbon footprints and greenhouse gas emissions.

## 7 Limitations of the Study and Recommendations for Future Research

This exploratory study focuses on a specific matter related to the negative impacts of COVID-19 on the ability of Turkish academicians to travel abroad and domestically for academic reasons. As a limitation of the study, the email interview technique was used to collect data from academicians who live in different cities across Turkey. Future studies can point out how travel industry, congress, and meeting planners should use digitalisation efforts to organise virtual events for academic reasons during a pandemic or similar global emergency.

### Bionotes

**Ferika Ozer Sari** is an Associate Professor Doctor in the Tourism Guidance Department at Yasar University. After she earned her bachelor's degree from the Mersin School of Tourism and Hospitality Management at Cukurova University, she worked in the tourism sector between 1993 and 2004 as a department manager in a variety of national and international five-star hotels. She earned her MBA from Yasar University in 2007 and her PhD from the

Dokuz Eylul University Graduate School of Social Sciences in 2011. She also worked at Izmir University of Economics as a part-time instructor and a visiting instructor in Hungary. She has written a book, several book chapters, and research papers that have been published in national and international forums, and she has attended a variety of conferences. Her studies are focused mainly on the tourism and hospitality realm. Service quality and operations management, gastronomy and culinary arts, and the sociocultural and environmental sustainability of tourism are among her research interests.

**Nilgün Avci** is an Associate Professor at Ege University, Faculty of Tourism, Department of Tourism Management. She received her PhD in tourism management. Her master's degree is in business administration. Her undergraduate education is in the field of tourism management. She has published articles, papers, and book chapters on tourism management, hotel management, human resources in hotels, organizational behaviour, and alternative tourism. She teaches alternative tourism, hotel management, and quality management in hotels at the university. She has worked as an executive and researcher in projects on alternative tourism development and value chain analysis.

**Murat Nazli** received his bachelor's degree in tourism and hotel management from Bilkent University, Turkey, in 2001. He earned his MBA from Cleveland State University in 2005, received his second master's degree in management science and organization from Ege University in 2011, and graduated from the Yaşar University PhD program in management and organization in 2015. He has written several publications and book chapters about tourism-related topics such as sustainability, innovation, cultural heritage, and tourism development. Currently, he is lecturing part time at universities in Izmir and working on European Union projects concerning sustainability and carbon footprint.

**Samet Can Curkan** is a Research Assistant Doctor working at Ege University in the Çeşme Faculty of Tourism Department of Tourism Management. He holds bachelor's, master's and PhD degrees from Balıkesir University, all in the area of tourism management. He has published articles related to tourism, event management, online shopping acceptance, and gastronomy. He has also written book chapters and a wide range of conference papers related to tourism.

## References

- [1] Achten, W. M. J., Almeida, J., & Muys, B. (2013). Carbon footprint of science: More than flying. *Ecological Indicators*, 34(2013), 352–355. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ecolind.2013.05.025>
- [2] Ackers, L. (2008). Internationalization, mobility and metrics: A new form of indirect discrimination? *Minerva*, 46(4), 411–435. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11024-008-9110-2>
- [3] BBC. (2020). Coronavirus: Hong Kong hospital staff strike to demand closure of China border. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-51349154>.
- [4] Beaverstock, J. V., Derudder, B., Faulconbridge, J. R., & Witlox, F. (2009). International business travel: Some explorations. *Geografiska Annaler: Series B, Human Geography*, 91(3), 193–202.
- [5] Bidmon, C., Meath, C., & Bohnsack, R. (2020, June 24). Organizing a virtual conference changed the way we think about academic exchange. *Nature*. <https://www.nature.com/articles/d41586-020-01896-3>
- [6] Bourdieu, P. (1975). The specificity of the scientific field and the social conditions of the progress of reason. *Sociology of Science*, 14(6), 19–47. <https://doi.org/10.1177/053901847501400602>
- [7] Caset, F., Boussauw, K., & Storme, T. (2018). Meet & fly: Sustainable transport academics and the elephant in the room. *Journal of Transport Geography*, 70(2018), 64–67. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jtrangeo.2018.05.020>
- [8] Chinazzi, M., Davis, J. T., Ajelli, M., Gioannini, C., Litvinova, M., Merler, S., Piontti, A. P., Mu, K., Rossi, L., Sun, K., Viboud, C., Xiong, X., Yu, H., Halloran, M. E., Longini, I. M., Jr., & Vespignani, A. (2020). The effect of travel restrictions on the spread of the 2019 novel coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. *Science*, 368(6489), 395–400. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.aba9757>
- [9] Cohen, S. A., Hanna, P., & Gössling, S. (2018). The dark side of business travel: A media comments analysis. *Transportation Research Part D: Transport and Environment*, 61(2018), 406–419. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.trd.2017.01.004>
- [10] Cranford, S. W. (2020). I may not have symptoms, but COVID-19 is a huge headache. *Matter*, 2(5), 1068–1071. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.matt.2020.03.017>
- [11] Davey, L. (1991). The application of case study evaluations. *Practical Assessment, Research & Evaluation*, 2(9), 1–2.
- [12] DeWeese, J., Ravensbergen, L., & El-Geneidy, A. (2022). Travel behaviour and greenhouse gas emissions during the COVID-19 pandemic: A case study in a university setting. *Transportation Research Interdisciplinary Perspectives*, 13(2022), 1–9.
- [13] Espino, C. M., Sundstrom, S. M., Frick, H. L., Jacobs, M., & Peters, M. (2002). International business travel: Impact on families and travellers. *Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 59(5), 309–322. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1136/oem.59.5.309>
- [14] European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control. (2021). *COVID-19 situation update worldwide, as of week 21*. <https://www.ecdc.europa.eu/en/geographical-distribution-2019-ncov-cases>
- [15] Gerring, J. (2007). *Case study research: Principles and practices* (1st ed.). Cambridge University Press.
- [16] Glover, A., Strengers, Y., & Lewis, T. (2018). Sustainability and academic air travel in Australian universities. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*, 19(4), 756–772. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJSHE-08-2017-0129>
- [17] Gössling, S., Scott, D., & Hall, C. M. (2021). Pandemics, tourism and global change: A rapid assessment of COVID-19. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 29(1), 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2020.1758708>
- [18] Hall, E. (2007). Alternative futures for academic conferences: A response to Bonnett. *Area*, 39(1), 125–129. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/20004595>
- [19] Hancock, R. D., & Algozzine, B. (2006). *Doing case study research*. Teachers College Press.
- [20] Hopkins, D., Higham, J., Tapp, S., & Duncan, T. (2016). Academic mobility in the Anthropocene era: A comparative study of university policy at three New Zealand institutions. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 24(3), 376–397. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2015.1071383>
- [21] Hunter, J., Corcoran, K., Leeder, S., & Phelps, K. (2013). Is it time to abandon paper? The use of emails and the Internet for health services research—A cost-effectiveness and qualitative study. *Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice*, 19(5), 855–861. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1365-2753.2012.01864.x>
- [22] International Congress and Convention Association. (2020). *The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the international meetings industry survey report: Research Group of CIMERT*. <https://www.iccaworld.org/dbs/asiapacific/files/CIMERT/CIMERT%20Survey%20Report.pdf>
- [23] Ivanova, M., Ivanov, I. K., & Ivanov, S. (2021). Travel behaviour after the pandemic: The case of Bulgaria. *Anatolia*, 32(1), 1–11. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13032917.2020.1818267>
- [24] Jack, T., & Glover, A. (2021). Online conferencing in the midst of COVID-19: An “already existing experiment” in academic internationalization without air travel. *Sustainability: Science, Practice and Policy*, 17(1), 292–304. <https://doi.org/10.1080/15487733.2021.1946297>
- [25] Jackle, S. (2021). Reducing the carbon footprint of academic conferences by online participation: The case of the 2020 Virtual European Consortium for Political Research General Conference. *PS: Political Science and Politics*, 54(3), 453–461. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S1049096521000020>
- [26] Klöwer, M., Hopkins, D., Allen, M., & Higham, J. (2020). An analysis of ways to decarbonize conference travel after COVID-19. *Nature*, 583(1), 356–359.
- [27] Leary, A., & Abbott, B. (2020, January 31). U.S. imposes entry restrictions over coronavirus. *The Wall Street Journal*. <https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-k-reports-first-coronavirus-cases-as-china-allies-limit-ties-11580467046>
- [28] Lee, B., & Saunders, M. N. K. (2017). *Conducting case study research for business and management students* (1st ed.). Sage.
- [29] Mahroum, S. (2003). Brain gain brain drain, an international overview. Austrian Ministry for Transport Innovation and Technology, Alpbach, Austria.
- [30] Mair, J., & Frew, E. (2018). Academic conferences: A female duo-ethnography. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 21(18), 2160–2172. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2016.1248909>

- [31] Neuburger, L., & Egger, R. (2021). Travel risk perception and travel behavior during the COVID-19 pandemic 2020: A case study of the DACH region. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 24(7), 1003–1016. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2020.1803807>
- [32] Parker, M., & Weik, E. (2014). Free spirits? The academic on the aeroplane. *Management Learning*, 45(2), 167–181. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1350507612466210>
- [33] Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Sage.
- [34] Phelan, A. L., Katz, R., & Gostin, L. O. (2020). The novel coronavirus originating in Wuhan, China: Challenges for global health governance. *JAMA*, 323(8), 709–710. <https://doi.org/10.1001/jama.2020.1097>
- [35] Sánchez-Cañizares, S. M., Cabeza-Ramírez, L. J., Muñoz-Fernández, G., & Fuentes-García, F. J. (2020). Impact of the perceived risk from Covid-19 on intention to travel. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 24(7), 970–984.
- [36] Schwarz, M., Scherrer, A., Hohmann, C., Heiberg, J., Brugger, A., & Nuñez-Jimenez, A. (2020). COVID-19 and the academy: It is time for going digital. *Energy Research & Social Science*, 68(2020), 1–3. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.erss.2020.101684>
- [37] Shelley-Egan, C. (2020). Testing the obligations of presence in academia in the COVID-19 era. *Sustainability*, 12(16), 1–10. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su12166350>
- [38] Smidvik, H., Mollaoglu, E. P., Bergeling, E., & Olsson, F. (2020). *Digital solutions replacing academic travel during the corona pandemic—What can we learn?* Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences.
- [39] Stebbins, R. A. (2001). *Exploratory research in the social sciences*. Sage.
- [40] Urry, J. (2002). Mobility and proximity. *Sociology*, 36(2), 255–274. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038502036002002>
- [41] Urry, J. (2003). Social networks, travel and talk. *The British Journal of Sociology*, 54(2), 155–175. <https://doi.org/10.1080/0007131032000080186>
- [42] World Health Organization. (2020). *Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19): Situation report*. <https://www.who.int/docs/default-source/coronaviruse/situation-reports/20200401-sitrep-72-covid-19.pdf>
- [43] World Tourism Organization. (2020). World Tourism Barometer. *UNWTO*, 18(4), 1–36. <https://www.e-unwto.org/doi/epdf/10.18111/wtobarometereng.2020.18.1.4>
- [44] Wynes, S., Donner, S. D., Tannason, S., & Nabors, N. (2019). Academic air travel has a limited influence on professional success. *Journal of Cleaner Production*, 226(2019), 959–967. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2019.04.109>
- [45] Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods* (5th ed.). Sage.

## Appendix: Demographic characteristics of the research participants (*n* = 89)

Characteristic	Frequency
<b>Gender</b>	
Female	47
Male	42
<b>Age</b>	
50 and above	19
36–49	37
22–35	32
Missing	1
<b>Academic title</b>	
Research assistant	19
Lecturer	10
Dr. lecturer	11
Assistant professor	19
Associate professor	17
Professor	13
<b>University work at</b>	
Government	72
Foundation	11
Missing	6
<b>Department</b>	
Tourism	21
City and regional planning	10
Architecture	9
Finance	9
Economy	7
Medicine	5
Geology	4
Sports science	4
Fine arts	3
Gastronomy and culinary arts	2
Business administration	2
Others	13