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An Exploration of Personal Decision as Mediating Effect between Passenger Concern and Airport Service Information During COVID-19 Outbreak

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Abstract. The Indonesian government has commanded the new reality status. In this situation, various public transportations have started operating again, particularly at Yogyakarta International Airport (YIA) and Adisutjipto Airport (JOG). By overcoming the new reality status, the airport services provider has been required to improve the services to expect the passenger' concerns. Therefore, the objective of the study was to directly determine passenger satisfaction during the COVID-19 outbreak in Yogyakarta airports, whether the passenger's concern significantly influenced the passenger's personal decision toward the service, and whether the personal decision influenced the provided information of the airport service provider. The method used was a quantitative method and the International Air Transport Association questionnaire was set to survey 417 respondents. The analysis of those criteria used Structural Equation Modelling Partial Least Square. The result showed a significant correlation between concern and the provided air service information, between concern and the personal decision, and the personal decision mediating link between the concern of the passenger and the provided air service information. According to the model, there was a limitation that the dependent variable explained the provided information and the personal decision at low impact. The other factors shall be included in the model to gain more overview of the model.

Keywords: Airport; Air travel; Concern; COVID-19; Service information

1. Introduction

Air transportation is currently an alternative for long-distance travel, but the COVID-19 pandemic has changed aviation and airport business processes. One of them was the decreasing number of airport service users (Tuchen et al., 2020). In Indonesia, the number of patients infected with COVID-19 reached one million in January 2021 (Dong et al., 2020). Therefore, the government had instructed to do temporary public mobility restrictions and causing the weakening of the economic activity, especially in transportation services (Candra et al., 2021). It impacted all of the public transportation services, specifically the aviation industry and air travel passengers. After the temporary restriction status, the government commanded the new reality status. The new reality is the condition where society adopts new behavior to live together with the virus. In this situation, various public transportations have started operating again, particularly at Yogyakarta International Airport (YIA) and Adisutjipto Airport (JOG).

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However, the passengers are still worried about traveling. The effect of COVID-19 had a direct correlation between the high volume of air passengers entering a country and the high number of COVID-19 infections, especially among adults (Oztig & Askin, 2020). It could be stated that the more increased air passenger traffic passes, the higher the chance of infection or being infected by COVID-19 was (Lau et al., 2020). It forced the airport service provider to develop some actions to guarantee that the airports were safe.

It was proven that some frequent air passengers had been concerned about their health and wellbeing, so the airport service provider should have realized pre, during, and postflight about the infection and disease control (Sotomayor-Castillo et al., 2020). Passenger safety enhanced the interest in air travel, which ended up impacting the aviation industry (Budd et al., 2020). To overcome the issue, the airport services provider needed to improve the services to expect the passenger concerns. The passenger's concern was related to their travel decision. The travel decision is the attributes of the alternative are weighed based on personal perception. It was also the alternatives that may filter through the travel requirements hierarchy (Singleton, 2013). Personal values and their social experiences triggered their decision. Travel decision-making was generated by the value perceptions, the attitude, and the intention itself (Gardiner et al., 2013). Therefore, our research focused on prediction and understanding the travel decision during the pandemic rather than interpretation. There had been little research focusing on a direct survey of passenger concerns at airports. The last study evaluated the quality and quantity of communication between airlines and passengers via social media Twitter (Maneenop & Kotcharin, 2020).

The research was conducted to directly determine passenger satisfaction during the COVID-19 outbreak in Yogyakarta airports. The objective was to know whether the passenger's concern significantly influences the passenger's personal decision toward the service and what they thought to ensure their health and safety. Then, another objective was to discover whether the personal decision influences the provided information at the airports. The satisfactions could be used as input for the airport service providers to improve the services and facilities at both airports during and post-pandemic. The satisfaction was expressed as a personal passenger decision whether they would continue flying or not. Furthermore, Yogyakarta was then chosen because it had many air travel passengers, both domestic and internationally. The airport's escalation reached 13-15% compared with other domestic airports that were touched 10% only (Budi, 2018). Also, the place was one of the passenger destinations for trade, education, cultural exchange, and some industrial purposes.

1.1. Literature Review and Hypotheses Development

The conceptual model of the study can be seen in Figure 1. Many studies focused on passenger satisfaction, perceived quality, and perceived values (Ni et al., 2020). We assumed on the model that passenger satisfaction was a personal decision, perceived quality as a concern regarding the pandemic situation, and perceived values as provided information by the airport service provider. Previous research mentioned a positive correlation between perceived quality and perceived value and passenger satisfaction (Winahyu & Sitti, 2016). Therefore, this study focused on simulating whether passenger concern about the pandemic situation had influenced passengers' personal decisions and provided information. Passenger personal decisions positively influenced the provided information and mediated between passenger concerns and provided information from the airports.



Figure 1 Conceptual Model

Customer satisfaction is a fundamental element to gain perceived value and service quality (Hapsari et al., 2016). The previous study indicates that customer satisfaction consists of two things; customer characteristics and the service concept. The customer characteristics covered demographics, situational experience, and service class. In comparison, the service concept encompasses the core and peripheral service elements (Anderson et al., 2008). In implementing the service concept, the airport service providers needed to create accurate information to help identify the actual passenger expectation (Zuna et al., 2016). The provided information represented the perceived value of the passenger to get their satisfaction with the pandemic situation.

Meanwhile, traveler satisfaction was identified by the personnel's overall facilities, comfort, satisfaction, and helpfulness (Purba et al., 2017). Therefore, it needed additional information, assistance, or reassurance to move from the traditional process by the service provider (Halpern et al., 2021). The provided information from the airport service provider referred to the passenger to set their decision. The decision conceived the customer satisfaction whether they would continue or postpone their air travel planning. Based on the explanation, the hypothesis is formulated as follows,

H1: Provided information from the airport service provider is positively affected by personal passenger decisions.

The air transport provider's responsibility is to inform and shape transport policy and good practices to respond to COVID-19 (Budd & Ison, 2020). Frequent air travelers have significant health concerns concerning infectious diseases. The air transporter must provide pre and post-flight prevention and control of the conditions (Sotomayor-Castillo et al., 2020). The air traveler shall get a transportation warranty in the same way as China did during COVID-19 (Chen & Pan, 2020). People may consider resuming overseas travel, so they need relaxed requirements of self-isolation and vaccine (Song & Choi, 2020). Additionally, the elderly passenger is still planning to travel by air in the next year or do less travel or more domestic with more transportation modes (Graham et al., 2020). Individual travelers can access air and public transportation resources based on their preferences, restrictions, and social distancing norms, which affect their preferences and negatively influence their satisfaction (Khaddar & Fatmi, 2021). All of those conditions revealed the passenger's concern. Thus, the hypothesis is assumed,

H2: Concern of the passenger during the pandemic positively affects provided information from the airport service provider.

The seamless process revises its process per capacity. The resilience with sustainable strategies offers a broader variety of services to the passenger. The previous study stated that long-term goals provide resilient action with sustainable methods that provide passengers with a more comprehensive array of services (Serrano & Kazda, 2020). Therefore, the airport service provider shall overcome passenger concerns that can be defined as behavioral intention. The behavioral choice is driven by passenger values that are achieved by the company (Gounaris et al., 2007). It means that the pandemic's concern about the passenger's personal decision and the perceived value of the passenger is strongly influenced by the airport service quality (Bezerra & Gomes, 2020). The hypothesis is set as follows,

H3: Concern for the passenger during the pandemic positively affects the personal passenger decision.

Customer satisfaction is one of the essential criteria that the airport service providers must pay attention to. The satisfaction can help to attract more customers who use the existing airports and airlines (Tuchen et al., 2020). For example, the waiting room's satisfaction is influenced by the arrival information and the offered atmosphere (Parsetiorini, 2017). Some air travelers in India were less satisfied with the airport's provided facilities and had low satisfaction with implementing preventive measures during the pandemic (Mahalakshmi, 2020). Satisfaction is needed during the pandemic and the post-pandemic to ensure the passengers' mobility.

Furthermore, the passengers' satisfaction is also influenced by the offered facilities, the provided services, and the feasibility of access to the airport information (Yuliana, 2017). The quality of the airport services is influenced by various factors; responsiveness, tangibles, reliability, assurance, and empathy (Mahalli, 2014; Purwita & Bintoro, 2019). Moreover, several additional factors such as information visibility, convenience, and security are also part of the service quality (Marina et al., 2018).

Generally, public transport's service characteristic is convenient, safe, and comfortable. In some cases, the corporate image influences perceived quality, and then it has a positive correlation with perceived value and passenger satisfaction (Ni et al., 2020). The airport service quality consists of seven dimensions; security, check-in, wayfinding, the environment, access, arrival services, and the facilities (Chonsalasin et al., 2020). One of the facilities is a servicescape. The perceived servicescape in the airport positively affects the emotional response of the passenger and their satisfaction. Therefore, it will create the airport image and passengers' behavioral intentions (Park & Park, 2018). The excellent service scape leads to shopping behavior, and the shopping satisfaction at the airport has a direct correlation with the place of residence and the passenger destination route (Martín et al., 2019).

Customer satisfaction and loyalty strongly affect the customer who perceives high value to repurchase the product (Kuo et al., 2011). The previous study revealed that perceived price, perceived value, passenger satisfaction, and the company image influence the passenger's future behavioral intention (Park et al., 2006). Moreover, the service quality and perceived value have a direct consequence on customer satisfaction. Perceived values play a part in mediating the role between service quality and customer satisfaction (Winahyu & Sitti, 2016). It is also confirmed in the airline industry that perceived quality and service quality have a significant relationship with customer loyalty and satisfaction (Rahim, 2016). Therefore, the passenger's personal decision to choose whether they will fly or not is based on the condition of the airport. The state of the airport is known from the provided information, and the information influences concern and awareness. The information's concern and attention include the big picture of the air travel pandemic apart from a social distance, hygiene during the flight, and infection alert procedure (Samanci et al., 2021). The standards make the passenger concerned about reusing the airport services. Sometimes the decision is made on the emotional background. A previous study mentioned that emotional response and airport image are mediated by passenger satisfaction (Park & Park, 2018). In this study, the emotional response is depicted as a concern, and the airport image represents provided information through the passenger. Moreover, the indirect effect of the passenger concern and provided information can be supposed through the mediation of passenger satisfaction. The hypothesis is assumed as follows,

H4: provided information at the airport mediates the connection between passenger concerns and personal passenger decision during the pandemic.

2. Methods

2.1. The Covered Respondent

The study was conducted at the airports of Yogyakarta Special Region Province. The covered area of the study was Yogyakarta International Airport (YIA) and Adisutjipto Airport (JOG). The method used was quantitative and the period was July to September 2020. The total number of interviewed respondents was 417. The IATA (International Air transport Association) questionnaire was adapted to survey the air passenger preferences toward the airport service providers during the pandemic (IATA, 2020). The total of the questions was 28, and those were divided into three criteria; customer's concern, the provided information from the airport service provider, and passenger's personal decision toward the provided information. Furthermore, the direct interviews (305 respondents) and online interviews (112 respondents) conducted data collection techniques. Then the results were submitted and collected to a Google Form. The collected data covered passenger demographics (sex, job, age, address, and purpose of air travel). The questionnaire was measured with a Likert scale from one to seven, where the number one (1) meant entirely disagree until (7) meant entirely agree.

2.2. Data Analysis with SEM-PLS Model

The analysis of the relationship between those criteria used Structural Equation Modelling Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS). SEM-PLS was an alternative analysis to find the correlations in which the theoretical background was weak. SEM-PLS analysis was selected to explore the nature of the research, such that the correlation among the criteria was predicted (Hair et al., 2018). The requirements were split into three *criteria*; concern of passenger (CON), personal passenger decision (PRI), and provided information by the airport service provider (INF). Then, the model was executed by Smart-PLS 3 software. Then, the last process was to evaluate the model and test the hypotheses. Furthermore, the SEM-PLS model needed two steps to fit the model: model evaluation and structural model analysis.

2.2.1. Model evaluation

The model evaluation was a step to test the validity and reliability of the model. Before running the model, the constructed model must be valid and reliable. The validity test required three criteria; convergent validity, average variance extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity, while the standard of reliability was composite reliability only (Rifai, 2015). Convergent validity was a test to measure based on the correlation between the indicator value and the variable value. The weight value was represented as the loading factor value or cross-loading factor value. The value of the loading factor was high if the value was more than 0.7. Still, for some initial research, the measurement scale with a minimum loading factor value of 0.5 to 0.6 was deliberated as sufficient. Moreover, the average variance extracted (AVE) was the average percentage extracted variance value from the latent variable that was estimated through the loading factor standard, and the minimum AVE value was 0.5.

The discriminant validity compared the square root of average variance extracted (AVE) values. Another way was by comparing the latent variable covariance. The latent variable covariance was fulfilled if it had the strongest association with its indicator. The latent variable could achieve the reliability standard if the minimum value was 0.6.

2.2.2. Structural model analysis

The structural model analysis was established to analyze the relationship between constructed model, the significance value, and the model itself. The assessment criteria

process was coefficient determination (R²) and path coefficients. R² was a model prediction accuracy, and it appraised the correlation between the independent latent variable and the latent dependent variable. The path coefficient denoted the relationship between the hypothesis link towards the constructed model (Hair et al., 2014; Yahaya et al., 2019). After analyzing the structural model, we performed the bootstrapping process. The aim of bootstrapping process was to diminish the abnormality of the structured model.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Demographics of the Respondent

The total number of respondents was 417. They were passengers at Adisutjipto Airport (JOG) and Yogyakarta International Airport (YIA). Adisutjipto Airport is an airport that services domestic and international flights. Meanwhile, Yogyakarta International Airport (YIA) is a new airport in this province placed in Kulon Progo Regency. In the future, all of the flights from JOG will be moved to YIA. Recently, they are in the transition process, and YIA services domestic flights only while waiting for permission to open International flights (Ani, 2020). The demographics of the respondents can be seen in Table 1. Most of the respondents were male following the proportion is 50.60% and 49.40% for female. According to the job, most of the respondents were personal company employees and students. The personal sector employee had a portion of 45.32%, and the student had 35.25%.

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Varia	ıble	Ν	%	Variable		N	%
Job	Private company employee	189	45.32	Purpose of travel	Vacation	54	12.95
	Civil Servant/ Police/Military	31	7.43		Business	31	7.43
	Student	147	35.25		On Duty	84	20.14
	Businessman	31	7.43		Personal	235	56.35
	Professional	6	1.44		Study	13	3.12
	Housewife	13	3.12	Airport	JOG	86	20.62
Age	< 20 years old	25	6.00		YIA	206	49.40
	20-30 years old	279	66.91		JOG dan YIA	125	29.98
	31-40 years old	93	22.30	Gender	Male	211	50.60
	41-50 years old	19	4.56		Female	206	49.40
	> 50 years old	1	0.24				

The proportion of ages was dominated by the passengers between 20 and 30 years old (66.91%). According to the spreading of passenger ages, the passengers of both airports were dominated by productive people. In the formative ages, passengers realized that their mobility using airplanes during the pandemics was more often. Even most of their air travel purpose was for the personal affair. The personal affair was about visiting family or colleagues to discuss something that was relatively urgent and the portion was around 56.35%. The last was the airport origin of YIA (49.40%). It indicated that many air travel schedules were moved to YIA, and JOG was used for international travel and domestic but shorter-distance purposes only.

3.2. The Passenger Preferences

The passenger preferences are divided by three criteria; concern of the passenger, provided information by the airport service provider, and the personal decision of the

passenger (Table 2). The first criterion was about the concern of the passenger toward the airport situation during the pandemic. The concern covered all activities at the airports. The second criterion was provided information about the pandemic by the airport service providers and the last criterion was the passenger's personal decision to fly or not.

Construct	Code	Indicator	Construct	Code	Indicator
Concern	CON1	Concerns about COVID-19 infection in air travel	Provided Airport	INF1	Free COVID-19 areas
	CON2	Identity check at the airport	Information	INF2	Travel insurance for COVID-19
	CON3	Luggage check at the airport		INF3	Knowing all the passengers are COVID-19 screened
	CON4	Waiting at the gate or lounge		INF4	Airport facilities are clean and safe
	CON5	Eating at the airport restaurant		INF5	Emergency procedure for infected passenger
	CON6	Touching tray during security check		INF6	All of the airport staff are safe and healthy
	CON7	Using the airport toilet		INF7	All of the airport staff wear personal protective tools
	CON8	Queueing during check- in/boarding		INF8	Screening all of the passengers before departing
	CON9	Riding on an apron bus		INF9	Negative COVID-19 test result
	CON10	Taking or touching luggage		INF10	Compulsory to wear a face mask for all passengers
Personal Decision	PRI1	Postponing air travel until a healthy economic condition	-	INF11	Knowing the airport is safe
	PRI2	Postponing air travel until a well personal finance		INF12	Health certificate for all passengers
	PRI3	Air traveling for vacation soon		INF13	Touchless technologies
	PRI4	Air traveling for business soon			5
	PRI5	Air traveling for relatives soon			

Table 2 Construct and indicator of the questionnaire

The first criterion was passenger concern. The concern covered all activity at the airports. The concern was about talking about overall preference being infected during the flight (CON 1), identity check process at the airport (CON 2), luggage check (CON 3), waiting at the gate or lounge (CON 4), visiting the restaurant for having a meal (CON 5), touching the tray during security check (CON 6), and using airport toilet (CON 7). Furthermore, the passengers were distressed about queueing during the boarding or check-in (CON 8), riding on an apron bus (CON 9), and taking their baggage after landing from a plane (CON 10).

The second criterion was providing information about the pandemic by the airport service providers. The indicator involved information about free COVID-19 areas at the airports (INF 1), facilitating travel insurance during the Pandemic (INF 2), making sure that all passengers were COVID-19 tested, whether using a rapid test or antigen test before flying (INF 3), knowing that all airport facilities have been cleaned and sanitized (INF 4), preparing the emergency procedure for the positive passenger (INF 5), all of the airport staff were safe and healthy (INF 6) and all of them wore personal protective tools such as face mask, gloves, or face shield (INF 7).

Furthermore, the next indicator of provided information criterion was the passengers knew that the airport service provider prepared a screening process before departing, such as detecting body temperature using a thermo-gun, the passenger wore a face mask and face shield, and prepared hand sanitizer (INF 8). Then, handed out a negative covid-19 test result from the trusted medical facility (INF 9), the obligation to wear a face shield and face mask (INF 10), knowing that all the facilities were sanitized routinely (INF 11), and the obligation to prepare health certificate for all passengers (INF 12), and preparing touchless technologies service to minimize the direct contact (INF 13).

The last criterion was the passenger's personal decision to fly or not. The indicators were postponing the flight until a well national economic condition (PRI 1). Indonesia had an economic recession because of the pandemic and negative economic growth (PRI 2). Then, the next preference was to postpone the flight until their finance become better, desiring to fly for vacation (PRI 3), business (PRI 4), and visit their relatives (PRI 5) soon.

3.3. Structural Equation Modelling Partial Least Square (SEM-PLS) Result

The SEM-PLS was conducted to observe the correlation among those criteria; concern provided information and passenger personal decisions. The condition consisted of a validity and reliability test. The validity test contained convergent validity, average variance extracted (AVE), and discriminant validity, while the reliability test was composite reliability only.

All of the cross-loading factor value was more than 0.5. The convergent validity of the model is fulfilled, and the final constructed model can be seen in Figure 2. The minimum value of Average Variance Extracted (AVE) was 0.5. According to Table 3, all of the construct values are more than 0.5. Therefore, all of the constructs were satisfied with the validity test requirement. The minimum construct values of composite reliability must be higher than 0.6. According to Table 3, the model is reliable. Another standard was based on Cronbach's alpha values. If those values were more than 0.7, it confirmed that all of the constructs were reliable. Then, the discriminant validity measured how much the differences between a construct with the others. The high value of discriminant validity determined that the model had a special or unique variable and described the measured occurrences. The latent variable covariance was satisfied if it had the strongest association with its indicator or constructs. According to Table 4, the discriminant validity test is satisfied for the constructs.



Figure 2 Final Model

Table 3 Average variance extracted (AVE) and composite reliability result

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE	R ²
Concern	0.910	0.926	0.583	
Personal Decision	0.774	0.869	0.689	0.025
Provided Info	0.938	0.946	0.577	0.249

	Concern	Personal Decision	Provided Info	Status
Concern	0.764			Confirmed
Personal Decision	0.157	0.83		Confirmed
Provided Info	0.457	0.269	0.76	Confirmed

Table 4 Latent variable covariances

After finishing the model structural analysis, the next step was the bootstrapping of the final structural model. According to Table 5, the correlation between the passenger's personal decision has a significant influence on the provided information from the airport service passenger (t-stats = 3.655). The correlation between the concern of passengers about the pandemic and provided information had a significant correlation also (t-stats = 8.418). The other significant correlation was demonstrated between the concern of the passenger and the personal decision (t-stats = 2.481). It meant that there was a positive influence on the construct of the concerned passenger about the pandemic and their personal decision about whether they fly or not. The last one was the personal decision that mediated the link between the concern of the passenger and the provided information (t-stats = 2.203).

Table 5 Coefficient path struc	tured model
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Hypothesis	Path	t-stats	p-values	Decision
H1	Personal Decision -> Provided Info	3.655	0.000	Supported
H2	Concern -> Provided Info	8.418	0.000	Supported
Н3	Concern -> Personal Decision	2.481	0.013	Supported
H4	Concern -> Personal Decision -> Provided Info	2.203	0.028	Supported

3.4. Practical Implications and Contributions

The study was to find the mediate link between the concern of the passenger and the provided information from the airport service provider. According to the model, the passenger's personal decision influenced the concern about the pandemic situation and had a positive effect on the provided information at the airport. It means that the operator's service is guided by the updating pandemic situation and passenger satisfaction. Moreover, the other related factors from the outside of this study are still high because the R-squared value of personal decision and provided is low. The theoretical contribution of this study is essential to the public transportation industry. As a theoretic, this study supports the agenda of the transportation industry to survive during the pandemic situation. Many public transportation industries have been forced to stop their operation at the beginning of lockdown status. Nowadays, they have started running with many limitations. The model's setup assumptions have significant relevance to a theory of passenger satisfaction toward the transportation service (Dawi et al., 2018). Furthermore, this study gives future research to other transportation service providers on passenger satisfaction during and after the pandemic.

This study's practical implication gives a framework to the current condition of the passenger and how the passenger reacts. The airport service provider can combine the passenger decision during the pandemic to add more additional information that keeps the passenger healthy, safe, convenient, and comfortable (Ni et al., 2020). Moreover, the airport service provider also improves their services with the long-term goal to come up with the post-pandemic situation. The additional service that can be provided in preparing robust playbooks with information about pandemics during air travel, reducing human-human interaction points and accelerating the building of the system, and creating the model and

simulation to enable the real-time dynamic response to the service changes (Serrano & Kazda, 2020; Lestiana & Romadlon, 2021).

The significant contribution from this study offers a basic outline to estimate when the passenger will fly again. Therefore, the service quality during and post-pandemic shall be prepared well to achieve passenger satisfaction and reuse intention (Kuo et al., 2011; Park et al., 2006). The reuse intention is one of the objectives to maintain the transportation service provider's sustainability, especially for the airport service provider. The reuse intention will enhance the social ties between the service provider and the passengers. A previous study mentioned that travel intention during the pandemic was higher than travel anxiety (Wachyuni, 2020). But according to our results, the travel anxiety during the pandemic is also high. It is influenced by their personal decision, provided information in the airport, and depended on the social culture of society to express the pandemic situation.

Moreover, good social ties develop the passenger's behavioral intention, and the service provider can predict the future to maintain their business more sustainable. The limitation of our study is less variable to depict the real situation. The next study can add more variables such as passenger behavior, transportation mode, and destination choice.

4. Conclusions

The pandemic situation has changed social behavior and intention. From the transportation service provider's perspective, they intend to adapt and try to sustain their business. The airport service provider realizes they have to provide the information and service to develop passenger satisfaction. This study gives insightful results that the passenger's concern about the pandemic influences the provided information from the airport and the personal decision of the passenger whether they will continue to fly or not within the particular time. In addition, the personal decision of the customer mediates the link between the passenger's concern and the provided information from the airport service provider. According to the model, the constructed depending variable explains the provided information is at 24.9%. The personal decision is at 2.5%, and the rest is explained by other factors not included in this study. Therefore, this study has many limitations affected by the accuracy of the measurements, a smaller number of unobserved factors, and strength causality. Future research can be done by adding more variables such as government regulation about the pandemic, the current situation for air transportation, and different airport service providers who have experience controlling the infected disease in the public area and on public transport. Furthermore, the research on the airport image and behavioral intention can also be added to improve the model to be more comprehensive.

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