

Special call: *Tourism and Covid-19*

Interrupted dreams: memories and emotions of travel experiences during Covid-19 breakthrough.

Sonhos interrompidos: memórias e emoções de experiências de viagem durante a propagação da Covid-19.

Sueños interrumpidos: recuerdos y emociones de las experiencias de viaje durante el avance de Covid-19.

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Keywords:

Covid-19.
Tourist behavior.
Chronology of the tourist experience.

Abstract

This work aims to understand the experiences of tourists who traveled during the Covid-19 breakthrough, exploring the emotions and memories in a chronological context of the trip. The methodological approach is qualitative, based on 21 in-depth interviews with Brazilian tourists who described their trips made between January and March 2020, encompassing experiences in all continents. The data analysis was based on grounded theory, through open, axial, and selective coding. The results show the particularities lived in travel experiences during the pandemic, the emotions that permeate happiness, fear, frustration, tension, and relief. In addition, it discusses how tourists got involved with travel planning, were pressured socially, and made risk assessments before traveling. During the trip, unexpected experiences generated the transfiguration of the trip previously planned. The precarious service and helplessness, as well as self-protection behavior (or not) were listed. Finally, tourists reflected on the trip and its consequences. The contributions involve the classification of studies on tourism and Covid-19, and the proposal of a theoretical framework that represents the emotions and memories of travelers before, during, and after the travel experience.

Palavras-chave:

Covid-19.
Comportamento do turista.
Cronologia da experiência turística.

Resumo

Este trabalho tem o objetivo de compreender as experiências de turistas que viajaram durante a propagação da Covid-19, explorando as emoções e memórias em um contexto cronológico da viagem. A abordagem metodológica é qualitativa, com base em 21 entrevistas em profundidade a turistas brasileiros que relataram suas viagens entre janeiro e março de 2020, contemplando experiências em todos os continentes do mundo. A análise dos dados se deu pela teoria fundamentada, como base na codificação aberta, axial e seletiva. Os resultados demonstram as particularidades vivenciadas em experiências de viagem durante a pandemia, com emoções que permeiam a felicidade, medo, frustração, tensão e alívio. Ainda, discute-se como os turistas se envolveram com o planejamento de viagem, foram pressionados socialmente e fizeram avaliações de risco antes de viajarem. Durante a viagem, experiências inesperadas geraram a transfiguração da viagem outrora planejada, o atendimento precário e o desamparo, bem como comportamento de autoproteção (ou não)

foram elencados. Por fim, os turistas refletiram sobre a viagem e suas consequências. As contribuições envolvem a classificação dos estudos sobre turismo e Covid-19, e a proposição de um framework teórico que representa as emoções e memórias de viajantes antes, durante e após a experiência de viagem.

Palabras clave:

Covid-19.
Comportamiento turístico.
Cronología de la experiencia turística.

Peer-reviewed article.
Received in: 21/07/2020.
Approved in: 21/10/2020.
Editor:
Glauber Eduardo de Oliveira Santos



Resumen

Este trabajo tiene como objetivo comprender las experiencias de los turistas que viajaron durante el avance de Covid-19, explorando las emociones y los recuerdos en un contexto cronológico del viaje. El método es cualitativo, basado en 21 entrevistas en profundidad con turistas brasileños que comenzaron viajes entre enero y marzo de 2020, contemplando experiencias en todos los continentes del mundo. Los datos del análisis de datos se basaron en la teoría fundamentada, a través de codificación abierta, axial y selectiva. Los resultados demuestran las particularidades experimentadas en las experiencias de viaje durante la pandemia, con emociones que impregnan la felicidad, el miedo, la frustración, la tensión y el alivio. Así, analiza cómo los turistas se involucraron en la planificación de viajes, fueron presionados socialmente y realizaron evaluaciones de riesgos antes de viajar. Durante el viaje, experiencias inesperadas generaron la transfiguración del viaje previamente planificado, el servicio precario y la impotencia, así como el comportamiento de autoprotección (o no). Finalmente, los turistas reflexionaron sobre el viaje y sus consecuencias. Las contribuciones implican la clasificación de estudios sobre turismo y Covid-19, y la propuesta de un marco teórico que discute las emociones y recuerdos de los viajeros antes, durante y después de la experiencia de viaje.

How to cite: Mayer, V. F.; Coelho, M. F. (2021). Interrupted dreams: memories and emotions of travel experiences during Covid-19 breakthrough. *Revista Brasileira de Pesquisa em Turismo*, São Paulo, 15 (1), 2192. <http://dx.doi.org/10.7784/rbtur.v15i1.2192>

1 INTRODUCTION

In the first half of 2020, the new coronavirus pandemic unleashed a previously unthinkable global scenario: thousands of grounded planes, closed hotels, and mobility disruptions in more than 180 countries. Travel bans and restrictions began gradually in February 2020, directed initially at Chinese citizens.

Countries began adopting travel and mobility restrictions since the outbreak of Covid-19 – the disease caused by the new coronavirus – officially reported by China to the WHO on December 31, and with the first cases confirmed outside mainland China on January 20. However, the adoption of stricter measures occurred only after March 11, with the declaration of the outbreak of a global pandemic by the World Health Organization (WHO), with cases confirmed in the six WHO regions (WHO - World Health Organization, 2020). In April 2020, estimates indicated that 7.1 billion people (about 90% of the world's population) were in countries with travel restrictions, and 3 billion lived in countries where borders were completely closed to non-citizens and non-residents, such as new immigrants and business and leisure travelers. In May 2020, 100% of tourist destinations adopted restrictions on travelers (Chinazzi *et al.*, 2020; Connor, 2020; Taylor, 2020; UNWTO, 2020).

The day the pandemic was declared, there were 124,101 cases and 4,583 confirmed deaths in the world, most of them in China and Italy (75.3% of the cases and 87% of the deaths) (WHO - World Health Organization, 2020). At that time there was a clear geographical concentration of the new disease, despite indications that the spread of Covid-19 was being quick and was presenting danger to all nations, especially when comparing these numbers with the data of the disease on December 6th, 2020, when 65.870.030 cases and 1.523.583 cumulative deaths in the world have already been confirmed.

Due to the critical relationship between tourism and the spread of diseases (Hall *et al.*, 2020; Shi & Liu, 2020), tourists were advised to avoid unnecessary travel (Karim *et al.*, 2020; Raibhandari *et al.*, 2020). On the one hand, tourism has been severely impacted; but on the other, it is also considered partially responsible for the transmission of the new disease. Therefore, “to understand the role of tourism in the pandemic requires an understanding of how mobility is practiced by tourists” (laquinto, 2020, p. 2).

Since travelers' mobility was interrupted in waves during the Covid-19 progression, many people were beginning their trips between January and March 2020. For example, more than 5 million travelers were on international flights to or from Brazil during this period (ANAC - National Civil Aviation Authority, 2020).

But why would people travel amidst the rapid spread of a potentially lethal virus? Would they be imprudent travelers and insensitive to their potential role in expanding the problem? Unfortunately, no study has been dedicated to understanding the experiences of these travelers, nor the memories and feelings that tourists associate with the pandemic. So far, academic studies and discussions have focused on the impact of the pandemic on tourist organizations and destinations (Coelho & Mayer, 2020), with few studies dedicated to tourist behavior (e.g. Wen *et al.*, 2020 and Zheng *et al.*, 2020). Among the latter, none researched the trips that occurred during the spread of the new coronavirus.

Thus, the present work aims to understand the experiences of tourists who traveled during the Covid-19 breakthrough, exploring the emotions and memories in a pre, during, and post-trip context. The chosen methodological approach is qualitative, based on in-depth interviews conducted with people who started trips between January and March 2020. Thus, this study contributes to the understanding of travel experiences during an extraordinary moment in the tourism sector, deepening issues not yet addressed by the literature and pointing out relevant theoretical paths for future research.

2 COVID-19 IN THE TOURISM CONTEXT: NEGLECTED TRAVELERS

To identify how Brazilian and international studies have been dealing with the relationship between the new coronavirus pandemic and tourism, a survey was conducted on the Web of Science platform, using the terms “Tourism” and “Covid-19”, which resulted in 48 articles published between 2019 and the end of June 2020 (excluding repetitions and an editorial conclusion) in 26 different journals. The Brazilian articles were identified via Google Academic and direct access to scientific journals.

In Brazil, *Cenário* journal published 5 articles about coronavirus and tourism (Clemente *et al.*, 2020; Fois-Fraga & Brusadin, 2020; Gastal, 2020; Netto *et al.*, 2020; Ortiz, 2020). The *Rosa dos Ventos* journal published a special edition of Covid-19, with 17 publications (Amorim *et al.*, 2020; Ávila & Baptista, 2020; Baptista *et al.*, 2020; Beni, 2020; Campos, 2020; César *et al.*, 2020; Del Puerto & Baptista, 2020; Diaz, 2020; Ferreira *et al.*, 2020; Guimarães *et al.*, 2020; Gullo, 2020; Korstanje, 2020; Mecca *et al.*, 2020; Melo & Baptista, 2020; Sá, 2020; Velho & Herédia, 2020; Vieira, 2020). Additionally, Coelho and Mayer (2020) pointed out academic publications and reports on the pandemic and tourism, focusing on four major areas: 1) Process and Technology Management; 2) Facilities and Capacity Management; 3) People Management; and 4) Customer Interaction Management.

In national works there are theoretical essays, such as Beni's (2020) and Gastal's (2020), and a bibliographic survey that included 17 international articles on the subject (Sá, 2020). There are some discussions about the relationship between Covid-19 and specific themes, in general contexts, such as hospitality (Ferreira *et al.*, 2020; Fois-Fraga & Brusadin, 2020; Korstanje, 2020), sustainability (Amorim *et al.*, 2020), the elderly and technology (Velho & Herédia, 2020), mental health of the traveler (César *et al.*, 2020), and how the pandemic reflects on specific types of tourism, such as rural tourism (Ortiz, 2020), and cemetery tourism (Del Puerto & Baptista, 2020). The impact of Covid-19 on education by Guimarães *et al.* (2020) addressed particularly the context of tourism education programs in Rio de Janeiro.

There are also studies on the economic impacts of the pandemic on specific locations such as São Paulo (Netto *et al.*, 2020), Rio Grande do Sul (Gullo, 2020), and Serra Gaúcha (Mecca *et al.*, 2020). Finally, the number of articles that start from personal testimonies and reflections stands out, such as Vieira (2020), Campos (2020), Baptista *et al.* (2020), Melo and Baptista (2020), Ávila and Baptista (2020), and Diaz (2020).

Internationally, the *Tourism Geographies* has emerged as a leader on the subject, with 22 publications on tourism and Covid-19, focusing on theoretical works that discuss tourism activity in general and post-Covid alternatives, including sustainability (Galvani *et al.*, 2020; Ioannides & Gyimóthy, 2020; Romagosa, 2020), locally-based tourism (Brouder *et al.*, 2020; Lapointe, 2020; Tomassini & Cavagnaro, 2020), tourism and mindfulness (Stankov *et al.*, 2020), tourism and equity (Benjamin *et al.*, 2020), among other topics. Many studies of this journal are based on discussions about the need or opportunity to transform tourism as an activity (Ateljevic, 2020; Benjamin *et al.*, 2020; Brouder, 2020; Cheer, 2020; Mostafanezhad, 2020; Prideaux *et al.*, 2020; Rowen, 2020; Tomassini & Cavagnaro, 2020).

About the articles' research site, there is more emphasis on countries such as China (Chen *et al.*, 2020; Hoque *et al.*, 2020a; Li *et al.*, 2020; Lu *et al.*, 2020; Wen *et al.*, 2020) and others that depend directly on tourism for moving the economy, such as Samoa (Olayemi *et al.*, 2020), India (Singh & Neog, 2020), Great Britain (Dinarto *et al.*, 2020), Malaysia (Karim *et al.*, 2020), and the Philippines (Centeno & Marquez, 2020).

Studies on Covid-19 in tourism, until June 2020, can be classified in three main research topics (Table 1). First, there are the post-pandemic scenarios, in which some authors describe the effects and illustrate the expected conjuncture after Covid-19 – called by the authors “post-Covid” and “new normal”. In second place comes studies that evoke impacts of Covid-19 on social, economic, business, and personal behavior activities. Few studies emphasize tourists, employees, or communities (e.g., Carr, 2020). Finally, some researchers were concerned with mobility and disease transmission, focusing their discussions on patients and the role of tourism in the transmission and spread of the disease.

Table 1 – Classification of International Surveys on Tourism and Covid-19

Research Emphasis	International References	National References
Post-Pandemic Scenarios	Ateljevic (2020); Baum & Hai (2020); Benjamin <i>et al.</i> (2020); Brouder (2020); Carr (2020); Cheer (2020); Crossley (2020); Edelheim (2020); Everingham & Chassagne (2020); Galvani <i>et al.</i> (2020); Gössling <i>et al.</i> (2020); Gretzel <i>et al.</i> (2020); Hall <i>et al.</i> (2020); Ioannides & Gyimóthy (2020); Lapointe (2020); Mostafanezhad (2020); Niewiadomski & Niewiadomski (2020); Prideaux <i>et al.</i> (2020); Renaud (2020); Romagosa (2020); Rowen (2020); Stankov <i>et al.</i> (2020); Tomassini & Cavagnaro (2020); Wen <i>et al.</i> (2020); Zeng, Chen, & Lew (2020).	Amorim <i>et al.</i> (2020); Ávila & Baptista, 2020; Baptista <i>et al.</i> (2020); Beni (2020); Campos (2020); Cézár <i>et al.</i> (2020); Clemente <i>et al.</i> (2020); Coelho & Mayer (2020); Del Puerto & Baptista (2020); Diaz (2020); Ferreira <i>et al.</i> (2020); Fois-Fraga & Brusadin (2020); Gastal (2020); Guimarães <i>et al.</i> , (2020); Gullo (2020); Korstanje (2020); Mecca <i>et al.</i> (2020); Melo & Baptista (2020); Netto <i>et al.</i> (2020); Ortiz (2020); Velho & Herédia (2020); Vieira (2020)
Social, economic, and personal impacts of the pandemic	Centeno & Marquez (2020); Chen <i>et al.</i> (2020); Dinarto <i>et al.</i> (2020); Fernandes (2020); Hoque, Shikha, Hasanat, & Arif (2020); Li <i>et al.</i> (2020); Lu <i>et al.</i> (2020); Olayemi <i>et al.</i> (2020); Oliveira (2020); Singh & Neog (2020); Zheng <i>et al.</i> (2020).	Sá (2020)
Mobility and virus transmission	Chinazzi <i>et al.</i> (2020); Correa-Martínez <i>et al.</i> (2020); laquinto (2020); Karim <i>et al.</i> (2020); Liu, Chen, & Hwang (2020); Lo <i>et al.</i> (2020); Menchero Sánchez (2020); Raibhandari <i>et al.</i> (2020); Shi & Liu (2020).	

Source: The authors.

International studies have discussed post-pandemic with more focus than national studies. In general, national studies tend to point out the impacts of the pandemic on economy, society, and individuals. Mobility and medical-sanitary aspects also deserve further discussion in the Brazilian context.

We have not identified any study dedicated to tourist behavior during the pandemic, except for Zheng *et al.* (2020), who reported how the use of biased and inappropriate terms conveyed by some media, such as “Chinese virus”, affected the mental health of Chinese tourists. In addition, Wen *et al.* (2020) described the potential effects on the lifestyle and travel of Chinese citizens in the future, but from a post-Covid perspective. In the national context, the articles by Cézár *et al.* (2020) and Netto *et al.* (2020) pay more attention to tourist behavior, in particular the first one, that reflects on the emotions of travelers, but without an empirical survey. Therefore, the literature review identified that there are still topics that seem “untouched” by tourism researchers. Despite the relevance, the experiences, emotions, and memories of tourists that were traveling during the Covid-19 breakthrough were neglected by literature until now.

3 TOURIST EXPERIENCES, MEMORIES, AND EMOTIONS OF TRAVELERS

Experiences are highly individual phenomena, since they are mainly based on the individual and psychological characteristics of tourists (Coelho *et al.*, 2018; Kim, 2012). This means that one same trip or experience can present different perceptions for each tourist, depending on the emotions they experience.

Some characteristics of tourist experiences are explored in this study, since “understanding the potentially different perceptions and outcomes of experiences, including emotional aspects and personal meaning, might enable providers to enhance tourists’ experiences” (Knobloch *et al.*, 2017, p. 653). The first is the chronology of the experience, in which time is a factor that intertwines with the stages of the experience, namely: 1) pre-experience; 2) real-time experience, and 3) post-experience (Park & Santos, 2017). However, since the tourist experience presents multiple factors that impact it, it can be interpreted beyond the chronological dimension (Quinlan-Cutler & Carmichael, 2010; Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009).

The tourist experience has dimensions that are very salient in previous studies: the emotions of the tourist, the memory and the perceived novelty. The experiential perspective must consider emotions that arise from consumption (Holbrook & Hirschman, 1982). Positive emotions like happiness and excitement are critical elements of an experience that stays in memory (Kim *et al.*, 2012; Tung & Ritchie, 2011). The positive emotional state serves as a trigger for the creation of memories (Lee, 2015) that impact on tourists' satisfaction, loyalty (Andreu *et al.*, 2005), and future behavior (Hosany & Gilbert, 2010).

The management of tourists' emotions emerges as an important research topic in the area of travel experiences (Mondo & Gândara, 2017). Schmitt (2000) cites several emotions of service consumers, such as anger, discontent, annoyance, sadness, fear, shame, envy, loneliness, romanticism, love, peace, contentment, optimism, joy, excitement, and other emotions such as pride, guilt, and anxiety. Such emotions vary according to the places visited, the activities performed, and the people found (Knobloch, Robertson, & Aitken, 2017). Hosany *et al.* (2015) proposed a scale of emotions of destinations composed of the variables joy, love, and positive surprise. Otherwise, Medeiros *et al.* (2015) present anger/deception, fear, sadness, humiliation, envy, guilt, and shame as dimensions of negative travel experiences.

Negative emotions in travel experiences are rarely remembered by tourists (Tung & Ritchie, 2011), that is, travelers tend to recall positive experiences of the trip (Prayag *et al.*, 2017), even if they have gone through unpleasant situations. One of the reasons for that is that tourists seek pleasurable experiences when they travel and tend to magnify positive experiences and mitigate negative occurrences when in a retrospective situation (Hosany *et al.*, 2015). However, negative emotions such as fear can relate to the visitors' satisfaction, as in water parks (Verde *et al.*, 2010). Nostalgia is also a contradictory emotion, which includes positive aspects, but also missing from a past that cannot come back (Lee, 2015).

Coelho, Gosling, and Almeida (2018) indicate the need to expand the classification of the study of emotions of tourist experiences, both positive and negative, since the current scales and studies are insufficient to describe how such emotions can be managed and better understood. In general, there is a shortage of studies investigating the emotional fluctuations of tourists and the role of negative feelings in travel experiences (Mayer *et al.*, 2019).

Sensory elements such as smells, sounds, taste, touch, and visual aspects can stimulate the emotions and memory of travelers. However, internal factors of the visitor, such as being receptive to new cultures, also impact on the memory of tourists (Kim & Jang, 2016). It is also valid to note that memories are dynamic and subject to change over time, through processes of daily routine (Park & Santos, 2017).

Another element that tends to be remembered by tourists are unexpected experiences (Park & Santos, 2017). Several authors have proved the importance of the novelty perceived by tourists for the formation of memorable tourist experiences (Kim & Ritchie, 2014; Kim *et al.*, 2012; Tsai, 2016). In this sense, destinations that offer innovations for the tourist can be more competitive. Moreover, many elements cannot be controlled neither by managers nor by tourists, which triggers unexpected moments that can have positive or negative consequences for the trip, such as the Covid-19 pandemic.

4 METHODOLOGY

In order to understand the experiences, emotions, and memories of travel during the propagation of Covid-19, the methodological approach chosen is qualitative, based on in-depth interviews conducted with tourists who started trips between January and March 2020. These interviews show reports of travelers who have suffered the consequences of the pandemic on all continents, in solo trips, excursions and even on a cruise, facing the possibility of not being able to return home and getting sick in foreign countries.

The participants of this study were selected according to the snowball method, by means of a call for volunteers, shared in social networks determined by the authors. Only those individuals who traveled between January and March 2020 and met the following criteria were included in the study: a) were impacted during an ongoing trip; b) were prevented or delayed from returning home due to mobility restrictions, such as flight cancellations, closure of borders, or cruise confinement; d) were affected by changes in their trip because they contracted Covid-19 in a foreign country. The profile of the 21 individuals who met the inclusion methodological criteria is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2 – General Profile of Research Participants

Name	Age	Occupation	Education	Residence	Destination	Trip Type	
Lívia	49	Librarian	Postgraduate	Minas Gerais	Brazil	India	Excursion
Paula	36	Medical	Postgraduate	Distrito Federal	Brazil	Argentina and Canada	Family
Victor	27	Student	Postgraduate	Maranhão	Brazil	Spain	Solo
Tiago	29	Software Engineer	Graduate	Minas Gerais	Brazil	Qatar and Thailand	Family
César	56	Bank Officer	Graduate	Minas Gerais	Brazil	Morro de São Paulo — BA	Family
Fernanda	34	Dentist Surgeon	Postgraduate	Minas Gerais	Brazil	Bolivia	Couple
Lara	69	Publisher/Retired	Postgraduate	Rio de Janeiro	Brazil	Mexico	Excursion
Taysa	28	Student (receives Scholarship)	Postgraduate	Canterbury	England	England	Solo
Elza	49	Financial Management Consultant	Postgraduate	Rio de Janeiro	Brazil	United States	Solo
Giovana	30	Administrator	Graduate	Rio de Janeiro	Brazil	Portugal, England	Solo
Débora	31	Project manager	Postgraduate	Düsseldorf	Germany	Rio de Janeiro	Solo
Amanda	48	Psychologist	Postgraduate	Rio de Janeiro	Brazil	England	Couple
Elisa	50	Uninformed	Graduate	Uruguay	Brazil	Rio de Janeiro	Solo
Ana	33	IT Business Analyst	Graduate	São Paulo	Brazil	Qatar and Philippines	Couple
Leandro	22	Student	Graduate	São Paulo	Brazil	Spain	Solo
José	34	Entrepreneur	Postgraduate	Padua	Italy	São Paulo and Minas Gerais	Solo
Angélica	53	Currently not acting	Graduate	Rio de Janeiro	Brazil	Spain	Solo
Glória	33	Waiter Assistant	Graduate	Rio de Janeiro	Brazil	Around the World	Solo
Hugo	31	Software Engineer	Graduate	Minas Gerais	Brazil	Fortaleza — CE	Couple
Marcela	30	Lawyer	Postgraduate	Minas Gerais	Brazil	South Africa	Couple
Diana	Uninformed	Executive	Postgraduate	Rio de Janeiro	Brazil	Spain, France	Family

Source: The authors

Note: The names of participants have been modified to preserve their identities.

All volunteers filled out a TCLE (Term of Free and Informed Consent, Termo de Consentimento Livre e Esclarecido, in Portuguese) and authorized the recording of the interviews, which were conducted through the Google Meet platform. The semi-structured script followed a sequential logic, based on the travel cycle: pre-trip, during the trip, and post-trip (Park & Santos, 2017). Two pilot interviews guided the reorganization

of the questions in the final script used. The interviews were conducted by two senior researchers, during the first two weeks of April, and had an average duration of 60 minutes.

For the data analysis, a descriptive, interpretative, and thematic approach was adopted, seeking the identification of repeated patterns in the narratives and memories of the research participants. The narratives included the motivations for the trip, the decision to embark on the Covid-19 dissemination, the experiences and feelings, the relationship with tourist service providers, the consequences of the trip.

The examination of the reports was done with the support of the NVivo software, in an inductive way, with the adoption of the grounded theory method. The use of this method is considered appropriate when a methodological dynamism is needed and the researcher emphasizes an objective, inductive logic, and the emersion of the data focuses on constant comparison in order to produce the grounded theory (Ralph *et al.*, 2015). There are also reports from other authors who have studied tourist experience based on grounded theory (Coelho *et al.*, 2018; Filieri, 2016; Zare, 2019), which reinforces the choice of this method.

The steps adopted followed the proposal of Strauss and Corbin (2008), of open, axial, and selective coding. Open coding involves examining each line of text and defining actions and events that are represented in the data. Axial coding tries to group the codes, initially found in open coding, to represent a set of open codes in a grouped manner. For example, “relief”, “despair”, “happiness” and “fear” were grouped in the category “emotions”. Finally, the third step integrates the two previous phases seeking a process of conceptualization and data integration (Zare, 2019b). Thus, the selective codification presented as a challenge to the researchers to contemplate only what was particular to the travel experiences during the pandemic, crossing with the chronological scheme of the experience proposed by Park and Santos (2017).

5 RESULTS

About the characterization of the 21 Brazilian participants of the study, 15 were women and 6 were men, with ages between 22 and 69 (average age of 39 years). With degrees in several areas and 18 residents in Brazil and 3 abroad, all have degrees, 12 also have postgraduate degrees. Motivated by studies, work, visits to relatives, change of residence, and leisure, 3 began the trip in January, 2 in February, and 16 in March; among the latter, 6 embarked after March 11, soon after the WHO declared that the world was experiencing a Covid-19 pandemic (Frame 2).

At the time of the interviews, 2 research participants had not yet returned to their homes; 10 were able to anticipate the return, and 7 had to delay returning home. In this sense, their reports allow deepening knowledge about the memorable travel experiences that occurred in these extreme situations. Thus, the results reveal the emotional aspects of the experiences and highlight the variations in emotions and memories through the chronology of the trip. This way, the analyses were divided in order to differentiate these two main categories: 1) feelings x chronology of the trip, and 2) memories x chronology of the trip.

5.1 Memorable feelings

The literature points out the need for more studies about tourists' feelings and emotions in their travel experiences (Coelho, Gosling & Almeida, 2019). It also draws attention that studies tend to point out essentially positive emotions when related to the study of memorable tourist experiences (Cornelisse, 2018; Tung & Ritchie, 2011). However, by analyzing the participants' narratives about their experiences pre-during and post-travel, it is possible to identify positive and negative feelings of tourists, as pointed out by Coelho *et al.* (2018). Figure 1 presents a word cloud generated from the coding made on the memorable feelings of the participants' experiences.

Positive emotions were present in the narratives, particularly in two distinct moments. In the memories of the pre-trip, joy, excitement, enthusiasm, and happiness were mentioned in descriptions about the anticipation of dreams that could be realized through the trip and in meetings with meaningful people. Tranquility and carelessness were also mentioned during this phase.

The predominance of memories accompanied by negative feelings occurred during the trip. Fear was the most mentioned emotion, followed by despair; tension, panic, stress, crying, nervousness, agony, frustration,

Social pressure and special dates – Two factors stood out as justifications to travel during the pandemic. The first factor involved the pressure from travel companions and family members to make the trip. One of the reports involved a meeting with family members to decide whether the couple should travel or not. Another factor concerns very special and unique celebrations and situations such as celebrating birthdays, 25 years of marriage, birth of a child in the family, and participating in a very meaningful ceremony. Such situations seemed to add an affective and social burden to travel decisions. In this sense, considering the affective and social involvement, the cancellation of the trip seems to be even more difficult.

Pre-boarding risk assessments – The third theme is directly related to Covid-19 and deals with travel risk assessments. The participants tried to remember what they knew and understood about the disease before the trip. Many reported that they sought information in the media, on websites, and from official sources. Others said they were “monitoring” the number of cases and the spread of the disease in different locations around the world. Those who had scheduled trips to places perceived as more risky at the time, even made last-minute changes, a behavior that indicates the search for the reduction of the probability of failure in the choice (Souza *et al.*, 2012). Those who perceived they were heading for destinations outside the “contagion area” felt more protected and optimistic to embark, a risk avoidance behavior already documented in the literature (Song *et al.*, 2019). Beliefs about virus susceptibility, disease characteristics, and self-protection capacity also guided the risk assessments of respondents (Gao *et al.*, 2000; Sridhar *et al.*, 2016).

Still according to reports, everything “seemed normal”, with excursions and flights confirmed, no alert issued by the official channels of the airlines, the cruise operator, or the travel operators. The feeling of “normality” of the services and the lack of clear alerts from the companies seem to have contributed to the risk assessment and to the perception that it was safe to go on with the trip.

Frame 1 – Travelers' memories of pre-trip moments in the Covid-19 pandemic

Involvement with the trip	But he [husband] didn't want to miss the opportunity , because he planned the trip a lot , he is a very positive person, he was optimistic that the virus wouldn't catch us because we are healthy and strong (Amanda). We got a promotion from TAM in business class at a great price! But with no refund and no possibility to change (Diana). It had no option to cancel . If I didn't go, I would miss the ticket. (Giovana).
Social pressure and special dates	The mother's need to be with her daughter at a complicated time. I would have gone sooner if I could (Angelica). Celebration of 25 years of marriage . It would be a great trip through Europe. I was scared, but I suffered a lot of pressure [from husband] and we ended up going (Amanda). I went to accompany the birth of my sister's second child (...) and participate in a Jewish ceremony very meaningful for our family (Elza).
Pre-trip assessments	I didn't even think about not boarding, almost no case in Brazil , not even 50, it was insignificant. (...) I didn't receive any official information ; everything was normal, without warning (Débora). I knew a lot, that it was contagious and very serious, that it can cause death , I had hope for not being older (Amanda). We kept mapping , it seemed to be concentrated in Italy. I knew about China, and that it had a question of age. I didn't expect Spain and France to be affected – we tried to stay outside the border. We've run from a hurricane before, we couldn't think it was so global! (Diana). Before the trip I sent a question to the operator of our tour [about the risks with Covid-19], but I did not receive any answer (Lara).

Source: The authors, using NVivo software.

5.3 Memorable experiences during the trip

In remembering and describing their experiences during the trip (examples presented in Frame 2, with the rapid spread of Covid-19, participants in the study focused largely on three central themes: (1) transfiguration of the tourist experience; (2) precarious service and helplessness, and (3) self-protection.

Transfiguration of the tourist experience – Participants of the study, especially those who managed to complete the trip before March 11, described the unusual sensation of circulating calmly through very popular tourist destinations and attractions. During the interviews, negative reports and reductions in welfare levels (Mayer *et al.*, 2019) were predominant and involved closed attractions or reduced opening hours; forced confinement in hotel rooms and closing of leisure areas; bans on circulation in destinations with fines and

police force; difficulty in accessing public transportation (buses, taxis, application cars); suspension of basic services in cities and roads; difficulty in accessing food and hygiene products.

Reports show that the rapid increase in mobility interruptions has always been present, with countries announcing border closures and return home options becoming scarcer by the day. The feeling of loss of control was also present, coupled with the realization of “being a foreigner”, without assistance, and without supportive relationships “outside home”.

Poor service and helplessness— The narratives also bring feelings of abandonment in relation to tourist services. Descriptions were focused on general lack of information and guidance; multiple flight cancellations without warning; long queues and long hours of waiting in congested service channels; confused and unprepared staff and crew; rejection of check-in by hotels and exchange for unwanted accommodations; besides the lack of travel insurance coverage in cases of pandemic. The experience in airports and flights has been described by many as chaotic, tense, and frightening.

In general, interviewees expressed feelings of helplessness with the poor support provided by companies and the tourist structure of destinations, with suspension of basic rights for tourists (Baum & Hai, 2020). Besides the general perceived lack of support, the memory of high prices charged by companies and airlines for return flights was recurrent in the interviews. Participants mentioned amounts that reached, for example, three or four times the prices paid or researched by them, demonstrating feelings of unfairness with the prices (Mayer & Avila, 2014). Difficulties with reimbursements and uncertainty in future rescheduling of hotels and airline tickets were also mentioned.

Frame 2 – Travelers' memories of moments during the trip in the Covid-19 pandemic

Transfiguration of the tourist experience	Thailand was very empty, things were kinda of deserted. There was no one in the attractions, no need to face queues. We took a trip that no one was going to take (Tiago). I couldn't enjoy the vacations anymore, visiting people, going places. [...] it wasn't much of a travel, it was boomerang trip (Deborah). When we stepped into the Hotel in Vancouver we were informed that the restaurant was not open. The penny dropped. Mall nearby closed with warnings (Paula).
Poor service and helplessness	My husband told me to try travel insurance. I read the contract and got stressed: even for health the insurance does not cover in epidemic and pandemic situation. I was super nervous, being in a country you don't know and without health coverage (Elza). I would call every day and stay in line trying to confirm the flight. I bought another flight and then it was cancelled. Chaos. My father helped me [...] It has some things that is only God (Giovana). I wasn't sure if I would fly. I had to leave the key inside the apartment and had nowhere else to go. I kept praying, asking God. (...) I had absurd expenses. We had no financial help from anyone (Marcela). The return ticket was very expensive. We pay R\$ 9,500 only for the two return tickets, the price of freedom (Amanda).
Self-protection	I sat down with an armchair away [...] I left the seat and went to the end of the plane because there was a coughing person (Elisa). In Barcelona we did quarantine, almost neurotic, with all the care , we took care of each other. (Angelica). In a climate of fright, in Salvador I felt the people afraid. Alcohol gel all the time, distance, covering the face (César).

Source: The authors, using NVivo software.

Many respondents sought help from people close to them, friends or family who were in Brazil, to solve the difficulties, and attributed the success of their efforts to “luck”, “persistence”, “cleverness,” “experience”, and “God”. Still, some company employees were remembered for offering help and solving difficult problems, even amidst the chaos. The memory of the dedicated support of travel agents was also important for some interviewees.

Self-protection – The self-protective behaviors adopted during the trip include memories of mask, alcohol gel, escaping from coughing people, and the attempts at distancing, which have intensified throughout the trip. The adoption or not of self-protection behaviors and items seemed to have been influenced by the perceived environments and social norms, rather than by the knowledge that the interviewees had about the disease (Riggs, 2017).

5.4 Post-trip memories

In reporting the post-trip memories (examples presented in Frame 3, the study participants focused mainly on two themes: (1) consequences of the trip, and (2) reflections on the experience.

Consequences of the trip – Some of the consequences of the trip involve Covid-19 directly. Quarantine, isolation, alcohol gel, and other hygiene measures, as well as remote work have emerged as new practices adopted on the return home. Some participants reported financial losses due to unforeseen or unrecoverable expenses, suffering from psychological sequelae and health problems.

Reflections on the experience – The second theme present in the descriptions of the post-trip were the reflections on the experience and attributions of causality, with many mentions on the surprise of the pandemic and the speed with which the events unfolded. Some attributed the difficulties they experienced to the nature of the virus and to the characteristics of rapid and difficult to predict contagion. Others have resented the lack of preparation and agility of companies and governments in taking measures to protect individuals and customers.

Marked by the memories and feelings of the experience, the research participants took stock of their decisions and what they learned. Not everyone considered that they made a bad decision considering the information available at the time. Many said they were not sorry, because everything went well or because they had accumulated another travel experience. However, others regretted they had boarded.

Frame 3 – Travelers' memories of post-trip moments in the Covid-19 pandemic

Consequences of the trip	<p>I didn't go out for two weeks, together with my husband. On Mother's Day I went to see my other daughter, I stayed in the car, from a distance (Angelica).</p> <p>My husband [arrived after her in Brazil] was more exposed and did quarantine, stayed in his room, and did not eat with his family, avoided contact, and kept distance, without hugs and kisses (Elisa).</p> <p>I started feeling the first symptoms of Covid-19 in Liverpool, but in me it was not serious. My husband also gets it and arrived in Brazil very weak, very breathless, and almost needed hospitalization, but he recovered at home. [...] I got depressed, I lost weight, I'm missing people. Feeling depression, panic, and it's a bit serious (Amanda).</p> <p>I had no refund for the course, I bought it directly at the university. [...] cold clothes that I will never wear. [...] I've intensified the therapy, I'm more crying, trying to direct the energy to work (Paula).</p> <p>Anxiety, cancelled plans, emotionally too much stress, suffering, worry about my mother and family. It [Covid-19] ruined my dream (Taysa).</p>
Reflections on the experience	<p>Maybe I could have had a response from the government more in advance. The government could have announced it. We would have prepared ourselves or something (Hugo).</p> <p>I don't regret it. It was a very nice purpose to invest in knowledge. Try to renew myself. [...] If I had known it would be this way, I wouldn't have gone, but with that knowledge of the day of boarding, I would go again (Marcela).</p> <p>This was not the time to have ventured (Fernanda).</p> <p>We will need to change as a society. There is no prediction of when it will be post-coronavirus. I don't know when it will be normal. What is the society we want? (Taysa).</p>

Source: The authors, using NVivo software.

Some mentioned learning related to practical aspects of the trip: have a credit card with a good limit for contingencies; always have cash, because at these times ATMs get congested; avoid issuing miles in other “partner” companies, because the service becomes even more complicated; know how to speak English, the local language or have a companion who knows it; make quick decisions and have patience to face queues and service channels; be careful with promotions and great offers; avoid accommodation establishments with high personal contact; inform yourself carefully about contractual clauses of insurance and other tourist services; and privilege the purchase with good travel agents. Many descriptions showed mistrust in relation to the service and protection of tourists, who needed to “rely on themselves”.

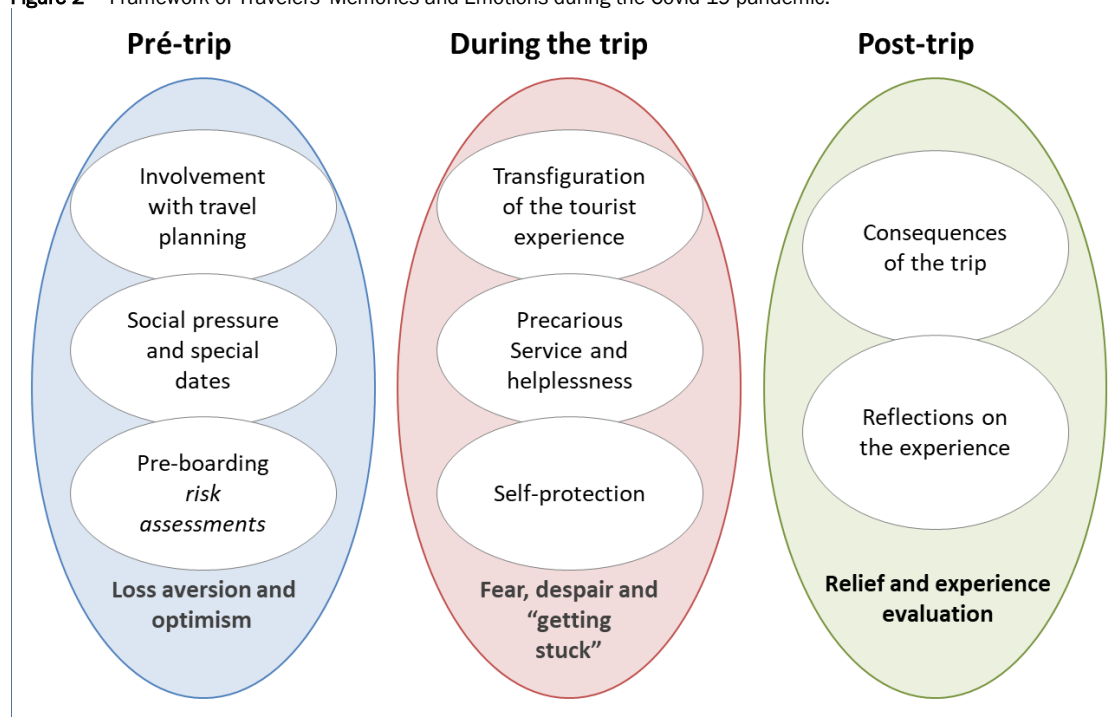
Other reports focused on human issues and social relations, or even reflections on nature and humanity; deeper learnings apparently achieved such as valuing the family more, adopting greater hygiene care, preserving the environment, planning less, being lighter and simpler in consumption and travel, and enjoying freedom.

Finally, many have shown themselves to be careful with new travel plans, and have said they wish to travel to nearby places and wait for a vaccine or cure. Even so, they expressed the desire to travel again, to redo what was not done, to be with distant relatives.

6 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

This study provided knowledge about the experiences of tourists who traveled to destinations around the globe during the propagation of Covid-19, filling a gap in the tourism literature. It was possible to understand the factors that influenced the travel decision, despite the risks of the virus, and how travelers faced many extraordinary and unexpected situations, such as the closure of borders, lockdown in tourist destinations, interruption of hotel services, mobility restrictions, suspension of services, contamination risks, and even illness. Figure 2 shows the framework that represents the findings of the study.

Figure 2 – Framework of Travelers' Memories and Emotions during the Covid-19 pandemic.



Source: The authors.

Analysis of pre-trip memories and feelings revealed that tourists too involved with dreams and travel plans tend not to be willing to lose their resources, or to give up "a dream trip," a phenomenon described by Prospect Theory and known in the field of behavioral economics as aversion to loss (Kahneman & Tversky, 1979). The social pressure suffered by many of the interviewees – special dates, influence of relatives and friends – was also a relevant factor in the decision to continue the trip. In turn, risk assessment before traveling involved gathering information available at the time of pre-trip, including the number of cases in destination countries and perceived susceptibility to the virus (Cho *et al.*, 2013; Gao *et al.*, 2000; M. E. Korstanje, 2011; Souza *et al.*, 2012). In this sense, pre-trip emotions tended to be positive, with feelings of optimism, overconfidence, and a feeling of invulnerability to the virus.

During the trip, unexpected experiences changed the previously planned trip and, for many, impeded fruition, due to the partial or total closure of attractions, restrictions on movements and, mainly, because of poor service and abandonment of airlines, insurance companies, tourist destinations and government institutions such as embassies, which in some cases disregarded travelers' rights (Baum & Hai, 2020). At that moment, memorable feelings (Coelho *et al.*, 2018) of helplessness, fear, tension, anxiety and despair emerged, with fluctuations in the levels of well-being (Mayer *et al.*, 2019), besides perceptions of injustice (Mayer & Avila,

2014). It was possible to identify negative emotions that are normally not reported by tourists and have a great relationship with the uncertainty of the trip and the possibility of contracting the disease. Some tourists were concerned about maintaining their self-protection with the use of equipment and social distancing, but some did not take any precautions, because they did not feel threatened or even because of the perception of local social norms (Riggs, 2017).

Finally, tourists reflected on trip decisions and their consequences. Some had financial losses, others had consequences on physical health – including the contraction of Covid-19 – and psychological health. The reflections involved learning, decision assessments, and plans for the future. Some expressed regret, recognizing a risky behavior, others attributed their decisions to the information available at the time. Those with travel plans report being more careful and attentive to health risks (Cahyanto *et al.*, 2016; Song *et al.*, 2019).

About the implications of the study, Frame 5 summarizes the theoretical implications and research opportunities that were identified throughout the analysis and that can be addressed in future studies on the relationships between risk in travel, aversion to loss, biases of judgment, social influences, feelings, and memories. It can be understood that travel experiences during Covid-19 can exemplify other extreme and unexpected situations in which the context of uncertainty demands quick responses from travelers and managers of public and private organizations.

Frame 5 - Theoretical implications and research opportunities

Theoretical Implications and Research Opportunities	Authors
Aversion to loss and risk-prone travel behavior.	Kahneman (2011); Tversky & Kahneman, (1981)
Assessment of travel risks, information and acting of biases of the judgment, such as optimism and overconfidence.	Cho <i>et al.</i> (2013); Korstanje (2011); Souza <i>et al.</i> (2012)
Social and family influences on risky travel situations and decisions.	Riggs (2017)
Perception of susceptibility to health problems in travel and adoption of risk behaviors.	Gao <i>et al.</i> (2000); Sridhar <i>et al.</i> (2016)
Fluctuation of negative feelings and emotions in travel experiences; permanence in memory over time.	Mayer <i>et al.</i> (2019); Coelho & Gosling, (2018); Kim <i>et al.</i> (2012); Kim & Ritchie (2014)
Behaviors of avoidance of future risk in travels from lived experiences.	Cahyanto <i>et al.</i> (2016); Song <i>et al.</i> (2019)
Reactions to the perceived injustice in prices and service of companies and representatives of tourist destinations.	Mayer & Avila (2014)
Rights of tourists at situations of risk and from the new measures adopted due to the Covid-19 pandemic	Baum & Hai (2020)

Source: The authors.

Regarding management implications, an important issue refers to the helplessness felt in tourist destinations, and with the support given by companies in the tourism sector. This highlights the weak support network for travelers and the lack of preparation of organizations. From now on, it is necessary to invest in process redesign, adoption of new practices and preparation for risk mitigation, and improved interactions with tourists (Coelho & Mayer, 2020).

About the companies, the main complaints were about the poor service of airlines for rescheduling flights. Such companies need to look for solutions that allow rescheduling and contact between passengers and company in a faster and safer way. Communication issues such as establishing a clear rescheduling policy, pricing, reimbursement, service updates, cancellations, as well as finding appropriate channels for this communication, can contribute to a more beneficial relationship for all actors involved in the tourism chain. It also became clear the importance of hospitality workers, especially of accommodations and tourist attractions, to inform the contextual situations of that destination, as well as to offer logistical support such as the indication of services and operation of the locations.

Regarding tourists, the study shows that some tourists say they feel safer in hiring travel agents, since agents contributed to solve the problems of tourists during the pandemic. Other reports pointed to the need to have financial resources when traveling, for use in unexpected cases. The travel insurance contract, which does not provide coverage in case of a pandemic, has also been narrated with surprise by some travelers. In this sense, the search for prior information can contribute to travel planning and minimize risks when traveling.

Finally, all reports point to the resolution of the problem faced in some way by tourists, even if the experience involved unwanted situations.

It should be mentioned that some feelings were positive when related to companies in the sector, but in occasional situations. For example, when participants reported a sense of tranquility and confidence when having flights rescheduled by a travel agent, or gratitude for a rescheduling by an airline attendant, even with the call connection failing. Therefore, the results reinforce that companies that manage negative experiences such as frustrations and suffering can generate even more positive memories for tourists (Tung, Lin, Qiu Zhang, & Zhao, 2016).

About the contributions of this study, besides adding to tourism and Covid-19 literature, from the survey and classification of national and international studies, this study contributes to the understanding of the travel behavior of tourists during the pandemic, a topic until now ignored by researchers in the area. Moreover, the study contributes by capturing and emphasizing the context of emotions, especially negative ones, in travel experiences. This is because the literature points out that the emotions of memorable trips tend to be positive (Cornelisse, 2018; Tung & Ritchie, 2011).

As the study was limited to Brazilian travelers, the findings may be different for tourists from other cultures. Also, the findings are based on the memory and narratives of travelers, which are subject to changes and inconsistencies (Park & Santos, 2017). In this sense, future studies can benefit from research that combines data collection before, during, and after the trip, so as to increase the possibility of triangulation of information presented by tourists. It is valid to highlight that this study was limited to understanding the behavior of those who actually traveled during the pandemic. Travelers who have not completed their trip may be the target of future investigations.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We thank the Federal University of Viçosa, Minas Gerais, Brazil for the financial support for the translation of this paper.

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