

The Perspective of Academics towards Physical Conference Attendance: A Qualitative Approach

Jorge Marques

University Portucalense, Portugal

This study explores the perspectives of academics concerning the new coronavirus (COVID-19) and its impact in physical attendance of academic and scientific events. This research is based on qualitative approach, through the analysis of the results of six interviews to academics that usually participate in academic and scientific events. The main goal was to better understand how information and communication technologies (ICT) are impacting conference attendance and if they tend to replace physical events after the pandemic context is over. Some attributes, such as destination attractiveness and tourism opportunities were put into consideration as competitive factors for destinations. Findings suggest that coronavirus in fact had direct impact in physical event attendance and will have impact in the future of this segment. However, it seems that technology will not permanently replace physical presence at events, due to the social character it represents. Also, destination attractiveness, and tourist opportunities will be important in the decision to participate in physical events.

Keywords: *Coronavirus, Event attendance, Information and Communication Technologies (ICT), Qualitative research, Tourism*