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Research Proposal

For Dissertation:

Research Proposal 2020:

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Research question:

How has the Covid 19 Pandemic impacted Malaysian business and what does this mean for the future of business in Malaysia?

Background and or context:

Malaysia is a diverse and multicultural country filled with many opportunities for business due to its thriving tourist economy and attractions, such as the twin towers and beautiful beaches all around its coasts. It's a hub for expats as well as locals to sell and profit from small SMEs to big corporate giants.

The onset of Covid 19 acted as a metaphoric stick in the Malaysian economy due to the MCO (Movement Control Order) initiated by the Malay government on March 18th 2020. The movement control order restricted travel internationally and made domestic travel much harder, resulting in a slump in Malay economic activity. This order was put in place to try to control the spread of the covid 19 virus within the country to relieve pressure on Malaysia's already busy public health services. Throughout 2020 Malaysia's GDP shrunk by a huge 17.1%. Businesses were forced to become more e-commerce as their physical locations were not receiving the tourists and travelers that they rely on for profit. Having lived in Malaysia for 12 years I find it hard to imagine the struggle it must be for certain groups of Malay society as most of their income is based off of the huge tourist market that the MCO has now cut entirely. For example SME's make up 99% of the 920,624 business establishments in Malaysia and in 2018 SME's employed 66.2% of the entire workforce in Malaysia. Malays have profited for years from supplying activities such as sky diving, boat trips, jungle walks, diving and other similar types of activities for the tourist communities to take advantage on while on holiday. These areas are often 100% of the income of the local communities in these areas. Due to the Pandemic these businesses have seen no profits for almost an entire year now and will be struggling to feed their families or find alternative methods of income.

A second huge business sector in Malaysia is the food and drink market. Malaysia has one of the most diverse food scenes world wide, with tourists and locals always flocking to try the exciting food. However many small businesses will not survive this period due to being unable to source wages for staff and keep food fresh when business is said to have been cut back by 75%. This is a massive problem for the Malay government as a huge portion of their population are now at risk of unemployment and a potential for riots

against the MCO are very strong. SME's also contribute RM552.1 billion which is 38.3% of Malaysia's GDP. The question of how the Malay government will recover this money and how long it will be before business in Malaysia can bounce back is very potent on the local Malays' mind at this current time. The Malay Government has introduced a series of initiatives to try to help small SME'S by encouraging digitization. 28 initiatives were released, predominately in financial aid and discounts, under the 'PRIHATIN Economic Stimulus Package.' Online grocery shopping increased by 144% and online food delivery by 61%. Companies such as GrabFood and FoodPanda are very big businesses in Malaysia and are one of the only businesses that have actually seen a huge increase in use due to the Pandemic. On the back of these trends of online shopping, MDEC (Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation) projected a 20% growth in e-commerce business in 2020.

The MCO saw progressively increasing enforcement, with the Military setting up road blocks across the country to ensure enforcement of the Movement Control Order. From the 1st April onwards businesses were told to only operate between 8am to 8pm, to encourage all citizens to only be out during those times. All citizens were restricted to a 10km travel radius and purchases of shopping and essentials were limited to just one person at a time. The Malay government has instilled these restrictions in an effort to try to reduce the amount of human contact as touch is the method the virus is thought to be most contagious through. The Malay government took a very harsh stance against covid 19, in order to protect their health care system from becoming overwhelmed. In certain areas considered to be Covid hotspots, residents were prohibited from leaving their homes and non-residents were not allowed to visit or enter the premises.

Based on the decline in new and active cases of Covid 19 in Malaysia and with more cases recovering, the MCO can be seen as a success of the Malaysian government. They effectively controlled the spread of people and thus the impact of the virus. The experience of governing the Malay public was entirely reliant on the compliance and cooperation of the public as essential elements for the successful implementations of government action.

Objectives:

- Gaging a scope of the scale that this Pandemic has had on local Malaysian business.
- Analyse the responses at each stage of the Pandemic by the Malay Government, analysing their decisions and reasons for their actions. As well as suggesting alternative actions they could have taken.
- What steps can the Malaysian government take to reduce the impact this Pandemic has caused?
- This essay is aimed at looking at the economic damage that the 2020 covid 19 pandemic has had on the economy of Malaysia. Looking at which industries and agriculture was affected the most, as well as assessing the damage done to the everyday Malay businessman. By analysing the scale of the damage caused to the economy one can ascertain what the future progression of the Malaysian economy is likely to have in the next few years.
- Which industries and agriculture have been affected the most?
- Are industries likely to bounce back post the pandemic?
- By analysing the number of hospitalisations and deaths related to Covid, one can ascertain an understanding of whether or not the response issued was too vast or not enough to deal with the current situation.
- How have businesses needed to adapt to remain competitive?
- Understanding alternative methods Malaysians have had to take to source finance.
- Understanding how the damage done to the Malay economy will be recounted for. Tax?
- Analysing the reasoning behind Malay Government's actions and how it has impacted the local, everyday Malay.
- Analyse the huge effect that the MCO had on the tourist industry in Malaysia, as this sector is responsible for a huge portion of Malaysian GDP and supports thousands of small malay businesses.
- Understanding how this pandemic has changed the future of Malaysian business
- How have certain Malaysian businesses adapted to overcome the challenge of a pandemic?
- How it feels to be a local Malay at this time.
- How the Malay government is planning to stop the spread of the pandemic alongside trying to not crush the Malay economy.
- In what ways will Malay business be different in the future?

Research techniques:

There are many News articles online as well as a handful of academic sources that will give me good statistical evidence and an accurate understanding of the effect the pandemic has had on Malaysia from an internal perspective.

I will perform actual tests and interviews with real local Malaysians who are currently facing this exact problem, as my parents still live in Malaysia and know many people affected by the pandemic.

I will perform research about different industries, areas and agriculture in Malaysia that have been hit the hardest by the COVID-19 Pandemic and will talk about how we can expect this to affect the Malaysian economy over the coming years.

What steps can the Malaysian government take to reduce the damage that the pandemic has caused to the economy?

How have big Malaysian businesses been able to stay open? How have they needed to adapt and overcome this challenge?

Having lived in Malaysia for over a decade I have information on how this pandemic affects the local Malaysian as well as alternative perspectives such as how this pandemic has affected an expat living in Malaysia, allowing me to contrast the two experiences if necessary.

I will be interviewing Malays to give their own personal experience, allowing a very accurate account of how this pandemic has changed Malaysia and what they think should be done to help fix this public health crisis.

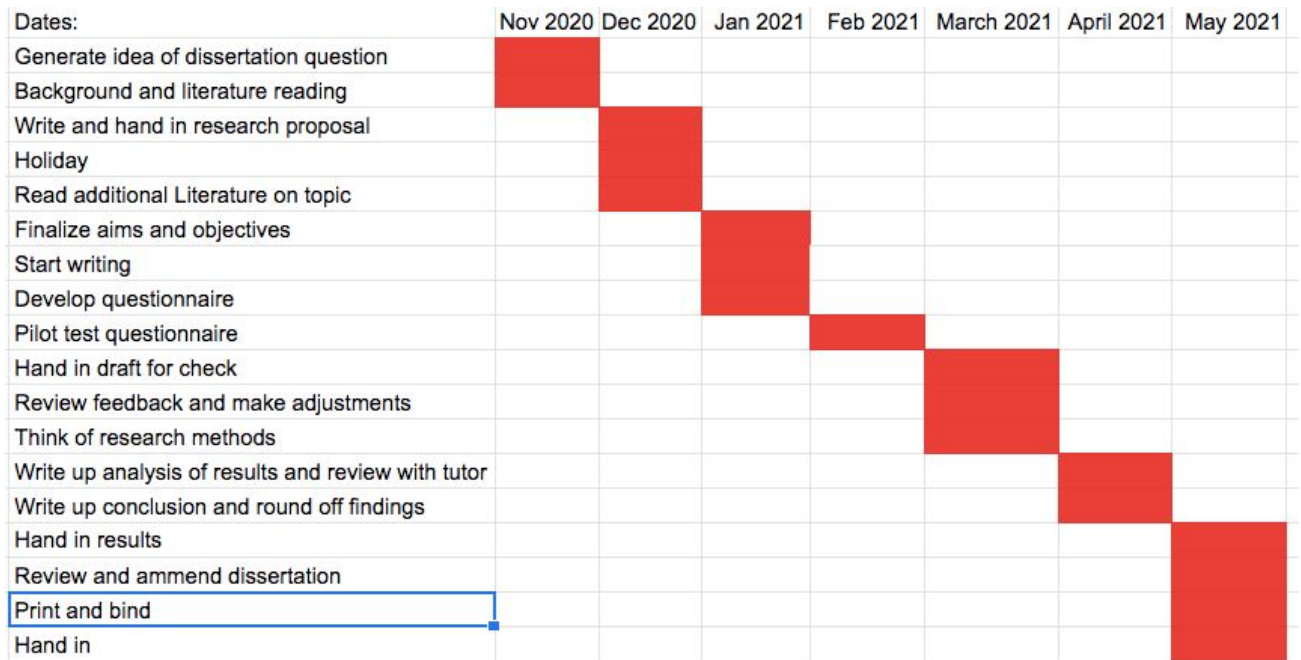
Research Limitations:

- Distance is a limitation, however with my family still living in Malaysia this limitation is lessened.
- There should be no real constraints to the research that the author aims to gather

Research rationale:

- Huge amounts of information via news articles and research done on the topic to assist me in writing a very accurate and detailed account of the reality of the situation.
- I would be able to structure interviews with people who have lived there for many years giving my research as accurate a reflection on the current social state in Malaysia, pos covid 19.
- Resources to be used include books, journals, reports, government legislation and credible online websites. These can be found in libraries, book shops and on the internet. Literature read must be relevant to the questions subject matter, aims and objectives.
- This topic is very relevant in the current times with a vast amount of information on the topic.
- Collins (2009) states that the rationale for doing academic research is to inform the researcher on certain specific subject areas. The construction of this research must be suitable to the research needs as well as informing the author of what the research aims to find out.
- I have 12 years of knowledge and experience of this specific culture and have been all over South East Asia, so this topic is very close to home for me. I'll be able to talk about it in a way that other people who just research the topic wouldn't be able to. Making the work relatable and accurately reflective of a real life Malaysian perspective.
- Personal incentive and motivation to talk about this topic as Malaysia was a big part of my own life for so long.
- As my parents still reside in Malaysia I will be able to get their understanding and experience of the situation from living in the very heart of the country that I'm researching.
- I can contrast how expat business dealt with and struggled through the pandemic, compared to how the local Malaysian struggled during this period.

Ghantt Chart:



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