Response Behaviour of Edu-tourists to COVID-19: A Case of Edu-tourism Destination

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ABSTRACT

The sudden closure by universities' campuses across the globe, amid the coronavirus outbreak, brought out several adverse effects on the Edu-tourism, including boredom. Delineated by the arousal and planned behaviour theories, this research developed a conceptual framework investigating the impact of boredom on attitude and behaviours and their indirect impacts through psychological distress among the international students at the Eastern Mediterranean University during the COVİD-19 pandemic. Partial least square (PLS-SEM) was used to analyse data from a sample of 260 students to explore the fore-mentioned relationships. The multigroup analysis was run to assess different responses of the students based on their gender and age. The research findings underscored the significant negative effect of boredom on edu-tourists attitude and insignificant positive effects on behaviour. Equally, the results of the link between students attitude and behaviour did not show any significance. Also, the mediation results demonstrated that psychological distress does not have any mediation effects. On the other hand, the results of the multigroup analysis unearth different responses by students on COVID-19. The male and female, the young and older students, have different reactions towards the coronavirus pandemic. The study provides practical and theoretical implications, limitations and areas for further research.

Keywords: COVID-19, Edu-tourists, Edu-tourism, state of boredom, psychological distress, Edu-tourists attitude, Edu-tourists behaviour.

ÖZ

Koronavirüs salgını sırasında dünyanın dört bir yanındaki üniversitelerin kampüslerinin aniden kapanması, eğitim turizmi üzerinde can sıkıntısı da dahil olmak üzere birçok olumsuz etki yarattı. Uyarılma ve planlı davranış teorileri ile tanımlanan bu araştırma, Doğu Akdeniz Üniversitesi'nde COVİD-19 salgını sırasında uluslararası öğrencilerde can sıkıntısının tutum ve davranışlar üzerindeki etkisini ve psikolojik sıkıntı yoluyla dolaylı etkilerini araştıran kavramsal bir çerçeve geliştirdi. Yukarıda belirtilen ilişkileri keşfetmek için 260 öğrenciden oluşan bir örneklemden alınan verileri analiz etmek için kısmi en küçük kare (PLS-SEM) kullanılmıştır. Çoklu grup analizi, öğrencilerin cinsiyetlerine ve yaşlarına göre farklı tepkilerini değerlendirmek için yapılmıştır. Araştırma bulguları, can sıkıntısının eğitici turist tutumu üzerindeki önemli olumsuz etkisinin ve davranış üzerindeki önemsiz olumlu etkilerinin altını çizdi. Aynı şekilde, öğrencilerin tutumları ve davranışları arasındaki bağlantının sonuçları da herhangi bir anlam ifade etmemiştir. Ayrıca, arabuluculuk sonuçları, psikolojik sıkıntının herhangi bir arabuluculuk etkisi olmadığını gösterdi. Öte yandan, çoklu grup analizinin sonuçları, öğrencilerin COVID-19 üzerindeki farklı tepkilerini ortaya çıkardı. Erkek ve kadın, genç ve daha büyük öğrencilerin corona virüs salgınına karşı farklı tepkileri var. Çalışma, daha fazla araştırma için pratik ve teorik çıkarımlar, sınırlamalar ve alanlar sağlar.

Anahtar kelimeler: COVID-19, Edu-turistler, Edu-turizm, can sıkıntısı durumu, psikolojik sıkıntı, Edu-turist tutumu, Edu-turist davranı

DEDICATION

To my parents, who have been my inspiration in life!

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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The outbreak of COVID-19 has multiple devastating effects on human lives and the world economy. Apparently, among the most affected is the educational sector as several such destinations closed their universities to allow social distancing and lockdown. Even though universities' closure was effective in mitigating the impacts of COVID-19; it deprived students of the privilege of gathering and socializing (Chen, 2020). As a result of this, edu-tourist remained in their dormitories, and homes where most of them experienced boredom. Accordingly, data from several parts of the world highlights the influence of pandemic on boredom (BRD), among people and students in specific. Boredom was reported by a survey conducted by the Chinese authority that included 2,135 participants to be a leading emotional aspect experienced by the Chinese during the pandemic (Chao et al., 2020). Likewise, more than 70 per cent of contributors investigated during the outbreak reveals a high-level of psychological symptoms level the unpleasant feeling of low arousal a person can experience during a specific period caused by external factors (Sundström et al., 2019). Several studies demonstrate the negative sentiment by Edu-tourists behaviour and experience driven by boredom. The available data on boredom underscored its adverse outcomes (Banerjee & Rai, 2020) in the learning environment. The boredom has been favourably correlated with low academic performance or even the termination of studies. The boredom does not affect students during their classes, and its adverse impacts are more pronounced in disable students (2010). Likewise, Woolf et al. had similar concerns

over students with a disability, where his findings demonstrated that students with a disability who learn mathematics are overwhelmed by the boredom. Besides, the empirical findings recommend that Boredom can be a general academic sentiment encountered by Edu-tourists in all ages, ethnicities and educational needs (Tze et al., 2016).

1.1 Statement of the problem

In Edu-tourism, previous studies have highlighted the impact of boredom to edu-tourists (Nett et al., 2010, 2011; van Tilburg & Igou, 2017). For instance, Nett et al.,(2010) attempt to come up with strategies for students to deal with boredom; and his objective is found that the four methods, namely cognitive techniques, approach strategies, cognitive-avoidance strategies, and behavioural avoidance strategies are highly appropriate to help edu-tourists to reduce boredom, as well as communicating their feeling of boredom more openly with their instructors. On the other hand, Nett et al. (2011) estimated that continued research on boredom could lead to the improvement of intervention programs that attempt to help students deal with boredom more efficiently. Also, van Tilburg & Igou (2017) see boredom as annoyance feeling that caused harmful effects. Boredom is recognized as a sentiment with its specific roles and outcomes, with something socially appropriate. While the available study provides excellent insights and excessive contribution in boredom and Edu tourism, there is a paucity of studies that have examined the effects of boredom on the attitude and behaviour of the edu-tourists.

1.2 Purpose of the study

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected edu-tourists' lives, as well as causing a wide variety of psychological problems, such as boredom and psychological distress. This research aims to develop a conceptual model that is centring on assessing the direct

impacts of boredom (BRD) on attitude (ATT) and behaviour (BVH), and its indirect impacts through the psychological distress (Psyc). The present research examines the attitude and behaviour of edu-tourists toward online learning during the lockdown caused by COVID-19. On other words, it is aiming to investigate the edu-tourists response behaviour toward the pandemic outcomes.

1.3 Objectives

the present study contains four main goals:

i. Examine the effects of boredom on edu-tourist attitude.

ii. Investigate the impact of boredom on edu-tourist behaviour.

iii. Scrutinize the mediating role of psychological distress in the relationship between boredom and (a) edu-tourist attitude, (b) edu-tourist behaviour.

iv. Assessing the different response behaviours based on age and gender among international students.

1.4 structure and timeline of the study

this study is comprised of six sections. The first section, which is a comprehensive introduction to the topic, it precisely explains the background of the subject and its direction; the second section is a literature review that makes an in-depth critical examination of previous literature on edu-tourism, edu-tourists, boredom, psychological distress, attitude and behaviour; the third section, is a theoretical framework and hypothesis development, presents a research model and the relationship between the variables that will be tested through data collected from edu-tourists; the fourth section is a methodology, some of the matters relating to the research philosophy, data collection, survey instruments, and strategy of analyses; the fifth section is result and analysis, and the last one is discussion and conclusion.

Chapter 2

EDU-TOURISM

2.1 Tourism

Tourism is among the leading global sectors and essential source for employment and growth in financial revenue in the world today. Investors perceive the business economic benefits and potential gains of the industry. Nevertheless, the field has several advantages to people within the destinations, such as creating environmental consciousness, sustainability practises, and employment opportunities. Thus, this sector has an exciting multiplying factor that benefits, as such, every angle of the society can get advantages from it. The data from WTO, (2010), suggest that tourism is one of the rapidly growing sectors. Its domination will be secure if this current fast growth is well maintained. Today, the international tourism has evidenced the tremendous growth of tourism from 25 million in 1950 to over 1.1 billion tourists in 2014. Currently, in every 11 people worldwide, 1 person works in tourism-related sector. Therefore, the contribution of the industry to the world economy has now exceeded US$ 7.6 trillion, which accounts for 10% of the global GDP in 2014 (WTTC, 2015). Recently, many destinations have been broadly seen as one that has contributed to improving the forex, jobs creation, increase awareness, enhance the living standard, and improving the destination.

Today, most of the places worldwide, benefit from tourism in one way or another. For instance, India is one of the countries where tourism plays a vital role in its economy.

Furthermore, the world nowadays relies on tourism as it is one of the primaries internal revenue (Ajake & Amalu, 2012). Obviously, India is attracting a considerable number of tourists all around the worldwide. The travel and tourism sectors are expected to contribute US$ 187.3 billion to the world gross domestic product by 2019 (TTC report, 2009). The report revealed that the GDP growth for the tourism economy is expected to achieve an average of 7.7 per cent per annum over the next 10 years. Moreover, by 2019 the earning from international tourists was around 51. 4 billion dollars. Besides, the tourism sector, which reports 4 per cent of total employment in 2009 is increased to 7.2 per cent of the overall engagement. Likewise, the NSSO, Ministry of tourism in the last six years has created 11 million jobs. It has the capacity to produce another 37 million jobs of the 120 million projected requirements by 2020.

2.2 Edu-tourism sector

Educational tourism is viewed as one of the rapidly growing trends in recent years. Students are beginning to give more importance to new ways of gaining knowledge in abroad destinations other than their home country, so, the possibilities of learning grow significantly (Bhuiyana et al., 2010). Moreover, edu-tourism is one of the popular segment in the tourism industry. It is increasingly getting fame and importance in the tourism domain. Accordingly, this category of tourism is becoming more and more essential sources of income for the countries. However, there is a limited category of researchers or better to say there is an absence of research that have discussed this sector of educational tourism. This has caused by the lack of data and literature in this area (Abubakar et al., 2014). Similarly, according to Paul (2010), there is a restricted knowledge in term of educational tourism concepts. Furthermore, like the tourism itself, educational tourism as well is characterized by intangibility; and it is prone to several threats and uncertainties. Despite its several benefits, education-related tourism

is correlated with the existence of a high degree of doubts. According to Felix & Steve (2007) discussed that universities are not giving attention to assist students in making the right decisions in the procedure of deciding about the planned course of study and which university to apply to not fail in the course.

2.3 Expansion of Edu-tourism

In the present time, our routine life becomes more and more challenging. The access possibilities and offer for educational services raise and the knowledge sharing methods take similar shapes, the significance of novelty gains essential meaning. Moreover, people are searching for new things, new experiences, social norms and knowing new cultures. Also, many countries are concentrating on the education sector for tourism; lately, most of the institutions are trying to introduce their programs, and they use the English language to increase their market share. Since the requirement for higher education tends to be competitive if it is offered in English. Therefore, using English as a teaching language allows those institutions to be more competitive and attract more students (Maggi & Padurean, 2009).

More precisely, the edu-tourism industry is projected to increase to 1,070,000 learners by 2017 (Ortiz, Chang and Fang, 2015). This will prompt the growth in the world spending's related educational services from $4.4 trillion in 2012 to $6.2 trillion (Ortiz, Chang and Fang, 2015). Similarly, the data from Northern Cyprus have underscored the contribution of edu-tourism to $400 million shortly (Zaman Yazarları, 2014). Also, several factors are taught to influence students' attitude in choosing their future institution abroad. For instance, educational programs in English opens up an institution for a wider audience. Likewise, increasing their competitive advantages (Rico and Loredana, 2009). The nature of edu-tourists lies on the quest for new experiences, norms and future job prospects. Further, potential edu-tourists are do not

hesitate to leave homes, and travel to experience new living environment (Ojo et al., 2015).

2.4 Northern Cyprus as edu-tourism destination

As a separate country from Cyprus, the Turkish Republic of North Cyprus (TRNC) is an island in the North East of the Mediterranean Sea. The economic growth in Northern Cyprus has positioned edu-tourism as an essential financial sector in this region. Indeed, in 2005, North Cyprus' GDP donated to $145.6 million by the tourism industry that led to 8.004 job opportunities. Besides, tourism industry presented 589.549 international tourists; in the same year, 395.4 million dollars has been added to the tourism sector (Rezapouraghdam et al., 2015).

More precisely, in the year of 2017 edu-tourism industry projected to attract around 1,070,000 students. As well as, The world costs on services and product concerning the education system are projected to grow from $4.4 trillion to $6.2 trillion (Ortiz et al., 2015). Similarly, the education tourism industry in Northern Cyprus gained $400 million in 2011 and this number projected to rise in the following years. Moreover, several elements influenced edu-tourists in choosing the appropriate university outside their home country. For example, in England the educational programs are finding new ways for attracting more students, while developing their competitive advantages for more succuss (Rico and Loredana, 2009) Since students willing to leaves their homes looking for experiencing new things, getting to know new cultures, nationalities and future job perspective (Abubakar et al., 2014).

As mentioned earlier, edu-tourism contribution to the economic development of North Cyprus is paramount. Presumably, this country is the right choice for studying

educational tourism; as long as many international students are reaching this area for purchasing their education. However, North Cyprus is facing some political and economic issues; Besides, the country's current status to the international community is a limitation. North Cyprus is not recognized as a separate entity by the international community. The economic embargo such as the postal and communication services and absence of international flights from and to North Cyprus has fueled North Cyprus's problems. Therefore, the state is currently unable to enter into trade terms with other nation-states. This political isolation and has impacted tourism growth considerably in North Cyprus. Also, because of the excellent advertisement for the Northern Cyprus international universities and the expansion of many well-known universities, the country's number has boosted recently. The number of international students coming to Northern Cyprus has expanded, which led the educational tourism sector in TRNC to be successful (Katircioğlu, 2014).

Chapter 3

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a theoretical background that includes the edu-tourism destination and edu-tourists' attitude and behaviours. Besides, edu-tourists experiencing boredom leads to psychological distress during COVID -19, which affected their attitudes and behaviours towards online education. This chapter also provides information about the attitude and actions of edu-tourist toward the new system of education.

3.1 Edu-tourism

Edu-tourism or international education tourism refers to any educational activity in which students across international borders either independently or collectively whose primary goal is a learning experience, acquiring intellectual services, and acquiring knowledge (Abubakar Mohammed et, al 2014). In a broader context, today the educational tourism plays a significant role in tourism. Thus, the available data disclosed the use of edu-tourism as a source of income and foreign earnings by many countries in the world (Sari et al., 2019).

The COVID-19 outbreak has affected the decision making and behaviours of edu-tourists. As such, higher learning institutions have been expressively impacted. For learners, the choice of destination for studying is one of critical aspect. Therefore, the wake of the pandemic has considerably changed its option and perceptions of edu-tourists' country. For instance, some preferred tourists' destinations before the

pandemic such as China, UK, Spain, Italy etc., are no longer the preference of the edu-tourists. Previous studies on the pandemics such as SARS and avian flu have highlighted the impacts of the diseases on edu-tourism destinations worldwide. Likewise, the research on socio-economic effects of the virus's outbreaks has demonstrated in detail the influence of edu-tourism on the intention to travel (Floyd et al., 2004; Lee et al., 2012). Other threads of research have debated the students' behaviours on several health-protective issues such as tourists' preventive mechanism, health-seeking actions and their behaviours toward education (Bae & Chang, 2020).

Thousands of schools and universities were closed in many parts of the world due to the coronavirus outbreak. UNESCO (2020) reported that 91.3% out of 1,576,021,818 of the total enrolled learners in 188 nation-states were affected in their different studies levels. Likewise, the reference from SARS unearthed that some of the educational institutions and universities stopped their studies temporarily during the outbreak in China in 2003. In Hongkong, for instance, 1,302 schools were closed, which made 1,000,000 students remain at their homes. Therefore, 50, 600 instructors faced some problems using technology to teach their students (Fox, 2003). According to some researchers, the outbreak of coronavirus changed universities' focus to pay attention to high-quality education and safe learning. Now, universities offer new curriculums to cope with students' needs by providing a new education system of online education rather than limiting themselves and cancelling studies. Also, it is challenging for universities to offer high-quality learning for their students even through online learning (Basilaia & Kvavadze, 2020).

3.2 Edu-tourists

International students, also known as edu-tourists, come from foreign countries and cross their nation-states' borders on an individual or collective basis to stay in a destination rather than the countries of their origin (World Tourism Organization, 2012). On other words, these tourists are those students who are looking for further education and increase their competence and expertise whereby their principal goals for travel are involving themselves into studies and learning (Merkl et al., 2008). According to the OECD (2018), educational tourists have traversed an international border of their countries for educational purpose to the distinct countries from their countries of origin. This kind of tourism is essential for students as the former may learn from the host countries' culture and experience. Educational tourism is central in providing happiness and more importantly, knowledge competence. It breaks the routine of life and fills the mind with joy. Besides, travelling teaches how to bear hardship, and this is good training for success in the struggle of life (Rahimizhian et al., 2020).

Globally, edu-tourists make a significant number of international tourists. The number of international students looking for universities outside their countries of origin was 4.1 million and the figure increased to over seven million by the year 2020. Thus the former creates a vital market share worth US$342 billion (Ojo & Yusof, 2019). For example, TRNC is a small island in the Eastern Mediterranean which has gained fame and became a higher education destination for many students worldwide (Alipour et al., 2020).

3.2.1 International mobile students

In recent years, there has been witnessed growth in internationally mobile students. The former refers to students who are not required to possess a resident visa to complete their studies. These types of edu-tourists are just given other categories of access to their international studies. Internationally, mobile students differ from different varieties of Edu tourists: international students and credit-mobile students. The other name for internationally mobile students is the degree of mobile students. Their distinguishing features from other international students are that they study abroad for just a short period of study abroad trips. The percentage of internationally mobile students has been increasing gradually from 3,961,200 in 2011 to 4,485,346 in 2016. On the other hand, a foreign student is a general term that refers to the students registered as students but is not citizens of their studying. These category students include students with permanent residents' visas and those who have not (UNESCO, 2015). Table 1 provides the highlight of the increase.

Table 1: Internationlly mobile students.

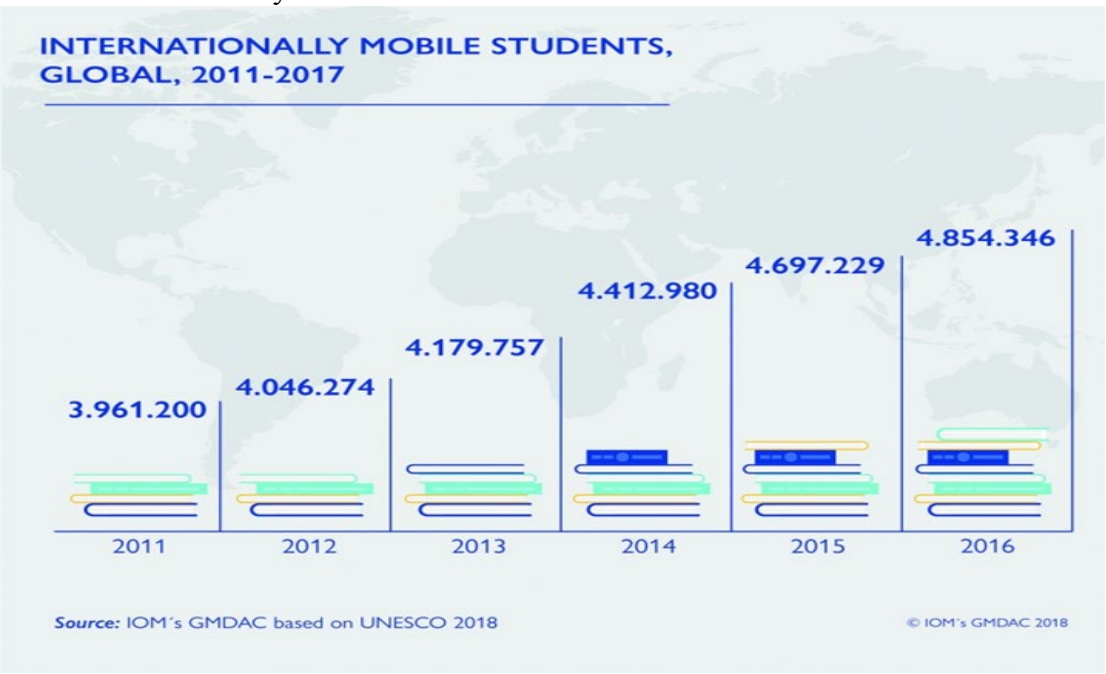

Table 2: International and foreign student mobility in tertiary education.

	Number of international or foreign students (in thousands)	Share of international or foreign students by level of tertiary education						
		Short-cycle tertiary	Bachelor's or equivalent	Master's or equivalent	Doctoral or equivalent	All tertiary		
	2017					2017	2013	2010
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)
	International students							
OECD Countries								
Australia	381	20	14	48	32	21	18	22
Austria	74	1	19	21	30	17	17	15
Belgium[1]	46	8	6	16	m	9	10	7
Canada	210	13	11	16	33	13	10	m
Chile	5	0	0	2	8	0	0	m
Denmark	34	15	6	19	35	11	10	8
Estonia	4	a	6	12	14	8	3	2
Finland	24	a	6	13	22	8	7	6
France	258	5	7	14	40	10	10	m
Germany	259	0	5	14	10	8	7	8
Hungary	29	1	7	17	15	10	6	5
Iceland	1	28	5	8	29	7	7	m
Ireland	20	3	7	19	29	9	6	m
Japan	164	7	3	8	18	4	3	m
Latvia	6	2	6	17	10	7	4	2
Lithuania	6	a	3	9	4	5	2	1
Luxembourg	3	9	26	76	85	47	44	m
Mexico	25	0	0	1	7	1	0	m
Netherlands	96	3	9	17	43	11	10	4
New Zealand	53	23	16	28	49	20	16	15
Norway	9	1	2	5	21	3	4	1
Poland	64	0	4	5	2	4	1	1
Portugal	22	3	4	8	27	6	4	3
Slovenia	3	2	3	5	9	4	3	2
Spain	65	1	1	10	18	3	3	3
Sweden	29	0	3	11	35	7	6	m
Switzerland	53	0	10	29	55	18	17	17
United Kingdom	436	4	14	34	42	18	17	16
United States	985	2	4	13	26	5	4	4
	Foreign students							
Colombia	5	0	0	1	3	0	m	m
Czech Republic	44	6	11	14	17	13	9	m
Greece	25	a	4	1	1	3	4	m
Israel	11	m	3	4	7	3	3	1
Italy	98	7	5	5	15	5	4	m
Korea	71	0	2	8	10	2	2	2
Slovak Republic	11	1	5	9	10	7	5	4
Turkey	108	0	2	5	8	2	1	m
OECD total	3 736	3	4	13	22	6	5	m
Average for countries with available data for all reference years						7	6	5
EU23 total	1 655	4	7	13	22	9	8	m
	Foreign students							
Argentina[2]	76	x(6)	x(6)	x(6)	x(6)	2	m	m
Brazil	21	0	0	1	2	0	m	0
China	157	x(6)	x(6)	x(6)	x(6)	0	m	m
Costa Rica	3	x(6)	x(6)	x(6)	x(6)	1	1	m
India	47	x(6)	x(6)	x(6)	x(6)	0	0	m
Indonesia	6	x(6)	x(6)	x(6)	x(6)	0	m	m
Russian Federation	278	1	5	7	7	4	2	2
Saudi Arabia	78	x(6)	x(6)	x(6)	x(6)	5	5	m
South Africa[2]	45	x(6)	x(6)	x(6)	x(6)	4	4	m

3.3 Covid-19: an unanticipated pandemic

Coronavirus is a severe health problem in various countries in the world nowadays. The pneumonia was previously discovered Wuhan in China in late 2019 (Al-Rabiaah et al., 2020). The disease rapidly affected all countries and places (Guan et al., 2020). Due to the virus's speed of contamination, the world health organization decided to take some measures and declared the virus as an international pandemic (Neuburger & Egger, 2020). By mid-2020, over 11 million observed international approved affected people (WHO, 2020). When the virus was announced as a worldwide pandemic, the state's governments worldwide confirmed partial lockdown. Thus, the lockdown impacted millions of people, including academics, business persons, and students (Pilotto et al., 2020). The data from the World Health Organization (WHO), demonstrated the rapid spread of the virus. The first country affected in Europe is Italy. This country was devasted by the COVID-19. Over a thousand cases were diagnosed just two weeks after the pandemic entered Europe. Four thousand patients were reported a week later and increased excessively to thirty thousand patients and over two thousand deaths during March 2020. As a result of this, the Italian government ordered a nationwide lockdown. Other nations followed, for example, Spain declared an emergency on 14 March and announced similar measures to be taken (Mizumoto et al., 2020).

The cases were increasing from the first day the virus appeared. Various countries decided to put the locked down strategy as many other countries to minimize the quick spread of the virus by putting restrictions to stay home, as a way to protect their people (Guan et al., 2020). By the mid 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) reported over 17 million, validated cases of COVID-19, including many fatalities (UNWTO,

2020). As for that, over 100 million of people globally are projected to lose their employments in 2020. Likewise, it was predicted that more than 12,000 people lost their jobs every single day in the hospitality industry. COVID-19 has been acknowledged to impose several economic impacts on Hospitality, 2020, was too intense. The number of students in the World has exceeded one and a half billion students (UNESCO Cambodia, 2020). Initially, all education institutions were closed in different edu-tourist's destinations. Furthermore, this unprecedented experience of 'home quarantine' under lockdown with academic and professional career uncertainty has multifaceted impacts on students' psychological health (Akhtarul Islam et al., 2020). In other words, the isolation in lockdown threatens the learning and well-being of edu-tourists by resulting in a high perception in the state of boredom. Students could feel bored with the new alternative online learning system while they are home locked, which may lead to psychological distress (Daniel, 2020).

Impacts:

3.4 Impacts of covid-19 on edu-tourism

The effects of COVID-19 has been so apparent in educational activities and institutions in general in many countries. These pandemic educational activities are directly stopped, especially teaching and learning activities face to face (Wang et al., 2020). These face-to-face activities are replaced by online activities where they conduct teaching and learning activities online. Online teaching and learning activities in many undeveloped countries are still minimal due to infrastructure limitations that are not yet ready for the process (Tosida et al., 2020). A new paradigm appeared amid the pandemic, online teaching and learning activities to stop the learning process. However, the teaching and learning process online is facing numerous obstacles regarding infrastructure. Moreover, online learning activities become a new challenge

because this process is different from face-to-face learning. Such as video exam performance, assignment activities, attendance and student satisfaction in accepting online learning will make the instructor as providing education continue to work to find innovations so that online learning can run efficiently (Ibáñez & Delgado-Kloos, 2018).

3.5 State of boredom

The extant literature provides definitions of boredom. Eastwood et al. (2012) determined boredom primarily as a feeling of low-arousal and negative emotions connected with a negative attitude toward an action. One cannot profoundly engage in a task and cannot sustain critical attention attributes an external environment as a cause of this undesirable feeling. Besides, decreasing in physical activities and an inability to identify what a person wishes, a passive attitude hoping for a change from an outside source, and a sense of time alteration (William L.Mikulas and Stephen J, 1993). On other words, boredom is defined as one of the significant outcomes of covid-19 constructions. It is identified as individuals' unwanted experience of having an unconvinced desire to be engaged in a comforting environment that leads to feelings of being stuck in an undesirable and unimportant present (Fahlman et al., 2013).

The term boredom has been studied for more than 25 years, and most of the studies focused on evaluating the impact of general boredom on students' behaviours. Research focusing specifically on academic boredom has received more attention (Tze et al., 2013). As Pekrun et al. (2002) stated, students' feeling of boredom describes boredom that connected to academic learning, classroom instruction and success. Furthermore, the data from medical experts disclosed the pandemic's role to boredom, when the former increases, the latter is escalating as well. Thus, boredom has a

significant impact on edu-tourists behaviours (Laato et al., 2020). However, students' social isolation and distancing have been viewed as effective ways to slow transmission during pandemics (World Health Organization, 2019).

Moreover, various recent studies have found that social isolation induces boredom at home, which may damage physical and psychological health in the long term (Banerjee and Rai, 2020; Williams et al., 2020). Equally, the lockdown has minimized the interaction among the people, which affected the mental and psychological wellbeing, leading to a different degree of negative mental stress (Qiu et al., 2020; Xiang et al., 2020; Zhang et al., 2020). Extant literature has recently advocated that social distancing minimizes physical and social contact with others, which constitutes an essential contribution towards boredom (Brooks et al., 2020). Boredom has been presumably associated with many psychological problems, including depression, eating disorders, and aggression. It is an unpleasant experience and undesired emotion that affects the daily life of edu-tourists (van Tilburg & Igou, 2017).

3.6 Psychological distress

Psychological distress refers to disagreeable emotions, mood, or feelings influencing the people way of working (Piccoli & De Witte, 2015). Recent increases in psychological distress among people worldwide have been associated with the pandemic's presence (Hasan & Bao, 2020). Therefore, one's perceptions of the effects of COVID-19 impact the number of sentiments, whether positive or negative (H. Han et al., 2020). Furthermore, psychological distress is connected to edu-tourists' negative views of their living environment and shapes how they react to other people. Other researchers have examined the link between distant and interactive education and their effects on edu-tourists psychological distress (Han et al., 2020).

Educational institutes' closure dramatically affects students' psychology, especially those away from their families (Hasan & Bao, 2020). Studies have underscored the relationship between knowledge on the pandemic and the level of psychological distress and discomfort among the students (Juan et al., 2020). Moreover, many negative stressors such as depression, anxiety, sadness, anxiety, that influence the specific individual behaviours have been examined. According to a previous study, a lack of enjoyment at classrooms is the main factor in the high level of student psychological distress (Dewaele, Magdalena, & Saito, 2019).

During that challenging period, students' psychology during pandemic depended heavily on the level of change in their usual daily routine and social support. During those months of closure, students lived in very disparate environments and had to run their social life differently than before. According to a survey, results show that students worldwide communicate online at least once a day with their close family members, someone they live with, as a roommate, or rely on the social network. Students helped one another psychologically by maintaining their social distance, specifically in the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic (Aristovnik et al., 2020).

Institutional closure during this pandemic tried to find an alternative solution to education by executing online classes. Cao et al. l, (2020) conducted a study including several university's students. They found that about twenty-five per cent of students are experiencing psychological distress caused by long-distance learning. On the other hand, Lee (2020) mentioned that 83% of students suffer from different most terrible situations. Nevertheless, little attention has been put on examining the impact of psychological attention on attitude, specifically during online education under pandemic and higher learning institutions. Presumably, the instructors' prevalence of

insufficient teaching techniques and the incapability of students to adequately cope with online education are partly causes of psychological problems. The success of online education, which is an alternative to the physical classroom; is determined by the awareness and technological know-how of both students and instructors (Hasan & Bao, 2020). Thus, the lack of the two pre-mentioned aspects may deteriorate lecturers' performance and specific students that may prompt negative attitudes towards online learning behaviours. For these reasons, online learning during the pandemic has been a significant predictor of psychological distress (Rohman, Marji, Sugandi, & Nurhadi, 2020).

3.7 Edu- tourists' attitude

Studies have identified attitude as an essential element that positively or negatively influences an individual towards assessing specific phenomenon (Ajzen, 1985). The formation of attitude lasts longer, and once molded, it is often acting as a sensitive predictor of a person's actions (Bae & Chang, 2020). Moreover, the edu-tourists' attitude towards online education, and the educational destination, constitute an integral part of their decisions their travel decision during the virus outbreak (Hasan & Bao, 2020).

Coronavirus has caused a massive impact on students, instructors, and higher education institutions worldwide (Mailizar, Almanthari, Maulina, & Bruce, 2020). The pandemic caused schools, colleges, and universities worldwide to shut down their campuses so that students could follow social distancing measures that noticeably affect students (Toquero, 2020). But because nobody knows when this pandemic will disappear altogether, educational institutions including schools, colleges and universities across the globe immediately decided to embrace online learning for

students of all academic fields, causing boredom to students (Kaur, 2020). This embracing of online education kept students in a challenging situation (Hasan & Bao, 2020). Furthermore, most instructors and students are not ready to deal with online education. However, the presence of some practical flaws, several criticisms have been raised against online education by a considerable number of international students (T. Chen et al., 2020). According to Roth et al. (2020), during the video learning amid the COVID-19, students had obtained lower grades, which prompted the dissatisfaction among the majority of them (Droit-Volet et al., 2020).

Lee (2020) surveyed the coronavirus pandemic, had informed a significant number of students facing psychological problems. Despite their concerns, 83 per cent of these high institution learners were unable to get any psychological assistance to cope with an extremely negative attitude. Previous experimental research equally revealed a too high level of boredom by students, and their eager demand for material to adjust their behaviours during the outbreak (Geana et al., 2015).

3.8 Edu- tourist behaviour

Edu-tourists' behaviours during the pandemic differ from one student to another. Indeed, edu-tourists' risk behaviours vary based on complex psychological characteristics, cultures, and living lifestyle (Reisinger & Mavondo, 2005). Besides, social distancing was considered as one of the defensive actions amid the pandemic. Furthermore, the modern world has hardly ever been social a distancing for such a long time. The public movement has been restricted and isolated to control the spread of the virus. Edu-tourists are forced to stay to remain their houses and dormitories, which lead them to be overwhelmed by the period of quarantine. In the World of rapid travel

and communication; it is hard for them to wake up every day in the same place in social isolation, absolute boredom (Banerjee & Rai, 2020).

Presumably, students experienced a high anxiety level during the COVID-19 pandemic (Brooks et al., 2020). The equal students experienced severe levels of negative emotional behaviours emanated due to the virus outbreaks. These behaviours include; feelings of uncertainty, doubt of academic year loss, the fear of being separated from their loved ones, stress specifically among the international students. These negative emotional and behavioural responses produced anxiety responses, where students experienced feelings of fear, sadness, and nervousness, which affected their enthusiasm considerably in studying (Savage et al., 2020). The online education, among other things, had fueled the stress among the edu-tourists due to the absence of interactions among them. Therefore, students had to work from homes due to the strict restrictions prohibited from studying in the classrooms (Akdeniz et al., 2020). According to Jean-Paul Sartre, human beings' acts and effects on another human are significant predictors to define them. However, when they have more time but are isolated and cannot act—they have nothing to do—they are overwhelmed by sadness and boredom. An experimental study approved that university students suffer from psychological distress due to unproductive online teaching approaches (Carpenter et al., 2020).

Previous research during outbreaks and pandemics linked one's behavioural change due to students' limited activity and government-imposed policies. Individuals and government-level decision-making are prone to errors and biases in new and unclear situations (Laato et al., 2020). Besides, in Turkey, the practice of social isolation was very high, at 97 per cent among the protective behaviours examined. Also, 38 per cent

of students reveal they worry about their health; 44 per cent stated that they have a moderate fear level. Also, 88 per cent were anxious about their relatives to catch the coronavirus (Ahorsu et al., 2020).

Moreover, A study has revealed that university students' changing behaviours were due to the pandemic's presence that impacted students learnings and threatens employment for the instructors (Cornine, 2020). The edu-tourists' actions and psychological problems increased due to lockdown, where tourism-related entities such as accommodation and transportation providers and restaurants were closed entirely. Therefore, the lack of reliable treatment is still a precondition for the students' current high level of anxiety responses (Romero-Blanco et al., 2020).

Chapter 4

THEORITICAL FREMEWORK AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

The present chapter presents the research model and the relationships to be tested through international students' data. Specifically, we employed two theories. Therefore, this chapter gives information about BRD → Psyc → ATT → BHV, the impact of Covid-19 on edu-tourist. By doing so, the mediating role of Psyc is tested. In addition to these relationships, the control variables are included in the research model.

4.1 Research model

Figure 1 presents a proposed model for this study. Specifically, the conceptual framework that includes four critical latent variables. Our proposed model examines boredom's effects on edu-tourists' behaviours and attitude toward online learning during the COVID-19. The conceptual model suggests that the wake of the pandemic has resulted in boredom. The former affected the psychological distress, which is a mediator between boredom and edu-tourist attitude, on the one hand, and with behaviours on the other hand. The model indicates that both BRD and PScy influence edu-tourists at the time of the virus outbreak. Four constructs that create our model are governed by the six hypotheses and delineated by two theoretical frameworks: the theory of planned behaviours and arousal theory.

4.2 Theories

4.2.1 The Arousal Theory (AT)

The arousal theory states that people need external activities and inspiration required by the body to feel comfortable (Reisenzein, 2017). It equally stipulates that when the magnitude of arousal is minimal people are comforted. However, as the degree of arousal escalates people are depressed. Based on this theory, we argue that boredom, which is an essential element, when increases create, triggers students' psychological distress (Picard et al., 2016). Equally, when the students' level of boredom is low, the magnitude of their psychological distress is lowered. Extant literature has confirmed that the coronavirus outbreak had caused the boredom among the students, and the former was aroused (Chao et al., 2020).

4.2.2 Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB)

In addition to the theory of arousal, the TPB posits that people behaviours are determined by their outlooks that are mainly emanating from their social constructions and social fabrics (Ajzen, 1985). The theory has a multipurpose function as it has been employed in many disciplines such as marketing, tourism and medicine (Cachat et al., 2010). One may define attitude as the subjective view of an individual and how one perceives and regulates his/ her behaviours. Delineated by the TPB, this study suggests that edu-tourists attitudes during the coronavirus outbreak have been a significant predictor of students behaviours towards online learning.

4.3 Hypothesis

4.3.1 Boredom → Edu-tourists attitude → Edu-tourists behaviours

During COVID-19 lockdown, things have been changing so fast. Therefore, this quick changing leads to a significant increase in boredom among edu-tourist. The literature on boredom suggests that it is involved in many behaviours and psychological

dimensions and that it has a negative side, as in the boredom observed in our research. Indeed, trait boredom is associated with psychological difficulties. However, some recent efficient approaches have also suggested that boredom constitutes a pivotal signal to change behaviours by adjusting individuals to find a more satisfying situation. In the lockdown context, one may wonder what influence this feeling of boredom has on developing prosocial behaviours or compliance with the containment situation in the short or long term (Droit-Volet et al., 2020).

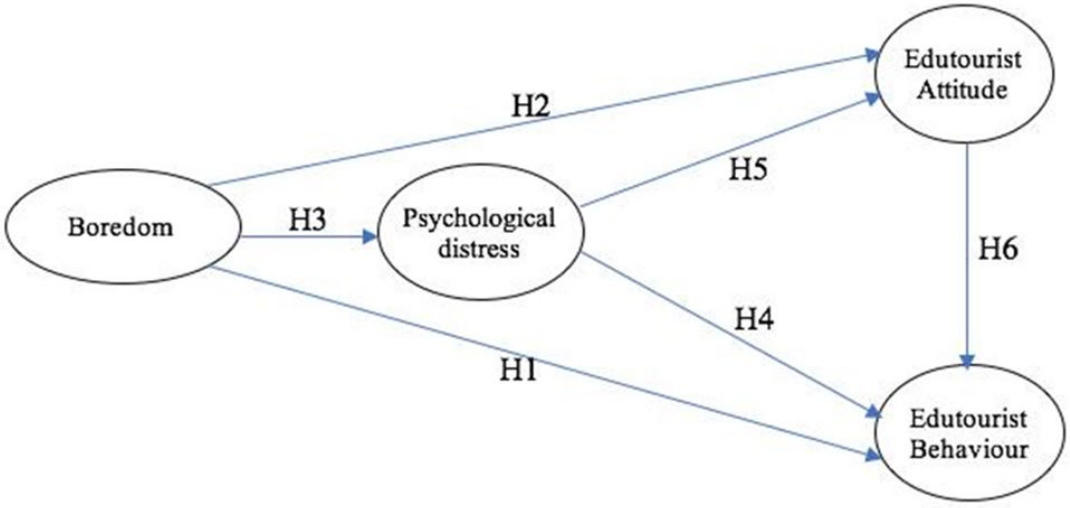

Figure 1: Research Model

According to the arousal theory, among people needs is having the chance to be outdoor to practice their activities not to feel uncomfortable. As a Result, the luck of actions leads to a repetitive life which changed students' attitude and behaviours and lowered their arousal levels and increased their feelings of boredom. Therefore, we argue the following hypothesis:

H 1: Boredom affects negatively edu-tourist behaviours.

H2: Boredom affects negatively edu-tourist attitude.

4.3.2 Boredom → Psychological distress

According to the arousal theory, an individual's excitement or depression is determined by the magnitude of arousal one receives (Reisenzein, 2017). As such, when the level of arousal escalates people feel depressed and bored. On the other hand, the lower the arousal level, the more relaxed the people become (Deng et al., 2020). In his study, COVID-19 as an arousing element has caused numerous negative factors such as lockdown and social distancing. Students who are restricted to interact had to remain in their rooms and houses without seeing their friends and colleagues. As a result, these students experienced boredom which eventually affected their phycological emotions. Previous literature has underscored boredom's effects on psychological distress and associated state boredom with a high psychological distress level during the COVID-19 epidemic (Chao et al., 2020). Thus, we arrive at the following hypothesis:

H3: boredom has a positive relationship with psychological distress.

4.3.3 Psychological distress →Edu-tourists attitude → Edu-tourists behaviours

Based on the arousal theory, the COVID-19 stimulates the state of boredom to the students in the higher learning institutions. The boredom evokes their psychological emotions to the extent of making them distressed. Therefore, the psychological distressed is considered a meaningful mediator between boredom and international students' attitude and behaviours. Students experienced anxiety and loneliness, even though they were also required to accomplish their educational responsibilities. Previous studies have highlighted the relationship between psychological distress and people attitudes and behaviours during the pandemic (H. Han et al., 2020). Therefore,

based on the above theoretical underpinnings (TPB) and the findings of the previous research, we formally hypothesize that:

H 4: psychological distress affects edu-tourist attitude.

H 5: psychological distress affects edu-tourist behaviours.

4.3.4 Edu-tourists attitude → Edu-tourist behaviour

The theory of planned behaviours suggested that attitudes affect people (Ajzen, 1985). Worldwide, COVID-19 was experienced by online education. Following several governments' lockdowns, students had to practice social distancing and isolate themselves from social interaction. Therefore, many of the international students experienced bored, and which ultimate affected their attitudes and behaviours. As a result, their behaviours towards online education changed and influenced their actions towards the same. Extant literature suggested that a high increase of boredom has considerable effects on the individual attitude that negatively affects people's behaviours (Lee 2009). Besides, the edu-tourists' attitude towards edu-tourism behaviours is considered the magnitude to which edu-tourists make either a positive or negative evaluation (Heesup Han, 2020). That means edu-tourists attitude towards online education can be either positive or negative, depending on the assessment of a particular student. Based on the above arguments, we create the following hypothesis:

H6: Attitude has a significant favourable influence on students' behaviours

Chapter 5

METHODOLOGY

The methodology section aims to discuss several issues relating to the research philosophy, data collection, survey instruments, and analytical strategy.

5.1 Deductive approach

This study involved a model with four latent variables: boredom, psychological distress, attitude and behaviours. The study's model was assessed based on the theoretical framework and the empirical data collected through a survey questionnaire. Additionally, the study was governed by the deductive approach as its primary focus was to test the hypothesis based on the Theory of planned behaviours and the Arousal theory. Therefore, the research has six hypothesized relationships. The hypothesis one examined the effects of boredom on behaviours; hypothesis two assessed the impacts of boredom on attitude. Proposition three evaluated the impact of boredom on psychological distress. Hypothesis four and five tested psychological distress effects on edu-tourist attitude and behaviours, and final hypothesis inspected the impacts of edu-tourist perspective on behaviours.

5.2 Participations and procedure

This study was conducted at Eastern Mediterranean University. 260 students from several faculties and countries were consulted to fill out the survey. Furthermore, before distributing the instrument, one highly qualified academician was assessed to confirm face validity. Thus, based on the commendations from the experts, the survey was modified. Therefore, We used 20 questionnaires for a pilot study to establish the

reliability of the instrument. Also, Cronbach alpha and the loading factors were assessed. The results of the pilot test led to the modifications of some indicators. A Final field survey was distributed to the students using the snowball sampling procedure. Besides, the snowball sampling was used because students were in lockdown, so the researcher could not know its location. Similarly, out of 290, 276 edu-tourists filled out questions obtained, and after the cleaning of the data, only 260 surveys were found to be usable for this study. Additionally, as the study aims at collecting the response from edu-tourists, there was one screening question to determine their qualification. As such, the answer made by students with Cypriot nationality were not counted in this study.

The common method variance was examined. In this study, we employed procedural and statistical remedies to overcome the threats of common method variance in our data set. The recommendations by Podsakoff et al. (2003) were considered. First, our questionnaires had information such as "this study is voluntary so that you may withdraw from it any time, the anonymity of the respondents was assured. Moreover, some of the items were negatively worded, and the objective of the study was hidden as a technique to administer the psychological separation (Podsakoff et al., 2012).

In addition to the procedural remedies, statistical remedies were also administered. Indeed, the study used Harman's single factor test to screen the method variance in our data set. Pearson correlation with varimax was run, and the data were found to have only 36.494% which is lower than 50% required to confirm that our data is suffering from the problem of the common method variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003). Therefore, as a result of the test, we confirmed that our study does not have a severe problem of the common method bias.

5.3 The measuring instruments

5.3.1 Measures

This study adopted measures from previous studies. All measurements were on the first order and under a 5 Likert scale (1= strongly disagree, 2= disagree, 3= undecided, 4= agree, 5= strongly agree). The instrument included five sections with four latent variables: boredom, Psychological distress, attitude and behaviours. The last part included the demographic profile of the respondents. Based on (Chao et al., 2020), measures for boredom were adopted. The psychological distress was assumed from (Hasan & Bao, 2020). Measures for attitude was adopted from (Bae & Chang, 2020). Finally, the behaviours was adopted from (Neuburger & Egger, 2020)

5.4 Analytic strategy

As suggested by Anderson and Gerbing (1988), this study applies the two-step approach. The two-step approach considers first the conduct of measurement model followed by the structural model after. This approach contains the evaluation of the measurement and structural or hypothesized the models.

Table 3: Measure of Constructs

Table 1. Measures of Constructs

Boredom (BRD)	BRD1	Often I find myself at loose ends, not knowing what to do
	BRD2	Many of things I o are repetitive and monotonous
	BRD3	Much of the time, I just sit around doing nothing
Psychological distress (Psyc)	Psyc1	I often feel tired out for no good reason
	Psyc2	I often feel nervous
	Psyc3	I often feel so nervous that nothing could calm me down
	Psyc4	I often feel hopeless
	Psyc5	I often feel restless or fidgety
	Psyc6	I often feel so restless that I could not sit alone
	Psyc7	I often feel depressed
	Psyc8	I often feel that everything is not an effort
	Psyc9	I often feel so sad that nothing could cheer me up
	Psyc10	I often feel worthless
Edu-tourist attitude (ATT)	ATT1	Online education is useful
	ATT2	Online education is valuable
	ATT3	Online education is beneficial

	ATT4	Online education is attractive
Edu-tourist behaviours (BHV)	BHV1	My learning behaviours is likely to change due to coronavirus
	BHV2	If I study in another country depends on how media is reporting about that country
	BHV3	Currently, I would prefer studying in countries with reported cases of coronavirus
	BHV4	Currently, I would prefer to cancel my studies to countries with no reported cases of coronavirus
	BHV5	Currently, I would avoid studying outside
	BHV6	Currently, I would avoid face to face studies
	BHV7	I would avoid any contact with other students in my university

Chapter 6

RESULTS OF STUDY

6.1 Respondents' Characteristics

The study presents several demographic characteristics of the respondents in terms of age, education level, gender, residence, nationality, and marital status. Accordingly, the study sample included 260 respondents; out of whom female were 116 (44.6%) and 144 (55.4%) male respondents (edu-tourists). Among these, 178 (68.5%) were less than 25 years old. 72 (25.7%) were aged between 25 and 34 years. 10 (3.8%) respondents were aged between 35 to 45 years. There was no respondent aged above 45. In terms of education, 136 (52.3%) respondents they were undergraduate students. 72 (27.7%) respondents are post graduate students. Residents 136 (52.3) were living home. 108 (41.5) were living in dormitory. 16 (6.2) are living in other places. 243 (93.5) are single while only 17 (6.5) are married. The respondents involved 44 nationalities, some of these nationalities are Nigeriens, Moroccan, Iranians, Jordanians and Palestinians to mention only a few. Table 4 and 5 show the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Table 4: Respondents' profile (n = 260)

	Frequency	**Percentage %**
Age		
Less than 25	178	68.5
26 and older	82	29.5
Gender		
Male	144	55.4
Female	116	44.6
Marital status		

Single	243	93.5
Married	17	6.5
Education		
undergraduate	188	72.3
Postgraduate & above	72	27.7
Residence		
Home	136	52.3
Dormitory	108	41.5
Other places	16	6.2

Table 5: Repondant' nationality

	Nationality	Frequency	Percent
1	Nigerian	35	13.5
2	Iranian	23	8.8
3	Palestinian	19	7.3
4	Egyptian	14	5.4
5	Jordanian	14	5.4
6	Moroccan	22	8.5
7	Sudanese	2	0.8
8	Kazakh	3	1.2
9	Eritrean	2	0.8
10	Cameroonian	8	3.1
11	Lebanese	6	2.3
12	Yemen	6	2.3
13	Turkish	18	6.9
14	Zimbabwean	9	3.5
15	Algerian	2	0.8
16	Afghan	1	0.4
17	Syrian	11	4.2
18	Russian	2	0.8
19	Tanzanian	3	1.2
20	Iraqi	6	2.3
21	French	1	0.4
22	Chadian	4	1.5
23	Kyrgyzstan	2	0.8
24	Indonesian	1	0.4
25	Congolese	1	0.4
26	Togolese	1	0.4
27	Somalian	3	1.2
28	Sierra Leone	2	0.8
29	Chinese	1	0.4
30	Botswanan	1	0.4

31	Malian	3	1.2
32	Tunisian	3	1.2
33	Libyan	6	2.3
34	Saudi Arabian	2	0.8
35	Ghanaian	2	0.8
36	Rwandans	1	0.4
37	Zambian	4	1.5
38	Bengali	2	0.8
39	Pakistani	2	0.8
40	Swaziland	2	0.8
41	South African	2	0.8
42	Malawian	2	0.8
43	Kenyan	3	1.2
44	Lesotho	3	1.2

6.2 Measurement model

The assessment of measurement model was conducted by using partial least square (PLS-SEM). The relationship between the focal variables and their related items was assessed. PLS was selected because of its high capacity in the analysis of small sample size and the abnormal distributed data . The validity of the items was measured using the Cronbach alfa, which after dropping off some items, the Cronbach alfa of all constructs were greater >0.70. Therefore, the validity of the instruments was confirmed by Cronbach alpha. The convergent validity was established by using both factor loadings, and Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of the constructs (Ghobehei et al., 2019). All items with the factor loading below the cut of the level of 0.50 were deleted (Hair Jr, Sarstedt, Ringle, & Gudergan, 2017). The discriminant validity was evaluated by using Fornell and Lacker criterion, where the square root of AVE was greater than the correlations of the constructs (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). Then this was corroborated by the hetero-trait-mono-trait ratio (HTMT) where the results showed all ratio to be less than one at 97.5% confidence interval (Risher & Hair, 2017).

Table 6: Discriminant validity: the square root of the AVE

	Boredom	Edu-tourist attitude	Edu-tourist behaviour	Psychological distress
Boredom	**0.792**			
Edu-tourist attitude	-0.257	**0.879**		
Edu-tourist behaviour	0.201	0.050	**0.788**	
Psychological distress	0.608	-0.184	0.268	**0.793**

Table 7: Discriminant validity: the hetero-trait-mono-trait ratio (HTMT)

	Boredom	Edu-tourist Attitude	Edu-tourist behaviour	Psychological distress
Boredom	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Edu-tourist attitude	0.316	0.000	0.000	0.000
Edu-tourist behaviour	0.241	0.163	0.000	0.000
Psychological distress	0.731	0.203	0.270	0.000

6.3 Structural model and hypothesis testing

In assessing our model, the path coefficients and their significance values, and R^2 values were used. The model fit was assessed through SRMR which was found to be 0.066 which is below the cut of level of < 0.080 (Hair et al., 2017; Hair et al. 2020). We conducted a blindfolding analysis to assess the predictive capacity of our model. The value of Stone Gaesser's (Q^2) of all predicted variables in the model was greater to 0, ATT=0.048, BHV=0.046, Pscy=0.228 which confirmed the accurate predictive capacity of the data not used in the model (Hair et al., 2020). Using a subsample of 5000, the Bootstrapping was run to assessing the structural and hypothesis testing and the results. Bootstrapping was selected in order to prevent the original data from the threat of non-normal distribution of data (Xu & Fox, 2014). The table below highlights the results.

Table 8: Internal concistency, reliability, and convergent validity

	Standardised Loadings	CA	Rho_A	CR	AVE
Boredom		**0.709**	**0.736**	**0.834**	**0.627**
I often find myself at loose ends, not knowing what to do	**0.836**				
Many things I have to do are repetitive and monotonous	**0.732**				
Much of the time I just sit around doing nothing	**0.805**				
Edu-tourist attitude		**0.855**	**0.888**	**0.911**	**0.773**
Online education is useful	**0.897**				
Online education is beneficial	**0.915**				
Online education is attractive	0.823				
Edu-tourist behaviour		**0.750**	**0.778**	**0.824**	**0.622**
Currently I would avoid studying outside	**0.869**				
Currently I would avoid face to face studies	**0.529**				
I would avoid any contact with other students in my university	**0.911**				
Psychological distress		**0.915**	**0.918**	**0.931**	**0.629**
I often feel nervous	**0.747**				
I often feel so nervous that nothing could calm me down	**0.788**				
I often feel hopeless	**0.852**				
I often feel restless or fidgety	**0.735**				
I often feel depressed	**0.861**				
I often feel that everything is not effort	**0.823**				
I often feel so sad that nothing could cheer me up	**0.799**				
I often feel worthless	**0.730**				

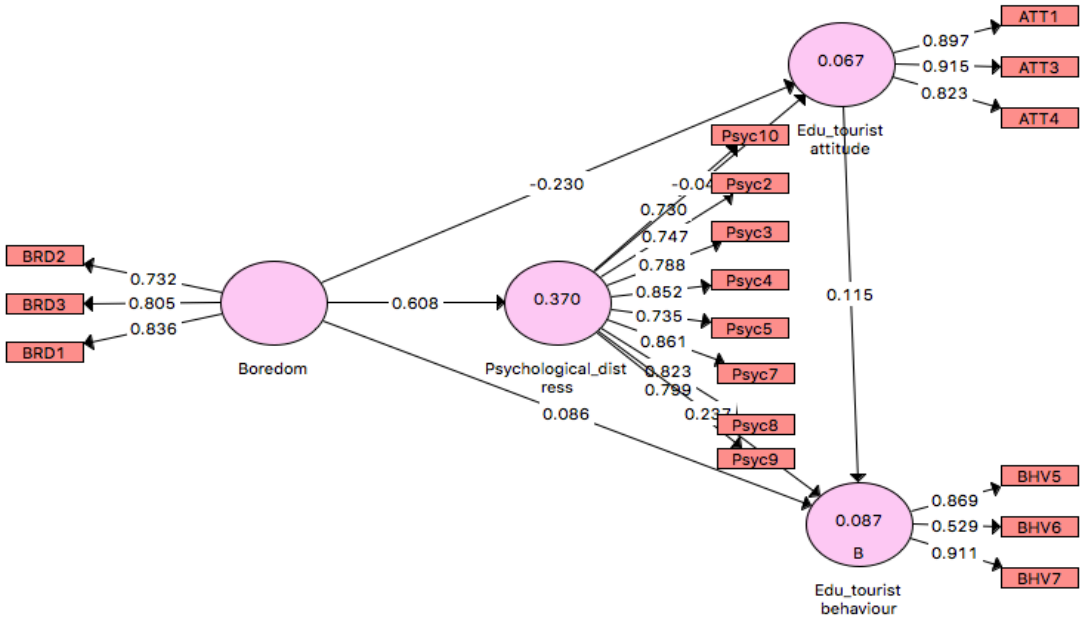

Figure 2: Structural model

The results of the bootstrapping test of hypothesis, BRD was found to have no effects on BHV β = 0.086, p=0.498, H1 was rejected. The results of hypothesis H2 revealed the significant negative effects by BRD on ATT, β = -0.230, p = 0.009, H2 was accepted. H3 showed significant positive effects by BRD on Pscy with β= 0.608 and p = 0.000, H3 was accepted. The final hypothesis number six the results revealed the insignificant positive effects of ATT on BHV with β= 0.115 and p = 0.424, H6 was also rejected.

Table 9: Path coefficient of direct hypothesis effects

		β	t-value	p-value	Significance
H1	BRD->BHV	0.086	1.678	0.498	NO
H2	BRD->ATT	-0.230	2.610	0.009	YES
H3	BRD->Pscy	0.608	14.235	0.000	YES
H6	ATT->BHV	0.115	0.799	0.424	NO

Mediation analysis was assessed by running a bootstrapping with 5000 subsamples. The assessment on path coefficients, T values and their respective levels of significances in both direct and indirect relationships. Following the suggestion by (Zhao et al., 2010), we considered both direct and indirect effects in assessing the mediation. The analysis of hypothesis path coefficient and their respective significance are shown in table 9 and table 10. Also, the results of the mediation showed that psychological distress does not mediate the either the link between boredom and edu-tourists attitude nor between boredom and edu tourists behaviour.

Table 10: Path coefficient of hypothesis indirect effects

		β	t-value	p-value	Significance
H4	BRD->Pscy->BHV	0.144	1.556	0.120	NO
H5	BRD -> Pscy->ATT	-0.027	0.508	0.611	NO

6.4 The Multi-group analysis

The multi-group analysis was run using patrial least square (PLS-SEM) to examine different responses of COVID19 among the international students. The data of the study were divided into two groups; the first group was gender which included male (144) and female (116). And the second group was age which included high age (82) and low age (178). The comparison was made within each group and not between the groups to have a meaningful comparison. We assessed the path coefficients, t-value, and their respective significance by using p-value. Male vs female students, and high age vs low age students, were compared. Thus, the findings of the comparison in gender suggested that psychological distress in male students positively affected their behaviours p-value=0.012, for the female students, the psychological distress had insignificant negative impact p=0.756. The female attitude had significant positively associated with their behaviours p=0.022, while male students had insignificant impact

p=0.882. However, the impact of boredom on psychological distress is positive significant among males and female students p=0.000. Moreover, boredom had insignificant positive impact on edu-tourists behaviours among both male p=0.721 and female p=0.283 students, while it has negative insignificant impact on attitude in both gender, female p=0.111 and male p=0.067, in table 11.

In age group boredom among older students has negative insignificant impact on their attitude p=0.648 while among younger students has negative significant impact p=0.007. Moreover, boredom has negative insignificant impact on older students' behaviours 0.993, however it has positive insignificant impact on younger students' behaviours p=0.734. Boredom has positive significant impact on psychological distress in both older and younger edu-tourist. Furthermore, psychological distress has negative insignificant impact on attitude in both older and younger. Likewise, it has positive insignificant impact on both younger and older students' behaviours. This is shown in table 12.

Table 11: The multi-group analysis for gender

	β Female	**t-Value Female**	**p-Value Female**	**β Male**	**t-Value Male**	**p-Value Male**
BRD -> ATT	-0.209	1.594	0.111	-0.221	1.832	0.067
BRD-> BHV	0.209	1.073	0.283	0.049	0.358	0.721
BRD -> Psyc	0.645	10.332	0.000	0.571	9.508	0.000
ATT -> BHV	0.319	2.293	0.022	-0.022	0.148	0.882
Psyc -> ATT	-0.043	0.342	0.732	-0.086	0.686	0.493
Psyc -> BHV	-0.075	0.310	0.756	0.360	2.525	0.012

Table 12: Multigroup analysis for age

	β older	t-Value older	p-Value older	β younger	t-Value younger	p-Value younger
BRD -> ATT	-0.084	0.456	0.648	-0.282	2.721	0.007
BRD-> BHV	-0.003	0.008	0.993	0.052	0.340	0.734
BRD -> Psyc	0.701	12.351	0.000	0.576	10.297	0.000
ATT -> BHV	0.164	0.688	0.492	0.071	0.464	0.643
Psyc -> ATT	-0.043	0.233	0.816	-0.055	0.528	0.598
Psyc -> BHV	0.292	1.018	0.309	0.298	1.886	0.059

Chapter 7

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The present chapter gives a theoretical discussion of the findings reported in chapter 6. The theoretical discussion is followed by limitations of the empirical study and implications for prospective investigation. After presenting the methodological concerns associated with empirical research, management implications can be considered useful.

7.1 Discussion

Education is one of the sectors heavily affected by coronavirus pandemic. Both local and international students were impacted. As such, schools and higher learning institutions had to be closed due to the rapid increase of the COVID-19. The public educations institutions were obliged to request assistance from their respective governments. However, the situation was not the same for private institutions. The present study sought to examine the direct effects of the boredom on Edu-tourist attitude and behaviours and the indirect impact through psychological distress. This research attempts to expand the knowledge base of boredom in the context of COVID-19 and Edu-tourists in the higher learning institutions. The present study examined the model with four focal variables: boredom, psychological distress, attitude and behaviour. After testing six hypotheses of the model, the results revealed that Edu-tourists boredom had significant negative impacts on their actions. Edu-tourists boredom also has significant positive effects on psychological distress. Thus, when students are bored, their psychological distress level was boosted.

The results are in line with the arousal theory, positing that the limited activities brought by the COVID-19 make students more psychologically distressed, which shows that face-to-face education is more preferred than long-distance learning. These findings are supported by Miao Chao, (2020) and Han Heesup et al. (2020), who suggested that people who experienced boredom during the COVID19 had adverse psychological distress consequences.

Unexpectedly, the current study results have shown no significant direct impact by boredom on edu-tourist behaviours. This is partly because, during the COVID-19 where education was distant and online, many students had a good performance and acquired good marks. So these students did not have their behaviours towards e-learning negative. Likewise, the findings demonstrated similarly no effects by attitude on edu-tourist actions. Despite COVID-19 where students were in lockdown performed their education online, students behaviours remain the same. As such, edu-tourists did not avoid contact with other students; they study, make discussions and revising together. This implies that edu-tourists did not have the intention to avoid face to face education. As such, if the government did not put strict terms, edu-tourist would prefer continuing with interactive teaching in the middle of the pandemic. Interestingly, edu-tourists continued with their online studies and did not intend to cancel them.

The mediation analysis results highlighted that psychological distress did not mediates neither the association between boredom and attitude nor between boredom and behaviours. As we have seen previously, the link between psychological distress toward attitude and its association with behaviours was insignificant because attitude remains the same. Studies have demonstrated that psychological distress does not

mediate relationships with constructs that represent adverse outcomes. As such, this research's findings are complying with Anasori et al. (2021), where the association between workplace ostracism and work engagement was not mediated.

Moreover, the multigroup analysis was conducted to assess several responses from edu-tourists during the COVID-19. The analysis results based on their gender disclosed different reactions among male and female students. While psychological distress in male students positively affected their behaviours, for the female students, the response was not the same as the psychological distress did have an insignificant impact on them. This implies that male students' psychological distress during the COVID-19 trigged their behaviours towards the e-learning. Likewise, psychological distress seemed to have positive outcomes on male edu-tourist behaviours, while it had an insignificant negative effect on female students' behaviours. Equally, the female attitude during the COVID-19 was positively associated with their behaviours, while male students had insignificant adverse outcomes. Thus, implying that female edu-tourists have a high level of endurance, and boredom motivated them to have more online education efforts. However, the impact of boredom on psychological distress is similar among both males and female students. As such, boredom has a positive effect on psychological distress among both genders. Moreover, boredom had an insignificant positive impact on edu-tourists behaviours among both male and female students.

Age was another group in our multigroup analysis. The results based on older or younger edu-tourists disclosed different reactions among the students. While boredom did not affect the attitude of older students, younger students were massively and adversely affected. Boredom has a significant effect on the psychological distress of

both ages. This is because young students have a lower level of resilience and the incapacity of endurance to problems than the older student. This is supported by Kimhi et al., (2020), who revealed that older age projected lower levels of sense of resilience and distress symptoms. Even though the more senior students had a high level of resilience of both ages were psychologically affected by the boredom, that comes as one of the pandemic negative outcomes.

In conclusion, the current research assessed the impact of boredom on edu-tourists' attitudes and behaviours and their indirect impacts through psychological distress. Our study's findings showed that boredom triggers the psychological distress of the students exposed to the COVID-19 outbreak. Moreover, psychological distress mediated neither the association between boredom and attitude nor between the students' boredom and behaviours towards online education. Also, the multigroup analysis results uncovered that age and genders were essential factors that determine different response by students to the COVID-19 pandemic.

7.2 practical implication

The current study has multiple implications, practical implications for the educational institutions' policymakers, specifically universities whose stakeholders are international students from their countries of residence. This study has two implications: first different students' treatment based on their age and gender. Second, the need by university policymakers to protect students from the contamination of the pandemic.

Despite several research conducted in higher learning institutions, the impact of Boredom on edu-tourist attitude and behaviours on the context of a pandemic such as

COVID-19 has received little attention among the decision and policymakers in the learning institutions. Thus, this study's findings will help the policymakers in universities tailor their treatment to students during the pandemics and other disasters which will lead to the implementation of online education (e-learning). Based on the present study's finding, the university policymakers will now be able to know the different responses between the students based on their gender and age. The policymakers now understand which age group is more affected by the boredom, psychological distress, and their individual attitudinal and behavioural responses during the pandemic outbreak. Following this study's results, for instance, the universities policymakers will pay more attention to young students than the older ones. They will also understand which aspects affect each gender and find the potential mechanism of dealing with them.

Despite the government restrictions during the COVID-19 outbreak, students did not take them seriously. As the findings from the link between attitude and behaviours underscored, the edu-tourists did not change their behaviours; they visited their friends and colleagues for discussions and other social interactions. Although these interactions were useful for them to cope with online education, one may not compromise the pandemic's danger for the health and wellbeing of the students. For these reasons, the university policymakers could see the need to strengthen their rules and regulations to protect the students from potential contamination and further spread of the pandemic.

7.3 Theoretical implications

In addition to the practical implications, our study has multiple contributions to the theory. First, the theory extends knowledge to the theory of planned behaviours, which maintains that attitude affects people's behaviours. As findings of the present study did

not have any significant effect by the attitude to behaviours of the students, this fault the general assumptions of the theory. Accordingly, our study's main contribution is studying the effects of attitude on behaviours are contextual and depend mostly on the circumstances. At the context of COVID- 19 pandemic, boredom and edu-tourists. Theory of planned behaviours does not hold water.

Secondly, this study is in line with the arousal theory, as boredom had a significant positive relationship toward psychological distress and edu-tourists attitude. Therefore one may consider boredom a situational state that triggers negative emotions among the students in the higher learning institutions. Thus, our study extends its contribution to the arousal theory in the context of higher learning institutions and students. COVID-19 which can be seen as an external stimulus is congruent with the tenents of the arousal theory. Our findings are congruent with Li J. et al. (2020), who revealed that Chinese people's social life during the COVID-19 pandemic was low.

7.4 Limitation and future studies

Despite numerous contributions, yet our study is not without limitations. To start with, the samples of our research was collected purposively from a specific target population (edu-tourists). Further research could be conducted longitudinally to substantiate the findings of this study. Another limitation is the sample size which is only 260, and the study's context is higher learning institutions. Further studies could replicate the study by using large sample size and use other sectors such as hotels, and restaurants to validate the findings of the present research. In addition, as the present study had only four variables, further study could apply more variables to include moderating control variables.

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APPENDIX

Dear Respondent

As part of my M.S. research/thesis at the Eastern Mediterranean University, Faculty of tourism and in North Cyprus, I am conducting a survey that investigates the Response behavior and attitude of Edu-tourists to covid-19. The result of this research will be highly beneficial for understanding international student's shopping behavior that will provide valuable information for tourism marketers and businesses in the university town. Eventually, the findings will enhance the shopping experiences of Edu-tourists. I will appreciate it if you could complete this following questionnaire. Any information obtained in connection with this study will remain confidential. In any written reports or publications, no one will be identified. This is solely for a research purpose and you do not need to reveal your name. If you have any question about this research, please call or email me.

FATIMA ZAHRAE AFELLAT
email: afellat.fatimazahrae@gmail.com

Thank you very much for your contribution.

PART 1.

Are you an international student? Yes_____ No_____

As a student who has been confronted with the COVID-19 during your studies, please tick the degree to which you either agree or disagree with the statements below:

Please circle one option:
Strongly disagree (1)
Disagree (2)
Undecided (3)
Agree (4)
Strongly agree (5)

		Strongly disagree	*Disagree*	*Undecided*	*Agree*	*Strongly agree*
1.	**I often find myself at loose ends, not knowing what to do**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
2.	**Many things I have to do are repetitive and monotonous**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
3.	**Much of the time I just sit around doing nothing**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
4.	**I often feel tired out for no good reason**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

5.	**I often feel nervous**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
6.	**I often feel so nervous that nothing could calm me down**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
7.	**I often feel hopeless**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
8.	**I often feel restless or fidgety**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
9.	**I often feel so restless that I could not sit alone**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
10.	**I often feel depressed**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
11.	**I often feel that everything is a burden**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
12.	**I often feel so sad that nothing could cheer me up**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
13.	**I often feel worthless**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
14.	**Online education is useful**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
15.	**Online education is valuable**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
16.	**Online education is beneficial**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
17.	**Online education is attractive**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

18.	**My learning behavior has changed due to coronavirus**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
19.	**If I decide to study in another country depends on how media is reporting about that country**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
20.	**Currently, I would prefer studying in a country with minimum reported cases of coronavirus**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
21.	**Right now, I would prefer to suspend my studies and wait until the pandemic is over**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
22.	**Currently I would avoid joining friends to study**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
23.	**Currently I would avoid face to face studies**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
24.	**I would avoid any contact with other students in my university**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**

PART 2.

Demographic information:
For statistical purposes only. Please a tick where appropriate:

1) **Gender:**

Male ☐ **Female** ☐

2) **Age (Years):**

Less than 25 ☐
26 and older ☐

3) **Educational level:**

Undergraduate ☐ **Postgraduate or above** ☐

4) **Where you live:**

Home ☐
Dormitory ☐
Other places ☐

5) **Marital status:**

Single ☐ **Married** ☐

6) **Your nationality:** _____