

## Proof of Trade-off between Economy and Safety in the Acceptance of New Normal Policy for Tourism Industry in the Covid-19 Pandemic; Evidence from Bali



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**ABSTRACT:** This article shows the existence of a trade-off between the economy and safety in the acceptance of the New Normal Policy for the tourism industry. To prove the existence of the trade-off, Path Analysis was used to test the mediating effect of the Economic Impact of Covid-19 pandemic in the prediction of Acceptance Toward New-Normal Policy with the Danger of The Covid-19 pandemic as the predictor. The result shows that mediation exists, thus trade-off also exists. It means that in the current Covid-19 pandemic situation, people prefer the economy more than health and safety since they understand that the New-Normal Policy will ensure their health and safety while pursuing the economy. This article contributes to presenting a different method for measuring trade-offs, other than Discreet Choice Experiments (DCE) which is widely used as a method to measure trade-offs. Having proved that trade-off exists, this article recommended that government should always educate the citizen about the danger of the pandemic. This is important so that they will pursue the economy safely and responsibly.

**KEYWORDS:** Trade-off, Economy, Safety, Policy Acceptance, New-Normal, Tourism

### I. INTRODUCTION

Bali has been started to reopen its door for domestic tourism since 31<sup>st</sup> of July of 2020. The decision has been taken to cut more lost suffered by the tourism industry in the island. In order to prevent for the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic, as well as to promote for the participation of the population in battling the pandemic, and to push for economic and mental recuperation due to the pandemic, The Government of Bali Province has issued Circulated Letter Number 3355/2020 about Protocol of Order for The New Life Era in the tourism sector. The protocol maintained that tourism sector in Bali should allow for the implementation of the recommended way to prevent from being infected by the Corona Virus, recommended by the Ministry Of Health of The Republic of Indonesia, such as the wearing of face mask, regular hand washing, maintain physical distancing, avoid crowds and refrain from touching nose, mouth and face. The protocol also mentioned ways to manage the tourism industry in the time of pandemic, such as implementation of cashless payment method, and regular cleaning of the tourism facilities using disinfectant.

The decision to open Bali for tourist in the time of pandemic is a decision full of risk. Opening the tourism for economic sake is risking the safety of the community. Opening tourism industry in the time of pandemic is seen as an act that placing human health and safety as second important then economy. For many it is a controversy, but the difficult choice in balancing between economy and public safety (Pronk et al., 2020; Viscusi, 2020) is one for the Government of Indonesia, especially in Bali Province to decide. And this time, economy emerged victorious between the two. This so-called "trade-off" between economy and safety is mention in many publications, such as those published by Kim & Santacreu-vasut (2020; Li et al., 2020; Pronk et al., 2020; Sigala, 2020; Tisdell, 2020). Loayza (2020) even mention that there are two (2) types of trade-off, those between economy and saving lives and those between economy and saving livelihood. Other type of trade-off in the response of the government toward the Covid-19 pandemic introduced by Bavel et al. (2020) is the life for life trade-off. Sarkodie & Owusu (2021) introduce the trilemma of environmental, health and economy trade-off. Eventhough there are many work published in the field of economy and safety trade-off, only few of them that is specifically measure the trade-off between them. The works that measure trade-off between economy and safety in the Covid-19 pandemic related policy are those written by Reed et al. (2020) and Manipis et al. (2021). Eventhough there are other research using DCE in regard with the Covid-19 pandemic, such as those published by Chorus et al., (2020; Degeling et al., 2020), but they are not sought to revealed economy and public health and safety trade-off in the Covid-19 related policy.

This article trying to show whether such trade-off is really existing in the policy acceptance of a tourism policy. Instead of using DCE, this article trying to reveal the existence of trade-off using Path Analysis. The path model is designed to test the mediating effect of Economic Impact of Covid-19 pandemic in the prediction of Acceptance of New-Normal Policy from the Danger of The

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Covid-19 pandemic. If the model shows that The Danger of The Covid-19 pandemic doesn't predicted Acceptance toward New-Normal Policy, and if The Economic Impact of The Covid-19 pandemic serve as a mediator for the Acceptance of New-Normal Policy, predicted from The Danger of the Covid-19 pandemic, then conclusion can be made that trade-off is exist.

### **II. LITERATURE REVIEW**

Covid-19 is an infectious disease caused by SARS CoV-2 Virus (WHO, 2020). Those who are infected by the virus experience mild to severe symptoms such as fever, dry cough, tiredness, aches and pains, sore throat, diarrhea, conjunctivitis, headache, loss of taste or smell, a rash on skin, discoloration of fingers or toes, difficulty breathing or shortness of breath, chest pain or pressure and loss of speech or movement (WHO, 2020). The virus even more dangerous to the elder and to people with health problems such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes, chronic respiratory disease, cancer and can cause death (WHO, 2020). The virus is easily spread through droplets of saliva or nose mucus when people who are infected speak, sneeze or cough. To prevent from being infected, one should wash their hands regularly with soap and running water or clean them with alcohol based hand sanitizer, maintain physical distance of minimum 1 meter from other, avoid touching mouth, nose and eyes, always use face mask and avoiding crowds as well as practicing healthy lifestyle.

Covid-19 has been declared by the WHO as world pandemic on 11 March 2020 (WHO, 2020). The disease has since affected almost all aspect of human live. Countries in the world has been implementing policies to respond the dangerous situation resulted by the pandemic. Given the nature of the way of the virus spread, one of the most popular policy that is considered to be effective to prevent the spread of the pandemic was to restrict human mobility (Jamal & Budke, 2020; Mu et al., 2021; Wilder-Smith, 2021; Zhou et al., 2020). Isolation, restriction on gathering and closing the border for incoming and outgoing traveler was an example of the policy during the early period of the pandemic, where the need is high to flatten the infection rate (Tisdell, 2020).

Travel and tourism has long been considered as spreader of infectious disease (Findlater & Bogoch, 2018; Gössling et al., 2020; Jamal & Budke, 2020; Wilder-Smith, 2021; Wilson, 2005). Therefore, when Covid-19 spread across the globe, tourism with its vast value chain have been one of the most affected sectors due to destination countries closed their border for incoming and outgoing traveler (WHO, 2020). The number of tourist arrival decreased in almost all of destination countries because of restriction from the authority as well as perceived danger of the pandemic felt by the traveler themselves. Nonetheless, the decision to declare Covid-19 as world pandemic has been carefully taken, since the word "pandemic" is not a word that can be used carelessly. It was only because the number of infections has reached 114 countries, and that the number of the casualties has reached 4291 across the globe, that Covid-19 declared as world pandemic (WHO, 2020).

On 28<sup>th</sup> May 2020, The UNWTO launched The UNTWO Global Guidelines To Restart Tourism. On his statement in the preparation of the launching, The UNWTO Secretary General Mr. Zurab Pololikashvili stated the urgency in making the right decision regarding the crisis that Tourism Industry facing in the time of Covid-19 pandemic. It was feared that hundreds of million of jobs will be lost, and that 910 US\$ billion to 1.2 US\$ trillion lost in export earnings and decrease in between 850 million to 1.1 billion of international tourist arrival if there is no effort to mitigate the crisis (UNWTO, 2020). In Indonesia, report from The Central Bank of The Republic of Indonesia shows that Covid-19 pandemic has put enormous pressure on the economy of Indonesia. The pressure caused by travel restriction that affected the performance of tourism industry (Bank Indonesia, 2021). Bali as the most important destination in Indonesia are also suffering from the travel-restricting pandemic. On 2020, economic growth of Bali is minus 12,21% compared to 2019, due to decreased number of tourist arrival affecting the performance of the tourism industry (Bank Indonesia, 2021).

The UNTWO Global Guidelines To Restart Tourism focuses on three important pillars in mitigating the economic impact of the pandemic, developing safety protocols and coordinated responds and fostering innovation. The guidelines were developed in the hope that it can provide a comprehensive measure to deal with the pandemic so that tourism can be open without jeopardizing people's health and safety. The launching of the guidelines marked the shift in the policy direction as a response to the ongoing pandemic, raising discussions as well as pros and cons on the difficult choice that the policy makers should take between the desirable economic impact and public health and safety (Dunlop et al., 2020; Kim & Santacreu-vasut, 2020).

Aided by understanding of the effectiveness of mobility restriction that is getting better as more researches conducted in the field of Covid-19, it was letter known that implementation of containment policy at local scale to reduce mobility is more effective to control the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic (Satyakti, 2020; Yechezkel et al., 2021). Other than local containment, temporal containment is also considered to be effective to control the pandemic (Yechezkel et al., 2021). With the local containment policy, and understanding of the spread of the virus that is different between areas, came a possibility to gradually open the tourism industry and encourage visits between area that is considered safe to visit each other. Countries are encouraged to restart their tourism

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industry, prompting a popular term “new-normal” in the tourism industry. New-Normal is an adjustment made to how tourism being served and enjoyed in that those who are engaged in tourism activities should always wear face mask, avoid crowds and keep physical distancing with others (Basher & Haque, 2021; Grech et al., 2020). In Indonesia, especially in Bali, new-normal refers to tourism that emphasize more on cleanliness, health, safety/security and environmental sustainability (Handayani et al., 2021). The above explanation described three (3) variable discussed in this article. The first variable is about the Danger of the Covid-19 pandemic (X). The second is about the Economic Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic (M), while the third variable is about New-Normal Policy implemented in the tourism industry (Y).

### III. METHOD

To prove the existence of economy and safety trade-off in the acceptance of the New-Normal policy discussed above, Path Analysis was used. The decision in using Path Analysis was based on understanding that Path Analysis can be used to test mediation. If for example the economy serves as mediator for the acceptance of New-Normal Policy predicted from the Danger of The Covid-19 pandemic as the predictor, when the Danger of Covid-19 pandemic does not directly and significantly predicted the Acceptance of New-Normal Policy, then we are shown that trade-off is exist. Path Analysis is a simple and commonly used tool to perform mediation analysis. Path Analysis can be executed using series of regression analysis (Baron & Kenny, 1986; MacKinnon et al., 2007). Path Analysis for this article was done on The PROCESS Macro Program installed on SPSS version 26, based on Field (2017). This allowed for the sample to be resampled using bootstrap analysis to produce better confident interval. The research hypothesis tested in the analysis are:

1. H<sub>1</sub>: Whether the danger of the Covid-19 pandemic does not influence the acceptance of new-normal policy.
2. H<sub>2</sub>: Whether the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic influence the acceptance of new-normal policy.
3. H<sub>3</sub>: Whether the danger of the Covid-19 pandemic influence the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.
4. H<sub>4</sub>: Whether the economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic serves as the mediator for the acceptance of the new-normal policy predicted from the danger of the Covid-19 pandemic

Those relationships are as shown on the following model:

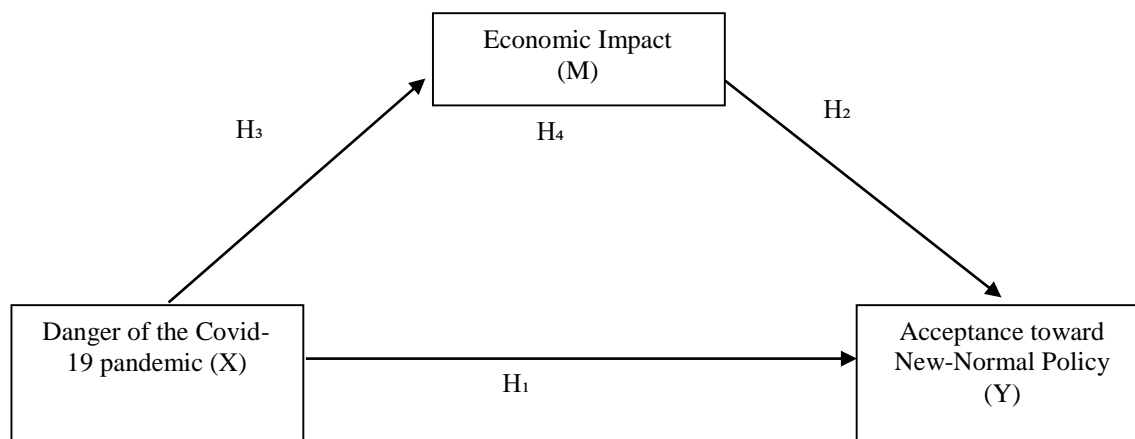


Figure 1. Research model

Data for the research collected through survey. The survey was done during October 2020, approximately 3 month after the opening of Bali for domestic tourism. The questionnaire for the survey using 5 point Likert Scale ranging from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree (Likert, 1932). The questionnaire consisted of three parts. The first part consisted of item designated to understand the knowledge of responden toward the danger of SARS CoV-2 Virus. The second part consisted of items developed to understand the perception of respondent towards the economic impact brought about by the pandemic, and the last part consist of items specified to collect data concerning the perception of respondents about the new-normal policy implemented by the Government of Indonesia to restart tourism. The questionnaire was prepared in the form of google form, and was tested for validity and reliability before being submitted online to the respondent.

The respondent for the survei was lecturer of Bali Tourism Polytechnic. The selection of the respondent was determined purposively, based on the aim of the reseach in understanding the acceptance of tourism academia toward implementation of new-normal policy. There are 151 lecturers of Bali tourism polytechnic, so it was expected that the survei would be able to collect data from those

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population of 151 lecturer. Out of 151 there was only 89 questionnaire were returned, with one of those was forced to be dropped due to validity issues, resulting in the final number of respondents were 88.

Power analysis was then performed to measure the power of the statistical analysis done on those 88 responden dataset. Power analysis will shows the possibility of the phenomena beeing researched existed in the population (Cohen, 1988) and considered important to ensure that type 1 and type 2 errors in hypothesis testing will not occur (Field, 2017; Hair Jr. et al., 2014; Lester et al., 2014; Pituch & Stevens, 2016) in this reseach. The analysis was done on G\*Power Software, following Field (2017) and (Hair Jr. et al., 2014). The parameter computed for the power analysis was error probability (significants) of 0.05, with 0.15 effect size and 88 sample. Result of the analysis shows that 88 sample with 2 predictors resulted in the 0.90 power of statistical analysis. It was above 0.80 as the minimum required power for statistical analysis (Field, 2017; Hair Jr. et al., 2014; Lester et al., 2014). With the power of 0.90, it means that there is 90% of possibility that the phenomena existed in the population. Therefore, sample size of 88 was adequate for analysis.

## IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

### RESULT

Since the assumption of normality, heteroscedasticity, multicollinearity has been met, then the data can be analyzed. In order to produce result of direct and indirect effect of the 3 path models described above, Path Analysis was performed. Result of the analysis are as follows:

**Table 1. Result of Path Analysis**

No	Predicted Relationships	Regression coefficient (b)	Sig.	Indirect effect	Confident interval (CI)	Hypothesis
1	Danger of the Covid-19 pandemic <del>X</del> Acceptance of New-Normal Policy	0.15	0.06	-	-	Not-supported
2	Economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic $\longrightarrow$ Acceptance of New-Normal Policy	0.60	0.00	-	-	Supported
3	Danger of the Covid-19 pandemic $\longrightarrow$ Economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic	0.38	0.00	-	-	Supported
4	Danger of the Covid-19 pandemic $\longrightarrow$ Economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic $\longrightarrow$ Acceptance of New-Normal Policy	-	-	0.23	95% (LLCI: 0.1 and ULCI: 0.37)	Supported

Note:

~~X~~ : not influencing

$\longrightarrow$  : influencing

The first hypothesis testing shows that the Danger of The Covid-19 pandemic (X) is not a significant predictor of people Acceptance toward New-Normal Policy (Y) with  $b = 0.15$  and  $p = 0.06$ . Therefore, the first hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) is supported.

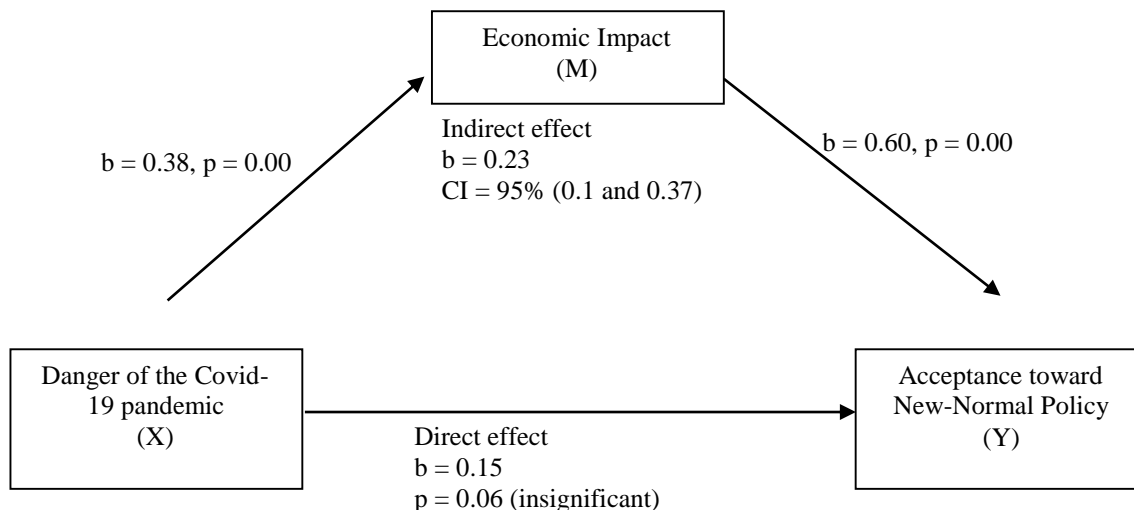
The second test shows that Economic Impact of the Pandemic (M) is significantly predict the acceptance of New-Normal Policy (Y). The regression coefficient (b) value is 0.60 and significant with  $p = 0.00$ , thus the second hypothesis ( $H_2$ ) is supported. The coefficient shows a positive value which means that increase in the perception on the economic impact brought by the pandemic will increase acceptance toward New-Normal Policy.

Hypothesis testing number three shows that Danger of The Covid-19 pandemic (X) is a significant predictor of the Economic Impact (M) with  $b = 0.38$  and  $p = 0.00$ , which means that the third hypothesis ( $H_3$ ) is supported. This is an indication that negative economic impact is a logic consequence of Covid-19 pandemic, where the perceived danger of the virus causing the pandemic has been forced people and government to restrict movements including tourism, resulting in the slowing down of the economy in Bali.

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The fourth hypothesis testing shows that perceived danger brought by the SARS CoV-2 virus (X) significantly predicted acceptance toward New-Normal (Y) through Economic Impact (M) with  $b = 0.23$  and Confident Interval (CI) = 95% (0.1 and 0.37). Therefore, the fourth hypothesis (H<sub>4</sub>) is also supported. Even though Danger of The Covid-19 pandemic is not significantly influence acceptance toward New-Normal policy, but when the pandemic started to put pressure on the ability of people to fulfill their needs due to long periods of restriction or containment and also decreased tourist arrival, people starts to consider that the New-Normal policy is the best way to deal with the situation without compromise too much on their safety.

Having produced all the output of analysis to understand the mediating effect of Economic Impact of Covid-19 pandemic in the acceptance of New-Normal Policy, then the path model can be completed as follow:



**Figure 2. Completed research model**

Observing the path diagrams above, we can conclude that there is effect of X (Danger of the Covid-19 pandemic) toward M (Economic Impact). There is effect of X (Danger of the Covid-19 pandemic) toward Y (New-Normal Policy) even though the effect does not significant. And there is effect on M (Economic Impact) toward Y (New-Normal Policy). Having all those three (3) effects exist, then conclusion can be made that mediation exists (based on Baron & Kenny, 1986) represented by Economic Impact of the Covid-19 pandemic. To paraphrase MacKinnon et al., (2007), the Economic Impact has transmitted the Danger of the Covid-19 pandemic toward acceptance of New-Normal Policy. The Economic Impact altered the direct effect of The Danger of the Covid-19 pandemic toward acceptance of New-Normal from insignificant direct effect into a significant indirect effect. Therefore, the fourth hypothesis for the research accepted. It shows that if the Covid-19 pandemic doesn't impact the economy negatively, then the respondents will resist the implementation of New-Normal Policy. That's why The Danger of Covid-19 pandemic is not a significant predictor of people acceptance towards New-Normal Policy, while Economic Impact of Covid-19 significantly predicted acceptance toward New-Normal Policy. It is only because of the economy that the respondents accepted the implementation of New-Normal Policy.

## V. DISCUSSION

Existence of mediation in the form of Economic Impact of Covid-19 pandemic that mediating the acceptance of New-Normal Policy is the evidence that the trade-off between safety and economy, just as mention in previous writings (Kim & Santacreu-vasut, 2020; Li et al., 2020; Loayza, 2020; Pronk et al., 2020; Reed et al., 2020; Sarkodie & Owusu, 2021; Sigala, 2020; Tisdell, 2020) is a real thing. On the contrary with the result published by (Manipis et al., 2021) where public health and safety are preferred more than economy, this research shows that economic consideration can be an important factor that influence acceptance of a policy even though the policy is of a high-risk policy, underlined that the trade-off is not only at the government side, but also at the community side. Illogical it may be, given that fear of the dangerous is the basic response of human in the pandemic situation (Bavel et al., 2020) but the acceptance of the policy shows that there are trust from the respondents toward those who make the policy (Bavel et al., 2020), existence of positive information perception (Kim & Santacreu-vasut, 2020; PytlikZillig et al., 2018) as well as positive process perception (PytlikZillig et al., 2018). The respondents seems to trust the Government of The Republic of Indonesia as well as The Government of Bali Province as the policy maker that they understand the situation well, and that they will produce a policy that will help the nations to survive the current pandemic and potential economic recession.



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The trust toward policy makers may be a direct result of millions of official information, news and research reports spread worldwide since the start of the pandemic. The instruction of The President of The Republic of Indonesia at the beginning of the pandemic to study, work and pray from home is the first example of the process that developed the understanding and knowledge of the respondents toward the danger of the pandemic. The latter instruction from the President, to live hand in hand with the pandemic, when the economic impact resulted from the restriction were started to burden economically has awoken Indonesian that economy must also be a consideration in the response toward the pandemic (McKee & Stuckler, 2020). At the provincial level, the decision to open a new-normal Bali tourism for domestic tourism has add a bit of optimism into the island's population whom most of them work directly and indirectly in the tourism industry (Antara & Sumarniasih, 2017).

People seems to be interested toward the Covid-19 pandemic and eager to educate themselves about the subject (Rovetta & Bhagavathula, 2020). Availability of tons of information about the pandemic triggered formal and informal discussion that further enhanced the knowledge of the respondent toward the danger of the disease, its economic impact and the New-Normal. Eventhough too much information can lead to spread of unverified information about the pandemic (Laato et al., 2020), and given that trustworthiness toward the informations available is a matter of respondent's own ability to screen and select the appropriate information, it seems that the availability of the information has been developing the knowledge of the people concerning the Covid-19 pandemic. In the end, trust toward the policy makers, the information about the pandemic as well as how the policy were designed has helped them to consciously stand their choice in the trade-off between economy and public health and safety.

Keeping in mind that the respondent for this research are civil servant Lecturer whose income does not affected much by the pandemic, it is quite interesting that they prefer economy better than their own safety - when and if they want to - they can oppose the new-normal policy for tourism industry. It is attempting to assume that knowledge that have been accumulated in them by the vast ammount of research and news about the pandemic, as well as their knowledge in tourism has made them thinking that the current downfall of tourism in Bali will be irreversibile if the impact of the pandemic fail to be mitigated, which will leads to damage of health not only in the present, but also in the future, just as McKee & Stuckler (2020) mention in their work.

The result shows that Path Analysis can be use to prove existence of trade-off in the acceptance of a tourism policy.

Given favouredness of this article toward economic impact of the Covid-19 pandemic, it doesn't mean that safety should not be prioritised. Public health and safety remain one of the most important aspect of human life that need special care. It is only that for this time, economic growth should be persued in a safest possible way to prevent the Covid-19 pandemic to get worsen. Government should always educated the citizen especially those who works in the tourism industry about the danger of the pandemic toward one's health and safety, as well as to the economy. When decided to open the tourism industry, the government, the industry and the Community should be prepared in implementing strict new-normal protocol.

### **VI. CONCLUSIONS**

This article tries to prove the existence of trade-offs between economy and safety in the acceptance of the new normal policy in the tourism industry, with Bali as the case study. The article also tries to show that Path Analysis is suitable to prove the trade-offs as the alternative to Discrete Choice Experiment (DCE) which has been widely used to show trade-offs. The result shows that the economic situation mediating the acceptance of the new normal policy when predicted by the danger of the Corona Virus. Therefore, it can be concluded that trade-offs between economy and safety exist. This article also demonstrated that Path Analysis can be a good alternative to DCE when we want to prove the existence of trade-offs.

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