

POST-COVID WELLNESS TOURISM REPOSITIONING AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT: A COMPARATIVE QUALITATIVE ANALYSIS OF THAILAND, JAPAN, AND SINGAPORE

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ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 pandemic fundamentally disrupted global tourism systems and compelled destinations worldwide to reassess tourism development priorities through the lens of sustainability, resilience, and high-value tourism. This study examines post-COVID wellness tourism repositioning through comparative qualitative analysis of Thailand, Japan, and Singapore, drawing on national tourism development plans, policy documents, and implementation evidence from 2020-2025. The findings reveal convergent strategic shifts across all three destinations toward "quality over quantity" high-value tourism, yet divergent implementation pathways and significant gaps between policy aspirations and business realities. Thailand pursues "value over volume" through wellness and community-based tourism but faces substantial implementation challenges in capacity building and equitable benefit distribution. Japan emphasizes quality tourism while addressing overtourism yet encounters fundamental contradictions between aggressive volume targets and sustainability commitments. Singapore demonstrates relatively successful medical-wellness integration through centralized governance but faces limitations in cultural authenticity, equity, and community participation.

Keywords: Wellness Tourism, Sustainable Development, Post-COVID Tourism, High-Value Tourism; Governance, Policy Implementation

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