

SOCIOECONOMIC, CULTURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON TOURISM IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Coronavirus is spreading quickly through countries and several countries have locked the infection chain through this new disease. The first objective of the article is to identify the consequences of this pandemic in terms of economic, environmental, social and cultural factors on the tourism industry in India. The focus of this study is to suggest tourism developmental practices to implement and overcome the pandemic situation in India. The primary data is collected through an online survey and secondary data was collected from various government published sources and ongoing literature reviews. This study discusses both positive and negative impacts and further helps the government to take precautions and best policy decisions to be applied in the future. The paper provides an open analysis of some of the essential steps between tourism growth and economic recovery in order to resolve India's current economic crisis.

Keywords: Tourism; COVID-19; Economic impacts; Environmental impacts; Socio-cultural impacts.

INTRODUCTION

In December 2019 coronavirus, a deadly threat that originated in the Hubei province of Wuhan, has been spreading across the world for a short time. When the outbreak of COVID 19 was exceeding, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared the International Public Health Emergency Concern. WHO also came with suggestions of the symptoms and steps to stop oneself infected from the deadly virus. Increased number of cases exceeded within the countries like USA, Italy, Germany, India, UK, and Indonesia apart from China. In September over 90,000 deaths and 5.5 million confirmed cases in India (The Hindu, 2020). In 2019, international tourist arrivals surpassed 1.5 billion, while Jan-June 2020 saw a massive 65 percent decrease (UNWTO, 2020). Asia & the Pacific had a drop in international tourist arrivals of 72 percent during Jan-June 2020 (UNWTO, 2020). The massive decrease in international travel demand over the first half of 2020 means a loss of 440 million international travelers and approximately US\$ 460 billion in international tourism export revenues. In the midst of the global economic and financial crisis this is more than 5 times the sales loss reported in 2009. WHO has announced a full lockdown from March 20 of 2020 and an entire quarantine for those to maintain Social distancing, self-isolation, 14-days quarantine which leads to the prevention of spreading?

Lockdowns were imposed including shutdown of all the business activities, health care units, manufacturing industries, tourism, accommodation, aviation, restaurant's, F&B sectors not only in India but everywhere the planet. The government of India has already taken steps to beat

the situations by implementing no. of lockdowns with restrictions. With the support of individuals of India as per the advisories issued by the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, the country is slowly rising against the deadly impact (Table 1).

State/UT'S	Cases	Recovered	Deaths
Maharashtra	1.26M	956K	33,886
Andhra Pradesh	647K	571K	5,506
Tamil Nadu	558K	503K	9,010
Karnataka	541K	438K	8,266
Uttar Pradesh	370K	303K	5,299
Delhi	257K	221K	5,087
West Bengal	235K	205K	4,544
Odisha	197K	157K	752
Telangana	179K	148K	1,070
Bihar	173K	159K	874
Assam	163K	133K	597
Kerala	155K	108K	613
Gujarat	127K	108K	3,367
Rajasthan	121K	100K	1,382
Haryana	117K	96,347	1,233
Madhya Pradesh	113K	88,168	2,077
Punjab	103K	79,244	2,990
Chhattisgarh	93,351	56,773	728
Jharkhand	75,089	61,559	648

Source: COVID 19 alert

Tourism in India

India attracts tourists from everywhere in the world. India one among the topmost countries in foreign tourist arrival, inbound tourism, outbound tourism, MICE (Ministry of Tourism-2019). Total travel and tourism contribution to the Indian GDP is expected to range to Rs 32,05,000 from Rs 15,24,000 crores in 2017 in 2028. Total world sales were 28.6 billion dollars in India in 2018, and are targeted at 50 billion dollars by 2022 (Ministry of Tourism-2019). The most innovative concepts that emerged this decade are the digital transformation in the tourism field, technological growth, and improved accessibility such as, eVISA, visa on arrival, dangerous VISA formalities and express checks (Vineet, 2020). The average annual growth rate (CAGR) of domestic tourist travel to all and all States/UTs from 1991-2018 was 12.61 percent. There was an ongoing rise in domestic tourist travel. In the general tourism and hospitality sector, there is a global projected 75 million employment loss and the world leads to the economic recession due to COVID 19 the tourist industry is in shutdown

(World Travel and Tourism Council, 2020; Worldometer, 2020; World Economic Forum, 2020; UNWTO, 2020). The sector saw a whirlwind of foreign and internal cancellations due to the COVID 19, Pronab Sarkar, President of Indian Association of Tour Operators. In the January-March quarter, international tourists come down by around 67 percent annually, while domestic visitors drop by around 40 percent. International tourist arrivals decreased 65% by the same time last year in the first half of 2020, with 93% of arrivals decreased in June, according to data released by the destinations. Indian tourism industry will build jobs and livelihoods for a number of people directly and indirectly related to India's economy.

Impact of Pandemic on Tourism

External shocks like other phenomena, such as earthquakes, flooding, droughts, conflicts, terrorist attacks etc, are studied in economics. Nearly 90% of hotel and travel agent reservations in Italy were cancelled in Rome by March 2020 and up to 80% in Sicily. Australia's most popular destinations are affected by a decline in visitors up to 90% and, for this reason, the fact that many tourists from China, Japan and South Korea support these destinations is significant. All kinds of gatherings, conferences and meetings were cancelled or postponed in India due to the current crisis says Business Today (2020). The field of tourism has a detrimental impact on jobs and GDP. Owing to the amount of greenhouse gases released over decades, the environment surrounding us was considered highly toxic. But there have been minor improvements to the atmosphere since the coronavirus lockout has begun. Everyday cleaner and there are very few development, like the India Cauvery, Ganga, Yamuna, Sutlej rivers. This is largely attributed to wastewater in large waterways. From the point of view of Wildlife Tourism, both the positive and the negative effects at the global level are no longer apparent. Plants thrive faster when the air and water are healthier, and there is no pollution from humans again. With COVID-19 halting international travel, many people in quarantine are searching for cultural and leisure opportunities from home. Culture has proved invaluable in these days, and thus demand has hit unparalleled heights for interactive access to museums, cultural heritages, theatres, and performances. Cultural practitioners worldwide are severely endangered. The cultural, artistic industry was influenced by COVID-19, like other forms of art of tourism. This recession poses a systemic danger to the survival of many creative and creative industries and staff.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To identify the economic, environmental, socio-cultural impacts of pandemic on tourism industry due to COVID 19.
2. To suggest sustainable tourism developmental practices to implement and overcome the pandemic situation in India.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Several conceptual studies have provided a similar result extensively; the tourism industry has been unparalleled by COVID 19 (Amit, 2020; Deb & Md. Nafi, 2020; Hoque et al., 2020; Karim et al., 2020; Vineet, 2020). Several studies have confirmed the unanimous agreement of the global recession, the high impact on the global economy, the change in price elasticity, the

economic crisis due to the pandemic (Amit, 2020; Korinth & Ranasinghe, 2020; Bakar & Rosbi, 2020; Nicolaa et al., 2020). According to Sotiris & Theodore (2020) Coronavirus had a six to seven-fold rise in the effect on the travel industry than the 9/11 attacks according to the US president and CEO. Today, 10 percent of global GDP is declared to the tourist industry says the World Economic Forum, 2020. Vineet (2020) confirms that the financial crunch can also be faced in the near future in travel agencies and tour operators, as tourism visits to India would decrease in frequency. Both tourism categories inbound, outbound and domestic are impacted by MICE. Half of the sales could be decreased in 2020 relative to the previous year, but amid serious business cuts and forecasts that usual travel habits will take years to return. Papanikos, 2020; Sotiris & Theodore (2020) in their study conveys the contribution of tourism to GDP will drop in the mid of 2020. Several reports recognize the decline in employment levels and the loss of jobs for many workers (Mariolis & Soklis, 2020; Nicolaa et al., 2020; Amit, 2020). Studies examining the relationship between economic impacts and tourism reported both a negative and a positive relationship due to COVID 19 (Deb & Md. Nafi, 2020; Rogerson & Rogerson, 2020; Amit, 2020; Papanikos, 2020). Going forward, to minimize the negative impact of tourism, few researchers suggested medium-and longer-term planning, the economic revitalization package, the measures needed to rebalance and re-energize the economy following the crisis (Nicolaa et al., 2020; Amit, 2020). Several authors including Hoque et al. (2020); Vineet (2020); and Deb & Md. Nafi (2020) cleared that the nature of a tourism company is delicate and, as this crisis shook the entire tourism sector globally, contingencies are necessary also for unexpected events.

From the Indian background, following the lockdown, people decreased travelling, whether by their cars, or by trains and flights (Lokhandwala & Gautam, 2020). The Several studies indicated the COVID-19 pandemic has changed the air quality in many cities around the world as carbon emissions have decreased and the quality of air has improved unparalleled. (Aman et al., 2020; Lokhandwala & Gautam, 2020; Muhammad et al., 2020). According to a report, there is a substantial decrease of 85.1 percent in PM2.5 concentration in one of India's most polluted towns, Ghaziabad (Lokhandwala & Gautam, 2020). An study show, the percentage of CO2 decreased in Kolkata ranged from 24.56 (at Deshbandhu Park) to 45.37 (at Sealdah station). Additional environmental impact of COVID 19 is a significant decrease in the consumption of coal. Several studies reported equal to air quality, although water quality also had positive effects due to human non-transmission (Lokhandwala & Gautam, 2020; Aman et al., 2020; Espejo et al., 2020). This positive environmental effect could be immediate, but policymakers and individuals should benefit from this lockout on how to long-term emissions reduction. Moreover, several studies have stated improvement on the international trade in bushmeat, which remains a big burden on the dignity of animals in wildlife anywhere at all levels. (Aljazeera, 2020; Reuters, 2020a; Gardiner, B. 2020). In addition, several scholars have written on the effects caused in raising awareness, at all levels, of the global trade in bush meat, which continues to put tremendous strain on the dignity of wildlife ecosystems everywhere (Newsome, 2020). Paudel (2020), in his study explains that Regular shifts in brightness and fire radiative force correlated with forest fire incidents demonstrated a downward trend after the lockout. It is also reported that the temperature was the environmental driver of the outbreak of COVID-19 in China and that the transmission rate decreased as the temperature rose and that the rising temperature led to further reductions in the rate of infection and the scale of the outbreak. Ultimate post-COVID 19 scenarios also depends on political support and funding, appropriate funding for protected areas and the active role of NGOs, and the re-establishment of the faith or otherwise of local people. Some writers have concentrated on providing suggestions,

including the importance of ecology, mother earth and natural resources, to people in this pandemic situation (Aman et al., 2020; Lokhandwala & Gautam, 2020).

Flew and Kirkwood (2020) gathers information that the arts, cultural and creative industries are among the most severely deteriorated segments of the economy as a result of COVID-19 social distance policies, travel limits and a ban on large gatherings of individuals. Studies have based on the impacts on cultural tourism, social impact, social behavior, socio-economic impacts (Ali & Alharbi, 2020; Flew & Kirkwood, 2020). Flew and Kirkwood (2020) also gathers that cultural tourism is a part of 'creative economy' revival. Studies outline aspects of societal influences, such as different functions, in particular science conferences, corporate gatherings, sporting competitions, fashion shows and engagement celebrations, which have a significant effect on society (Ali & Alharbi, 2020). However, these factors have had a significant impact on local and global equity markets. The effects of COVID-19 in India, based on three sectors, namely primary, secondary and tertiary sectors, are summarized by socio-economic influence. The socio-cultural impacts wise family dynamics: domestic violence and hobbies, Cultural differences, overcrowding of shopping malls and rude awakening, inappropriate behavior, disturb the social order, induce traffic congestion after lockdown implemented. A holistic social and economic development plan consisting of infrastructure and sector-by-sector schemes that help business to ensure the success of those with stable and sustainable business models. Ali and Alharbi (2020) points out that, without any religious distinctions, there is a need for concerted efforts internationally to tackle such diseases in the future.

METHODOLOGY

For conducting primary research, a survey method of primary data collection is used to describe the current scenario. An online survey method is conducted with 50 samples in Chennai, Trichy, Madurai, Tirunelveli, Kanyakumari, Cuddalore, Villupuram and other parts of Tamil Nadu one of the highly affected states of India which is the study area. A structured questionnaire with demographic profile and a 5-point Likert scale with random sampling method is implemented. The regression analysis is used to assess the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The dependent variable in this study is growth of tourism.

Study Area

On March 09, 2020, Tamil Nadu's first Coronavirus case was identified. After Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu has the biggest proportion of confirmed cases in India as reported by Times of India. The pandemic is affecting all 37 state districts, with the capital city of Chennai being the worst affected. On 31 July, with 57,968, Tamil Nadu reached its peak number of active cases and began to show a decline. In the midst of the growing number of cases of coronavirus in Chennai, the government of Tamil Nadu declared a 'lockdown' again with few restrictions as of September 2020. Without any relaxation, limits on containment zones will remain in place. The State government announced major relaxations during September and, at the same time, the spread of the infection has decreased at the State level (The Hindu, 2020). It was announced that all of the famous tourist sites, study centres, universities, theatres, museums and amusement parks will be closed (Figure 1).

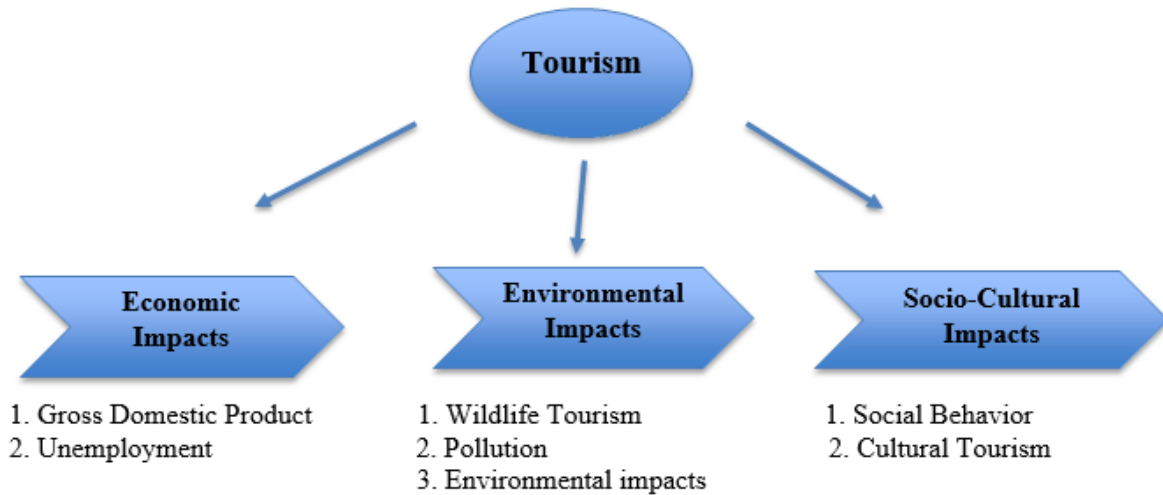


FIGURE 1
FACTORS AFFECTING TOURISM

HYPOTHESIS

Ho: There is no impact of COVID 19 on the Tourism Sector in India

Ha: There is impact of COVID 19 on the Tourism Sector in India

The profile of the respondent taken for an online survey is shown in below Table 2. The age group of 20-29 comprises 84 percent of respondents. The majority of respondents (52 percent) are male. Chennai respondents make up 48 percent, while 42 percent are in other districts. Each of them comes from various designations, such as an entrepreneur, assistant professor, marketing, researcher, tour manager, tour operator, tourist officer, travel consultant, with regard to their occupational respondents. Respondents who fly once a month with a majority of 28.6 percent, are 20.4 percent once during 6 months with 26.5 percent once in a year and once in 3 months.

TABLE 2			
PROFILE OF THE RESPONDENT			
Characteristics	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Age	20-29	42	84
	30-39	6	12
	40-49	1	2
	50-59	1	2
Gender	Female	24	48
	Male	26	52
City	Chennai	24	48

	South Districts	11	22
	North Districts	15	30
How do you often Travel?	Once in a year	10	20.4
	Once in 6 months	13	26.5
	Once in 3 months	10	20.4
	Once in a month	14	28.6
	Never	2	4

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The most outstanding result of the variable review relates to Environmental Impacts (M=6.62) and GDP (M=6.44) on the tourism industry. This may demonstrate that because of the pandemic there is a major effect. The Social Behavior component (M=4.26) with the second highest effect was subsequently affected. The Table 3 has the least ranking for Unemployment (M=3.6), Wildlife Tourism (M=2.1), Pollution (M=1.84).

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.594	0.381		4.180	.000
	GDP(Economic growth to denote economic activities)	-0.269	0.132	-0.354	-2.031	0.049
	Unemployment	-0.101	0.135	-0.125	-0.748	0.459
	Environmental impacts	0.097	0.170	0.107	0.572	0.570
	Wild life tourism	-0.038	0.103	-0.069	-0.369	0.714
	Pollution	0.167	0.108	0.278	1.551	0.128
	Cultural tourism	-0.062	0.110	-0.092	-0.564	0.576
	Social behavior	0.170	0.119	0.240	1.436	0.159

The relationship between impacts due to COVID 19 on tourism industry was investigated using Multiple Regression analysis. Table 3 shows that there is significant relation between GDP and tourism industry and other variables have no significant. Here the alternative hypothesis is rejected. This points out that the notion there is least or no impact of COVID 19 on tourism industry's growth in India in the particular year 2020. The economic activities specified in terms of GDP rate show a significant impact on tourism sector during the pandemic or has a detrimental effect on the tourism market

CONCLUSION

The study shows that there is no significant impact of the COVID 19 outcomes on the tourism industry. GDP or the economic activities show a significant impact on tourism sector

during the pandemic or has a detrimental effect on the tourism market. Protecting individuals and sustaining a safe tourism industry are critical in the short term. The worst effects of any form of shock, including the COVID-19 pandemic, can also be avoided by social security. In tourism-related industries, casual and self-employed employees are popular and should be supported where possible. Governments should safeguard staff. Where it is doubtful that any companies can recover, compensation subsidies can be structured to help employees move to new industries. Governments will further assist tourism companies, such as hotels and airlines that would otherwise go bankrupt. Low interest loans or grants are one method for financial relief. The data showed that the economic effects are not only specifically linked to the tourism industry, but also spread through many industries. A significant finding from the study is that, because of the indirect effects, the GDP effects are much greater than the loss of tourist spending. With quarantine easing and flight schedules reforming, tourism is showing signs of a comeback. Yet in order for the sector to return as a force for good for both the economy and the climate, we cannot return to business as normal. Governments have responded quickly and strongly with the level and coverage of measures steeping up over time. Most countries have adopted economy-wide stimulus packages, promotions aimed at building demand whereas some countries depend on ideal locations for attracting visitors. Strengthening regulations for the conservation of biodiversity and criminal activity are required. To maintain the ecological balance from tourism, policymakers should consider: expanded focus and investment in skill building and training; introduction of sustainability taxes for tourists; protection of vulnerable populations and aboriginal peoples from exploitation; and include science policy structures. The system for waste control needs to be strengthened and all public areas must have facilities for the appropriate handling of biomedical waste. Increased access to clean water and sanitation facilities, along with the implementation of safe health habits such as hand washing, will also help to avoid the spread of communicable diseases.

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