

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF COVID 19 ON THE TOURISM INDUSTRY: A CONSUMER PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Corona virus originated from Wuhan city China has proliferated in such a way that it has made its presence in almost every country. This virus has impacted every industry such as manufacturing, service industry etc. It has put a great dent in the tourism and travel industry. It is assumed that tourism and travel can take a long time to recover. This impact of this virus has resulted in millions of job losses and took economy in negative figures. India, which was once considered to be the largest growing economy, has seen a double-digit negative growth. The objective of this paper is to find the impact of pandemic on tourism industry. An extensive literature review resulted in three dimensions of microenvironment which have suffered in tourism industry. Results showed that the scale is reliable and valid. Pandemic has resulted in un-employment, reduced income of tourism and reduced traveller preference etc. Hypotheses were tested by calculating correlation coefficient, which showed that there is significant relationship among factors. This study will help managers and policy makers to make projections for profit margins and to build strategies to overcome the negative effect of pandemic on tourism.

Keywords: *Pandemic, Tourism, Travel, Income, Employment*

I. Introduction

The spread of the corona virus and unabated infestation throughout the world has stalled the economic engine worldwide. Everything has shaken in

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the tourism industry after this pandemic (Kandampully et al., 2011). The influence of a hotel firm's quality of service and image has its effect on tourism customer loyalty. Customer Base, loyalty customers, pilgrimage and post-wedding trips have come at standstill. "Current global forces, which are manipulating the world, have never been more complex and challenging and are rooting disruptive changes in all aspects of a society" (Boes et al., 2016). The fourth industrial revolution has reinforced development in each industry with tourism. "Tourism needed it more because of the very nature of how it deals with its consumer" (Lee et al., 2020). Consumers are new to the places, the people, the language of tourism destination, and their cultures. The Lingua-Franka of the touring destination is often different from the tourists visiting their cities. Technology can significantly narrow down this gap. "The tourism industry has numerous cities that spout into the tourism competitiveness stock on smart city infrastructures and focal point on enhancing the city competitiveness".

Sadly, the challenges of improving the infrastructure have enhanced the possibilities of biological infestations (Mittal, 2020). The remedies for safeguarding tourists from the dangers are not enough to win back the customers. The direct blow of the COVID19 epidemic is visible in terms of reduction into the hourly wages of the workers (Mittal & Raghuvaran, 2021). Workers are confronting potentially devastating hardships as Marriott International (approximately 174,000 employees) is noted to place tens of thousands of workers on furlough. Another case related to the hospitality sector within the tourism industry is noticeable in how the Hilton Worldwide has let know lenders. They would be sponging a precautionary \$1.75bn underneath a revolving loan to conserve money and to sustain flexibility "in light of the improbability in the global markets" (Anon, 2020).

1.1 Background

A very sustainable urban design & walk able places is the choice of Locals and tourists (Ram et al., 2018). Kanellopoulou states that, "The appearance

and utility of new forms of urban walking shake between tourism, social exchange and act of citizenship" (Kanellopoulou, 2018). Government intervention required to uplift these destinations in post era of COVID19 like a controlled planning and development of Chinese Red Tourism (Sima, 2017). Government has employed precautionary measures for social distancing, lockdown, cancellation of international flights, regulation of domestic flight and transport, which has affected the tourism industry (Abu Bakar & Rosbi, 2020). As per duration of the pandemic, the tourism Industry will decrease by 60-80% by 2020. A countermeasure, from the stakeholder participation of the government, improvising traveller confidence, unrestricted travel and rethinking tourism in future are essential steps. Cultural heritage tourism is the most popular tourist activity (Kang et al., 2014) thus will be among the first where tourism will reboot and surge. The chances of recovery for the OECD countries are likely to be more in comparison to the other international conglomeration of location (Ranasinghe et al, 2020). The higher chance of recovery is most likely to be within the domestic tourism sector in OECD countries. The recovery tends to be quicker for countries that are dependent on the tourism sector for the support of jobs and businesses.

The tourism industry is competitive at all levels (Coca-Stefaniak, 2019). Commencing the sustainable tourism perspective, each tourist attraction should intend to maintain itself (Musa et al., 2015). Through enhancement in disposable income, the numeral of tourists across the world is increasing. Tourism is a "luxury segment" but the part of luxury is becoming the norm of industry demand. The luxury sectors tend to have high price elasticity. This suggests that people are likely to reject luxury activities in times of crisis. As Bakar & Rosbi (Abu Bakar & Rosbi, 2020) opines, thus the advent of the pandemic situation has caused a higher level of caution among people. There is a general tendency to avoid travel plans unless there is a complete assurance of the safety of the external situation. Yet, such an assurance is perceptive in nature and may take considerable time. With the application

of the strict health policy in tourism and hospitality industry, not many changes are visible. There has been a considerable impact on the economy. High quarantine measures & travel restrictions have affected the disposable income of people which has affected the investment in travel and tourism.

Thus, the aim of this paper is to find the impact of pandemic on income, employment and tourist preference and access the difference between income before and after the pandemic.

2. Literature Review

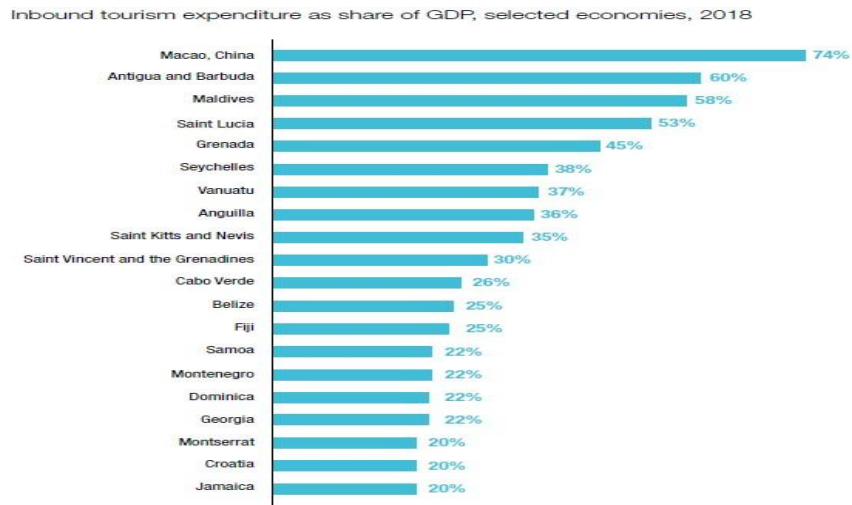
2.1 Tourism industry Before COVID-19 Time

The tourism industry is one of the developing industries that use a significant number of the workforce. The data from 2018 shows that the industry has grown by 6% compared to past years. During this time around 1407 million arrivals of international tourists occurred. Around USD 1480 billion was the receipt from tourism in the year 2018 and it was an increase of 4.4%. An important fact is "growth of global tourism receipts is higher than the last 8 years' GDP growth in the world." The passenger transport sector is worth USD 250 billion. Omitting the export potential, the tourism industry has contributed around USD 1.7 trillion for 70% of global GDP (Unctad.org, 2020). Destinations like the USA, France, China, and Spain are the most popular ones in the world. Thus, for economy, the tourism industry is one of the important segments of the global economy. "In Europe, the European Tourism Manifesto alliance, encircling over 50 European public and private organizations from the travel and tourism sector, have prioritized the need for implementing urgent measures. These include temporary aid for tourism and for travel sector from central governments with rapid and flexible access to short-term and medium-term loans to prevail over liquidity shortages, together with funds ready

accessible by the EU through the Corona Response Investment Initiative, and fiscal relief.”

Another important aspect that contributed to this industry is an employment and social aspect (Yadav et al., 2021). Around 54% of the total workforce in the industry is women (Qiu et al., 2020) . The tourism industry is an important contributor to the United Nation sustainable goals. In the least developed countries, this industry is contributing 9.5% to its GDP . Of 47 least developed countries, around 42 of them are dependent on this sector for economic activity (Unctad.org, 2020).

Figure 1: Inbound tourism expenditure as a percentage of GDP for selected countries



Source: unctad.org, 2020

2.2 Impact of Epidemic Corona virus (Covid19) on the Tourism Industry

As the Corona virus (Covid19) epicentres from Wuhan city of China, researchers reveal that this virus is airborne and spreads through cough, sneeze, and through people affected by COVID19. Thus, a major

precaution as suggested by CDC (CDC, 2020), is to exercise social distancing and follow guidelines (Abu Bakar & Rosbi, 2020) . As reported by World Health Organization (WHO), the highest struck countries are the USA, Russia, India, parts of Europe, which are also the largest attractors of tourist. Researcher, Nicola, describes COVID19 as the most realistic shock for the Tourism Industry, which has caused a collapse of the entire Industry. The COVID19 situation could impact the tourism industry at many levels (Nicola et al., 2020). A four months scenario for the global tourism industry has projected a stagnant view. Explaining that an industry has faced 80% restriction that leading to socioeconomic loss. According to UNCTAD organization report, the tourism industry lost 66% of credibility, hence, standstill. This depicts another axis of impact on the tourism industry, leading to productivity shock. The moderate scenario as stated has a loss of USD1.2 Trillion for the global GDP. When compared to above, the intermediate and dramatic outlook would be around \$2.2 and \$3.3 Trillion. Thus, it inferred that COVID19 pandemic will have positive and critical impact on GDP (Baum & Hai, 2020).

Figure 2: The most affected 15 countries and their changes

Changes in GDP: 15 most affected countries, moderate scenario

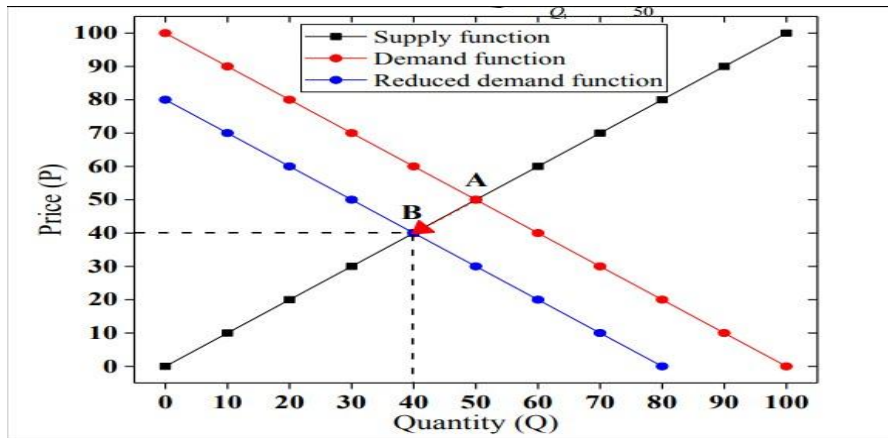
Country	% Change (GDP)	Country	Value Change - GDP (US\$Millions)
Jamaica	-11	United States of America	-167,838
Thailand	-9	China (inc. Hong Kong SAR)	-104,690
Croatia	-8	Thailand	-47,298
Portugal	-6	France	-42,289
Dominican Rep.	-5	Germany	-46,260
Kenya	-5	Spain	-33,119
Morocco	-5	United Kingdom	-37,056
Greece	-4	Italy	-34,924
Mauritius	-3	Japan	-30,706
Senegal	-3	India	-28,120
Ireland	-3	Republic of Korea	-22,092
Egypt	-3	Indonesia	-20,713
South Africa	-3	Canada	-18,480
Malaysia	-3	Mexico	-17,376
Spain	-3	Portugal	-13,922

Source: unctad.org, 2020

Tourism destination around the globe has suffered from COVID19 pandemic. Countries for an instance, Jamaica and Thailand, have seen depreciation of 11% and 9% in their GDP. Jamaican tourism has 20% contribution to its GDP. Other popular tourism places like Portugal, Croatia, and Dominic Republic observed 8%, 9%, and 6% decline in their GDP (Gössling et al., 2020). Destination, other than popular ones, has reported a decline of 3% in their GDP. Gössling, Scott and others report that USA and Chinese would lose \$104 billion and \$187 billion in GDP. Report from Unctad suggests that Germany and France lost \$47 billion due to COVID19. Hence, global tourism needs strong policies to revive from COVID19 impact. Governments globally suggest the use of private transportation for emergency travel, like Medical tourism and etc., although being expensive. From the aspect of customers, their loyalty and demand has decreased. The reason for such shift is plain fear of getting infected. The survival of the customer during pandemic, restricted their demand for tourism and entertainment, but the supply remained constant. This disturbed the supply demand curve forcing the industry to drop prices for tourism. As the companies had followed a left skewed curve in the demand due to financial breakdown, thus the probability to devise new strategy for demand generation faced huge setback (Nicola et al., 2020). The demand and supply curve can evaluate the impact of the corona. The aspect of demand can be primarily studied on factors like Leisure travelling, household income, and employment and secondly, by studying the demand functions. The demand function is used to study the quality of goods and services a person is willing to pay within a fixed period. The demand function study different factors that contribute to the creation of the demand for a particular commodity. The other aspect studied in this case is the supply factor. The components that together form the supply function involve the price of resources, how production is done, the price of the goods that are required for the production, the supply stock, and the total number of people who are selling. This function studies the amount that is demanded with a consideration of the price at which the product is placed.

As stated that before widen of coronavirus, it has more or less affected most of the countries across the globe. In general, in such a situation the level of economic activity tends to slow down (Abu Bakar & Rosbi, 2020). The inability to properly deal with such a standstill situation can eventually lead to a significant destruction of the economy.

Figure 3: Level of Economic Activity



Source: Abu Bakar and Rosbi, 2020

The market equilibrium has changed after the decremented demand function because of the corona virus situation. From Figure 3, we observe how the overall price of conducting a tour has increased due to reduced demand, compared to a pre-COVID19 situation (Abu Bakar & Rosbi, 2020). This is one aspect of the negative impact of corona pandemic. Apart from this, there have been other aspects that have been affecting by it as well. Job growth can be considered as one of the points that are significantly contributing to the tourism sector. The majority of employment in the tourism sector is doing by the young females (Ranasinghe et al. , 2020). This is the particular demographic segment that has been impacted by the lack of function in this particular sector. This sector has grown and governments have considered it as an industry that is contributing to the growth of the economy. Thus, there have been numerous investment

options that have been investing by governments for growth. Apart from this epidemic corona, it has been recently studied that in any case of the epidemic the tourism industry tends to be affected first.

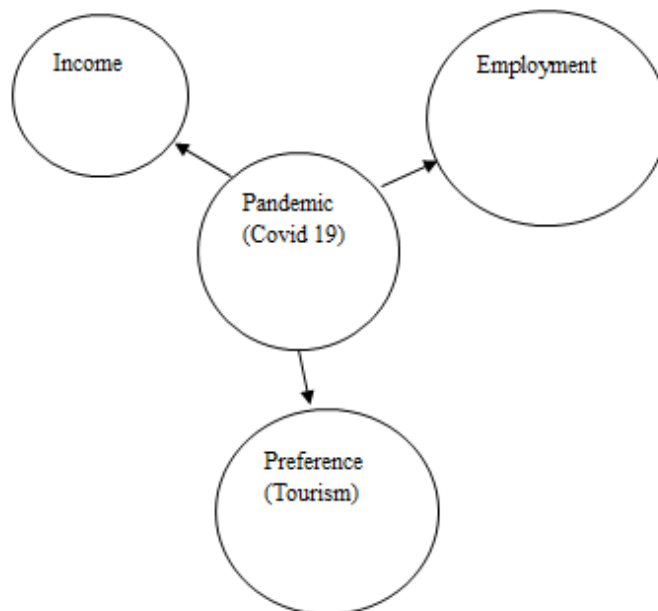
2.3 The future of Tourism industry post COVID-19

A strategic and resilient plan for recovery is of an utmost importance for the tourism industry. Due to increased risks and uncertainty, the consumer's confidence towards clinically safe and hygienic travel needs to be revived. As the demand will decrease due to apprehension and fear, to reduce the chances of infection, the customers will reduce their disposable income and save their extra income which is allocated for entertainment, limiting economic activities and leading to more homebound activities (Hoque et al., 2020). In such changes, the tourism sector might come up with virtual travel plans, in such services, as meaningless face to face interaction is highly discouraged and is associated with social taboo; the service provider needs to change the mode of communication to consumers (Chakraborty et al., 2020). It is also essential to increase the perception of the safety and precautions that are being maintained by the service provider. The major ongoing problem is the full capacity requirement of HR. As there is uncertainty in the business, the need for personnel to come and have face to face contact will reduce the stigma set in the minds of customers (Ranasinghe et al,2020).

2.4 Proposed Theoretical Framework

After going through the papers on the tourism industry we have identified three important factors, namely Socioeconomic, Employment, and Destination selection/preference. The First factor "Impact of COVID19 on household Income" refers to the financial vantage of the family (Ozili, 2020). The lifting up of the factor has been found to emphasize the connection and equality between technology and society. "They have been giving birth to environmental and economic as well as social prosperity" (Gretzel et al.,

2015). This synergy in this ecosystem has been co-creating by the techno development and by the numerous individuals operating in the smart cities (Grossi et al., 2020). The second-factor "Employment" refers to the jobs that have been impacted due to COVID19 in the Tourism Industry as well as other sectors. "The employment factor can be gauged and supported for the study from the fact that Marriott International (around 174,000 employees) has pushed a hundred thousand employee's furlough." (Anon, 2020).The third factor refers to the tourist preference towards Travelling after the COVID-19 (Grossi et al., 2020)



Based on above ideology following hypothesis have been framed:

H1: There is a negative relation between tourism during pandemic and income

H2: There is a negative relation between tourism during pandemic and employment.

H3: There is a negative relation between tourism during pandemic and tourist preference

H4: There is a significant relationship between the effect on income before and after pandemic.

3. Research Methodology

This research aims to find an impact of Covid19 on the tourism industry. Headed for an exploration of the Impact of Corona virus on the tourism industry, a quantitative questionnaire method in the form of an online survey was chosen. The survey questionnaire consisted of 15 questions and was structured to capture factors such as socioeconomic Impact, Employment, Destination selection/preference, that have been impacted due to COVID19. All constructs and variables are measured using a 5-pointed Likert scale (ranging from 1 = Strongly Disagree to 5 = Strongly agree). The survey was accomplished using Google form. The Questionnaire was sent to 550 respondents through emails and other methods of communication. Only 504 responses out of 550 were found useful for analysis. These respondents were from all over India. The collected data was studied using SPSS.

4. Data Analysis

The SPSS v26 was used for analyzing the quantitative data collected. The Likert scale was utilized in the analysis to support an application of the Factor Analysis. The reliability of the data was set to be above 0.7, anything less than Cronbach's alpha > 0.7 was not considered reliable. (Hair et al., 2010). The factor Loading values were expected to be above 0.7 as factors involved in the study and are of high importance.

Reliability Test -Table 1

Reliability Factors	Cronbach's Alpha	N
Household Income	0.823	504
Employment	0.819	504
Travelling preference	0.812	504

The above table suggests that factors such as Household Income, Employment, and Leisure Travel have Cronbach's alpha value > 0.7 which is considered as good reliable data for further analysis.

Table 2: Total Explained Variance

Component	Initial Eigen values	Total % of Variance	Cumulative %	Extraction from Sums of Squared Loadings	Total % of Variance	Cumulative %	Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings	Total % of Variance	Cumulative %
Household Income	6.283	41.886	41.886	6.283	41.886	41.886	6.225	41.499	41.499
Employment	4.413	29.421	71.308	4.413	29.421	71.308	4.441	29.606	71.105
Travelling preference	1.105	7.369	78.677	1.105	7.369	78.677	1.085	7.231	78.336

The above table suggests that the total variance explained by the three factors under study is 78% of the complete data, signifying those three factors (Impact of COVID19 on Household Income, Impact of COVID19 on Employment, and Impact of COVID19 on Leisure Travelling) are sufficient to further carry out the analysis.

Table 3: Factor loading of the under-study Variables

Rotated Component Matrix			
	Household Income	Employment	Leisure Travelling
HI_1	0.818		
HI_2	0.865		
HI_3	0.859		
HI_4	0.903		
HI_5	0.9		
EMP_1		0.918	
EMP_2		0.865	

EMP_3		0.847	
EMP_4		0.788	
EMP_5		0.897	
TP_1			0.718
TP_2			0.865
TP_3			0.759
TP_4			0.703
TP_5			0.858
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis.			
Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.			
Rotation converged in 4 iterations.			

The above table suggests that the first factor has 5 questions which are related to Impact of Corona on Household Income, similarly the second factor has 5 questions which show close relation to Impact on Employment due to Corona and the third factor consists of 5 questions related to Impact on Leisure travelling.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

H1: There is a negative relation between tourism during pandemic and Income.

Table 4

Correlations			
Variables		Pandemic	Income
Pandemic	Correlation Coefficient	1	-0.665
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	0.04***
	N	504	504
Income	Correlation Coefficient	-0.665	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.04***	.
	N	504	504

It is evident from the table 4 that income has significant but negative relation with tourism during pandemic. I.e. $p < 0.05$, this rejects the null hypothesis. It signifies that income from tourism has decreased with the onset of pandemic.

H2: There is a negative relation between tourism during pandemic and employment.

Table 5

Correlations			
Variables		Pandemic	Employment
Pandemic	Correlation Coefficient	1	-0.42
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	0.02***
	N	504	504
Employment	Correlation Coefficient	-0.42	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.02***	.
	N	504	504

It is evident from the table 5 that employment has significant but negative relation with tourism during pandemic. It signifies that unemployment has surged during pandemic.

H3: There is a negative relation between tourism during pandemic and tourist preference

Table 6

Correlations			
Variables		Pandemic	Employment
Pandemic	Correlation Coefficient	1	-0.72
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	0.025***
	N	504	504

Preference(tourist)	Correlation Coefficient	-0.72	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.025***	.
	N	504	504

It is evident from the Table 6, that there is a negative correlation between the pair suggesting that the tourism preference of frequent travellers reduced significantly amid the COVID19 lockdown.

H4: There is a significant relationship between the effect on income before and after pandemic

Table 7

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Before COVID19, Frequent traveller Income	2.45	504	0.499	0.029
	After COVID19, Frequent traveller Income	1.28	504	0.418	0.026

Table 8

Paired Samples Correlations		
		T
Pair 1	Before COVID19, Frequent traveller Income & After COVID19, Frequent traveller Income	-0.035***

The above table 7 and 8 clearly shows that the mean difference between the income corresponding to the former and latter effect of COVID19 is negative which suggest that the Income reduced during the Lockdown with t value being significant using (p<0.05) level.

5. Conclusion and Implications

As evident from the paper that epidemics, unlike Corona virus, spread, black fever, SARS, and MERS can become the crucial driver for the collapse of Industry. The aim of the researcher to show that the tourism industry has suffered with mammoth financial loss is correct. The tourism industry dependent on various other industries likes Hospitality, Transport, and Food, etc. The study supports the prior statement as it shows positive correlation. Apart from this, studies from other tourist cities like Italy, Australia, Las Vegas, and India shows a negative impact of an epidemic on the tourism Industry, as it influences all the human aspects like social, religious, athletic, artistic, and cultural (Folinas & Metaxas, 2020). The researcher aimed to identify the factors which lead to have the impact tourism and travel industry amid pandemic viz., Income, employment and tourist preference. Factor analysis confirmed the validity and Cronbach's alpha values confirmed the reliability of scale. Different Hypotheses were tested which showed that all three factors have significant and negative relation. In order to test whether there is any significant difference between income before and after pandemic, t test was used. This study will therefore help in making economic projections regarding the future of tourism and travel. It will also help in predicting profit margins post pandemic scenario, which would easily help in tackling the problems of income, employment, etc. This study will help managers to build strategies, how to stimulate the travel lovers to resume the tourism.

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