

INDIAN TOURISM BEFORE & AFTER COVID'19

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Abstract

The sudden outbreak of Novel Corona virus (Covid-19) around the globe has become a strong breaker for the tourism industry because of the pandemic situation around the globe will become a cause of changes in behaviour and preferences of tourists. With the large scale travel restrictions, quarantines, social distancing and lockdown, Covid-19 has given a major impact on the economic development worldwide. Health communication strategies and measures like social distancing, travel and mobility bans, community lockdowns, stay at home campaigns, curbs on crowding have halted global travel, tourism and leisure. Due to resulting travel restrictions and drop in demand, Covid-19 pandemic has also made an impact on tourism industry significantly. However, the nature, the unprecedented circumstances and impacts of the COVID-19, demonstrate signs that this crisis is not only different, but it can have profound and long-term structural and transformational changes to tourism as socio-economic activity and industry.

Keywords.: covid19, tourism, Indian tourism

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Introduction

The hospitality and tourism industries are crucial to a nation's economic growth. The sector's appeal stems from the wide range of economic effects it has. It is widely acknowledged that the tourist and hospitality sector, which encompasses travel and hospitality services like hotels and restaurants, is a development agent, a driver of socioeconomic growth, and a significant source of foreign exchange earnings in many nations. It has a remarkable capacity to produce a lot of different types of jobs, from the most specialized to the least skilled. It can be essential in generating growth that is equitable.

The tourism industry also has strong backward connections and multiplier effects that affect the agricultural sector, which provides food for travellers, as well as the manufacturing sector, which benefits from the demand for souvenirs, handicrafts and keepsakes.

Statement of the Problem

New trends are emerging in the tourism industry, which are supplanting long-standing ones. Indian tourism is expanding quickly and has a lot of potential to become a top-tier travel destination. To make an effective strategic and operational choice, accurate tourism demand forecasting is crucial. By predicting tourism demand, planners and policymakers can better understand the trends that will emerge in the future. After COVID 19, both the growth in visitor arrivals and their foreign exchange profits significantly improved. In this study, the Indian tourism sector is covered in detail, including evolving tourism patterns, progress in tourism before and after COVID, variables affecting tourism, and the emergence of new initiatives in India.

Objectives

- To analyze the pre- COVID 19 (2011-2020) tourism growth in India.
- To analyze the post COVID 19 (2022-2025) tourism growth in India.
- To examine the changing trends in tourism industry in India.

Limitations

- The study is primarily based on secondary information which may not be fully reliable with changing tourism trends.
- Future outlook of the study was a challenging pace as the pandemic has not been fully over.
- Reason for increase and decrease in growth rate of tourism before was not analysed.

Literature Review

Natisha Saqib (2019)-Indian Tourism Industry: Current Trends and Future Outlook- This study primarily aims and seeks to identify and examine the paradigm shifts in the tourism industry over the seeming years and how the trends have behaved in India. It seeks to study the current trends in the tourism industry and evaluates the role of tourism in economic

development. The chapter contributes to an improved understanding of economic growth of a country because of tourism development.

Vineet Kumar (2020) Indian Tourism Industry and COVID-19- This paper focuses on the COVID-19 issue in India and its impact on the tourism and hotel industry, the paper has some significance, as the tourism and hotel industry greatly affected by the COVID-19 crisis worldwide. He explains that the need of the hour, is to take early steps to overcome the present slowdown in tourism industry by analyzing its long term impacts at the earliest.

Archana Bhatia, Bindu Roy & Anuj Kumar (2022) -Tourism sustainability in the era of Covid-19-During this pandemic, as per UNWTO, the tourism industry is the most affected globally. The purpose of the study is to review some dimensions to come back with preventive measures so that the tourism sector can recover the loss as soon as possible and to reset a better pathway towards the sustainable development of the tourism industry.

Tourism Industry before COVID'19

Growing options for low budget travelers

Numerous low-cost solutions have recently emerged in India with setups like hostels for travellers. There are many affordable hotels, bed & breakfasts, and other lodging alternatives available to accommodate travellers with limited budgets. Since the country's taxes and other moving costs are comparably lower than those of other foreign countries, it also becomes an excellent option for travellers on a budget from all over the world.

Visa on arrival boosting tourism

A bureaucratic and rapidly developing nation like India depends heavily on its government's decisions. Since the introduction of India's visa-on-arrival programme in 2014, which covers visitors from more than 40 countries, more international travellers have been seen. Under the upcoming years, more than 100 different nationalities are anticipated to be included in this strategy.

Rise of boutique hotels

Tourists now have a wide range of lodging alternatives thanks to the country's recent rise in the number of boutique hotels. These upscale accommodations encourage travel by offering luxury while allowing guests to fully experience their surroundings.

Exploring new destinations

Both domestic and foreign tourists continue to show a desire to visit new and lesser-known locations in the nation. With increased internet access and communication, more and more of these locations are becoming known and attracting tourists.

Emerging dimensions in tourism

Apart from traditional tourism, other types of tourism activities are established. Emerging dimensions in Indian tourism are

- Health tourism
- Spiritual tourism
- Adventure tourism
- Meetings, Incentives, Conferences and Exhibitions (MICE) tourism
- Rural tourism
- Sustainable tourism

India offers affordable access to top-notch medical care. It covers the Indian medical systems of ayurveda, allopathy, naturopathy, unani, and siddha. Many travellers from the developed world, like the United States, Europe, and the Middle East, where medical care is still quite expensive, come to India for medical treatment.

India is the spiritualism's epicentre. There are several various religions represented there, including Hinduism, Sikhism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, and Jainism. In numerous locations across the nation, religious believers have constructed beautiful churches, mosques, monasteries, and temples. In India, these sacred sites are bringing in a tonne of domestic and foreign tourists. Nature and adventure tourism are becoming more and more popular. India is a fantastic location for adventurers because of its geographic diversity. Higher altitudes are preferred to conduct adventure activities.

Tourism economy going forward-Future outlook – Post COVID'19

The public's confidence in travelling has returned, the vaccination effort was successful, and lessons have been learned from earlier waves of infections, so it is anticipated that tourism activity will soon return to normal. For the purpose of presenting our predictions for the industry, we have created the following three scenarios for all types of travel, including inbound, outward, and domestic travel.

- Optimistic;
- Most likely and
- Pessimistic.

These hypothetical situations are based on presumptions that have been formed using judgments about the expected future circumstance. The following are the main conclusions: By 2024–2025, domestic travel is predicted to be the main driver of the tourist sector as it returns to its pre-pandemic level in terms of tourism expenditure. Even under the most optimistic scenario, the inbound tourism sector is predicted to recover more slowly and is unlikely to restore its pre-pandemic levels before 2026–2027.

However, even under the most pessimistic scenario, domestic tourism (together with outward tourism that has been converted to domestic tourism) is projected to approach the pre-pandemic level by 2024–25.

A roadmap to transform tourism needs to address five priority areas

- Reduce social and economic effects on livelihoods, especially those that affect women's employment and financial stability.

- Improve resilience and competitiveness, notably through economic diversification, the promotion of domestic and regional tourism, and the facilitation of an environment that is favourable for the growth of micro, small, and medium-sized businesses (MSMEs).
- Promote innovation and investment in digital skills, especially for workers who are temporarily unemployed and for job searchers. This includes the digital transformation of tourism and the advancement of innovation.
- Encourage sustainability and green growth to move the tourism industry toward one that is resilient, competitive, resource-efficient, and carbon-neutral. Protected areas, renewable energy, smart buildings, and the circular economy, among other potential, might be the focus of green investments for recovery.
- Partnerships and coordination to transform the industry and advance the SDGs, ensuring that the resurgence of tourism puts people work together, cooperate to responsibly and systematically reduce and lift travel restrictions.

Government Initiatives

After the pandemic crisis, the government intends to capitalise on local tourism by opening its doors to visitors from South Asian nations. To support the hospitality and tourism industries, the Ministry of Tourism and Indian Railway Catering and Tourism Corporation signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in November 2021. Additionally, Easy My Trip, Cleartrip, Yatra.com, Make My Trip, and Goibibo have signed MoUs with the government.

The Indian government organised a meeting in November 2021 to promote film tourism there with the goal of making domestic locations the preferred locations for shooting. This action is anticipated to increase tourism and generate jobs in the nation.

Additionally, the government is working hard to increase investment in the travel and tourist industry. 100% FDI (Foreign Direct Investment) is permitted through the automatic method in the hotel and tourism sector. For hotels in the 2-, 3-, and 4-star categories that are close to UNESCO World Heritage sites, a five-year tax exemption has been provided (except Delhi and Mumbai).

The Indian government intends to increase tourism by making use of the nation's lighthouses. India has picked 71 lighthouses that will be turned into tourist attractions. According to their capacity, the lighthouses will have museums, amphitheatres, outdoor theatres, cafeterias, children's parks, eco-friendly cottages, and landscaping. India is frequently referred to as the world's biodiversity hotspot, and its extensive natural legacy is unmatched in many aspects. The nation had 104 national parks and 566 sanctuaries as of December 2020.

As part of the Union Budget 2019–20, the Indian government recently declared its intention to transform 17 famous tourist spots into world-class tourist attractions. In April 2020, the Ministry of Tourism launched the Dekho Apna Desh webinar to enlighten viewers about the wide variety of locations as well as the breadth and depth of Incredible India's cultural heritage. 90 webinars have been held as part of the series up until July 2021.

Findings and Analysis

Table 1

Annual growth rate of domestic and foreign tourist visits (2011-2020)

Year	Tourist Visits		Annual Growth Rate (in percentage)	
	Domestic	Foreign	Domestic	Foreign
2011	86.4	194.9		
2012	104.5	182.6	20.9	-6.3
2013	114.2	199.5	9.2	9.2
2014	128.2	223.3	12.2	11.9
2015	143.1	233.2	11.6	4.4
2016	161.5	247.1	12.8	5.9
2017	165.7	268.8	2.6	8.7
2018	185.3	288.5	11.8	7.3
2019	232.1	314	25.3	8.8
2020	61	71.7	-73.7	-77.1

Source: www.tourism.gov.in

From the above table it is inferred that, the year 2019 had got the highest number of domestic tourist visits and resulted to 25.3 percentage. Whereas when it comes to foreign tourist visits the year 2014 resulted to the highest number of foreign visits of 11.9 percentage. When it comes to the pandemic period both the domestic tourist's visits and the foreign tourist's visits were drastically declined showing negative annual growth.

Table 2

State/UT-wise Domestic and Foreign Tourist Visits, 2019 & 2020

S. No.	States/UTs	2019		2020		Growth rate	
		Domestic Tourist Visits	Foreign Tourist Visits	Domestic Tourist Visits	Foreign Tourist Visits	DTV 2020/2019	FTV 2020/2019

1	A&N Island	505398	16206	191207	5412	-62.17	-66.60
2	Andhra Pradesh	237051508	280356	70828590	67591	-70.12	-75.89
3	Arunachal Pradesh	555639	7825	42871	961	-92.28	-87.72
4	Assam	5447805	26878	1266898	7285	-76.74	-72.90
5	Bihar	33990038	1093141	5638024	308080	-83.41	-71.82
6	Chandigarh	1563795	44132	417953	12218	-73.27	-72.31
7	Chhattisgarh	17304506	6817	2810227	2322	-83.76	-65.94
8	Dadra & Nagar Haveli	618330	1666	104959	222	-83.03	-86.67
9	Daman & Diu	897804	5703	297436	1382	-66.87	-75.77
10	Delhi	36467598	2983436	9583671	681230	-73.7	-77.2
11	Goa	7127287	937113	3258715	302751	-54.28	-67.69
12	Gujarat	58864661	595607	19464517	210047	-66.93	-64.73
13	Haryana	4549017	48046	2114731	17474	-53.51	-63.63
14	Himachal Pradesh	16829231	382876	3170714	42665	-81.16	-88.86
15	Jharkhand	35580768	176043	2574704	490	-92.76	-99.72
16	J&K	16163330	57920	2519524	5317	-84.41	-90.82
17	Karnataka	227934714	608754	77453339	165325	-66.02	-72.84
18	Kerala	18384233	1189771	4988972	340755	-72.86	-71.36
19	Lakshadweep	6985	820	3462	413	-50.44	-49.63
20	Ladakh	241285	38652	6743	1126	-97.21	-97.09
21	Madhya Pradesh	88707139	327958	23519632	99819	-73.49	-69.56
22	Maharashtra	149294703	5528704	39234591	1262409	-73.72	-77.2
23	Manipur	167560	13608	49669	3139	-70.36	-76.93
24	Meghalaya	1245633	25813	24734	2311	-98.01	-91.05
25	Mizoram	163762	2249	30890	265	-81.14	-88.22
26	Nagaland	125949	5577	10979	518	-91.28	-90.71
27	Odisha	15307637	115128	4622273	10206	-69.80	-91.14

28	Puducherry	1713248	149919	1114942	92080	-34.92	-38.58
29	Punjab	47385387	1101343	16692197	359114	-64.77	-67.39
30	Rajasthan	52220431	1605560	15117239	446457	-71.05	-72.19
31	Sikkim	1421823	133388	316408	19935	-77.75	-85.05
32	Tamil Nadu	494865257	6866327	140651241	1228323	-71.58	-82.11
33	Telangana	83035894	323326	39997001	46694	-51.83	-85.56
34	Tripura	437201	154405	127815	31877	-70.77	-79.35
35	Uttar Pradesh	535855162	4745181	86122293	890932	-83.93	-81.22
36	Uttarakhand	37585920	152273	7005264	41339	-81.36	-72.85
37	West Bengal	92366025	1656145	28841732	463285	-68.77	-72.03
	Grand Total	2321982663	31408666	610216157	7171769	- 73.7%	- 77.2%

1) Source: www.tourism.gov.in

2)

- 2020 data is estimated by applying all India growth rate for 2020/19 on 2019 data. The above table provides the percentage shares and ranks of various States/UTs in domestic and foreign tourist visits during 2020. The top 5 States in domestic tourist visits in 2020 were Tamil Nadu (140.65 million), Uttar Pradesh (86.12 million), Karnataka (77.45 million), Andhra Pradesh (70.83 million), and Telangana (40.00 million) with their respective shares being 23.0%, 14.1%, 12.7%, 11.6% and 6.6%.
- These 5 States accounted for about 68.0% of the total domestic tourist visits in the country. In respect of foreign tourist visits in 2020, the top 5 States/UTs were Maharashtra (1.26 million), Tamil Nadu (1.23 million), Uttar Pradesh (0.89 million), Delhi (0.68 million) and West Bengal (0.46 million), with their respective shares being 17.6%, 17.1%, 12.4%, 9.5% and 6.5% These 5 States/UTs accounted for about 63.1% of the total foreign tourist visits to the States/UTs in the country.
- During the year 2020 the number of tourist's visits registered a rapid decline due to COVID-19 pandemic and registered negative growth rate.
- Tourism continues to play an important role as a foreign exchange earner for the country. In 2018, foreign exchange earnings (FEE) from tourism were US\$ 28.59 billion as compared to US\$ 27.31 billion in 2017, registering a growth of 4.7%.
- Tamil Nadu and Maharashtra were the most popular states in number of tourist arrivals among other 10 most visited states in India.
- Post pandemic the Government has announced stimulus package to boost diverse sectors of economy affected by COVID-19 pandemic and provide impetus for growth and employment measures.

- Among all the monuments, Taj Mahal, Agra (1.26 Million) was the most visited monument in 2020-21 for domestic visitors
- The revival of tourism industry is evident with decline in COVID cases and emerging trend in travel and tourism sector.

Suggestions

- To assist a seamless return to business, it is crucial to develop and publish precise operational standards for COVID-19 safety and hygiene for hotels, restaurants, B&Bs/Homestays, and tourism services.
- Both positive and bad transformational changes have occurred in rural regions as a result of the change from a passive to an active role. It should be mentioned at this point that tourism can benefit a location if consistent planning and action are continuously monitored by policy-makers at the local, regional, and national level.
- In order for the tourism industry to survive alongside the virus in the short- to medium-term, flexible legislative responses are required. The epidemic has shown weaknesses in business and government response and preparation. It is crucial that all levels of government and the commercial sector work together in concert.
- The development of the crisis and longer-term consumer trends that are changing how people travel both have an impact on traveller behaviour. The government must put more of an emphasis on safety procedures and contactless tourism experiences as a result, which may entail the formation of new market niches and sectors.

Conclusion

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on a variety of tourist stakeholders on a social, psychological, socioeconomic, and cultural level, and they will continue to feel the negative impacts for a longer period of time. Based on factors including the size, location, administration, and governance styles of the tourism industry, the COVID-19 pandemic, for example, has a considerable impact on tourism companies, including intermediaries, transportation planners, and hotel or attraction providers. Similar to how the travel requirements of local and individual tourists, as well as travellers on business and pleasure trips, demonstrate that the COVID-19's numerous repercussions are to be expected and are crucial for debate in trend analysis. Tourism policy will need to be more responsive, and over time, it will transition to more adaptable systems that can respond more quickly to shifts in policy focus. One of the booming industries in recent years is tourism.

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