



COVID-19: IT'S IMPACT ON TRAVEL AND TOURISM SECTOR IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

In India, travel and tourism industry is generous and vital. Among other industries, travel and tourism industry is one of the prominent and profitable industries in India. According to World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), among 185 countries, India ranked at third in case of travel and tourism industry by contributing a profitable amount to GDP in 2018. But in present days, the sector is harshly affected by the outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19). Because due to this pandemic of COVID-19, people are refrain from travel to different countries. Due to COVID-19, it is expecting that about 38 million of people in India loss their jobs in tourism industry specially impact of this pandemic would be felt on both blue and white collar jobs and globally over 50 million jobs are at risk which indicates a 12 to 14 percent reduction in jobs. The objectives of this research study are firstly to understand the importance of tourism sector for economic development, secondly to study the impact of COVID-19 on travel and tourism sector, thirdly to find out the hurdles for development of travel and tourism sector in India and lastly to find out the suitable measures to rescue the tourism industry in current situation. The research paper is mostly descriptive in nature entirely based on secondary data. Data and information relating to the present study have been collected from some reliable data sources. In conclusion part, it is found out that this sector is mostly induced by the psychology of the people. Therefore, after this crisis, it is very challenging task to the companies of tourism sector have to regain the trust of people. If we analyse the present situation then we can predict that the tourism sector will recover partially in 2021 and it take a long time to go back to the previous situation completely and for this the Government should take some effective and reliable measures and the common people should response their initiatives properly.

KEYWORDS : Tourism, India, COVID-19, Government**I.INTRODUCTION**

In India, travel and tourism industry is generous and vital. For rapid growth of the country's economy, tourism is one of the most important sectors. According to World Travel and Tourism Council, in 2018, tourism sector brought about 16.91 lakh crore, i.e., US \$240 billion and which is equal to 9.2% of India's Gross Domestic Product(GDP). India is ranked at 16th in all over the world in case of receipts from tourism sector in the year of 2012. But in present days, the sector is harshly affected by the outbreak of Coronavirus (COVID-19). Because due to this pandemic of COVID-19, people are refrain from travel to different countries and cities. So, because of this reason, the tourism sector of the countries is negatively impacted. According to a report, tourism industry in India is to incur 1.25 trillion revenue loss in 2020 which may definitely worsen the economic growth of the country.

II.Review of Literature

A comprehensive review of literature which is related to travel and tourism industry in India are presented here under-

Vijay M. Kumbhar, on his study "Growth and Performance of Tourism Industry in India" analyses te important part of tourism in human life. This paper discusses about how foreign tourists visited to India and how it helps in foreign exchange earning to the country. Along with this, paper also discusses about the tourism sector of India for overall development of the economy also discusses briefly the National Tourism Policy,2002 and its Implication.

Lateef Ahmad Mir discusses in his research study "An Economic Evaluation of Indian Tourism Industry" about how tourism industry of India plays a vital role for both skilled and unskilled labour force by generating employment opportunity also improves the other sectors such as upgrading the standard of living, increase the foreign exchange earnings, development of infrastructure and also improves the traditional art and craft of India. This study also analyses that tourism industry enlarges the inclusive economic development.

In their research study "A Comprehensive Study on Foreign Tourist Arrivals in India". Dr. Shekhar Upadhyay, Dr. Alka Awasthi and Dr. Priyanka Rawal discusses about the trend of foreigners, i.e., tourist who arrivals in India in the last four years. Their study also reveals the earnings which are earned from foreign tourist in Indian rupees. This study also aims to real the different UTs/ states share in case of foreign tourist arrivals. In their study, they also analyse some current Government policies and also discuss some suggestions relating to improve the foreign tourist sector in India.

D. Amutha in his research study "Developmnt and Impact of Tourism Industry in India" analyses how tourism industry in India is the largest service industry in now-a-days by contributing 6.23% to national GDP and providing 8.78% to the total employment.

In their research study "Tourism in India: Opportunities and Challenges", Sujith T.S. and Jisha M.K. also discusses about the leading characteristics of the tourism sector for economic development. They also discuss how tourism sector is the second largest foreign exchange earner in India. The objectives of their research is to discuss about the concept relating to tourism industry and also to find out the opportunities and threats of the industry of the country.

III.Objectives of the study

1. To understand the importance of tourism sector for economic development
2. To study the impact of COVID-19 on travel and tourism sector
3. To find out the hurdles for development of travel and tourism industry in India
4. To find out the suitable measures to rescue the tourism industry in the current situation

IV.Methodology

The research paper is mostly descriptive in nature entirely based on secondary data. Data and information relating to the present study have been collected from some daily news papers like The Hindu, The Assam Tribune etc. and also from some web sources like www. Worldometers.info, <https://cdc.gov>, <https://www.who.int> etc. Therefore, the paper basically relates to the current situation.

A.What is Corona Virus

It is a type of virus named as Coronavirus. There are many kinds and some of them cause disease. Recently a newly identified type is there; the outbreak of which causes illness in all over the world is now called COVID-19. World Health Organization has declared the COVID-19 outbreak is a pandemic in March,2020. At least 2,91,000 people have died from this infections virus and at least more than 4.2 million infections confirmed in almost 187 countries and territories. The pandemic of COVID-19 was first reported in India on 30 January, 2020. Total 78,003 cases have confirmed on 14 May, 2020 and 26,235 have recovered including 1 migration and 2,549 deaths have taken place in India(Report of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare). Report reveals that this virus has initially come from Wuhan city of China(sea food and market), December, 2019. According to World Health Organization(12 January,2020), novel coronavirus was the cause of a respiratory sickness in a bunch of population in Wuhan city,

Hubei Province, China and from December, 2019, this virus spreads to all over the world. Generally, this virus of COVID-19 spreads through people who have symptoms. Even they don't know that they have been infected by this virus and can give into others is called asymptomatic spread and again one can also pass this virus before they observe the signs of infection, then it is called presymptomatic spread.

B. Most Common Symptoms of Coronavirus

There are different symptoms of COVID-19 for different people. There are following different ways of COVID-19-

Most Common Symptoms:

- i. Dry Cough
- ii. Fever
- iii. Tiredness

Serious Symptoms:

- i. Pain or pressure in chest
- ii. Breathing problem or shortness of breath
- iii. Loss of speech or movement

Less Common Symptoms:

- i. Sore throat
- ii. Problem of diarrhoea
- iii. Pains and aches
- iv. Headache
- v. Conjunctivitis
- vi. Taste or smell problem
- vii. Discolouration of fingers or toes/ A rash on skin

Besides these, COVID-19 also weakened the whole immune system of a human being and caused the problem of pneumonia or bronchitis. It is expected that adults and childrens are getting infected through this COVID-19 very easily and badly. Basically, this virus can transmitted from one person to other by some bodily fluids such as droplets in a cough. It is also said that this virus can also transmitted through touching something by a infected person and these things touching by other non-infected persons and after that those persons touches their own mouth, nose or eyes and finally get infected by the virus of COVID-19.

V. Travel and Tourism Industry in India: An Overview

Among other industries, travel and tourism industry is one of the prominent and profitable industries in India. According to World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), among 185 countries, India ranked at third in case of travel and tourism industry by contributing a profitable amount to GDP in 2018. According to Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report, 2019 published by World Economic Forum, India was ranked at 34th. It is expected that travel and tourism sector in India to be the second largest employer in the world by employing 40,037,000 in 2019. Besides this, it is also expected that capital investment of travel and tourism industry in India increases to 8.8 percent during 2010 and 2019. Again, it is also mentioned that tourism industry of India is ranked at 5th in case of long-term growth, i.e., 10 years and also expected to be the second largest employer industry in the world during 2019. The nodal agency, i.e., Ministry of Tourism has developed a Campaign which is known as "Incredible India" which is taken for the motive of the promotion of tourism sector in India. It is also expected to engender US \$51.4 billion by 2019 from export earnings of India which is comes from tourism items and also from international visitors.

VI. Pandemic of COVID-19: Its Impact on Travel and Tourism Industry

There are several sectors in India which may help a lot to improvement of the economy. Travel and tourism industry is one of them. According to annual report of Ministry of Tourism (MOT), 2019-2020, about 87 million population of India were engaged or employed in the travel and tourism sector in 2018-2019. Again, almost 26.7 million of jobs were generated in this sector during the same year and contributed about 9.2 percent to India's GDP. It is also required to mention that air transport sector of India employs over 400,000 population and about 940,000 are also employed in related supply chains. Such a potential kind of industry is currently facing a financial crisis for the past three/four months due to the pandemic of COVID-19. Due to COVID-19, it is expecting that about 38 million of people in India loss their jobs in tourism industry specially impact of this pandemic would be felt on both blue and white collar jobs and globally over 50 million jobs are at

risk which indicates a 12 to 14 percent reduction in jobs. According to Federation of Associations in Indian Tourism and Hospitality (FAITH), loss of India's tourism sector doubles to Rs. 10 lakh crore due to the pandemic of COVID-19. Due to the pandemic of COVID-19, demand for turbine fuel has gradually declined because of the interruption of international; and domestic travel. Again, according to Indian Association of Tour Operators (IATO), Due to the restriction on foreign tourists in case of travel, hotel, aviation and also the travel sector incur losses of about 85 billion. At present, in India travel restrictions for over 80 countries and the international flights being suspended (domestic flights being operation with some restrictions), so that the Indian domestic travelers and FTAs will witness a significant reduction in 2020. During 2020-21, the passenger growth of airlines is also decline drastically to a negative 20-25 percent. Report provided by the United Nations World Tourism Organization that the global international tourist arrivals might decline by 20-30 percent during 2020. The tourism industry of India is that kind of industry employs about 8.75 crore people (about 12.75 percent of the total number of employed population in India during 2018-2019, i.e., people from various sectors such as small traders, people of hospitality industry, tour operators, craftsmen, travel agents etc. The tourism industry has some linkages with some other important sectors such as agriculture, handloom industry, transport industry etc. Crisis in this tourism sector create the problem of unemployment.

VII. Recovery Measures

In present day, tourism sector is a backbone of economy for many countries especially for Indian economy it is a very important source of income. But due to COVID-19, this sector has faced some hurdles and the pace of growth of this sector has slowed down. So, for the fast recovery of this sector few important things have been proposed by leaders in the industry. Such as-

- a) In present day situation, it is required to focus on potential of domestic tourism and also try to earn some profit from it.
- b) At all operational levels, cost optimization should be needed.
- c) According to ICC, to prevent the financial and job loss, it is required to setting up of a "Travel and Tourism Stabilisation Fund". Because due to this, each unit will be benefitted with direct benefit transfer to each unit.
- d) Experts also recommend utilizing carefully the FF&E Reserves. It is also required to support the hotel owners by the operators.
- e) Most of the experts suggest cleaning and sanitizing facilities should be promoted as part of the supply and also to change the cleaning protocols.
- f) To maintain social distance, automation technologies such as robots and also artificial intelligence may help facilities to reduce their fixed costs and on the otherhand, increase liquidity and resilience in the long run. Experts also preferred market diversification which may help to decrease the dependence on a limited number of source market.
- g) Another important step is that hotels may take the direct control of room inventory rather involving the other third parties.
- h) The companies which are related to tourism sector should intake the new health safety norms. Besides these the Government should also focus on some measures such as-
 - a) To protect the enterprises which become weak due to this pandemic by controlling the possible predatory investors.
 - b) Central Government should allowing the local Governments to promote regulations.
 - c) For implementing tourism destinations provide some financial assistance to the tourism sector.
 - d) To partially internalize this pandemic of COVID-19, introducing the concept of Pigouvian tax.

VIII. Conclusion

Tourism sector is very much sensitive to safety and security aspects and this sector is mostly induced by the psychology of the people. Due to this pandemic of COVID-19, tourism sector is deeply affected. After this crisis, it is very challenging task to the companies of tourism sector have to regain the trust of people. If we analyse the present situation then we can predict that the tourism sector will recover partially in 2021 and it take a long time to go back to the previous situation completely.

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