

“COVID-19 PANDEMIC IMPACTs ON TOURISM INDUSTRY IN HIMACHAL PRADESH”

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Abstract

Himachal Pradesh is a part of the Indian Himalayas means “Home of snow”. It has 12 Districts and Shimla is the capital of the state. Traditionally Himachal was known a summer destination, but due to the Special efforts of tourism Department now, Himachal is known as “A Destination for all seasons”. In 2019 March, a big crisis corona virus came and spread rapidly across the world through human to human transmission. Slowly the pandemic spread to various states and union territories including the state of Himachal Pradesh. The economy of H.P got affected with this pandemic. The first case was recorded in this region on 20th March 2020. COVID-19 pandemic has worst effect on the state and many sectors have been affected. Here we studied the research problem “COVID-19 Pandemic impact on Tourism Industry in Himachal Pradesh”. The main objective of the study is to know the impact of COVID-19 Pandemic and to evaluate the tourist arrivals during COVID-19 Pandemic. This research carried to know the problem of tourist till now, there is no research have done for COVID-19 Pandemic impact on H.P Tourism. So this research is needed for the Society and Necessary to fill the research gap and find out how COVID-19 Pandemic affected the problems in the path of tourism.

Keywords: *Tourism Industry, Covid-19, Pandemic, Income, Travelling*

Introduction:

Himachal Pradesh situated in the heart of the western Himalaya, identified as “Dev Bhumi” and is believed to be the residence of Gods and Goddess. The entire state is punctuated with stone as well as wooden temples. The state has the pride of being the home to rishis like Vyas, Parashar, Vashist, Markandey and Lomas etc.

Many people come here to visit famous places. Himachal Pradesh is blessed with natural beauty. The top tourist places of Himachal Pradesh are Shimla, Kullu-Manali, Dharamshala and Chamba. Shimla and urbanized city of the Himachal, its peaceful atmosphere makes it different from many urban cities of India. It is famous for its temples, parks and valleys. The Kullu valley is also famous for its natural beauty, gardens, festivals, fair. Kullu provides an opportunity of employment for handicraft textile. Solan is known as the “Mushroom city of India. Chamba has important destinations like Champavati Temple, Bhuri Singh Museum, Lakshmi Narayan Temple etc. Dharamshala is “The Scotland of India” famous for its natural beauty, gardens along with snow covered mountains. These tourist places are major source of earning for HP Government and Local peoples. In this study we will explore about the tourism of Himachal Pradesh during Covid-19 Pandemic. Himachal Pradesh is one of the most famous tourist destinations. Tourism is rapidly growing Industry in Himachal Pradesh. It is playing an important and positive role in the social, economic and political development in the state besides it also offering new Employment opportunities. Tourism sector is operated and maintained by Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation. HPTDC was formed in Sep. 1972 as an undertaking of the Govt. of HP under the Company Act 1956 now it is covered under Company Act 2013. HPTDC provide different facilities at various places for tourists like hotels, restaurants, transport, digital services etc. The Corporation is engaged in production, distribution, providing tourism literature,

providing entertainment and shopping facilities to the tourists. HPTDC aim is to establish, develop, promote, execute and arrangement of tourist vehicles to facilitate the tourists. The Corporation promotes culture, fairs, temples, tourist attractions and specialty of the state. A main function of the corporation is to promote tourism in local, regional, national, international and maintain various heritage and historical sites of HP. Tourism in HP is described as a strong pillar of economic prosperity in the state. In 2019, March a big crisis corona virus came and spread rapidly across the world through human to human transmission. Slowly the pandemic spread to various states and union territories including the state of Himachal Pradesh. The epicenter of Corona virus was China. The virus did not spread only in the same country but enter in all over the world in a few months. We all were very well aware about the result of the Pandemic covid-19. During Pandemic the GDP of the economy slowed down because a few economic activities were done on national level. The person who engaged with tourism they were effected socially, economically, emotionally, mentally as well as physically from the outcomes of pandemic but not only the concerned person but their families also. Society faced the problems of food and retrenchment of job (unemployment) during this Pandemic. Everywhere we were looking Covid patient due to fear nobody get ready to go outside the home. Two years after Pandemic the HDTDC growth revenue found slow down. We passing time on doing home chores, entertainment and physical work and after lockdown government restriction uplifted one by one then the peoples think to start visit. Earlier researcher have done half hunted one sided research studies in the field of Tourism industry in H.P but this study shall focus on HDTDC with effect t of Covid-19 Pandemic on Tourism Industry.

2. Review of Literature

Tourism industry is the major source of earning in state economy. Tourist leaves their impact on the socio-cultural life of host communities. But the COVID-19 Pandemic has worst effect on tourism industry.. **Charles, (2001)**, founded that, tourism naturally turns an important industry for income generation to the local people. He further discuss that due to lack of management skills the local people either lease out their land to outsider or built their own hotels. The exposure of people to the luxuries that money can buy has leded them to adopt ways that are not legal one of the lucrative **Himayatullah Khan, (2004)**, “margalla Hills National Park hears Islamabad. How much Park visitors are willing to pay to Visit and enjoy the park is considerable. The total annual consumer surplus or economic benefit obtained from recreation in the park is approximately Rs. 23 million. The study recommends thata park entrance for of Rs.20 per Person be introduced, which could be utilized for park management.”**Richard Sharplay, (2005)**,He studied the deviating impact on the coastal regions of the countries around the Indian ocean, bringing death and destruction on a unimaginable scale. Almost 30000 people lost their lives, widespread damage was caused to infrastructure, transport and communication networks, ecosystem and livelihoods throughout the affectedregion and overall, the economic cost of the disaster is expected to exceed \$10 billion. As this paper observes, this response was primarily driven by the fact that thousands of water tourists were also victims of the tsunami, global disaster **Tripathi & Siddiqui, (2010)**, He mentioned that tourism and hospitality have become key global economic activities as expectations with regard to our use of leisure time have evolved, attributing greater meaning to our free time. While the growth in tourism has been impressive, India share in total global tourism arrivals and earnings is quite insignificant. It is an accepted fact that India has tremendous potential

for development of tourism. **Bhatia, (2013)**, People today travel to international destinations to break the regular monotony of life. They are mainly attracted by fascinating leisure, sport, and adventure activities offered by the destination. But every destination has some internal strengths and weaknesses that either enhance its capacity to attract foreign visitors or diminish it. Similarly, from the external environment can originate various opportunities or threats as **Kumbhar, (2015)**, He examined that Tourism is an Integral Part of human life. It is a situation where person from one country or region to other region and country for a short run period, is included in the concept of tourism. India has a great heritage of historical place like the Tajmahal. Various forts, Natural sites etc. Since 2000 tourism industry has been giving number of benefits to India. The number of foreign tourists visited to India which has given foreign exchange earning to the country. **Jeena Gupta, (2015)**, Himachal Pradesh provide hotel services, Shopping, Food, Transport, Entertainment, Parking, Special appearance to the tourists and they satisfied with

these facilities. The young, educated and married people from the different parts of the country and world prefer to visit the Kullu-Manali for the purpose of pleasure and climate changes. The married couples also like visit this place for honey moon. **UNCTAD, (2021)** COVID impacts on tourism industry destroy the source of income and during Pandemic vaccinations seem the most important element. The loss of tourism receipts would be partially offset by output in other sectors. Obviously, in tourist dependent developing countries this is difficult to do in the short run, but more achievable in the longer run. With tourism not expected to fully recover until perhaps 2023 the policy question is whether and how to support the sector until that time.” **Kaur & Sharma, (2022)**, tourism to economic development has been recognized widely due to its contribution to the balance of payments, GDP and employment since last few years, Indian tourism industry has been growing at a rapid pace and it has vast potential for generating employment and earning large amount of foreign exchange.

3. Research Design

The study is conducted on a sample size of 300 respondents from Himachal Pradesh. In this study both the primary and secondary data has been used. Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire and Secondary data was collected through various Web sources/ HPDTC department.

(A) Hypothesis: - Two hypothesis have been framed to identify the relation between dependent and independent variables.

- Ho: - There is no significant relationship between COVID-19 Pandemic and Tourists Industry.
- H1:- There is significant relationship between COVID-19 Pandemic and Tourists Industry.

(B) Objectives of the study:-

- a. To study the trend of Foreign Tourists and Indian tourists arrival in Himachal Pradesh before Pandemic.
- b. To examine the problem of education qualification perception COVID-19 Pandemic
- c. To Analysis the COVID-19 Pandemic impact on tourism industry in HP.

4. Data Analysis

Table 4.1:-Demographic profile (1)

Age	Frequency	%age	Education Group	Frequency	%age
Valid 15-25	115	38.3	Valid +2	53	17.7
25-35	80	26.7	UG	86	29.3
35-45	48	16.0	PG	99	33.0
Above 45	57	19.0	Ph.D.	22	7.3
Total	300	100.0	Any others	38	12.7
			Total	300	100.0

Table 4.2:- Demographic Profile (2)

Job Group	Frequency	%age	Income Group	Frequency	Percentage
Private Employees	84	28.0	0-250000	116	38.7
Govt. Employees	58	19.3	250001-500000	96	32.0
Semi-Govt. Employee	29	9.7	500001-1000000	88	29.3
No Employees	129	43.0	Total	300	100.0
Total	300	100.0			

Table 4.3:- Education and perception for instruction and guideline during Pandemic

Education	After Govt. instruction	COVID-19 guidelines	After lockdown	Any others	Total
+2	15	20	8	10	53
UG	17	31	17	23	88
PG	17	31	25	26	99
Ph.D.	2	9	8	3	22
Any others	6	12	11	9	38
Total	57	103	69	71	300

Table 4.4:- opinion of respondents for social distancing and wearing mask rules while travelling.

Education	No	Yes	Total
+2	14	39	53
UG	19	69	88
PG	18	81	99
Ph.D.	5	17	22
Any others	10	28	38
Total	66	234	300

Table 4.5:- Which mostly Problems you face for arrive to the particulars places.

Education Qualification	RT-PCR Test Report	Transportation problem	Vaccination report	COVID guidelines	others	Total
+2	5	16	11	2	19	53
UG	9	39	9	12	19	88
PG	15	31	11	9	33	99
Ph.D.	4	9	4	4	1	22
Any others	8	10	12	5	3	38
Total	41	105	17	32	75	300

Table 4.6: Problem and prospective during visiting places in pandemic.

Statement	O	E	Residual	$(O-E)^2$	$(O-E)^2/E$
You think that short term stay is more best compare to long duration during Pandemic.	38	60.0	-22.0	484	8.07
Disagree Pandemic reduces the possibility of travelling with groups.	56	60.0	-4.0	16	0.2
opinion regarding maintain hygiene after every touch is necessary	86	60.0	26.0	676	11.26
You visit the places during pandemic for rest and relaxation.	69	60.0	9.0	81	1.35
You face any difficultly in searching to Particular place.	51	60.0	-9.0	81	1.59
Total	300				22.47

Comparison of Domestic & Foreign Tourists in the year of 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020 & 2021.

Month	2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
	Indian	Foreigner	Indian	Foreigner	Indian	Foreigner	Indian	Foreigner	Indian	Foreigner
Jan	1187694	27409	1018914	23059	1076103	24188	1140796	26543	407950	477
Feb	1146506	25285	997870	20224	1017132	21456	612011	9897	323570	566
March	1540801	39935	1360710	32851	1401458	33155	410827	5243	361109	770
April	1973971	48539	1776021	41570	1781885	43628	23	9	220461	593
May	830820	44019	1704571	37982	1727329	41276	94	75	51243	109
June	2133665	49999	1809270	45578	1853164	40495	80	36	608911	332
July	1550578	47098	1250657	35498	1391678	40505	4156	5	925216	24
Aug.	1614940	49346	1245424	23288	1298694	28047	10326	59	311838	241
Sept.	2025711	45610	1402783	26648	1481842	28572	65947	121	0	0
Oct.	1988229	43357	1623282	27076	1721186	31303	293403	227	0	0
Nov.	1126049	30935	969612	25615	1091813	30699	204569	204569 45	0	0
Dec.	1011577	19460	904821	17179	986947	19552	428482	405	0	0
Total	19130541	470992	16093935	356568	16829231	382876	3170714	42665	320298	3335

Source: - Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation Shimla.

2017		2018		2019		2020		2021	
Indian	19130541	Indian	16093935	Indian	16829231	Indian	3170714	Indian	3210298
Foreigner	470992	Foreigner	356568	Foreigner	382876	Foreigner	42665	Foreigner	3335
Total	19601533	Total	16450503	Total	17212107	Total	3213379	Total	3213633

Domestic & Foreign Tourists arrived data during 2018 and 2019.

Particulars	2018	2019	Difference	% Change
Indian	16093935	16829231	(735296)	(4.56)
Foreigner	356568	382876	26308	(7.37)

Domestic & Foreign Tourists arrived during 2019 and 2020.

Particulars	2019	2020	Difference	% Change
Indian	16829231	3170714	13658517	-81.1
Foreigner	382876	42665	340211	-88.85

Domestic & Foreign Tourists arrived during 2020 and 2021.

Particulars	2020	2021	Difference	% Change
Indian	3170714	3210298	39584	1.25
Foreigner	42665	3335	39330	-92.18

Finding and conclusion

Most of Respondent out of 300 i.e. 130 follow the Covid-19 Guideline and average rate of respondent follow the rule after Govt. instruction and lockdown application. As per intellectual relationship with respondents 234 maximum number of respondents out of 300 maintain social distance and wearing proper mask but same as facing difficulty of transportation and disobey the rule and regulation of Covid-19. Maximum number of respondents not showing any document and escape from RT-PCR test and vaccination report. Chi-square test found that there is relationship between problem and prospective in visiting places during pandemic. During visit respondent face short stay problem in hotel, and maximum respondents believe that not one follow the proper instruction of govt. in travelling with maximum number of candidates. Person plan to tourist place for rest and relaxation but facing difficulty in searching peace place, above table founded that foreign tourist's decrease (24.30%) in 2018. And observed that there is growth in both Indian and Foreign tourist arrival in 2019 i.e. Indian (4.56%), foreign (7.37%). Due to COVID-19 Pandemic Indian as well as Foreign tourists arrival reduce in 2020 i.e. Indian (-81.15%), Foreign (-88.85%). Foreign tourist arrival decreases more as compare to Indian tourists.. In 2021, Indian tourist's arrival increase (1.25%) and foreign tourist's arrival also decrease with the (-92.18%) tourists. COVID-19 Pandemic has worst impact on origin country and also on rest of the world. Many industries badly affected and Tourism industry is one of them. In this research we studied that how COVID-19 Pandemic Impact on Tourism Industry in Himachal Pradesh and problem facing by tourists during Pandemic. From the above analysis we found that most of the tourists facing many difficulties to arrive at a particular place and in the path of tourism. Large section of the respondents visiting place before or after

lockdown instruction. Pandemic reduce the possibility of travelling with groups and also block the sources of income generation. People plans their trip according to COVID-19 guidelines. Only few one follow the instruction of wearing mask, using sanitizer. They mostly faced transportation problem for arrive to the particular place even they use own vehicles. Most of the respondents believe that HP travelling was not safe and no positive visiting during pandemic but some of the respondents in the favor of visiting H.P for rest & relaxation. This shows that due to lockdown people affected mentally, emotionally and economically they get depressed and want to get rid out of this. During Pandemic maintain hygiene is necessary. This crisis also affected the tourists' arrival in the year 2020 and 2021. Foreign and Indian tourist arrival data decreased which affected the source of income of tourism industry. But from 2021 Indian tourists arrival increase slowly that is good for tourism industry.

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