

TOURISM



"Tourism is a force for economic development and a vehicle for cultural understanding"

-David Scowsill



▶ WeChat

Ms. Shilpa Thakre
Key Account Manager,
Make My Trip.
PGDM Marketing
(2012-14)

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Readers,

It gives me great pride to introduce SAMVAD's edition every month. Our SAMVAD team's efforts seem to be paying off, and our readers seem to be hooked onto our magazine. At WeSchool, we try to acquire as much knowledge as possible and share it with everyone.



Prof. Dr. Uday Salunkhe
Group Director

As we begin a new journey with 2023, I sincerely hope that SAMVAD will reach new heights with the unmatched enthusiasm and talent of the entire team.

Here at WeSchool, we believe in the concept of AAA: Acquire Apply and Assimilate. The knowledge you have acquired over the last couple of months will be applied somewhere down the line. When you carry out a process repeatedly, it becomes ingrained in you and eventually tends to come out effortlessly. This is when you have assimilated all the knowledge that you have gathered.

At WeSchool, we aspire to be the best and unique, and we expect nothing but the extraordinary from all those who join our college. From the point of view of our magazine, we look forward to having more readers and having more contributions from our new readers.

SAMVAD is a platform to share and acquire knowledge and develop ourselves into integrative managers. Our earnest desire is to disseminate our knowledge and experience with not only WeSchool students but also the society at large.

Prof. Dr. Uday Salunkhe,
Group Director

ABOUT US



OUR VISION

“To nurture thought leaders and practitioners through inventive education.”

CORE VALUES

Breakthrough Thinking and Breakthrough Execution

Result Oriented, Process Driven Work Ethic

We Link and Care

Passion

“The illiterate of this century will not be those who cannot read and write, but those who cannot learn, unlearn and relearn.” -Alvin Toffler.

At WeSchool, we are deeply inspired by the words of this great American writer and futurist. Undoubtedly, being convinced of the need for a radical change in management education, we decided to tread the path that led to the corporate revolution.

Emerging unarticulated needs and realities require a new approach in both thought and action. Cross-disciplinary learning, discovering, scrutinizing, prototyping, learning to create and destroy the mind's eye needs to be nurtured differently.

WeSchool has chosen the ‘design thinking’ approach towards management education. All our efforts and manifestations, as a result, stem from the integration of design thinking into management education. We dream of creating an environment conducive to experiential learning.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

Dear Readers,

Welcome to the 134th Issue of SAMVAD!

SAMVAD is a platform for “Inspiring Futuristic Ideas”, we constantly strive to provide thought-provoking articles that add value to your management education.

We have an audacious goal of becoming one of the most coveted business magazines for B-school students across the country. To help this dream become a reality, we invite articles from all management domains, giving a holistic view and bridging the gap between industry veterans and students through our WeChat section.

In this issue of SAMVAD, we bring to you some articles focusing on ‘**Tourism**’ with a section called ‘**WeChat**’. Our WeChat alumni for this edition is “**Ms. Shilpa Thakre**” who is a sales and marketing professional with 6 years+ of experience in account management and FMCG strategy and trade marketing. Currently, she is working with MakeMyTrip as a Key Account Manager handling multiple International Hotel chains. In this section, we have some exclusive insights of what is happening under the nose of our theme.

The travel and tourism industry is the largest service industry in India. It provides **heritage, cultural, medical, business and sports tourism**. Tourism sector is one of the fastest growing economic sectors with a significant impact on employment and accelerates regional development with a multiplying effect on the activity of related sectors.

The travel market in India is projected to reach \$125 Bn by FY27 from an estimated \$75 Bn in FY20. By 2028, Indian tourism and hospitality is expected to earn \$50.9 Bn as visitor exports compared with \$ 28.9 Bn in 2018. International tourist arrivals are expected to reach 30.5 Mn by 2028. According to WTTC, India is ranked **10th among 185 countries** in terms of travel & tourism’s total contribution to GDP in 2019.

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

It contributes to a total of about **US \$ 178 billion to the country's GDP**. States with the Largest Domestic Tourist Arrivals in 2021 are Tamil Nadu, Uttar Pradesh, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra and Telangana. The country's extensive coastline is dotted with attractive beaches. India is 54th on the World Economic Forum Travel & Tourism Development Index (2022). With a total area of 3,287,263 sq. km extending from the snow-covered Himalayan heights to the tropical rain forests of the south, India has a rich cultural and historical heritage, variety in ecology, terrains and places of natural beauty spread across the country.

India was globally the **third largest in terms of investment** in travel and tourism with an inflow of US\$ 45.7 billion in 2018, accounting for 5.9% of the total investment in the country. India is the **most digitally advanced traveller nation** in terms of digital tools being used for planning, booking, and experiencing a journey. India's rising middle class and increasing disposable income have supported the growth of domestic and outbound tourism. The United Nations World Tourism Organisation selected Pochampally in Telangana as one of the best tourism villages in November 2021.

India offers geographical diversity, world heritage sites, and niche tourism products like cruises, adventure, medical, eco-tourism, etc that come with its own experiences, making it one of the leading countries in terms of international tourism expenditure. Tourism tends to encourage the development of multiple-use infrastructure including hotels, resorts & restaurants, transport infrastructure (aviation, roads, shipping & railways), and healthcare facilities.

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 catalyst for socioeconomic growth, and a significant source of foreign exchange gains in many countries. The tourist industry not only drives growth but also raises people's standards of living with its ability to provide a significant amount of diverse employment opportunities. Tourism Industry is **one of the largest employers of women's workforce**. It promotes environmental preservation, champions

FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK

diverse cultural heritage, and bolsters international peace.

In **Union Budget 2023-24**, **US\$ 290.64 million** was allocated to the Ministry of Tourism as the sector holds enormous opportunities for jobs and entrepreneurship for youth and to take the promotion of tourism on mission mode, with the active participation of states, the convergence of government programmes and public-private partnerships. Incredible India has spurred growth in Tourists Arrivals and Employment. The government of India has set a target to create 220 new airports by 2025.

In conclusion, staycation has emerged as a popular trend among people seeking a peaceful getaway to revive themselves from stress, and major hotel chains such as Marriott International, IHG Hotels & Resorts, and Oberoi hotels are introducing staycation offers with curated experiences. With the expected expansion of the e-Visa scheme in India, the tourism industry anticipates a doubling of tourist inflow, providing more opportunities for people to enjoy these luxurious hotel experiences.

We hope you have a great time reading SAMVAD!

Let's read, share and grow with us!

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Ms Shilpa Thakre

**Key Account Manager
Make My Trip
PGDM Marketing
(2012-14)**

1) Can you walk us through your journey from Welingkar Institute to Make my trip?

I had a great time at Welingkar. After completing my MBA from our institute, I have worked with 3 different companies in 3 other sectors. While they are all different, there was something about the experience in a previous company which helped me build skills useful for the next company.

I started my career with Zydus Wellness which has a diverse FMCG portfolio. I worked in sales and customer marketing for 18 months in Zydus to understand the world of FMCG sales. Then I got an exciting opportunity to work with a startup called Peel-Works, which is into B2B e-commerce. Here, I was on the other side of the table looking at offering our ecommerce services to big FMCG companies by understanding their requirements for distribution and incremental business. This role helped me build my account

management skills as I regularly interacted with various FMCG companies' leadership teams. I have always liked travelling and what better than working with the largest travel organization in the country, Makemytrip? I joined Makemytip in 2019 and it's been over 4 years doing account management in the hotel's team.

My role involves working with the central account management team of different hotel chains and impacting their business on a daily business. This has given me a great understanding of the app platform and how to drive incremental business for different chains by looking at various opportunities in the market. In between, we had Covid as well, which certainly had a huge impact on our business, but certainly great learning for the future as well!

2) How can India promote more sustainable and responsible tourism practices to preserve its natural and cultural heritage?

To say India is a rich country with really diverse and rich cultural and geographical nuances would be an understatement. With a country like ours, we should certainly be among the top tourism destinations in the world. We as Indians and the rest of the world are learning about the great experiences India has to offer. With this, we are seeing a boom in the tourism industry. The government has also played a great role by building infrastructure to allow people to explore new destinations and make travel easy and memorable.

Sustainability needs to be a part of life when it comes to tourism. A lot of our natural and cultural heritage will not be attractive if we don't adopt sustainable practices. It starts from a sense of responsibility by all travellers to leave the place in a better condition than they got it in. It's a simple but powerful way of making tourism more enriching for everyone. Alongside this, we need to minimize the use of plastics and any kind of activity which disrupts the natural ecosystem around it. This education needs to be given to our tourists and certainly embraced by the travel industry.

Today, people are willing to trade and get richer experiences by living close to nature and closer to the culture of the place they visit. We need to promote this more as it is more sustainable. Alongside this, we need to build more destinations as more tourism friendly so that there is no exploitation of natural and cultural resources in the key tourism centres. The wave has started but a lot more can be done!



3) India's travel and tourism sector is predicted to develop at an average annual rate of 7.8% over the next ten years, how far can the government's policies and initiatives help achieve this?

Tourism generates revenue and provides a source of livelihood for the locals. The role of government is quite critical to ensure the development of tourism happens in our country. It starts with building infrastructure for travel. Be it airports or road infra or rail infra. All of it has seen a massive transformation over the last decade. As we move forward, we need to accelerate this more so that it is easy to travel.

And then it is about policies which allow private investments to come into the country for the growth and development of tourism. We need public and private partnerships in the truest sense for tourism to become a really important pillar in our economy.

National Tourism policy 2002

- It suggested that tourism not only generates government revenue, foreign currency, but also provides an optimal use of India's scarce resources, sustainable development, high quality employment (especially to youngsters, women and disabled people), and finally peace, understanding, national unity and stability.

4) COVID-19 had severely affected tourism sector, how do you think the next 5 years are going to play out?

Covid was tough for every industry but so much more for tourism. Everything came to a standstill. But it also made us prudent and wiser. I believe the learnings during covid have only helped us build a sustainable muscle which will take this industry places. Next 5 years, we will see all the initiatives on sustainability, diversification of tourism centres and infra development take place at a breakneck speed. The potential is immense and we have seen a great bounce back. The future is really bright for the industry.

5) Can you throw light on the tourism sector's impact and contribution to the nation's economy?

Tourism generates employment but it can certainly do a lot more for the country and its people. In fact, a lot more is happening now than it has happened in the recent past. We are seeing local talent, local experiences etc take preference. People are more keen to see smaller towns and villages which certainly helps that region. Our tourists are looking for great experiences, and it does not matter if it comes from a big town or a small town. Small town or new centres have their charm which travellers are finding quite exciting.

Similarly, people are keener to experience smaller boutique hotels and Airbnb etc. which were not even existing in our country some 10 years back. This helps promote entrepreneurship in our country and is certainly something which contributes massively to the economy.

6) Virtual Reality Tourism is gaining popularity worldwide. What according to you are some pros and cons of it.

So, I'm not sure how popular virtual reality is now, but it was quite popular during COVID times, and I'm sure this is everyone's sentiment and feeling that

you can't compare the real raw experience with a virtual experience. But now, with everything opening up again, it is no longer an experience people are craving for.

However, virtual tourism has helped the industry learn how to make people experience something from their phones or computer. Which is really useful when you are looking to understand a bit about a place you are going to visit. Hotels are indulging their potential guests in a sneak peek at their property and also the destinations around them. This is quite useful for both travellers and hoteliers.

7) What is the most valuable piece of advice you'd like to give to those students who want to make a career in the tourism sector?

So, I believe that is a very general advice. If you want to work in any industry, not just tourism, you must be passionate about it. Alternatively, you should be enthusiastic about your job. While you will have days where you don't want to go to work, if you generally are excited about the work you are doing, it's a good starting place.

I don't think there is any job out there which is completely boring or completely exciting throughout the day. If you feel, you have great people skills and you like to experience the

the dynamic world of tourism, it's a good starting point. A job in the tourism sector requires quick learning and execution as it's a really dynamic world right now. You also need to be structured and be able to unearth insights and opportunities for growth from the vast sea of data out there. In the end, most jobs are done by people and the people skills you build in a job in tourism would be useful for everyone! So if you like to experience a new day every day, come and join this ride.

Promoting language and cultural immersion in educational tourism



National Winner

Ishani Chowdhury &
Sounak Bandyopadhyay
PGDM, PGDM (RM)
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Anand



Introduction

As more people travel to learn about different cultures and broaden their worldviews, the market of educational tourism is expanding quickly. Language and cultural immersion, however, are crucial for properly understanding a society. Travel agencies can draw in a wider variety of tourists and give them a more enriched experience by fostering language and cultural immersion in educational tourism.

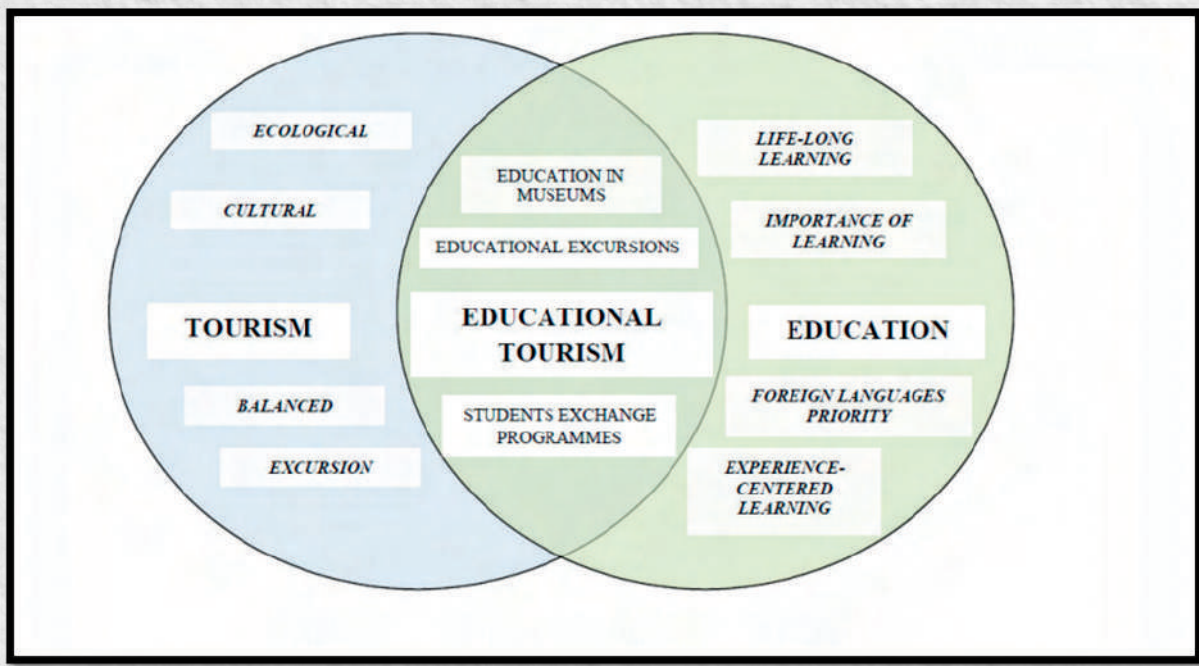
In this essay, we'll look at the advantages of cultural and linguistic immersion in educational travel as well as the ways that marketing perception can be utilized to encourage it.

Benefits of Cultural and Linguistic Immersion in Educational Travel

An important component of educational tourism is language and cultural immersion because it offers

visitors the chance to experience a completely new culture.

Travellers can have a deeper appreciation of the regional customs, traditions, and values by immersing themselves in that culture. Interacting with native speakers can help people both personally and professionally by improving their language skills.



Structure of the "Educational Tourism" Concept

Language immersion programmes have been demonstrated to enhance language proficiency, raise cultural awareness, and foster cognitive development, according to a study done by the Centre for Applied Linguistics (Thomas &

Collier, 1997). Another study by the American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages discovered that language immersion programmes can increase academic attainment and improve employment chances (Rhodes & Pufahl, 2016).

Challenges Faced by Language Immersion in Tourism

Although encouraging language and cultural immersion in educational travel can have many advantages, there may also be some difficulties. The following are some of the principal difficulties that language immersion in tourism faces:

- **Language Barriers:** The language barrier is one of the biggest obstacles that language immersion programmes must overcome. Many tourists may find it challenging to speak well in a foreign tongue, which can cause dissatisfaction and make it challenging to completely experience the culture.
- **Cultural Differences:** Cultural variations might also provide difficulties for language immersion programmes. It may be challenging for some visitors to fit in with the local traditions and practises, which might make it more challenging to properly enjoy the culture.
- **Cost:** Because language immersion programmes

frequently include extra costs like language lessons, cultural events, and homestays, they might be more expensive than conventional educational travel packages. They might become less reachable for some travellers as a result.

- **Safety Issues:** Last but not least, safety issues might present a big problem for language immersion programmes. Travellers who are unfamiliar with the local language and traditions may be more susceptible to theft or other crimes.

These obstacles can be very difficult to overcome, but with careful preparation and close attention to detail, they can be. Travellers can benefit from linguistic and cultural immersion in a safe and encouraging atmosphere by cooperating with knowledgeable tour operators and local businesses.

Marketing Perception in Promoting Language and Cultural Immersion in Educational Tourism

Promoting linguistic and cultural immersion in educational travel requires careful consideration of marketing perception. Tourism businesses can draw a larger spectrum of visitors who are eager to learn about other cultures by highlighting the value of language and cultural immersion.

The use of social media is a powerful tool for promoting language and cultural immersion. 72% of

American adults use at least one social media site, according to a Pew Research Centre study, which shows that social media use among adults has dramatically expanded over the past ten years (Perrin, 2019). The cultural and linguistic experiences that are accessible to travellers can be highlighted by travel companies through social media sites like Instagram and Facebook. To target particular groups of people, such as those who are interested in learning a new language or experiencing a different culture, they can also utilise tailored advertising.

Travel agencies can encourage linguistic and cultural immersion in addition to social media by using their website and marketing materials. They might include cultural immersion activities and language classes, for instance, in their travel packages. On their website and in their marketing materials, they can also offer details about the regional dialect, traditions, and customs.

To offer travellers opportunities for language and cultural immersion, travel agencies might collaborate with local businesses and organisations. To offer language classes and cultural events, for instance, they could collaborate with nearby cultural institutions or schools of foreign languages. In order to provide visitors with the chance to practise their language

abilities and discover the local cuisine, they can also collaborate with restaurants and marketplaces in the area.

Case Study

- **Cultural Immersion in Educational Tourism in Japan:** Due to its fascinating culture and history, Japan is a well-liked location for educational tourism. The Japan National Tourism Organisation (JNTO) has created a number of initiatives to encourage linguistic and cultural immersion in Japan. One of these programmes is the Japan Cultural Experience Programme, which gives visitors the chance to partake in cultural pursuits like tea ceremonies, calligraphy, and traditional crafts. These experiences are intended to provide visitors with a firsthand understanding of Japanese culture, and they are conducted by local specialists who can explain the significance of each activity.

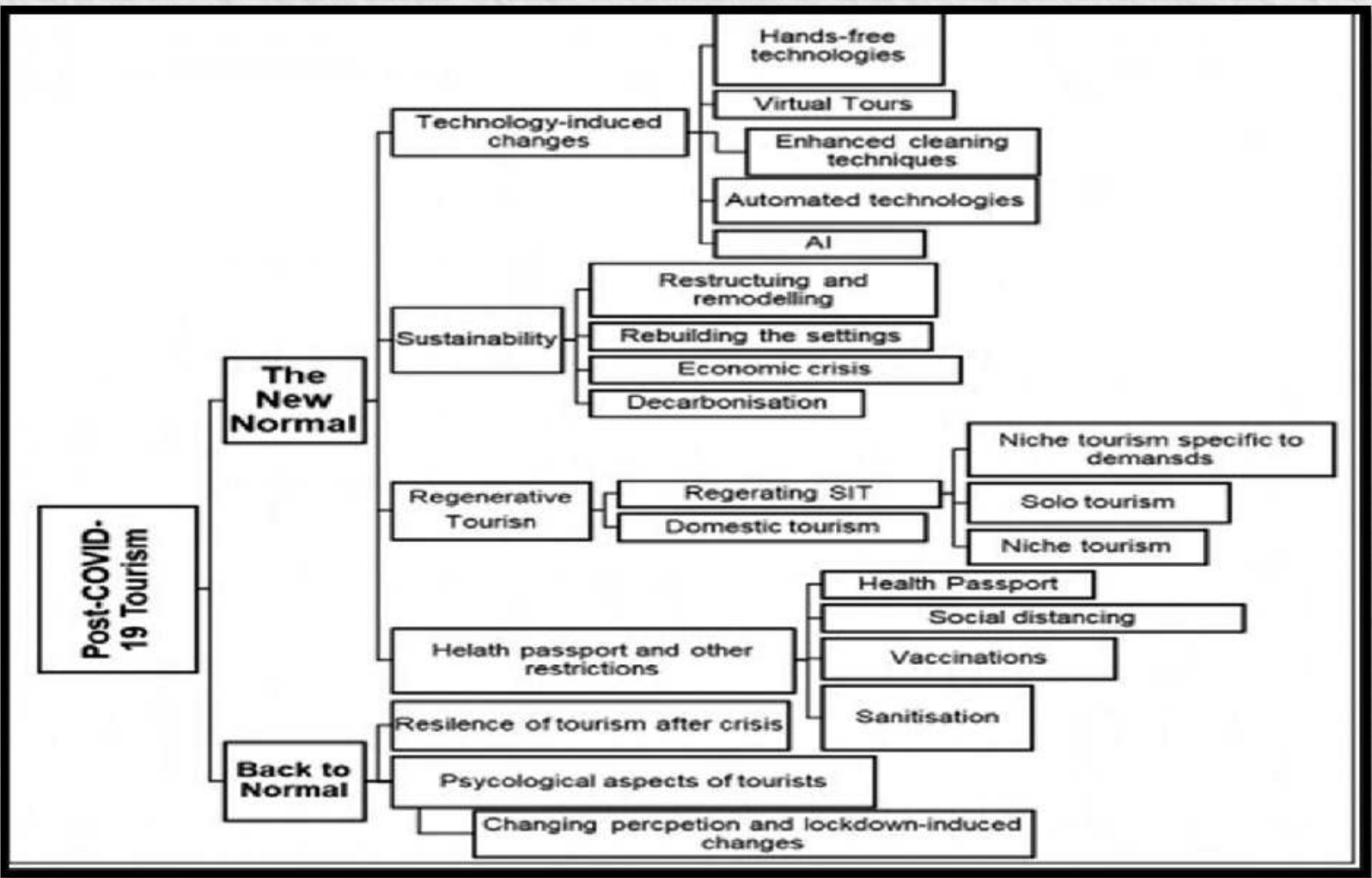
Cultural Immersion in Educational Tourism in India: The Language Immersion Programme provided by the American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS) is one instance of fostering language and cultural immersion in educational tourism in India. Students have the chance to learn Hindi, Tamil, or Urdu in an immersion setting

with this programme, helping them to advance their language abilities and comprehend Indian culture better. The programme includes cultural activities, excursions to historical and cultural places, and homestays with local families. The AIIS also collaborates with neighbourhood groups to give students chances to get involved in the community and hone their language abilities in authentic settings. Students can learn more about the rich history and culture of India through this programme.

As the case study in Japan showed, cultural immersion activities can be a beneficial supplement to any educational trip itinerary. Immersion in a new language and culture can provide people with the information and abilities they need to thrive in a diverse and linked world, which is becoming a more globalised environment.

Conclusion

Overall, encouraging cultural and linguistic immersion in educational tourism can give visitors a more rewarding and unforgettable experience. Travel organisations can draw in a wider variety of travellers and give them an opportunity to learn about various cultures and hone their language skills by highlighting the value of language and cultural immersion through marketing perception.



Role of HR in the Tourism Industry



National Winner

Nishtha Keshav Prabhupatkar

MMS - HR

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Tourism is one of the world's fastest-growing industries, and it's very important for a country's economic growth and development. India being one of Asia's most popular tourist destinations, offers a diverse range of places to visit and things to do. Its' beauty is mainly because of its enchanting backwaters, hill stations, and landscapes, historical monuments, forts, beaches, religious sites, and hills that add to the country's grandeur and draw visitors from all over the world. Each region is distinguished by its handicrafts, fairs, folk dances, music, and people.



This makes tourism India's second largest foreign exchange earner. A large number of people, both skilled and unskilled, are employed in the tourism industry. This industry benefits a lot of hostels, travel agencies, transportation, and airlines. In all of this Human Resources is a vital part of the tourism industry which has a lot of diversity. The tourism industry comprises various sectors, each with its own set of specialized human resource requirements which means that tourism and human resources are inextricably linked. Being a service industry, no tourist activity is possible without any involvement of humans and it is because of this element of heterogeneity and intangibility, the role of Human Resources and its importance grows exponentially. The tourism industry is very competitive in nature and therefore in order to compete and satisfy the end user, it is critical to have a well-trained Human Resource

that can deliver the product with the highest level of satisfaction. From recruiting to selecting and then training human resources is needed to make them efficient enough to interact with tourists and satisfy their needs for recreation, pleasure, pilgrimage, and so on by providing high-quality services that are human contact-based and have few mechanistic substitutes.

In all of this, Human resources departments are responsible for a variety of functions and responsibilities, including safety, remuneration, employee training, communication, organizational culture development, organizational structure management, work-job design, employment relations, and career development. These functions vary greatly depending on the company's structure. In the tourism and hospitality industries, these responsibilities differ in restaurants, large chain hotels, single-owner hotels, and family-owned hotels. Now, the main function of human resources departments is to interact with all other departments within the company. Human resources managers basically foster departmental relationships and employee career development plans while adhering to business objectives. For instance, Travel Agents in a travel company

are mostly engaged with clients on a day-to-day basis. They inquire about hotel and resort rates and check flight status. As a result, travel agents require tools such as a computer with Internet access and other amenities. They require software and schedule calendars in order to keep and track information. It is the Human Resources Department's responsibility to provide as many facilities as possible to travel agents.

Also, talent and skills related to the travel industry, as well as work experience, is required during the hiring process. Only an experienced candidate who is capable of managing multiple people at once for the coordination of travel activities will be able to handle the job successfully. An effective human resource professional who can assess the relevance of degrees and certificates in the travel and tourism industry and select the best candidate is required for this.

Not just for hiring and providing the necessary facilities to the employees but also for improving employee morale and productivity by giving them opportunities for both their personal and professional development, giving them challenging tasks and rewarding them on the basis of their performance in order to improve the overall efficiency and effectiveness of the employees in the tourism

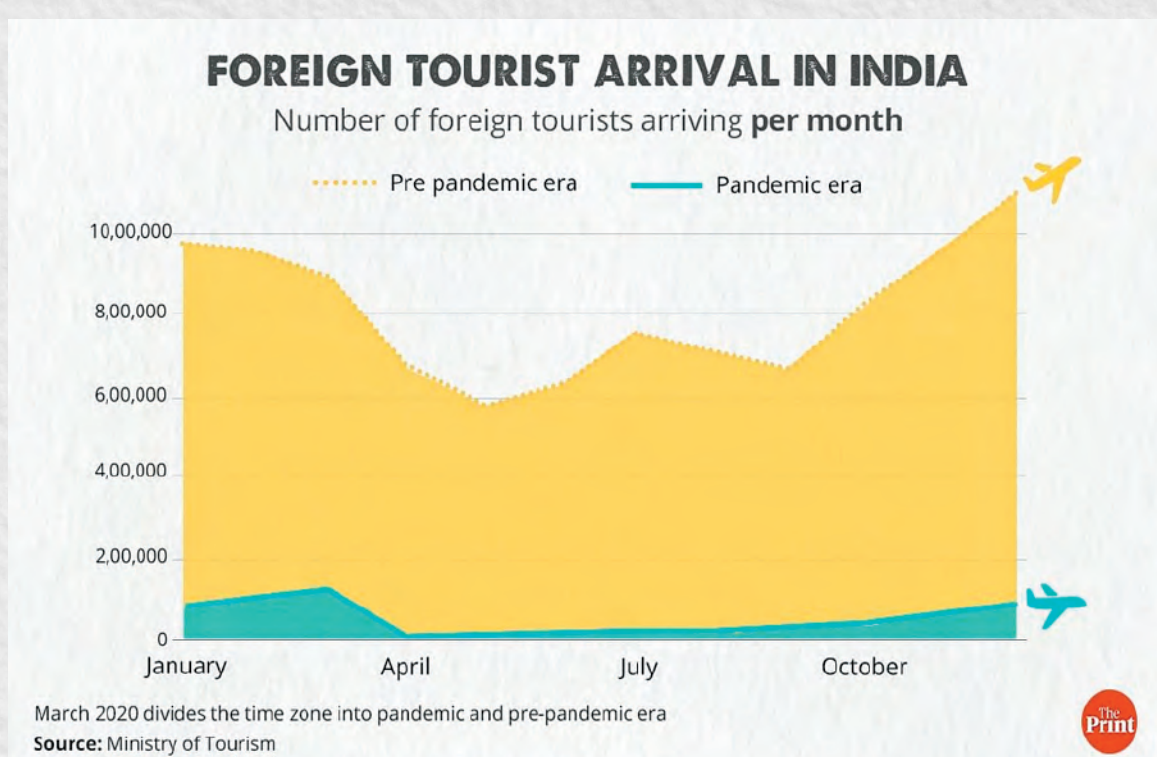
industry.

When discussing the recent years in which the covid-19 happened causing a global pandemic, it changed the way everything used to happen and became the "new normal". In all of this, one of the industries most affected was tourism, which was impacted by the global lockdown, which halted both domestic and international flights and resulted in hotels, restaurants, travel agencies/companies, and other businesses being forced to close which led to negatively impacting this industry. The covid-19 pandemic had also presented numerous challenges for HR professionals in India. Such as from facing the biggest challenge of ensuring the health and safety of their employees to managing workforce reductions, HR has seen all of that. But, in these difficult times, HR has emerged to play an

active role in helping an organization adapt to this abnormally changing situation smoothly.

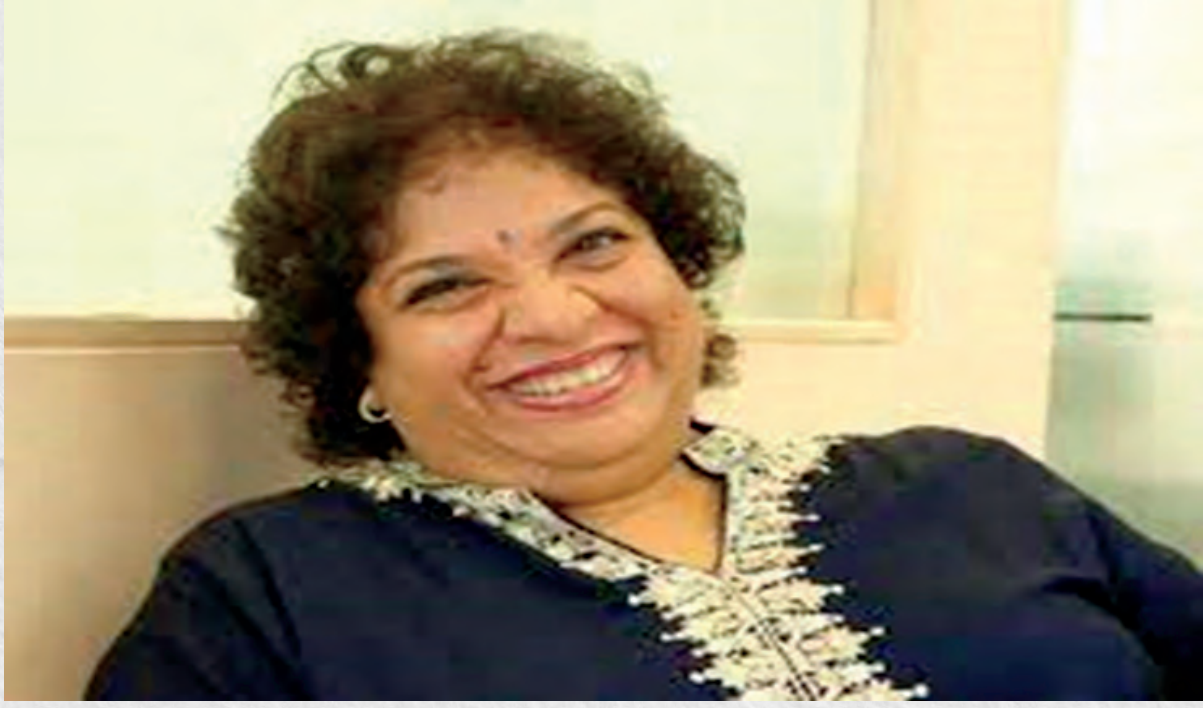
Taking the example of Thomas Cook, which is a well-known travelling company. Their Human Resources team focussed on 4 main areas in order to recover and grow during this turbulent period. First and foremost, their primary focus was their employee's well-being, both physical and mental. For this, they introduced flexible work timing and modified their insurance policy to include Covid related coverage and despite employees' remote working, they ensured to increase their employee engagement.

Secondly, The HR team concentrated on data collection and analysis in order to promote data-driven decision-making. Due to this, HR was able to gauge employee experience, engagement, and satisfaction using workforce analytics. Which they will continue to use in order to forecast their workforce needs, optimize revenues, and reduce costs. Thirdly, they restructured their organization in this digital world by replacing the hierarchical organizational structures with models in which the work is done in teams to adapt and embrace the dynamic global business environment. Lastly, other than cost management and introducing hybrid working models,



Statistics for the year 2020, on how Covid-19 negatively impacted the tourism sector of India due to the lack of foreign tourists.

they invested in training their employees with new skills and developing their competencies in order to equip them to deal with the new normal. All of these things ensured that the company persevered in this entire situation.



Mona Cheriyan, President and Group Head - Human Resources, Thomas Cook India.

To conclude, the role of human resources in the tourism industry in India is critical in ensuring business success and sustainability, as well as promoting the growth and development of the industry as a whole.

Effects of the Pandemic on Tourism Globally



National Winner

Shweta Rohatgi
PGDM
MDI Gurgaon



While most of the industries suffered some sort of setback due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the tourism industry was one of the worst ones impacted at large. With the concept of a country-wide lockdown and restrictions on travelling around in most countries to spread the containment of the virus by orders from the governments, travelling was out of the question. This in turn had a major impact on the economy of almost all countries around the globe in some way or the other.

Tourism has always been a major source of revenue and with the restrictions on movement locally as well as internationally, it put a stop on all channels of revenue that could be generated.

Tourist locations such as museums and parks were shut down completely and this somehow indirectly also impacted the food

business. Major food chains near these tourist spots also had to shut down their operations because of no customers. In the next section, we will discuss in detail the effects of the pandemic on tourism globally.

Tourism as an umbrella

When we talk of tourism, the entire umbrella includes five different sectors- transportation, accommodation, entertainment and attractions, food services, and trade associations and regulators.



Keeping in mind the pandemic, we will discuss in detail how each of them was impacted individually culminating towards the entire

industry as a whole.

- **Transportation** - Be it a decrease in the concept of public transportation such as buses and carpools for local travel and the adoption of private vehicles for the same or a complete shutting down of airports and airlines, in some cases and a sharp decline in international travel, transportation as a sector had to suffer major setbacks in terms of revenue generation. We must keep in mind that this was one sector which was beneficial for the economy as a whole but with the pandemic, this sector was hard-hit and the recovery rate rose very slowly eventually.
- **Accommodation** - Significant job losses were observed in the hospitality industry due to the closure of hotels, and resorts. Moreover, additional expenses were incurred to train the staff to adopt the safety protocols while dealing with guests checking in and out. Many hotels went on to the extent of adopting a virtual process to ascertain no contact between customers and staff. There was a significant decline in the occupancy rates and the room rents had to be cut down significantly to maintain a flow of revenue.
- **Entertainment and attractions** - With the cancellation or

postponement of all major events or the addition of increased safety measures eventually post the vaccination journey, the entertainment industry was severely impacted. There was a major dip in the footfall observed in museums, parks and movie theatres. This also had an indirect impact on the food services industry. There was a major shift to virtual experiences such as online shows and concerts. The increase in the number of OTT consumers is also a testament to the fact about how in order to increase their well-being of themselves, online mode of entertainment was given preference.

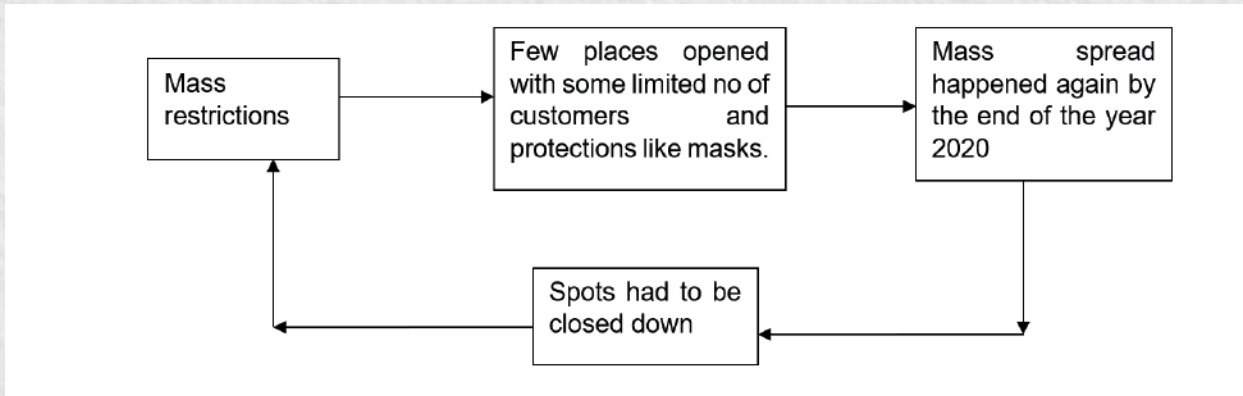
- **Food services** - With an increase in the preference of consumers switching to home-cooked meals to avoid contact and the eventual adoption of dine-outs or takeaways over dine-in restaurants, food services were impacted a lot initially as almost all the above-mentioned sectors have an indirect correlation with the food services sector. But with the option of outdoor dining and other such facilities which focused on customer safety, the food services sector was able to recover slowly and steadily. A lot of these restaurants and cafes had to be shut down and people lost their jobs due to no streams of revenue and payout of rental of areas initially, but what was observed was that with vaccinations coming up, this

the sector could have a steady recovery rate.

- Trade associations and regulators - With a shift to the virtual mode for almost all sorts of work or recreation feasible, businesses turned to associations for support due to no potential streams of revenue. New regulations had to be brought into the picture for safety as wearing masks or usage of hand sanitisers and organizations tried to come up for each other to rise up to support their fellow people in the industry.

The vicious chain

We could see a sort of vicious cycle that started to develop over the Covid period regarding movement amongst tourists-



While this cycle continued on for the entirety of 2020 and 2021, with the launch of vaccines such as Pfizer and Moderna in the USA or Covaxin and Covishield in India, one more step was added which was checking if the tourists carried a Covid-19 vaccine certificate.

How the launch of vaccines changed the scene for tourism

globally

With vaccination coming into the picture as mentioned earlier, the landscape of tourism changed entirely. People who were able to take the vaccinations tried to take advantage of the low fares that had been imposed by airlines (sometimes at the cost of risking their lives as well as that of their close ones).

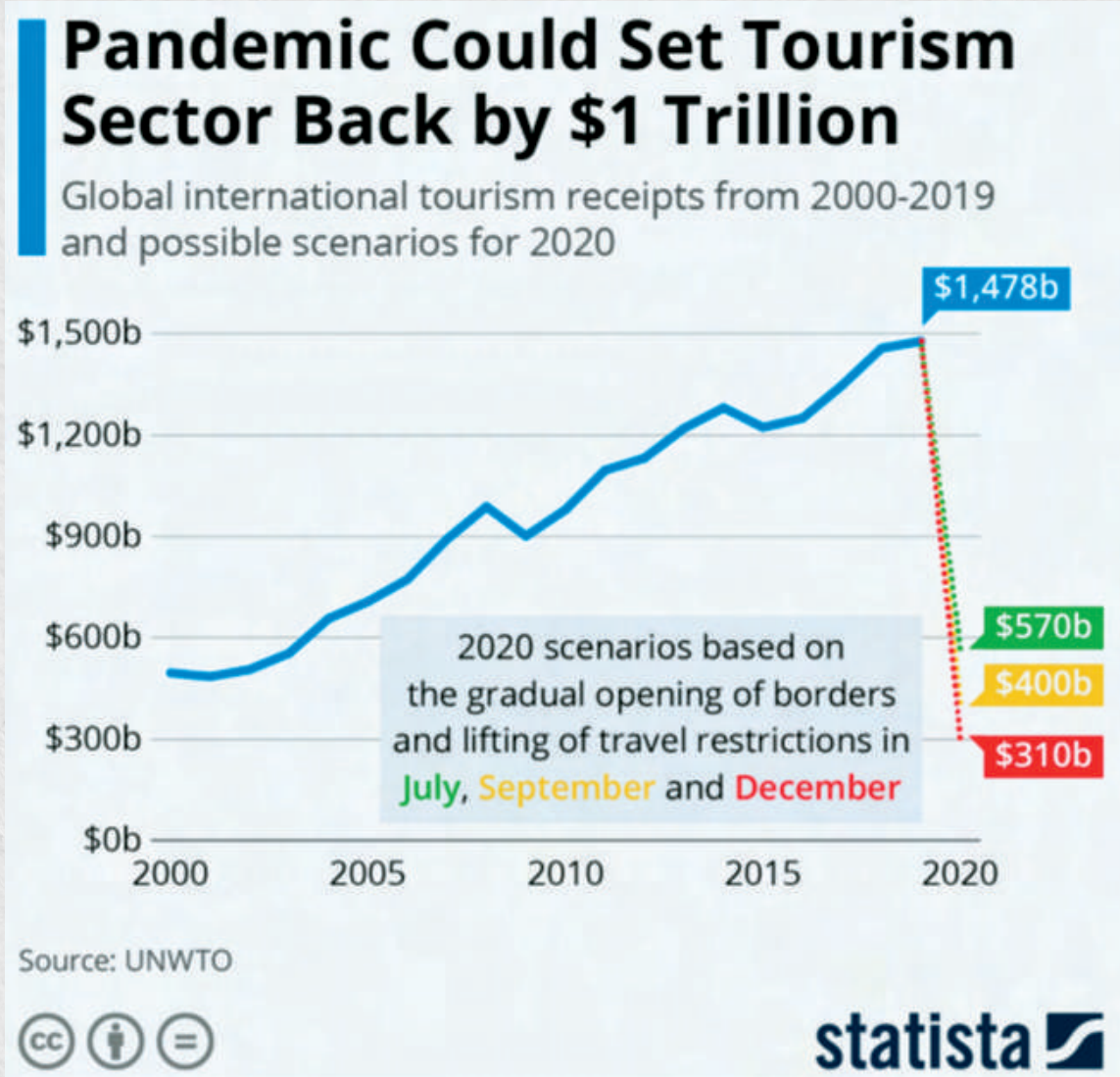
Airlines adopted an alternate-seating arrangement system be it on flights or at the airports. The airlines also ensured that their staff follow strict protocols to and from the country they were arriving/departing to.

Even the restaurants in all these travel destinations ensured hygiene was within check at all times and customers and staff were well-versed with the protocols that were adopted.

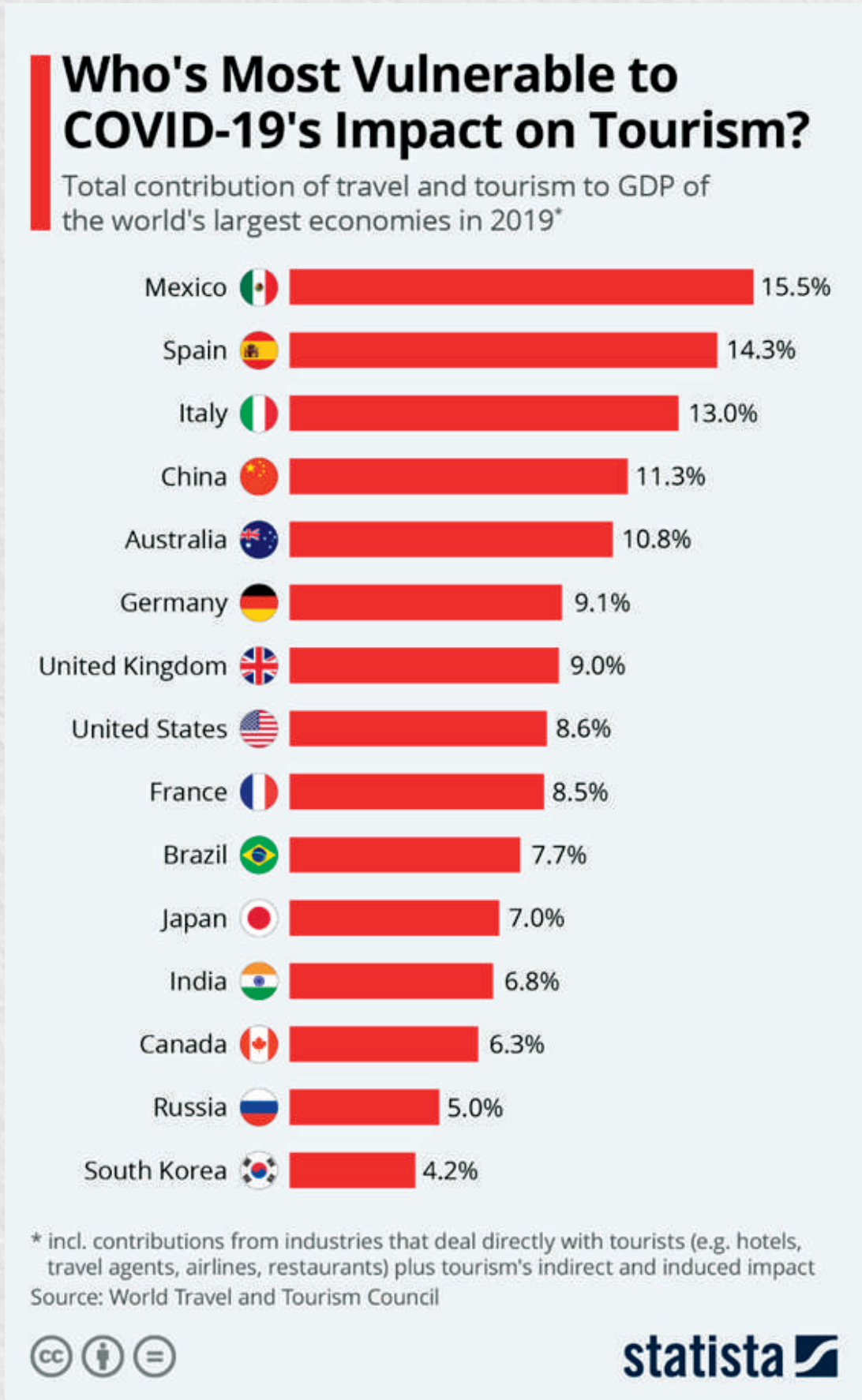
Economic Impacts Observed Around the Globe

According to an article published on September 2, 2020, by the World Economic Forum, it stated that “Covid-19 could set the global tourism industry back by 20 years”. This statement was enough to understand the gravity of the financial impact that the pandemic had on the industry. The graph accurately represents how with the imposition of

restrictions on account of safety, economies were impacted.



Another graph published by World Economic Forum in collaboration with Statista displays the contribution of tourism to some of the biggest economies around the globe and how a potential loss in the entire segment could rupture their overall economy.



up call to not only the tourism industry but to all. Quick adoption of alternate modes to continue the functioning and existence of a business is the only way to survive in the world of business.

Conclusion

While on one hand, the entire segment has been emerging at a rapid pace, the impact this pandemic had on the industry made the world rise and take notice of how a single hassle can rupture their entire day-to-day operations. The need for long-term planning and in particular, sustainable planning keeping in mind all sorts of factors and blockers will only help in sustenance. Covid-19 was a wake-

Role of Tourism in boosting the economy



National Finalist

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Tourism is one of the most important sectors of the global economy, which has a big influence on GDP, investment, and employment. The tourism sector employed more than 320 million people in 2019 and generated 10.4% of the global GDP, depending on the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC). Additionally, it is predicted that by 2028, the tourism sector will have added 100 million new jobs globally.

It is impossible to stress how important tourism is to growing the economy. The importance of the tourism sector in economic growth and how it helps with the general expansion of the economy will be discussed in this article.

Tourism as a Source of Foreign Exchange Earnings

For many nations, tourism is a significant source of foreign exchange profits. Visitors to a

nation typically spend money on a variety of products and services, including lodging, dining, travel, and souvenirs. As a result, the local economy experiences an increase in demand for products and services, which provides income for both companies and the government.

A nation's imports and foreign debt can be paid for using the money made through tourism. Tourism is a major source of foreign exchange profits for many developing nations. The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) estimates that USD 1.5 trillion, or 7% of global exports of goods and services, was brought in by international tourism in 2019.



Employment Generation Opportunities

Employing employees from a variety of industries, including hotels, restaurants, transportation, and travel agencies, tourism is a labor-intensive industry. The tourist sector is thought to be responsible for 10% of all jobs worldwide. A sizeable section of the population in several nations receives employment from tourism, which is the main employer in those nations.

The tourist business alone does not provide all of the job possibilities. The demand for goods and services from other industries, including agriculture, handicrafts, and construction, increases as the tourist industry expands. This creates job openings in these industries as well.

Infrastructure Development

The growth of a nation's infrastructure is also aided by tourism. Development of the infrastructure is required to meet the demand for tourism amenities including hotels, resorts, and airports. Investments are then made in infrastructure, such as roads, water supplies, and sewage systems.

Infrastructure improvement helps other areas of the economy by opening up new opportunities, in addition to the tourism sector. For

instance, better roads and transit infrastructure may make it easier for people and commodities to move around, which would boost trade and the economy.

Regional Development

The growth of rural and underdeveloped areas can also be aided by tourism. Tourism hotspots are frequently found in rural or economically underdeveloped areas. When tourists come to these places, the demand for goods and services increases, providing the locals with income and job opportunities.

In order to draw tourists and increase demand for locally produced products and services, tourism may also contribute to the preservation of a region's natural and cultural heritage. This may encourage sustained growth in these areas.



Tourism's multiplier effect

Beyond its direct influence on GDP and employment creation, tourism has an economic impact. The tourist business has a multiplier

impact, which means that it generates employment and economic activity in other industries like construction, retail, and agriculture. For instance, in Spain, the retail and transport industries provide 1.5 jobs for every one produced in the tourism business.

Similar to other countries, Thailand's tourism sector has a multiplier impact of 2.7, which means that for every job produced in the sector, 1.7 more employment are created in other industries. The tremendous influence of tourism on the whole economy is demonstrated by this multiplier effect.

Negative Impacts of Tourism

Tourism has numerous advantages, but it also confronts a number of difficulties. Environmental sustainability is one of the biggest obstacles. The tourist sector may have a big influence on the environment, causing habitat degradation, water and air pollution, and biodiversity loss. Over-reliance on tourism is another issue since it may make economies more susceptible to outside shocks like pandemics, terrorist attacks, and natural catastrophes. The recent example of this is Sri Lanka Economy. Sri Lanka's get very big number of GDP from the tourism sector but after the covid-19 pandemic there has been so many

financial problems faced by the Sri Lanka people. Similar is the case with Maldives and many other countries.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the tourist sector significantly contributes to the expansion of the economy. It is a significant source of foreign exchange revenues, creates job opportunities, aids in the building of infrastructure, and encourages regional development. However, the tourism sector is also susceptible to a number of risks, including pandemics, natural disasters, and security issues. As a result, it's critical to guarantee that the tourist sector develops responsibly with an emphasis on environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

Major challenges faced by HR in the tourism industry & measures to overcome them



National Finalist

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India is geographically diverse and offers a variety of cultures that come with their own experiences. From Beautiful beaches to breathtaking mountains, India has diverse beauty and culture. From Hustling Metropolitan cities to serene countryside India has something for everyone. The tourism sector contributes around US\$178 BILLION to the country's GDP.

Tourism also provides a large number of employment opportunities. Which in turn increases the GDP and reduces the inequality in the country.

In order to build a strong tourism sector, we need to understand what matters most in the sector, which is PEOPLE. Hiring the right people is extremely important as people working in the tourism sector are the representative of INDIA to other people. HRM always plays people a major role in

hiring people in the tourism sector as HR always has to fill the right position with the right people.

Challenges Faced by the Human Resource Management

As HR has to select the right people for the right job. HR manager is an asset for the organization as they select the right people for the right job motivate them and retain them in the organization. It is a very tedious as well as a difficult task for managers as they have to go through recruitment to the selection process and make sure they always choose a capable candidate for the organization. An HR needs to look at various competencies and skills before he employs.

The following challenges faced by HR are as follows-

- High employee turnover- the tourism industry is known for its high-level turnover. Positions like housekeeping, front desk, and restaurant staff leave jobs and are often looking for other better opportunities. The HR manager has to do the hiring process all over again and provide necessary training which leads to the loss of resources and time.
- Seasonal demand – Many tourism destinations experience seasonal fluctuations in demand. In the timeframe of October to March there is a peak season of US travel sales which needs to hire additional staff to handle the increased demand. Whereas, during the offseason, their companies have to go for downsizing. The employees are always skeptical and have a sense of fear about losing their job. There is no job security.
- Skills shortage- Some tourism destinations may face shortages of workers with specialized skills such as chefs, tour guides, or event planners. This becomes very difficult for companies to provide. States like Bihar, Jharkhand, etc. don't have skilled people for tourism.
- Compensation and benefits – Many travel companies provide jobs that are low paying. The facilities and health insurance provided are less compared to the other sectors. Tourist

Companies in India rely more on variable pay rather than fixed pay which is a cause of concern for the working employees. The tourist Industry depends on a variable structure that doesn't lead to the continuous flow of income in the households. It mainly depends upon the targets. The problems that arise due to the structure are- There is not a continuous flow of income which pressurizes the employee to go to other part-time jobs and leads to borrowing debt in some conditions. It creates an extra burden on the employees to achieve targets and go above, because of which they compromise on the family timings and takes a toll on their mental health.

- Linguistic Problem- Language is also a barrier. Many states in India don't use Hindi and English and rely more on their native language for communication. This makes it difficult for the tourist to enjoy the place to the fullest.

To overcome this problem, the following steps should be taken by the HRM:

- JOB Security – It is one of the most important aspects of today's corporate world. It is one of the most important after-basic needs. If the person is not confident that whether he/she has a secure job. They will not

be dedicated to jobs and find other opportunities. HR should provide them with job security so employees are motivated enough to work in the organization.

- **Pay structure –** The pay structure should be designed in a way that the employee receives basic pay so they pay their bills. Moreover, the variable should be used as a motivator not to affect their mental health. HR managers should design a salary structure in a way that the employees received a minimum amount of salary to pay daily expenses and live a standard life.
- **Training and Development –** “Train people well enough so they can leave, treat them well enough so they do not want to,” said Sir Richard Branson founder of the Virgin Hotel. Training at regular intervals will help the employees to achieve targets and the employer increase productivity. Providing the right set of training will help the employees to upgrade their existing skills and learn new skills. Training can vary from work skills to mental health for the overall development of the employees. It can be online/offline or short-term/long-term.
- **Work-Life Balance-** It is very important for employees to give equal time to their families. HR

managers should provide flexible working hours, work-from-home opportunities, part-time work, and Paid weekends. An employee should be enthusiastic enough to work with the organization.

- **Giving opportunities –** to counter the seasonality in tourism, HR should provide the employee with different opportunities – working on domestic tourism, attracting tourism to new destinations, or attracting solo travelers.
- **Work – Culture –** The majority of the time people leave the organization because of the toxic culture. Especially in the tourist sector where there is cutthroat competition. It is very necessary for HR managers to have great work culture in the organization. HR managers should try to engage the employees and make them feel more connected to the organization.

Conclusion

Human resource always plays a very important role in every sector. The role of human resources is extremely tough in the tourism sector as it includes the challenges of hiring employees to provide the best training and development and also making sure that the employees make the customer

satisfied. With unpredicted times including covid and recession, there is a decline in the growth of the tourism sector in previous. Also including the nature of the industry's seasonal demand, higher attrition, and job insecurity. The industry also suffers to attract a lot of potential employees. It is high time to look after the sector so there is growth in the industry and economic growth of our country. The stepping stone is to hire and retain the best talent in the industry which indeed requires competent HR managers and Human Resource Management.

Steps taken by the government to enhance Indian tourism



National Finalist

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Tourism has been a significant source of revenue for India for centuries, owing to its rich cultural heritage, diverse natural beauty, and ancient history. Recognizing its importance, the Indian government has been taking various steps to enhance the tourism industry, making it more accessible, attractive, and secure for visitors. In this essay, we will discuss the measures taken by the government to promote tourism in India while applying critical thinking skills and citing relevant statistics.

One of the most significant steps taken by the Indian government to enhance tourism is the introduction of the 'Incredible India' campaign in 2002, launched by the Ministry of Tourism. This campaign aimed to promote India as a global tourist destination by showcasing its rich cultural heritage and natural beauty. Since

its launch, the campaign has been a massive success, and as per the Ministry of Tourism, the number of foreign tourist arrivals in India has increased from 2.38 million in 2002 to 10.89 million in 2019, a growth rate of 357%. Similarly, the domestic tourist visits have increased from 240 million in 2012 to 1.82 billion in 2019, a growth rate of 660%. The Incredible India campaign has been a significant factor in changing the perception of India from a poverty-stricken country to a land of exotic experiences.

The Indian government has also been investing in developing and maintaining tourism infrastructure across the country. The Ministry of Tourism has undertaken several projects to develop tourist amenities, such as hotels, resorts, and other accommodation options, making it easier for tourists to access various tourist destinations across the country. As per the

Ministry of Tourism, there are now 3,800 hotels and 1,79,000 classified rooms in India, which is a 5.5% increase from the previous year. Additionally, the government has launched the SwadeshDarshan Scheme, under which 15 thematic circuits have been identified for development, with an allocated budget of INR 6,000 crore.

The government has also been focusing on promoting various niche tourism segments such as adventure tourism, medical tourism, and eco-tourism, which have tremendous potential in India, given the country's diverse natural beauty and cultural heritage. According to a report by the Ministry of Tourism, adventure tourism has been growing at a rate of 15% annually, with Himachal Pradesh, Uttarakhand, and Jammu & Kashmir being the most popular states for adventure tourism. Medical tourism, which involves visiting India for medical treatment, has also been on the rise, with India being one of the most affordable medical tourism destinations globally. The Indian government has been promoting medical tourism by offering incentives to patients and healthcare providers. According to the Ministry of Tourism, the medical tourism industry in India is expected to reach USD 9 billion by 2020. The government has also been promoting eco-tourism, which involves visiting natural areas with

an emphasis on conservation, and minimizing the impact on the environment. The Ministry of Tourism has identified 22 eco-tourism circuits across the country, which includes areas such as wildlife sanctuaries, national parks, and biodiversity hotspots.

Another important initiative taken by the Indian government to promote tourism is the e-Tourist Visa scheme. This scheme was introduced in 2014, allowing foreign tourists to apply for a visa online and get it approved within 72 hours. The scheme has been a massive success, with the number of e-Tourist visas issued increasing from 2.38 lakh in 2014 to 21.25 lakh in 2019, a growth rate of 790%. This initiative has not only made it easier for tourists to visit India but has also helped in improving the country's ranking on the World Tourism Organization's Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Index.

To ensure the safety and security of tourists, the Indian government has been implementing various measures such as strengthening security at airports, tourist spots, and hotels, as well as providing better emergency response systems. The Ministry of Tourism has also launched a 24x7 toll-free multilingual tourist helpline, which offers information and assistance to tourists in distress. Additionally, the government has been promoting

safe tourism practices through campaigns such as 'AtithiDevoBhava' (Guest is God), which encourages tourists to behave responsibly while visiting India.

In recent years, the Indian government has also been focusing on developing tourism in the Northeast region of the country, which has tremendous potential in terms of natural beauty and cultural diversity. The government has launched the 'North East Circuit: Imphal and Khongjom' project, which aims to develop tourist infrastructure in the region and promote tourism in lesser-known destinations. As per the Ministry of Tourism, the Northeast region has witnessed a growth rate of 25% in domestic tourist visits and 18% in foreign tourist arrivals in the last five years.

However, despite these efforts, there are still several challenges that need to be addressed to further enhance the tourism industry in India. One of the major challenges is the lack of proper infrastructure and amenities in many remote and rural areas, which limits their accessibility to tourists. Additionally, issues such as pollution, congestion, and inadequate sanitation facilities can also deter tourists from visiting certain destinations.

Another challenge is the lack of coordination and cooperation between various government agencies and private stakeholders,

which can lead to inefficiencies and delays in implementing tourism-related projects. The government needs to work closely with state governments and private investors to develop a more cohesive and coordinated approach towards promoting tourism in the country.

In conclusion, the Indian government has been taking several steps to enhance the tourism industry in the country, including the launch of the Incredible India campaign, investing in tourism infrastructure, promoting niche tourism segments, implementing the e-Tourist Visa scheme, and focusing on the Northeast region. These initiatives have led to significant growth in both domestic and foreign tourist arrivals, contributing to the country's economy and employment opportunities. However, challenges such as lack of infrastructure, pollution, and coordination issues still need to be addressed to further improve the tourism industry in India. By continuing to invest in tourism and addressing these challenges, India can further strengthen its position as a global tourist destination.

The effects of pandemic on Global Tourism



National Finalist

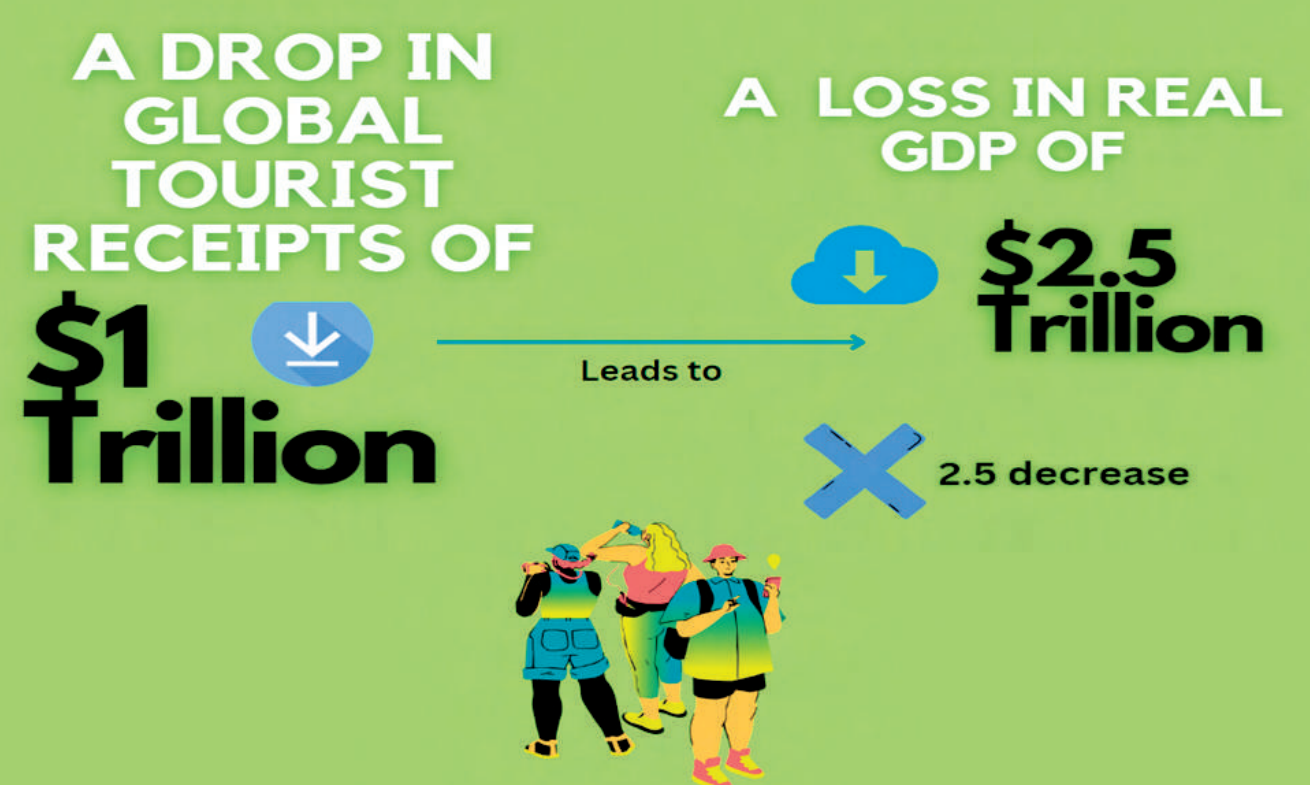
Abhishikta Ghosh Dastidar

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The COVID-19 epidemic has had severe impacts on developing nations, especially those that rely heavily on tourism, both from a health and economic standpoint. Lockdowns, quarantines, and significant limitations on domestic and foreign migration have all been put in place as governments try to safeguard their populations. This, together with consumer decisions to curtail foreign travel, caused the tourist industry to experience a significant contraction, which had serious economic repercussions, especially for nations that depended on the industry. According to the UNWTO Tourism Dashboard, there were 74% fewer foreign visitors in 2020 than there were in 2019. Arrivals were decreased by 80% to 90% in several emerging nations. The majority of destinations have had poorer year-to-date performance, with a global average fall of 88 per cent.



Prior to COVID-19, travel and tourism had grown to be one of the most significant economic sectors in the world, contributing 10% to the global GDP and supporting more than 320 million jobs. At the start of the jet era in 1950, just 25 million people travelled abroad. By 2019, that number had increased to 1.5 billion, and the travel and tourism industry had expanded to the point that many economies were virtually too dependent on it to fail. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO), the global pandemic, the first of its scope in a new era of

interconnectedness, has threatened 100 million jobs, many in micro, small, and medium-sized businesses that employ a high share of women, who make up 54 percent of the tourism workforce. Due to COVID, travel has changed, especially in terms of constraints. Although domestic travel has increased, developing nations that rely on international travel are not significantly benefited. Retirees are more inclined to stay at home since they typically spend more money per trip. Younger tourists, including backpackers, who appear more eager to travel during this epidemic, typically stay longer but spend less money. Cruise ships, which involve prolonged confinement, are probably less common. Developing nations that depend on cruise ship arrivals might have to diversify their economic sectors.

From the pristine white sands of the Caribbean, Seychelles, Mauritius, and the Pacific to Bangkok's back alleys and Africa's expansive national parks, nations are struggling to entice tourists back while preventing fresh outbreaks of disease. The options include courting the ultra-wealthy who can live aboard their boats or encouraging individuals to stay for up to a year and work electronically while taking in a view of the tropics.

In 2020, the global economy was expected to decrease by 4.4 percent, in terms of the October World Economic Outlook. Tourism-dependent economies will experience a far greater blow. The real GDP of African nations that rely on tourism will decline by 12%. The reduction will also be 12 percent among Caribbean countries that rely heavily on tourism. The real GDP of Pacific island nations like Fiji may fall by a startling 21% in 2020. The countries most dependent on tourism are not the only ones to suffer economic losses. In the United States, by August, one out of every six employment had disappeared in Hawaii. It will take up to three years for the tourist sector to recover in Florida, where it contributes up to 15% of the state's revenue. In the G20, the tourism and hospitality industries account for 10% of employment and 9.5% of GDP on average, with GDP shares of at least 14% in Italy, Mexico, and Spain. According to a recent IMF research, a six-month interruption in activity may directly lower GDP in all G20 nations by 2.5 percent to 3.5 percent. The epidemic effectively put an end to the tourism business in Barbados and the Seychelles, as well as in many other countries that rely heavily on it. The authorities effectively stopped the virus's local spread before reopening their island nations to foreign tourists in July. Even still, compared to prior

years, arrivals in August were down nearly 90%, drying up a crucial source of cash for the government. Due to an economic reform program that assisted in stabilising debt, accumulating reserves, and consolidating Barbados' fiscal position right before the crisis occurred, the island nation entered the crisis with strong economic foundations. In order to help fund the looming fiscal deficit brought on by declining tourism-related revenue and rising COVID-related spending, the IMF added an additional \$90 million, or around 2% of GDP, to its Extended Fund Facility programme. As coined by India's Third Tourism Satellite Account (TSA) (2015-16), the tourism industry produces 12.4% of employment and 5.2% of India's GDP. While the overall economy shrank nominally by 20.1% in Q1 of FY 2020-21, the tourism industry plunged by a staggering 93.3%, showing no signs of recovery even in Q3 of the same year. In order to adjust to the new normal, creative structural strategies will be required given the significant uncertainty surrounding the sector's recovery. To regain the trust of tourists, who worry about their health and the possibility of having their trip plans cancelled and ending up trapped abroad, much work must be done. Immunisations appear to be the most crucial component. It's critical to lessen the

socioeconomic effects on people's livelihoods. Developed nations have supported tourism-related firms and people with tax initiatives. While useful as a temporary solution, this is essentially borrowing from the future and creates a debt that will eventually need to be repaid. Supporting companies that are otherwise successful is likely to be beneficial. For the majority of developing nations, especially those with significant tourism, this technique presents a hurdle. There are frequently no social safety nets, and informality is widespread. Instead than protecting particular employment in deteriorating industries, workers should be safeguarded, maybe through training. In order to ensure the future of tourism, nations must make strategic decisions. Even once travel restrictions were lifted, some tourist enterprises didn't survive. Governments must determine who and for how long to provide help. It is important to think about the pandemic's long-term effects. It is anticipated that some structural alterations will be required. COVID-19 is probably going to be used for a while.

Prior to 2023, a return to normal appeared fanciful. Environmental concerns, for instance, might become more crucial and raise the price of long-distance flights or increase societal pressure to avoid

them. Other changes could include a decline in cruise ship confidence and an increase in domestic travel in the three major source regions of the United States, Europe, and China. Developing nations that rely on tourism could think about diversifying their sources away from it.

Adventure Tourism marketing



National Finalist

Rishabh Bansal

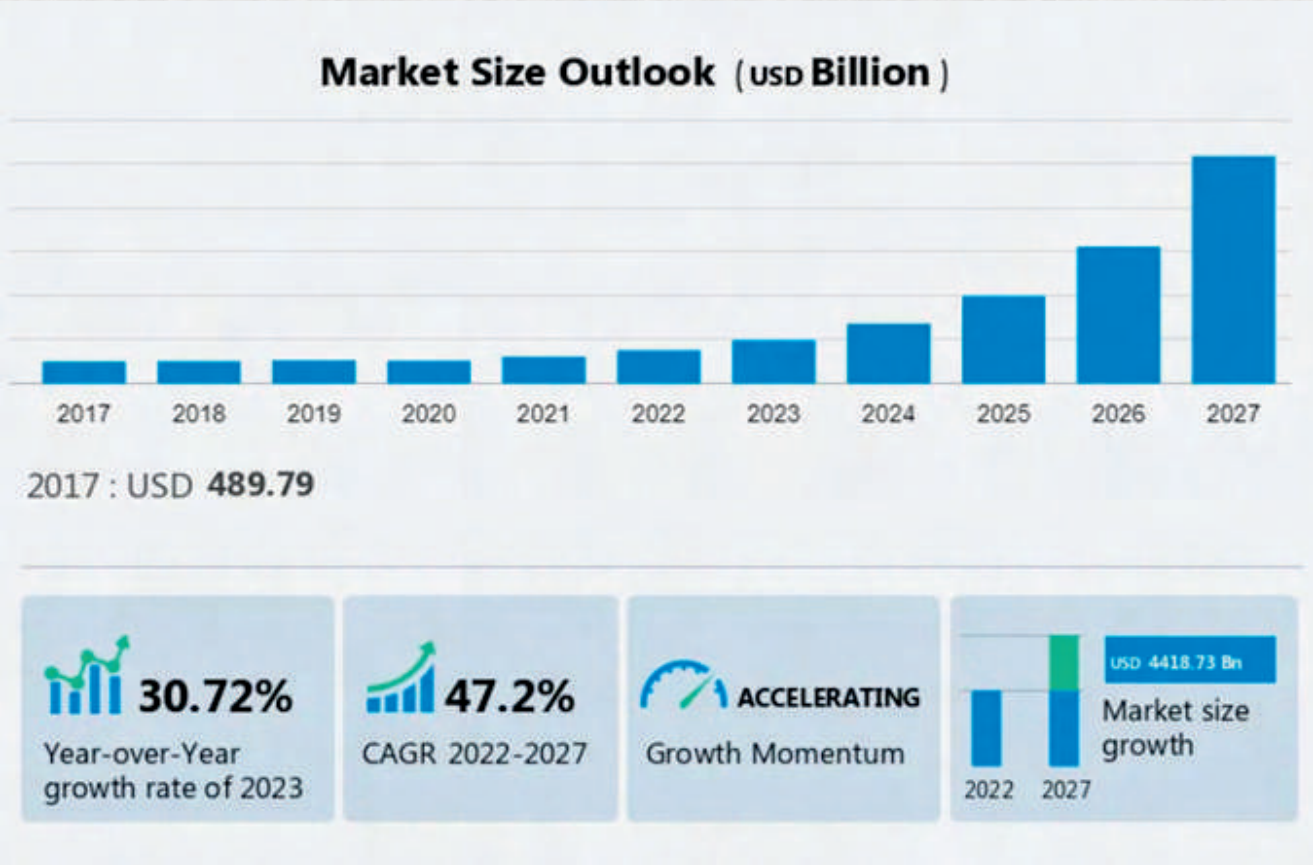
Integrated Programme in Management
Indian Institute of Management, Rohtak



“Dar ke aage jeet hai” is the tagline of Mountain Dew but very well summarizes the adrenal rush one gets after conquering difficult and risky activities at adventurous destinations. The Indian Tourism Industry is projected to grow at a whopping CAGR of 13.47% and reach a projected market volume of US \$31.35 Billion by 2027 as per Statista.1 Out of this, 23% accounts for Adventure Tourism in 2023. A major reason behind the increase is the increasing disposal incomes in India which has allowed to spend more on entertainment and leisure activities.

What will the size of the Adventure Tourism Global Market During between 2023-27?

Apart from the famous adventure destinations like Rishikesh, Goa and Ladakh, newer destinations which were earlier lesser known are coming into the limelight of the travel enthusiasts like Kheerganga, Bir, states in north-east like Sikkim and many others. Such destinations still require considerable amount of brand awareness and positioning before they move to the evoked set of travellers. Digital Marketing especially content and influencer marketing are playing a huge role in accomplishing the job.



A Picture from Bir Paragliding

It would be very unlikely that a person residing in Ahmedabad (Gujarat) would have heard about the treks in Kheerganga, Kedarkantha or exploring the north-eastern a decade ago. But with the advent and mass popularization of social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook and Whatsapp, the beauty and irresistible experiences of Coorg, Shillong and Dehradun can be shared with travellers across the country. Various small holiday packages company grew many folds as a result of digital marketing on Instagram



Few Companies that leveraged the Platform

According to a report by Technavio, digital marketing is the most effective strategy for promoting adventure tourism in India³. Digital Marketing not only helped to promote the travel holiday company but also on a macro level promoted the destination in the mind of the viewers. A whole new category of travel blogging has been identified and grown exponentially on Instagram through digital marketing. By means of sponsoring a whole trip to travel influencers, bloggers and content creators who have massive niche travel enthusiasts following



digitally, companies drive traffic on their website. Companies generally collaborate with influencers whose brand personality resonates with the company well. These influencers and content creators have gained trust and reliability over their followers over time.

Apart from sponsoring these Online celebs, travel companies also hold social media contests. Here, the company partners with an adventure sports influencer to promote a contest that requires participants to share their best adventure photos on social media tagging the social media account of the company. They can then use these photos in their marketing campaigns and offer prizes to the winners, thereby increasing brand awareness and engagement. At times, such contests also help companies gather useful customer data out of such contests.

At the end of every marketing campaign, the primary objective remains to increase the Lifetime Value (LTV) of a customer and increasing website traffic by promoting and reaching out to a completely new set of audience. The Government of India is also taking several initiatives to promote adventure tourism in India by facilitating required infrastructure, safety measures and trained guides at these destinations. To attract more international tourists, the

government has also introduced the e-Tourist Visa scheme, which allows tourists to apply for a visa online and obtain it within 72 hours. This has made it easier for adventure tourists to plan their trips and has increased the number of foreign tourists visiting the country.

The Ministry of Tourism has also launched various campaigns and programs to promote adventure tourism in India. For example, the Incredible India Adventure campaign⁴ showcases the various adventure activities and destinations in the country through social media and other marketing channels. The ministry has also launched the Swadesh Darshan scheme, which aims to develop tourism infrastructure in various regions of the country, including adventure tourism.

To conclude, digital marketing tools and techniques have proven to be an effective route to market adventure tourism destinations in India. Building upon this, many regular users are also taking up being a travel blogger in their free time either out of passion or building a career out of it in the long term. This indicates adventure tourism certainly has a very bright future coming with its growing popularity not only in India but also outside India.

FinQuest by IIM BodhGaya Team Name: Finance Marvels



Nihar Sharma



Khushi Jain



Yukta Malu

1. First of all, congratulations on winning. How do you feel about it?

I am thrilled and honored to have won third place in the IIM Bodhgaya competition. It was a challenging competition, and I am grateful for the opportunity and recognition for my efforts.

2. Could you brief us about this competition? What hurdles did you face and how did you overcome them?

We were presented with financial statements for a bank and three companies, and we were tasked with selecting one company for a merger and another company for acquisition based on our analysis of their financial statements. During the competition, we encountered several obstacles that we had to overcome. One of the foremost challenges was analyzing the financial statements, which can be a daunting task, particularly if you are not familiar with the industry or the company's financial performance. Additionally, the strategic decision-making involved in mergers and acquisitions required careful analysis and planning. Lastly, presenting our findings and recommendations to the judges was also nerve-wracking. These hurdles tested our abilities, but we employed various strategies to overcome them, such as collaborating with teammates, consulting experts, and practicing

our presentation skills.

3. What were your key learnings and takeaways?

The ability to analyze financial statements is an essential skill for making informed business decisions, as demonstrated by our success in the FinQuest competition. It requires a good understanding of financial statements and how to interpret them. In addition to financial knowledge, strategic thinking and problem-solving skills are crucial for deciding which companies to merge or acquire with the bank. Along with this, effective collaboration and teamwork are also critical in achieving the desired outcomes. Lastly, the finance and business industries are constantly evolving and continuous learning as well as updating our skills are necessary to stay competitive and relevant in the field.

4. It is always difficult managing your time between academics, personal life, and other opportunities. How did you manage your time?

To manage time effectively between academics, personal life, and other opportunities, it is important to prioritize tasks by listing them out and sorting based on importance and urgency. Completing the most important tasks first should be the priority. An organized calendar can also help in remaining focused and adhere to the deadlines. Set specific goals to keep yourself motivated and on track. Taking breaks is essential to recharge your batteries. Lastly, it is important to learn to say no to activities that are not necessary and avoid overcommitment.

5. What guidance or recommendations would you offer to your peers to ace such high value platform?

To excel in the finance industry, it is crucial to develop strong analytical skills through courses in finance, accounting, statistics, etc. Staying up to date with industry trends and news helps broaden our perspective and can help in making informed decisions. Effective communication skills are essential in finance,

WeAchievers

and one should practice writing reports and presentations and seek feedback from peers and mentors. Collaboration and networking can provide valuable insights and opportunities to learn from others. Finally, a growth mindset is necessary to remain curious, seek feedback, and continually improve skills and knowledge.



Case Study

Case Studies on use of technology in Tourism

1) How Disney leveraged Big Data, IOT & AI to enhance customer experience.?

The Disney masterminds are innovatively utilising Big Data to enhance visitors' experience to its parks. There are also some fascinating improvements in data use that will interest viewers of Disney films. Let us look at how Disney, a major player in the entertainment industry, is being impacted by big data. After years of research and development, Disney World introduced its MyMagicPlus programme in 2013. Every visitor to Disney World now receives a MagicBand, a bracelet with RFID and a long-range radio.

The entertainment venue functions as a massive computer thanks to the communication of these bands with thousands of sensors and real-time data streaming to hundreds of systems. All of this information is intended to help Disney staff members anticipate your needs so they can provide you with a fantastic experience. The wristbands serve as fast passes, credit cards, tickets, and more. The massive system can find out where you are, what you're doing, and what you need with only a quick swipe of the band across sensors placed throughout the park. The IT team that created the MagicBands resolved to root out all the friction within the Disney World experience. You can make reservations for some sites even before you leave town, so you won't have to stand in a queue. Disney also benefits from adding your decisions to its data bank. After visitors come, one of any amusement park's main concerns is figuring out how to cut down on wait times for rides and other attractions. People don't spend money on food or shopping when they are standing in queue.

The operations team receives critical real-time information as each passenger swipes their band at a ride. This enables decisions to be made regarding hiring additional personnel or rewarding visitors. The analysis also helps visitors to proceed to another ride or amusement. This re-routing of visitors makes better use of the park and even enables the provision of first-rate customer service. The unease and creepiness of machines knowing so much about you fades away as families enjoy a once-in-a-lifetime vacation as data powers a better experience.

Case Study



The fact that Disney is able to optimise park operations thanks to the data-driven insights gleaned from this massive system is one of its primary advantages. Disney World operators can identify which areas are overcrowded using data from the wristbands and the

numerous IoT sensors and cameras installed across the resort. The system can then use the My Disney Experience mobile app to offer clients personalised rewards based on their past behaviour to encourage them to relocate to less congested regions. Disney has the ability to reallocate personnel based on current information.

Disney World was able to boost capacity by as much as 30% thanks to this sophisticated data analytics system. Additionally, because of how precisely their predictive machine learning algorithms work, they are able to predict not only where a visitor will probably spend the majority of their time, but also preferred dining times for dinner reservations and, among many other things, a child's favourite Disney character.

Disney established a cooperation with analytics company Hitachi Vantara in 2019 to increase the scope of its operational analytics. Hitachi Vantara, who serves as Disney's "Official Ride and Show Analytics Provider," has assisted the company in developing a cutting-edge predictive maintenance system. Disney can more accurately forecast when rides or other resort equipment is likely to break down and take pre-emptive measures by merging customer data with past maintenance data and external data, such as weather conditions.

Case Study

2) Hilton Hotel's AI robot Connie

A recent report from Accenture estimated that AI could potentially double annual economic growth rates by 2035. This has been validated by a study by PwC estimating that AI could add \$15.7 trillion to the global economy by 2030.

Needless to say, AI is already having a massive impact on society and every industry should take note. In addition to chatbots, AI powered in person customer service has also remarkably transformed the guest experience. In addition to chatbots, AI-enabled in-person customer care has significantly improved the visitor experience. At their McLean, Virginia location (Davis), Hilton unveiled the first AI-powered hotel concierge robot in March 2016. She was given the name Connie in honour of company founder Conrad Hilton. Connie was created in partnership with IBM with three main objectives: to shorten queue wait times, increase hotel operations' efficiency, and surprise visitors with a cutting-edge and wholly original tool.

The domain expertise used by the robot was obtained from Watson, a cognitive computing technology platform. Watson gives the computer system the ability to understand the surroundings similarly to how people do through senses, learning, and experience. Connie can educate guests on hotel features, local attractions, and dining recommendations just like any front desk agent, concierge, or hotel phone operator would (Davis). According to Rob High, Chief Technology Officer at IBM Watson, Watson "helps Connie understand and respond naturally to the needs and interests of Hilton's guests – which is an experience that's particularly powerful in a hospitality setting, where it can lead to deeper guest engagement" (Davis).

Hilton's Connie AI robot has significantly disrupted the hotel sector, which establishes speed and convenience to raise customer pleasure even higher. Along with chatbots and robotic concierges, AI has had an impact on the hospitality sector through the use of data analytics.

Case Study

Artificial intelligence technology has radically transformed the hospitality sector by influencing how hotels run today. With the chatbot messaging from Marriott, Connie the robot from Hilton, and the Total Rewards Loyalty Programme from Caesars Entertainment, artificial intelligence (AI) shows tremendous promise in upgrading convenience and personalisation standards.



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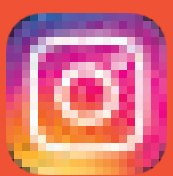
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