

# A Review on The Impact of Covid 19 On the Travel and Tourism Industry in India.

Prof Mezbin Lalani,

Department of Accountancy, VIVA College of Arts, Commerce & Science.

**Abstract:** The outbreak of the coronavirus pandemic created worldwide disruptions. It threatened not just the public health but created economic and social disruptions thereby affecting millions worldwide. Of all the industries that were impacted by COVID, one of the industries that saw severe damage was the Travel and Tourism industry.

India is one of the most popular tourist destinations across the world. With a culturally and geographically rich and diverse nature, it provides multicultural experiences, beautiful attractions ranging from the Snowclad Mountains to the magnificent forests. India has various tourist products such as various heritage sites, national parks, religious and spiritual tourism, cruise, beaches, adventure, caravan trips, film tourism and various attractive landscapes. The official slogan of the Tourism ministry of India truly describes India as Incredible India.

Tourism and hospitality industry has been one of the biggest service industries in India. This industry plays a critical role in enhancing India's growth rate and helps in employment generation directly or indirectly. This paper aims to study the impact of COVID 19 on the travel and tourism industry by analyzing the current conditions, challenges, and the road ahead.

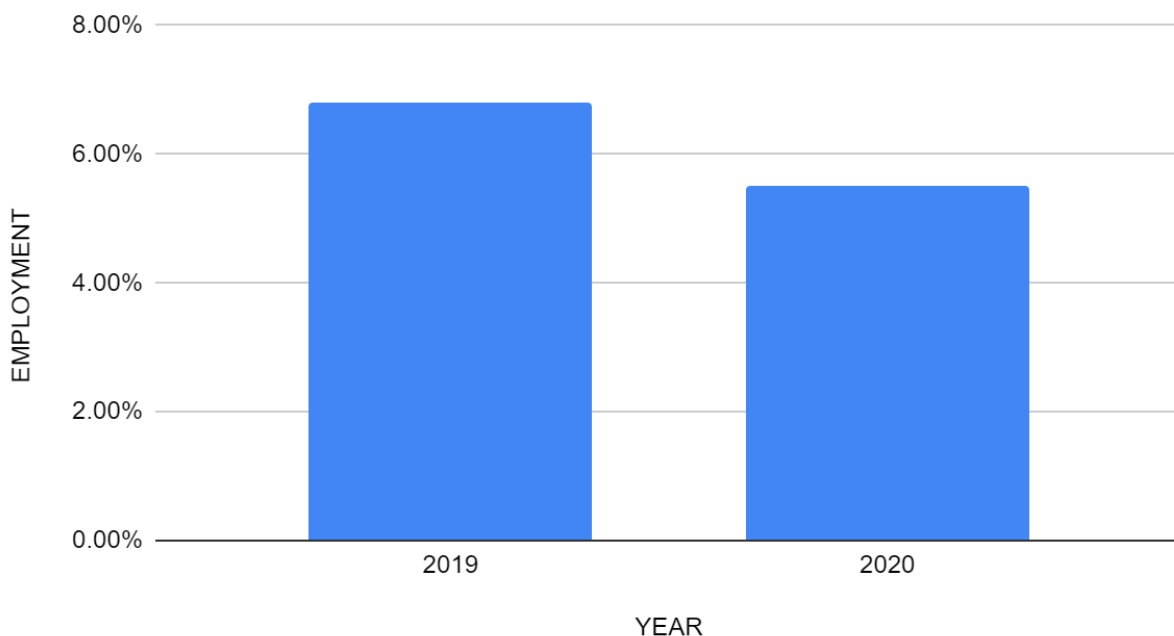
**Key words:** Travel and tourism, COVID pandemic, lockdown, Indian tourism, recovery.

## Introduction:

Travel and tourism has been one of the biggest service industries for India. It is an integral part of the Make in India campaign of Government of India. It has helped in the economic growth and as well in the creation of employment opportunities. The scenario pre COVID was very encouraging as far as the tourism industry was concerned. India's ranking in the Travel and Tourism Competitive Index (TTCI) of World Economic Forum moved from 52nd position in 2015 to 40th position in 2017. Further India climbed up to 34th rank in 2019.

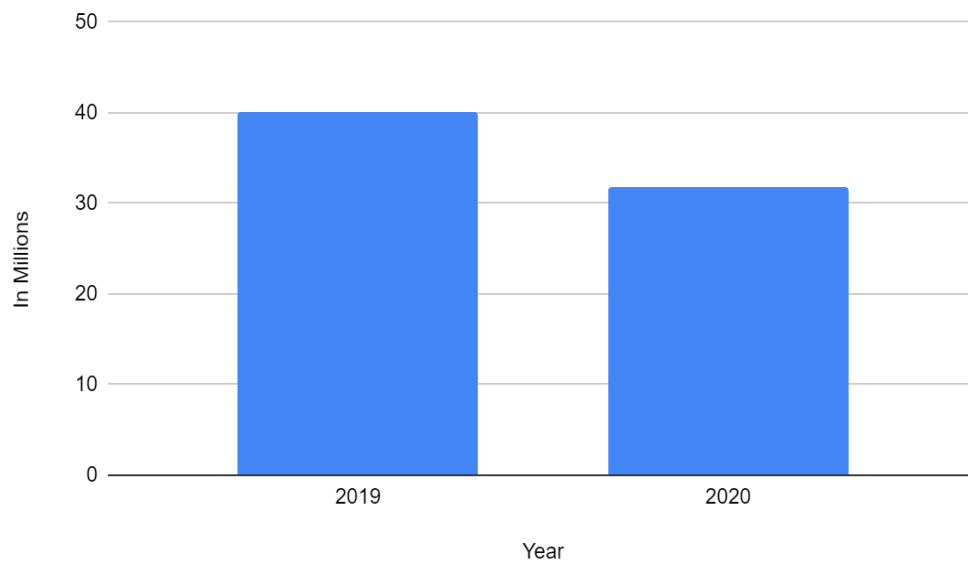
The contribution of the travel and tourism sector to the Indian GDP was around 6.8% in 2019 which was reduced to 5.5% in 2020 owing to the travel restrictions placed across the world.

## Contribution of Travels & Tourism to Indian GDP



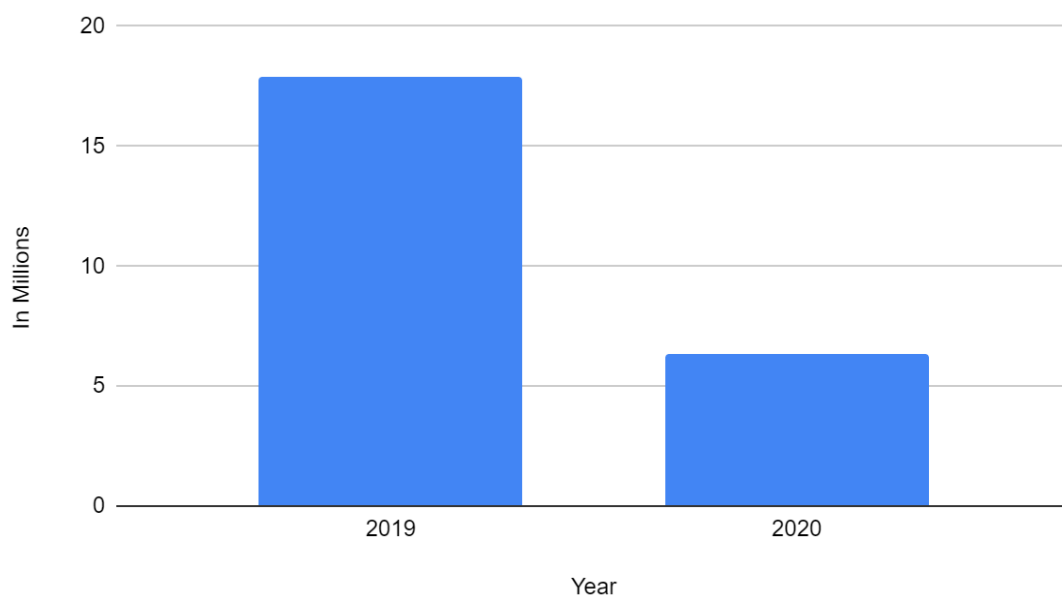
In 2020, nearly 32 million people were officially employed in the travel and tourism industry in India. This was a significant decrease by over 20 percent compared to the previous year. The travel industry was hit hard in 2020 due to travel restrictions during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

### Number of Jobs in Travel and Tourism in India



The number of international tourist arrivals worldwide dropped sharply in 2020 over the previous year due to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic which was around 17.91 millions in 2019 and 6.33 millions in 2020.

### Number of International Tourist Arrivals in India



The coronavirus pandemic has impacted not just global tourism but also domestic tourism. In addition to the drop in international and domestic tourist travelers, the pandemic has caused negative impact on revenues both in terms of domestic revenue generation as well as foreign exchange earnings, employment and overall contribution to GDP.

#### Objectives and research methodology:

This paper is based on secondary data gathered from newspapers, journals, websites, etc

To study the objectives:

- 1) to highlight the present impact of the pandemic on the travel and tourism industry in India.
- 2) to recommend steps for the revival of tourism sector in India.

#### Post pandemic scenes:

While the industry has began to recover from the Covid-19 pandemic, it is not completely immune to shocks and sets backs. Changing government policies, new rules on vaccinations and quarantines, and the discovery of new mutations continue to impact 100% recovery of the industry.

The challenge now for the Government of India is to undertake measures that would bring the industry back on the revival track. With more importance given to safety and social distance, tourists think that it is safer to travel shorter distances than compared to the longer ones. This is why many people are opting for short road trips to unknown destinations with less crowd.

The domestic vacation is now on top of the traveler's bucket list for 2021. Just the first week of January 2021 saw 70% of users booking for future domestic trips on TripAdvisor.

The year 2021 did see an increase in domestic tourism, the Government has to therefore channelize on domestic tourism by increasing the sightseeing of remote destinations which can help the locals to get their livelihood back. This can help in boosting the local economy, creation of more jobs, promotion of local art, handicrafts, culture, helping the local hotels and restaurants of the region.

Sustainable tourism too has gained much interest among travellers. People are more conscious about their travel etiquettes and there has been a change in customer behaviours in this regard. Similarly Responsible tourism is on the rise. Corporates too are preferring eco-friendly options, Tourists are also keen to walk to protect beaches, heritage sites, national parks, flora and fauna. the youth are more aware about environmental issues.

Recovery in a sustainable manner cannot occur without the coordination of all the agencies involved, tourism operators, hospitality partners, local travel agencies and local, state and central governments need to work in coordination to ensure a smooth transition of the tourism industry to a post-pandemic phase. It is evident that the industry is moving towards a 'new normal' and steps to operationalize the same through greater empowerment to the traveller and providing personalized travel experiences could be the key to faster and more sustainable recovery. The industry also needs to explore and nurture newer options in terms of developing niche tourism and nurturing the hitherto underdeveloped areas of medical and wellness tourism, spiritual tourism, etc. Lastly, developing digital initiatives through the adoption of artificial intelligence, data analytics, etc., could go a long way in sustaining the sector over the long term. Going forward the Indian tourism industry would be poised to examine newer tourism options which will provide the tourist with a wide range of choices thereby leading to a sustainable recovery of the Indian tourism sector in a post-pandemic era.

#### **Conclusion:**

As per a study commissioned by India's Tourism Ministry, the National Council of Applied Economic Research (NCAER) states even if we go by the most optimistic projection, inbound tourism will only be around half of what it was in 2019 by 2025. And it stated that the revival will likely be slow and will not likely reach the pre-pandemic level before 2026-27.

Establishing and following safety protocols go a long way in assuring the tourist that his travel and stay would be at reduced risk levels. The post-pandemic era will see a shift in destination demand and may also throw up newer formats of travel such as quicker and shorter holidays, need for safe stays, self-guided or self-drive travel plans,

#### **Limitations:**

One limitation of this study is that secondary data has been used in order to analyze the impact of COVID-19 on the tourism industry. This study has not explored the on-the-ground situation through primary data analysis. Additionally, the study has focused on one of the industries affected by COVID-19 and has explored the issues from an overall industry perspective and has not examined issues pertaining to the sub-sectors of the tourism industry.

#### **References:**

1. <https://www.investindia.gov.in/sector/tourism-hospitality>
2. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/209334/total-number-of-international-tourist-arrivals/>
3. <https://www.ibef.org/industry/tourism-hospitality-india.aspx>
4. <https://www.freepressjournal.in/business/tourism-industrys-share-in-gdp-falls-120-bps-to-47-in-2020-due-to-covid-19-pandemic-impact-reportshttps://www.statista.com/statistics/701899/india-employment-in-travel-and-tourism-by-type/>
5. <http://bwhotelier.businessworld.in/article/-How-India-s-travel-and-tourism-industry-can-retaliate-the-impact-of-COVID-19-/16-11-2021-412134/>
6. <https://www.statista.com/statistics/701899/india-employment-in-travel-and-tourism-by-type/>
7. <https://www.freepressjournal.in/weekend/world-tourism-day-2021-with-focus-on-responsible-and-sustainable-travel-heres-what-india-is-doing-to-boost-domestic-tourism>
8. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/09722629211043298>
9. <https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/travel/travel-news/ncaer-indian-tourism-is-likely-to-not-return-to-pre-pandemic-levels-until-2026/as89023512.cms>
10. <https://www.ibef.org/blogs/schemes-announced-by-the-ministry-of-finance-for-augmenting-tourism-in-the-fight-against-covid-19-pandemic>