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## **A STUDY ON CHANGES IN TOURIST BEHAVIOUR DURING PANDEMIC**

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### **ABSTRACT**

People used to travel without fear or restriction before the pandemic. They could do whatever they wanted, travel to new places, and participate in a variety of activities. However, on account of COVID-19, the situation altered, and the tourist behavior also changed as well. Travelers' willingness to travel is still present in their minds, but the issue is under control, and people are being compelled to adjust their travel habits accordingly. The main purpose of this conceptual study is to determine how travel behaviour changed during COVID-19 and to point out how people met their travel needs by altering their travel patterns. The study reviewed a variety of contemporary research articles, journals, newspapers, statistical data from worldwide tourism organizations, and websites in order to observe and understand changing travel behaviour. A comprehensive review of the existing literature is conducted, with a focus on the changing behavioral patterns of tourists and future travel trends as a result of COVID-19.

### **KEYWORDS**

Tourist, Travel behaviour, Changes, COVID-19, Pandemic, Review of literature

### **INTRODUCTION**

During the first half of 2020, the lifestyles of a huge proportion of the global population altered considerably. The COVID-19 pandemic, which was caused by the virus SARS-CoV-2, was the first in decades to nearly bring the globe to a halt, and its most serious consequences have yet to be seen. The impact of the global pandemic COVID-19 outbreak is very detrimental to the economic sector in all countries, as well as tourism. Sectors affected include destinations, transportation businesses, travel agents, and other supporting businesses such as hotels, restaurants, and so on. International tourist arrivals have fallen from almost 1.5 billion in 2019 to around 380 million in 2020, a 74 per cent decline. This



represents a loss of an estimated 1.3 trillion USD in international tourism expenditure, about 11 times the loss of the 2009 global crisis (UNWTO 2021). Millions of individuals around the world have changed their habits as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. COVID-19 outbreak led to sudden and massive booking cancellations and very few bookings, resulting in hotel closures. To control the spread of COVID-19, governments have proposed or implemented a variety of measures. Such measures have a major impact on travel behaviour. During pandemic, travel distances tend to shorten and journeys become less frequent. Because most individuals will be travelling largely for shopping during the pandemic, social distancing will be essential for an extended period (Abdullah et.al, 2020).

The lockdown and the return to normalcy had a significant impact on visitor traffic, as well as changes in travel behaviour (Samir Awad et.al, 2021). The pandemic doesn't seem to be generating a motivation to explore new destinations. Long-distance travel will resume as before once travel restrictions are repealed, which is a huge benefit for the tourism industry. Tourists' willingness to travel continues to be promising, even though they are "a little more cautious and attentive" to the recovery (Chebli et.al, 2020). Psychological and economic factors influence visitor behaviour and choice after the 2020 lockdown, should the prerequisites for travel are met. Psychological factors relating to contamination fears, such as as long as there is no vaccination or treatments, have an impact on people's willingness to travel as well as the conditions and holiday preferences in which they travel. Economic considerations are linked to a decrease in household income as a result of unemployment or reduced working hours or job loss (Marques, et.al, 2020)

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

For the development of the tourism industry, it is important to understand tourist behaviour which helps to identify tourist destination selection, evaluation, and future tourist behaviour intentions. Travel behaviour refers to a traveller's complex decision-making process during a trip, including travel mode selection, route selection, departure time selection, destination selection, and so on (MengLi et. al, 2019). Motivation is a driving force that stimulates consumers' behaviour (Fodness, 1994). Consumers are unique people with a wide range of behaviours that are influenced by both internal and external forces. Tourist behaviour is the combination of interactions between internal factors (motivation,



attitudes, beliefs, etc.) and external factors (economic environment, security, socio-cultural environment, etc.) (Andrades, Dimanche, & Ilkevich, 2015).

The travel decision-making process has been addressed by Mathieson and Wall (1982) distinguishing five categories namely travel needs or desire, information collection and evaluation, making the travel decision, travel preparation and travel experience, and travel satisfaction evaluation. Travel decision involves the decision regarding destination to be visited, accommodation, activities to be undertaken, attractions to be visited. In the decision-making process tourist expectations and the benefits sought to relate to a core tourism product.

The push-pull theoretical framework (Crompton, 1979) is a popular theory to explain the reason why the tourists decide to visit the destination rather than other places, the kind of experience they want to get and the type of activity they want to do. Motivation is frequently associated with Push-pull elements that influence visitor behaviour. Push factors are socio-psychological tourist factors such as peace, loneliness, the desire to try something new, rest, relaxation, etc. that influence their motivation to visit a certain attraction or destination. The way you travel daily is influenced by your lifestyle. The concept of lifestyle refers to an individual's way of living and is influenced by his or her outlook of life and motivations, including beliefs, interests and general attitudes (Van Acker, 2010).

When customers make a buying decision, they will consider the risks involved in doing so. Consumer behaviour is influenced by risk perception, which in turn drives purchasing decisions. In tourism, war and political instability, terrorist attacks, criminality, natural disasters, and health problems were highlighted as five key risk factors (Chebli et.al 2020).

The effects of the SARS outbreak on Chinese domestic tourists' travel behaviour had a significant impact on people's lives, jobs, and travel habits (Zhang Wen, 2008). Many nations have implemented various precautions to prevent the H1N1 virus from crossing borders via air travel since the beginning of 2009. From the most effective measures, which attempt to isolate one country from potential sources of infection, to the least impactful measures, which could have a significant effect on passenger travel behaviour around the world (P. Bajardi et.al, 2010). During an epidemic, people engage in voluntary defensive



behaviour; some passengers skipped flights due to concerns about a novel influenza virus known as swine flu, and this behavioural adaptation was particularly directed at Mexico. (Eli P. Fenichel, 2017). The Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) outbreak in South Korea was reported in 2015, and when fear is widespread, those who have the flexibility to change their lifestyle changed their daily activities and travelled more. The impact of public fear of a pandemic disease on travel behaviour can be significant (Chansung Kim 2017).

## **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

**The study is undertaken with the following objectives:**

1. To examine the impact of COVID-19 on travel.
2. To study how far people's travel behaviour has changed as a result of COVID-19.
3. To identify the new travel trends and future tourist behaviour.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The changing tourist behaviour during the pandemic was highlighted in a review of empirical studies on the topic. The study mainly depended on secondary data. Secondary data are the data that have already been collected and are readily available from other sources that have been published by others. By reviewing journals, documents, newspaper articles, studies, UNWTO statistics, and websites, the study identified and examined the effects of COVID-19 on tourist behaviour and changing trends in travel. A comprehensive evaluation of the existing literature is conducted, with a focus on the changing behavioral patterns of tourists and future travel trends as a result of COVID-19.

## **COVID 19 AND BEHAVIORAL CHANGES OF TOURIST**

Recent surveys revealed that many are still willing to travel after the COVID-19 (EY, 2020b; DNA, 2020). Recent surveys and trend analysis have shown that the COVID-19 health crisis is affecting consumer patterns. Changes are observed in the short-term periods like lock-down and confinement online sales and services increased significantly (Global Data, 2020). During the outbreak in Kanto Region, Japan, risk perception, trait anxiety, and social influence all



had a significant impact on the frequency of in-store purchasing, eating outside, and leisure activities. During the COVID-19 epidemic in the United States, risk perception influenced travel behaviour to shift dramatically (Irawan, M.Z., 2021).

Customers will only feel safe travelling to and staying at a hotel if the destination has a low number of COVID-19 cases and the ability to test, trace, and isolate COVID-19 cases. Furthermore, when the COVID-19 vaccine becomes available, there will be a group of customers who will only feel comfortable deciding to purchase a sit-down restaurant and travelling to a destination and staying at a hotel. Visible sanitizing efforts such as hand sanitizers at the entry, staff wearing masks and gloves, social distancing, limiting the number of customers served, and employee training and safety protocols are the most important safety precautions customers expect (Gursoy et al., 2020). Although health concerns have influenced tourists' behaviour and destination choices in areas where infectious disease is endemic, there is little evidence of such intentions in the context of the broad pandemic. In addition, rather than the quality of service, location, or size of the hotel, a "new" characteristic of passengers' behaviours has necessitated hygiene precautions in the hotel (T.H Hassan, 2021). When it comes to choosing a vacation spot, however, low tourist population and sanitary standards are the most important factors to consider. Tourists prefer sites that offer outdoor activities and allow them to interact with nature in order to prevent overcrowding, (Gursoy et al., 2020).

Travellers intending to travel abroad or inside the country during the COVID-19 pandemic are resilient because they consider PNPIs (Personal Non-Pharmaceutical Interventions) as possible preventive behaviour that can minimize the danger of transmission when travelling (Sitanshu and Aviral, 2020). There are significant differences in how people perceive the threat of pandemic influenza depending on their socioeconomic characteristics such as gender, age, education, and income when choosing a holiday destination. When choosing a vacation destination, low tourist density and sanitary conditions are the most important factors to consider. After the pandemic has gone, tourists' behaviour will take on new features. Tourists' risk aversion is stronger when it comes to international tourism than when it comes to domestic tourism, thus if the industry focuses on local tourism, tourists are more likely to enjoy it (Tafadzwa Matiza, 2020).



Tourists' willingness to go whenever and wherever they want is unchanged by the pandemic. Tourists may have a negative impression of a tourist destination if they feel their safety may be threatened while being there. After the pandemic has gone, tourists' behaviour will begin to change characteristics. Natural attractions with a short travel time will attract tourists. The key elements that influence tourism destination choices are safety and cleanliness (S.S Wachyuni et.al,2020).

As a result of the pandemic, people are less likely to use public transportation and more likely to go by private car (JunxiongLi et.al,2020). It's possible that going to less crowded places will become the next trend. They wish to travel to a less well-known location. The COVID-19 crisis will influence tourists' willingness to travel in groups and their willingness to purchase tour packages. Travellers would be more attentive about the cleanliness of airports, public places, hotels, restaurants, tourist attractions, and everyday necessities, among other things, as well as the destination's accessibility and quality care. The travel decision is influenced by health standards and the performance of the host destination's health system. Another expected trend is a reduction in the amount of money set aside for vacations. The economic crisis caused by COVID-19 will have an impact on purchasing power (Chebli et.al, 2020). The influence of COVID-19 pandemic on the attitude of consumers towards tourism, travel agencies and online platforms. Authors claimed that consumers would prefer forms of tourism that have less inter-human contact such as natural environment and adventure tourism even after the pandemic (Baba et al. 2020).

## **FINDINGS OF THE STUDY**

The research showed a decrease in travel regularity from the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, which resulted in alterations in activity-travel behaviour. People are still willing to travel, but the pandemic scenario is keeping them from doing so. Because the pandemic cause health anxiety, when travellers make purchase selections, they also consider risk factors. As a result of the pandemic, international travel is limited, and tourists are more likely to travel to domestic destinations, by prioritizing the safety and cleanliness of destinations, lodging, restaurants, and other establishments. People are concerned about their safety before making a trip decision. It is safe to travel within the country in a private vehicle to ensure the safety of tourists. Many tourists prefer to travel within the country in



their own vehicle. They are examining the current total of covid cases, quarantine facilities, testing facilities, and other aspects of the destination to which they plan to travel. Before the COVID-19, other pandemics including SARS, H1N1, and others influenced travel and their decisions, resulting in a drop in international travel. Another behavioural change discovered in the study is that people are searching for less congested destinations so that they can ensure social separation and safety. Visible sanitation initiatives can help tourists feel safe in their destination. Due to the economic downturn, travellers' disposable income has fallen, and their spending power has decreased as well.

## **CONCLUSION**

The COVID-19 pandemic began in China in December 2019 and spread around the world by March 2020. The global crisis and instability within and beyond the tourism industry are the consequences of international and national border closures and lockdowns. The objective of this paper was to determine how tourist behaviour changed during the COVID-19 pandemic. The COVID-19 pandemic seems to have had a massive effect on people's daily life, influencing their spending patterns and preferences, due to an increase in perceived risk. In order to predict the long-term survival of the businesses, the tourism industry must learn about tourist behaviour. After the pandemic has ended, health concerns should be considered as a factor in destination selection. The intention to change one's travel plans, travel to a certain destination, or avoid a specific destination is closely related to the perceived risk of travelling in general or to a specific destination. Based on the way of treating COVID-19, there are some differences in intention to travel from different nations, such as developed and developing, and future studies should address these disparities.

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