



## ASSESSING THE TRENDS IN TOURIST ARRIVALS IN RAJASTHAN: A STUDY OF THE LAST DECADE (2012-2022)

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### ABSTRACT

*This research paper investigates trends in tourist arrivals in Rajasthan, India, from 2012 to 2022, focusing on both domestic and international visitors. Rajasthan, renowned for its cultural richness and historical landmarks, has experienced significant fluctuations in tourist traffic over the past decade. This study aims to analyze these trends, understand the underlying factors, and provide recommendations for enhancing tourism in the state. Using data from the Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation (RTDC) and the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, the study examines annual variations in tourist numbers, economic impacts, infrastructure development, and responses to global events such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Findings reveal that domestic tourism showed steady growth until 2019, peaking at 52.22 million arrivals. The pandemic caused a dramatic decline to 15.12 million in 2020, with a strong recovery to 108.33 million by 2022. International tourism grew until 2016 but faced a significant drop during the pandemic, recovering slowly to 396,000 in 2022. The study identifies economic conditions, infrastructure improvements, and global events as major influences on tourism trends, highlighting the need for strategic planning in crisis management. Recommendations include enhancing marketing strategies, investing in infrastructure, and diversifying tourism products.*

**Key Words:** Domestic tourism, International tourism, Economic impact, Infrastructure development, COVID-19 pandemic.

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Rajasthan, India's largest state by area, is celebrated for its majestic forts, opulent palaces, and rich cultural heritage. Known as the "Land of Kings," Rajasthan captivates millions of tourists each year with its historical splendor and vibrant traditions. The cities of Jaipur, Udaipur, Jodhpur, and Jaisalmer are particularly renowned for their unique architectural wonders and cultural festivities, making tourism a cornerstone of the state's economy. This



sector not only contributes significantly to Rajasthan's GDP but also plays a crucial role in local development and employment generation.

Over the past decade, the tourism industry in Rajasthan has witnessed periods of growth and decline, influenced by a variety of factors including economic fluctuations, political stability, infrastructure advancements, and significant global events such as the COVID-19 pandemic. Analyzing these trends is essential for stakeholders to develop effective strategies for sustaining and boosting tourism.

Tourism is highly dynamic, responding swiftly to external influences. Analyzing tourist arrival trends provides insights into future patterns and helps in strategic planning. This study focuses on examining the trends in tourist arrivals in Rajasthan from 2012 to 2022. Through the analysis of quantitative data, the study aims to identify growth patterns, disruptions, and the factors driving these trends. Additionally, it evaluates the impact of major events on the tourism sector.

The primary objectives of this study are to analyze the trend of tourist arrivals in Rajasthan over the last decade, identify key influencing factors, evaluate the impact of significant global and local events on tourism, and offer strategic recommendations for enhancing tourism strategies. The analysis is based on data from the Rajasthan Tourism Department, Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation (RTDC), the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, and various industry reports.

The scope of this research encompasses both domestic and international tourist arrivals, considering factors such as economic conditions, infrastructure improvements, and global crises. The importance of this study lies in its potential to guide tourism policy and strategy in Rajasthan, aiming to increase tourist numbers and ensure the sustainability of the tourism sector.

## **2. Objectives**

1. To analyze the trend of tourist arrivals in Rajasthan from 2012 to 2022.
2. To identify key factors influencing these trends.
3. To provide strategic recommendations for improving tourism.



### 3. Methodology

This study is based on secondary data which were obtained from the Annual reports by Tourism Department of Rajasthan, Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation (RTDC), the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, and various travel industry reports.

The secondary data were classified through tables and charts. Trend analysis and Comparative analysis method was used for data analysis using graphs and tables.

### 4. Analysis and Discussion:

#### 4.1 Major Tourist Places in Rajasthan:

The following table provides a concise overview of significant tourist attractions in Rajasthan, highlighting their unique features and significance.

**Table-1: Major Tourist Destinations and their description in Rajasthan.**

City/Town	Tourist Place	Description
Jaipur	Amber Fort	A majestic fort with intricate designs and stunning views.
	City Palace	A historical palace complex housing a museum with royal artifacts.
	Hawa Mahal	The "Palace of Winds," renowned for its unique façade with numerous small windows.
	JantarMantar	An 18th-century astronomical observatory with impressive instruments.
Udaipur	City Palace	A grand palace complex overlooking Lake Pichola with beautiful courtyards.
	Lake Palace	A luxury hotel on Lake Pichola offering stunning views and architecture.
	Jag Mandir	An island palace on Lake Pichola known for its serene ambiance and carvings.
	Saheliyon-ki-Bari	A historic garden featuring fountains, lotus



		pools, and marble elephants.
Jodhpur	Mehrangarh Fort	A large fort with panoramic views of the "Blue City" and a royal memorabilia museum.
	UmaidBhawan Palace	A grand palace that is partly a museum and luxury hotel.
	JaswantThada	A white marble cenotaph built in honor of Maharaja Jaswant Singh II.
Jaisalmer	Jaisalmer Fort	The "Golden Fort," renowned for its yellow sandstone architecture.
	Patwon Ki Haveli	Ornate havelis with intricate carvings and architectural beauty.
	Sam Sand Dunes	Desert area offering camel rides and safaris.
Pushkar	Pushkar Lake	A sacred lake surrounded by temples and ghats, important for Hindu pilgrimage.
	Brahma Temple	A rare temple dedicated to Lord Brahma, located near Pushkar Lake.
Ranthambore	Ranthambore National Park	A wildlife sanctuary famous for tiger sightings and diverse flora and fauna.
Bikaner	Junagarh Fort	A well-preserved fort known for its impressive architecture.
	Rat Temple (Karni Mata)	A unique temple where rats are revered and worshipped.
Alwar	BalaQuila	A historical fort offering panoramic views of the landscape.
	Sariska Tiger	A wildlife sanctuary known for its tiger



	Reserve	population and diverse wildlife.
<b>Chittorgarh</b>	Chittorgarh Fort	One of the largest forts in India with historical significance and grand architecture.
<b>Kumbhalgarh</b>	Kumbhalgarh Fort	A UNESCO World Heritage Site known for its massive walls and scenic surroundings.

Source: Annual Tourism Progress Report from -2023, Department of Tourism, Rajasthan.

#### 4.2 International and Domestic Tourists Arrivals in Rajasthan:

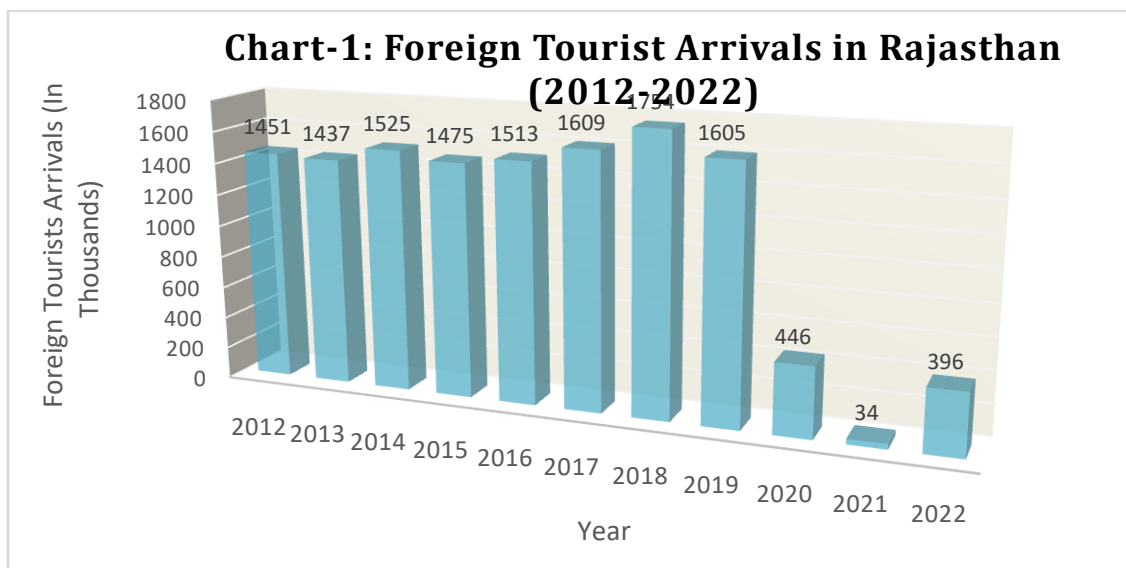
The data on tourist arrivals in Rajasthan over the past decade is showed in Table-2. It reveals significant fluctuations in both foreign and domestic tourist numbers, influenced by various factors including global events and local developments.

**Table-2: Foreign and Domestic Tourists Arrivals in Rajasthan during 2012 to 2022.**

Year	Foreign Tourists Arrivals (in thousands)	Annual Growth Rate (%)	Domestic Tourists (in millions)	Annual Growth Rate (%)
2012	1451	7.35 %	28.61	5.43 %
2013	1437	-0.98 %	30.29	5.89 %
2014	1525	6.15 %	33.08	9.17 %
2015	1475	-3.29 %	35.19	6.38 %
2016	1513	2.60 %	41.49	17.93 %
2017	1609	6.36 %	45.92	10.66 %
2018	1754	8.97 %	50.23	9.41 %
2019	1605	-8.48 %	52.22	3.95 %
2020	446	-72.19 %	15.12	-71.05 %
2021	34	-92.38 %	21.99	45.45 %
2022	396	1064.71 %	108.33	392.65 %



Source: Annual Tourism Progress Report from 2013 to 2023, Department of Tourism, Rajasthan.



Source: Annual Progress Report 2022-2023, Department of Tourism, Rajasthan.

#### 4.2.1 Foreign Tourist Arrivals:

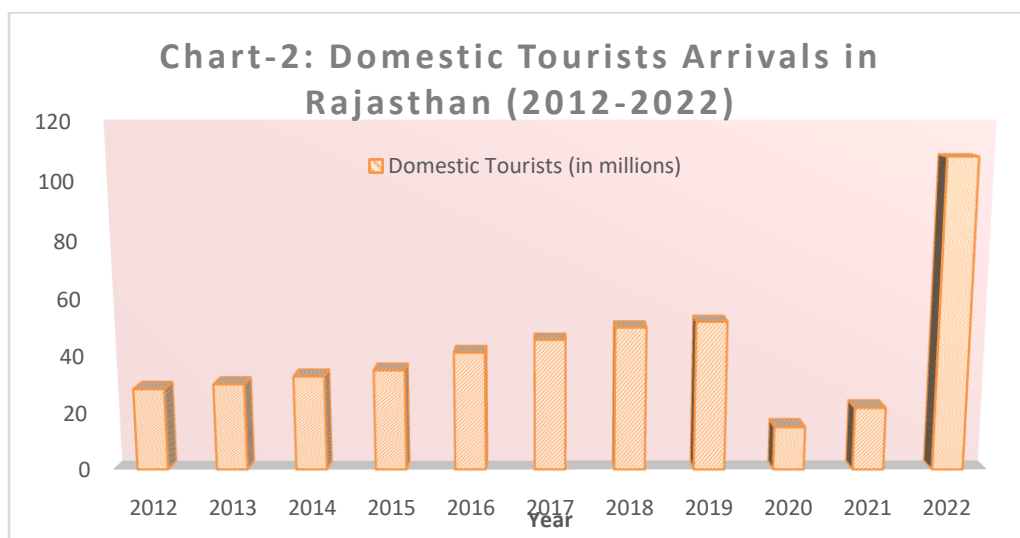
- **Initial Growth (2012-2016):** Foreign tourist arrivals in Rajasthan saw a steady increase from 2012 to 2016, with growth rates ranging from 2.60% to 8.97%. This period was marked by a consistent rise in international interest, with a peak in 2018 at 1,754,000 arrivals. The growth can be attributed to improved marketing strategies, enhanced infrastructure, and global interest in Rajasthan's rich cultural heritage.
- **Decline and Sharp Drop (2017-2020):** After reaching a high in 2018, the number of foreign tourists declined in 2019 by 8.48%. This decline continued dramatically in 2020, with a staggering reduction of 72.19% due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The global travel restrictions and lockdowns had a severe impact on international travel, leading to a historic low of 446,000 foreign tourists.
- **Recovery and Extreme Variations (2021-2022):** The year 2021 saw an unprecedented decline of 92.38% in foreign tourist arrivals, reflecting the ongoing impact of the pandemic. However, 2022 marked a remarkable recovery with an extraordinary growth rate of 1064.71%, bringing the number of foreign tourists back



up to 396,000. This dramatic increase, although significant, highlights the volatile nature of global tourism recovery in the wake of the pandemic.

#### 4.2.2 Domestic Tourist Arrivals:

- **Consistent Growth (2012-2019):** Domestic tourism exhibited a generally positive trend, with growth rates varying between 3.95% and 17.93%. The number of domestic tourists increased from 28.61 million in 2012 to 52.22 million in 2019. This steady rise indicates a growing interest among Indian travelers in exploring Rajasthan, driven by the state's cultural attractions and improved infrastructure.
- **Impact of COVID-19 (2020):** Similar to international tourism, domestic tourism experienced a sharp decline in 2020, with a 71.05% drop. The pandemic led to significant travel restrictions and reduced travel activity, impacting the domestic tourism sector severely.
- **Post-Pandemic Surge (2021-2022):** In 2021, domestic tourism showed a recovery with a growth rate of 45.45%, reaching 21.99 million tourists. The following year saw a staggering increase of 392.65%, with 108.33 million domestic tourists. This sharp rise can be attributed to the easing of travel restrictions, increased domestic travel, and pent-up demand for tourism post-pandemic.



Source:

*Annual Progress Report 2022-2023, Department of Tourism, Rajasthan.*

#### 4.3 Analysis of Economic Growth and Tourist Arrivals (2012-2022):



The data on economic growth and tourist arrivals in Rajasthan from 2012 to 2022 reveals significant trends and impacts, particularly around the COVID-19 pandemic. This analysis examines the relationship between the Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) growth rates and the number of domestic and international tourists.

**Table-3:Comparative analysis of Economic Growth and Tourist Arrivals (2012-2022)**

Year	GSDP Growth Rate (Constant Prices- 2011-12)	Domestic Tourist Arrivals (in millions)	International Tourist Arrivals (in millions)
2012-13	4.54	28.61	1.451
2013-14	6.97	30.29	1.437
2014-15	7.29	33.08	1.525
2015-16	6.99	35.19	1.475
2016-17	5.93	41.49	1.513
2017-18	4.71	45.92	1.609
2018-19	4.94	50.23	1.754
2019-20	5.45	52.22	1.605
2020-21	-1.82	15.12	0.446
2021-22	8.95	21.99	0.034
2022-23	7.81	108.33	0.396

*Source: Economic Survey of Rajasthan, 2012-13 to 2022-23 and;Annual Tourism Progress Report from 2013 to 2023, Department of Tourism, Rajasthan.*

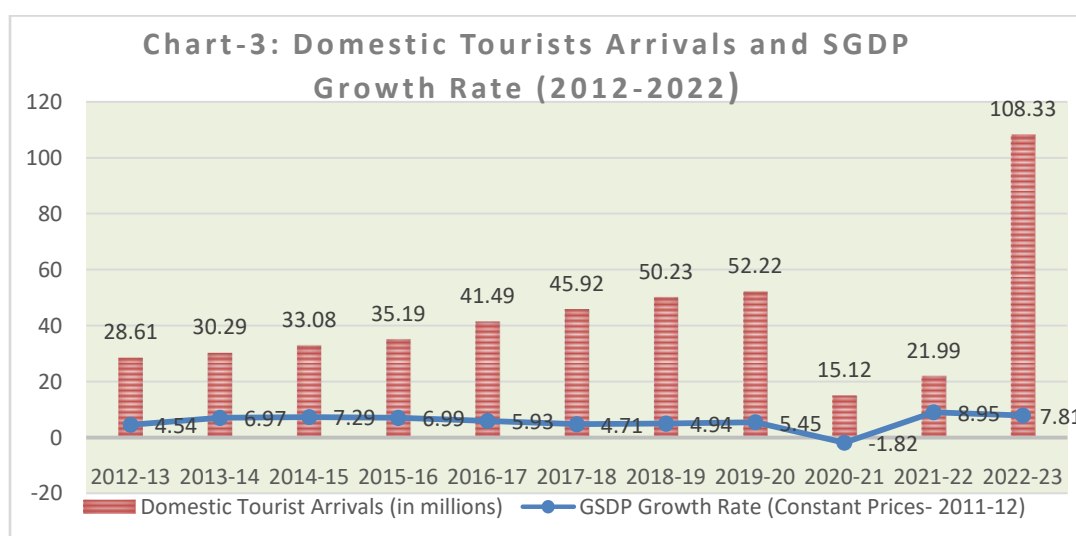
#### **4.3.1 Economic Growth and Domestic Tourist Arrivals**

- **Growth Correlation (2012-2019):**There is a positive correlation between economic growth and domestic tourist arrivals. During periods of higher GSDP growth, such as 2014-15 (7.29%) and 2018-19 (4.94%), domestic tourism increased significantly from 28.61 million to 52.22 million. Economic prosperity likely boosted disposable incomes, encouraging more travel within the country.



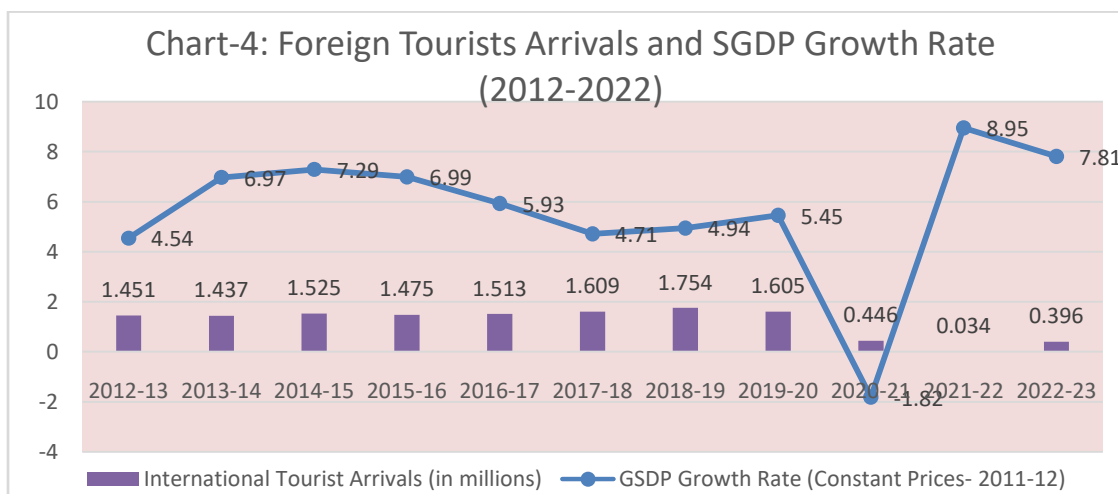


- **Pandemic Impact (2020-2021):**In 2020-21, the economic contraction (-1.82%) due to the COVID-19 pandemic led to a sharp decline in domestic tourism, with arrivals dropping to 15.12 million. The pandemic's restrictions severely affected travel and tourism sectors.
- **Post-Pandemic Recovery (2021-2022):**The economic rebound in 2021-22 (8.95%) saw a gradual recovery in domestic tourism, increasing to 21.99 million arrivals. By 2022-23, with a GSDP growth of 7.81%, domestic tourist arrivals surged to 108.33 million, reflecting a strong rebound in travel demand.



#### 4.3.2 Economic Growth and International Tourist Arrivals

- **Steady Increase (2012-2019):**International tourist arrivals grew steadily from 1.451 million in 2012-13 to 1.754 million in 2018-19, correlating with consistent economic growth, which likely enhanced Rajasthan's appeal as a stable destination.
- **Pandemic Decline (2020-2021):**The pandemic caused a dramatic drop in international arrivals, falling to 0.446 million in 2020-21 and further to 0.034 million in 2021-22, despite economic recovery. This decline was due to global travel restrictions and safety concerns.
- **Gradual Recovery (2022-2023):**International tourist arrivals rose to 0.396 million in 2022-23, indicating a slow recovery as travel restrictions eased. Continued economic growth (7.81%) supported efforts to attract international visitors back to the state.



#### 4.3.3 Overall Insights:

- **Economic Impact:** Economic growth positively influences tourist arrivals, particularly domestic tourism, which responds quickly to changes in economic conditions.
- **Pandemic Effects:** The COVID-19 pandemic severely impacted both domestic and international tourism, with a more prolonged effect on international arrivals.
- **Recovery:** Post-pandemic, domestic tourism showed a strong recovery, while international tourism is gradually improving but remains below pre-pandemic levels.

#### 4.4 Impact of Infrastructure Development on Tourist Arrivals:

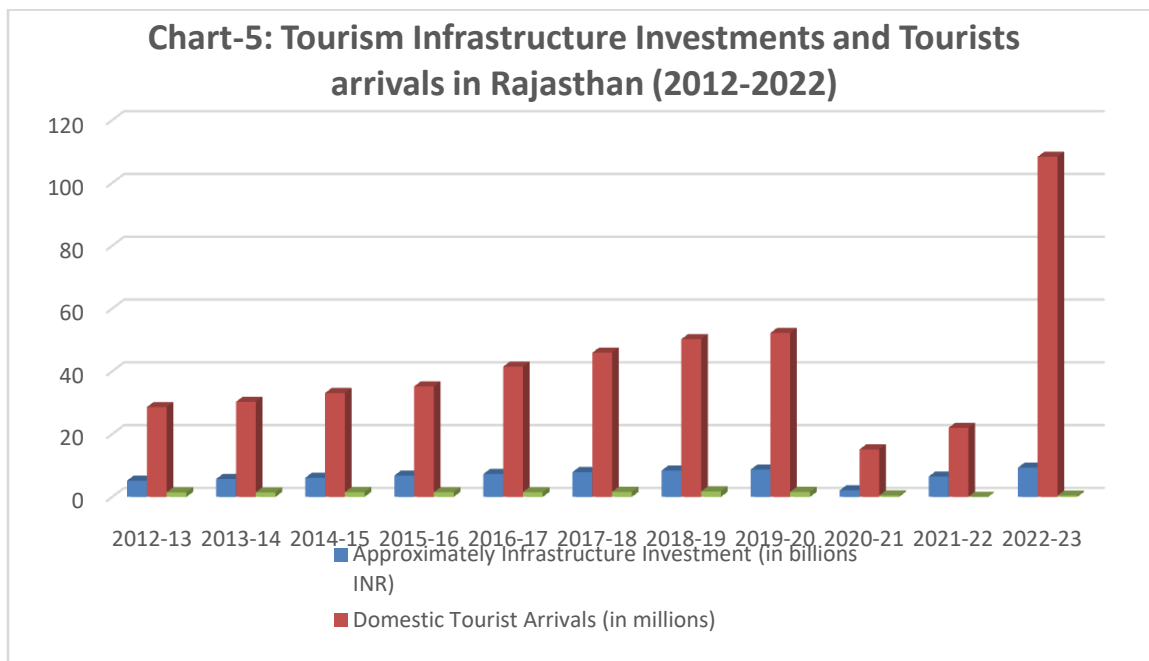
The analysis of infrastructure investments and tourist arrivals in Rajasthan from 2012 to 2022 shows a strong correlation between increased infrastructure spending and tourism growth. Between 2012 and 2019, infrastructure investment rose from INR 5.2 billion to INR 8.7 billion, while domestic tourist arrivals increased from 28.61 million to 52.22 million. This trend suggests that better infrastructure significantly boosted domestic tourism. The COVID-19 pandemic in 2020-21 led to a sharp decline in both infrastructure investment (down to INR 2.1 billion) and domestic tourist arrivals (down to 15.12 million), highlighting the severe impact of the pandemic. However, with the recovery, infrastructure investment rose to INR 6.5 billion in 2021-22 and further to INR 9.3 billion in 2022-23, with domestic arrivals surging to 108.33 million.



**Table-4: Tourism Infrastructure Investments and Tourists arrivals in Rajasthan (2012-2022).**

Year	Approximately Infrastructure Investment (in billions INR)	Domestic Tourist Arrivals (in millions)	International Tourist Arrivals (in millions)
2012-13	5.2	28.61	1.451
2013-14	5.7	30.29	1.437
2014-15	6.1	33.08	1.525
2015-16	6.8	35.19	1.475
2016-17	7.3	41.49	1.513
2017-18	7.9	45.92	1.609
2018-19	8.4	50.23	1.754
2019-20	8.7	52.22	1.605
2020-21	2.1	15.12	0.446
2021-22	6.5	21.99	0.034
2022-23	9.3	108.33	0.396

*Source: Annual Progress Report from 2013 to 2023, Department of Tourism, Rajasthan.*



Source: Annual Progress Report from 2013 to 2023, Department of Tourism, Rajasthan.

International tourist arrivals also showed growth from 1.451 million in 2012-13 to 1.754 million in 2018-19, reflecting improved infrastructure. The pandemic caused a dramatic drop in international arrivals to 0.446 million in 2020-21. Despite a gradual recovery in investment to INR 6.5 billion in 2021-22, international arrivals remained low at 0.034 million, but increased to 0.396 million by 2022-23 with further investment.

Overall, the data illustrates a positive link between infrastructure development and tourist arrivals, with the COVID-19 pandemic causing significant disruption. The recovery phase highlights the importance of sustained infrastructure investment to support the tourism sector's growth.

## 5. Findings:

- The COVID-19 pandemic caused a dramatic decline in both international and domestic tourist arrivals in Rajasthan. International tourist arrivals plummeted from 1605 thousand in 2019 to just 34 thousand in 2021, a drop of over 97%. Domestic tourism also saw a significant decline, falling from 52.22 million in 2019 to 15.12 million in 2020, a decrease of over 70%.
- While both international and domestic tourism were affected by the pandemic, domestic tourism showed a much quicker and stronger recovery. By 2022, domestic tourist arrivals surged to 108.33 million, more than double the pre-pandemic levels



of 2019. In contrast, international tourist arrivals recovered to 396 thousand in 2022, still well below the pre-pandemic levels.

- Prior to the pandemic, there was a consistent growth trend in both international and domestic tourist arrivals in Rajasthan. From 2012 to 2018, international tourist arrivals increased from 1451 thousand to 1754 thousand, showing an overall growth of about 21%. Similarly, domestic tourist arrivals grew steadily from 28.61 million in 2012 to 52.22 million in 2019, indicating a robust growth trend of about 83%.
- The growth trends in tourist arrivals prior to the pandemic can be attributed to economic conditions and improvements in tourism infrastructure. Investments in transportation, accommodation, and the promotion of tourism helped drive the steady increase in tourist numbers. Conversely, economic downturns and infrastructure challenges could also be linked to the occasional declines in tourist arrivals.
- The data highlights the resilience of the domestic tourism sector in Rajasthan, which rebounded strongly post-pandemic. This resilience offers strategic opportunities for further growth. By focusing on enhancing domestic tourism infrastructure, promoting lesser-known destinations, and developing comprehensive crisis management strategies, Rajasthan can not only recover fully but also achieve sustainable growth in its tourism sector.

## **6. Suggestions:**

1. Utilize digital marketing channels and social media to boost Rajasthan's visibility. Promote lesser-known destinations to spread tourist traffic and support local economies.
2. Improve transportation networks and expand accommodation options to cater to diverse tourist needs, ensuring sustainability and high service standards.
3. Implement flexible booking policies and robust health protocols to build tourist confidence and prepare for future emergencies.
4. Enhance visitor services with multilingual support and detailed information. Offer themed cultural tours to enrich the tourist experience.



5. Encourage eco-friendly practices and support community-based tourism to ensure environmental conservation and local benefit.

## 7. CONCLUSIONS:

The study highlights significant fluctuations in Rajasthan's tourism over the past decade, with domestic tourism rebounding strongly post-pandemic, while international tourism recovers more slowly. Before the pandemic, both domestic and international arrivals grew due to better infrastructure and marketing. The pandemic caused severe declines, revealing the sector's vulnerability. Moving forward, strategic investments in infrastructure, targeted marketing, and robust crisis management are essential to sustain and boost tourism growth.

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