

Impact of Covid-19 on the Tourism Industry of Himachal Pradesh

Chhaya Devi

PhD Scholar, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, National Institute of Technology Hamirpur, India, E-mail: chhayadhwal597@gmail.com

Abstract

The eruption of COVID-19 pandemic virus caused a challenge to the whole world, prevent or cure from its further spreading or survive with it, or revive of economy. To prevent from the spreading of virus government of India resisted lockdown which stops travel and tourism completely. Restrictions on global and interstate travel affected business sector exception allowed to daily need commodity its huge shock to nation's economy. This research paper is investigating the results of covid-19 pandemic on economic growth in tourism sector. This paper is classified into following dimensions: domain of tourism facilities, tourist's arrival and methodology. The aspects of this paper are focusing on tourism industry, including revenue impact, employment loss, issues facing by workers, market demand, recovery of the tourism industry, behavior of tourist for safety and health, preference of customers. Its analysis based on secondary data which discuss the pandemic activities and measuring the impression of the pandemic on the tourism industry in Himachal Pradesh.

Keywords: Covid-19 pandemic; Economic growth; Tourism Industry; Lockdown; Himachal Pradesh.

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Corresponding Author: Chhaya Devi, PhD Scholar, Department of Humanities and Social Sciences, National Institute of Technology Hamirpur, India, E-mail: chhayadhwal597@gmail.com

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Introduction:

The COVID-19 pandemic smash health and economics globally. The WHO (World Health Organization) proclaimed international public health emergency in January and a pandemic in March 2020. Indian government had imposed a nationwide lockdown for 21 days on 24th March, 2020. The first coronavirus positive case was recorded in Himachal Pradesh on 20th March 2020 and approximately 7,976 out of every 10-lakh people in Himachal was tested Covid positive. The tourism industry according to World Tourism Organization is estimated as 9.9% of total world

GDP that is US\$5890 billion. The contribution of tourism industry is 6.23% to national GDP and total employment generated is 8.78% in India, tourism sector is the largest service industry of country (Nag, 2013). In India, relationship between tourism growth and economic growth is significant in long run, but short run relationship is not significant. Unidirectional causality satisfies two hypotheses between economic growth from tourism (a)Economic Driven Tourism Growth-EDTG and (b)Tourism -Led Economic Growth -TLEG (Schubert et.al., 2011). Tourism sector promotes economic growth by inspiring investment that increases competition among firms

lead to efficiency (Balaguer and Contavella, 2002), tourism accomplishments based on human capital and reduces unemployment (Brida and Pulina, 2010). Tourism includes transportation, entertainment, business tours, hospitality services, accommodation facilities for individuals and teams away from home (Kaushal, 2019). Deforestation, heavy rainfall, slope cutting for the construction of roads, other infrastructural projects were highly responsible factors for the soil erosion and frequent landslides in the hilly state (Prasad et al., 2016).

Concept of Tourism

An activity that includes the availability of entertainment, transportation, accommodation and tourist destinations is called tourism. Conventionally, tourism is the mixture of material, psychological factors with a wide range of attitude, perception and expectations varying from escapism to fulfill dream, educational, entertainment, religious, and other interests (Sharma and Agarwal, 2018). Tourists are defined as the people who “travel to and stay in places outside their usual environment for more than twenty-four hours and not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes not related to the exercise of an activity remunerated from within the place visited” (world tourism organization, 1995). In a chapter Camilleri (2017), introduces the concept of tourism, and described various aspects of tourists travel destination, requirement of accommodation, tourism products, amenities and facilities. In many places, a complete breakdown of economic income from tourism side, led to dramatic effects for the business related to travel, hostel, gastronomy and entertainment. Schomaker (2020), has discussed the situation of public awareness to the wider costs related to tourism. Being an island nation, Japan has an advantage that domestic and foreign tourists can be easily separated.

Tourism and hospitality are among the most affected sectors in the states of India especially major dependency of employment on tourism industry. Koirala et al, (2020) indicated in their study that Wuhan has isolated millions of populations from daily activities on the outbreak of coronavirus. Kumar et al, (2020) addressed the matter of government support for business and medical facility, livelihood and financial security, personal and family life. It was found that 67% people from sample has never seen such critical situation before. Apart from that 60% of people were affected professionally to not get payment schedule. However, the result indicated that people living their life happily with family and had faith for bright future.

Tourism profile of Himachal Pradesh

Himachal Pradesh is an Indian state located at northern region. It is a mountainous state covered with natural beauty of mountains and rivers where people can go for trekking, camping, river rafting, indulge in adventure tourism, lake tours, religious places, wildlife sanctuaries and attend festival fairs on vacation. In 1966, Shimla became the capital of state popularly known as 'Queen of hill stations. Shimla was named on the name of Shyamala -the Goddess Kali. The state is believed in the “Adobe of Gods and Goddesses” also called as “Dev Bhumi”. The lush green valleys, steep cliffs, roaring rivers, large glaciers and flora and fauna clubbed together to form a place named as Himachal Pradesh (Kaushal, 2019).

Famous tourist attractions and destinations of Himachal Pradesh are:

Shimla: Shimla district experiences two tourist seasons in the months of May, June and January, February. Mostly tourists from Punjab, Haryana, Delhi, Bihar and Rajasthan, visit Shimla to get succor from scorching heat of summer. Shimla provides clear sky in winter to see Himalayan

Panorama, foreigners like to enjoy of skiing and ice-skating (Pal, and Kumar, 2016). Increase in revenue through tourist trade where tourists visit and region has earned the foreign exchange. Tourist industry generate labor intensive employment that encouraged economic development of the region.

Kufri: Kufri is beautiful hill station located 17 km far from Shimla district of the state. Himalayan Nature Park and Indira Tourist Park are famous attractions of this place. It is popular destination for pony riding, trekking, skiing, wildlife and horse riding.

Kullu: Kullu is 'Valley of Gods' located between Manali and Larji on the bank of Beas river. This place is famous for hot water springs, Hadimba Mata temple, Bijali Mahadev, apple orchards, handicraft products and international fair on Dussehra festival.

Manali: Manali is placed in district Kullu of the state. It is the most attractive hill station and tourist destination of India. It is based on the bank of Beas river and famous for skiing in the Solang Valley, Paragliding, rafting, trekking in Parvati valley and mountaineering in the Pir Panjal mountains.

Kangra: Kangra is situated in Dhauladhar range of Himalaya. Kangra is famous for ancient temples, tea garden in Palampur, Historical place Kangra fort itself, it was built by Katoch rulers thousand years ago. Some famous destinations of Kangra district are Palampur, Dharamshala, Mcleod Ganj, Bir, Baijnath and Nurpur where tourist visits mostly.

Dharamshala: Dharamshala was found in 1855 by Britishers also known as 'Little Lhasa'. It is situated on the Dhauladhar ranges of Himalaya. It is famous for home of His Holiness "The Dalai Lama", monasteries, temples and natural waterfall.

Chamba: Chamba is a district of Himachal Pradesh located at the Dalhousie valley adjoined by deodar trees. Tourists visit to enjoy adventure activities at this place like trekking, river rafting, fishing, sailing and boating, walk on mountain, camping and hiking. A popular tourist spot is Naggar Castle is located in Naggar.

Other destinations: Many tourist attractions of the state tourists often like to visits throughout the year. Some of famous are Rohtang pass, Jakhu Temple, Sadhupul, Kasauli, Chail, Rewalasar lake, Prashar lake, Hatu peak, Kinaur, Lahul & Spiti, Atal Tunnel and others.

Economy of Himachal Pradesh

In short span of time state has initiated growth and development in various fields such as, agriculture, horticulture, health, social-welfare and especially in tourism sector. In financial year 2016-17, state economy is the fastest growing economy estimated 6.8 percent in the country. The share of service sector has increased contribution in economics growth from 5.9 percent in 1950-51 to 43.9 percent in 2015-16. The growth of tourism sector acts as engine to the growth and development of the economy it generates revenue and employment in our state. Government has developed an infrastructure that includes roads, airports, helipads, water and sanitation facilities, tunnels and amenities. Gross domestic product of Himachal Pradesh in 2019-20 at current prices was 1,62,816 crore rupees. Service sector contributed Rs.46,568 crore to gross state domestic product in 2019-20 at growth rate 7.7% including growth rate of transport storage and communication 4.5%, trade, Hotel & restaurant 4.6%, financial services 1.1% real estate, ownership of dwelling and professional 2.9%, public administration 12.6% and other services at 17.6%. State economy has dual shocks as demand shock (reduced investment, reduction in consumption, reduced demand for

non- essentials) and supply shocks (labour supply shock and disruption in supply chain).

Literature Review

COVID-19 pandemic spread over the world, 2.66 million people were died of it and contaminated more than 119 million people (Lange, 2021). The long run relationship between development of tourism and economic growth is positive and positive effect of tourism on economic growth greater in non-Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development countries than in OECD countries (Lee and Chang, 2008) but it is equally important for large as well as small countries (Sequeira and Nunes, 2008). Cheung, (2020) reported the coronavirus's impact on consumers and business in China. Supply chains caused significant changes to consumer behavior and business. Positive impacts of tourists on economy are creations of job opportunities addition of income /tax, diversification of economy, foreign Exchange, better multiplier and improves infrastructure, local arts/crafts, regional developments (Pal, and Kumar, 2016).

Tourism industries are significant contributors to the service sector by creating jobs, developing socio-economic and cultural globally (McCabe and Qiao, 2020). The main role of tourism and hospitality industry is consumer satisfaction and stimulating economic activities, but this industry is also most vulnerable industry (Ma, et al., 2020). Tourism industry experienced losses of several diseases, seasonal influenza, epidemics, and global pandemics. Relationship between tourism and economic growth in India is significant study of (Mallick, et al., 2016) which found dependence of economic growth on tourism in long run. The tourism industry has surprised crisis, like globally financial crunch in 1997 and 2008, and SARS epidemic in 2003, various social disturbances, and earthquakes (Lee and Chen, 2021). Cardenas-

Garcia et al, (2013) recognized the importance of tourism to economic growth, and the dimensions of tourism and economic growth has begun to be developed, whether the economic growth expand the tourism activities which influences that level of economic development increased. Kaushal (2019), conducted a descriptive study in which tourism is the major activity in Himachal Pradesh that helps in growth and development of the state economy, as it contributed 6.6% in the state GDP. Kumar et al, (2020) addressed the effect of COVID-19 pandemic on the tourism industry in Haridwar and Dehradun Districts of Uttarakhand.

Since 1990, economic development with population growth increased the risk of living with vulnerability to natural hazards (Pandey, 2002). Covid-19 pandemic smashed hardest to the tourism industry and declined it with the amount of 2.86 trillion US dollars, and loss of 50% revenue. Abbas et al, (2021) narrated the significant impact of pandemic on tourism organizations (included intermediaries, transportation planners, and accommodation providers). COVID-19 impacts on job creation opportunities of tourism industry worldwide. Tourist cancelled their planned tours in fear of Covid -19 to avoid infection of virus during travel time and gathering (Mamirkulova et al., 2020). Ukhanov et al, (2020) showed that dynamics of economic development began to decline, due to the pandemic and described the measure taken for enterprises for state, presented the model of economic growth for small and medium-sized enterprises. It was associated positively on impact of the development of the sanatorium and resort complex and infrastructure of recreation organizations. Potential strength of screening measures improved the efficiency of thermal scanners and coronavirus symptom detection technology by several factors such as effectiveness of arrival and departure screening (Gostic et al., 2020).

Research Gap:

Skare (2021) studied the potential impact of the current situation of crises on tourism industry globally used system dynamic modeling on real-time data. Empirical studies on impact of covid outbreak on tourism industry are inadequate on spatial. It was suggested that hotels shall consider the preference of various cuisines of the customers and should provide variety of local food, diverge the range of beverages as drinks an important part of dinning out experience. Islamovna (2020) proposed for the development of a tourist and recreational complex after coronavirus pandemic for the restoration of the tourism sector. A strong emphasis on training of hotel staff to ensure they are providing service mind and willing to deliver high quality service. Hotels should structure the price with the all aspects of customer, hotels should management appropriately to satisfy the customer and enable to earn profits as well (Sharma and Agarwal, 2018). It was suggested social carrying capacity for better management of the destination and tourism authority should ensure the customer satisfaction (Sukiman, et.al. 2013).

Research Objectives

The objectives framed to this study are focusing on the scenario of the tourism and hospitality industry in Himachal Pradesh, Study based on the following objectives:

- To study the impact of COVID-19 on the tourism industry in Himachal Pradesh.
- To analyze the status of tourism facilities (travel agents, hoteliers, homestay owners, tourist guides, and Photographers) in Himachal Pradesh.

- To Study the tourism determinant influences on economic growth Himachal Pradesh.

Research Methodology

The data has been collected from secondary sources of various departments such as a handbook of department of Economic and Statistics Himachal Pradesh. Data collected on tourist gathering from 2009-2020 from final report of Himachal Pradesh by ministry of Tourism. The data also gathered from department of Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation, and various books, the articles, research papers, newspapers and internet websites. MS-excel is used to analyse data on domestic and foreign tourist arrival and tourist facilities in Himachal Pradesh.

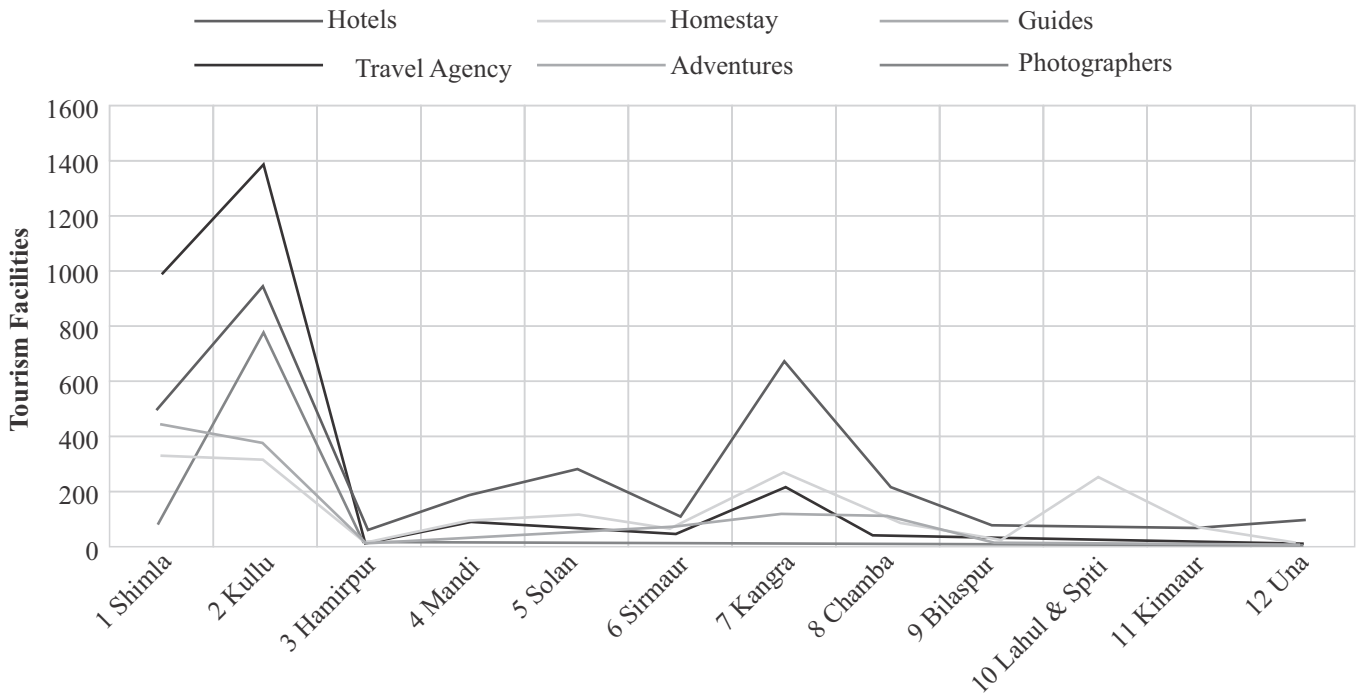
Analysis & Discussion

Graphical Representation of tourism in Himachal Pradesh

There are twelve districts in Himachal Pradesh named as *Shimla, Kullu, Hamirpur, Mandi, Solan, Sirmaur, Kangra, Chamba, Bilaspur, Lahul & Spiti, Kinnaur and Una*. District -wise tourism facilities in state of Himachal Pradesh are hotels, homestay, guides, travel agency, adventures, and photographers. To facilitate tourists was challenging as industry was affected with Covid - 19. To avoid the gathering on tourist spot various restrictions and was curfew on night of 31st December 2021. So, the first dimension of this study is to study the tourism facilities. In challenging world adoption of technology become more familiar for tourism industry so it was great opportunity.

Figure-1

Tourism facilities in Himachal Pradesh



District Wise

Source: Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation, Annual Report 2019.

Table 1. Tourist Facilities

	District	Hotels	Homestay	Guides	Travel Agency	Adventures	Photographers
1	Shimla	493	335	451	978	6	91
2	Kullu	953	327	368	1374	6	783
3	Hamirpur	60	7	2	6	0	0
4	Mandi	198	100	75	115	38	4
5	Solan	286	125	69	81	0	0
6	Sirmaur	111	42	55	7	0	0
7	kangra	672	268	128	231	97	3
8	Chamba	225	106	106	15	5	17
9	Bilaspur	84	14	29	28	2	1
10	Lahul & spiti	88	258	1	15	0	0
11	kinnaur	73	66	12	19	0	0
12	Una	106	9	0	7	0	0

In graphical representation various tourism facilities are indicated in different colour. At x-axis, study presented the district wise and at y-axis, tourist facilities are presented. Tourism facilities

provided in different states of Himachal Pradesh are seen as hotels highest 953 in Kullu district succeeded by Kangra district, highest 368 homestay facilities provided in Kullu which is

succeeded by Shimla, Shimla has top number of tourist guides 451 that is succeeded by Kullu. 1374 travel agencies facilitating in Kullu and 978 travel agencies at Shimla. Kullu is again best in Photography with 738 photographers. And Kangra provided few adventurous spots for tourists' others districts has negligible in adventure activities. Hence it is cleared from above district has highest tourism facilities is Kullu, so it is considered on the basis of tourism facilities that best tourist attraction is Kullu district.

Influence of Tourism on Economic growth

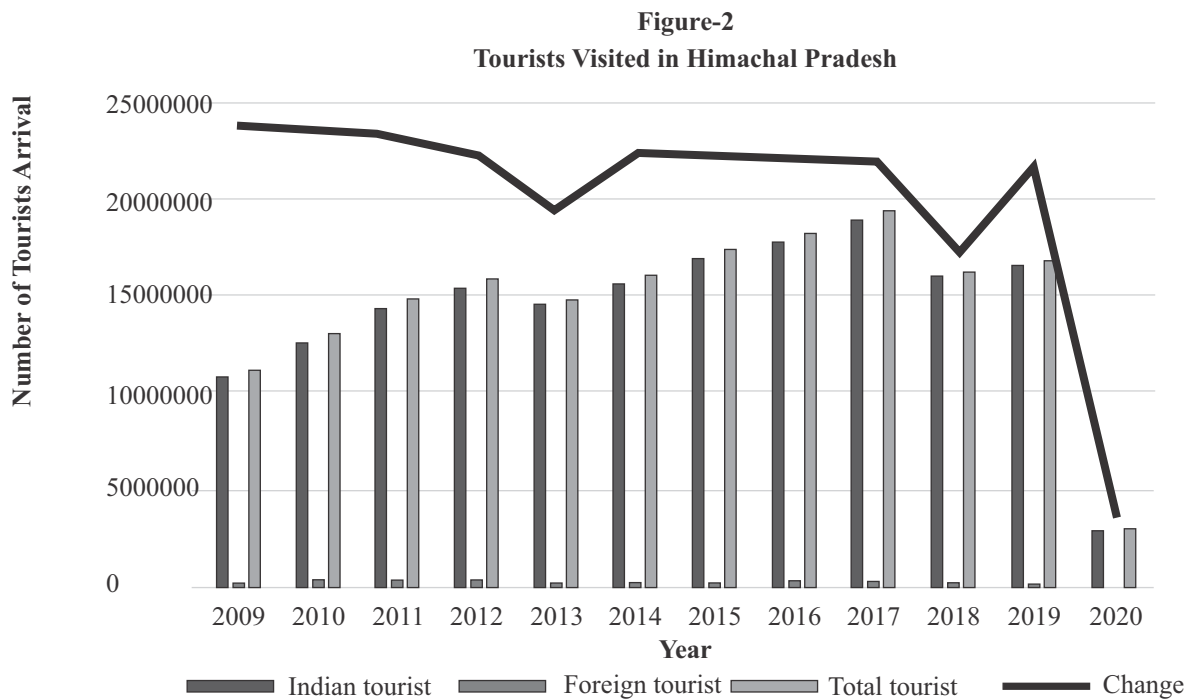
A relationship between tourism and economic growth diagnosed, that the tourism determinants influenced on economic growth such as investment, growth, initial GDP per capita, Government consumption, Trade, Agriculture GDP, Service GDP, manufacturing GDP, Employment (agriculture, service, Industry) and Inflation. It was fixed to generate employment for target of 14,500 persons, but 8600 people got employed for year 2020-21. Proportion of GDP expenditure on social services including health, education and others has been raised from 7.81 percent in 2014-15 to 10.89 percent in 2020-21.

Oshkordina, (2020) concluded that tourism

industry was highly profitable, emerging developing industry of the economy, but during pandemic tourism industry suffers with multi-billion-dollar losses, many players in the tourism services able to overcome the negative consequences of the pandemic. Niche tourism in market examined the phenomenon of globalization by infrastructure, destinations, technological advances, commercial space. It was synthesized tourism sector is in a constant, ever-growing direction, monetary intentions in tourism activities and incredible potential, other aspects are capacity risk and consumers perceived risk. Technological advancement improves the growth of tourism industry (Bunghez, 2021).

Impression of Covid -19 on Economic growth of Tourism Industry in Himachal Pradesh

It was an eruption of Covid 19 in economic growth by big shortfall of tourists in Himachal Pradesh. Total number of tourists visited in 2019-20 were 1,72,12,107 in which 1,68,29,231 were Indians and 3,82,876 foreigners, and total tourists visited in 2020-21 were 32,13,379 from which 31,70,714 Indians and 42,665 were foreigners. Number of tourists reduced from 2019-20 to 2020-21 was 13,998,728 which is approximately 81 percent.



Source: Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation, Annual Report, 2020

Table 2. Tourist Arrival

Year	Indian tourist	Foreign Tourist	Total tourist	Change
2009	11036572	400583	11437155	14.75%
2010	12811986	453616	13265602	13.78%
2011	14604888	484518	15089406	12.08%
2012	15646048	500284	16146332	7.00%
2013	14715586	414249	15129835	-6.30%
2014	15924701	389699	16314400	7.83%
2015	17125045	406108	17531153	7.46%
2016	17997750	452770	18450520	5.24%
2017	19130541	470992	19601533	6.24%
2018	16093935	356568	16450503	-16.08%
2019	16829231	382876	17212107	4.63%
2020	31,70,714	42,665	32,13,379	-81.33%

Above figure-2, represents number of tourists' arrival from 2009-2020 yearly, it represents Indian tourists' arrival and Foreign tourists' arrival respectively, above curve shows the per centage change of tourists' arrival steep in 2020. Loss of employment, income, investment and other economic losses. After first hit of corona virus

tourism was totally closed and it opened in July 2020, but inflow of few tourists up to April 2021. Targeted income of Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation was Rs.31.14 crore in year of 2020 but income generated was Rs 24.41 crore. Figured out 81% fall in tourist arrival in the state was a great loss for economy.

Manali hotelier's association president Anup Kumar said, "The tourism and allied industry have suffered a loss of Rs. 2,500 crore (approximately) in 2020". Federation of Himachal hotels and restaurant associations president Ashwani Bamba said, "95 percent Losses between March and October".

Research Findings

It is clearly seen the impact of covid pandemic on tourism industry of Himachal Pradesh from big shortfall of tourist arrival in the year 2020-21. It is analysed that tourist arrival from a decade is increasing continuously. But on the year pandemic happened tourist arrival declines. Tourism industry has an important contribution in the economy of Himachal Pradesh, during pandemic none of the tourist destination and scope was availed, so it effected the economic growth of state as well. Figure 2. represents the tourist arrival affected by pandemic, changes have 81% downfall. It has badly affected on the economic growth of the state as loss of employment, income, investment, that births as inflation, unemployment, stagnation in the economic growth.

Conclusion

This study concludes that Covid -19 has huge effect on tourism industry of Himachal Pradesh, it has declined tourism based economic growth during lockdown as all tourism facilities were closed. GSDP share of tourism industry in Himachal Pradesh was very less in 2020 earlier it was at 4.3% growth rate. Districts of Kullu, Shimla and Kangra have spotted maximum tourist arrivals pre pandemic period. 81% tourist arrival was a big amount of tourist that they were not visited. It shows there is significant relationship presents between tourism and growth of state's economy. To maintain sustainable growth in tourism's

contribution to economy need to develop infrastructure in less visited districts also and develop more tourism attractive markets in others like handicrafts and handlooms. It suggests that increase of infrastructure in tourism sector will recover fast the economic loss of state and will strengthen the growth of state economy in short time. Tourism facilities would be increased for adventure activities then it will increase attractions of tourists which will help in fast recovery of economy shown impact of pandemic.

Recommendations

Northernmost states of India like Jammu and Kashmir, Himachal Pradesh and Uttarakhand has enormous possibilities of tourism. Edirisinghe (2021) studied the impact of pandemic on tourism industry is directly visible on comparing industry with pre pandemic and post pandemic performance of the sector in GDP of many countries.

Himachal Pradesh is a beautiful tourist destination and many prospects can use its rich cultural heritage and natural beauty. Rather than this, Porwal (2020) mentioned in study titled "tourism unites, and Yoga provides health, happiness and harmony" a collective human input will be required for the revival of the tourism sector. In a study Evans, (2020) discussed the policy solutions on socio-economic impacts of novel coronavirus. The economic implications are detrimental to public health system, food and agriculture industries and trade and travel industries including market supply chains. Policy solutions are suggested as proactive management approaches, framework for health policy, social determinants of health, education and health literacy with effective implementation of policy solutions require support of stakeholders, government, media, non-government organizations, communities, health professionals and individuals.

Scope for Future Research

This study has suggestion for upcoming vision of tourism sector, there is lack of studies on various tourist facilities available in Himachal Pradesh. Vision on tourist facilities may also improve the quality of existing tourist facilities in future research. Undoubtedly Himachal Pradesh is beautiful mountainous place where everyone dreams to visit at-least once in life, so tourist facilities must be improved to make the visit joyful. In future researcher can explore the area of research interest on tourist expectation for quality of service, leisure and entertainment. It would be needful to study the unexplored destinations of state and determinants that affect the tourist behavior in future so tourism department of the state can increase the contribution of GSDP. Increase in economic perspective also increase the well-being of the people.

Limitations

This study conducted on the basis of secondary data in future it could be study the impact of pandemic on the tourism industry of state. Each Northern Indian state is mountainous are beautiful with various perspective we have studied only state Himachal Pradesh this time other states should be need to be studied. It would be more needful to conduct a parallel study of tourism industry from states. Study has explored only the impact of pandemic on the economic growth of tourism sector. It would be insightful to know the economic conditions and management of resources during the pandemic.

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