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Tourism and career sustainability: Solution driven approach

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Abstract

The generation of new employment opportunity and economic development both are importantly fuelled up by the tourism industry. It has represented by continuous growth and diversification in the past couple of decades, and became among the largest and rapidly-growing income generating economic sectors worldwide. Sustainable tourism has upgraded the living standard of human beings connected with tourism industry, revamp the communities, eradicate poverty, boost up the wealth, and bring positive and prosperous cultural, social, technological and economic changes in the host countries. If tourism sector controlled sustainably, it can help in manifold economic development, refined local and global culture along with better products and services, which will enhance local businesses and support creation of jobs. Tourism is treated as a sector which could lead a multiplier effect across all the major sectors of economy, including railways, aviation, agriculture, transportation, retail chains, supply chains, accommodation and food industry. It indicates that this sector is having utmost importance for creation of employment, local and global economic development, cultural development, improved products and services. But COVID-19 pandemic had a long term noxious impact on tourism business, earning of tourism workers, communities along with international effect which has ruined those economy who rely on tourism after years of effort in development and expansion in the industry. Not only this but the students and the academicians also got impacted by Covid 19 pandemic drastically. It not only reduced the interest of the students for this stream but also put a question on their future perspective to adopt tourism as their career to earn their livelihood and for the growth as an employee, entrepreneur and industrialist. Along with this, how faculty of tourism perceives it as a professional in teaching field. In this paper, researchers will study the perceptions of students and faculty of tourism sector, that how they perceive their future in tourism industry as employee, professionals or entrepreneur after Covid 19. Also, how the career sustainability can be achieved in tourism with respect to employment and income generation and the economic growth etc.

Keywords: Sustainable tourism, career sustainability, employment generation, tourism academician, tourism students, tourism entrepreneurs

Introduction

The world's largest service sector and source of employment is tourism. Being a labour-intensive sector, its performance depends on recurring and keeping qualified, trained people (El-Houshy, 2014) [15] (Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000) [28]. However, this sector is frequently denounced for its characteristic of low-skilled and low/less-paying jobs (Roney & Öztin, 2007) [41]. The travel and tourism sector has been expanding steadily over the past few years, and in 2019 it generated 330 million employment and 10.3% of the global GDP (WTTC, 2020).

By 2026, the worldwide hotel market is projected to generate USD 211.54 billion at a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 4.6%. (ZMR, 2019). In India, tourism generates 6.8% of the country's overall GDP (USD 194.3 billion) and employs about 39.82 million people, or 8% of all workers (WTTC, 2020). Both domestic tourism and foreign tourist arrivals (FTA) have increased during the past ten years (MOT, 2019). The country's hotel market alone was valued at USD 22 billion in 2019 and is expected to expand by 8.6% by 2025. (MF, 2020) [29]. The effects of COVID-19 on human health have been overwhelmingly terrible, but the subsequent economic effects put this crisis apart from all others (Hao, Xiao, & Chon, 2020) [21] According to (Earthscan. Sigala, 2020) [14], the crisis will not only unique in nature, but it will also have long-term structural and transformative effects. The tourist and hospitality sector has distinguished itself as the main provider and inheritor of the pandemic and its effects while industries around the world are being overrun by growing uncertainty (Hao, Xiao, & Chon, 2020) [21].

Understanding the present industry image, expected losses and problems affecting the tourist and hospitality sectors important from student/teacher/entrepreneur/professionals and recruiter point of view. These impressions may then have an impact on future labour supply, both in terms of number and quality. The purpose of this paper is to investigate how the epidemic has affected students' perceptions about the change in careers and transformation in desired services or skill set of employees in tourism and hospitality sectors. This article assesses the effects of transformation in tourism sector on students' and teachers' perception and willingness to work in the tourism and hospitality sector, as well as their opinions of changes to the workplace and their preferred alternatives.

Literature Review

This section begins by examining the effects of industry perspective on students' views and attitudes toward employment in the travel and hospitality sectors. Additionally, it presents a summary of the expansion of the travel and hospitality sectors in India as well as information on the various crises that the sector is currently experiencing. Finally, we look at how COVID-19 has impacted the industry's position in India.

Impact of industry image on students view and react to occupations in the tourist and hospitality sector

The expansion of the tourism sector results in an uptick in employment opportunities. The supply of tourist education, which works as in charge of creating a competent and educated workforce, and drives the way of career sustainability and knowledge (Gu, Kavanaugh, & Cong, 2007) ^[17].

For fruitful business operations in any industry, staff is vital (Rivera, 2020) ^[40]. One on one connection between workers and clients, benefits the sector, thus the quality of service becomes a major topic of concern. Service quality is determined by an employee's attitude, behaviour, and performance, which in turn impacts the customer satisfaction and long term aspect of loyalty (Richardson, 2010) ^[38]. While an employee's education, training drive them to work together to provide them a competitive advantage, their dedication to their industry also contributes to the company's ability to maintain that advantage (Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000) ^[28]. This commitment is determined by how employees and potential hires view their jobs, how they behave at work, and how they predict the industry's future growth.

It is asserted that the perception of an industry influences the propensity of potential employees to work there. This in turn affects the number and calibre of existing and prospective employees (Brien, Thomas, & Brown, 2017) ^[6]. Employment in related career prospects has historically been hampered by complex and confusing perceptions about the tourism and hospitality sectors (Riley, Ladkin, & Szivas, 2002) ^[39]. Some of the cited factors that are typically linked to the reputation of the tourism and hospitality industries include low pay opportunities (Richardson, 2010; Routledge & Richardson, 2008) ^[38, 42], low skill (Roney & Öztin, 2007) ^[41], high employee turnover (Qiu, Dooley, & Palkar, 2017), limited career opportunities (Routledge & Richardson, 2008) ^[42], and the temporary nature of the job (Roney & Öztin, 2007) ^[41]. Additionally, this picture is not brand-new or specifically regional (Brien, Thomas, & Brown, 2017) ^[6].

According to (Kshrisagar, Mansour, McNally, & Metakis, 2021) ^[26] this perceived unfavourable perception of the industry has a significant impact on potential employees' decisions about their careers.

Numerous studies have been conducted in the past two decades to map students' perceptions and attitudes toward professions in tourism and host service (Gomma & Sobaih, 2014) ^[16]. The literature that is currently available depicts the determinants of career perception and their implications have been examined in terms of the tourist and hospitality industries (Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000) ^[28] (Roney & Öztin, 2007) ^[41]. These studies provided in-depth analysis of factors that may negatively impact students' perceptions, including a high volume of low/less-skilled jobs (Routledge & Richardson, 2008) ^[42], long/higher working hours (Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000) ^[28], non-competitive pay and fringe benefits in the industry along with very less training (IET/IT) (Roney & Öztin, 2007) ^[41]. Research suggests a plausible beneficial link reveals a connection between training and attitudes and behaviour that ultimately helps an individual to sustain their career in tourism industry as it is termed as hospitality industry (Baloran, 2020) ^[3], (Kusluvan & Kusluvan, 2000) ^[28], (Richardson, 2010) ^[38]. Students' perceptions will change as the tourism and hospitality sector's reputation continues to deteriorate and the way people view employment in the sector will also alter, which will lead a negative impact on employee retention, performance, and recruitment. The purpose of this study is to investigate students' attitudes and views about professions in the tourism and hospitality industries in novel conditions. By doing this, it will give interested parties, the industry, and educational institutions a better understanding of likely student behaviour as well as their propensity and dedication to work in the field. This will help with better workforce post-pandemic strategy, planning and execution.

Indian Tourism Industry Scenario

India offers lively recreational and adventure activities as well as physical, political, and social variety for the development in tourism (Dixit, 2020) ^[13], (Roy & Saxena, 2020) ^[43]. The GDP of the nation is boosted by tourism to the tune of 6.8%. The average annual growth rate of foreign tourist arrivals to India during the past ten years was 13%. 17.4 million Foreign visitors came to India, and approximately USD 28.6 billion is earned as tourism-related revenue (UNWTO, 2019). According to the "Make in India" programme, every USD 1 million spent on travel and tourism might result in the creation of 78 employment (Sekhani, 2016) ^[46]. Additionally, 75% of India's enterprises are in the informal sector, which depends heavily on tourism (Sekhani, 2016) ^[46]. With plans to turn 17 famous sites into top-tier travel destinations, the nation has begun to concentrate on the development of tourism. Union Budget of India in 2019-20 included a "Tax Refund for Tourists (TRT) scheme" to promote increased tourist expenditure, following the example of nations like Singapore. In addition, the GST on hotel rates was lowered to 12% for room rates between USD 14.32 and 107.31 and to 18% for room rates beyond USD 107.32. As per literature tourism and hospitality industries grow in a combined manner over the past ten years.

Domestic tourism contributes significantly in Indian tourism market, as evidenced by the fact that domestic visitors (1854.9 million visits in 2018) far outnumbered foreign

visitors (10.56 million in 2018) (MOT, Govt. of India, 2019). The domestic tourist sector was opened up after the economic liberalisation policy initiated in the 1990s, which raised domestic income and consequently leads a handsome growth of a larger middle class (Rao & Suresh, 2013) [37]. Domestic travel numbers have increased dramatically since

2000, reaching 1.85 billion in 2018 (MOT, Govt. of India, 2019). India, however, anticipates expansion due to its demographic and economic characteristics. Both domestic and international tourism (Ohlan, 2017) [32] received USD 13.210 billion in FDI (IBEF, 2020).

Table 1: Tourism Data (2018-2021)

Description	FTA (Foreign Tourist Arrival) in Millions	FEE (Foreign Exchange Earnings) in USD Million	Employment in millions	GDP %
2018	10.56	28.568	72.69	5.01%
2019	10.93 (+3.5%)	30.058 (+5.1)	75.85	6.8%
2020	2.74 (-74.9%)	6.959 (-76.8%)	79.86	4.3%
2021	1.52 (-44.5%)	8.797 (+26.41)	58.36 (Tentative)	5.8%

Source: Reserve bank of India (2001-2017), Indian Tourism Statistics (2018-2021)

As per table no. 1 it is visible that Indian tourism sector is contributing a major chunk in employment and Gross domestic product of the economy. But Covid-19 hit this sector very badly, approximately 21.50 million jobs were curtailed during this time and contribution towards GDP has also fallen down. Here is a drastic need to revive this sector for better growth rate as an economy.

Overall Impact of Covid - 19

The tourism and hospitality sector is very vulnerable to destructive events (Pforr & Hosie, 2008) [34] and recent climate change and health issues have had a significant negative impact on the sector (Gupta, Cahyanto, Sajani, & Shah, 2021) [18]. According to (Page, Yeoman, Munro, Connell, & Walker, 2006) [33], the harm produced by natural catastrophes, economic crises, and terrorism-related crises pales in comparison to the effects of pandemics such as the avian flu, H1N1, ebola etc. The current pandemic (COVID-19) has paralysed the global economy (Jamal & Budke, 2020) [24]. The pandemic has a number of severe effects, including the loss of jobs and income, professional instability, restricted access to loans, extremely low to non-existent of product market demand, high risk of environmental exposure related to COVID-19, absence of sudden illness related insurance, huge workload and long working hours (Davahli, Karwowski, Sonmez, & Apostolopoulos, 2020) [11]. During earlier pandemics, it was also common to see loss of jobs and redundancies, requests for postponement of hotel loan payments, a fall in hotel stock demand, and government bailouts (Kaushal & Srivastava, 2021) [25]. Even though these crises have led to significant unemployment and financial losses, closures, and fatalities, the industry has proven to be resilient enough to return to routine (Novelli, Gussing Burgess, Jones, & Ritchie, 2020) [31].

Transformation in Tourism Industry Demand to match the supply

For being a successful workers in this industry, individual need to acquire new competencies to assist and push travel organisations towards significant changes, fuelled up by today's technology driven landscape, including all ins and outs of tourist demand (Roney & Ztin, 2007) [41]. It emphasises how the travel sector is evolving, past developments like self-booking mechanism and endless

desktop-to-mobile integration, and game-changing technology like destination knowledge, proactive solutions to travel disruptions, and other similar services that anticipate the customer response in real time (Bhatia, Roy, & Kumar, 2022) [4].

Tourism industry did not work in isolation in fact many other industry becomes an integral part of tourism. It includes Destination, Hotel, Travel & Transport system and importantly employees working in these industries.

Trends like smartphone interaction, artificial intelligence, chat bots, and interaction of the "Internet of Things", for concentration of data, online goodwill, digital and virtual reality have fundamentally changed the hotel and tourism business in last few decades (Bhatia, Roy, & Kumar, 2022) [4]. The pandemic pushed the tourism industry to offer significantly less to the world economy. Approximately US\$4.5 trillion income was deteriorated by the travel and tourism sector globally in 2020, and its percentage of the global GDP fell from 10.4% in 2019 to 5.5% (WTTC, 2020).

The immediate correction is required for long-term survival in responses to the COVID-19 in tourism sector, which can be achieved by maintain the quality of skills and lifelong learning. These are necessary to encourage people to return to the industry along with assisting the employees in finding new opportunities and positions within industry, acquiring required skills for the industry's digitalization, and commencing sustainable development for long-term recovery plans. A human-driven strategy is crucial for crisis management and recovery for future, to ensure fair, integrated, secure tenure, optimistic, productive, and freely chosen employment for all. To focus on productivity improvement, sustainable development, and at the core of it encourage the acquisition of skills, knowledge, and competencies for tourism employees throughout their working lives.

Finding the essential skills from entry level to management, is frequently difficult for hoteliers, restaurateurs, and tour operators. This may have a detrimental effect on output and services rendered, which may then have an adverse effect on a company's reputation, profitability, and potential investments. The ability of the tourism industry to recover from the crisis will be hampered by a lack of the necessary skills.

Table 2: Gaps to Fill

Basis	Earlier	Required
Hotel	Clean	Sanitized
	Less expensive	Somewhat costly but deep clean
	Highly occupied place	Low occupancy (Social Distancing)
Destination/ Place of visit	Prime destination where most of tourist visit	Clean and calm place to avoid crowd and maintain social distancing
	Less emphasise to cleanliness	High emphasise to cleanliness
	Place should be safe	Place should be safe, healthy, free from any epidemic
	Tour Guide should be less costly, no other concerns	Should be clean, not shabby, no personal touch, could be costly
Mode of Transport	Clean	Sanitized
	Feel safety in crowd mode of transportation	Need clean, less crowd and comfortable along with physical distancing
Employees	Personalised services	Contact less services
	Manual working	Technology oriented, usage of Bots, Artificial intelligence usage
Food	Can have from anywhere but less costly	Can afford costly but should be Healthy, Fresh, hygienically prepared

Note: Compiled by authors

It also focuses on examining key employment and skills issues, social protection, working conditions, basic principles and rights at work needs to associate with decent work. It concludes by exploring the major megatrends and forces that are affecting the tourist industry, its businesses, and its workforce, including globalisation, digitization, technological advancements, demographic shifts, and climate change.

Objective of the study

To establish a relationship or explore that the determinant of career perception leads career sustainability or not. Also, study the changing or transformative dimension of tourism industry so that sustainability can be derived by changing the related environment which is demanded by customer after COVID-19 pandemic.

Research Methodology

A structured questionnaire has been used to collect the response of the respondents. Google form has been created and responses are collected from students and faculty of tourism sector academicians. Total 251 valid responses has been collected and analysed for the study. Researcher has used “Structural equation modelling” to establish the relationship between determinants of career perception and career sustainability. Along with this descriptive analysis has also been used to evaluate the changing or transformative dimension of the tourism industry which needs to implement for sustainability of tourism sector and career in this field.

Independent variables or Determinates of career perception are Availability of Career Opportunity, Working environment, Pay & benefits, Skills & competencies and Professional Growth & Personal Development (Al., 2022), whereas Career perception is latent variables which is led by determinates of career perception. Further career perception work as Independent variable which leads the career sustainability (Dependent variable).

Hypothesis of study

- H0-1 There is no significant impact of career opportunities on career perception.
- H0-2 There is no significant impact of working environment on career perception.
- H0-3 There is no significant impact of pay and benefits on career perception.
- H0-4 There is no significant impact of skills and competencies on career perception.

H0-5 There is no significant impact of growth and development on career perception.

H0-6 There is no significant impact of career perception on career sustainability.

Analysis and Interpretation

Total 251 respondents has been used to analysis the study, out of which 41.8% are faculty of tourism and 58.2% are tourism students. 39.4% are male respondents and rest 60.6% are female respondents.

Table 3: Demographic Data

Type of Respondents	Faculty	Students	Total
Academicians	105 (41.8%)	146 (58.2%)	251 (100%)
Gender of Respondents	Male	Female	Total
	99 (39.4%)	152 (60.6%)	251 (100%)

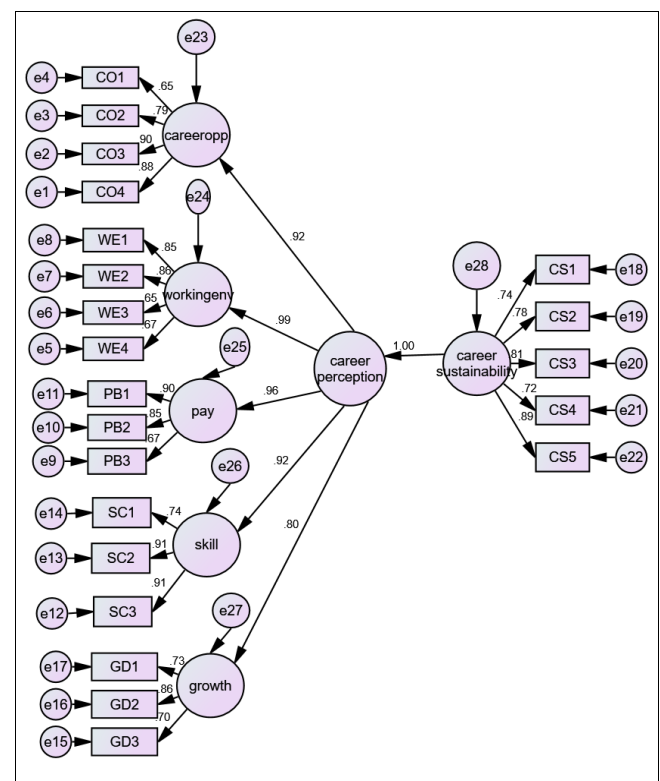


Fig 1: Career Sustainability Model

Beta values of all the items should be more than .6 for better representation of the variable by the items. All the beta values are more than .65.

Table 4: Model fit Values of career sustainability model

Statistical Fitness Index	CMIN/Df	Goodness of Fit Index (GFI)	Tucker-Lewis Incremental Fit Index (TLI)	Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	Normative Fit Index (NFI)	Root Mean Square error (RMSEA)
Estimated value of the Index	2.892	0.819	0.906	0.917	0.879	0.087
Required value of the index	<= 3	> 0.8	> 0.9	>= 0.9	>= 0.8	< = 0.09

To establish the relationship between determinants of career perception and career sustainability and to validate the scale of career perception “structural equation modelling” technique has been used. Where the model fit values are statistically satisfactory. The model is quite useful to determine the factors that needs to maintain to derive a long

term career and P value is also significant (P Value - .000). It shows that all the determinants of career perception are important from students as well as faculty’s point of view and they all are having significant impact on career sustainability of tourism students.

Table 5: Hypothesis Testing

Sr. No.	Null Hypothesis	P Value	Inference
1.	H0-1 There is no significant impact of career opportunities on career perception.	***	Fail to accept Null hypothesis
2.	H0-2 There is no significant impact of working environment on career perception.	***	Fail to accept Null hypothesis
3.	H0-3 There is no significant impact of pay and benefits on career perception.	***	Fail to accept Null hypothesis
4.	H0-4 There is no significant impact of skills and competencies on career perception.	***	Fail to accept Null hypothesis
5.	H0-5 There is no significant impact of growth and development on career perception.	***	Fail to accept Null hypothesis
6.	H0-6 There is no significant impact of career perception on career sustainability.	***	Fail to accept Null hypothesis

Changing and transformative scenario in tourism industry

The data collected from respondents shows that the tourism industry has changed drastically during and after COVID-19. As it was the sector which is totally banned by the

government as a preventive measure to reduce the spread of corona virus. After pandemic the general choice of the tourists has also been changed for safer tomorrow and due to futuristic view.

Table 6: Descriptive of Transformative variables

Sr. No.	Transformative changes for better future and sustainability	Mean Value	Inference
1.	From Manual working to technology based working like artificial intelligence, robotics etc.	3.51	Highly recommended
2.	From safe and clean destination to sanitized and hygienic destination	4.10	Highly recommended
3.	From highest visiting tourist destination to comparatively less explored destination	3.91	Highly recommended
4.	From Personalised services to contact less services	4.22	Highly recommended
5.	From Less skilled or unskilled labours to highly skilled and tech savvy labours are desired	3.45	Highly recommended
6.	From job seeker to job creator or entrepreneur	3.95	Highly recommended
7.	From less expensive and compromised service along with average cleanliness to comparatively expensive but no compromise with services and cleanliness.	4.18	Highly recommended
8.	From no concern about employee to considerable consideration about look and feel of employees.	4.30	Highly recommended

As per the above table it is cleared that all the mean values which are provided by the respondents of the study drive the study towards the requirement of change in tourism industry. As per the changing time the customer requirements are also shaping accordingly. Customer want such kind of destination where they can separate themselves from crowd while being the part of crowd. Enough space for social distancing along with sanitized or thoroughly clean lodging and boarding facilities.

Conclusion

It recognises the travel and tourist industry as one of the most severely affected industries and demands for quick recovery and coordinated action to "enable a sustainable future of travel and tourism industry, keeping in mind its labor-intensive nature. Even though the tourism sector significantly contributes to employment and economic growth, it still has issues with decent working environment that need to be resolved in order to support a speedy recovery from the recent pandemic of COVID-19 crisis that is inclusive, safe, resilient, fair, sustainable, and human-centred. The COVID-19 recovery effort offers the chance to reconsider the tourism industry's future, introduce

sustainable, greener models of tourism, and create green jobs within the industry. Since 2000, there has been a 250% increase in international tourism, which has created potential for expansion but also brought up concerns related to the social and environmental sustainability of travel and tourism. There is still room for growth in the number of green jobs in the tourism industry. The majority of new jobs has been created for medium-skilled workers by adding new knowledge and skills to existing jobs, which can be prove fruitful for ecotourism.

In order to create and maintain decent jobs, increase employability, productivity, and social inclusion, as well as to maximise the opportunities and well-being of employers and employees, it is crucial to invest in technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and development and enhancement of multiple skills specifically address the needs of the tourism sector. Due to the significant skills gaps that the tourism industry is currently experiencing low income. TVET and skills development might significantly improve productivity and profitability notably by utilising the growth potential of digital technology. Also incentives can be introduced to motivate the tourism workforce to remain in the sector and provide utmost satisfaction to the

tourists.

Future skill development initiatives for workers in the tourism industry may make use of new educational technologies, transform workplaces into learning environments, and elevate skill-building initiatives. Work based learning can be incorporated, including core and digital skills, to address the needs of businesses and employment for better outcomes.

The best ways to ensure the safety of employees and visitors are through proper ventilation, adequate usage of mask, physical separation, hand hygiene, routine cleaning, and immunisation programmes. The reopening of economies and tourist destinations, as well as establishing a path to sustained and resilient growth and recovery in the tourism sector, depend on these policies and actions.

Future Scope

Although all related fields are discussed in above mentioned paper but tourism sector cannot work in isolation. Various other fields are included in this like food industry, handicraft industry and various small scale and ancillary industries. Tourism industry is one of the high rated income generated economic activity, which can have a significant positive impact on a nations GDP and balance of payments, if developed sustainably it has huge and immense capabilities. Career sustainability can be achieved in tourism and related industries by maintaining quality and meeting the demand of the tourist in desired manner and further studies can be extended to other sectors related to tourism.

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