

COVID 19 and Tourism Industry: Strategies Adopted for Survival During Pandemic Time in India

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Abstract:

In February 2021, in India, there were about 10,000 COVID infections in a day, and it started worsened in the April 2021 and setting new global records daily in second wave. In order to control the severe impacts of the deadly wave, states came ahead with the several restrictions and lockdown strategies. These measures have impacted various industries and job losses are the end results. The tourism industry could not be unaffected with the severe impacts of this wave too.

The paper discusses about the various promotional strategies adopted by small travel agencies and small hotels in India for the survival in this adverse time for having some consistent earning.

Keywords: COVID 19 and tourism, COVID impacts on tourism, Tourism Industry, Strategies of Survival.

Introduction:

The second wave of the deadly COVID-19 hit India to worst with new record high cases reported every day. The center and state Governments are trying to curb the increasing curve of the infected cases with several measures. The state who are affecting severely have imposed lockdown partial or complete. The movement of the people has been restricted. Several industries have been affected with such lockdown and restrictions. As per the Naukri job report for Apr'21, the hiring activity declined by 15% when compared to March 2021 due to the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic (India Today). Situations are getting worst in the destinations like Kashmir who have opened with full boom after first wave of COVID-19. All the stakeholders including hoteliers, houseboat owners, travel agents, shikara owners and others are worried in the valley due to ninety per cent cancellation of bookings (Hindustan Times). But money as the necessity of life, for earning money some travel agencies in collaboration with hotel industry came ahead with idea of work from destination hotel room.

The idea is getting successful even. With Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh opening its borders, professionals are escaping the monotony and heat of the cities with their families, laptops and a COVID-19 negative certificate (Indian Express). Simultaneously other modes of earning are also emerged by the travel agents in this adverse time for earning their livelihood.

Objective of the Study: Current pandemic situation has worsened the situations in India. The study is conducted to observe:

1. The Impacts of COVID 19 on the Tourism Industry in the India.
2. The Strategies adopted by the Tourism Industry, Particularly, small scale travel agencies and hotel properties for the survival during COVID 19 pandemic situation.

Research Methodology: The key role players of the study are tourism industrialist i.e., small scale level travel agents and hotel properties. In order to achieve the above stated objects in-depth study is done of the different promotion packages and flyers introduced by these stakeholders during this time and promoted on different platforms. The promotion packages are directly called from the industrialists who have done such promotional activities. Some packages are taken from the newspaper and Social Media group of the respective body.

Strategies: The travel industry emerged with various strategies for the survival during this pandemic time.



Diagram 1: Strategies of Survival

- **Work – from - Hill:** Work-from-home is getting replaced with the concept of Work – from – Hill, as people move their workstations to the hills. With Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh opening its borders, professionals are escaping the monotony and heat of the cities with their families, laptops and a COVID-19 negative certificate (Indian Express). It seems to be the Win-Win situation for both host as well as guests. The guest gets to spend their working summer in a relaxed environment while industry get a steady source of income. The accommodation property provides the paying guest facilities at a fixed monthly rent, having study table and good Wi-Fi connection.

- **IRCTC** has launched a special 'work from hotel' package, providing professionals a "refreshing and soothing ambiance" in hotel rooms in Kerala as an alternative to the 'work from home' (Economic Times).



Figure 2 (Source: IRCTCtourism)

The package per person on triple occupancy for five-night stay starts from Rs. 10,126 and includes disinfected rooms, all three meals, twice tea/coffee, complimentary wi-fi, secured parking place for vehicle, and travel insurance (Economic Times). In terms of pricing, the package per person on triple occupancy for five-night stay starts from ₹10,126 and includes disinfected rooms, all three meals, twice tea/coffee, complimentary wi-fi, secured parking place for vehicle, and travel insurance (Live Mint).

- Similarly, **Pax Hotels and Resorts** promoting “The Work from Hills” of **Hotel Mount View, Dalhousie** with minimum three nights stay package. The package varies from Rs. 7666/- for three nights stay to Rs. 29999/- for fifteen-night stay. It includes accommodation, meals as per offer, daily evening tea with snacks, two water bottles etc.

3 NIGHTS		7 NIGHTS		15 NIGHTS	
MINIMUM STAY		MINIMUM STAY		MINIMUM STAY	
7666*		15999*		29999*	

Package inclusions:

- ☐ Welcome drink on arrival
- ☐ Accommodation on Double / Twin sharing basis
- ☐ Meals as per plan at our restaurant
- ☐ Daily evening 1/2 Tea with veg. Snacks
- ☐ 02 Bottles of mineral water per day
- ☐ Cookies platter in room on arrival
- ☐ Use of Tea/Coffee Maker, daily replenishment
- ☐ Two Children below 6 year is complimentary
- ☐ 20% discount on F&B
- ☐ 20% discount on Laundry

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Figure 3 (Source: PAX)

- Similar offers are given by **Country Inn, Bhimtal**. The property is offering a comparison of working inside the room and the work to be done in the charming and peaceful environment of hills.



Figure 4 (Source: Country INN)

- **Long Duration Stay Package:** Some hotels are offering long duration stay package in a very nominal price with all facilities to attract potential tourist towards the property.

- **Di Casa**, a budget property in Goa is providing lucrative offer. Where a guest can be accommodated at a nominal tariff of Rs.999 per person per night for long stay package. The package requires minimum 10 days stay. The package covers stay, two meals, free Wi-Fi, swimming pool etc. The property is near to Calangute Beach. The package varies from Rs. 999/- per person per night to Rs. 1998/- for three persons per night.

Figure 5 (Source: Di CASA)

- **Forest View Resort Mussoorie**, a property near mall road Mussoorie, trying to attract the potential tourists with its long stay duration package. The prices vary from Rs. 21000/- for seven nights to Rs. 75000/- for thirty nights on big discount. The stay is offered with all meals and free Wi-Fi facilities.

Figure 6 (Source: Forest View Mussoorie)

- Online Internship:** In order to manage some finances, some travel agencies came up with an idea of providing Online Internship to the Tourism Students or to those, who see their future in this industry as career. **Travel ZUZU** in association with **TRAVELSPORIUM** is providing 28 days online training program to the tourism students covering all the syllabus related to Destinations Knowledge, Documentation, VISA processing, FOREX reserves, Online Portals etc. in a minimum fee of Rs. 1500/- per student.



Figure 7 (Source: Travelsporium)

- Digital Marketing: Amigos Alliance LLP**, offers other travel agents providing assistance in promotion during this pandemic time through flyers on the social media. The company offers in creating colorful and attention seeking flyers with brand names of the respective travel agency and assist them in the promotion. The team came with an idea to assist their clients by using digital marketing to reach enormous audience in a very cost-effective way with offer price of Rs. 1500/- only.



Figure 8 (Source: Amigos Alliance LLP)

- Book Now and Travel After: Mother India Tour Travels** came up with an idea of Book now and Travel After. The travel agency is offering package to the North hill destinations. The offer is given for 05 nights and 06 days package for Shimla, Kullu and Manali with inclusions of two meals, all transfers and sightseeing in AC vehicle and all taxes. The package varies from Rs. 11225/- per person for minimum 06 pax to Rs. 31500/- per couple.

Shimla Kullu Manali Tour ! Grand Himachal Tour ! BOOK NOW & TRAVEL AFTER - Contact us & book your dream vacation : <http://motherindiatourtravels.in/package/delhi-shimla-manali-tour-packages/> , Email: tourttravelsmotherindia@gmail.com ! Call/WhatsApp +91 9810140121 , we can arrange tailor made tours !

PACKAGE COST	INCLUSIONS
02 Pax. *BUDGET PACKAGE ₹31,500 FOR COUPLE.	Accommodation with Daily Breakfast & Dinner, Comfortable A/C vehicle with driver, All transfers, All sightseeing, All toll taxes, State taxes, Parkings, Pick up & Drop
04 PAX. *BUDGET PACKAGE ₹ 11,500/- Per Person.	
06 PAX. *BUDGET PACKAGE ₹ 11,225/- Per Person.	

Figure 9 (Source: Mother India)

- Isolated Place: Vivanta Global Holidays** is offering its paid services to its clients in arrangements of full equipped and sanitized isolated place for quarantine. The package includes trained staff for maintaining covid related hygiene, regular sanitization of all areas, having full compliance with COVID protocols.

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Figure 10 (Source: Vivanta)

Conclusion: COVID 19 has impacted the tourism industry to its worst, as the travelling has almost come to end during this situation. Many of the travel agencies are resultant into permanent closure that made most of the tourism employee job less. But survival in adverse

condition is required. The industry came up many strategies to earn some money for their livelihood and survival. Desired results of survival are expected in this situation. The paper has scope to study the impacts of such strategies adopted on the tourism industry.

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