



AN ANALYSIS ON THE REPERCUSSIONS OF COVID-19 ON WORKERS IN TOURISM SECTOR WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ALAPPUZHA DISTRICT

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Abstract: The impact of Covid-19 pandemic in the lives of the general public and different service sectors like Tourism was tragic. The sudden outbreak of this pandemic and the restrictions imposed on our society to prevent its spreading have disastrous effect on our global economy. Here, in this study, an attempt is made to know the “Impact of Covid-19 on workers in tourism sector with special reference to Alappuzha district”. Sample of 50 was taken for the purpose of conducting this study. The data collected from the primary and secondary resources has been detailly analysed to have a better understanding of the present condition and future possibilities of the tourism industry.

Key words: Tourism, Covid-19, Workers in tourism sector

Introduction

The outbreak of Corona virus disease (Covid-19) has a catastrophic effect on our economy. The Covid-19 has impacted every segment of life like commercial establishment, education, economy, religion, transport, tourism, employment, entertainment, food security, sports, etc. Tourism is one of the most affected sectors due to the pandemic. The various safety and security measures adopted by the Government or authorities to control the spread of this disease includes travel bans, closing public places, including travel attractions and monuments, and restriction of movement. These measures have helped us to control the spread of this disease. But at the same time, the impact that it had created in the Tourism sector was disastrous. Kerala is one of the most popular tourist destinations in our country. The rich culture of Kerala makes it such an important tourist destination in the country. Alappuzha, also known as Venice of the East, is one of the most sought-after destinations in Kerala. Presently, it is famous for its boat races, backwater holidays, beaches, marine products, and coir industry and it employs a vast number of locals in the private sector of tourism. So, it is essential to know the impact of Covid-19 on the tourism sector of Alappuzha district. Thus, this study is conducted to discover the impact of COVID 19 on the life of workers in the tourism industry of Alappuzha district.

Review of Literature

1. **(Bakar & Rosbi, 2020)** investigated the 'Effect of Corona virus disease (COVID 19) to tourism industry'. They evaluated the impact using supply and demand curve to detect the economic changes in tourism industry. The demand function is developed using a few parameters namely tastes and preference of customers, average income of certain countries, number of buyers and economic and environmental scenario. The supply function is determined by important factors namely resource price, production techniques, price of related goods, supply stocks and numbers of sellers. The result of the study showed that the COVID 19 had created panic among the public, which led to lower demand in tourism industry. This was mainly due to the lockdown approach adopted by many countries.
2. **(Jaipuria et al., 2020)** studied the impact of COVID 19 on tourism sector in India. The main objectives of the paper were three-fold which is as follow: (i) predicting the number of foreign tourist arrivals, particularly in India using ANN model, (ii) analyzing the impact of COVID-19 on tourism in terms of loss and gain in FEE, and (iii) suggesting the appropriate theoretical and managerial implications. They found that there was nearly 68% decline in foreign tourists' arrival in India and it has a great impact on the revenue generated from tourism in the form of Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEE).
3. **(Baum, 2020)** studied 'Hospitality, Tourism, Human rights and Impact of COVID 19'. The study was based on review of the scenario from human rights point of view. They found that rights to participate in hospitality and tourism, particularly in parts of Asia, Europe and North America, were affected on a scale unprecedented in peacetime.
4. **(Bas & Sivaprasad, 2021)** investigated 'The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic Crisis on the Travel and Tourism Sector: UK Evidence'. They found that this pandemic has negatively affected the travel and tourism sector and resulted in many job losses, bankrupt of the firms and decrease in consumer confidence.
5. **(Brouder, 2020)** pointed out an evolutionary pathway towards the transformation of tourism in a COVID 19 world. His study marked that a radical transformation in the tourism sector is yet to be seen but its imprint it will leave on both the demand and supply of tourism will have long-term, incremental impacts for years to come and ultimately move us closer towards the transformation of tourism.

Objectives of the study

- To assess the impact of Covid19 on the economic status of workers in Tourism industry.
- To examine the measures taken by Government to help the workers in Tourism sectors.
- To analyze the steps taken by different tourism organization's in helping the workers in tourism sector.
- To know the strategies and future plan of workers to cope up with the unemployment created by the pandemic situation.

Research methodology

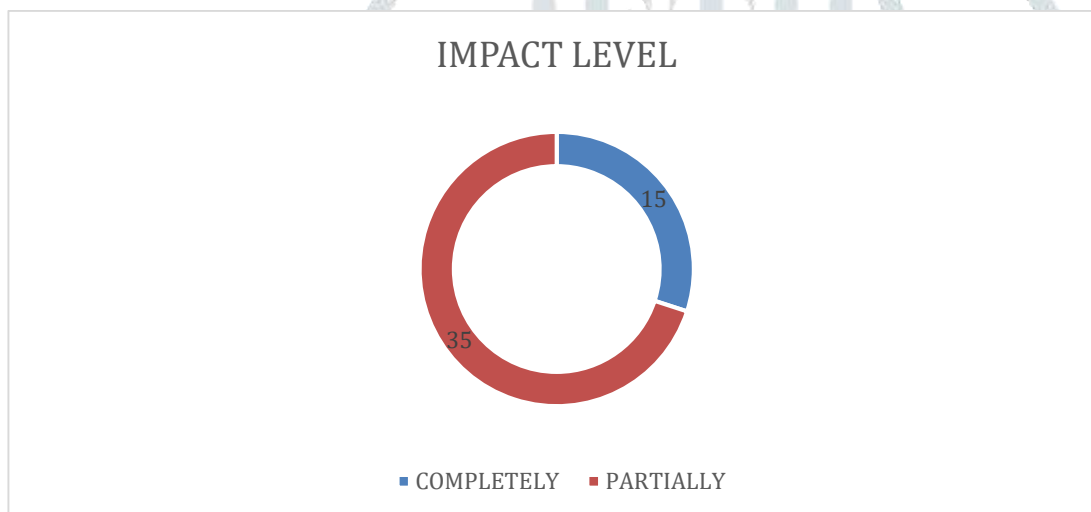
Data: The data required for this proposed study has been collected from both the primary and secondary resources. The primary data has been collected from the sample group by circulating a questionnaire consisting 16 relevant questions. The secondary data were collected from various websites, books, journals and published documents. Discussions were also made with the employees of hotels, resorts, house boats and travel agency.

Sample size and technique: A sample of 50 was taken by using simple random sampling method to collect the relevant information that is required to conduct this study.

Tools of Analysis: The tools used for the purpose of data analysis includes percentage analysis, percentage score and tables.

Data Analysis and Interpretations

1. IMPACT OF COVID 19



Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION: Majority of the respondents opined that their sector is partially affected by Covid 19 and nearly 30% of them reported that their company/industry were completely affected by Covid 19.

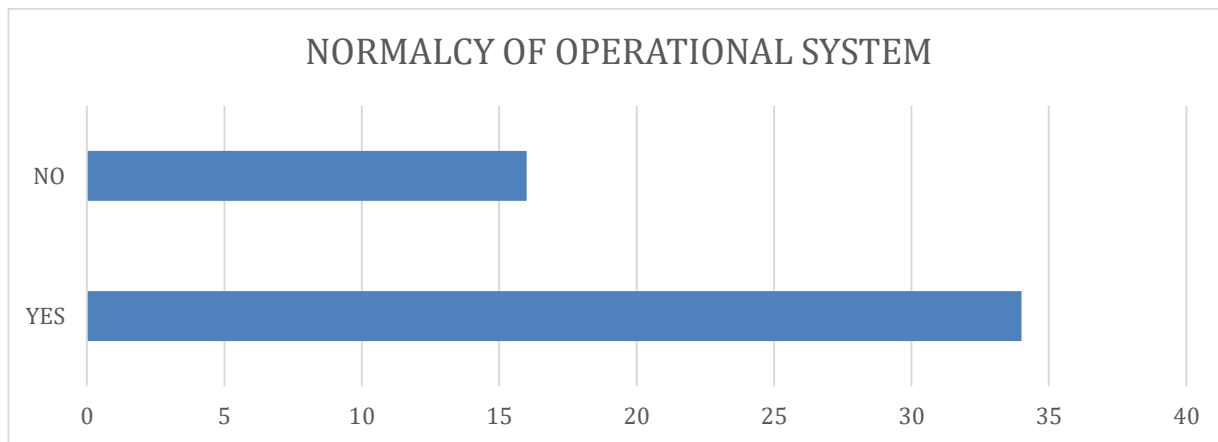
2. REDUCTION IN NUMBER OF CUSTOMERS



Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION: The table shows that 42% of the respondents had an estimated loss of customers within a range of 50-75%. 16% reported that their loss of customers was more than 75%. Only 10% of them reported a loss less than 25%.

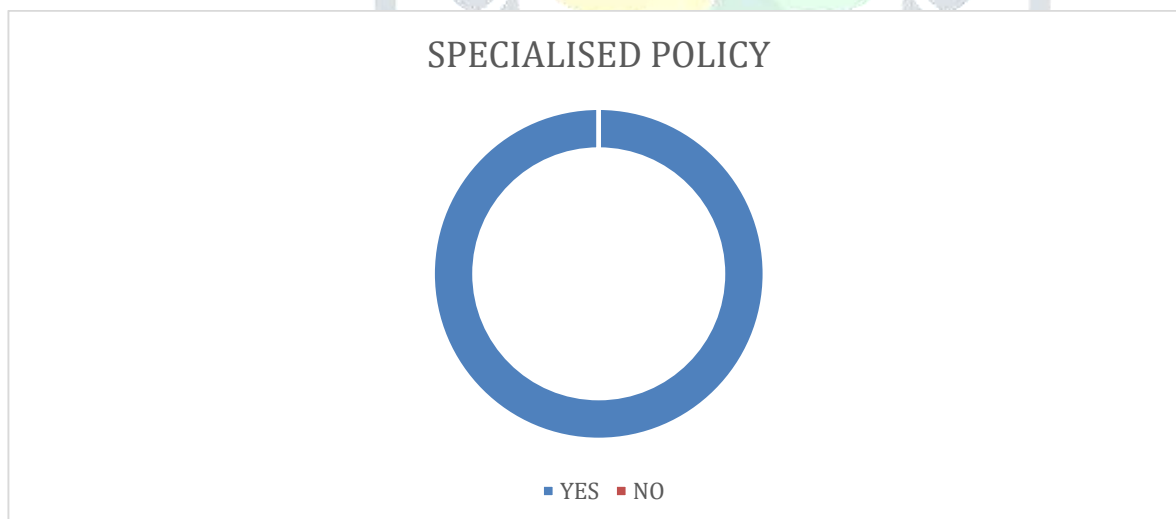
3. NORMALCY OF OPERATIONAL SYSTEM



Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION: The respondents were asked whether their operational system is working as usual. 68% of them opined that their business is back to normal as usual and 32% of the respondents still was not able to function the operational system as usual.

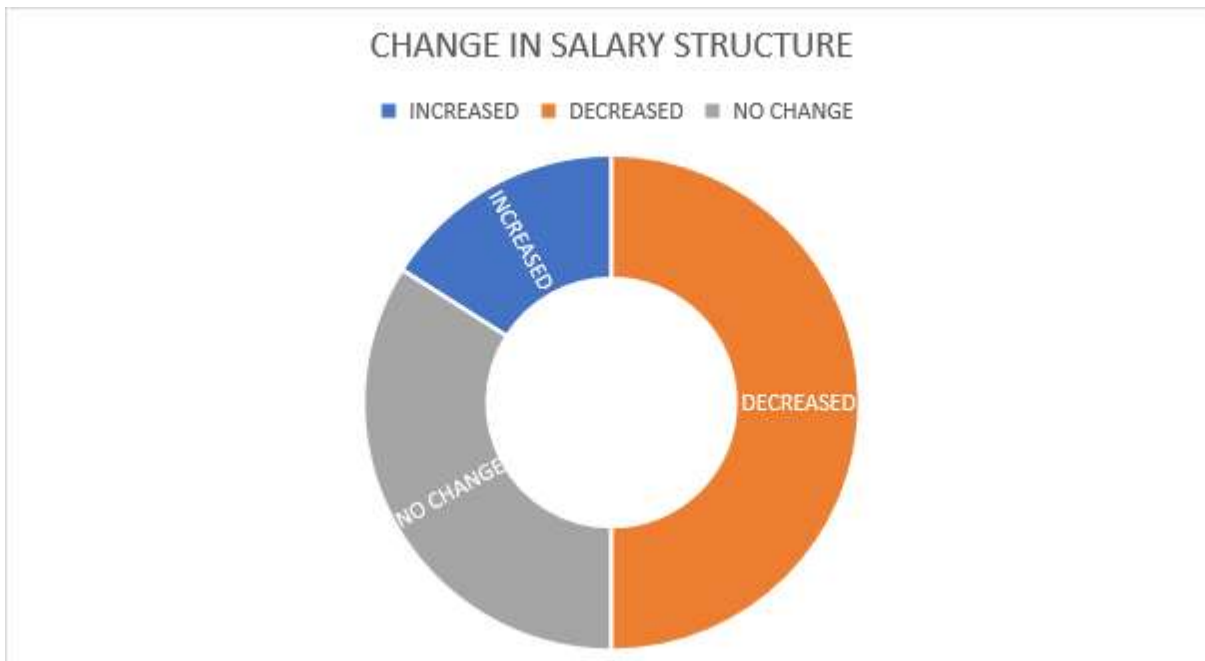
4. ISSUANCE OF SPECIALISED POLICY



Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION: When the respondents were asked whether they had issued any specialized policy to deal with Corona virus, the entire respondents enrolled yes as the answer

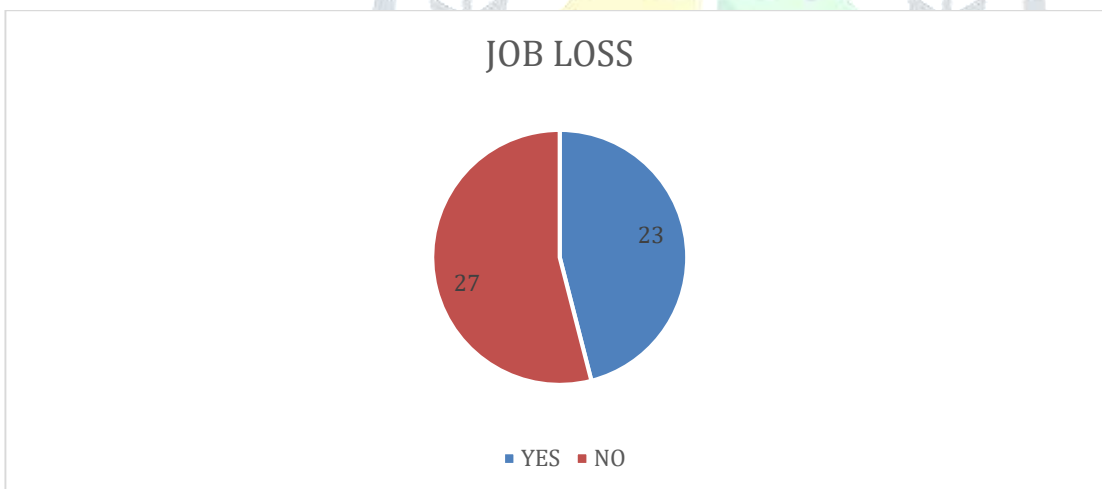
5. CHANGE IN SALARY



Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION: About 50% of the respondents reported that their salary has been decreased as a result of pandemic and 34% of them had no change in their salary structure. Only 16% of them experienced an increase in salary even during this pandemic.

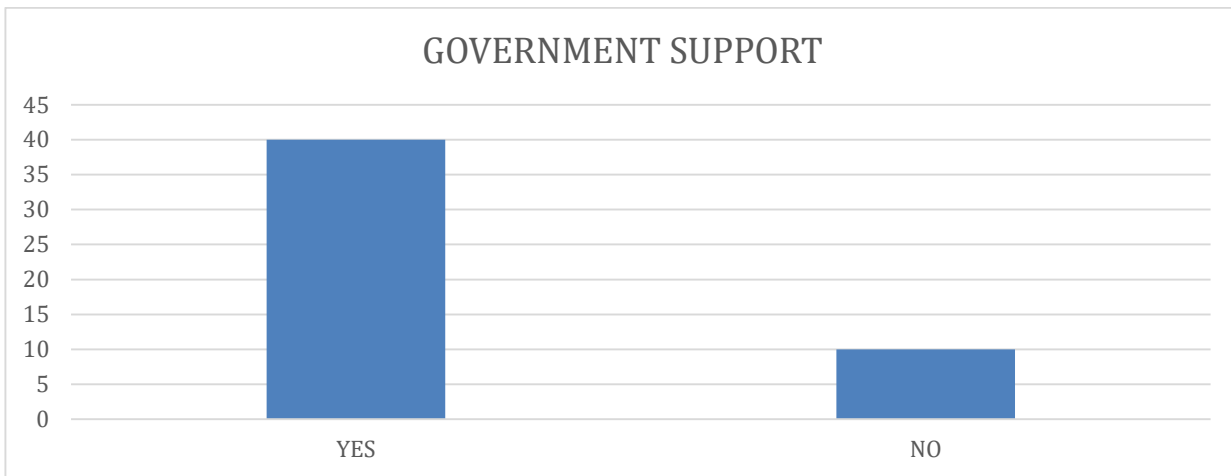
6. JOB LOSS



Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION: The above table shows that 46% of the respondents reported layoffs of jobs of their colleagues due to business loss as a result of Covid 19. Fortunately, 54% of them opined that they had no experience of such cases in their company/industry.

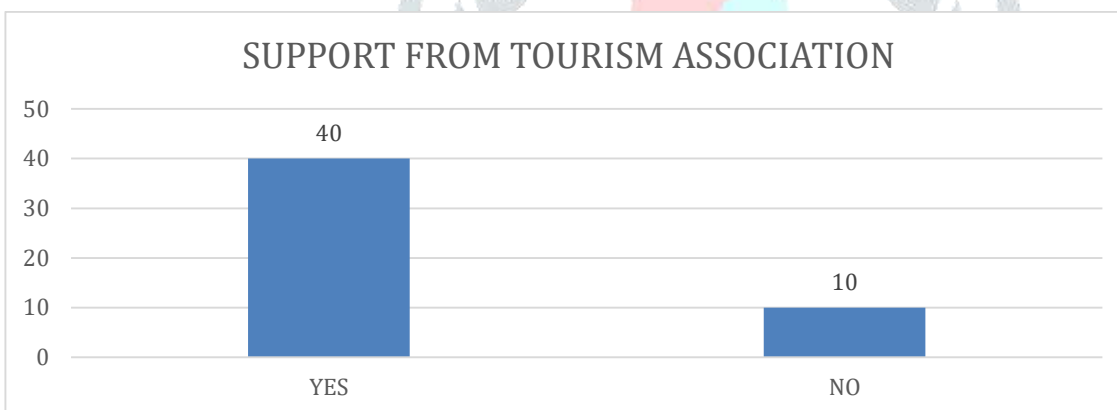
7. GOVERNMENT SUPPORT



Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION: Table 3.11 indicates that 64% of the respondents got enough assistance from government and 36% of the respondents didn't get enough support from the Government to recover from the loss of business.

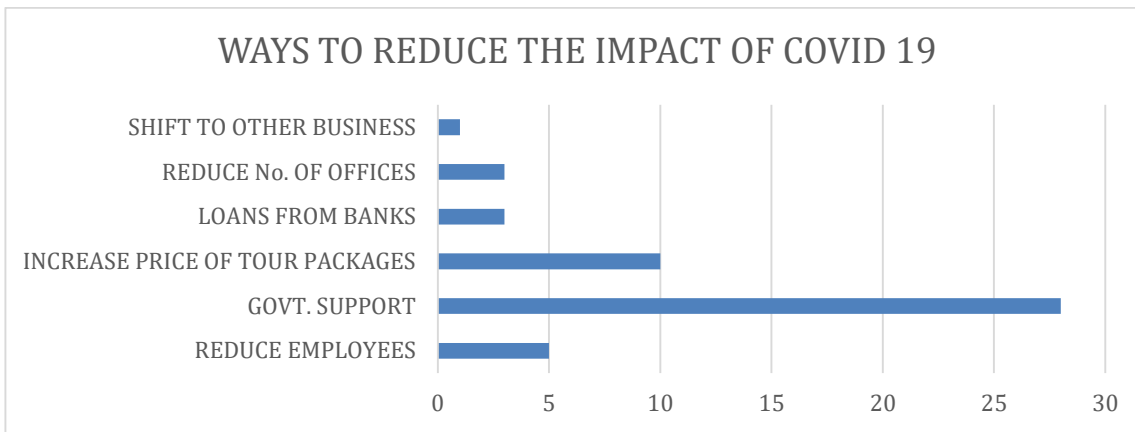
8. SUPPORT FROM TOURISM ASSOCIATION



Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION: The above table shows that 80% of the respondents got support from tourism association in the form of finance as well as promotion of tourism industry. 20% of them lack such a support from tourism association.

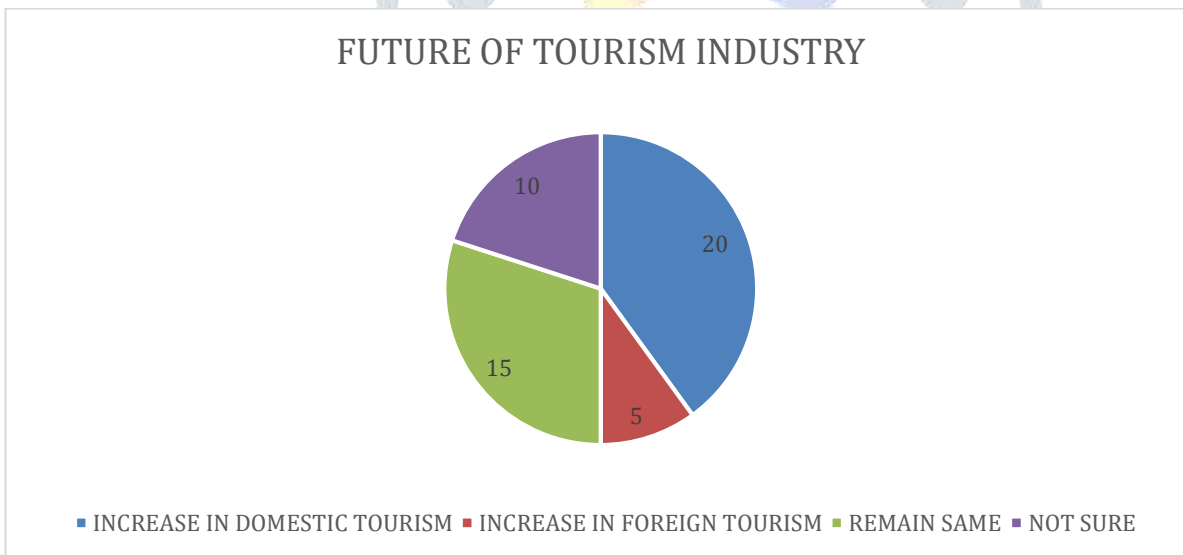
9. SUGGESTIONS TO MITIGATE IMPACT OF COVID 19 ON BUSINESS



Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION: When respondents were asked to provide suggestions to reduce the impact of Covid 19 on the tourism industry, significant number of respondents enrolled that adequate Government support will pose a solution to the problems. Nearly 20% of them suggested that increasing the price of tour packages will change the scene to an extent.

10. FUTURE OF TOURISM INDUSTRY



Source: Primary Data

INTERPRETATION: The above table shows that 40% of the respondents are of the view that the domestic tourism will increase more than foreign tourism and 10% opined the opposite i.e., the foreign tourism will increase more than domestic tourism. 30% of them responded that the tourism industry will remain the same. 20% are not sure about the future of tourism industry.

Findings

- The study indicates that majority of respondents are partly affected by the COVID-19. Nearly 30% have completely affected by the pandemic situation. And 42% of the respondents have 50% - 75% of loss of customers as compared to previous year. 16% of the respondents said that they lost more than 75% of their customers.
- About 68% of the respondents are back to their normal business operations. 32% of the respondents are still not able to fully function as normal. And there was a decrease in the salary of respondents due to Covid-19. However, 16 % of them experienced a salary hike and 34% of them had no change in their salary.
- The study shows that 46% of the respondents reported layoffs of jobs of their colleagues due to business loss as a result of Covid 19. Fortunately, 54% of them opined that they had no experience of such cases in their company/industry.
- 64% of the respondents reported that they got assistance from the Government and the rest reported negatively. It also shows that 80% of the respondents got support from tourism associations also.
- 56% of the respondents said that only Government support will give a solution to the problems caused by the pandemic, 20% responded that increase in the package price could be a solution. 10% reported that the reduction in no. of employees would be a temporary solution.
- About the future of tourism in Alappuzha 40% of the respondents reported that domestic tourism will increase more than foreign tourism. 30% responded that it could remain the same and 20% reported that they are not sure about the future courses.

Suggestions

- With the outbreak of global pandemic, tourists have become ultra-conscious about their hygiene habits and prefer quintessential sanitary essentials during their travel. Public transportation authorities can consider hiring sanitary service agencies to look after the facilities' sanitary activities in exchange of fee. The corporates can also employ such services for their various business trips.
- Tourism organizations and Government should provide subsidies and incentives to the tourism sector, it helps to flourish tourism activities. Government should take certain policies for helping employees in such pandemic situation. Several tourism sector employees were doing other jobs for their survival during the pandemic situations. Therefore, Government can take steps to ensure their job security.
- Kerala should fully utilize the big-ticket projects such as shopping malls, multiplexes, convention centers, metro rail, mobility hub, seaports and airports. More people should be encouraged to use public facilities. The state should try to attract tourists and those planning to host mega conventions.

Conclusion

The study is conducted to find out and analyze the impact of COVID-19 on workers in tourism sector in Alappuzha district. From the analysis of collected data, it is found that there was a great downfall in the actual booking rate, so many tourist guides and other tourism employees lost their jobs in the pandemic time. Several sectors have to reduce their package rates to attract the tourists. Most of the companies were forced to reduce the salary and wages of their employees and workers, which negatively affected the life of the workers. Therefore, Government and tourism association must consider this situation as a propitious chance, and make the best use of the opportunities hurled on them with the pertaining challenges of the Covid-19 crisis. To conclude, the Government should focus on creating and ensuring opportunities for the workers in tourism sector. And must increase their investment and other assistance provided to the tourism sector of the Alappuzha district.

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