



Study of Post Covid Effects on Tourism and Fishing Business and their Sustainable Development.

**Author: - Jyotsana. D. Raut (Assistant Professor) Department of BAF,
St. John College of Humanities and Sciences, Affiliated with the University of Mumbai**

ABSTRACT:

Fishing is an important sector in India, providing jobs for millions of people and contributing to the country's food security. This research paper helps us to understand the post-covid impact of the tourism and fishing business and its sustainable development. A conventional idea of sustainable fishing is practised at a sustainable rate, where the fish population does not decrease over time due to fishing practices. Tourism and fishing business go hand in hand. Many tourists visit India to try Indian seafood cuisine and to study the fishing business and related communities. The recent pandemic has caused a decline in tourism and fishing industries. Developing countries like India are experiencing unbalanced burdens from the COVID-19 pandemic. Severe Covid infections and deaths have left countless devastated. But we must examine the economic and social impacts in the country's coastal areas, where setbacks are likely to erase years of development gains and push many of us back into poverty.

Compared to other developing countries, India has suffered tons thanks to Covid-19. An unexpected surge in Covid cases within the second wave of the SARS-COV virus has resulted in a sudden number of deaths, causing a decline in the country's population and economic activity. The severe impact of COVID-19 on these economies is also the result of heavy reliance on fishing, which is a major source of coastal regions' marine wealth and provides much-needed public revenue. The COVID-19 pandemic crisis will jeopardize these income streams due to a slowdown in fishing activity. However, it is important to note that the COVID-19 pandemic may also create a small window for stocks to recover if it leads to a global slowdown in the commercial fishing industry.

KEYWORDS: Sustainable Development, Fisheries, Tourism, Covid-19, Economic Growth.

1. INTRODUCTION

Fishing is an important sector in India, providing jobs for millions of people and contributing to the country's food security. Fisheries in India contribute over 1 per cent to India's annual gross domestic product. Fishing in India employs about 14.5 million people. To reap the economic benefits from the fishing yields, India has established an exclusive economic zone that extends 200 nautical miles (370 km) into the Indian Ocean, which covers 2 million square kilometres. Besides the current marine zone, India has about 14,000 km of brackish water used for aquaculture, about 16,000 km of freshwater lakes, ponds and swamps; and nearly 40,000 miles of river sand streams. In the early 1990s the fishing fleet included 180,000 traditional sailing or rowing boats, 26,000 motorized traditional boats and a few 34,000 mechanized boats.

Despite the rapid growth in total fish production, the average annual production by a fish farmer in India is just 2 tons per person, compared to 172 tons in Norway, 72 tons in Chile and 6 tons per fisherman in China. High yields, knowledge transfer for sustainable fishing, and continuous growth in fish production with increasing fish exports have the potential to improve the quality of life of Indian fishermen. Delivery of fish harvest is difficult in India due to poor rural road infrastructure, lack of data from fishermen, lack of cold storage and lack of organized retail trade in most parts of the country. Indian fishermen are captured by Sri Lankan and Pakistani navies during their fishing

trip in Okha (Gujarat). Skirmishes with the Sri Lanka Navy often result in casualties and damage to boats.

Fishing communities in India are not homogeneous as they belong to different castes. These communities have their distinct social, cultural, governance structures and traditional practices, including the coast they live on. At least 2-3 castes in each sea state are engaged exclusively in marine fisheries and have nothing to do with the mainstream agricultural system. Tourism in India is vital to the country's economy and is growing rapidly. The World Travel and Tourism Council has calculated that tourism generated 15.24 lakh crore (\$210 billion) or 9.4% of India's GDP in 2017 and supported 41.622 million jobs, 8% of total employment. The 2017 Travel and Tourism Competitiveness Report ranked India 40th out of 136 countries. The report ranked the competitiveness of India's tourism sector 10th out of 136 countries. It is mentioned that India has quite good air transportation (ranked 32nd), especially considering the country's level of development, and decent ground transportation infrastructure (ranked 29th). The country also performs well in terms of natural and cultural resources (rank 9).

Recent environmental changes like hurricanes and other natural disasters have affected the Indian fish trading business. In 2020, the pandemic started in March and is still severe today. This pandemic has led to the decline of various sectors. One of the sectors is the tourism and fishing industry.

Objectives

- a) To find out problems associated with the fishing business and tourism.
- b) To Study the post covid effects on the tourism and fishing business.
- c) To find solutions for the sustainable development of both sectors.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Global tourism has historically been affected by many types of disruptive events such as B. Terrorist attacks like 9/11, epidemics like SARS-CoV-2, MERS-CoV, Ebola, swine flu etc)^[1]. However, the recent pandemic (COVID-19), which originated in Wuhan, China, has severely affected almost all industries including tourism worldwide (Yeh, 2020) ^[2]. The virus spread to all continents by air transport and still spreads the infection enormously. To contain the spread, many countries are closing/partially closing their borders and cancelling all flights and events, including sports, entertainment, pilgrimages, conferences, etc. (UNWTO (2020)^[3] estimates that international tourists will decrease by 1%3% would. compared to 2019 instead of the forecast 3%4% growth. As a result, global tourism has slowed significantly. International flights fell by more than half after the tourism industry temporarily laid off half its workforce (Gssling et al., 2020)^[4] The World Travel & Tourism Council forecasts a tourism-related loss of up to 2.1 US\$ trillion in 2020 and up to 75 million jobs (WTTC, 2020)^[5].

The travel industry, which includes airlines, hotels and restaurants, will shrink by 50% in 2020, which would mean a significant loss of jobs and revenue. According to the International Air Transport Association (IATA), airlines around the world are expected to lose a record \$84 billion in 2020, more than three times what they suffered during the global financial crisis (The World Economic Forum, 2020)^[6]. Most airlines are underground. Hotels are being closed due to fewer tourists and many five-star hotels are turning into quarantine facilities. Most restaurateurs anticipate that operational costs will continue to rise due to social distancing, hygiene and sanitation costs. Therefore, it is challenging for the tourism industry to survive this crisis.

The decline in the tourism industry has also led to a decline in the fishing business. The Indian fisheries and fishing communities across India have seen a decline in fishing activities due to lockdowns and government restrictions on certain activities. Fishing in India is an important sector of food and nutrition security. More than nine million active fishermen depend directly on fishing for their livelihood, 80% of

whom are small-scale fishermen. It employs over 14 million people and contributes 1.1 per cent to India's GDP. Much of the fish catch is delivered to hotels and restaurants. Due to the lockdown and closure of Indian borders, tourism has declined which in turn has reduced hotel chains and indirectly impacted the fishing business as there is no potential buyer for the fish catch.

If we talk about the sustainable development of these sectors, sustainability has ground to a halt due to the pandemic in India.

(Škare, M., Soriano, D. R., & Porada-Rochoń, M. 2021)^[7]

Their study shows that pandemic crises negatively affect the tourism industry and economy. The estimated negative impacts far exceed those observed during past pandemic crises. Future pandemic crises should be managed promptly, and to do so, policymakers and practitioners need effective contingency plans.

Policymakers and practitioners in the tourism industry need to develop a new crisis preparedness mechanism to combat the current pandemic crisis as well as future pandemic crises. To do this, they need to gain empirical insights into the nature and actual magnitude of the COVID-19 crisis. So far this has not happened and the scenarios they have developed grossly underestimate the potential impact of the COVID-19 pandemic crisis.

A four-part economic strategy is required: (a) accept economic losses, (b) protect the health, (c) support people experiencing a sudden loss of income by broadening existing security network programs, and (d) protect productive capacity and use economic production capacity to the fullest extent possible as soon as the virus has diminished ([Marron, 2020](#))^[8].

An article on geospatial technology issued by Remote sensing for environment & disaster helped to find out the effects of the pandemic on the fisheries and the fishing communities engaged in the fishing business (Remote Sensing for Environment & Disaster, 2021)^[9]

3. METHODOLOGY

For this research paper secondary sources like Research Journals, News Paper Articles, government portals etc. are used to collect tourism and fisheries data.

4. DISCUSSIONS AND FINDINGS

While in some areas fishing remains an attractive profession, in many it is becoming increasingly difficult for fishermen to make a decent living and local communities can no longer depend on fishing alone. The revenue and jobs that tourism can bring to an area can help diversify the local economy and job market, as well as provide additional income for fishing families, sometimes ensuring that their production activity remains viable. Indeed, tourism is one of the few industries that have kept growing, even during the economic crisis. As well as providing additional sources of income for fishing families and other local inhabitants, tourism can also help to improve sales of local fish through a range of activities, such as direct sales to tourists, promotion in local restaurants, and festivals that raise awareness of the area's fishing activity and products. At the same time, many tourist areas are looking for ways to offer something different from the typical sun and sand package.

Building on traditional activities such as fishing can help attract visitors looking for a more authentic experience, favouring more sustainable tourism that values and contributes to the local community.

Table- 1

Month-wise arrival of foreign tourists availing e-Tourist Visas during 2018, 2019 and Jan-March 2020 (provisional)

Month	Foreign Tourist Arrivals (FTAs) in India				
	2018	2019	2020 (P)	Percentage(%) Change	
				2019/18	2020/19
January	10,45,027	11,11,040	11,18,150	6.3	0.6
February	10,49,259	10,90,516	10,15,632	3.9	-6.9
March	10,21,539	9,78,236	3,28,462	-4.2	-66.4
April	7,45,033	7,74,651	0	4	-100.0
May	6,06,513	6,15,136	0	1.4	-100.0
June	6,83,935	7,26,446	0	6.2	-100.0
July	8,06,493	8,18,125		1.4	
August	7,85,993	8,00,837		1.9	
September	7,19,894	7,51,513		4.4	
October	8,90,223	9,45,017		6.2	
November	10,12,569	10,92,440		7.9	
December	11,91,498	12,26,398		2.9	
Total (Jan-June)	51,51,306	52,96,025	24,62,244	2.8 @	-53.5@
Total (Jan-Dec)	1,05,57,976	1,09,30,355		3.5	

P: Provisional, @ Growth rate over January-June of the previous year. Source: (i) Bureau of Immigration, Govt. of India, for 2018, 2019 & 2020

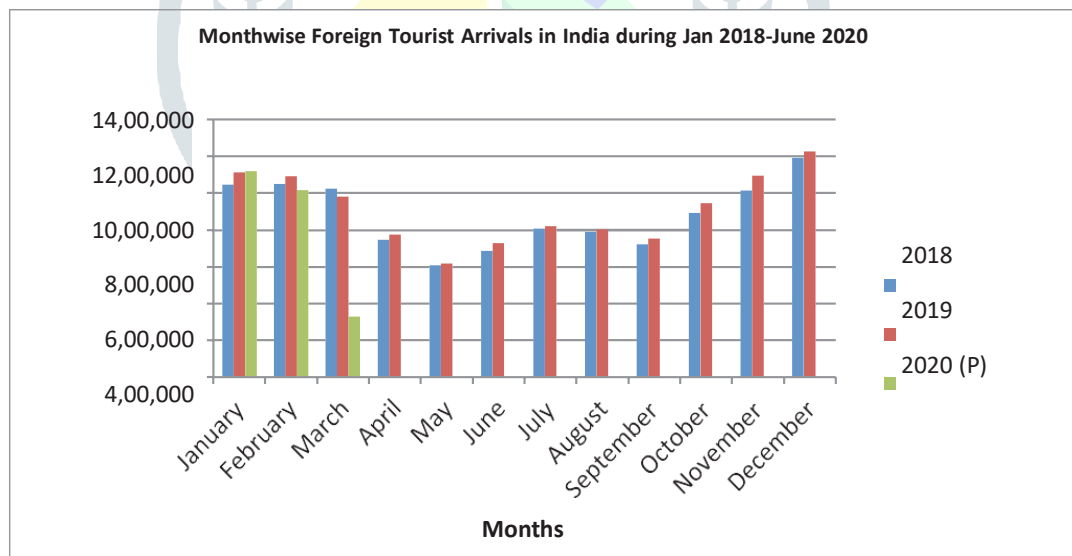


Table 2

The outbreak of COVID-19 and the resulting total lockdown in India has severely impacted the livelihoods of fishing communities across India. The total lockdown can help contain the spread of the Coronavirus; however, fishermen must intervene quickly and effectively to minimize the disruptive impact on the livelihoods of vulnerable populations, particularly food systems, storage and market chains, both locally and regionally.

The west coast of India includes the states of Kerala, Karnataka, Goa, Maharashtra and Gujarat as well as union territories such as Daman and Diu. Engaged in fishing. Fishing is mainly done with traditional fishing boats, motorized boats and small mechanized boats.

Due to an effective shutdown of industrial fish food services, demand has evaporated due to restaurant closures and lack of transportation, resulting in a slack not only for domestic buyers but also for the processing industry. As this pandemic has hit more than 170 countries so far and many of them have cancelled orders, causing uncertainties in the export market. Traders had expected a price drop of 20-40 per cent.

Small-scale fishermen in India face problems in three areas: pricing, marketing and organization. Many of these are long-term needs, but some are immediate and related to the coronavirus.

The total lockdown of ports and landing centres has severely affected the daily income of fishermen in all coastal districts. Small-scale fisheries in particular are responsible for making fish available to consumers as an important source of protein at low cost. This is particularly important for marginalized communities, and a lack of fish in the diet will have a significant impact on the food security of these people.

In some villages near the western coasts of Maharashtra and Gujarat, small-scale fishermen who fish close to shore are struggling to market their catch. Due to social distancing rules, only a few women fishermen can buy fish from the fishermen in the landing centres. Since the sale time for the fish is very short, they are forced to sell their catch at a low price. For example, if the price of fish was INR 500 per kilogram before the COVID-19 lockdown, now the price is only INR 300-350.

Fishmongers have been significantly affected due to the lockdown with no fishing activity taking place and limited boats fishing in some spots. The small catch brought to the landing centre is in high demand. Even if few women buy an affordable amount of fish from the landing centre for street vending, people are not buying the fish because of the pandemic. Customers are also seen bargaining for a lower price. Because of this, their income has completely decreased and they are struggling to manage their families.

The workers employed in this sector are badly affected. Usually, during the fishing season, fishermen workers take an advance from the boat owners. But now boat owners are also facing financial problems due to the lockdown. As a result, workers find it difficult to meet family expenses. Those who had migrated from Tamil Nadu to other states such as Kerala and Karnataka for fishing activities are now unemployed due to the national lockdown. Some fishermen have reported that their family only eats one meal a day.

The trawler fishermen who ventured into the multi-day fishing pre-lockdown (before March 20) have now returned to shore. They are struggling to market their fish due to lockdown restrictions. Equipped with storage facilities, fishermen can preserve their catch and later have the opportunity to market their harvested fish. Another part of the fishermen suffers from a lack of storage facilities when marketing their catch and is severely affected. It should be noted that last week in Chennai a large amount of tuna was discarded due to unavailability or lack of storage facilities.

The export market is on standby and as a result, the entire fisheries sector is being affected along with its related sectors. Since the March 25 lockdown, fishmongers are no longer allowed to source fish and so the export marketing of fish has fallen sharply. Only fishermen are allowed to enter the harbour and only for a short time (no longer than half an hour).

The supply chain is severely disrupted. Ice factory workers, diesel workers and young people are unemployed. The daily loss is somewhere between INR 500 and INR 2,000. The lockdown has affected other Fish Allies activities such as mending nets, and regular boat and engine maintenance. This also causes tremendous damage to expensive assets such as fishing vessels and fishing gear. Many fishing families have expressed this alongside the loss of income; The lockdown has seriously disrupted planned activities such as repairing boats and nets, building boats and also repaying loans taken out for various fishing purposes.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

Fishermen have not ventured into the sea since March 20, 2020. The annual fishing ban begins on April 15th and lasts until June 15th. As a result, sea fishermen will practically not fish for almost 90 days this year. So, due to the lockdown, there is tremendous pressure among fishermen, fishermen sellers and fishery workers.

To protect the livelihoods of the fishing communities, an immediate aid package for the fishing communities must be put in place. This should not be linked to regular compensation during lockdown season.

Extending the scope of work under the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act 2005 (MGNREGS) to include skilled work can provide immediate relief. For example, women drying fish or adding value, processing, and net repair can be considered qualified activities to be remunerated under MGNREGS. This will particularly help rural women, including fisherwomen, who are engaged in a range of household management tasks.

Fishermen in villages falling under communes and urban panchayats, and not just village panchayats should also receive similar subsistence employment benefits. The National Fisheries Development Board (NFDB) and the fisheries departments of the affected states should submit a package as a matter of priority.

5. CONCLUSION:

With the help of the National Fisheries Policy 2020, fish marketing mechanisms will be strengthened to protect fishermen and fish farmers from the whims of middlemen and traders and protect the interests of consumers. Electronic markets and electronic trade in fish and fish products are encouraged and promoted. Licensing and registration of fish markets and vendors would be encouraged along with appropriate SOPs to streamline all fish market activities. It may not be easy to get fishermen to participate in tourism development because they work for offshore fishing activities, generally resist change, lack the skills to start new activities or lack financial resources, in which to invest in new activities.

Fishermen and their families can earn additional income by diversifying their activities to enter the tourism market, e.g. offering excursions on board fishing boats, accommodation in fishermen's houses and the opportunity to eat locally caught fish. This additional income can help to reduce the dependence of fishermen's families on the fluctuating income from fishing. Additionally, new skills acquired in the tourism sector can help give fishing families a competitive edge in the job market.

Tourism can also contribute to the general economy of the area by providing residents with employment opportunities or additional income (e.g. in local shops, restaurants or other service providers). The additional revenue comes not only from the direct expenses of the visitors but also from companies that serve them. This also leads to increased purchasing power for the local population.

Therefore, the government must take measures towards the sustainability of both tourism and fishing business. Tourism in fisheries areas should be promoted in such a way that new sources of income from tourism can help retain fishermen and make the sector more attractive to future generations. The peak of tourism will ultimately lead to the sustainable development of the fishing business and fishing community.

6. REFERENCES

- 1) Wen, J., Wang, W., Kozak, M., Liu, X., & Hou, H. (2020). Many brains are better than one: The importance of interdisciplinary studies on COVID-19 in and beyond tourism. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 1–4. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2020.1761120> [Taylor & Francis Online], [Web of Science ®], [Google Scholar]
- 2) Yeh, S. S. (2020). Tourism recovery strategy against COVID-19 pandemic. *Tourism Recreation Research*, 1–7. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2020.1805933> [Taylor & Francis Online], [Web of Science ®], [Google Scholar]

- 3) UNWTO. (2020). UNWTO World Tourism Barometer (Vol. 18, Issue 2, May 2020). Madrid, Spain: UNWTO. [Crossref], [Google Scholar]
- 4) Gössling, S., Scott, D., & Hall, C. M. (2020). Pandemics, tourism and global change: a rapid assessment of COVID-19. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 29(1), 1-20.
- 5) WTTC. (2018). Travel & tourism economic impact 2018 world. World Travel and Tourism Council. [Google Scholar]
- 6) The World Economic Forum. (2020). <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2020/06/4-charts-airline-crisis-covid-way-ahead/>. [Google Scholar]
- 7) Škare, M., Soriano, D. R., & Porada-Rochoń, M. (2021). Impact of COVID-19 on the travel and tourism industry. *Technological Forecasting and Social Change*, 163, 120469.
- 8) Marron, D. (2020). Macroeconomic Policy in the Time of COVID-19. Federal Budget and Economy, TaxVox, 17 March 2020, available on.
- 9) Avtar, R., Singh, D., Umarhadi, D. A., Yunus, A. P., Misra, P., Desai, P. N., & Phanindra, K. B. V. N. (2021). Impact of COVID-19 Lockdown on the Fisheries Sector: A Case Study from Three Harbors in Western India. *Remote Sensing*, 13(2), 183.
- 10) <https://www.mssrf.org/content/covid19-impact-livelihoods-marine-fishing-communities-0> (accessed on 29th May, 2021)
- 11) https://www.fergusson.edu/upload/document/76764_Impactofcovid-19onfisheries.pdf (accessed on 29th May,2021)
- 12) <https://tourism.gov.in/market-research-and-statistics> (accessed on 1st June 2021)