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## An economic analysis of destination management at the local level with special reference to COVID-19 period

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### Abstract

Tourism is as an economic term that contributes significantly to the GDP of many countries. The travel and tourism industry of India had a share in GDP of 6.9% in 2019, but it fell to 4.7 percent in 2020 during the Covid19 period. Every country has a twin dilemma in terms of tourist sector management: the first is at the local level, and the second is at the international level. This article highlights the function of lower-level management agencies in how they may manage local tourist industry through destination management. Tourism is primarily the notion of human beings crossing some form of boundary. It is critical to manage the tourist industry in order to boost its growth and contribution to the national economy. Destination management is a critical component of the tourist industry's economic and long-term sustainability. The destination management is investigated in this study. This research examines the strategies of destination management in the face of the Covid 19 epidemic. To integrate the potential management approaches, this research utilized an exploratory technique. Covid 19 is a tourism roadblock. It's critical to figure out how to live with covid 19 in order to tackle this issue. Are these destination management groups assisting local tourist destination management? Tourism management organizations are critical for destination management. In the accounting year 2019, tourism industry accounted for 13% of overall employment, which afterwards dropped to 7.3 percent in 2020. This paper also looked at the quality of life and destination management, as well as how destination management influences quality of life.

**Keywords:** Covid 19, destination management organizations, economic development, sustainable tourism development

### 1. Introductions

Every country's economy is made up of several sectors, each of which plays a distinct role in the economy's development. Every sector boosts the economy in its own unique way. When it comes to the tourism industry, it plays a significant role and makes a significant contribution to the Indian economy. This industry has two types of income generation: inter country (foreign revenue) and intra-country (domestic revenue). It is vital to strengthen the tourist industry in order to increase the sector's economic contribution. It is necessary to increase the share of social overhead capital in order for this sector to expand. The tourist industry requires the development of the transportation sector, infrastructure sector, rule of law enforcement and maintenance, and destination administration. The term "destination management" refers to the management of a tourist attraction or a location to visit. The visit locations have to be safe, secure, and pleasant, as well as include natural elements. Occasionally, management has acted in conformity with the requirements. When a location is confronted with an unnatural condition, it is critical to address the issue at the earliest approach. Generally, three main types of destination management are found: national, regional, and local. In 2020, India will be devastated by a coronavirus epidemic. On January 27, 2020, the first confirmed Covid19 case in India was identified. On March 25, 2020, India as a whole declared a state of emergency. Rather than critical services and products, this lockdown compels the closure of the whole country. Every section of the economy was affected by the outbreak. During the epidemic, the tourism industry nearly collapsed. Shortly after the opening of lockdown, every sector's primary priority is to deal with the covid19 protocols. It has become vital for destination management to provide tourists including all types of safety. The major focus of this study is on how to deal with or manage covid19 at the local level to encompass destination management.

## 2. Review of literature

Varghese (2016) performed research on the administration of Karnataka tourism destinations through organizations. This research examines the significance of national and regional tourism organizations, as well as their functions. The government is identified as being especially significant for the administration of destinations in this study; without government engagement, it becomes difficult in countries such as India. Destination management was found to be extremely important for long-term tourism management in this research.

Adeyinka (2014) [1] investigated the function of marketing organizations in the management of rural tourism destinations. The information offices in responsible of rural destination management were identified in this investigation. The researcher noticed no organization for rural destination management, which is also a research gap of this study. The researcher discovered that DMMOs are critical for rural destination management and marketing. This management was found to be critical for long-term tourism sustainability.

Munar (2012) [7] attempted to manage tourism destination management using social media tactics. The theoretical paradigm of generic social media tactics for destination management is examined in this paper. The importance of social media in destination management was uncovered in this study. Interviews, documentary analysis, and organizational reports were used to gather data for this paper. Advertisement and mimicry are widely employed even after they are troublesome, destination management is less developed, social media as a new culture of destination management, and low-level methods are implemented, according to the study.

## 3. Objectives of the study

- To assess the contribution of destination management organizations to local destination management.
- To investigate the effects of the Covid19 epidemic on the tourist industry
- To cope with the covid19 pandemic in terms of destination management.

## 4. Tourism industry in India

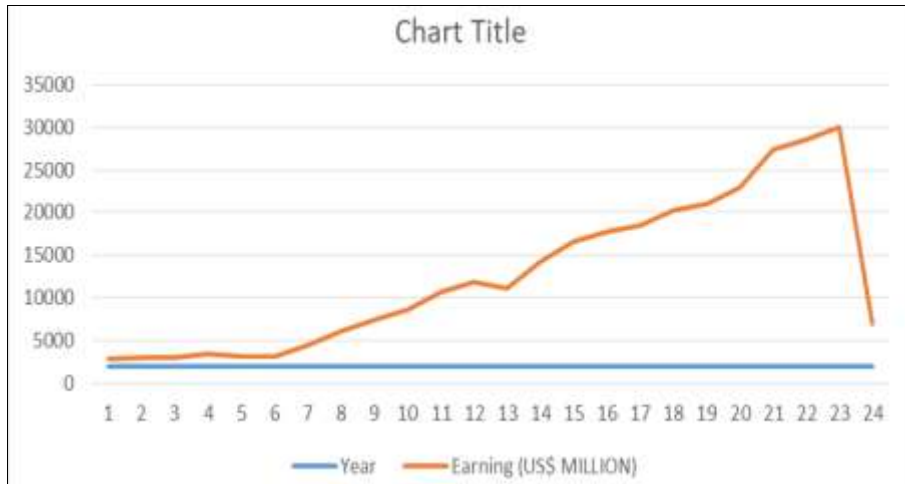
India's tourist industry makes a significant contribution to the country's GDP. In recent years, the tourist sector has witnessed rapid growth as a result of government initiatives such as Incredible India. In terms of geographical regions, Indian tourism is diversified, covering practically every sort of destination. In 2020, the travel and tourism industry contributed US\$ 121 million to GDP. Tourism is anticipated to expand at a 10.35 percent annual rate from 2019 to 2028. In the fiscal year 2020, the tourist industry employs 39 million people, accounting for 8% of total employment. Covid19 resulted in a reduction in the tourist sector's compound annual growth rate of foreign exchange. In perspective of using digital tools and techniques to provide services, the Indian tourism sector is the most advanced. India ranked third in the world in terms of investment in the travel and tourism sector in 2018, with a total investment of US\$ 45.7 billion. Sikkim and Nagaland are two states in India that have been designated as PAP protected areas. The RAP protects the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.

### 4.1 Foreign exchange earnings from tourism in India (1997-2020)

**Table 1:** Foreign exchange earnings from tourism in India (1997-2020)

Year	Earning (us\$ million)	Percentage change	Earnings (in rupees crore)	Percentage change
1997	2889	2.0	10511	4.6
1998	2948	2.0	12150	15.6
1999	3009	2.1	12951	6.6
2000	3460	15	15626	20.7
2001	3198	-7.6	15083	-3.5
2002	3103	-3.0	15064	-0.1
2003	4463	43.8	20729	37.6
2004	6170	38.2	27944	34.8
2005	7493	21.4	33123	18.5
2006	8634	15.2	39025	17.8
2007	10729	24.3	44362	13.7
2008	11832	10.3	51294	15.6
2009	11136	-5.9	53754	4.8
2010	14193	27.5	66172	23.1
2011	16564	16.7	83036	25.5
2012	17737	7.1	95607	15.1
2013	18445	4.0	107563	12.5
2014	20236	9.7	120367	11.9
2015	21071	4.1	134844	12
2016	22923	9.1	154146	14.3
2017	27310	19.1	177874	15.4
2018	28586	4.7	194881	9.6
2019	30058	5.1	211661	8.6
2020	6958	-76.8	50136	-76.3

**Source:** India Tourism Statistics at a Glance- 2021



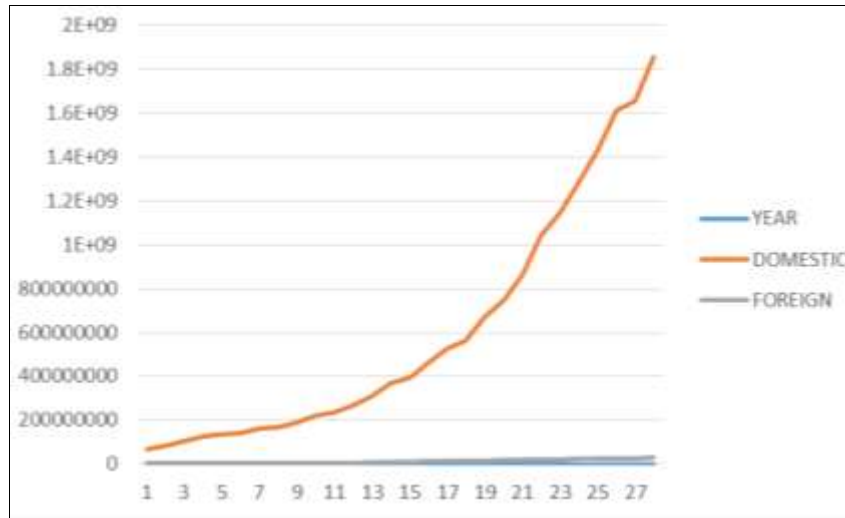
**Fig 1:** Foreign exchange earnings from tourism in India (1997-2020)

**4.2 Domestic & Foreign tourist visits to states / UTS. During 1991 – 2018**

**Table 2:** Domestic & foreign tourist visits to states / UTS. During 1991- 2018

Year	Tourist visits		Annual growth rate (in percentage)	
	Domestic	Foreign	Domestic	Foreign
1991	66670303	3146652	-	-
1992	81455861	3095160	22.18	-1.64
1993	105811696	3541727	29.90	14.43
1994	127118655	4030216	20.14	13.79
1995	136643600	4641279	7.49	15.16
1996	140119672	5030342	2.54	8.38
1997	159877208	5500419	14.10	9.34
1998	168196000	5539704	5.20	0.71
1999	190671034	5832015	13.36	5.28
2000	220106911	5893542	15.44	1.05
2001	236469599	5436261	7.43	-7.76
2002	269598028	5157518	14.01	-5.13
2003	309038335	6708479	14.63	30.07
2004	366267522	8360278	18.52	24.62
2005	392044495	9949671	7.04	19.01
2006	462439634	11747937	17.96	18.07
2007	526700493	13267612	13.90	12.94
2008	563034107	14380633	6.90	8.39
2009	668800482	14372300	18.79	-0.06
2010	747703380	17910178	11.80	24.62
2011	864532718	19497126	15.63	8.86
2012	1045047536	18263074	20.88	-6.33
2013	1142529465	19951026	9.33	9.24
2014	1282801629	22334031	12.88	11.94
2015	1431973794	23326163	11.63	4.44
2016	1615388619	24714503	12.81	5.95
2017	1657546152	26886684	2.61	8.79
2018	1854933384	28872384	11.91	7.39

**Source:** India tourism statistics 2019, ministry of tourism, government of India



**Fig 2:** Domestic & foreign tourist visits to states / UTS. During 1991- 2018

From 1997 through 2020, Table 1 presents the foreign exchange profits. These two tables have been used to develop the graph. Foreign exchange earnings could be seen to rise until 2020, but afterward, earnings immediately declined. The tourist movement is depicted in the table 2. This table separates domestic and international movement of tourists. The data in this table range from 1991 to 2018. This table illustrates the annual growth rate at the same time. The annual growth of domestic tourists has never been zero or negative, however, the movement of international tourists has been negative five times in the years 1992, 2001, 2002, 2009, and 2012. The maximum annual growth rate of domestic visitors was 29.9% in 1993, whereas the lowest was 2.54% in 1996. The highest yearly growth rate of foreign tourists was 30.7 percent in the accounting year 2003, while the lowest was -7.76 percent in 2001.

**5. Destination management at local levels**

Phil Lee introduced the term "destination management" in 1972. Phil Lee founded a California leisure consultant company. After the Second World War, the notion of destination management rose to prominence. There were various firms that assist with conferences and meetings. These tiny businesses aid passengers with local travel and excursions, as well as aviation logistics, so they are considered highly important by travellers.

**5.1 Destination management in India**

The Ministry of Tourism administers India's tourism sector. Since several decades, the Indian tourism sector has carved out a niche for itself, and the government is now attempting to develop it on a worldwide scale through 100 percent FDI, promotion, eliminating the digital divide, and destination management. The government has been encouraging MSMEs to flourish and thrive because the tourism sector cannot grow without them. The emergence of destination management organizations is critical to the success of destination management. The Indian tourist industry is attempting to get international investors to invest in the country, whereas Indian tourism management organizations are endeavoring to boost tourism in India. The tourism sector in India has its own organization that safeguards the rights of travelers. Destination management firms are organizations that manage locations and provide

professional services associated to travel tourism. These firms are in charge of destination management at the local level. Client information, travel agents, service supplies at the destination, ground-level handling, and payment-related handlers are all part of the destination management companies.



**5.2 These DMOs offer the following major services**

- a. **Transportation:** The first priority for each traveler is to find a reliable mode of transportation to get to their destination. Destination management businesses are committed to providing a safe and efficient transportation system. Some locales do not allow private transportation; therefore, destination firms have government approvals for their suitable transportation. This enables the tourists to gain exposure without difficulty. It's discovered that various locations require different modes of transportation. For example, in certain steep places where the local transit system fails, these organizations provide a suitable appropriate system.
- b. **Meet and greet:** certain tourists wish to plan their events at specific locations, and destination management businesses handle the meet and greet for their clients.
- c. **Hotel accommodations:** these are the services given by hotels at their level; these services may include a variety of services such as transportation, lodging, and food; it is difficult for tourists to organize things reasonably. These facilities are guaranteed by destination management agencies.
- d. **Restaurants and activities** are also included in these organizations' arrangements.
- e. **Food and beverages:** Food and beverages are always attractive to tourists. These businesses are already familiar with the culinary peculiarities of each location.
- f. **Language barriers:** This is a typical problem that travelers experience. In a country like India, diversity is observed on a large scale, with travelers encountering a variety of regional languages. These management

companies provide interpreters or any other alternatives to assist guests receive a complete picture of the place.

**The following are some of India's top destination management companies**

- a. Abercrombie and Kent
- b. Cox and Kings
- c. Le passage to India
- d. SITA destination management
- e. Caper travel India
- f. Design holidays
- g. Ventours

**6. Impact of Covid 19 pandemic on Indian tourism sector**

Coronavirus diseases 2019: coronavirus pandemic caused severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus. This pandemic originated from Wuhan, China in 2019. WHO declared it public health emergency on 30 January, 2020 and pandemic on 11 March 2020. In India this disease's first case confirmed on 30 January, 2020 in Kerala which became epicenter of this pandemic India. Whole country put under lockdown by the government on 25 March, 2020. In March, 2021 India faced the second wave of this pandemic. Lockdown affects every sector of Indian economy negatively. People lose their jobs, businesses gone in loss, small commercial sector faces crisis, organized as well as unorganized labour sector faces crisis etc. industry and

service sector affected badly by this pandemic.

**6.1 Effects of covid19 on Indian tourism sector**

The tourism sector is not a stand-alone industry. Covid19 affects every area of the economy, and individuals were having their worst year ever. People suffered in a number of different ways. Many people have died, and several lost their loved ones. If we concentrate on the tourism industry, we can see how adversely it has been devastated by the epidemic. Both international and domestic tourism has been hammered for a long time. Locals who rely only on tourism have seen their earnings drop to almost nil. The tourism sector encompasses a wide range of areas that are related to and dependent on tourism. The tourist industry plays a significant role. This industry generated 6.8% of India's GDP in fiscal year 2019. Table 1 illustrates the contribution of the tourist sector to the Indian economy through foreign exchange earnings. These earnings were US\$ 2889 million in 1997, but have significantly increased to US\$ 10729 million in 2005. These profits have nearly tripled from 2005 to US\$ 30058 in 2019, indicating a significant growth in earnings. Foreign exchange earnings grew at a negative rate of -76.8% (US\$6958) in 2020, immediately after the country was devastated by the coronavirus. This statistic demonstrates how adversely the covid19 has impacted the tourist industry.

**6.2 Covid 19 cases as on 07 may 2022**

**Table 3:** Covid 19 cases as on 07 may 2022

State/UT name	Total confirmed	Cured/discharged/migrated	Death
Andaman and Nico bar	10036	9906	129
Andhra Pradesh	2319732	2304955	14730
Arunachal Pradesh	64499	64199	14730
Assam	724218	716226	7986
Bihar	830606	818304	12256
Chandigarh	92124	90886	1165
Chhattisgarh	1152305	1138229	14034
Dadra and Nagar haveli and daman and Diu	11441	11437	4
Delhi	1891425	1859152	26177
Goa	245476	241594	3832
Gujrat	1224443	1213382	10943
Haryana	995618	982434	10620
Himachal Pradesh	284858	280671	4134
Jammu and Kashmir	454088	449276	4751
Jharkhand	435265	429900	5317
Karnataka	3948464	3906466	40103
Kerala	6543402	6471242	69210
Ladakh	28247	28018	228
Lakshadweep	11402	11350	52
Maharashtra	7878801	7729795	147845
Manipur	137225	135097	2120
Meghalaya	93807	92204	1593
Mizoram	227703	226713	697
Madhya Pradesh	1041634	1030689	10735
Nagaland	35489	34728	760
Odisha	1288117	1278839	9126
Puducherry	165794	163827	1962
Punjab	759856	741823	17751
Rajasthan	1284071	1273968	9553
Sikkim	39153	38699	452
Tamil Nādu	3454217	3415718	38025
Telangana	792253	787746	4111
Tripura	100885	99959	923
Uttar Pradesh	2076013	2050725	23508
Uttarakhand	437587	429395	7693
west Bengal	2018489	1996864	21203

Source: Covid19 Statewise Status | Mygov.In

Table 3 shows the status of covid19 instances; according to this table, the state Maharashtra has the most confirmed cases (7878801), whereas Andaman Nico bar has the least confirmed cases (10036). The data shows that Maharashtra has the most healed cases (7729795), while Andaman Nicobar has the least (9906 instances). Table 3 shows the number of fatalities caused by the covid19 pandemic, with the highest number of deaths 147845 in Maharashtra and the lowest number of deaths 04 in Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Diu and Daman. Rajasthan, Goa, Sikkim, Kerala, and Himachal Pradesh, in particular, are heavily reliant on tourism. These states' state governments are experiencing financial difficulties. The pandemic era affects them in two ways: initially, they lose income due to the covid19 epidemic, and second, they become dependent on the central government subsidies to battle the pandemic. Coronavirus disease is a serious threat to the tourism-dependent states. Food, transportation, lodging, adventure and leisure, attractions, events and conferences, and travel are some of the tourism-related or dependent areas. 21.5 million individuals who were directly or indirectly employed in the tourism industry lost their employment as a result of Covid19. When Covid19 met the first wave in March 2020, 14.5 million people lost their jobs, 5.2 million during the second wave, and 1.8 million during the third wave. According to this ministry of tourism, the government has issued 51960 normal visas and 1.57 L e-visas.

**6.3 Covid19 Management in India**

Covid19 is a disease that is transmitted through contact with an infected person. No one understood how to manage this at first, but the government takes some measures to help. The government's first blunder was failing to regulate overseas immigrants; if international arrivals were handled appropriately, a different image would materialize. The government has put the entire nation under lockdown, which eventually heal at some level. The epidemic then experienced rapid expansion again owing to ignorance. Political demonstrations, religious gatherings, and the lack

of adherence to Covid rules have thrown the entire country into biological warfare. Following that, the country was attacked by the second and third waves of Covid19. At initial level of this pandemic, the Indian government was unable to contain this rapidly expanding disease. The Indian health system is not capable of successfully dealing with the epidemic, as evidenced by the fact that during the second wave, our health system failed and was unable to deliver enough oxygen to patients. To remove the covid19, the Indian government enacted several rules and regulations, as well as protocols. The government has issued three case definitions: suspected cases who are suffering from an acute respiratory ailment such as fever, and likely cases who are not being tested for various reasons.

The government classifies diseases based on their clinical severity:

- Mild: Patients with a slight temperature and a respiratory illness are considered mild. They recommended to manage at the Covid Care Center.
- Moderately severe: Pneumonia with no additional symptoms. Managing at a dedicated health center is recommended.
- Severe: Pneumonia with a spO2 of 90% or lesser at room air, treated at a dedicated covid hospital.
- Acute Respiratory Distress Syndrome (ARDS): chest x-ray, respiratory failure
- Severe continued: organ dysfunction symptoms.

The government issued precautionary and medical advice for the entire country. People who have not previously suffered and suffered from this sickness are recommended to wear a face mask, keep a distance of 6 gaj, apply sanitizer after visiting a public area, and avoid going out without doing any necessary work. Government medical recommendations recommended home quarantine and the provision of home medication.

**6.4 India’s top domestic travel destination:**

**Table 4:** India’s top domestic travel destination

State	Travelers/visitors in 2018	Travelers/visitors in 2020
Tamilnadu	385.91	140.65
Uttar Pradesh	285.08	86.12
Karnataka	214.31	77.45
Andhra Pradesh	194.77	70.82
Maharashtra	119.19	39.23
Telangana	92.88	40
West Bengal	85.66	28.24
Madhya Pradesh	83.97	23.52
Gujarat	54.37	19.46

Source: Market research and statistics | ministry of tourism | government of India (in millions)

**7. Destination management with covid19 in regional destinations:**

Destination management entails overseeing all aspects of the tourist industry. Destination management must respond to the pandemic's impact on the industry. It is critical to first identify the damaged region before determining the appropriate remedy. The tourist industry was hit hard by the epidemic, and its growth rate plummeted by about 80%. After being hit by the epidemic, the government issued guidelines on how to deal with it. It is vital to follow established measures while managing destinations with

covid19. Some protocols might be based on common sense and fundamental information. To maintain the sector's previous development pace, it is vital to provide safe tourism so that passengers feel safe and secure. After a lengthy period of isolation, the government has decided to allow tourists with some restrictions. Destination management services encompass a variety of services that are required at practically every step to ensure safe tourism. Every company's first responsibility is to determine the health state of anybody who wishes to travel, so that no healthy people suffer. If this first phase fails, the entire cycle

is rendered useless. Every sector has two sides, and the tourist industry is no exception. The first one is the demand side, and the second is the supply side. The passengers on the demand side are those who are eager to go. This perspective is also useful for destination management because it allows you to understand their needs and determine their appropriateness. The second side supply includes these destination management businesses as well as the government. To deal with COvid19, destination management must work with the demand side and the government. It is well acknowledged that destination management businesses and the government play critical roles in the growth of tourism.

The government must assist these DMOs; they have experienced a crisis as a result of the epidemic, and it is crucial to enable them recover. Through social media techniques and ads, these businesses may promote safe travel. Social distance, sanitization, mask use, testing kit availability, and medical facility availability are all essential requirements that these businesses must meet. Transportation, accommodation, educational excursions, events, and logistic support are some of the areas that destination management companies must correct according to covid19 protocols.

### 7.1 Regional tourism destination management challenges

- Professionalism: To fight covid19, these enterprises must be professional; if passengers see unprofessional behavior, they may have a negative impression of tourism.
- Market competition: It is well established that market competition always decides high-quality services. These businesses must see competition positively and deliver superior service to their competitors.
- Market recognition: DMOs encounter market unrecognition and must disseminate it using appropriate resources.
- Infrastructure: India's infrastructure is underdeveloped, posing a significant difficulty for DMOs.
- Proper policy formation: To deal with covid19 DMOs must have rules in place that safeguard passengers.
- Local inhabitants: obtaining the perspective of local citizens is critical for destination regional management. The management could not allow residents to suffer in any manner.
- Following the protocols: Some people will refuse to obey the protocols provided by destination management businesses. Then it became the responsibility of these businesses to ensure that they comply.
- Digitalization: India is experiencing a digital divide. It covered some ground in the previous years, but owing to insufficient digital availability, enterprises may experience challenges in meeting their goals.
- Medical facilities: every destination is inaccessible. It is vital to provide health facilities throughout the covid time, however it is tough for these organizations to administer.
- Lower costs with greater quality: as a result of competition, the issue of lower costs develops, making it harder for these businesses to decrease expenses while maintaining higher quality than their competitors.
- DMO image at a local level: it is in the arms of DMOs to create their shadow among local residents. These DMOs are quite rare in local places. People who are

looking for their services will not find them there. These DMOs must contribute at local levels with their ease of access and high-quality services to increase their appeal among local people and regional destinations.

### 8. Major findings and Conclusion

The tourism industry and its management have been identified as critical to the economy's growth and development. As this study discovered, tourism's contribution to the overall economy is critical in every aspect. The tourism industry makes a major contribution to the economy's GDP. Domestic and foreign tourism are equally important contributors to India's economy. The epidemic of Covid19 had a detrimental impact on the whole economy, including the tourism industry. The study revealed a drop in foreign exchange revenues as well as a drop in international and local visitors shortly after the outbreak. Foreign currency revenues are plummeted by 76.8% in 2020. Destination management is an important idea in tourist management; as previously said, this concept was formed earlier, but we saw in the context of Covid19 that it is the only method to grow international and regional tourism. Because the present state of covid19 in India is steady, it is recommended that this period be used to sustain tourism. Subsidies for this sector's development are advocated. The government must offer subsidies in all areas involving tourism. Although stakeholders in the tourist industry suffered a crisis during the covid19 epidemic, it became the government's responsibility to give subsidies, interest-free loans, or other appropriate assistance to better their situation. These destination management organizations must operate more effectively at the regional level to accomplish regional tourism growth and development.

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