

Tourism and Sustainability in the Times of COVID-19: A Case study of Jammu region

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ABSTRACT

The paper aims to critically review past and emerging literature to help professionals and researchers alike to better understand, manage and valorize both the tourism impacts and transformational avoidance of COVID-19 in the Jammu region.. To achieve this, first, the paper discusses why and how the COVID-19 can be a transformational opportunity by discussing the circumstances and the questions raised by the pandemic. By doing this, the paper identifies the fundamental values, institutions and pre-assumptions that the tourism industry and academia should challenge and break through to advance and reset the research and practice frontiers. The paper continues by discussing the major impacts, behaviours and experiences that three major tourism stakeholders (namely tourism demand, supply and destination management organisations and policy makers) are experiencing during three COVID-19 stages (response, recovery and reset). This provides an overview of the type and scale of the COVID-19 tourism impacts and implications for tourism research in Jammu region.

Keywords: Tourism, COVID-19, Impacts, Recovery, Resilience, Crisis

INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 (declared as a pandemic by WHO, 12 March 2020) of significantly impacts the global economic, political, socio-cultural systems. Health communication strategies and measures (e.g. social distancing, travel and mobility bans, community lockdowns, stay at home campaigns, self- or mandatory-quarantine, curbs on crowding) have halted global travel, tourism and leisure.

Being a highly vulnerable industry to numerous environmental, political, socio-economic risks, tourism is used to and has become resilient in bouncing back from various crises and outbreaks in Jammu region.

However, the nature, the unprecedented circumstances and impacts of the COVID-19, demonstrate signs that this crisis is not only different, but it can have profound and long-term structural and transformational changes to tourism as socio-economic activity and industry in the Jammu region.. Indeed, the global and huge scale, the multidimensional and interconnected impacts challenging current values and systems and leading to a worldwide recession and depression are the most distinctive characteristics of this pandemic.

COVID-19 tourism impacts will be uneven in space and time, and apart from the human tool, estimates show an enormous economic impact: international tourist arrivals are estimated to drop to 78% causing a loss 1.2 trillion in export revenues from tourism and 120 million direct tourism job cuts representing seven times the impact of September 11, and the largest decline in the history.

Being one of the most important global employer (1 in 10 jobs are directly related to tourism, and the major GDP contributor for several countries, tourism and COVID-19 are the epicenter of all international discussions and economies. Within the burgeoning industry discussions and research about tourism and COVID-19, there is an unanimous call to see and use the pandemic as a transformative opportunity in the Jammu region.

Industry should not only recover but also reimagine and reform the next normal and economic order while researchers should not solely use COVID-19 as another context to replicate existing knowledge for measuring and predicting tourism impacts.

Although such studies are important for managing the pandemic, they do not advance knowledge and/or guide the industry to a step beyond. Moreover, because of the interlinked socio-cultural, economic, psychological and political impacts of COVID-19 of this magnitude, unforeseen trajectories instead of historical trends are expected and the predictive power of 'old' explanatory models may not work. Moreover, there is enough evidence to claim that both the tourism industry and research have matured to a good extent providing sufficient knowledge about how to study and effectively: (1) design and implement crisis recovery and response strategies (e.g. ^{McKercher & Chon, 2004}); (2) build resilience to address future crises.

What is still lacking is knowledge about how crisis can foster industry change, how companies can convert this crisis disruption into transformative innovation and how to conduct research that can enable, inform and shape the rethinking and resetting of a next normal.

Crises can be a change trigger, but none crisis has been so far a significant transition event in tourism. Crises have also been used as a political tool to stabilize existing structures and diminish the possibility of collective mobilization.

As change can be selective and/or optional for the tourism stakeholders (e.g. tourists, operators, destination organisations, policy makers, local communities, employees), the nature and degree of crises-led transformations depend on whether and how these stakeholders are affected by, respond to, recover and reflect on crises. Consequently, to better understand, predict but also inform and shape change, tourism COVID-19 research should provide a deeper examination and understanding of the tourism stakeholders' (behavioural, cognitive, emotional, psychological and even ideological) drivers, actions and reactions to their COVID-19 impacts.

Research should also examine and understand the stakeholders' lived and perceived COVID-19 experiences as well as their consciousness, mindfulness, capabilities and willingness to understand and act (pro-actively and re-actively) to the pandemic, as all these can equally influence their attitudes, behaviours and change potential.

COVID-19 tourism research should also advance our knowledge for informing, fostering, shaping or even leading such crises-enabled transformations. Otherwise, we will simply experience one crisis after the other (. Responding to the mushrooming euphoria of COVID-19 tourism related research, also plead for transformative e-tourism research that can shape tourism futures by making value systems, institutional logics, scientific paradigms and technology notions visible and transformable. To achieve scientific paradigm shifts, e-tourism research should embrace historicity, reflexivity, transparency, equity, plurality and creativity.

To avoid the bubble of the COVID-19 research orgasm and advance tourism research, others have also suggested to adopt inter-disciplinary multi-disciplinary or even anti-disciplinary research to enable out-of-the-box, creative and flexible thinking that challenges and goes beyond existing pre-assumptions and mindsets.

To address these needs and gaps, this paper aims to critically review past and emerging literature to help professionals and researchers alike to better understand, manage and valorize both the tourism impacts and transformational affordance of COVID-19. To achieve this, first, the paper discusses why and how the COVID-19 can be a transformational opportunity by discussing the circumstances and the questions raised by the pandemic.

By doing this, the paper identifies the fundamental values, institutions and pre-assumptions that the tourism industry and academia should challenge and break through to advance and reset the research and practice frontiers of the Jammu region. The paper continues by discussing the major impacts, behaviours and experiences that three major tourism stakeholders (namely tourism demand, supply and destination management organisations and policy makers) are experiencing during three COVID-19 stages (response, recovery and reset).

This analysis is useful because it provides an overview and understanding of the type and scale of the COVID-19 tourism impacts, while it also demonstrates that the way in which stakeholders and researchers understand, react and behave in each stage may form and set the next (new) normal in the post COVID-19 era. Responding to the call for transformative research, discussions are developed based on the rational that tourism research should go beyond replicating and reconfirming existing knowledge within the COVID-19 context; instead tourism COVID-19 research should *see new things and see them differently* to inform and guide tourism futures. Hence, the paper suggests potential new research areas and theoretical lenses that can be used for advancing and resetting industry practice and research in Jammu Region.

The paper does not aim to provide a fully comprehensive and inclusive analysis of all the impacts, theories, topics and tourism stakeholders that COVID-19 tourism research can examine. Instead, it aims to provide practical and theoretical

implications on how to better research, understand, manage and transformative valorize COVID-19 tourism impacts of the Jammu region..

COVID-19 circumstances and tourism: Shifting the research focus to challenge, reset and contradict institutional logics, systems and assumption in Jammu region

Research investigating, measuring and predicting the COVID-19 tourism impacts is important in order to eliminate ‘casualties’, draft, monitor and improve response strategies (i.e. you cannot manage what you cannot measure).

However, research focusing on the features and impacts of crises instead of their structural roots tends to conceal and stabilize the conditions and corollary social structures through which crises are produced.

Investigating the real roots of COVID-19 may go beyond the boundaries and scope of tourism research. Yet, the latter needs to look into and challenge the tourism ‘circumstances’ and structures that have enabled and sometimes accelerated the global spread and impact of COVID-19.

Unfortunately, the economists downplay the pandemic as a purely natural event originating and operating outside of the economic system (^{Nowlin, 2017}). But, treating COVID-19 as an exogenous shock and phenomenon that has nothing to do with socio-economic structures and values, can perpetuate and strengthen the pandemic roots during the post COVID-era as well as constrain change and transformational processes.

COVID-19 is a crisis of the economized societies rooted in the growth-paradigm (COVID-19 is also a result of the intersection of broader processes of urbanisation, globalisation, environmental change, agribusiness and contemporary capitalism). The nature of tourism (requiring traveling) and its evolution and growth paradigms are a significant contributor to such circumstances and the current socio-economic system accelerating the spread and impact of this contagious and infectious virus. Tourism is a result but also responsible for: our highly interconnected and global world; pollution, waste and climate change; global, national and regional economic development and growth; superiority of capitalism values in people’s and business decision-making but also policy and politics formulations.

As climate change increases the frequency of pandemics and outbreaks, pandemics are expected to become more common in the future which in turn highlights the interwoven nature and vicious circle forces between the biological, physical and socio-economic systems in the Jammu region.

Moreover, the economic system and mindset contributing to the COVID-19 has also been guiding and shaping the COVID-19 response and recovery strategies of governments, institutions, businesses and people alike.

This can significantly perpetuate and repeat crises as we are treating their symptoms and not their roots. For example, economic priorities for maintaining business continuity and jobs, resume and recovering to the old ‘economic success growth’, have been driving governments’ policies and practices such as: economic support (e.g. subsidies, tax reliefs) to tourism businesses and employees; debates for relaxation of restrictions for re-opening and re-starting economies at the expense of a second way and human lives. Similarly, people have engaged in panic buying and (over)-consumption of online experiences (e.g. virtual entertainment, dining, drinking, traveling) during lock-downs, that demonstrate their persistence, preference and fear of loosing to their ‘consumerism’ traditional lifestyles deemed essential for their success and happiness. Early COVID-19 tourism research also reinforces a similar mindset, e.g. many studies trying to measure the economic impacts of COVID-19 trading them off to socio-cultural and biological impacts, studies aiming to predict and measure when tourists will start traveling again and when we can reach the old tourism targets.

As governments race to minimise economic losses, and be the first to reopen borders and (tourism) businesses, and financial markets, investors, cash liquidity and financial survival are equally pressing multinational and small tourism enterprises, they are all also looking for tourism research that can ‘feed’ and ‘reconfirm’ their mindset and help them resume operations based on the old paradigms and business models they are founded.

Debates and research are based on trading between economic benefits and losses in exchange of human rights, lives, morals and ethics. There is no discussion why trade-offs are the best methodology and mindset to decide, no one has re-imagined ‘solutions’ enabling co-existence or regenerative forces between these concepts.

Overall, research, education and our socio-economic and political system (which they shape and are shaped by each other), have all framed our mindset on how we research, measure, understand, respond and aim to recover from the COVID-19.

Consequently, we have converted COVID-19 from a biological virus contagion to a financial crisis contagion and recently, an economic race to re-build our old financial competitiveness.

To avoid such perpetuations, tourism research should assume more responsibility in informing, driving and leading sustainable futures. To that end, COVID-19 tourism research should not be solely seen, conducted and used as a useful tool to help resume old states. Instead, COVID-19 tourism research should also challenge our growth-paradigms and assumptions that have led to the current situation and enable us to reimagine and reset tourism.

To achieve this, COVID-19 tourism research should criticize ontological and epistemological foundations and assumptions that underpin the current science and growth paradigms.

It should also deconstruct and challenge the mechanisms and systems that sustain the deleterious unsustainable tourism evolution. But to regenerate and transform tourism and its socio-economic system, tourism research should not only support new ways and perspectives of researching, knowing and evolving in the Jammu region.

COVID-19 tourism research should also inspire, motivate and inform all tourism stakeholders alike to adopt new ways of being, doing and politicising. For example:

At a macro-level, COVID-19 tourism research should generate dethinking, rethinking and unthinking of pre-assumptions and mindsets including: globalisation as an unstoppable force; neoliberal capitalism as the best system and decision-making tool for organizing and allocating resources; growth as the sole way for development and success. It should also challenge the 'surveillance capitalism', whose institutionalisation and normalisation is perceived as inevitable and unstoppable because of forces including institutionalised facts (e.g. data collection, analytics and mining); leading tech and disrupting companies being respected and treated as emissaries of a better future solving the "faults of capitalism" (e.g. sharing economy platforms 'democratizing' micro-entrepreneurship); and people seeing technologies as a necessity requirement for social and civic participation, securing employment and addressing the increasingly stressful, competitive, and stratified struggle for effective life.

The COVID-19 is accelerating the institutionalisation and acceptance of this algorithmic governance, management and society, previously contested as violations of human rights, privacy and laws (^{Zysman, 2006}), but now becoming normalised in the name of health and common good.

Technology is at the core of solutions for combating the COVID-19 and re-opening tourism and the economy (e.g. mobility tracing apps, robotised-AI touchless service delivery, digital health passports and identity controls, social distancing and crowding control technologies, big data for fast and real time decision-making, humanoid robots delivering materials, disinfecting and sterilizing public spaces, detecting or measuring body temperature, providing safety or security), while technology is seen as a panacea to our COVID-19 driven-needs to normalise surveillance, to ensure health and safety, to collect and analyse personal data for fast decision-making.

Although COVID-19 tourism research cannot stop these technological advances, it should fight this digital trojan horse from the inside by questioning and resetting their purposes, designs and affordances, interpretations and application ethics. Technologies are constituted by unique affordances, whose development and expression are shaped by the institutional logics in which technologies are designed, implemented, and used.

COVID-19 tourism research could simply investigate and advance our information and technological capabilities to collect, analyse and use (big) data for better knowing, predicting, controlling, and modifying human behavior (e.g. tourists and employees behaviour) as a means to produce revenue and market control (^{Zuboff, 2015}). But such research will simply further support the making of everydayness qua data imprints an intrinsic component of organizational and institutional life and a primary target of commercialization strategies.

Technologies have always been an enabler, a catalyst of innovation and change, a disruptor of tourism, as well as a tool to build tourism resilience in crisis. The COVID-19 has further enhanced the role of technologies in the recovery and reimagination of tourism, while it reinforces existing paradigms in the e-tourism evolution. Developmental trends and adoption of smart destinations and tourism services, AI, robotics and other digital advances are now accelerated to combat the COVID-19 tourism implications.

COVID-19 tourism research should reimagine and re-shape the purposes, usage and means of such technological advances that significantly form how our societies and economies are being transformed, how tourism is being practiced, managed and evolves with the help and/or because of the COVID-19.

At a micro-level, COVID-19 tourism research should question and reset why tourism is viewed, practiced and managed as a way to ‘escape’, ‘relax’, ‘socialise’, ‘construct identities/status’, ‘learn’ and reward themselves from a routine, unpleasant and meaningless life. Why tourism should be researched and practiced as an escape from a boring life, instead of life being rewarding and meaningful itself? Why people have to travel thousands of miles away from home to ‘learn’ and ‘be happy’? Why companies have to commercialize and commoditize communities, people and their tangible and intangible resources as tourism attractions ‘please’ the tourists’ needs and drive economic development? Tourism paradigms and mindsets like this, have led and intensified crises like COVID-19 and this cannot be sustainable for much longer. Consumerism and tourism should not be seen as the sole way to achieve happiness, self-expression, and (economic) development in the Jammu region.

COVID-19 tourism research should inspire tourists, businesses and destinations alike to re-imagine and reset new mindsets, frontiers and behaviours such as: how to use and develop tourism to valorize and not consume tourism resources, to generate well-being, sustainability and transformational learning; how to study and practice environmental/sustainable management not as a legal necessity for lobbying and formulating policies, not as marketing tool to build brands’ and people’s identities, not as an expense to be minimized, but as a mindful business investment and personal lifestyle for a responsible future.

Overall, COVID-19 tourism research should not only be the mean to overcome the crisis and resume previously chartered economic growth trajectories of the Jammu region. It should lead the refocusing, repurposing, reframing and re-interpretation of research questions, methodologies and outcomes, so that tourism stakeholders can in turn re-direct their actioning, conduct and evolution.

To that end, COVID-19 tourism research will be benefited by embedding, adapting, reflecting and expanding the theoretical lenses and perspectives of a much greater plurality of disciplines and constructs to guide and implement research. Transformative (service) research, philosophy, criminology, ethics, law, anthropology, behavioural and religious studies, political science and diplomacy, governance, bioethics, rhetoric.

Researching within uncharted waters, COVID-19 tourism research may also need to apply new methodological approaches and tools that are capable to combat roots and not symptoms of tourism crises and use the latter as transformational opportunity to reset research agendas and re-imagine and re-shape unthinkable tourism futures. Due to the newness of the field qualitative approaches such as (cyber)ethnography and the need for urgent, fast and real-time research processes and outcomes, COVID-19 tourism research may also need to intensify and advance “new” methods of (big) data collection, analysis and interpretation/visualization, such as participatory sensing (i.e. using tourists as sensors for data collection).

As a meta-theory, paradox research offers a powerful lens for enriching extant theories and fostering theorizing processes in management science, because it provides deeper understanding and conceptualisation of constructs, relationships, and dynamics surrounding organizational tensions.

By investigating contradictions between interdependent elements that are seemingly distinct and oppositional, one can better unravel how one element actually informs and defines the another, tied in a web of eternal mutuality. As a methodology, the paradox lens encourages researchers to approach organizational paradoxes paradoxically.

Incorporating paradox research into COVID-19 research may also be inevitable, as the COVID-19 circumstances, impacts and debates have uncovered and intensified existing paradoxes, but also generated new ones. Paradox research is also paramount to COVID-19 tourism research, if the latter is to become innovative and transformative in the Jammu region. Paradox research is limitedly used within tourism research, but its applicability, versatility and value are shown already in investigating: macro-level tourism and destination management issues business operations and tourism demand. However, as the present and post COVID-19 era is a fertile ground of persistent and new paradoxes in tourism, tourism researchers should seriously consider adopting a paradox lense. For example, the circumstances of COVID-19 (e.g. stay at home lockdowns, social distancing) have necessitated and accelerated the use of technologies by both tourists (e.g. information about travel restrictions, online crisis communication, online COVID-19 alerts and hygiene measures) and businesses (e.g. online food delivery, virtual dining, virtual wine experiences, festivals/events, virtual visits of museums, destinations) in the Jammu region.

However, persistent ‘paradoxes’ (e.g. increase use of social media and loneliness, democratisation of information accessibility and information darkness, technology and (small) business empowerment/equalizing competition rules) are

questioning the effectiveness of such technology solutions and have fuelled debates on whether they are a ‘cure’ or a ‘fertiliser’ and “diffuser’ of the pandemic.

Not everyone has access to technology and those that they have do not necessarily have the capabilities and knowledge to effectively use the technology tools and information. The persistent digital divide found in consumers and businesses (which mainly represents a socio-economic divide of citizens and size of businesses), has converted the pandemic to an infodemic (e.g. lack or mis-information, diffusion of fake COVID-19 news and advices, emotional contagion of global depression and mental health) and a tool deepening the economic divide and competitive gap between larger and smaller tourism operators. Digital inequalities in tourists potentiated their vulnerability to COVID-19 (e.g. putting themselves and their loved one in health risk while traveling or willing to travel during and after the COVID-19), while COVID-19 vulnerability potentiate to enlarge the digital inequalities [e.g. those who have the tools and means to easier go through the COVID-19 impacts will also be the only ones who can pay and access virtual tourism experiences, who will be well informed on how, where and when travel and who will be able to afford to travel in the future, as increased (hygiene and technology) operating costs and transportation oligopolies may increase costs of tourism]. Similarly, digital inequalities in tourism businesses potentiate COVID-19 vulnerability (as larger operators that were technology ready and ‘inherited’ by size resilience, were the first and maybe the only ones to be able to virtualise operations and experiences for maintaining business liquidity, surviving, re-opening and recovering post COVID-19), while COVID-19 vulnerability increases digital and economic inequalities in the tourism competitive landscape (e.g. larger companies/destinations which are characterised by greater cash liquidity, know-how, technology readiness and resilience and so, have lower COVID-19 vulnerability, will be the ones to survive and thrive post COVID-19). Paradox research that can investigate such contradictions between the above mentioned distinct and oppositional, but also elements interdependent elements can better define, understand, manage and address their concepts and the dynamics of their web of eternal mutuality.

Tourism supply – Businesses

Tourism businesses have been racing to ensure the safety of their employees, customers, brand image and cash liquidity. To re-start, tourism companies are re-designing experiences (e.g. winery experiences, museum visits, tours, sports events, in-room dining and entertainment instead of hotel facilities) to feature smaller groups of tourists, outdoor activities and/or private experiences complying with social distancing and gathering restrictions and travellers’ expectations. Tourism companies have already upgraded their cleaning procedures by adopting new standards and restraining staff. Many of companies promote their hygiene certifications accredited by health expert associations. Tourism professionals are being trained to become ‘contact tracers’ obtaining relevant certifications confirming their skills to identify cases, build rapport and community with cases, identify their contact and stop community transmission. Restaurants, hotels, airports, public spaces are re-engineering their operations to make them contact-free or contactless. Mobile apps (for check-in, check-out, room keys, mobile payments, bookings-purchases), self-service kiosks, in-room technologies for entertainment and destination e-shopping (e.g. virtual reality for destination virtual visits to museums, attractions and destinations, movies), robots (for reception and concierge services, food delivery museum guides), artificial intelligence enabled websites and chatbox for customer communication and services, digital payments (e.g. digital wallets, paypal, credit cards). In addition, the new operating environment enforced by COVID-19 measures require firms to adopt new technologies and applications to ensure management of crowds and number of people gathered in public spaces (e.g. airports, shopping malls, museums, restaurants, hotels), human disinfectors and hand sanitiser equipment, applications identifying and managing people’s health identity and profiles.

Research can conduct a reality check and benchmarking of the effectiveness of the various respond and recovery strategies adopted by tourism operators. Research can also investigate the role and the way to build resilience to fast develop and implement such strategies. However, such research is useful and important but probably not enough for investigating the resetting of the next tourism industry normal. Transformative COVID-19 research should help industry to reimagine and implement an operating environment that is human-centred and responsible to sustainability and well-being values.

Destination management organisations and policy makers

Governments and destinations have been providing stimulus packages and interventions (e.g. tax reliefs, subsidies, deferrals of payments) to ensure the viability and continuity of tourism firms and jobs in Jammu region.

Governments have intervened in mobility restriction and closures of businesses. Because of these, COVID-19 has resulted in a greater intervention of governments in the functioning and operations of the tourism industry. The government has also become a much bigger actor in the tourism economy (e.g. re-nationalisation of airlines and other tourism firms and tourism infrastructure like airports). This is very unique for COVID-19, as previous crises have generated research and institutional interest, but they did not have policy impact, specifically in tourism. Would such government interventions and role sustain in the future? How will this influence the structure and functioning of the industry at a national and global level?

Debates have already started questioning the effectiveness of such interventions, their fairness and equal distribution amongst tourism stakeholders their long-term impacts in terms of austerity and cuts of public expenditures. Future research looking into these issues is highly warranted. In their COVID-19 reactions and responses governments and destinations seem to have acted individually and nationalistic and recently selectively (e.g. bilateral and multilateral agreements amongst tourism bubbles). However, systems theory and crisis management, would argue that crises need to be addressed collectively. What would be the impact of such governmental behaviours on the future of tourism and destinations tourism policy making and strategies? As it seems, COVID-19 has raised political, geopolitical and governance issues that frameworks and concepts from these disciplines would need to be used to enlighten such research.

CONCLUSIONS

COVID-19 resulted in numerous socio-cultural, economic and psychological impacts on various tourism stakeholders, some of them for years to stay in the Jammu region.. Consequently, the pandemic has created a 'fertile' new context whereby tourism researchers can conduct research with valuable end-user benefits. However, COVID-19 tourism research should try to avoid the '*publish or perish*' old mantra that has been driving and mushrooming tourism research.

Although studies conducting a reality check of impacts, predicting tourism demand, and benchmarking good and best practices are very useful and contextually interesting to assess COVID-19 impacts on various geographies sectors and stakeholders, they potentially offer limited scope to advance our knowledge on crisis management as well as to potentiate the pandemic's affordance to reset our research agendas and expand the contribution and frontiers of tourism research and industry.

It is the aim of this paper to inspire tourism scholars to view and use the COVID-19 as a transformational opportunity for reforming their mindsets in designing and conducting research and for the tourism institutions to reset their standards and metrics for motivating and evaluating the purpose, role and impact of tourism research.

In addition, crises also accelerate technology innovation and change). However, these should not be viewed as inevitable, unquestionable and impossible to re-shape and re-adjust to serve real needs and meaningful values. It is the responsibility scholars to ensure that COVID-19 tourism research can ensure the latter.

The present analysis is not exhaustive in terms of the COVID-19 impacts, while impacts may not be uniform across all the actors of the same tourism stakeholder group. For example, the COVID-19 has different impacts on tourism operators based on their characteristics such as, the nature of the tourism sector (intermediaries, event organizers transportation, type of accommodation or attraction provider), their size, location, management and ownership style. Similarly, the highly heterogenous tourism demand (e.g. leisure and business travelers, group and independent tourists, special interest tourists such as religious, gay & lesbian, corporate travelers) also means that different COVID-19 impacts and implications are anticipated and worthy to be investigated for different market segments. COVID-19 tourism research should not only disclose such differentiated COVID-19 impacts, but it should also provide an enriched explanatory power about the roots of such disparities with the scope to envision and/or test any suggestions on how to address any inequalities and disadvantages that they may cause to various groups of tourism stakeholders.

The analysis did not also include other major tourism stakeholders such as tourism employees, local communities, tourism entrepreneurs and tourism education (scholars, students and institutions alike). Recent developments and pressures faced by some of these tourism stakeholders were further strengthened by the COVID-19, which in turn place them in a more disadvantaged situation. COVID-19 research related to these stakeholders is equally important in the Jammu region.

For example, COVID-19 has worsened the already difficult situation (e.g. high labour flexibility but at the expense of low salaries, lack of job security, insurance and other benefits) faced by an increasing number of tourism micro-entrepreneurs (e.g. food delivery people, 'Uber taxi drivers', "Airbnb hoteliers") Algorithmic management, increased pressure and work stress are some of the negative impacts of the gig economy, which become more evident and fortified due to the COVID-19 (e.g. food delivery employees have no health insurance or coverage of lost salaries in case they get infected while working; 'micro-hoteliers' risk losing their homes, as they cannot collect 'accommodation fees' to pay off home mortgages). Being an unofficial and sometime black economy/employment, gig tourism workers may not even be entitled to governmental subsidies provided to COVID-19 vulnerable employees or businesses in the Jammu region.

As the COVID-19 is expected to continue and reinforce contemporary paradigms and trends of this 'causalisation' of tourism employment (due to the upcoming economic recession and greater operating costs of tourism firms), COVID-19 tourism research needs to urgently investigate issues of employee psychological, mental and physical health, engagement,

working conditions (e.g. remote working, virtual teams and virtual leadership) and other human resource issues within the COVID-19 setting. For example, traditional leadership, recruitment, management, and motivational incentives may not inspire, engage, motivate, and attract employees who have recalibrated their personal values and priorities during the COVID-19 lockdown and remote working.

The COVID-19 impacts on tourism employment create further pressures on tourism education that has severely affected by the pandemic. Apart from the virtualization of teaching and learning processes, tourism students and graduates have to also address the halt of industry internships, recruitment and questionable career paths. Tourism programs and universities are faced with reduced students' intakes, industry and government sponsorship and research funding. Tourism researchers need to find new ways and sources for conducting research addressing social distancing, respecting the mental health and privacy issues of COVID-19 affected stakeholders. Investigating pedagogical issues such as how to make the design and delivery of tourism curricula more 'resilient', agile and updated to develop graduates with flexible and transferable skills to other industries is also equally important.

Many other specialized topics also warrant research within the domain of COVID-19. For example, the social entrepreneurship has been booming in tourism during the last decade in the Jammu region for several reasons including the 2008 economic recession.

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