

# Transformation In Destination Attractiveness Attributes after Covid-19 Pandemic: A Review

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## Abstract

From a historical perspective, it is impossible to envision tourism without travelers' mobility. However, the Covid-19 pandemic unlocked new avenues for tourism, including virtual travel. The pandemic seriously impacted the travel and tourism industries due to border closures that grounded the transportation industry and led to job losses. Historically, tourism has quickly bounced back after disasters, pandemics, and epidemics. Hence, a new outlook was developed with the introduction of the New Normal or "business as usual". The pandemic covid-19 has compelled tourism industry stakeholders to explore and analyze the transformative attributes of tourist destination attractiveness to revive the industry and regain tourists' confidence. The research study is constructed on secondary data and literature analysis. The researchers have examined numerous studies representing transformative destination attractiveness to examine the characteristics. The study concludes that there is a paradigm shift in the attributes affecting tourist destination attractiveness which will help the tourism stakeholders in marketing and restarting tourism after the

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pandemic. These transformative attributes will increase the number of visitors, assisting the tourism industry's recovery from the pandemic.

**Keywords:** Tourist Destination Attractiveness, Transformative Attributes, Revival of tourism

## Introduction

In the modern era, a tourist destination has become a diverse amalgamation of natural wonders, social inheritance, or environmentally friendly features, but rather a general profitable product that is easily reachable in a specific area serving a wide range of tourist requirements. (Cracolici & Nijkamp, 2008). As a result, a tourist destination can be defined as a collection of a variety of tourist amenities reliant on indigenous supply. Additionally, it creates a dynamic battle between established destinations and traditional destinations attempting to maintain and expand market share. The Novel and undiscovered destinations are vying for market share. (Roy & Saxena, 2020). As a result, the success of any tourist destination is heavily dependent on its regional competitiveness, in terms of key strengths as well as attractiveness that demonstrate its expertise in that field. (Agrawal, 1997) (Butler, 1980) (Hovinen, 2002).

The persuading factors of a tourist destination's attractiveness significantly influence the travel decision-making process. The destination's features that entice tourists to visit a specific tourist destination are referred to as destination attractiveness (Dey, Mathew, & Chee-Hua, 2020). "The physical attraction of a travel destination reflects an individual's sentiments, opinions, and viewpoints about a destination's perceptions capacity to achieve his or her distinct sightseeing specifications." (Hu Y. &., 1993) (Morachat, 2003) (Vengesayi, Mavondo, & Reisinger, 2009). Current studies demonstrate that an assortment of competition and destination attractiveness creates a pull element of tourism destinations. "A traveler typically considers five fundamental A's that are attraction, *accessibility*, *accommodation*, *activities*, and *amenities*" (Devu Sunil, 2020), (Crouch & Ritchie, 1999).

As travelers enjoy the spirit of rustic India blessed with rural beauty, wildlife, culture, adventure, and diverse cuisines and crafts,

travel turns into a joyful experience. India is home to a variety of stunning tourist destinations (Maitra & Joseph, 2022). Physical, cultural, interpersonal and status and prestige motivation are the four primary reasons for visiting a location. Usually, this is what pulls travelers from one destination to another. But the Coronavirus pandemic has compelled the tourism sector to rethink new attributes of destinations so that they can attract tourists' attention towards the destinations. The COVID-19 epidemic had an impact on all areas of international commerce, posing hitherto unheard-of difficulties in both personal and professional life. Several nations all across the world have been influenced by the Covid-19 pandemic threat. Lockdowns at businesses and industries, canceled flights, stopped trains, and restrictions on the movement of people and vehicles caused a huge loss to the Indian economy. (Maitra & Shukla, 2022). The travel and tourism sector has been the most severely affected service sectors due to strict restrictions and travel bans. At the end of the year 2021, many governments had lifted the travel bans and restrictions but still, some travel restrictions remained in place. On account of the prolonged status of COVID-19, it was anticipated that the tourism sector will recover. Visitors will consider several criterias, including destination features, to make travel decisions at the launch of numerous tourist sites in the new normal. As international tourists face closed borders and strict quarantine measures, travelers are taking a keen interest in domestic trips, a fully hygienic environment, contactless services, etc. (Patel P.K., 2020)

### **The rationale of the study**

The novelty of this paper is to discuss the new transformative attributes of a tourist destination. After Corona, the tourism market was badly hit by the boomerang of unexpected effects on the financial system of countries. Tourism-dependent destinations offer jobs and economic growth in severely hit areas. The Coronavirus seems to have had a significant adverse impact on the tourism industry which in turn has an impact on all continents' economies, lifestyles, government services, and prospects (UNWTO, 2020). Therefore, it becomes prevalent for researchers to come up with new ideas for the revival of tourist destinations i.e., transformative attributes. The study will add creative strategies for reviving tourist

sites. When tourist attractions will be optimized with new attributes i.e., short-distance trips, new health and hygiene standards, intelligent service delivery, clear Covid-19 communication strategies, and Covid-19 crisis management strategies, their sales will improve. After the COVID-19 pandemic, the government has implemented several initiatives i.e. safety and hygiene to boost tourism in the nation, including financial assistance for the travel and tourism sector (Ministry of Tourism, 2021; UNWTO, 2020).

### **Research Objective**

The study aims to find out and discuss some transformative attributes of destinations' attractiveness for the revival of tourist destinations after the Covid-19 pandemic.

### **Research Methodology**

The present study is based on the traditional narrative review method. To get valuable insights and new dimensions of destination attractiveness with regard to the objective of the study, the Scopus database, Google Scholar and Google has been used. The review methodology was to identify a few studies that can describe the rationale of the study. For this methodology, no research question and no specific search strategy is applied. The Scopus database, Google Scholar and Google were used to retrieve articles, news releases and reports to review the new attributes transforming the attractiveness of tourist destinations and supporting the tourist spots to revive, reset and restart. More than 90 articles are reviewed to fulfill the objective but only 59 articles are found relevant in the context of the study. The annual reports, survey reports, new releases etc. from the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India, United Nations World Tourism Organization, World Health Organization and other tourism websites were reviewed to get fruitful inputs for the study. The research methodology was based on previously available literature on the theme of destination attractiveness attributes in the pre and post-Covid 19 pandemics. The findings of the review are presented further in two tables out of which one table is presenting the traditional destination attractiveness attributes and the second table is presenting a few transformative destination attractiveness attributes.

## **Review of literature**

The study is based on an existing review of literature on the desirability characteristics of tourist attractions to support its arguments and recommendations. The researchers identified several elements that contribute to the attractiveness of tourist destinations, including tourism infrastructure, tourist facilities, and destination attractions. The study also proposes new transformative attributes that can help to revive tourist destinations after the pandemic.

The major theories and ideas that are based on tourist destination attractiveness attributes are destination Image, Push and Pull Factors, Tourist Experience, Destination Competitiveness, its lifecycle, marketing, tourist motivators, and satisfaction. These concepts provide a framework for understanding the influence of tourist behaviour influencers and the successful development of attractive destinations with various strategies to promote tourism growth.

## **Destination attractiveness**

The term "attractiveness" originates from the Spanish verb "atrathere," which tends to mean "to draw" (Gunn, 1988). So, if a destination attractiveness attribute is to be evaluated as a travel attraction, it should have the following characteristics: exciting and alluring characteristics for potential travelers. The desirability of tourist sites is based on tourists' feelings, beliefs, and perspectives about the qualities that a distinctive venue can offer concerning specific leisure requirements (Hu, 1993). This assertion is consistent with the perspective of Leiper (1990), Vengesayi, Mavondo, & Reisinger (2009) that the desirability of a desired location refers to visitors' expectations of the destination's ability to fulfill his\her necessities or aspirations. Regarding the geographic component, the attractiveness of destinations is defined as topographical locations that offer an amalgamation of products and tourist industry operations within specified boundaries. (Buhalis, 2000) (UNWTO, 2003). The principle of desirability in a visitor's destination is put into action (Morachat, 2003), as the sentiments, opinions, perspectives, outlooks or aspirations of the traveler up to a specific location or as attempting to influence variables which influence a tourist's preferences. Attractiveness is defined as "all characteristics

of a tourist destination that attract or inspire visitors to visit, with their distinctive features."(Kresic D., 2007). The accumulated indicators of virtues are popular tourism attraction attributes that can attract tourists, as stated explicitly (Cho, 2008). (Kresic & Darko Prebezac, 2011) explicitly notes that the Accumulated predictor variables of attributes are features of classic tourist destinations that can promote tourism. (Lee., Ou, & Huang, 2009) To summarize, the appeal of a site is defined by its overarching distinctive traits. According to studies, the need for attractiveness studies is to understand the factors of the appeal of a site that entices people to move. (Formica S., 2002). The greater a destination fits the requirement of travelers, the more likely it is that the destination will be chosen over a competing destination. The pulling effect that physical attraction has on travelers is, in fact, the primary characteristic of destination attractiveness. (Kim & Lee, 2002).

### **Tourist destination attractiveness attributes**

The tourism industry has emerged as a crucial industry (Ortega & Gonzalez, 2007). It has aided in the growth of the vast number of surrounding communities. Selecting a tourist destination to tour is analogous to researching any goods or services before acquiring it. (Wiang & Gao, 2010) (Bilkey & Nes, 1982). The image of a traveler presented by a holiday destination, especially a territory, will impact the location's preference. (Beerli & Matri, 2004; Babić, Mehic, Kramo, & Resic, 2008). So, the assessment and understanding of destination attractiveness has been a popular issue in academic articles, and it has greatly contributed to a greater grasp of the tourist's experience, as stated by (Tasci, Cavusgil, & Gartner, 2007). A person's impression of a destination can be generated by a variety of frameworks. They list five structures: attraction to the destination, knowledge of the destination, appraisal of the destination, understanding of the destination, features of the destination, and qualities of the destination. (Formica & Uysal, 2006) reached an agreement in their destination attractiveness analysis, which focuses on macroeconomic variables. The most appealing aspect of the percentage of total tourism is the correlation sometimes amid the availability of importance in identifying the ultimate destination and their apparent importance. Tourism stakeholders when they discuss or advertise local establishments, they introduce them to various

aspects of tourism, such as socioeconomic, ecologic, and artificial attractions. These are also important motivators for tourists to visit. Such elements combine to form the utmost tourism endurance that can be researched in parallel.

Table -1

Tabular representation of literature review on Destination Attractiveness Traditional Attributes

S. No.	The major types of tourism destination desirability	Destination attractiveness characteristics/attributes	Investigators (years)
1.	Accessibility	Transportation, Travel Agents, Visitor Operators, Availability and quality of local transport;	(Laws, 1995), (Amalia, Pérez-Nebra, & Cláudio, 2010), (Tam, 2012), (Anholt, 2010), (Babić, Mehic, Kramo, & Resic, 2008), (Cho, 2008), (Gartner, 1989), (Kim & Lee, 2002), (Chuang, Hwang, Wong, & Chen, 2014), (Awuah & Reinert, 2011), (Beerli & Matri, 2004), (Hoang, Nguyen, Phung, & Phan, 2016)
2	Accommodation	Hotels, Housing services (Hotels, Hostels), Quality of the accommodation Availability/quality of accommodation;	(Edward & George, 2008), (Laws, 1995), (Amalia, Pérez-Nebra, & Cláudio, 2010), (Kresic & Darko Prebezac, 2011), (Tam, 2012), (Klufova, 2016), (Chuang, Hwang,

S. No.	The major types of tourism destination desirability	Destination attractiveness characteristics/attributes	Investigators (years)
			Wong, & Chen, 2014), (Awuah & Reinert, 2011), (Beerli & Matri, 2004), (Vinayek & Bhatia, 2013), (Hoang, Nguyen, Phung, & Phan, 2016)
3	Attractions	Rest and relaxing atmosphere and local culture, Entertainment and Recreation, biodiversity, natural resources, culture and historical architecture, Sports, Natural scenery, weather, backwaters, Weather; scenic beauty; protection; urban and architectural peace; tidiness of the area; sociability, endurance,	(Amalia, Pérez-Nebra, & Cláudio, 2010), (Laws, 1995), (Edward & George, 2008), (Kresic & Darko Prebezac, 2011), (Tam, 2012), (Chuang, Hwang, Wong, & Chen, 2014), (Wijaya, Wahyudi, Kusuma, & Sugianto, 2018), (Klufova, 2016), (Awuah & Reinert, 2011), (Beerli & Matri, 2004), (Chaudhary, 2000), (Vinayek & Bhatia, 2013), (Hoang, Nguyen, Phung, & Phan, 2016), (Kaushik, Kaushik, Sharma, & Rani, 2010), (Ariya,



S. No.	The major types of tourism destination desirability	Destination attractiveness characteristics/attributes	Investigators (years)
		heritage and culture presentation; general merchandise opportunities; as well as 'value for money, quality of the information in destinations, and the distinctiveness of residents' lives; Festival special events; historical attractions; accessibility to tourist landmarks, distinctive regional features, and psychological and physical surroundings Diversity of wildlife resources, uniqueness of wildlife resources	Wishitemi, & Sitati, 2017)

<b>S. No.</b>	<b>The major types of tourism destination desirability</b>	<b>Destination attractiveness characteristics/attributes</b>	<b>Investigators (years)</b>
4	Activities	Shopping, Citizen Hospitality and more, Marketing of tourism products and efficient management of destination capacities, Product renewal, promotional nature of the country; protection of the natural, social, political and economic environment; Tourist leisure and recreation, Destination competitiveness,	(Genest & Legg, 2003), (Amalia, Pérez-Nebra, & Cláudio, 2010), (Kresic & Darko Prebezac, 2011), (Tam, 2012), (Beerli & Matri, 2004), (Chaudhary, 2000), (Vinayek & Bhatia, 2013), (Sultana, Haque, Momen, & Yasmin, 2014)
5.	Amenities and Ancillary services	Community Amenities, Connectivity facilities; shopping accessibility; Basic amenities Catering, food, Quality of the restaurants,	(Kresic & Darko Prebezac, 2011), (Laws, 1995), (Edward & George, 2008), (Klufova, 2016), (Amalia, Pérez-Nebra, & Cláudio, 2010), (Tam, 2012), (Awuah & Reinert, 2011),

S. No.	The major types of tourism destination desirability	Destination attractiveness characteristics/attributes	Investigators (years)
		Dining and Beverage Facilities, Safety and security; price levels; Law and order of the country, Service quality, communication facilities	(Chaudhary, 2000), (Vinayek & Bhatia, 2013), (Sultana, Haque, Momen, & Yasmin, 2014), (Kaushik, Kaushik, Sharma, & Rani, 2010), (Ariya, Wishitemi, & Sitati, 2017)

Source: Authors' Compilation

**Findings of Table 1**

After reviewing detailed literature on the desirability characteristics of tourist attractions, researchers discovered that numerous published research papers have listed a multitude of elements, and the list seems far from extensive and comprehensive. Hence, the researchers have classified them into the Five A's that define the main categories of tourism destination attractiveness i.e., **Accessibility, Accommodations, Attractions, Activities, Amenities and Ancillary Services**. Out of five, the top three areas recognized by the researchers are Tourism Infrastructure (Accommodation, Transportation, Communication, Shopping Centers, Entertainment Sources), Tourist Facilities (Food and beverage, drinking water, Hygienic atmosphere, Tour operators, Quality tourism products at a reasonable price), and Destination Attractions (Attractions can be organic, ethnic, contextual, regional and sociocultural). Tourist destination attractions in tourism include religious tourism, adventure travel, recreational tourism, environmental, healthcare services, historical heritage, corporate travel, and so on. All tourism stakeholders provide and promote a variety of vacation packages for tourists with varying characteristics and accruing classifications, based on the requirements of the expenditure of traveler's constraints and priorities and selections. These are the main factors

to consider when planning a trip and traveling to a tourist destination. It is widely assumed that the more attributes a destination have, the more appealing it becomes. Destinations create infrastructure and amenities to boost their attractiveness to attract visitors. In the absence of tourism infrastructure and tourist facilities, the attractiveness of a destination decreases. The major destination support services include the availability and quality of accommodation, transportation, the food culture and potable water, neat and hygienic environment, and the availability of a proficient tourist guide among other things. These support services allow stakeholders in tourist destinations to cultivate while also tracking negative aspects of development and taking appropriate steps to ensure long-term viability.

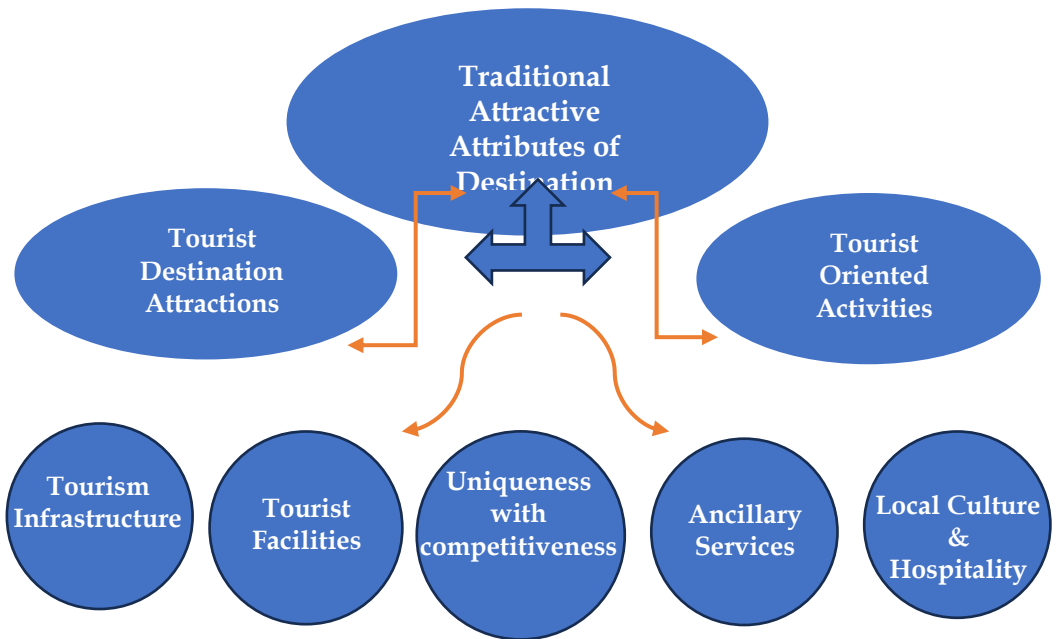


Figure 1: Traditional Attributes of Destination Attractiveness

Table 2: Tabular representation of literature review on Destination attractiveness transformative attributes

S.No.	The main types of tourism destination desirability	Specific features/attributes of destination attractiveness	Researchers (years)*
1.	Short distance trips	Local trips and Local attractions, Domestic tourism	(Li X, 2021), (UNWTO , 2020) (Haro, 2022)
2	New health and hygiene standards	Advanced and quality health care services, medical facilities, digital health monitoring, travel medical insurance, social distancing	(Shin H., 2020), (Rasoolimanesh, 2021), (S. Yang, 2021), (WHO, 2020), (OECD, 2020), (Haro, 2022), (Thilini, Steven, & Amanda, 2021)
3	Intelligent Service Delivery	Contact-less services, contact-less transactions, real-time information, automated services, digitalization of tourist services, virtual tours, green tourism, Smart distribution channels	(Shin H., 2020), (OECD, 2020), (UNWTO , 2020), (Haro, 2022), (Thilini, Steven, & Amanda, 2021), (Bhatia, Roy, & Kumar, 2022)
4	Clear Covid-19 communication strategies	Informative signals including media reports, right information through social media, Smart tourist destinations with fewer confirmed cases, New tourist hotspots, pricing strategies,	(Bove L.L., 2020), (Rasoolimanesh, 2021), (S. Chemli, 2020), (S. Yang, 2021), (D. Zheng, 2021)

S. No.	The main types of tourism destination desirability	Specific features/attributes of destination attractiveness	Researchers (years)*
5.	Covid-19 Crisis management strategies	Willingness to support financially a destination, Solidarity, Govt. response and regulations, technology innovation, local belongingness, Consumer and employee confidence,	(José Filipe Torres, Founder and CEO, Bloom Consulting, 2020), (Rasoolimanesh, 2021), (Haro, 2022) (Thilini, Steven, & Amanda, 2021)

Source: Compiled by the authors

**Findings of Table 2**

Table 02 represents a literature review on transformative attributes of destination attractiveness. One of the results of the pandemic is that it has raised uncertainty and lack of confidence among travelers; hence industry should try to know the reasons. Now, most tourists prefer wellness activities at the destination as they are looking to relax their minds. Consequently, they are willing to spend money on self-care and stress relief. To make tremendous efforts to maintain the glory of the tourism sector and to help them recover the loss, short-distance trips i.e., local trips are being arranged by the stakeholders. Government’s support is also encouraging domestic tourism especially in the face of restrictions on international travel. Now tourists are searching to travel to unknown destinations with new tourist attractions. They especially prefer those destinations which can be used as multipurpose tourist destinations. The Covid pandemic has raised various green and digital options for tourist amenities/services. It has accelerated contactless services, virtual experiences, real-time information, automated processes etc. The use of big data and tourism intelligence will help tourism stakeholders to understand tourists’ needs better and make their

experience more satisfying. Tourist destinations can be popular if there is a proper channel of information. Consumer information becomes an important link as it supports long-term government planning and good coordination among different stakeholders. To understand the changing context, emerging trends and tourist expectations, social media and other sources of communication can be used properly. The crisis management strategies also support the destinations to adopt the changes with more information about tourists to be more healthy and hygienic places to offer more sustainable practices with digitalized services. All these transformative attributes will improve the popularity of tourist destinations.

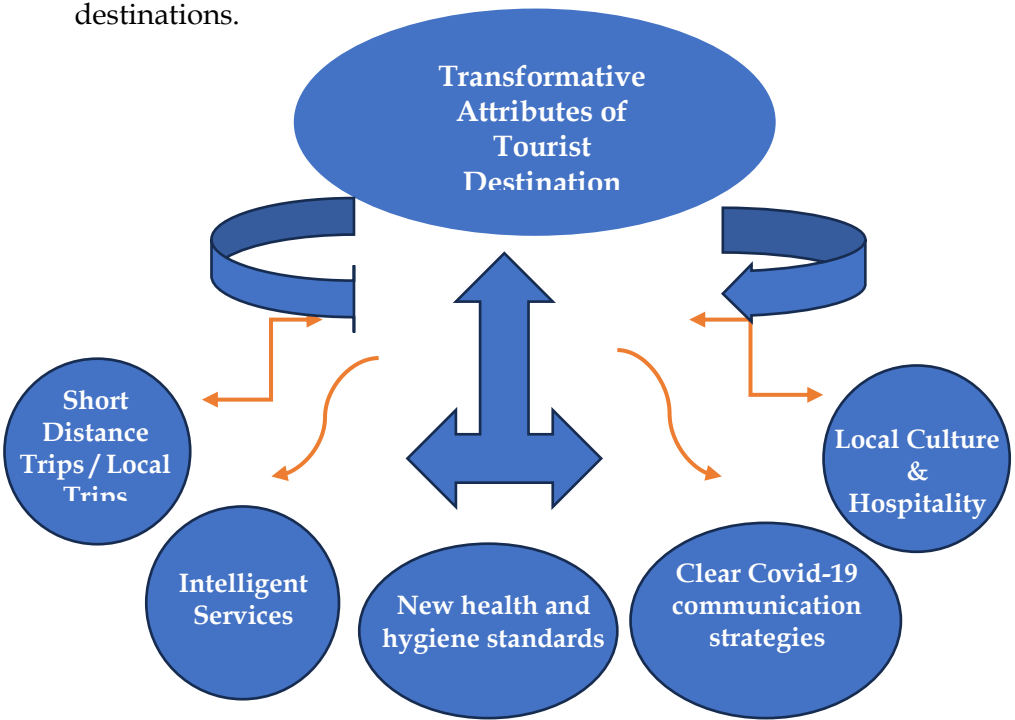


Figure 02: Transformative Attractive Attributes of a Destination

### Suggestions

Thus, the need for a flexible and appropriate blend of traditional and modern expectations of tourists can make this sector alive. To do so, and drive environment friendly tourism forward, each and every stakeholder should work together. The most important actions

should be to ensure health and employ safety measures, to make an investment in digital infrastructure and to train the labour force to inculcate skills accordingly. The Ministry of tourism should provide clear guidelines about the transformative attributes and encourage the tourism stakeholders to support sustainable development and to invest in areas of growth such as wellness tourism, digital technology and health monitoring. In this way, the Governments can assist both travelers and enterprises in making more rational decisions, create more employment opportunities and provide learning skills to those who have lost their jobs as a result of the pandemic. This in turn will promote market research, knowledge sharing and strategic marketing of new tourism products. The pandemic has opened new opportunities for tourism marketers to restore tourism markets with the help of transformative attributes to build job opportunities and to provide skills training among those who lost jobs due to the pandemic. The government should help in promoting attractions in the regional economy to encourage visitors to return quickly and to grow in demand resilience. The government can give strength to this industry for restart and revival by implementing digital training opportunities, market dynamics guidelines, and monetary incentives to acclimate or develop new markets. They should concentrate on assisting tourism wholesalers in creating applications that will resonate with domestic industries to enhance the persistence of this sector. They can help businesses enforce technology tools such as digital health. All these actions will support tourism marketers to recover the previous loss by adopting them and by improving and maintaining coordination amongst all stakeholders to build a great future for the tourism industry.

## **Conclusion**

It can be said that there is a transformative shift from the traditional attractiveness of tourist destinations to a vibrant approach. The time is changing so the tourism sector has also become dynamic and well conversant with this changing scenario in terms of transformative attributes i.e. **short-distance trips**, consisting of Local trips and Local attractions and promoting domestic tourism, **new health and hygiene standards** with advanced and quality health care services, **Intelligent Service Delivery** extended with Contact-less services, real-time information, automated services, virtual tours, **Clear**



**Covid-19 communication strategies** inclusive of Information including media reports through social media, **Covid-19 Crisis management strategies** including Govt. regulations, technology innovation etc. These attributes are likely to boost tourism in hidden and unknown destinations. It is significant to underline that Covid has drastically changed perceptions, expectations and so many factors in terms of safe destinations. It has been observed that in the era of post Covid 19 the new dimensions i.e. smart tourist destination combined with smart techniques and smart attributes play a vital role in increasing the number of visitors for the tourist destinations. The role of social media has affected a lot in the area of tourist destinations in terms of destination attractiveness so the need of the hour is to frame attractiveness with smart communication and smart crisis management strategies by the stakeholders.

### **Implications of the study**

The proposed study aims to bridge the gap between traditional aspects of tourism and a new era of tourism strategies. All stakeholders must develop a collaborative strategy to ensure the tourism industry's long-term viability. The Covid 19 and post-Covid 19 periods ushered in a slew of new dimensions. The research highlights the positive role of local communities and governments in maintaining tourism protocol while maintaining residents' trust in frequently visited destinations. As a result, the implications for future growth are extremely favourable.

The study on transformative attributes for the revival of tourist destinations has several implications. Firstly, it highlights the need for tourism stakeholders to adapt to the changing circumstances brought about by the Covid-19 pandemic. Secondly, it identifies new strategies and approaches that can be used to attract visitors and revive the tourism industry. Finally, it provides insights into how tourism-dependent destinations can recover from the adverse effects of pandemics and other disasters. Overall, this study can help inform policy decisions and marketing strategies aimed at restarting tourism after the pandemic.

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