

STAY LOCAL, SERVE GLOBAL

SUSTAINABLE HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM THROUGH STAYCATIONS

PART 1



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Stay Local, Serve Global: Sustainable Hospitality and Tourism through Staycations

(Part 1)

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**Stay Local, Serve Global: Sustainable Hospitality and Tourism
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CONTENTS

PREFACE	i
LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS	iii
CHAPTER 1 THE RISE OF STAYCATIONS: RESHAPING DOMESTIC TOURISM IN THE POST-PANDEMIC ERA	1
<i>Lei Chen, Rahmat Hashim, Anshul Garg and Zhuoma Yan</i>	
INTRODUCTION	1
Why Staycation? The Catalyst of Pandemic	3
<i>Travel Restrictions and Safety Concerns</i>	3
<i>Changing Consumer Priorities</i>	4
The Benefit of Staycations in the Post-Pandemic Era	6
<i>Enhance Well-being of Travellers</i>	6
<i>Convenient Travel: Affordability and Adaptability</i>	7
<i>Benefit to the Eco-Friendly Environment</i>	8
<i>Support for Economy and Local Communities</i>	9
<i>Strengthening Community and Social Connections</i>	10
Challenges and Future Trends	12
<i>The Issue of “Distant”</i>	12
<i>“Overcrowding” Locals</i>	13
<i>Diversity of Staycation Packages and Vouchers</i>	14
<i>Embrace Technology Innovation in Staycation</i>	15
CONCLUSION	15
REFERENCES	17
CHAPTER 2 STAYCATION TOURISM: EMERGING TRENDS, INNOVATIONS, AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS	24
<i>Anand Bharathi, Vinoth Kumar, Rajamohan and Unika David</i>	
INTRODUCTION	25
Background of Staycation Tourism	25
<i>Definition of Staycation Tourism</i>	25
<i>Historical Context and Evolution of Staycation Tourism</i>	25
<i>Significance of Staycations in the Tourism Industry</i>	25
<i>Factors Contributing to the Rise of Staycations</i>	26
Importance of Systematic Literature Review (SLR) and Bibliometric Analysis	26
<i>Definition and Purpose of SLR and Bibliometric Analysis</i>	26
<i>Value of SLR and Bibliometric Analysis in Understanding Research Impact</i>	27
<i>How SLR and Bibliometric Analysis Provide Insights into Emerging Trends and Key Research Areas</i>	27
METHODOLOGY	27
Data Collection and Sources	27
<i>Description of the Databases and Sources Used</i>	27
<i>Period and Timeframe of Data Collection</i>	28
<i>Search Parameters and Keywords Used in the Research</i>	28
<i>Scope of Data: Types of Articles, Publications, and Citations Considered</i>	28
EMERGING TRENDS IN STAYCATION TOURISM	30
Trends in Publications	30
<i>Overview of Publication Growth Over Time</i>	30
<i>Key Periods of Growth or Decline in Staycation Tourism Research</i>	31
<i>Shifts in Research Focus and Thematic Areas</i>	32
Top Sources and Authors in Staycation Tourism Research	33

<i>Most Influential Journals and Publications in Staycation Tourism Research</i>	33
<i>Renowned Authors and Their Contributions</i>	34
<i>Key Publications Shaping the Field</i>	36
<i>Global Cited Articles</i>	36
Countries and Affiliations	39
<i>Leading Countries in Staycation Tourism Research</i>	39
<i>Prominent Institutions and Affiliations Driving the Field</i>	40
<i>Regional Patterns and Geographical Concentrations of Research</i>	41
KEY THEMES AND TOPICS IN STAYCATION TOURISM	42
Word Frequency and Themes	42
<i>Analysis of Frequently Mentioned Terms and Concepts in Staycation Tourism Research</i>	42
<i>Identification of Core Topics and Research Areas</i>	43
Thematic Evolution	43
<i>Exploration of How Themes in Staycation Tourism Have Evolved Over Time</i>	43
<i>Emerging Topics and Shifts in Research Focus</i>	44
Thematic Mapping	46
<i>Visual Representation of Thematic Distribution Over Time</i>	46
<i>Analysis of How Themes are Distributed Across Different Research Periods</i>	46
GLOBAL COLLABORATIONS AND NETWORKS	47
Author Collaborations	47
<i>Examination of Collaborative Networks Among Authors in Staycation Research</i>	47
<i>Analysis of Co-Authorship Patterns and Their Impact on Research</i>	48
Institutional Collaborations	48
<i>Overview of Key Institutions Involved in Staycation Tourism Research</i>	48
<i>Institutional Networks and Their Role in Advancing the Field</i>	49
Country Collaborations	49
<i>International Collaboration Patterns in Staycation Research</i>	49
<i>Analysis of Collaborative Research Between Countries</i>	50
Impact of Staycation Tourism Research	50
<i>Evaluation of the Citation Metrics and Their Significance</i>	50
<i>The Global Reach and Influence of Staycation Tourism Research</i>	51
<i>Summary of Impact</i>	52
Future Trends	52
<i>Predictions for Future Research Areas and Focus</i>	53
<i>Geographical Regions Poised for Growth in Staycation Research</i>	54
<i>Potential Shifts in Staycation Tourism Research Due to Global Events</i>	54
CONCLUSION	55
Summary of Findings	55
Implications for Future Research	56
Concluding Remarks	56
Limitations of the Study	57
<i>Data and Scope Constraints</i>	57
<i>Methodological Limitations</i>	57
<i>Contextual Variability</i>	58
<i>Evolving Trends</i>	58
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	58
REFERENCES	58
CHAPTER 3 FUTURE TRENDS IN STAYCATION TOURISM	62
<i>Bijay Kumar Yadav</i>	

INTRODUCTION	62
KEY DRIVERS OF FUTURE STAYCATION TRENDS	63
TECHNOLOGICAL ADVANCEMENTS AND STAYCATION TOURISM	65
The Need for Rest and Reconnection	66
EMERGING MARKETS AND STAYCATION TOURISM	67
CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES	67
CONCLUSION	68
BIBLIOGRAPHY	69
CHAPTER 4 CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN STAYCATION TOURISM	70
<i>Nilesh Kharche</i>	
INTRODUCTION	70
UNDERSTANDING STAYCATION TOURISM	72
OPPORTUNITIES IN STAYCATION TOURISM	74
Boosting Local Economies	74
Sustainable Tourism Practices	74
Fostering Cultural and Heritage Tourism	74
Diversification of Tourism Offerings	75
Leveraging Technology and Digital Platforms	75
Building Community Resilience	75
Affordability and Accessibility	75
Health and Wellness	75
Countering Over-tourism in Popular Destinations	76
Education and Skill Development	76
CHALLENGES IN STAYCATION TOURISM	76
Perceived Lack of Novelty	76
Lack of Facilities and Services	77
Seasonality Influence	77
Promotion and Awareness Gap	77
Economic Constraints for Local Businesses	77
Environmental impact	77
Limited Choices of Offerings	78
Cultural Sensitivities and Inclusivity	78
Changing Consumer Preferences	78
STRATEGIES TO ENHANCE STAYCATION TOURISM	78
Diversification of Tourism Offerings	79
Leveraging Technology and Digital Platforms	79
Enhancing Infrastructure and Accessibility	79
Promoting Sustainable and Responsible Tourism	79
Encouraging Local Community Participation	79
Offering Year-Round Attractions	80
Supporting SMEs	80
Incorporating Wellness and Mindfulness	80
Monitoring and Evaluation	80
CASE STUDIES ON STAYCATION TOURISM	80
Singapore	81
United Kingdom: Promoting Rural Staycations	81
India: Heritage and Wellness Staycations	81
United States: Urban Staycations in New York City	82
Australia: Regional Staycation Campaigns	82
Japan: Local Tourism in the Wake of the Pandemic	82

FUTURE OUTLOOK	83
Maintaining Demand for Local Country Travel	83
Trend in Technology and Innovation	83
Sustainability and Eco-Tourism	83
Evolving Hospitality Models	84
Role of Governments and Policymakers	84
Challenges Ahead	84
Opportunities for Growth	84
CONCLUSION	85
REFERENCES	85
CHAPTER 5 SUSTAINABLE TOURISM THROUGH RURAL STAYCATIONS: CASE STUDIES OF SUCCESS	87
Prashant Amin and Sneha Bajaj	
INTRODUCTION	88
Global Events as Factors Influencing Travel Behavior: Environmental Awareness and Economic Considerations	89
Defining Rural Staycations	89
Rural Staycation Importance in Sustainable Tourism as well as Empowering Local Economies	89
Objectives	90
CONTRIBUTING FACTORS TO THE SUCCESS OF RURAL STAYCATIONS	90
Trends Having an Impact on the Experience of Staycation	90
<i>Growing Demand for Eco-Friendly Tourism and Shaping of Responsible Tourism</i>	90
<i>Rural Staycations and Nature-Based Tourism: Towards Increased Ecological Consciousness</i>	91
Advantages of Rural Staycations	91
<i>Local Economy and Community Support</i>	91
<i>Authentic Cultural Exchanges and Appropriating and Deepening Relations with Nature</i>	92
<i>Health and Well-Being Benefits Related to Rural Environment and Eco-Tourism</i>	92
CASE STUDY 1: FARMSTAY PROGRAM IN EUROPE	93
Overview of the Farmstay Program	93
<i>European Countryside Tourism: Attractive Features of Landscapes, Culture, and Agriculture</i>	93
Sustainability Practices in the Farmstay	93
Tourist Engagement and Experience	94
<i>Engaging Tourists in Agricultural Activities: Harvesting Crops, Caring for Animals, and Acquiring Sustainable Farming Methods</i>	94
<i>Interactive Education in Sustainable Farming</i>	94
<i>Job Creation and Small-scale Entrepreneurship</i>	95
Challenges and Solutions	95
<i>Balancing Tourism with Agricultural Needs: Managing Seasonal Fluctuations and Tourist Expectations</i>	95
<i>Scalability of the Farmstay Model without Compromising Authenticity and Sustainability</i>	95
CASE STUDY 2: ECO-LODGE NETWORK IN RURAL ASIA	96
Background and Overview of the Eco-Lodge Network	96
<i>Description of the Structure, Location, and Role in Promoting Eco-Tourism in Rural Asia</i>	96

<i>Key Attractions: Biodiversity, Local Culture, and Environmentally Conscious</i>	
<i>Lodging</i>	96
Sustainability Practices in the Eco-Lodge Network	97
<i>Infrastructure Development: Solar-Powered Lodges, Water Harvesting Systems,</i>	
<i>Waste Recycling Schemes</i>	97
<i>Sustainability Benefits in Support of the Local Farmers: Organic Food and Supply</i>	
<i>Chain Impact, Lower Carbon Footprint</i>	97
<i>Conservation Efforts: Wildlife Protection, Reforestation, and Reduction in the</i>	
<i>Environmental Impact of Tourism</i>	98
Tourist Experience and Environmental Education	98
<i>Nature-Based Activities</i>	98
<i>Involvement of Visitors in Local Conservation Efforts: Tree Planting, Wildlife</i>	
<i>Tracking, and Supporting Local Ecosystems</i>	98
Economic and Social Impact on the Community	99
<i>Creation of Employment, Infrastructural Facilities, and Increased Income to the</i>	
<i>Local Communities</i>	99
<i>As Institutional Innovators, ETLs Trigger Sustainable Development and Decrease</i>	
<i>Dependence on the Extractive Industry</i>	99
Challenges and Solutions	100
<i>Infrastructure Limitations: Accessibility, Water and Energy Supply</i>	100
<i>Scaling Strategies and Scaling up Marketing: Maximizing Guest Satisfaction for</i>	
<i>Sustainability</i>	100
Case Study 3: Community-Based Tourism in South America	100
<i>Community-Based Tourism Initiative Background Overview</i>	100
Sustainability Practices in Community-Based Tourism	101
<i>Focus on Low-Impact Tourism: Eco-Friendly Accommodations, Waste Management,</i>	
<i>and Responsible Resource Use</i>	101
<i>Cultural Heritage Protection: Traditional Crafts, Local Cuisine, and Preservation of</i>	
<i>Indigenous Knowledge</i>	101
Tourist Involvement and Authentic Cultural Experiences	102
<i>Unique Cultural Experiences Provided: Storytelling, Guided Nature Walks, and</i>	
<i>Traditional Arts and Crafts Workshops</i>	102
<i>Opportunities for Tourists to Participate and Contribute to Community-Driven</i>	
<i>Initiatives</i>	102
Economic and Social Impact on the Village	103
<i>Distributive Justice in Tourism: Equitable Income Distribution</i>	103
<i>Empowerment through Job Creation, Skill Development, and Preservation of</i>	
<i>Cultural Identity</i>	103
Challenges and Solutions	104
<i>Tourist Management: How Not to Over-Tour, Harm Fragile Ecosystems, and Dilute</i>	
<i>Cultural Experience</i>	104
<i>Overcoming Scalability Issues in a Way That Also Maintains the Cooperative Model</i>	
<i>and Community Engagement</i>	104
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF THE THREE CASE STUDIES	105
Key Success Factors in Rural Staycations	105
<i>The Key Success Factors in Rural Staycations: Community Involvement and</i>	
<i>Ownership</i>	105
<i>Authenticity and Cultural Engagement for the Success of Rural Staycations</i>	105
Role of Collaborative Partnerships	106
<i>How Partnerships between Local Communities, Governments, Businesses, and NGOs</i>	
<i>Are Needed to Foster a Successful Rural Staycation</i>	106

CHALLENGES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR RURAL STAYCATIONS	107
Common Challenges in Rural Staycation Destinations	107
<i>Infrastructure Limitations: Transportation, Access to Energy, and Water Resources</i>	107
<i>Addressing Over-Tourism: Risk of Damage to Fragile Ecosystems and Local Communities</i>	107
Scaling Strategies for Sustainable Rural Tourism	108
<i>Recommendations on Overcoming Challenges while Enlarging Rural Staycation Models</i>	108
<i>Infrastructural Development</i>	108
Developing Trends in Sustainable Tourism	108
PRACTICAL RECOMMENDATIONS FOR RURAL STAYCATION DEVELOPMENT	109
Investment in Sustainable Infrastructure	109
<i>Importance of Infrastructure Development That Supports Eco-Tourism and Minimizes Environmental Impact</i>	109
Building Capacity and Training for Local Communities	110
<i>Capacity and Training Programs for Hospitality Skill Development, Sustainable Practices, and Entrepreneurial Skill Enhancement among Locals</i>	110
Marketing and Outreach Strategies	110
<i>Best Use of Digital Marketing Channels to Target a Wider Sustainability-Minded Tourist Market</i>	110
CONCLUSION	111
FUTURE OF RURAL STAYCATIONS AND SUSTAINABLE TOURISM	111
REFERENCES	112
CHAPTER 6 SUSTAINABLE TOURISM THROUGH STAYCATIONS: A SOCIO-ECONOMIC ANALYSIS OF RURAL HOSPITALITY	115
Anshuman Kumar Das and Siddharth Kanojia	
INTRODUCTION	115
LITERATURE REVIEW	117
Data Insights and Trends in Staycation Tourism	118
Factors Driving the Popularity of Staycations and off-beat Destinations	123
Social-Economic Impact on Rural Areas	125
CONCLUSION	126
REFERENCES	127
CHAPTER 7 THE ROLE OF GOVERNMENT AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT IN SUSTAINABLE STAYCATION TOURISM	129
Muhammad Afnan Mahusain, Chiew Boon Tian, Azlinda Hakim Lokman Hakim and Deri Mildred Nuong	
INTRODUCTION	129
GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES FOR SUSTAINABLE STAYCATION TOURISM	131
Financial Tools and Support for Eco-Friendly Local Tourism Businesses	132
Subsidies, Grants, and Tax Reliefs for Sustainable Staycation Packages	132
PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS IN PROMOTING STAYCATIONS	133
Collaborations between Governments, Businesses, and Tourism Boards	133
Collaborating with the Private Sector	134
Role of Partnerships in Sustainable Infrastructure and Marketing	136
PROMOTING DOMESTIC TOURISM THROUGH POLICY AND CAMPAIGNS	137
The Role of Domestic Tourism in Malaysia	137
National Efforts in the Development of Domestic Tourism	138
Regional Efforts to Promote Domestic Tourism	139
Challenges and Opportunities to Promote Domestic Tourism	139

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND LOCAL BUSINESS SUPPORT IN STAYCATION TOURISM	140
The Need for Community Involvement in Tourism Development for Sustainability	140
Cultural Preservation, Local Business Promotion, and Economic Empowerment	141
DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION	142
REFERENCES	143
CHAPTER 8 REDEFINING INDIA'S TOURISM: PHOENIX RISING FROM THE RURAL ASHES - SUBSTANTIAL INFLUENCE OF WOMEN LEADERS AND THEIR BROADER VISION FOR RURAL SHRINKAGE AND REVIVAL	147
<i>Riddhi Tambi, Umang Bhartwal, Monika Rani, Bright Keswani and Lavina Khilnani</i>	
INTRODUCTION	147
LITERATURE REVIEW	150
Beyond Camel Carts and Palace Gates	151
From Shrinking Canvas to Flourishing Mosaic	152
Beyond Tourism: A Broader Vision for Renewal	154
Women Leadership and Rural Revitalization in India	154
OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY	156
Objective 1: Discovering Collaborative Strategies for Sustainable Tourism and Rural Development	156
CONCLUDING REMARKS	158
Objective 2: Empowering Women as Drivers of Smart Rural Shrinkage and Tourism Innovation	158
SBM-G: Revolutionizing Sanitation, Empowering Women in Rural Tourism	158
FOSTERING SUSTAINABLE RURAL TOURISM BY EQUIPPING COMMUNITIES THROUGH CULTURAL EXCHANGE AND SKILL DEVELOPMENT	159
CONCLUSION	159
REFERENCES	160
CHAPTER 9 BEYOND THE GAMES: SUSTAINABLE INFRASTRUCTURE FOR STAYCATIONS	162
<i>Shubham Dhaka, Manoj Sahu, Kapi Sonowal and Poonam Singh</i>	
INTRODUCTION	162
THE POST-EVENT LEGACY OF SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE	163
The Problem of “White Elephants”	163
Environmental and Economic Costs of Underutilized Venues	164
Positive Examples of Repurposed Sports Venues	165
TURNING MEGA SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE INTO STAYCATION HUBS	166
Stadium Tours and Public Access	166
Hosting Community Sports Tournaments	166
Multi-Use Spaces for Local Events	166
Fitness Camps and Wellness Retreats	167
Adventure Sports and Outdoor Activities	167
Collaborating with Local Businesses for Staycation Packages	168
Sports Museums and Interactive Exhibits	168
Cultural Integration and Year-Round Event Planning	169
Hosting Eco-Friendly Workshops and Events	169
STRATEGIES FOR SUSTAINABLE USE OF SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE	170
BENEFITS OF REPURPOSING SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE FOR STAYCATIONS	172
CONCLUSION	174
REFERENCES	176

CHAPTER 10 EXPLORING FUTURE TRENDS AND SOCIAL-CULTURAL ASPECTS OF STAYCATIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR SUSTAINABLE HOSPITALITY	182
<i>Akshita Tiwari, Pranshu Chomplay and Swati Sharma</i>	
INTRODUCTION	183
Future Trends in Staycations	185
Socio-Cultural Dimensions of Staycations	188
Community Engagement and its Role in Staycations	188
Promotion of Local Economic Activities by the Use of Staycations	189
Social Inclusion and Responsible Travel	189
Sustainability in Staycations	190
Ecological Advantages of Localized Tourism	190
Sustainable Hospitality Practices in Staycations	190
Case Studies: Successful Integration of Sustainability in Staycations	191
Best Practice Guidelines for Enhancing Community Participation	191
Sustainable Hospitality – Case Study Analysis	191
Case study 1: The Scarlet Hotel, Cornwall, United Kingdom	191
<i>Overview of Implementation</i>	191
<i>Results of Sustainability</i>	192
Case Study 2: The Zuri White Sands, Goa, India	193
<i>Overview of Implementation</i>	193
<i>Sustainability Outcomes</i>	194
Case Study 3: Six Senses Zighy Bay, Oman	194
<i>Implications on the Part of Hospitality Providers</i>	195
The Integration of Emerging Trends for Improving Staycation Packages	196
Culturally Relevant and Eco-Friendly Destination Experiences	196
Adapting to Consumer Demands for Wellness and Eco-Friendly Choices	197
CONCLUSION	197
REFERENCES	199
CHAPTER 11 SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ASPECTS OF STAYCATIONS	201
<i>Ayan Basak</i>	
INTRODUCTION	201
LITERATURE REVIEW	201
Economic Impact of Staycations	203
Staycations Fostering Local Exploration	203
Mental Health	204
Cultural Reconnection	205
Family and Social Bonds	205
CONCLUSION	206
BIBLIOGRAPHY	207
CHAPTER 12 EXPLORING SOCIAL INTERACTIONS AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT OF DOMESTIC TOURISTS ON STAYCATIONS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY FROM THE INDIAN PERSPECTIVE	209
<i>Bivek Datta</i>	
INTRODUCTION	209
LITERATURE REVIEW	211
Evolution and Definitions of Staycation	211
Impact of COVID-19 on Staycation Trends	211
Community Engagement and Social Interactions	212
Segment-Specific Staycation Insights	212

Staycation and Psychological Impacts	212
Opportunities and Challenges	212
Staycation as a Strategic Tourism Model	213
Marketing Communication Strategies for Staycations	213
Lifestyle-Based Lodging Packages for Staycation Travelers	213
Staycations and Well-Being During Crises	214
Insights and Implications	214
Research Questions	214
Research Objectives	215
Research Hypotheses	215
Literature Gap	215
METHODOLOGY	216
Research Design and Data Collection	216
Data Analysis	217
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	222
Interpretation of Findings	222
IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY	222
LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	222
DIRECTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH	223
CONCLUSION	223
REFERENCES	225
CHAPTER 13 IMPACT OF COST AND TIME ON STAYCATIONS: PERCEPTIONS FROM TRAVELERS	227
<i>Rahul Chowdhury and Mahuya Adhikary</i>	
INTRODUCTION	227
Research Questions	228
Objectives of the Study	228
LITERATURE REVIEW	229
HYPOTHESES	230
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	230
Research Design	230
Data Collection and Sampling	231
Data Analysis	231
<i>Validity</i>	231
<i>Reliability Statistics</i>	231
DATA REDUCTION AND SCALE RELIABILITY	232
KMO and Bartlett's Test	232
Factor Analysis	232
DISCUSSIONS, LIMITATIONS, AND CONCLUSION	235
REFERENCES	236
CHAPTER 14 ENHANCING THE TOURIST STAYCATION EXPERIENCE IN URBAN AREAS BY UTILIZING EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE	238
<i>Trupti Patole, Swati Sharma and Kshitiz Sharma</i>	
INTRODUCTION	238
Significant Growth of Staycation	240
Experiencing Environment Aesthetically	242
The Popularity of Staycations Among Tourists	244
Growth of Staycations During the Pandemic	245
Travel Motivation	252
Reasons for Staycation Popularity	253

Understanding the Relationship between the Emotional Intelligence of Tourists and Tourism	256
CONCLUSION	258
REFERENCES	259
SUBJECT INDEX	264

Preface

In an era of rapid globalization and heightened environmental consciousness, the travel and tourism industry stands at a crossroads. The traditional model of mass tourism, characterized by long-haul travel and excessive resource consumption, is increasingly challenged by a more mindful, localized approach. This paradigm shift has given rise to the concept of staycations—a form of tourism where travelers explore local attractions, stay within their own regions, and support local businesses. The phenomenon of staycations is not merely a response to global disruptions such as pandemics or economic downturns; it is a movement towards sustainable tourism, responsible consumption, and a renewed appreciation for local culture and heritage.

The edited book, "Stay Local, Serve Global: Sustainable Hospitality and Tourism through Staycations (Part 1)," delves into the transformative potential of this emerging trend. It explores how localized travel experiences can contribute to sustainable development, promote community empowerment, and reduce the environmental impact associated with conventional tourism. In doing so, it seeks to offer a comprehensive understanding of staycations as a powerful tool for reimagining the future of hospitality and tourism.

The term 'staycation' gained prominence during the global financial crisis of 2008, as travelers opted to explore their local surroundings instead of spending on international travel. However, it was the COVID-19 pandemic that significantly accelerated the popularity of staycations, as travel restrictions and safety concerns led people to rediscover local destinations. What initially began as a necessity soon evolved into a conscious choice for sustainable living and responsible tourism. This book captures this transition, examining how staycations have moved beyond a temporary trend to become a cornerstone of modern tourism.

Staycations challenge the conventional tourism model by encouraging travelers to 'stay local' while embracing the spirit of global citizenship. By reducing carbon footprints associated with long-distance travel, supporting local economies, and fostering community interactions, staycations contribute to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) outlined by the United Nations. This book explores how hospitality providers, tour operators, and destination marketers can leverage the staycation trend to create meaningful, immersive, and eco-friendly travel experiences. The chapters in this volume examine the multifaceted aspects of staycations, from consumer behavior and marketing strategies to policy implications and community engagement. By adopting a multidisciplinary approach, the book provides insights into how staycations can be positioned as a sustainable alternative to conventional tourism. This book makes a significant contribution to the growing body of literature on sustainable tourism by positioning staycations as a strategic tool for achieving the triple bottom line of economic growth, social inclusivity, and environmental stewardship. It bridges the gap between theoretical perspectives and practical applications, offering actionable insights for academics, industry practitioners, policymakers, and students of tourism and hospitality. The successful completion of this book would not have been possible without the contributions of esteemed authors, reviewers, and industry experts who shared their valuable insights and expertise. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all contributors for their commitment to advancing the discourse on sustainable tourism through staycations. Special thanks to the editorial team for their meticulous efforts in ensuring the highest standards of academic rigor and coherence.

As the world grapples with pressing environmental challenges and shifting consumer behaviors, the tourism industry must rethink its growth trajectory. "Stay Local, Serve Global: Sustainable Hospitality and Tourism through Staycations (Part I)" is an endeavor to inspire a new way of thinking about travel—one that emphasizes sustainability, community engagement, and responsible consumption. We hope that this book serves as a catalyst for change, encouraging travelers to explore the richness of local cultures while contributing to global sustainability goals. With this vision, we invite readers to embark on a journey through the pages of this book, exploring the transformative potential of staycations and their role in shaping the future of hospitality and tourism.

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CHAPTER 1

The Rise of Staycations: Reshaping Domestic Tourism in the Post-Pandemic Era

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Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly reshaped global tourism, accelerating the rise of staycations as a mainstream travel alternative. This study explores the resurgence of staycations and their impact on post-pandemic domestic tourism. It examines key factors that contributed to the popularity of staycations, such as travel restrictions, health concerns, financial constraints, and shifting consumer priorities. Additionally, the study highlights the multifaceted benefits of staycations, including enhanced well-being, economic support for local businesses, environmental sustainability, and stronger community engagement. While staycations offer an affordable and accessible alternative to international travel, challenges such as the perception of limited novelty, overcrowding in popular local destinations, and the need for diversified staycation experiences persist. The research concludes by discussing emerging trends, including digital marketing strategies, themed staycation packages, and technological innovations such as virtual reality, which have the potential to further shape the future of staycations.

Keywords: Consumer travel behavior, Domestic tourism, Post-pandemic travel, Staycations, Sustainable tourism.

INTRODUCTION

International travel bans and border closures lasting up to 2 years during the COVID-19 pandemic posed significant challenges for nations dependent on tourism. Perceptions and evaluations of travel safety and risk among travellers and local people have changed remarkably (Qiu *et al.* 2020; Zenker& Kock, 2020). The elevated travel risk indicates the tourism sector's susceptibility to fluctuations in the international market (Liu *et al.* 2020). In the meantime, domestic tourism came to be considered the lifeblood of the industry in several countries (CDC, 2020).

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The term “Staycation” (Massey 2003) emerged as a result of the pursuit of domestic alternatives during the economic crisis. Staycation, the combination of “stay” and “vacation”, denotes the practice of individuals vacationing at home or in their local vicinity instead of traveling to distant destinations (Li, 2022; Hung & Huan, 2024). This phenomenon is not the product of this century. Back in the 1940s, staycations were regarded as a strategy to enhance the economic growth of local communities (Alban, 2008). This style of leisure then gained significant popularity in the United States during the financial crisis that occurred from 2007 to 2010, as staycations evolved from a niche travel option to a viable alternative for the general populace, prompted by the crisis (James *et al.*, 2017), which was signified as a new “turn” in tourism revolution. Soon, international travel and long-haul trips regained popularity amid the crisis, but the practice of staying close to home for a holiday has ancient roots.

Compared with the global financial crisis, the pandemic has had more catastrophic repercussions for international travel and tourism. Of interest, staycations have re-emerged in public consciousness. Recent empirical evidence indicates that travelers, who previously sought novelty and regarded tourism as a remedy for monotonous work and an escape from familiar surroundings (Chylińska, 2022), have shifted towards staycation activities. These activities involve rediscovering the allure of one's city or region to enhance cultural identity through active engagement with local culture (Richards, 2011; Qiu *et al.*, 2023; Wong *et al.*, 2023; Lin *et al.*, 2024), enjoying a well-prepared breakfast, a meticulously crafted cocktail, or a swim in a hotel pool within their home city for daily aesthetic experiences (Besson, 2017), and even exploring their backyards with camping gear or appreciating the beauty of cultivated flora (Rosu, 2020). In response, the governments and tourism practitioners felt obliged to encourage domestic tourism to secure their tourism sector from collapse through the following measures: 1) offering various levels of financial incentives for residents including discounted airfares, travel vouchers, and direct payments to tourism providers, as seen in Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and Australia (Moscardo, 2024); 2) advocating for staycations by emphasizing their benefits, such as reduced costs, minimized travel time, increased engagement in holiday activities, family-friendliness, support for the local economy, and the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of one's home region (Edgar, 2020; PeekPro, 2020; Sudevan, 2020); 3) highlighting how individuals might discover local experiences akin to those typically sought overseas, and that significant advantages could be derived from exploring one's own area and seeking the exotic beneath the mundane, with the purpose of capturing the attention of travellers on staycation.

Given the performance of staycations during the pandemic, this chapter focuses on key factors that facilitated the emergence of staycation development during the

pandemic. The importance of staycations in post-pandemic travel regarding well-being, cost-effectiveness, flexibility, sustainable practices, economic support, and social and cultural reconnection is also discussed. Finally, the chapter examines the obstacles and prospects for future staycations to illuminate the tourist sector in a post-pandemic context.

Why Staycation? The Catalyst of Pandemic

Travel Restrictions and Safety Concerns

The closure or restriction of international borders, coupled with increased safety concerns during the pandemic, renders long-distance travel both precarious and largely inaccessible. As a consequence, individuals worldwide are beginning to recognize the allure of their immediate surroundings, catalysing a surge in local exploration and domestic vacations, also known as staycations. Yan *et al.* (2022) illustrated the reasons individuals chose staycations over alternative travel options based on the modified protection incentive theory. The theory of planned behavior is augmented by modified protection incentive frameworks, which elucidate how an individual sees and internalizes risks in a more equitable manner (Braje *et al.*, 2021). It can be seen from this that the popularity of staycations during the COVID-19 pandemic is probably the result of tourists' cognitive assessment of the severity of the pandemic. Similar research was conducted by Oktavia and Sobari (2021), who revealed that perceived health risk had a greater influence on travellers' decision to select a staycation than financial risk.

When visiting a destination, a significant factor influencing customer decisions is their impression of the potential harm to their health and safety throughout the journey (Hasan *et al.*, 2017). Individuals perceiving a danger of disease transmission will mitigate this risk by forgoing vacations (Brewer *et al.*, 2007). The COVID-19 pandemic has heightened the public's sense of health threats. Golets *et al.* (2021) asserted that health risk perception variables, specifically the perception of illness severity, likelihood of infection, and estimated duration of the pandemic, are the determinants influencing decreased travel intentions in 2020 and 2021. Protection Motivation Theory indicated tourists' tendency to select natural and safe destinations, minimize group involvement, and restrict exposure during travel (Cahyanto *et al.* 2016). The apprehension over COVID-19 exposure in airports, congested motels, and tourist attractions resulted in a preference for private lodgings and nearby locales. Instead of traveling internationally, individuals are now discovering their towns and countries to an unprecedented extent. Perception of risk reduction in staycation positively enhanced the tendency to choose staycation as the means of leisure (Zhang *et al.*, 2022). This resurgence in staycations has revealed a multitude of distinctive experiences for travelers.

CHAPTER 2

Staycation Tourism: Emerging Trends, Innovations, and Future Directions

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Abstract: This study explores the growing significance of staycation tourism, particularly in the post-pandemic context, where travellers increasingly prioritize local, personalized, and cost-effective vacation alternatives. Through a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) and bibliometric analysis of publications from 1968 to 2024, this research examines the factors influencing the rise of staycations, including economic, social, and environmental considerations. Key findings indicate that staycations are recognized for their mental health benefits, sustainability, and flexibility, with an emphasis on wellness tourism and personalized travel experiences. The study also identifies a shift toward more eco-conscious and locally focused tourism as travellers seek to reduce their carbon footprint. Using a comprehensive dataset from Scopus and Web of Science, the research highlights influential authors, countries, and institutions, offering insights into the thematic evolution of staycation tourism. The implications for future research include the exploration of psychological factors driving staycation decisions, the community impacts of localized tourism, and the role of digital platforms and social media in shaping travel behaviour. This research contributes to the academic understanding of staycation tourism, providing valuable insights for both scholars and practitioners in the tourism industry.

Keywords: Bibliometric analysis, Staycation, Systematic literature review, Tourism, Tourism industry.

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INTRODUCTION

Background of Staycation Tourism

Definition of Staycation Tourism

Staycation tourism (Kou *et al.*, 2024; Moscardo, 2024), a blend of “stay” and “vacation,” refers to a vacation taken within a traveller’s home country or, in many cases, even within their local area (James, 2014; Zaikimi *et al.*, 2023). Unlike traditional tourism, which often involves extensive travel and accommodation expenses abroad (Brohman, 1996), staycation tourism encourages individuals to explore nearby attractions, engage in local activities, and enjoy leisure experiences without leaving their immediate surroundings (Qiu *et al.*, 2024; Wong *et al.*, 2022). This concept appeals to travellers seeking the relaxation and novelty of a vacation without the logistical complexities and costs of long-distance travel.

Historical Context and Evolution of Staycation Tourism

The concept of staycations emerged as an alternative travel trend during times of economic difficulty (Molz, 2009; Knežević Cvelbar & Ogorevc, 2023), with significant growth observed during the Great Recession of 2008 when families looked to cut costs while still desiring recreational breaks (Moon & Chan, 2022). More recently, staycation tourism gained unprecedented attention during the COVID-19 pandemic (Wu, 2022; Pichierri *et al.*, 2023), when international travel restrictions and health concerns drastically limited travel options (Uğur & Akbiyık, 2020). These events not only revived but expanded the staycation movement, reshaping it into a viable, popular, and sustainable choice within the tourism landscape (Molz, 2009; Arantes, 2024).

Significance of Staycations in the Tourism Industry

Staycations have become increasingly important to the tourism industry, providing both economic and social benefits (Satpute & Bapat, 2024; Nuswantoro *et al.*, 2024). They contribute to local economies by channelling tourism revenue into regional businesses, supporting local attractions, hotels, and restaurants. Additionally, staycations foster community engagement (Satpute & Bapat, 2024), allowing residents to rediscover and invest in their local areas while promoting cultural exchange and environmental sustainability by reducing the carbon footprint associated with long-distance travel (Ventimiglia *et al.*, 2024; Klarin *et al.*, 2023; Liu *et al.*, 2023).

Factors Contributing to the Rise of Staycations

The rise of staycation tourism can be attributed to several interrelated factors (Trirasri & Tangpatthanakit, 2022; Nuswantoro *et al.*, 2024; Pratiwi & Novani, 2022; Pichierri *et al.*, 2023; Do *et al.*, 2024; Huang *et al.*, 2024; Zhang *et al.*, 2022):

- **Economic Factors:** Economic downturns, high travel costs, and inflation often encourage travelers to consider more budget-friendly vacation options. Staycations offer an affordable alternative, allowing individuals to enjoy leisure activities without the significant expenses associated with international travel.
- **Social Factors:** Lifestyle changes, such as increased remote work and flexible schedules, have made local vacations more appealing and accessible. Furthermore, a growing focus on work-life balance and wellness has encouraged travelers to seek nearby, stress-free destinations for rejuvenation.
- **Environmental Factors:** Awareness of climate change and the impact of tourism on the environment has led to a preference for low-impact travel options. Staycations support sustainable tourism by reducing emissions associated with air and vehicle travel, aligning with eco-conscious values.

Together, these factors underscore the relevance of staycations as an adaptive, responsible, and increasingly favoured form of tourism in the modern world.

Importance of Systematic Literature Review (SLR) and Bibliometric Analysis

Definition and Purpose of SLR and Bibliometric Analysis

Systematic Literature Review (Okoli, 2015) is a structured approach to reviewing existing research on a particular topic, characterized by its rigorous methodology for selecting, assessing, and synthesizing relevant studies (Thomé *et al.*, 2016). SLR aims to minimize bias, ensuring a comprehensive and reliable understanding of the literature by following a predetermined set of inclusion and exclusion criteria (Paul *et al.*, 2023). This method enhances the quality and transparency of literature reviews, providing a well-rounded overview of research findings and identifying potential gaps (Fisch & Block, 2018).

Bibliometric analysis (Ellegaard, 2018; Derviş, 2019), on the other hand, is a quantitative approach to evaluating research impact and productivity through citation data and publication patterns (Alsharif *et al.*, 2020). By analyzing metrics such as citation counts, co-authorship networks, and keyword trends, bibliometric analysis highlights influential studies, key authors, journals, and institutions

CHAPTER 3

Future Trends in Staycation Tourism**Bijay Kumar Yadav^{1,*}**¹ *Department of Law, Fairfield Institute of Management & Technology, Guru Gobind Singh Inder Prastha University, New Delhi, India*

Abstract: The COVID-19 pandemic has significantly altered global travel patterns, leading to the rise of staycation tourism as a prominent alternative to international travel. This study explores future trends shaping staycation tourism, focusing on key drivers such as sustainability, digital advancements, remote work culture, and evolving consumer preferences. The research highlights the increasing environmental consciousness among travelers, the integration of technology to enhance local tourism experiences, and the growing demand for wellness-focused and immersive cultural stays. Additionally, the study examines the economic impact of staycations on local communities and the challenges associated with balancing tourism growth and sustainability. As staycations continue to gain mainstream popularity, this research provides insights into their role in shaping the future of domestic tourism and sustainable travel practices.

Keywords: Digital nomadism, Staycation tourism, Sustainable travel, Smart tourism technologies, Wellness tourism.

INTRODUCTION

The global travel and tourism industry has been undergoing a significant transformation, especially in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, which reshaped travel behaviors worldwide. One trend that emerged strongly during the pandemic and continued to grow is staycation tourism. Traditionally associated with vacationing locally, staycations have now become a significant facet of domestic tourism, fueled by concerns over health, safety, cost-effectiveness, and sustainability. In this article, we explore the future trends in staycation tourism, examining how changing consumer preferences, technological advancements, and societal factors will shape this market in the coming years.

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Staycation tourism, defined as vacationing locally within one's home, city, or country instead of traveling abroad, has risen significantly in recent years and has transformed from a budget-friendly alternative into a mainstream travel trend.

Originally appealing mainly to cost-conscious travelers, staycation—formed from the words “stay” and “vacation”—has evolved as people increasingly seek convenience, comfort, and meaningful local experiences without the logistical burdens of long-distance travel. Staycations involve exploring nearby attractions, nature reserves, and cultural sites, or simply enjoying leisure time at home, encouraging individuals to appreciate familiar surroundings and rediscover overlooked aspects of their locality. This form of tourism aligns with broader lifestyle shifts emphasizing simplicity, sustainability, and well-being. Its evolution has been shaped by several key factors, most notably the COVID-19 pandemic, which acted as a major catalyst by imposing lockdowns, travel restrictions, and safety concerns that curtailed international movement. As global travel halted, people turned to domestic destinations to meet their leisure needs, revealing the critical role of local tourism in sustaining regional economies, particularly in small towns and rural areas traditionally reliant on seasonal or international visitors. At the same time, rising environmental awareness and concerns about the carbon footprint associated with long-haul flights have encouraged travelers to opt for low-impact alternatives closer to home. Psychologically, staycations appeal to the growing desire for restful, stress-free experiences that do not require extensive planning, offer opportunities to unwind, and align with the values of sustainable living. They provide a sense of escape without the pressures of travel logistics, while promoting balance, mindfulness, and personal connection to familiar environments. As a result, staycation tourism has emerged not merely as a temporary response to travel limitations but as a lasting trend reflecting deeper shifts in consumer behavior and the pursuit of accessible, meaningful, and responsible travel experiences.

KEY DRIVERS OF FUTURE STAYCATION TRENDS

As staycation tourism continues to gain momentum worldwide, a growing set of forces is shaping its evolution, reflecting major societal changes, environmental concerns, technological advancements, and shifting consumer preferences. Among the strongest drivers of this trend is the rising global emphasis on sustainability and environmental consciousness. Climate change, biodiversity loss, and the ecological consequences of mass tourism have pushed travelers to rethink how and where they vacation. Air travel, responsible for a significant share of tourism-related greenhouse gas emissions, is increasingly viewed as environmentally costly. Staycations offer an attractive solution by eliminating long-haul flights and reducing reliance on carbon-intensive transportation.

Travelers who choose local destinations often depend on greener options such as trains, buses, cycling, or electric vehicles, significantly lowering their ecological footprint. This consciousness has encouraged the tourism industry to innovate, leading to the development of eco-friendly accommodations such as solar-powered hotels, sustainably constructed eco-lodges, and glamping sites that blend comfort with conservation. Nature-based tourism, including hiking, birdwatching, cycling trails, wildlife tours, and conservation volunteering, is also becoming more prominent as environmentally aware travelers seek meaningful interactions with natural landscapes. In addition to reducing environmental harm, staycation tourism supports local conservation efforts by channeling spending toward community-led eco-tours, protected-area initiatives, and wildlife preservation programs. This shift toward responsible travel underscores a growing commitment to environmental stewardship among tourists who want their vacations to contribute positively to the planet. As global awareness of sustainability increases, eco-friendly staycations are expected to become even more essential, driving demand for destinations that prioritize conservation, environmental education, and green infrastructure. Thus, sustainability is not only a motivation for travelers but also a strategic imperative for tourism operators striving to remain competitive in an environmentally conscious world.

Another powerful driver reshaping staycation tourism is the global rise of remote work and digital nomadism, a trend accelerated significantly by the COVID-19 pandemic. With millions of people now able to work remotely, the boundaries between professional and personal life have become more fluid, allowing individuals to travel without taking time off work. This shift has given rise to the concept of the “workcation,” in which travelers combine work responsibilities with leisure experiences in a local setting. Staycations are particularly well-positioned to support this trend because they eliminate long travel times, reduce logistical challenges, and allow remote workers to remain close to home while still enjoying a refreshing change of environment. In response, hotels, resorts, and rental accommodations are increasingly providing amenities tailored to remote workers, including high-speed internet, ergonomic workstations, co-working lounges, and hybrid spaces that blend office functionality with leisure comfort. Some destinations are even creating dedicated “workcation packages” that include flexible check-ins, extended-stay discounts, wellness programs, and productivity-focused services. As remote work becomes more normalized, travelers are no longer restricted to short weekend getaways; instead, many are choosing extended stays in nearby destinations, embracing the principles of slow travel. Slow travel encourages visitors to spend more time in one location, fostering deeper connections with local culture, nature, and community. This aligns seamlessly with staycations, where convenience and meaningful engagement coexist. Digital nomads and hybrid workers often seek peaceful, inspiring environments—rural

CHAPTER 4

Challenges and Opportunities in Staycation Tourism

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Abstract: The emergence of staycation tourism, which has been fueled by global events like the COVID-19 pandemic, climate change, and financial restrictions, is examined in this chapter. It draws attention to the trend's potential to improve domestic travel and lessen its negative effects on the environment, both of which would help local economies. It also emphasizes the necessity of localized adjustments to conventional tourism products, effective marketing techniques, and the development of local infrastructure. Cost, accessibility, ecological concerns, and changing customer tastes are the primary forces behind this movement. The chapter also looks at how staycations might support eco-friendly travel practices, stimulate investment in local attractions, and strengthen local economies. In order to demonstrate innovative marketing strategies and community engagement, it offers case studies of well-known staycation destinations. In order to take advantage of this trend and strike a balance between economic growth and sustainable tourism development, the chapter ends by providing strategic insights for tourism stakeholders.

Keywords: Community engagement, Local economies, Localized adjustments, Staycation destination, Sustainable tourist development.

INTRODUCTION

The international panorama of tourism has certainly witnessed significant alterations over the last few years, not only due to changing travelers' behavior but also due to a number of economic conditions and even the outbreak of COVID-19, which is unprecedented. One of these shifts is the rise of staycation tourism, a type of travel that highlights the exploration of local or domestic places. Staycation tourism is a departure from the traditional form of tourism, which involves traveling to foreign countries or traveling long distances, emphasizing affordability and closeness. It enables people to spend their free time on leisure activities in their own countries or regions, often engaging in activities

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that are less popular due to more appealing alternatives that are farther away (Bama *et al.* 2021 & Bartis *et al.* 2021).

Such vacations involve time spent at home and visiting local attractions. Holders of tourism, culture, and business associations refer to such tourism as domestic and consider it a new opportunity for the region's economic development. The idea of staycations has found particular relevance in the current global crisis. With borders closed for a significant period due to safety or health concerns, many opted to travel within their countries. This trend too has become popular and appears to have significant growth potential in stay-at-home countries due to several benefits, including environmental and financial concerns.

This chapter provides an overview of such theories while also presenting various aspects and explaining the limitations and prospects of staycation tourism. It is critical to explain how the tourism industry can look like in the very near future. Apart from this, such vacations would encourage people to innovate within the tourism market, deepen bonds between tourists and local communities, strengthen local tourism, and promote the regional economy.

It is important to elaborate why staycation tourism can be regarded as crucial for the tourism industry. They save economies during global chaos by serving and boosting local businesses, thereby creating jobs and economic growth. In addition, they cut low and long-distance flights and travel that helps lessen the adverse effects of travel on the environment and promote sustainability. By traveling to local places, travelers embolden themselves and appreciate their culture, heritage, and tradition easily. Furthermore, as they are generally more economical, staycations are a good bet for people who are unable to go on international tours.

This chapter focuses on staycation tourism, analyzing its challenges and opportunities. It is concerned with the fact that staycations can be less glamorous than global wanderings, so there emerge problems with capacity and infrastructure that are always in demand but may be only episodic, which suggests the need to contemplate over-enthusiastic tourism policies. However, it also notes that the use of AI and other technologies will enhance comprehension in staycation-driven tourism. The chapter stresses the influence of governments, communities, and entities in building an enabling environment for staycation tourism.

Over the past two years, under the adverse effects of the epidemic, staycation tourism has proved to grow in significance and relevance. In today's world, most people with diseases prefer simplicity, safety, and sustainability, and it is quite natural for them to choose staycations. At the same time, the tourism industry is experiencing stress and is looking for alternatives to international travel and a

broader spectrum of tourism products. Staycations work here too as they help achieve greater depth and more equitable tourism development (Volgger *et al.*, 2021).

International staycation tourism has outgrown COVID-19 restrictions; rather, this chapter aims to inform the stakeholders on how best to take advantage of the opportunities offered by staycation tourism. No matter what the case is, these factors will enable parents, businesses, policymakers, and travelers to make the most of staycation tourism.

Staycation tourism, which refers to vacationing within one's own country or local area, has seen a surge in popularity, especially during periods of global crises like the COVID-19 pandemic. It offers an alternative to international travel, focusing on local experiences, shorter trips, and reduced costs. As global travelers pivot towards sustainable and accessible tourism options, staycations have become a vital part of the tourism landscape. This chapter explores the challenges and opportunities of staycation tourism, examining its implications for stakeholders, including governments, local communities, and the tourism industry (Abbas *et al.*, 2021 & Aryal *et al.*, 2022).

UNDERSTANDING STAYCATION TOURISM

Staycation tourism refers to the provision of leisure and pleasure without going a long distance, a move that has swiftly accelerated in popularity among travelers who are either environmentally cautious or mindful of their budget. It includes local attractions such as museums, parks, or cultural festivals, short-term stays like hotels, and unique accommodations like glamping, as well as day trips and activities that include adventure sports and culinary tours. Staycation tourism has gained respect as a separate and meaningful segment of the travel industry, wherein vacations are taken in one's local setting, be it within the city or the country, and not overseas. In many cases, this form of tourism is casual but focuses on ease, low cost, and an authentic connection to local culture and experiences. Staycations in response to global hardships such as economic downturns, travel bans, and climate change have increasingly replaced traditional vacations with an adaptive and sustainable option (Del Chiappa *et al.* 2021, Dlomo *et al.*, 2020 & Ericson *et al.* 2024).

A staycation is a vacation where people stay close to home or engage in leisure activities close to home during recessions and crises when international travel is less practical. Staycation has evolved to denote exploring local attractions, taking short trips to nearby destinations, and engaging in experiential activities such as culinary tours, wellness retreats, and adventure sports, as well as creativity through workshops. Staycation tourism is characterized by proximity,

CHAPTER 5

Sustainable Tourism through Rural Staycations: Case Studies of Success

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Abstract: The concept of ‘staycations’—“vacationing” in or near one's hometown—has become one of the key buzzwords related to travel trends in recent years and emerged as a result of the dynamics of traveler behavior and increased interest in sustainable tourism. In the context of rural tourism, staycations represent a well-proven version of alternative tourism products; visitors can appreciate the calmness of life in villages and in the countryside while supporting local economies. In this chapter, several exemplary models of rural staycations balancing sustainability, hospitality, and economic viability are discussed. The chapter reviews case studies to show how rural staycations contribute to the overall goals of sustainable tourism and rural development.

The rest of the chapter discusses the criteria driving the popularity of rural staycations: low-impact travel, nature-based experiences, and avoiding long journeys. The more the people concerned with ecological responsibility, the more attractive rural destinations become; the possibilities for authentic cultural exchanges and intimate relationships with the environment and landscapes themselves are greater. Every case study in this chapter illustrates a different rural location that has utilized the staycation movement to create sustainable tourism.

The first case examines a farmstay program in the European countryside where visitors can stay on a farm participating in activities like harvesting, animal care, and their food practices, all of which are sustainable. The program enhances awareness of agricultural sustainability by engaging visitors in the actual use of the farm and also generates income in the local community.

Another case study uses a network of eco-lodges in rural Asia, through which sustainability is ubiquitous in every step of the guest's experience, from solar power to human-powered accommodation or organic farming initiatives. The network of eco-lodges stands as an example of how sustainable infrastructure can be woven seamlessly into the process of rural tourism, where not only does the guest enjoy serenity over the

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natural setting, but is also brought abreast of local conservation efforts toward a better appreciation for environmental stewardship.

The third case states success for community-based tourism initiated in a remote village in South America, where locals have developed cooperative models to offer unique cultural experiences, from crafts and storytelling to nature-walk guides. In this regard, all the revenue from tourism is equitably divided among the villagers and hence powers the economy in an economically empowered community.

These case studies describe many ways in which rural destinations can capitalize on the staycation model. These indicators that suggest success include high community involvement, an emphasis on environmental education, and the potential to deliver a high level of authenticity in activities aligned with visitors' values. Finally, this chapter pays attention to the critical role of collaborative partnerships among local government authorities, businesses, and NGOs in ensuring sustainable rural tourism development.

In addition to such positive results, there are also some challenges to staycation destinations in rural areas. These include constraints on infrastructure, a danger of over-tourism, particularly in fragile ecosystems, and inconsistent marketing designed to attract and retain visitors. However, most of these problems could be largely addressed by solid planning and with an intent to be sustainable.

The chapter ends with a set of recommendations for the rural destinations that would be willing to take advantage of the emerging staycation trend, along with sustainable practices. These recommendations are investing in sustainable infrastructure and developing local supply chains and community-based tourism models that promote an equal or almost equal share of the tourism revenue. With these approaches, rural regions can brand themselves as the leaders within the improving sector of sustainable hospitality and tourism.

This chapter thus leads to the conclusion that rural staycations not only offer a valid alternative for mass tourism but may also encourage local economies, support sustainability, and protect local heritage. Moreover, with an ever-growing necessity among travelers for meaningful, low-impact experiences, there is immense scope in rural areas to promote staycations and become a part of the broader drive toward sustainability in tourism worldwide.

Keywords: Case studies, Community-based tourism, Cultural heritage, Eco-lodges, Environmental education, Farmstays, Rural tourism, Staycations, Sustainable hospitality, Sustainable infrastructure.

INTRODUCTION

During the last few years, staycations have developed into a new trend in tourism because of factors such as the increased importance placed on sustainability and changed global practices in traveling. The past years have been characterized by global events, such as the COVID-19 pandemic, in which travel was forced to change dramatically from international travel to within-country or local holidays.

As discussed and presented by research, there has been a significant shift in consumer preference where people opted for holidays close to home as they managed to minimize health risks and embraced convenient travelling restrictions after the breakout of the pandemic (Bausch *et al.*, 2021). In addition, the increasing environmental impacts, particularly those generated from long distances used in air travel, have led more travelers to seek some low-impact alternatives. Staycations, by their nature, reduce carbon footprints, so they would be the preferred choice of an ecologically focused traveler (Gössling *et al.*, 2020).

Global Events as Factors Influencing Travel Behavior: Environmental Awareness and Economic Considerations

The economic downturns caused by global events such as the pandemic have also contributed to this trend of staycations. Additionally, with people in dire economic straits, cheap alternatives for holidays have become topical. Research on how economics limits the tourism sector by Gössling *et al.*, (Gössling *et al.*, 2021) concluded that staycations have developed into an even cheaper alternative compared to making international journeys. Increased environmental awareness has been one of the many other reasons that have contributed to this staycation trend. According to Juvan *et al.*, (Juvan *et al.*, 2020), 70% of travelers have become sensitive to environmental impacts while making travel decisions, and staying in their localities is perceived to be more sustainable. Ecotourism and the demand for nature-based experiences have also contributed to the growth of rural staycations, as pointed out by Becken (Becken, S. (2020).

Defining Rural Staycations

Rural staycations are a kind of travel that emphasizes natural settings and provides a link to the local way of life and the slower pace of living. They are not the same as traditional tourism, which frequently entails lengthy trips to far-off places or big cities. Small, independently owned lodgings like farmstays, eco-lodges, and guesthouses are popular choices for rural staycations because they offer a more genuine and grounded experience. In addition, they provide access to environmentally friendly initiatives like organic farming, animal rehabilitation, and conservation that are not as readily available in conventional urban or seaside resorts. The fast-paced, high-consumption character of mass tourism is countered by rural staycations, which lessen its negative environmental effects.

Rural Staycation Importance in Sustainable Tourism as well as Empowering Local Economies

Rural staycations are very important for sustaining tourism since they sustain low-impact tourism that helps in environmental protection and the fortunes of the

CHAPTER 6

Sustainable Tourism through Staycations: A Socio-Economic Analysis of Rural Hospitality

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Abstract: The tourism and hospitality industry has witnessed considerable shifts in the recent past, particularly with the emergence of staycations. This phenomenon has caused a drastic change in rural and lesser-known regions, as travelers increasingly seek authentic and sustainably environmental experiences. What is more, the COVID-19 pandemic has contributed to a sharp rise in staycations, thereby transforming the dynamics attributed to rural tourism. Rural destinations, in turn, have increasingly become important recipients of development based on the desires of more travelers to experience local cultures and travel sustainably. Many factors contribute to this rising interest in staycations: budget, less environmental impact, easier access, and connectivity. Accordingly, this chapter deconstructs the socio-economic implications of staycations in rural India, particularly in lesser-known destinations such as Uttarakhand and Kashmir, following the spade work of the COVID-19 pandemic. It assumes that there has been a remarkable increase in rural tourism, driven by an array of staycations, mainly due to shifts in travel behaviour. It also takes into account challenges caused by over-tourism, such as potential impacts on the socio-economic fabric, including rising land prices and the risk of displacement due to commercialization. In the end, the chapter advocates a balanced approach to rural tourism, emphasizing sustainable practices that preserve cultural and ecological values.

Keywords: Cultural immersion, Economic sustainability, Rural hospitality, Sustainable tourism, Staycations, Tourism infrastructure.

INTRODUCTION

Rural tourism and staycations have become essential components of the evolving tourism landscape, particularly in light of post-pandemic travel preferences. Rural tourism focuses on experiences that take place outside of cities, allowing visitors to interact with local cultures, nature, customs, and traditions. This type of tourism, generally viewed as a sustainable alternative to mass tourism, has

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recently gained popularity amid the growing need for environmentally friendly travel options. As a result, tourists seeking short-term relaxation without the inconveniences of long-distance travel increasingly prefer staycations—vacations spent close to home. In line with the growing awareness of sustainable travel, Jeuring and Haartsen (2017) argue that staycations save money and have a limited environmental impact. Across the world, including India, the COVID-19 pandemic has profoundly impacted tourism patterns and preferences. Travelers within the country began to prefer rural and isolated regions as international travel ceased and health concerns about congested urban areas increased. About this, the Ministry of Tourism reported a 23.5% increase in domestic travel in 2021, with many opting for rural locations that offered safety, tranquillity, and an escape into nature (MoT, 2022). With a rise in travelers, this change has elevated rural tourism to a prominent position in areas with abundant natural beauty, such as Uttarakhand and Himachal Pradesh. Together with reviving interest in lesser-known locations, this shift has also boosted funding for eco-friendly travel strategies that prioritize community involvement and environmental preservation. In the post-pandemic era, staycations have witnessed a sharp increase in popularity. The popularity of this trend is demonstrated by the 200% increase in searches for “staycations” on the internet after the pandemic (Google, 2020). As more people discovered neighbouring rural areas, they were often viewed as picturesque getaways from urban life. In addition to helping to offset some of the industry's financial losses, the increase in domestic travel also sparked the construction of roads and the growth of environmentally friendly lodging facilities in isolated regions (MoRTH, 2021). Sustainable tourism practices have gained additional traction in the trend towards staycations and rural tourism. Nowadays, tourists are more cognizant of their environmental impact and look for locations that prioritize sustainability. Tourism that “meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing future opportunities” is what the UNWTO refers to as sustainable tourism (UNWTO, 2023). Subsequently, eco-friendly methods such as organic farming, water conservation, and renewable energy have become popular in rural areas. In light of this shift in traveller preferences, this chapter explores the hypothesis that rural tourism is becoming more affluent as off-the-beaten-path sites in India gain popularity.

Accordingly, it is crucial to explore the expanding significance of sustainable tourism and staycations within the changing dynamics of rural tourism. Thus, the literature review will offer an in-depth examination of the principal academic and theoretical constructs that support these phenomena. The next part examines the aspect in which international recognition of sustainable tourism policies serves as a measure to harmonize environmental sustainability with benefits to local people, and the growth of staycations has created new opportunities for rural areas. The review of literature is based on the comprehensive study of existing literature and

seeks to provide an overview of how rural hospitality businesses responded to these changes, along with the threats and opportunities brought about by the change in the tourism industry towards sustainability.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sustainable tourism has become an essential consideration in academic and policy circles, owing to the need to balance tourism growth with environmental protection and community development. According to Butler (1999), sustainable tourism entails addressing the needs of both tourists and host communities while conserving prospects. It combines environmental protection with the socioeconomic well-being of host communities, especially in rural areas where resources are frequently scarce (Lane, 1994). In this reference, Bramwell and Lane (2013) found that sustainable tourism has two specific, interlinked benefits, *i.e.*, it boosts the local economy while protecting cultural and ecological landscapes. Accordingly, rural areas, with their rich heritage and wildlife, provide ideal conditions for sustainable tourism strategies. These methods aim to reduce environmental impacts while improving local livelihoods, primarily through employment and income generation (Nicolaidis, 2020). Staycations, or holidays taken close to home rather than long-distance travel, have become a prominent tourist trend, particularly post-COVID-19 (Gössling *et al.*, 2020). It is further claimed that staycations can help promote sustainable tourism by lowering the carbon footprint associated with long-distance travel (Moscardo, 2024). Localized tourism encourages people to visit nearby rural areas, which reduces emissions and promotes economic diversification. Furthermore, it can be asserted that staycations can alter rural tourism, enabling long-term growth without overwhelming local infrastructure (Farmaki, 2021). By keeping tourist numbers moderate, rural towns may better maintain their resources while providing distinctive, original experiences that set them apart from mass tourism sites (Bramwell, 2004).

According to Sharpley and Vass (2006), rural hospitality firms, such as farm stays, guesthouses, and eco-lodges, allow travelers to experience rural life while contributing to the local economy. These organizations often invest significant effort in conserving the environment by purchasing locally manufactured products, supporting artistry and cultural activities, and even engaging in environmentally friendly ventures. This, therefore, implies that the socio-economic effects of rural hospitality can be substantial. Second, Getz and Carlsen (2005) noted that tourism in rural settings tends to create employment and boost small-scale entrepreneurial projects. Additionally, such ventures ensure that local communities participate in the tourism development process. Thus, the collaborative method incorporated in rural hospitality makes sure that the benefits

CHAPTER 7

The Role of Government and Community Support in Sustainable Staycation Tourism

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Abstract: This chapter examines the rising appeal of staycation tourism, driven by the global emphasis on sustainability and environmental responsibility. As individuals seek more environmentally friendly travel choices for long trips, staycations have emerged as a significant method to reduce ecological impact. Government incentives, the promotion of domestic tourism, the development of public-private partnerships, and community engagement are key to enhancing the sustainability of staycation tourism. Financial assistance from the government in the form of subsidies and grants motivates local hospitality establishments to implement environmentally friendly measures. At the same time, focused initiatives like the support local campaign raise knowledge about nearby tourist spots and cultural significance. Collaboration between public and private sectors combines resources and knowledge to create holistic, long-lasting tourism plans that appeal to local tourists. Moreover, involving the community guarantees that staycations offer more than just hospitality advantages, promoting genuine experiences and support for local businesses. This chapter provides insights into how sustainable hospitality practices can reshape local tourism towards a more eco-conscious future by studying successful case studies.

Keywords: Ecological impact, Sustainable staycation, Sustainable travel.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of a staycation is gaining popularity and developing as a key trend in sustainable and environmentally friendly tourism. The focus on modern staycation tourism is now becoming important. This modern staycation is slowly becoming a desirable option for tourists who are seeking to reduce the impact on the environment by avoiding long-distance travel (Gonzalez, 2023). To support sustainable tourism, the government and communities are crucial in shaping this trend. These efforts include implementing several government incentives,

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promoting domestic tourism, forming collaborative partnerships between public and private sectors, and engaging communities to enhance the sustainability of staycation tourism within the hospitality industry. Therefore, this section explores these factors and their implementation in advancing sustainable practices in this sector.

In driving sustainability within the hospitality industry, the government incentives include subsidies, grants, and tax reliefs. These injections play a crucial role in motivating local hospitality businesses to implement sustainable practices, particularly for businesses catering to staycations. These incentives significantly reduce the financial burden for local businesses transitioning towards greener operations, for instance, subsidies for energy-efficient infrastructure like water systems and solar panels, grants for eco-certification and training programs to adopt and maintain sustainable practices, and allowances for improving waste management systems or reducing carbon emissions (Dressler, 2023). The impact of these incentives extends not only to the economic and environmental sustainability of staycations but also encourages travellers to choose staycations over high-carbon-footprint vacations.

Additionally, to stimulate economic growth while promoting sustainable travel practices, encouraging local tourism has emerged as a priority for the government's strategic plan. Focused initiatives like the "Support Local" campaign have been instrumental in inspiring locals to explore and appreciate their own communities. These campaigns often highlight traditional heritage, untouched natural resources, and locally crafted products from the region. By offering a unique experience of the cultural and ecological assets of a region, it attracts domestic travellers and raises a sense of pride among local communities (Guo *et al.* 2023). There are several successful examples from countries with strong domestic tourism strategies that illustrate the multifaceted benefits of such programs without compromising environmental sustainability.

Partnership and collaborations are another implementation that play a pivotal role in promoting sustainable staycation tourism. Public and private collaboration among governments, tourism boards, and private sector businesses leverages shared resources, expertise, and strategic planning to develop and promote staycation opportunities. Private sector businesses contribute to innovation, market insights, and operational capability, while the government often provides regulatory guidance and infrastructure support. Together, these collaborations frequently lead to addressing critical areas such as eco-friendly certification, infrastructure development, and campaigns to attract local travellers (Guo *et al.* 2023; Jones & Wynn, 2019). Aligning the partnership goals of public and private

stakeholders creates comprehensive, long-term viability strategies for sustainable tourism growth.

Engaging local communities in the planning and execution of tourism initiatives is a cornerstone of promoting staycation tourism. Staycations benefit not only the hospitality industry but also the local businesses encompassing artisans and service providers. This inclusive interaction allows communities to take an active role in operationalizing the tourism experience (community-driven), empowering local ownership and pride (Thi Thanh Nguyen, *et al.*, 2023). To maintain a strong focus on social and environmental well-being, communities can offer authentic and meaningful connections by promoting culture, traditional cuisines, and local craftsmanship through job opportunities. These efforts not only enhance the travel experience but also support the long-term sustainability of domestic tourism, ensuring it remains economically viable and beneficial for future generations (Thi Thanh Nguyen, *et al.*, 2023).

Thus, this chapter explores government incentives, promoting domestic tourism, forming collaborative partnerships between public and private sectors, and engaging communities to enhance the sustainability of staycation tourism within the hospitality industry. The chapter also offers an examination of successful examples, upcoming trends, and perspectives on how sustainable tourism practices can be analysed through the Sustainable Tourism Goals (SDGs) lens. `

GOVERNMENT INITIATIVES FOR SUSTAINABLE STAYCATION TOURISM

Financial mechanisms such as subsidies, grants, and tax exemptions play a key role in promoting sustainable staycation tourism (Wu *et al.*, 2021). These programs aim to support eco-friendly Small and Medium-Sized Tourism Enterprises (SMTEs) by alleviating the financial challenges associated with adopting and maintaining green practices. For instance, it enables these SMEs to adopt environmentally friendly practices, including infrastructure energy efficiency, waste management systems, and certification and training programs. To inspire long-term commitment among businesses, the government can encourage sustainability by launching targeted programs such as workshops and training on sustainable practices, which can equip businesses with the knowledge to operate responsibly. The certification for businesses that achieve sustainability milestones that align their operations with eco-friendly standards serves as an incentive for others to follow suit. The collaboration with environmental groups can further provide valuable insights and serve as multifaceted strategies not only to strengthen the commitments of SMEs businesses to sustainability but also

CHAPTER 8

Redefining India's Tourism: Phoenix Rising from the Rural Ashes - Substantial Influence of Women Leaders and their Broader Vision for Rural Shrinkage and Revival

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Abstract: This paper delves into the nuanced interplay between women's leadership, rural revitalization strategies, and the tourism sector in the context of India's tourism. Leveraging an interdisciplinary approach, the study scrutinizes the profound impact of female leadership in precipitating innovative strategies for the reinvigoration of rural areas experiencing decline. The article navigates the multifaceted dimensions of rural shrinkage, examining how the confluence of astute women leadership and visionary initiatives fosters a phoenix-like revival from rural dilapidation. It presents empirical evidence and case studies showcasing the transformative endeavors and visionary acumen of women leaders, contributing significantly to the redefinition and resurgence of India's tourism landscape.

Keywords: India, Rural shrinkage, Rural revitalization, Rajasthan, Tourism revival, Women Leaders.

INTRODUCTION

Rajasthan, India's crown jewel of vibrant heritage and boundless desert allure, faces a stark reality: rural shrinkage. Depopulation, economic hardship, and cultural erosion threaten the very fabric of its picturesque villages. Yet, from these ashes, a remarkable phenomenon is rising – a chorus of women's voices reshaping

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Rajasthan's tourism landscape. These are not mere participants; they are architects of change, redefining tourism itself and fostering a vibrant rural renaissance.

In India, the term “Aadhi awadi” translates to “half the population,” representing the significant role women play in the nation's fabric. However, despite historical disparities and a current sex ratio of 1046 females per 1000 males (Census of India, 2022), women are demonstrably shattering glass ceilings across diverse sectors. Tourism, a burgeoning service industry contributing roughly 6.9% to GDP and 9.2% of total employment (WTTC, 2023), is a prime example. This dynamic sector presents a treasure trove of opportunities for women, boasting a higher female workforce representation than other industries, both globally (48%, WTTC, 2023) and in India (nearly 50%). The sheer diversity of career paths, from hospitality and travel agencies to guiding and cultural tourism, caters to a multitude of skill sets and interests. Tourism empowers women not only through employment but also through entrepreneurial avenues like homestays, handicrafts businesses, and eco-tourism ventures, fostering financial independence and societal integration. Furthermore, compared to many other sectors, tourism often offers flexible work arrangements, allowing women to navigate the intricate relationship between professional and personal lives. Below are the infographics on tourism in India.



Fig. (1). Contribution of tourism and hospitality to GDP.

Fig. (1) depicts Tourism and hospitality are significant contributors to the global economy, generating trillions of dollars in GDP each year. **The direct contribution of tourism and hospitality to GDP is growing**, while the total contribution, which includes indirect and induced impacts, is even larger. **The**

Asia-Pacific region is the largest market for tourism and hospitality, followed by Europe and North America.

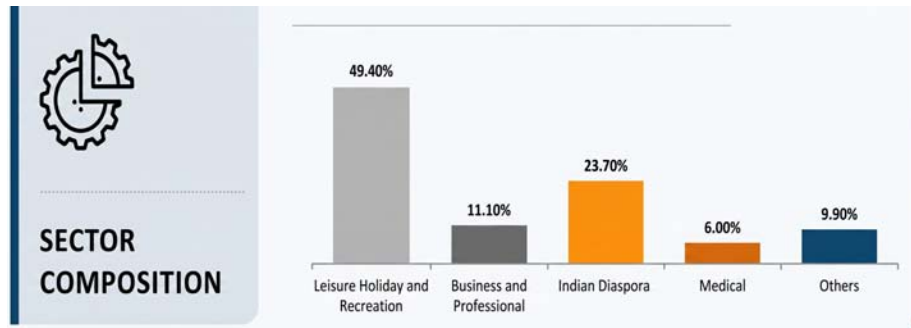


Fig. (2). Purpose-wise foreign tourist arrivals in India.

Fig. (2) depicts that the purpose-wise foreign tourist arrivals in India in 2023 were dominated by leisure holiday and recreation, which accounted for nearly 49.40% of all arrivals. This is followed by business and professional travelers at 11.10%. Indian diaspora visitors made up 23.70% of arrivals, while medical and others accounted for 6.00% and 9.90% respectively. Overall, the data suggests that India is a diverse tourist destination that caters to a variety of interests. The country's natural beauty, cultural attractions, and growing economy are all likely to attract even more foreign tourists in the future.



Fig. (3). Incredible India! Swadesh darshan initiatives.

Source: <https://www.ibef.org/industry/tourism-hospitality-india/infographic>

Fig. (3) represents how these programs work together to enhance India's domestic tourism sector. Swadesh Darshan is portrayed as creating attractive destinations, while SAATHI is represented as ensuring quality service and hospitality experiences.

The global tourism industry stands as a significant economic driver, creating millions of jobs and generating substantial revenue. While the sector's overall

CHAPTER 9

Beyond the Games: Sustainable Infrastructure for Staycations

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Abstract: Mega sports events, such as the Olympics and the FIFA World Cup, require large-scale infrastructure development, often leading to underutilized “white elephants” post-event. This paper explores sustainable strategies for repurposing such sports infrastructure to support staycations and community well-being. It examines challenges, including economic burdens and environmental impacts, while highlighting successful examples of adaptive reuse worldwide. The study proposes transforming mega-event venues into multifunctional hubs to promote local tourism, community engagement, and economic growth. By integrating cultural events, wellness retreats, adventure sports, and eco-friendly practices, these structures can enhance urban vibrancy and sustainability. The findings underscore the importance of long-term legacy planning and community-centred approaches, ensuring that mega-event investments yield continuous economic, social, and cultural benefits.

Keywords: Adaptive reuse, Community engagement, Mega sports events, Staycations, Sustainable infrastructure.

INTRODUCTION

Mega sports events, such as the Olympic Games and the FIFA World Cup, have become global spectacles, captivating billions and leaving lasting impacts on host cities. These events often necessitate the construction of large-scale infrastructure projects, including state-of-the-art stadiums, expansive athlete villages, and upgraded transportation networks (Baumann & Matheson, 2013). While proponents tout economic benefits and urban renewal, the long-term implications for host cities can be mixed. (Barrios *et al.*, 2016) The influx of tourists and investments can strain local resources, and the post-event utilization of these

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massive structures often poses significant financial and logistical challenges. (Chen, 2015).

Hosting mega events triggers a surge of economic activity, injecting billions into the host city and country. (Barrios *et al.*, 2016) Construction projects generate employment, while the influx of tourists, athletes, and media personnel boosts revenue across various sectors, from hospitality and transportation to retail and entertainment. (Backman, 2017) Furthermore, these events often act as catalysts for urban development, revitalizing neglected areas, modernizing infrastructure, and enhancing a city's global image. The global spotlight offers a unique opportunity to showcase the host city's cultural attractions and investment potential, potentially attracting future tourism and foreign direct investment. (Yavuz *et al.*, 2018).

In recent years, there has been a growing emphasis on incorporating sustainability principles into the planning and execution of mega sports events. (Tiwari *et al.*, 2020) This goes beyond constructing environmentally friendly buildings and implementing waste reduction strategies during the event itself. Organizers are now taking into account long-term sustainability projects that help the environment as well as the local communities (Pernecky, 2015). This will include residents' involvement in planning processes, a fair distribution of event benefits, and the creation of a legacy of sustainable practices after the event. It is no longer just about reducing the negative impacts but utilizing these events as tools for social and environmental transformation (Yuan, 2013).

One of the biggest challenges that host cities face after the global spotlight fades is what to do with mega-event infrastructure. Most of these megastructures become costly “white elephants,” underutilized and burdensome to maintain (Müller, 2015). Instead, a more sustainable way is to repurpose the venue for the local community's benefit and attract tourism through staycations (Okada & Greyser, 2018). This could be a stadium transformed into a multi-purpose entertainment complex, athlete villages repurposed as affordable housing, or transportation infrastructure used to enhance local connectivity. The mega-event legacies can shift from a burden on the community's pocketbook to sustainable assets if they focus on long-term community benefits and integrate these structures into the fabric of the city (Richins, 2008).

THE POST-EVENT LEGACY OF SPORTS INFRASTRUCTURE

The Problem of “White Elephants”

After mega sports events, cities are left with the sobering reality that imposing structures that once symbolized global unity and athletic achievement can become

financial burdens, appropriately called “white elephants.” These are no majestic creatures but valuable possessions that demand exorbitant maintenance, outweighing their practical use or worth (Davis, 2019). The term aptly captures the dilemma faced by cities grappling with underutilized stadiums, vacant athlete villages, and costly infrastructure maintenance, highlighting the need for sustainable solutions that extend beyond the ephemeral excitement of the event.

The 2004 Athens Olympics, etched in memory for its historical significance, offers a poignant example of this challenge. While the Games spurred modernization and infrastructure development, several venues fell into neglect and disuse in the years that followed. (Traganou, 2009) The once-thriving Olympic stadiums, including those built for baseball, softball, kayaking, and canoeing, stand as silent witnesses to the transient nature of these events. Similarly, parts of the Olympic Village, intended to house athletes in a vibrant community setting, faced an uncertain future, highlighting the complexities of repurposing specialized infrastructure for long-term viability.

Across continents, Brazil's hosting of the 2014 FIFA World Cup painted a similar picture, albeit on a grander scale. Despite the tournament's undeniable success in showcasing Brazilian football passion, the post-event reality revealed a string of underutilized stadiums. (Reis *et al.*, 2019) The iconic Maracanã Stadium in Rio de Janeiro, having undergone a lavish renovation, encountered financial and operational hurdles, struggling to attract consistent crowds and generate sufficient revenue to justify its upkeep. The arena in Manaus, constructed in a city with scarce footballing tradition, stands as a symbol of potential pitfalls of mega-event infrastructure development without a clear and sustainable plan for the event's afterlife (Castilho *et al.*, 2017).

Environmental and Economic Costs of Underutilized Venues

Irresponsibility in maintaining widespread sports facilities following a mega-event generates a chain reaction of environmental and economic impacts. Sustaining these frequently depleted structures carries a heavy ongoing expense for host cities already struggling with a post-event financial wipeout. From energy use for cooling and lighting to security and maintenance, the financial toll of these sprawling “white elephants” can bankrupt public coffers and divert funding from crucial services (Müller, 2015).

Furthermore, underutilized venues can contribute to environmental degradation. The great expanses of concrete common to stadiums and supporting infrastructure can be a contributing factor to the urban heat island effect, with subsequent higher energy and air pollution (Thành, 2019). Landscape and site cleaning practices,

CHAPTER 10

Exploring Future Trends and Social-Cultural Aspects of Staycations: Implications for Sustainable Hospitality

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to examine the emergence of new multidimensional trends in staycations and their sociocultural implications, with particular emphasis on the evolving context of the hospitality industry. It aims to understand shifts in visitor behavior, preferences, and expectations, and how these changes can strengthen marketing strategies that position staycations as tools for sustainability and community engagement (González & de la Cruz, 2021; McKercher & Lew, 2021). A qualitative research approach is adopted, combining a comprehensive literature review with analysis of case studies. The literature review synthesizes contemporary research on hospitality trends, sociocultural impacts of travel, and developments in responsible and sustainable tourism (Becken, 2018; Vong & Ritchie, 2020), while the case studies explore staycation models that successfully integrate cultural identity, community participation, and socially responsible practices. The findings suggest that staycations are being reshaped by societal shifts, technological innovation, wellness-oriented travel, and growing interest in localized experiences (Li *et al.*, 2020; Watanabe, 2022). Incorporating cultural heritage, community interaction, and support for local businesses significantly enhances the value and authenticity of staycations, underscoring the need for hospitality providers to embed these elements into both their design and operational culture. The study holds practical relevance for hospitality professionals and policymakers by highlighting strategies to enrich staycation offerings while considering sociocultural dimensions and future industry trends. Moreover, recognizing these factors enables service providers to meet the evolving expectations of modern travelers and to positively influence societal and environmental well-being (Saarinen, 2018). Overall, this research contributes to sustainable tourism literature by presenting a fresh perspective on staycations as meaningful, future-oriented, and socially responsible travel alternatives.

Keywords: Community engagement, Future trends, Local experiences, Social-cultural aspects, Staycations, Sustainable hospitality.

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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to explore the emergence of new multidimensional trends in staycations and examine their sociocultural implications within the rapidly evolving hospitality industry. As travel patterns undergo significant transformation due to economic shifts, technological innovations, and post-pandemic behavioral changes, staycations have emerged as a preferred form of leisure, offering convenience, affordability, and deeper local immersion. This study seeks to understand how visitor behavior, preferences, and expectations have shifted, emphasizing the growing desire for meaningful, culturally grounded, and environmentally responsible travel experiences (González & de la Cruz, 2021; McKercher & Lew, 2021). Staycations, once considered a secondary option, are now gaining traction as purposeful, experience-driven alternatives that align with global sustainability agendas and community-based tourism. By positioning staycations not merely as budget-friendly choices but as culturally and socially enriching experiences, hospitality marketers can tap into new consumer motivations and leverage staycation models to foster local pride, preserve cultural heritage, and strengthen community involvement. These changing dynamics signal the need for hospitality providers to rethink traditional service models, incorporate technological advancements such as virtual engagement and personalized digital offerings, and design packages that resonate with guests' growing expectations for authenticity, wellness, and ecological responsibility. As staycations continue to redefine local tourism landscapes, understanding these evolving patterns becomes essential for advancing both academic discourse and practical innovations within the industry.

Methodologically, this study adopts a qualitative approach by integrating a comprehensive literature review with in-depth case study analysis to examine how emerging trends shape staycation practices. The literature review synthesizes a wide spectrum of contemporary research on hospitality trends, sociocultural travel behaviors, and responsible tourism developments (Becken, 2018; Vong & Ritchie, 2020), offering a theoretical foundation for understanding the staycation phenomenon. It highlights how digital media, cultural immersion, environmental awareness, and local identity influence travelers' decision-making in the era of sustainable tourism. Complementing the literature, case studies provide real-world insights into how staycation models are being designed, marketed, and implemented to meet visitor expectations while supporting local communities. These case studies examine staycation properties that successfully integrate cultural elements such as heritage storytelling, local craftsmanship, gastronomic experiences, and community-based programs, thereby aligning their offerings with principles of social responsibility. Together, the literature and case study findings reveal that modern staycations are being shaped by broader societal shifts

toward wellness tourism, slower travel, and hyper-local exploration (Li *et al.*, 2020; Watanabe, 2022). They also demonstrate how hospitality providers are using cultural authenticity, technology-enabled engagement, and eco-friendly practices to differentiate their staycation offerings from traditional hotel stays. By embedding cultural heritage, local partnerships, and environmentally conscious strategies into both design and operational models, staycations are evolving from simple leisure options to immersive experiences that deepen guests' emotional connections with local communities. This methodological approach underscores the practical relevance of the study for industry stakeholders and policymakers seeking ways to innovate sustainably while preserving sociocultural values.

The findings of this study have significant implications for the hospitality sector, tourism authorities, and policymakers, particularly in the areas of experience design, sustainability practices, and community engagement. Recognizing the growing desire for localized, meaningful, and wellness-oriented travel, hospitality providers can create staycation packages that appeal to modern travelers seeking convenience without compromising on cultural richness or quality of experience. By incorporating elements such as local traditions, curated cultural encounters, and partnerships with artisans and small businesses, staycation providers can strengthen their ties with surrounding communities while contributing to the preservation of local identities. The research emphasizes that such integrated approaches not only enhance guest satisfaction but also support economic resilience and sociocultural sustainability (Saarinen, 2018). Moreover, the study highlights the importance of aligning staycations with environmental responsibility, encouraging the use of eco-friendly practices, reduced carbon footprints, and nature-based experiences that promote awareness and conservation. From a policy standpoint, the findings offer valuable insights into designing supportive frameworks for sustainable tourism development, including incentives for businesses adopting socially responsible models, community participation programs, and guidelines for culturally sensitive tourism practices. The study also broadens academic discourse by positioning staycations within the narratives of sustainable tourism, technological adaptation, and consumer behavior, presenting them as future-oriented travel alternatives capable of delivering transformative experiences. Ultimately, this research contributes to the literature by offering a holistic perspective on staycations as dynamic, socially embedded, and environmentally mindful travel options that respond to the evolving demands of contemporary travelers while reinforcing the well-being of local communities.

CHAPTER 11

Social and Cultural Aspects of Staycations

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Abstract: Staycations, defined as vacations spent at or near home, have gained prominence due to economic, social, and environmental factors. This study explores the multidimensional aspects of staycations, including their economic impact, contribution to local exploration, effects on mental health, cultural reconnection, and role in strengthening family and social bonds. The findings indicate that staycations provide cost-effective and sustainable alternatives to traditional travel, boosting local economies while minimizing environmental impact. Additionally, they foster deeper connections with local communities, enhance well-being by reducing travel-related stress, and promote cultural preservation. The study underscores the significance of staycations in contemporary tourism, offering valuable insights for stakeholders in the hospitality and tourism industries.

Keywords: Economic impact, Local tourism, Mental well-being, Staycation, Sustainable travel.

INTRODUCTION

A **staycation** is a vacation spent at home or nearby, rather than traveling to far-off destinations. People often take staycations to save money, reduce travel stress, or explore their local area. During a staycation, individuals might visit local tourist attractions, go to museums, parks, or nearby beaches, try out local restaurants or food markets, do home-based activities, like setting up a backyard picnic, movie nights, or even spa treatments at home, or take day trips to nearby towns or nature spots. Staycations have gained popularity for various reasons and come with unique social and cultural aspects.

LITERATURE REVIEW

If a legitimate visitor can afford it and is in a fit state to receive it, a hotel is a place where he can get meals, lodging, and other amenities. A staycation is a vacation taken at home with all of the comforts of home. One study defines a

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staycation as a form of domestic travel that is more time- and distance-constrained. It is regarded as a day trip as well. Another study describes a staycation as travel within a person's regular setting. A different study defines a staycation as a vacation spent at home with loved ones. Research also suggests that staycations are a type of domestic travel that is closer and shorter than other forms of travel. It is regarded as a day trip as well. Another perspective describes a staycation as a type of travel that takes place within a person's regular setting. Similarly, a staycation has been defined as a vacation spent at home with loved ones. It has also been described as a person spending their spare time at home; however, over time, that home may be up to 50 miles away. Research further identifies staycations as a trend in which individuals take vacations close to home in their native country and explore local landmarks. Another definition describes a staycation as staying rather than going on a vacation to investigate the neighbourhood. Upon examining the diverse interpretations of "staycation," we discover that a few elements are shared by all of them: staying put, taking a vacation close to home, and visiting the neighbourhood. Thus, a hotel staycation is checking into a hotel close to your home and taking advantage of the hotel's amenities and services, as well as the nearby sights.

During your staycation, applying common sense aesthetics could aid with your recovery. The phenomenon being studied is the staycation, which is a short trip taken at home or in one's home region, with the goal of understanding how people regularly appreciate the aesthetics of a (culturally familiar) place and how it influences Restoration. This attention lessens the possible detrimental effects of novelty, escapism, and long-distance travel on repair (106). There has never been a study done on the relationship between regular aesthetics and restoration and staycations. The researcher looked at staycations *via* the prisms of daily aesthetics theories, historical and empirical research on vacationing, and qualitative media analysis interpreting the separation. In staycations, mobility is an example of proximity tourism. In order to better understand how people use a (socially) natural setting for regularly gratifying their sense of style and how it impacts reclamation, the wonder investigated is the staycation, a brief holiday spent at home or in one's hometown. Long-distance travel, oddity, and idealism have an impact on rebuilding, but only to the extent that this centre can.

According to the perspective of conventional style and reclamation, staycations have not previously been concentrated. The researcher's approach to the investigation of staycations was from the perspectives of subjective media analysis, detailed research into the history of occasion-making, and general feel speculations.

Economic Impact of Staycations

One of the most important factors of staycations' popularity lies in their economic impact. Staycations are often more affordable than traditional vacations, which can help people save money. This can be particularly beneficial in times of economic uncertainty. The economic impact of staycations can be significant in several ways. One of the most significant factors is cost savings. For individuals and families, staycations are often less expensive than traditional vacations. Savings come from avoiding costs associated with travel, such as transportation, lodging, and dining out at tourist destinations. Secondly, it promotes local spending. While staying local, people are more likely to spend money at local businesses, including restaurants, entertainment venues, and shops. This can boost the local economy and provide a much-needed boost to small businesses and service providers. One of the most important factors of staycations is that they create jobs. Increased local spending can create or sustain jobs in the community. As more people explore local attractions and services, there can be a greater demand for workers in the hospitality, retail, and leisure sectors. One more factor is its resilience to economic turbulence. During times of economic downturn or uncertainty, staycations can offer a more stable alternative to traditional travel, helping to keep money circulating within the local economy rather than spending it outside of the community. Another very important factor is that it has significantly reduced the travel cost. By not traveling long distances, individuals and families can save on transportation costs, including fuel, airfare, and vehicle maintenance. These savings can be redirected towards other local expenditures or savings. There are a few other factors as well, but honestly, the induction of community investment could be a very important factor in the growth of Staycations. The increased focus on local attractions and activities has encouraged communities to invest in and improve local amenities, infrastructure, and events. This has led to long-term benefits for the community and enhanced the quality of life for residents. Finally, it is found that staycations can lead to economic benefits for both individuals and local communities, fostering financial savings, boosting local businesses, and supporting job creation.

Staycations Fostering Local Exploration

Staycations encourage people to explore their local area and appreciate local attractions they might usually overlook. This leads to a stronger connection to one's own community and support for local businesses. Local exploration is a key aspect of staycations, offering several benefits and opportunities. People often uncover local attractions, activities, and places they have not explored before. These Hidden Gems could include lesser-known parks, museums, historical sites, or unique restaurants. Also, by exploring their own area, people get engaged more

CHAPTER 12

Exploring Social Interactions and Community Engagement of Domestic Tourists on Staycations: An Empirical Study from the Indian Perspective

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Abstract: This empirical study delves into the multifaceted realm of social interactions and community engagement among domestic tourists of India during staycations, a growing trend in the tourism industry. By utilizing quantitative methodology, this research aims to elucidate how various factors *i.e.* setting of the staycation (urban vs. rural), the duration of the stay, prior knowledge of the area, and demographic characteristics (age, gender, family status, income, education) influence the quality of social interactions, the level of community engagement, and overall satisfaction with the staycation experience. The hypotheses' results suggest significant differences in social interactions between urban and rural settings, a direct correlation between the length of stay and community engagement, an impact of prior area knowledge on staycation satisfaction, and variations in community engagement and social interactions across different demographic groups. The outcomes of this study are expected to provide valuable insights for policymakers, tourism planners, and local communities in enhancing the staycation experience in India, thereby fostering sustainable tourism practices and enriching the social fabric of localities. This research highlights the importance of understanding the social dynamics of staycation tourism to leverage its benefits for both domestic tourists and local communities.

Keywords: Community engagement, Domestic tourism, Rural setting, Staycation, Social interaction, Tourist satisfaction, Urban setting.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, particularly the last two years, the concept of a “staycation” has emerged as a significant trend within the tourism sector. This term merges “stay,” implying staying put, with “vacation,” indicating a period of leisure, to describe the act of engaging in vacation activities close to home, sometimes within one's own city. The rise of staycations, a movement towards regional, local, or rural

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tourism, has been largely propelled by the COVID-19 pandemic. Health restrictions in 2020 and 2021 encouraged people to explore attractions within their immediate surroundings, transforming residents into tourists of their own locales. The concept of “staycation,” blending the essence of staying close to home with the adventurous spirit of vacationing, has emerged as a notable phenomenon in the contemporary tourism landscape. This emergent trend, significantly amplified by the global COVID-19 pandemic, highlights a pivotal shift in domestic tourism dynamics. The traditional allure of distant travels is being reevaluated against the backdrop of health concerns, economic constraints, and a growing appreciation for local treasures. The research probes into the intricate web of social interactions and community engagement experienced by domestic tourists in India embarking on staycations, shedding light on the nuanced relationship between tourists and the local communities they explore. The genesis of staycations can be traced back to economic downturns, notably the recession in the United States, which propelled the concept into the lexicon of the middle class as a cost-effective alternative to elaborate vacations. The proximity of the destination significantly influenced the travel decisions of domestic tourists, marking a shift from lavish escapades to embracing local culture and leisure activities. The COVID-19 pandemic catalysed this shift, transforming staycations from a choice to a necessity, as international travel restrictions and health risks reshaped consumer behaviour towards tourism.

The scholarly literature underscores the multifaceted nature of staycations, not merely as a temporary trend but as a cultural movement that redefines leisure and tourism. It reflects a societal pivot towards valuing proximity, local engagement, and sustainable tourism practices. The pandemic has further highlighted the importance of staycations in the recovery and resilience of the tourism sector, offering a lifeline to hotels and resorts while nurturing local economies. The research aims to explore the depth and breadth of social interactions and community engagement among domestic tourists during their staycations. It seeks to understand how these interactions influence the overall staycation experience, contribute to the local economy, and foster a sense of community belonging. Through the quantitative and deductive approach, this research will illuminate the factors driving the choice of staycations, the nature of tourists' engagement with local cultures and communities, and the resultant socio-economic impacts.

The concept of a “staycation,” where individuals or families indulge in vacation-like activities without venturing far from home, has gained unprecedented prominence in recent times, especially in the wake of the global COVID-19 pandemic. This paradigm shift in leisure and tourism reflects a broader socio-economic and cultural re-evaluation of travel and recreation amidst evolving global challenges. This research aims to delve into the intricate dynamics of social

interactions and community engagement experienced by domestic tourists during staycations, offering a nuanced understanding of this emerging trend from global, regional, and specifically Indian perspectives.

In the Indian context, staycations signify an emerging trend within the domestic tourism landscape, presenting an avenue to explore the nation's diverse cultural and natural heritage within local confines. Spurred by concerns for safety and leisure amidst the pandemic, Indian tourists have shown a marked preference for staycations, catalyzing a shift towards immersive travel experiences rooted in local cultures and environments. This inclination not only supports the tourism sector but also emphasizes the value of community engagement and social interactions among domestic tourists.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The concept of a staycation, blending the notions of “stay” and “vacation,” has gained significant momentum as a sustainable and practical alternative to traditional travel. Initially popularized during economic recessions as a cost-effective leisure option (Alban, 2008; Fox, 2009), staycations have evolved into a dynamic tourism phenomenon with implications across multiple dimensions, particularly during and post-COVID-19.

Evolution and Definitions of Staycation

Staycations emerged as an adaptive travel practice during times of economic strain and global crises, including the 2008 recession and the COVID-19 pandemic. The shift toward exploring local destinations reflects a growing emphasis on proximity tourism and sustainable travel practices (Molz, 2009; Gonçalves, 2020). Staycations emphasize experiencing vacation-like activities close to home, effectively addressing economic constraints, health concerns, and a desire for cultural and community engagement (Yesawich, 2010; Madsen, 2022).

Impact of COVID-19 on Staycation Trends

The pandemic significantly redefined the staycation landscape. Health-related anxieties and travel restrictions prompted travelers to prioritize nearby destinations and safe, controlled environments (Huang *et al.*, 2023). Staycations became instrumental in supporting local economies and fostering resilience within the hospitality sector (Madah *et al.*, 2023; Wong *et al.*, 2023). The integration of technology, such as virtual tourism, further enhanced staycation experiences, enabling cultural heritage exploration from home (Bafadhal, 2021).

CHAPTER 13

Impact of Cost and Time on Staycations: Perceptions from Travelers

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Abstract: A *staycation* combines the ideas of “stay” and “vacation,” allowing visitors to enjoy leisure activities without traveling far, spending their free time exploring local attractions while staying close to home. Every traveler has a purpose when choosing a staycation (T.C. & Sridevi, 2022). Staycations are typically shorter, more exquisite ways for travelers; they are a less expensive option than vacations. According to Nurlaila *et al.* (2022), a staycation is a vacation in which visitors engage in leisure activities while away from home. This concept is mostly embraced among city dwellers due to changing lifestyles and work-life balance preferences Muritala *et. al.*, (2022). Both cost and time play a pivotal role in selecting the right location for a staycation. The paper aims to investigate the impact of cost and time on staycations from the travelers' perceptions. The study used quantitative research techniques, and data were collected *via* questionnaires using a convenience snowball sampling technique. The questionnaire was circulated to the respondents *via* E-mail, and a Google Form was distributed to collect responses from the travelers regarding staycations. We validated the questionnaire through two focus group interviews with experts in this field. It was noted that cost and time significantly influence staycations.

Keywords: Cost, Staycation, Time, Travelers attitude, Travelers expectations.

INTRODUCTION

Combining the words “stay” and “vacation,” “staycation” refers to a quick leisure trip taken in the vicinity of one's home. Since staycations don't involve flights or rental cars, they are frequently more affordable than international travel. One of the numerous trends and transformations that the travel industry is going through at the moment is staycation travel, which is growing in importance and popularity. In light of this, people choose to engage in rural, regional, or local tourism, and they frequently do so within their city. The COVID-19 pandemic has led to a rise

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in the popularity of this new tourism trend. People began to engage in tourism in their community in 2020 and 2021 as a result of health restrictions.

According to Muritala *et al.* (2022), the pandemic has prompted the re-emergence of staycations to the fore, as travel restrictions meant many people had to spend their vacations close to home Mathew, T. C., & Sridevi, N. (2022). This phenomenon first went mainstream during the 2008 financial crisis and was later accelerated by the pandemic. The phrase “staycation” refers to a time when a person or family stays at home and engages in leisure activities close to where they live without needing immediate convenience (Mathew and Sridevi, 1991). Zhang *et al.* (2022) believed that staycation is a form of domestic tourism. To enhance and promote the hospitality industry, staycations play an important role in supporting the tourism economy. During a staycation, travelers experience various changes to adapt to a holiday-like environment awash with leisure time and a wide variety of activities Ramgade, A., & Divakaran, P. (2023). Gamil (2023) asserted that staycation encompassed a variety of leisure-embedded activities close to the domicile and required a limited volume of traveling El Gamil, R. (2023).

The study aims to analyze the impact of costs and time from the perspective of travelers, and also their impact on employment and the stimulation of the local economy. This study aims to:

1. Explore the impact of cost and time on staycations from the perceptions of travelers.
2. Understand the economic value of staycations from the traveler's perspective.
3. Evaluate the magnitude of staycations in supporting the local economy.

Research Questions

1. Do travelers feel that cost plays a pivotal role in deciding to opt for a staycation?
2. Do the respondents feel that time has a positive impact on the attitude of tourists to go for a staycation?
3. Do travelers feel that the government supports staycations because they boost employment and support the local economy?

Objectives of the Study

This paper tried to accomplish the following objectives:

1. Explore the impact of cost and time on staycations from the perceptions of travelers.
2. Evaluate the magnitude of staycations in supporting the local economy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The researchers opined that travelers' perceptions, expectations, and attitudes have changed over time. Oana *et al.* (2021) highlighted and aimed to identify the interest of the inhabitants in being tourists in their city. A staycation is more about clicking photos and videos, just like on a real vacation. The study revealed the attitude of tourists towards staycations. The study is exploratory research. Questionnaires were incorporated into the data collection process, and the Likert scale technique was introduced. The study included 124 respondents. The result revealed a difference in travel preferences between men and women after the health crisis. The output also revealed that it is mostly men who seem to prefer holidays away from their area of residence Nurlaila, *et al.* (2022).

James (2014) tried to conduct an exploratory study with the students. The author tried to understand the lifestyle patterns of staycation travelers and segment their profiles. The study also intended to produce staycation packages based on specific segments. The literature review section is divided into lifestyle and staycation sections. Researchers can gain from this study, as it highlights marketing strategies for targeting travelers; therefore, it allows further research on the implications of cost and time in staycations, which are not covered in this study. A limitation of this study is that the dataset is not representative of the total population of staycation travelers, as it was only collected from the millennial generation James, A. M. (2014).

Nurlaila *et al.* (2005), in their study, highlighted the changes in tourist perceptions and expectations of staycation activities. The researchers incorporated a descriptive qualitative approach in their study. The respondents in the study noted that, post-COVID-19, some facilities are not in good condition; therefore, they expect additional support and improvements to the facilities in the Cisaat Subang tourist village, West Java, for planning staycation activities. The study revealed the importance of the completeness of facilities and other entertainment activities needed to meet tourist expectations. Not only that, but the respondents' views also concluded by mentioning the necessity of carrying out health protocols there to ensure the health and safety of tourists who wish to visit Muritala *et al.* (2022).

Cvelbar & Ogorevc (2020) highlighted the potential of saving the tourism industry through staycation vouchers. The study focuses on Slovenia, where the Government decided to revive the tourism industry through staycation vouchers. The output reported that there could be a huge demand if this scheme is introduced Cvelbar, L. K., & Ogorevc, M. (2020).

Ramgade & Divakaran (2020) highlighted the trends of staycation post-COVID-19. The researchers collected data from travelers across the state of Maharashtra

CHAPTER 14

Enhancing the Tourist Staycation Experience in Urban Areas by Utilizing Emotional Intelligence

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Abstract: This study explores the crucial role of Emotional Intelligence (EI) in enhancing the staycation experience for tourists in urban areas, focusing on both tourists and tourism service representatives. By synthesizing insights from a wide range of research papers and scholarly works, the study adopts a conceptual approach to examine how EI influences service quality, visitor satisfaction, and overall staycation outcomes. The findings highlight that emotionally intelligent tourism service representatives significantly elevate the staycation experience by demonstrating empathy, effective communication, and emotional regulation, all of which contribute to personalized and memorable interactions. Likewise, tourists with higher emotional awareness are better equipped to manage expectations, engage positively with their environment, and derive greater satisfaction from local exploration. Although the research is based on secondary data, it provides valuable implications for future studies and practical applications. It underscores the need for organizations to recognize EI as a vital human resource competency, especially in service-driven sectors like tourism and hospitality. The study suggests that future primary research—particularly through structured questionnaires administered to tourism service representatives—could offer deeper insights into how EI shapes guest experiences in urban staycations. Overall, the research emphasizes that cultivating Emotional Intelligence can serve as a strategic tool for enhancing service delivery, strengthening tourist engagement, and enriching the staycation experience in increasingly competitive urban tourism landscapes.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, Staycation, Urban Staycation, Tourist Experience, Tourism, Tourism Representatives.

INTRODUCTION

Since Peter Salovey and John Mayer coined the phrase “Emotional Intelligence” (EI) in 1990, practitioners and academics have developed, updated, and embraced it. Not too long after, an article titled “Emotional Intelligence May Be the Best

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Predictor of Success in Life, Redefining What It Means to Be Smart” appeared on the cover of Time magazine. (Gibbs, 1995). The notion of Emotional Intelligence (EI) has gained widespread recognition. It has been expanded to the corporate world with the publication of Goleman's seminal books *Working with Emotional Intelligence* (1998) and *Emotional Intelligence* (1995). Because of its popularity, scholars have looked at how applicable it is to other facets of human functioning, especially in management, psychology, education, and sociology (Min, 2012).

Emotional Intelligence has gained much traction since Salovey and Mayer first proposed the idea of emotional intelligence in 1990. Throughout history, the subject of Emotional Intelligence (EI) has been discussed in a variety of popular publications, including magazines and newspapers (Bennett, 2000); (Mordechai I. Henig, 1996); (Peterson, 1997), a best-seller (Goleman, 1995), and most recently, a highly viewed talk show (Hudson, 1998). The possibility that many of the metrics are neither valid nor reliable is lost in the enthusiasm (Davies *et al.*, 1998). According to several studies, emotional intelligence has been linked to various aspects of people's careers, general life experiences, and academic success. Due to the concept's popularity over the last ten years, researchers have been looking at its effectiveness in several areas related to human functioning. The fields of developmental, educational, clinical, counselling, industrial, and organizational psychology have some of the closest ties to emotional intelligence (Ioannis Tsaousis, 2005).

Thus, it has been found that trait or ability EI is related to life success. (Bar-On R, 2001) (Daniel, 1995), life satisfaction and well-being (Martinez-Pons, 2000), and the Satisfaction With Life Scale were used to measure life satisfaction. Only the Difficulty Identifying Feelings subscale of the Toronto Alexithymia Scale (TAS-20) and the Clarity subscale of the Trait Meta-Mood Scale (TMMS) (Salovey, 1995). This measure is the perceived capacity to comprehend and distinguish between moods and emotions and correlates significantly with life satisfaction. Further studies showed that the only subscale that might account for additional variation in life satisfaction that was not explained by positive and negative affect was the Clarity subscale (Palmer, Donaldson, & Stough, 2002) (Martinez-Pons, The Relation of Emotional Intelligence with Selected Areas of Personal Functioning, 1997), interpersonal relationships (Judith Flury, 2006), academic achievement (James D.A. *et al.* 2004) (Melanie Thijs & Zee, 2002), Occupational stress (Bar-On, J.M.Brown, Kirkcaldy, & E.P.Thome, 2000) (Ioannis Nikolaou, 2002) (Mark Slaski, 2002), work success and performance (Malcolm Higgs, 1998) (Hendrie & Loth, 1999), leadership (Robert Cooper, 1997) (Prentice, 2020). However, for most practical purposes, it is sufficient to look at three types of intelligence: abstract, social, and mechanical intelligence. Mechanical intelligence requires managing and comprehending men and women to function sensibly in

interpersonal relationships. Understanding and manipulating concepts and symbols, such as words, numbers, chemistry, scientific rules, *etc.*, is known as abstract intelligence. The terms “mechanical and social intelligence” describe mental processes and behaviours related explicitly to real-world objects and people in front of the observer. Abstract intelligence is the mental process of working with broad facts about objects and people, as in the study of physics, chemistry, history, and sociology (Thorndike, 1920).

The research article analyses the results in light of the significance of emotional intelligence for one's lifestyle and health, and suggests further research and practical applications (Nikolaou & Tsaousis, 2005). A metric is created to represent an individual's external environment. This external life space consists of a person's biological underpinnings, the groups that comprise them, and their interactions with the environment. Five factors define the total metric:

- A caring environment
- A drug-culture environment
- An athletic environment
- A socially interacting environment
- An isolated environment

These characteristics help place the individual in the context of their surroundings and link with assessments of internal personality processes (Mayer, Carlsmith, & Chabot, 1998).

Significant Growth of Staycation

Due to travel limitations and hazards, staycations have become a well-liked substitute in the travel industry. However, staycations are still vague, with no agreed-upon definition or distinguishing characteristics. The main focus of this evaluation is to emphasise the time, distance, kinds, places, cost, and advantages of staycations. Studies on proximity experiences in real and virtual places are needed as tourism becomes an essential element of contemporary living. Future research should concentrate on creating staycations, product design, sustainability, and well-being issues. This evaluation provides insightful information to facilitate in-depth research, improving domestic travel and the welfare of locals. It also highlights how crucial it is to incorporate cutting-edge technologies and encourage environmentally friendly behaviours to have a flourishing staycation market (Gong, Kou, Wu, & Lin, 2024).

The 2020 staycation boom boosts the regional economy and revitalises the travel sector. One of the most significant shifts in how we work brought about by this

SUBJECT INDEX

A

Adaptability 7, 8, 15, 16, 110, 246
 Adventure 4, 73, 78, 196, 198
 Affordability 7, 70, 73, 75, 91, 183
 Agencies 134, 139, 148, 168
 Agriculture 92, 93, 94, 101
 Air 6, 26, 63, 74, 89, 90, 198
 Airbnb 42, 43, 44, 45, 47, 52, 53, 55, 156
 Airports 3, 8, 124, 242
 Aligning 26, 38, 43, 56, 110, 130, 183, 219, 222, 253
 Artisans 68, 81, 92, 124, 131, 142, 184, 196
 Augmented reality (AR) 55, 75, 79, 83, 109, 185, 186
 Authors 29, 30, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35, 36, 37, 40, 45, 46, 47, 51, 256
 Avenues 52, 139, 198, 211, 252

B

Beaches 9, 13, 192, 201
 Beauty 2, 6, 82, 84, 91, 116, 137, 149, 152
 Bibliometric analysis 24, 26, 27, 28
 Budgets 8, 10, 72, 115, 168

C

Campaigns 81, 82, 84, 130, 136, 137, 138, 153
 Capacity 5, 71, 85, 157, 172, 174, 244, 254
 Case studies 80, 82, 83, 87, 88, 90, 93, 96, 100, 182, 183, 191, 193, 194
 Challenges 71, 72, 73, 74, 76, 77, 78, 85, 95, 107, 118, 126, 139, 153, 154
 Citations 26, 28, 30, 31, 34, 36, 38, 39, 56, 57
 Cities 82, 163, 164, 165, 166, 167, 169, 186, 188, 227, 229, 243, 244
 Climate change 26, 53, 55, 63, 66, 70, 72
 Comfort 63, 100, 123, 185, 195, 196, 202, 204
 Community-based tourism 88, 101, 103, 104, 105, 111, 124, 126, 183

Companies 133, 134, 135, 138, 206, 256
 Concerts 79, 165, 167, 170, 175
 COVID-19 37, 42, 43, 45, 119, 120, 122, 126, 241, 246, 250

D

Data analysis 41, 118, 217, 231
 Digital platforms 43, 44, 46, 47, 52, 53, 54, 55, 56, 69, 75, 79
 Digitalization 44, 45, 54, 79, 195
 Distance 6, 8, 12, 13, 16, 73, 91, 190, 240, 244, 253
 Documents 28, 31, 50, 51
 Domestic tourists 92, 123, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 214, 215, 222, 224
 Duration 8, 42, 209, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 224

E

Eco-lodges 87, 88, 89, 91, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 105, 106
 Eco-tourism 83, 92, 93, 96, 97, 99, 100, 109, 111, 136, 142
 Economic activities 99, 100, 103, 163, 189
 Economic benefits 65, 105, 112, 125, 162, 168, 172, 175, 189, 194, 203
 Economic development 71, 81, 124, 132, 137, 158, 160, 194
 Economic growth 2, 70, 71, 74, 80, 125, 150, 158, 162, 174, 257
 Emotions 239, 254, 256, 257, 258, 259
 Employment 68, 74, 99, 117, 148, 151, 155, 163, 228, 230, 235
 Environmental sustainability 1, 25, 116, 123, 130, 134, 135, 139, 143, 152, 156

F

Family status 209, 214, 215, 216, 217, 219, 220, 222, 224
 Farm 67, 68, 84, 87, 93, 94, 95, 96, 97, 117
 Financial support 133, 135, 136, 153, 170
 Findings 11, 12, 55, 57, 58, 150, 151, 182, 184, 213, 214, 222, 223, 224, 257

G

Gender 153, 209, 214, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 220, 221, 222, 224
 Government initiatives 14, 131, 153, 155
 Guests 14, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 102, 185, 186, 191, 192, 193, 194, 195, 196

H

Hospitality industry 124, 126, 130, 131, 182, 185, 187, 213, 214, 228, 230, 251, 256
 Hospitality providers 182, 183, 184, 185, 191, 195, 196, 197, 198, 213, 214

J

Job creation 10, 16, 95, 103, 125, 143, 151, 203
 Jobs 71, 95, 125, 137, 149, 151, 156, 166, 203, 256

L

Local businesses 71, 73, 74, 81, 82, 129, 131, 134, 136, 140, 142, 143, 168, 203, 204
 Local communities 9, 16, 68, 95, 102, 106, 110, 112, 126, 140, 141, 142, 143, 155, 184, 194, 209, 222, 224
 Local cultures 11, 110, 111, 115, 186, 187, 188, 190, 191, 204, 205, 210, 211, 212
 Local destinations 64, 67, 69, 73, 75, 76, 77, 81, 84
 Locals 88, 96, 105, 107, 110, 140, 141, 142, 168, 240, 245
 Lodging 89, 96, 136, 185, 201, 203

M

Mental health 4, 9, 38, 66, 75, 201, 204, 205, 207, 244, 252
 Motivations 44, 64, 119, 154, 216, 223, 235, 252, 253, 254, 256

N

Non-governmental organizations (NGOs) 88, 100, 106, 110, 157

O

Operations 100, 105, 106, 131, 133, 157, 169, 187, 191, 194
 Overcrowding 1, 9, 13, 14, 16, 67, 73, 77, 82, 84, 126

P

Parks 16, 72, 91, 165, 170, 201, 244
 Platforms 43, 44, 45, 47, 55, 78, 79, 169, 173, 174
 Preferences 3, 5, 115, 116, 182, 183, 196, 212, 217, 218, 219, 221, 223, 224, 234
 Preservation 95, 103, 105, 106, 112, 126, 155, 156, 159, 184, 193
 Public-private partnerships (PPPs) 133, 134, 138, 170

R

Recycling 78, 101, 191, 192, 195, 197
 Remote work 13, 53, 64, 187
 Renewable energy 94, 108, 116, 169, 194
 Repurposed sports venues 165, 168, 169, 171, 172, 173, 174
 Repurposed venues 168, 171, 172, 173, 174, 175
 Residents 2, 11, 14, 140, 141, 142, 165, 166, 167, 171, 172, 174, 203, 204, 205
 Resilience 5, 7, 15, 41, 75, 110, 154, 157, 203, 210, 212
 Restrictions 1, 3, 5, 15, 63, 68, 82, 210, 211, 241, 245
 Rural communities 81, 90, 92, 99, 110, 124, 125, 126, 153, 154, 156

Rural destinations 87, 88, 107, 108, 109, 110, 115, 124, 126, 224

Rural tourism 87, 88, 106, 108, 109, 110, 115, 116, 117, 118, 123, 124, 125, 158, 159

S

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) 77, 80, 131, 132, 133

Social interactions 206, 209, 210, 211, 212, 215, 216, 217, 218, 219, 222, 224

Stakeholders 72, 74, 76, 78, 80, 83, 84, 131, 133, 136, 201, 222, 224

Staycation experience 12, 14, 16, 75, 76, 209, 210, 214, 215, 217, 219, 222, 223, 224, 238

Staycation packages 14, 133, 134, 168, 184, 191, 196, 212, 213, 241, 251

Staycation tourism research 30, 31, 32, 33, 36, 39, 41, 42, 44, 48, 50, 51, 52, 54, 55

Subsidies 80, 84, 129, 130, 131, 132, 138

Sustainable development 73, 92, 99, 103, 106, 110, 111, 112, 133, 155, 156

Sustainable infrastructure 87, 88, 97, 105, 106, 109, 112, 136, 162

Sustainable practices 110, 111, 125, 126, 130, 131, 134, 135, 136, 137, 140, 141, 158, 159, 160

Sustainable tourism practices 82, 84, 110, 116, 123, 124, 125, 131, 133, 135, 142, 210, 215

T

Technological advancements 53, 55, 62, 63, 65, 66, 140, 172, 183, 185, 223

Tourism development 105, 110, 126, 140, 141, 150, 151, 160, 174

Tourism industry 24, 25, 71, 72, 81, 84, 85, 134, 135, 136, 137, 150, 151, 152, 229

Tourism sector 89, 90, 134, 135, 140, 143, 147, 150, 151, 154, 157, 209, 210, 211, 241

Tourist experience 98, 105, 109, 159, 206, 238, 254

Traditional vacations 5, 8, 13, 16, 38, 203, 204, 253

Training programs 130, 131, 142, 157

U

United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) 116, 125, 132, 137, 150, 151, 158, 248

V

Virtual reality (VR) 15, 16, 75, 79, 83, 109, 185

W

Waste management 53, 97, 101, 109, 111, 123, 126

Waste reduction 98, 105, 110, 157, 190, 195, 198

Water conservation 98, 116, 193, 194

Wellness 5, 66, 75, 78, 80, 183, 185, 195, 196, 197, 198

Wellness retreats 66, 72, 75, 81, 84, 162, 167

Wellness tourism 24, 62, 65, 84, 173, 184, 187, 196, 197

Workforce 150, 152, 153, 158



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