

Trends of Tourism Development in Mauritius: An Analytical Studies

SAPANA MISHRA

Research Scholar

Department of African Studies, University of Delhi, New Delhi (India)

ABSTRACT

Tourism plays a pivotal role in the economic development of Mauritius, contributing significantly to its GDP and employment. This analytical study investigates into the dynamic landscape of tourism in Mauritius, examining the trends that have shaped its development. Through a comprehensive analysis of historical data, policy frameworks, and global market influences, this research provides valuable insights into the evolution of the tourism sector in Mauritius. The study examines the main drivers of tourist growth, such as government programmes, the expansion of infrastructure, the development of cultural attractions, and sustainable practises. For this study, quantitative and qualitative approaches were combined with primary and secondary data. It analyses the influence of social media, online reviews, and mobile applications on tourist decision-making processes and destination choices. The study also evaluates the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on tourism in Mauritius, exploring innovative approaches adopted to revive the industry post-crisis. In addition to provide a thorough summary of Mauritius's tourist situation at the moment. This analytical study provides significant knowledge to academics, policymakers, and industry professionals by combining historical data with modern insights. This helps to facilitate informed decision-making processes for the sustainable growth of tourism in Mauritius.

Key Words : Tourism, Development, Pandemic, infrastructure, Poicymakers

INTRODUCTION

At present, many countries promote tourism to strengthen the economy, Mauritius is also one of them. Mauritius is world famous for tourism and associate industry which plays a vital role in economic development. Tourism comes under a large service industry, which plays an significant role in the economy in terms of revenue as well as foreign exchange. Tourism is a combined service, both public and private, that includes air and sea transport, hotels, restaurants and shops belonging to many local people. Tourism is directly and indirectly related to the economy of a country and the change in the standard of living of its people. The important role of tourism in the Mauritius's economy and the livelihood of the local people around the tourist places, which is continuously progressing from ancient times to modern times.

METHODOLOGY

The main purpose of the present study is to determine the tourism trends in Mauritius. The study will be based upon primary and secondary data sources. For this study, quantitative and qualitative approaches were combined with primary and secondary data. It analyses the influence of social media, online reviews, and mobile applications on tourist decision-making processes and destination choices. The study also evaluates the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on tourism in Mauritius, exploring innovative approaches adopted to revive the industry post-crisis. Both descriptive, comparative as well as explanatory research were used in this study, in order to describe trends of tourism. To achieve these, different methods of qualitative data collection are used: questionnaire, interviews, focus group discussions, and observation.

Trends of Tourism Development in Mauritius:

Trends and patterns may have evolved or changed over the time period. Recent Trends of tourism in Mauritius is:

- Diversification of Tourism Offerings
- Increasing Tourist Arrivals
- Sustainable Tourism
- Luxury Tourism and High-End Resorts
- MICE Tourism
- Digital Transformation
- Emerging Source Markets
- Collaboration and Partnerships
- Cruise Tourism

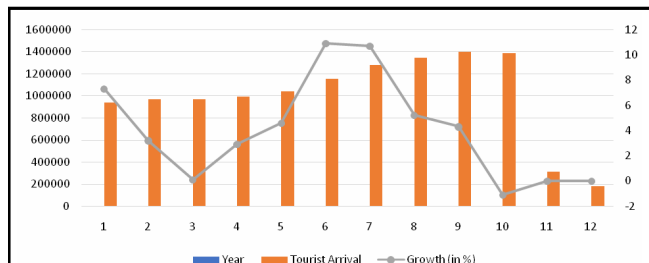
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Tourism arrivals continued to expand at a respectable rate of 5.2 percent in 2017 and 4.3 percent in 2018, respectively, following the double-digit peak reached in 2015 and 2016. With a -1.1 percent decline in arrivals in 2019, there was a slowdown following nine years of steady growth (Table 1 and Fig. 1).

Table 1 : Tourist Arrivals and Growth in Mauritius between 2010 – 2022: Trend

Year	Tourist Arrival	Growth (in %)
2010	934,827	7.3
2011	964,642	3.2
2012	965,441	0.1
2013	993,106	2.9
2014	1,038,960	4.6
2015	1,151,720	10.9
2016	1,275,220	10.7
2017	1,341,860	5.2
2018	1,399,400	4.3
2019	1,383,488	-1.1
2020	308,980	
2021	179,790	

Source: Statistics Mauritius (statsmauritius.govmu.org)



Source: Statistics Mauritius (statsmauritius.govmu.org)

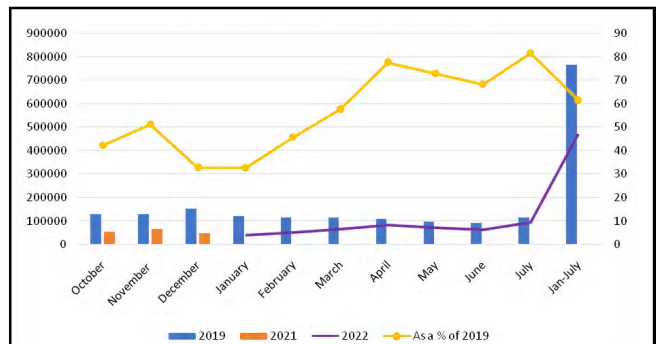
Fig. 1 : Tourist Arrivals and Growth in Mauritius between 2010 – 2022: Trend

Tourist arrivals were at an all-time high in 2020 and 2021 compared to years when Mauritius’ borders were closed for eighteen months. The number of tourists arriving between January and July 2022 reached 470,640, or 61.5 percent, of the level recorded for the same period in 2019. The destination has been gradually regaining its pre-pandemic period levels in the months since the reopening of the Mauritius border on October 1, 2021 (Table 2 and Fig. 2).

Table 2 : Tourist Arrivals by Month, 2019 vs 2021 and 2022

	2019	2021	2022	As a % of 2019
October	129018	54430		42.2
November	128730	65922		51.2
December	152098	49964		32.8
January	122273		40028	32.7
February	115613		52734	45.6
March	114419		66066	57.7
April	108565		84268	77.6
May	96814		70462	72.8
June	92398		63008	68.2
July	115448		94084	81.5
Jan-July	765530		470640	61.5

Source: Statistics Mauritius (statsmauritius.govmu.org)



Source: Statistics Mauritius (statsmauritius.govmu.org)

Fig. 2 : Tourist Arrivals by Month, 2019 vs 2021 and 2022

In Mauritius, seasonality remains significant, since the number of arrivals during the peak month of December is around twice that of the “lowest” month of June. However, there has been a decrease tendency in the ratio of arrivals between these two months during the past few years.

Trends of Tourism in Mauritius: Post Covid Pandemic (International Travel):

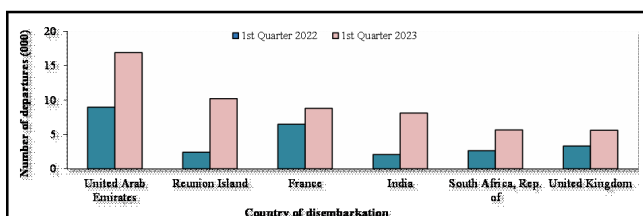
From 207,391 to 422,194 total passenger arrivals.

Table 3 : Passenger traffic, 1st Quarter 2022 and 2023

	2022 (1 st Quarter)	2023 (1 st Quarter)
Tourist Arrivals by		
Air Route	206,136	402,877
Sea Route	1,255	19,317
of which Cruise travellers	353	18,176
Total	207,391	422,194
Tourist Departures by		
Air Route	213,279	428,557
Sea Route	1,437	19,053
Total	214,716	447,610

Source: Statistics Mauritius (statsmauritius.govmu.org)

Total tourist arrivals increased from 158,818 to 305,197, according to government data; travellers arriving by air increased from 158,008 to 299,082, while travellers incoming by sea route increased from 810 to 6,115. Eight, 915, as opposed to 442, were excursionists (those who arrived and departed on the same day). 11, cruise ships docked in the nation in the first quarter of 2023, bringing with them approximately 18,176 passengers, including 5,146 tourists, 6,838 sightseers, 23 local Mauritius populaces, and 6,169 crew members. According to Statistics Mauritius, the number of passengers departing the island grew from 214,716 to 447,610, while the number of residents departing from 30,502 to 72,956. Comparable numbers for Mauritian departures by primary country of disembarkation for the first quarters of 2022 and 2023 are provided in the figures below. For citizens of Mauritius, the main disembarkation nations (their final destination or country of transit) in the first quarter of 2023 were (Fig. 3):



Source: Statistics Mauritius, 2023

Fig. 3 : Mauritian departures by main country of disembarkation, 1st Quarter 2022 and and 2023

Tourist arrivals in 1st Quarter 2023 from main markets were: France (81,822), Reunion Island (34,779), United Kingdom (29,699), Germany (26,370), Republic of South Africa (20,653), India (7,897), Italy (7,123) and Switzerland (6,520).

(635)

59,358 tourists, or 19.4% of all visitors, were 60 years of age or older during the time under consideration, according to government data. The percentage was significantly higher, at 67.7%, among those who arrived by water.

The employment statistics pertaining to the tourism sector, derived from the Survey of Employment and Earnings, concern jobs in food service, lodging, travel, and other service industries that employ ten or more people. The most recent data available for March 2022 shows that, compared to 27,858 for March 2021, employment in these establishments fell by 0.8% to 27,626.

Conclusion:

After observing at the trends of tourism in Mauritius, it is found that the number of tourists coming to Mauritius is more from foreign and rather than domestic. There was a decline in tourism due to Covid but now the situation is gradually improving and if the trend of tourism growth continues then its contribution to GDP will further increase in the coming years. In conclusion, while Mauritius' tourism sector has been a significant economic driver, it is imperative to acknowledge the challenges and adapt proactively. Diversification of markets, emphasis on sustainability, preservation of local culture, and strategic infrastructure development are essential components of a resilient tourism industry. By addressing these aspects, Mauritius can navigate the evolving tourism landscape successfully and ensure a sustainable and prosperous future for the sector.

REFERENCES

- Annual Report (2021/22). Association Des Hoteliers Et Restaurateurs Ile Maurice. Retrieved from ahrim.mu
- Annual Research: Key Highlights. (2022). Mauritius: World Travel and Tourism Council.
- Digest of International Travel and Tourism Statistics 2018. (October 2019). Volume 45. Statistics Mauritius: Ministry of Finance and Economic Development.
- Ghosh, R.N. and Siddique, M.A.B. (2017). Tourism and Economic Development: Case Study from the Indian Ocean Region. New York: Routledge.
- Gradual recovery in tourism to boost growth in Mauritius. (May 25, 2022). Retrieved from <https://country.eiu.com/>
- Harrison, David. Tourism and the Less Developed world: Issues and Case Studies. Wallingford, UK: CABI Publishing.
- Internat. J. Appl. Soc. Sci.* | Nov. & Dec., 2023 | **10** (11 & 12)

- International Travel and Tourism. (2021). Retrieved from <https://statsmauritius.govmu.org/>
- International Travel and Tourism (2022). Issue No. 1702. Released on 28 February 2023. Retrieved from <https://statsmauritius.govmu.org/>
- Mauritian Economy needs to be Cautious Going Ahead. (February 27, 2023). New Delhi: CareEdge. CARE Rating Limited.
- Mauritian Economy on the Path of Recovery (April 27, 2023). New Delhi: CareEdge. CARE Rating Limited.
- Mowforth, Martin and Munt, Ian. *Tourism and Sustainability: Development and New Tourism in Third World*. (2016). London: Routledge.
- Novelli, Marina (2016). *Tourism and Development in Sub-Saharan Africa Current issues and local realities*. New York: Routledge.
- Roopchund, Randhir (March 2020). *Mauritius as a Smart Tourism Destination: Technology for Enhancing Tourism Experience*. Retrieved from <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/339664739> (DOI: 10.1007/978-981-15-1483-8_44)
- Synopsis of Mauritius Budget (2023). Ernst and Young Limited: Mauritius. Retrieved from www.ey.com
- Sannasee, Vinesh Raja, Seetanah, Boopen and Rojid, Sawkut. (March 2015). The impact of relative prices on tourism demand for Mauritius: An empirical analysis. *Development Southern Africa*. Vol. 32, No.3, pp 363-376. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0376835X.2015.1010717>.
- World Tourism Organization (2020). UNWTO Briefing Note – Tourism and COVID-19, Issue 1 – How are countries supporting tourism recovery? UNWTO, Madrid, DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284421893>.
