

IMPACT OF DHUNDHAR TOURISM CIRCUIT ON THE ECONOMY OF RAJASTHAN

¹Garima Sharma, ²Dr.Kh. Moirangleima

¹Research Scholar, Banasthali Vidyapith¹

²Supervisor, Assistant Professor, Department of Earth Science Banasthali Vidyapith

Abstract

Rajasthan is internationally renowned for its vibrant tourism industry, significantly contributing to its GDP, employment generation, foreign exchange earnings, infrastructure development, capital investments, and overall economic and social progress. Various factors drive tourism growth, including destination reputation, tourist-friendly environments, affordable travel, and unique tourist circuits. Key attractions are tourism circuits and destinations, as they indicate rising tourism trends.

In Rajasthan, tourism is organized around nine distinct "Tourist Circuits" rather than standalone destinations. The Dhundhar Circuit, encompassing Jaipur, Tonk, and Dausa districts, is particularly noteworthy. This circuit is celebrated for its blend of religion, architecture, and history. This paper evaluates the economic impact of the Dhundhar tourism circuit and recent developments in the local tourism sector. Data for this study were sourced from both primary and secondary means, including questionnaires administered to tourists, shop owners, hoteliers, tour guides, etc.

Jaipur, the capital of Rajasthan and a prominent stop on the Dhundhar tourism circuit, is also part of the well-known "Golden Triangle" (Delhi, Agra, and Jaipur). Dausa and Tonk offer their own historical and heritage significance. Approximately 15% of Rajasthan's GDP is attributed to tourism, which provides direct and indirect employment, supports infrastructure development, generates revenue, increases investment opportunities, and promotes heritage preservation.

Keywords: Tourism, infrastructure, foreign exchange earnings, Tourist Circuit, economic impact, employment, heritage preservation

1. Introduction

Tourism refers to the practice of traveling for enjoyment and encompasses the provision of services and accommodations for visitors. It involves monetizing the travel experience, showing travelers the country's beauty, art, and culture with hospitality. Tourism is a rapidly

expanding global industry, contributing significantly to infrastructure development, transportation and technology advancements, cultural and social growth, and various other sectors. Successful tourism development hinges on product enhancement, marketing, regulations, and human resource development. As a major commercial force, tourism influences contemporary community lifestyles.

India, with its population of over 1.3 billion, offers diverse cultures, dialects, holidays, religions, and traditions. Post-independence, tourism has been a crucial sector. India's vast natural, geological, cultural, and artistic diversity presents numerous travel options. In the financial year 2020, the travel and tourism sector in India employed about 80 million people, accounting for around 15.3% of total jobs but less than 5% of GDP. By 2028, this contribution is projected to reach \$512 billion, with an annual increase of 10.35% between 2019 and 2028.

The Ministry of Tourism aims to promote and develop tourism in India by improving infrastructure, simplifying visa requirements, ensuring high standards for tourism services, positioning the nation as a year-round tourist destination, and promoting sustainable tourism. Using a cluster approach, the Ministry collaborates with Central Ministries, State Governments, and Industry Stakeholders to transform tourism sites into world-class destinations, encompassing infrastructure, amenities, interpretation centers, and skill development.

Tourism in Rajasthan

Rajasthan is one of India's most visited states, known for its diverse culture, heritage, wildlife, deserts, and lush vegetation. Attractions include museums, historical sites, castles and forts, wildlife, lakes, and deserts. The state, situated in the world's oldest mountain range, the Aravali, hosts numerous historic cities and stunning tourist destinations. Major cities like Jaipur, Jodhpur, Bikaner, Jaisalmer, Udaipur, and Mount Abu serve as tourism hubs.

The western desert region, including the Thar Desert, attracts tourists for camel rides. Jaipur, the "Pink City," is part of the "Golden Triangle." The Desert Circuit includes Jaisalmer, Jodhpur, and Bikaner, known for sand dunes and desert culture. Udaipur, the "City of Lakes," and Mount Abu, Rajasthan's only hill station, are also major attractions. Approximately 15% of Rajasthan's economy depends on tourism, which provides direct and indirect employment, supports infrastructure development, and encourages heritage preservation.

The Rajasthan Department of Tourism has identified nine tourism circuits based on

topography and attractions:

Table- 1. Tourist Circuits and related district in Rajasthan.

	Tourist Circuit	Districts
1.	Desert Circuit	Jodhpur-Jaisalmer-Bikaner
2.	Mewar Circuit	Udaipur-Rajsamand-Chittaurgarh-Bhilwara
3.	Dhundhar Circuit	Jaipur-Dausa-Tonk
4.	Shekhawati Circuit	Sikar-Jhunjhunun-churu
5.	Vagad Circuit	Banswara –Dungarpur
6.	Godwar Circuit	Pali-Jalore-Sirohi
7.	Marwar Circuit	Ajmer-Nagaur
8.	Brij-Mewat Circuit	Alwar –Karauli -Bhartpur-Dholpur- SawaiMadhopur
9.	Hadoti Circuit	Kota-Bundi-Jhalwar

Source: Department of Tourism, Rajasthan.

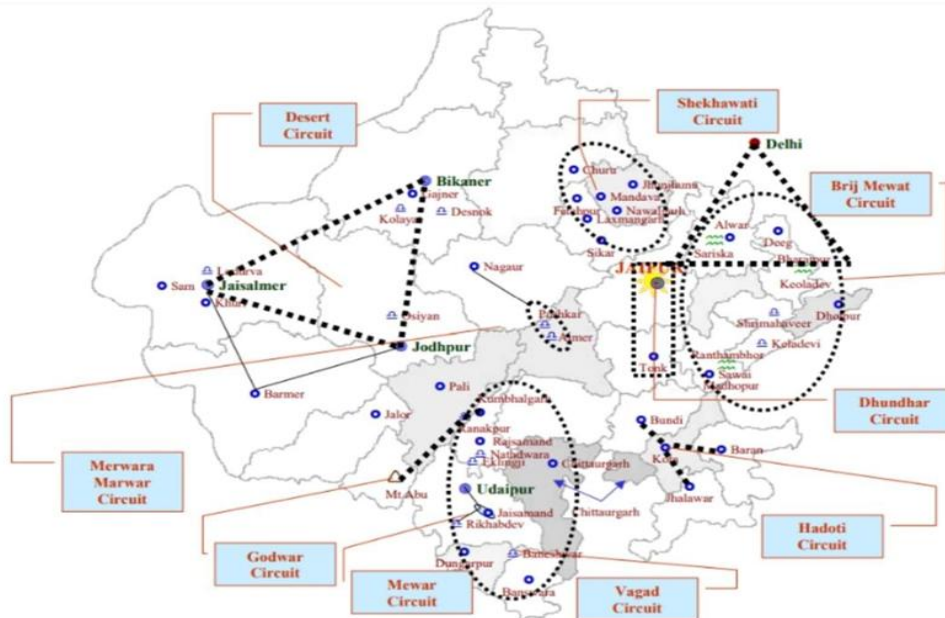


Figure 1: Tourist Circuits in Rajasthan

Source :-(*Rajasthan.Pdf*, n.d.-b)

These circuits cover all major tourist sites in Rajasthan. The Jaipur (Dhundhar) Circuit, Desert Circuit, and Mewar Circuit are the most established.

2. Objectives

The primary objective of this research is to assess the economic impact of the Dhundhar tourism circuit on Rajasthan’s economy using secondary data. Specific goals include:

1. Evaluating the contribution of tourism to local GDP.
2. Analyzing employment opportunities created by the tourism sector.
3. Understanding the effect on local businesses and infrastructure development.
4. Assessing the role of tourism in cultural preservation.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study employs a secondary data analysis approach, utilizing existing data from government reports, tourism statistics, and scholarly articles to examine the economic impact of the Dhundhar tourism circuit.

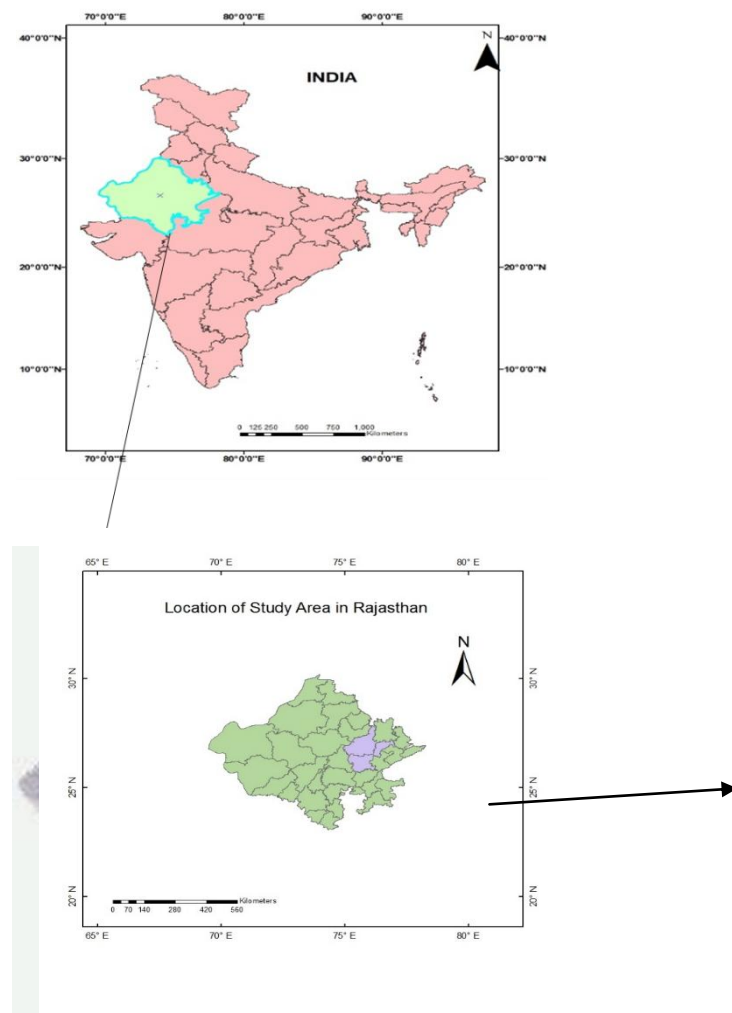
3.2 Data Sources

1. **Government Reports:** Data from the Government of Rajasthan's tourism and economic departments.
2. **Tourism Statistics:** Reports from the Indian Ministry of Tourism.
3. **Scholarly Articles:** Existing literature on tourism and economic development in Rajasthan.

3.3 Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using statistical methods to identify trends and draw conclusions about the economic impact of tourism in the Dhundhar region. Statistical methods include trend analysis and correlation analysis. Key metrics include contributions to GDP, employment rates, business growth indicators, and infrastructure development statistics.

4. Study Area: Dhundhar Tourist Circuit



The Dhundhar Circuit, encompassing Jaipur, Samode, Abhaneri, Tonk, and Ramgarh, is renowned for its rich blend of religion, history, and culture. Although agriculture is the primary livelihood, Jaipur is globally recognized as the "Pink City" and is a crucial part of the 'Golden Triangle,' linking Delhi, Agra, and Jaipur. The peak travel season is from September to March due to the summer heat from April to June.

5. Results and Discussions

5.1 Major Tourist spots and attractions:

The Dhundhar region has a large number of diverse and one-of-a-kind attractions. As a result, the region is popular among both domestic and foreign tourists. Major tourist destinations are as follows:

Table-2: Major Tourist spots and attractions in the Dhundhar Tourist Circuit.

District	Destination	Specification
Jaipur	Jantar -Mantar	UNESCO World heritage site and Astronomical Observatory
	Amber Palace,	UNESCO World heritage site
	Nahargarh	Means 'Abode of Tigre' , situated on the ridge of Aravlli hills
	Jaigarh	Famous for worlds largest cannon 'Jaiban'
	Hawamahal	Jaipur's ionic landmark an famous as 'palace of winds'
	Albert Hall	A famous Museum
	The City Palace	Fusion of Rajput- Mughal Architecture
	Jalmahal Palace	'lake palace' ,Float in the center of Mansagar .attractive exterior between the water
	Nahargarh Biological park	Famous for vast varieties of flora ad fauna and Zoo for visitors

	Sisodiya Rani bag	Mughal architecture painted with Legends Radha -Krishna
	Ramniwas Garden with Zoo	Famous heritage garden 'Heart of the City'
	Ishwarlat (Sargasuli)	60 feet high grand minaret built by Raja Ishwari Singh(1749) to remember a grand victory
	Temple (Govind dev ji, Motidungari, luxmiNarayan Temple)	Famous old temples of Lord Radha-Krishna and lord Ganesh ji
	Birla Temple	Famous for White marble and its modern architecture
	Galtaji	Ancient pilgrimage famous for temples, pavilions and holy kunds
	Kanak Vrindavan Garden	Famous picnic spot and film shooting sites
	BM Birla Planetarium	Famous for science and astronomical projects ,Taramandal, and huge auditorium
	Sanaganer Palaces and temples	Famous for Jain temple and historical temples
Outskirts of Jaipur City	SamodHaweli and Bagh	Heritage monuments fusion of Mughal and Rajsthani architecture
	Ramgarh Lake	Built by MaharajsawaiRamsingh 2(1876) , famou picnic spot after rainy season
	Bagru Fort	Historical place
	Ruins Of Bairath	Famous for freestanding monastery and Ashokan inscription

	Sambhar Lake	One of the largest inland salt lake , famous for beautiful landscap and large flocks of Flamingo
Dausa	Abhaneri well(Chand baori)	Famous architecture, one of the largest and deepest stepwell in India
	MehandipurBalaji temple	Famous for rituals healing and exorcism of evil spirits.
Tonk	DiggiKalayanji Temple	Famous ancient temple of lord Vishnu
	SunehariKothi of Tonk	Famous as ‘Sheesh Mahal” , great wall art of Gold, dimond and glasses
	Bisalpur Dam	Gravity dam on Banas river , water supply in Sawaimadhopur, Tonk , Ajmer and Jaipur district
	HathiBhata	Historical heritage site
	Hadi Rani kaKund	Famous historical heritage baori built by King ChundavatRatansingh to bath of his queen Hadi rani

5.2 Infrastructural development: A tourist's visit leads to the creation of new infrastructure, like parks, gardens, and museums. Roads, water systems, public utilities, and other facilities are additional facilities, therefore the growth of tourism promotes the growth of infrastructure by the help of earned revenue from Tourism.

Table-3: Tourist details and income of Rajasthan museums and monuments Financial year 2017 to 2022

Financial Year	Number of Visitors			Revenue Earned
	Indian	Foreigners	Total Visitors	
2017 & 18	45,82,999	8,70,137	54,53,136	56,52,45,060
2018 & 19	53,53,291	9,30,029	62,83,320	60,93,46,805
2019 & 20	52,27,045	7,92,799	60,19,844	54,05,39,585
2020 & 21	19,39,919	2,131	19,42,050	9,39,63,158
2021 & 22	32,71,010	7,383	32,78,393	17,35,28,995

Source: Archaeology and Museums Department, Rajasthan



Figure-3: Total Tourist Arrivals and Earned Revenue in Rajasthan.

From 2017 to 2022, Rajasthan's museums and monuments experienced fluctuating visitor numbers and revenue. The period saw a growth in total visitors and revenue from 2017-18 to 2018-19, with visitor numbers increasing by 15.3% and revenue rising by 7.7%. However, the COVID-19 pandemic caused a dramatic decline in 2020-21, with visitors dropping by 68.0% and revenue plummeting by 82.6%. Recovery began in 2021-22, with visitor numbers and revenue improving but still not reaching pre-pandemic levels. This data highlights the significant impact of tourism on the region's economy and underscores the need for strategies

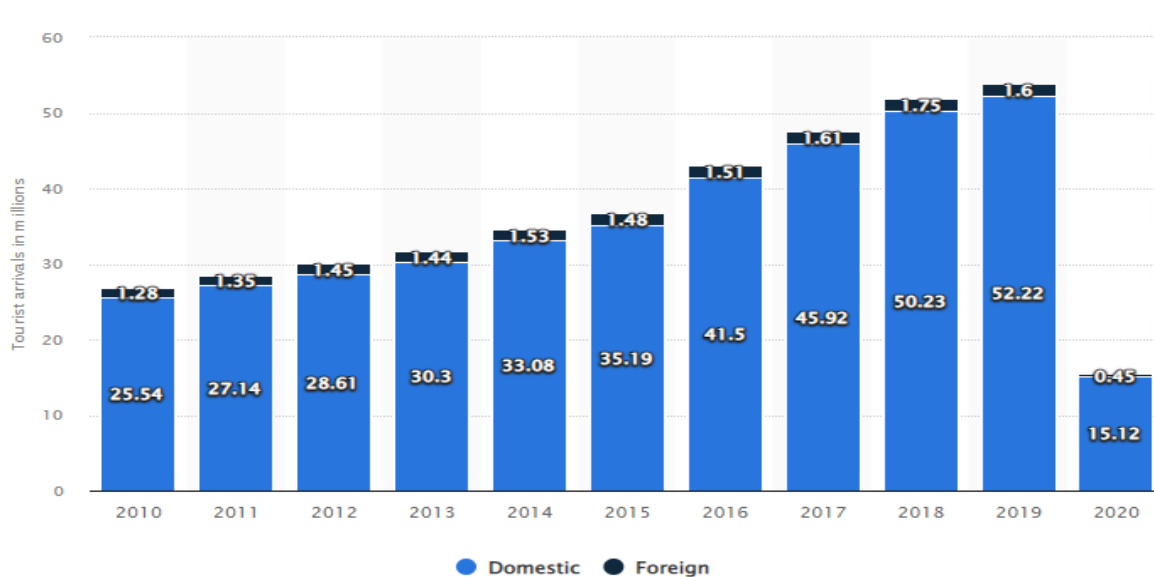
to enhance resilience and boost recovery in the face of future disruptions.

5.3 Conservation and Utilization of Historical Heritage: In terms of cultural heritage, Rajasthan is state rich in palaces, havelies, forts, vibrant art and dance, beautiful architecture, the world's oldest mountain ranges, the Aravali, the Thar Desert, the forest sanctuary, and its illustrious history. Rajasthan is a well-known and regal tourist destination due to all these variations. The majority of visitors travel to Rajasthan to visit such locations. Thus, the growth of tourism encourages the preservation of the state's rich cultural and historical heritage. The majority of the monuments in the Dhundhar region, especially those in Jaipur, are well-maintained thanks to funding from the Central Government, and refurbishment of many sites is going on under the centrally sponsored schemes (*Rajasthan.Pdf*, n.d.-a).

5.4 Development of Handicraft Industries: The tangible cultural legacy of Rajasthan includes handicrafts. Tourism and handicrafts are related to one another. One of the things that attracts travellers is handicrafts, therefore as tourism grows, so will the production and sale of handicrafts. The most well-known attractions in Rajasthan are its handicrafts, which are a reflection of the state's rich cultural past. Rajasthani handicrafts are well-known for their beauty and excellence throughout the world. Travelers who visit Rajasthan from all over the world never leave without purchasing some of its exquisite handicrafts. The most well-known Rajasthani handicrafts include jewellery, wooden furniture, paintings, blue pottery, carpets, durries, Rajasthani quilts and more (Kumawat, 2021).

5.5 Foreign Exchange earning: Rajasthan's tourism industry is regarded as the pinnacle of economic advantage in terms of foreign exchange earnings. The growth rate of tourism in the state of Rajasthan has revealed that both domestic and foreign tourist arrivals in the state of Rajasthan are increasing annually. The number of tourists visiting Rajasthan in 2020 was 155.64 lakh (151.72 lakh domestic and 4.46 lakh foreign). Due to the lockdown during the Covid-19 pandemic beginning in March of 2020, there has been a significant decrease in visitor arrivals (Kumawat, 2021).

Figure-4: Foreign and Domestic tourist arrival in Rajasthan



Source : Statista 2022(India, n.d.-b)

Table-4: Last 3-year tourist arrival and income information in Jaipur&Dausa.

Monuments and Museums	2018-2019		2019-2020		2020-2021	
	Tourist	Income (in INR)	Tourist	Income (in INR)	Tourist	Income (in INR)
Amber Palace	2135954	347355830	1,862,092	293504960	471348	37306230
Jantar-Mantar	1270434	115201395	1,168,676	102269280	240074	11256432
Hawamaha I	931015	51388735	881,226	48883000	288889	13055503
Albert Hall	711849	40710480	670,000	37341650	175054	7954420

Source: Archaeology and Museums Department, Rajasthan.

	Centrally protected monument	Indian visitors (2019-20)	Foreign visitors (2019-20)	Total Revenue (in INR) (2019-20)
Dausa	Abhaneri	78878	88838	27499505

Source: Archaeological Survey of India, Government of Rajasthan.

Over the last three years, Jaipur's key monuments and museums have shown notable fluctuations in tourist arrivals and income, reflecting the significant economic impact of tourism. Amber Palace, a major tourist attraction, saw a dramatic drop in both visitors and revenue from 2018-2019 to 2020-2021, with visitor numbers decreasing from approximately 2.1 million to 471,348 and revenue plummeting from ₹347.4 crore to ₹37.3 crore. Jantar-Mantar, another popular site, experienced a decline in visitors and income, with revenue falling from ₹115.2 crore to ₹11.3 crore. Hawa Mahal and Albert Hall similarly faced reductions in tourist numbers and revenue, indicating a widespread downturn across key heritage sites. This sharp decline, particularly evident during the 2020-2021 period, can be attributed to the COVID-19 pandemic, which severely impacted tourism and, consequently, the local economy. The reduced tourist footfall led to significant losses in revenue, highlighting tourism's critical role in Jaipur's economic landscape.

5.6 Regional development: Tourism is one industry that has a favourable impact on local development. It is an important regional development instrument that fosters social, political, and economic improvement. Regional development is dependent on Rural tourism. The World Tourism Organization further states that during the next five to ten years, more and more tourists are anticipated to look for items that allow them to see rural India. Therefore, it won't come as a surprise to see rural tourism contribute significantly to the nation's income. Economic imbalances can be remedied by developing a tourism industry in rural or underdeveloped areas.

5.7 Employment generation: Tourism is a non-smoking sector that offers more job opportunities than investing. The growth of the hotel transportation, handloom industry, handicrafts, etc. is encouraged by tourism. In tourism hotspots, a wide range of other industries are thriving as a result of infrastructure development. Therefore, the expansion of tourism creates both direct and indirect job opportunities. Tourism contributes 2.7% (5.2%

with indirect effect) to Rajasthan's gross state domestic product and 1.9% (7.2% with indirect effect) to state employment (Murdia&Rawal, 2017).

6. Findings and Suggestions

Findings:

1. The Dhundhar Circuit significantly boosts Rajasthan's GDP, contributing around 15% through tourism, which supports local businesses and infrastructure development.
2. Tourist numbers and revenue experienced fluctuations from 2017 to 2022, with a notable decline during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, a recovery began in 2021-2022.
3. Tourism creates numerous direct and indirect jobs in hospitality, transportation, and local businesses, enhancing economic stability in the Dhundhar region.
4. Tourism has led to the development of essential infrastructure such as roads, water systems, and public utilities, benefiting both tourists and residents.
5. The tourism industry supports the preservation of historical sites and monuments, with generated revenue funding maintenance and restoration efforts.
6. Increased tourist demand for local handicrafts provides substantial income for artisans and boosts the region's export economy.
7. Tourism significantly contributes to foreign exchange earnings, with an overall upward trend in foreign tourist arrivals.
8. Tourism promotes social, political, and economic progress in rural and underdeveloped areas, helping balance regional economic disparities.

Suggestions:

1. Enhance Marketing: Implement targeted digital marketing campaigns to attract a diverse range of domestic and international tourists.
2. Improve Infrastructure: Invest in transportation, public utilities, and tourist amenities to enhance the visitor experience and benefit local communities.
3. Promote Sustainability: Adopt sustainable tourism practices to protect natural and

cultural resources, including eco-friendly initiatives.

4. Support Local Businesses: Provide incentives for local businesses and artisans, promoting local handicrafts and products to tourists.
5. Strengthen Heritage Conservation: Increase funding for the maintenance and restoration of historical sites, managing tourist flow to protect fragile structures.
6. Diversify Attractions: Develop new tourist experiences, such as adventure tourism and cultural festivals, to diversify offerings in the Dhundhar Circuit.
7. Enhance Safety: Improve law enforcement, emergency services, and health facilities to ensure tourist safety and security.
8. Collaborate with Stakeholders: Engage government agencies, private sector players, and local communities in a cohesive tourism development strategy that aligns with local needs.

Implementing these suggestions will strengthen the Dhundhar Circuit's tourism sector, contributing to sustainable economic growth in Rajasthan.

7. Conclusions

The Dhundhar Tourism Circuit, covering Jaipur, Tonk, and Dausa, significantly impacts Rajasthan's economy. Contributing around 15% to the state's GDP, tourism drives local business growth, creates jobs, and fosters infrastructure development. Despite a sharp decline during the COVID-19 pandemic, the sector has shown resilience and recovery. Tourism supports the preservation of cultural heritage sites and boosts the handicraft industry, enhancing both domestic and foreign exchange earnings. Promoting regional development, tourism helps mitigate economic disparities in rural areas. To sustain this growth, targeted marketing, improved infrastructure, sustainable practices, and stakeholder collaboration are essential. Overall, the Dhundhar Tourism Circuit is crucial for Rajasthan's economic and social development.

References:

India: Employment in travel and tourism. (n.d.-a). Statista. Retrieved September 13, 2022, from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1094224/india-employment-in-travel-and-tourism->

sector/

India: Tourist arrivals in Rajasthan by type. (n.d.-b). Statista. Retrieved October 2, 2022, from <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1026993/india-tourist-arrivals-in-rajasthan-by-type/>

Government of Rajasthan, Tourism Statistics 2022-2023.

Indian Ministry of Tourism. (2022). *Economic Impact of Tourism in India*.

Sharma, R. (2021). Cultural Heritage and Tourism in Rajasthan. *Journal of Tourism Studies*, 15(3), 245-260.

Singh, A. (2020). Employment and Income Generation through Tourism in Rajasthan. *Economic Journal of India*, 12(1), 67-82.

World Tourism Organization. (2019). *Sustainable Tourism Practices: A Global Perspective*.

Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation. (2021). *Annual Report*.

Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry. (2020). *Rajasthan Tourism Industry Report*.

Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation. (2022). *India Tourism Statistics at a Glance 2022*.

Kumawat, B. C. (2021). *Recent Trends in Tourism Development in Rajasthan*. 8(6), 9.

Murdia, M., & Rawal, Y. (2017). *TOURISM & ECONOMY: DEVELOPMENT CHALLENGES IN RAJASTHAN*. 2, 5-8.

Rajasthan.pdf. (n.d.-a). Retrieved October 29, 2022, from <https://tourism.gov.in/sites/default/files/2020-04/rajasthan.pdf>

Rajasthan.pdf. (n.d.-b). Retrieved January 23, 2023, from <https://tourism.gov.in/sites/default/files/2020-04/rajasthan.pdf>

Team. (2020, February 20). Contribution of Tourism in Rajasthan economy. *RajRAS / RAS Exam Preparation*. <https://www.rajras.in/rajasthan-tourism-contribution-economy/>

Tourism-and-Hospitality-October-2021.pdf. (n.d.). Retrieved October 29, 2022, from <https://www.ibef.org/download/Tourism-and-Hospitality-October-2021.pdf>