

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE & MANAGEMENT

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# CONTENTS

Sr. No.	TITLE & NAME OF THE AUTHOR (S)	Page No.
1.	DOES EXECUTIVES COMPENSATION STIMULUS FIRM INNOVATION? THE CASE OF TAIWAN <i>DUNG PHUONG TONG &amp; HOA VAN NGUYEN</i>	1
2.	CORPORATE GOVERNANCE MECHANISMS IN INDIA: A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED FIRMS FROM TEN SECTORS <i>R. C. NAGARAJU &amp; DR. P. PARAMASHIVAIAH</i>	5
3.	HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT- RECRUITMENT REWARD AND RETENTION <i>SUMAIYA FATHIMA</i>	11
4.	INCREASING INFLUENCE OF PRIVATE LABEL BRANDS IN ORGANIZED RETAIL <i>SANDEEP NANDRAM DIVE &amp; DR. VIJAY AMBADE</i>	14
5.	COURTS' JURISDICTION FOR TAKING COGNIZANCE OF CRIMINAL COMPLAINTS FILED UNDER SECTION 142 OF NEGOTIABLE INSTRUMENTS ACT 1881 - THE NEGOTIABLE INSTRUMENTS (AMENDMENT) ACT 2015 – IT'S CAUSE AND CURE <i>DR. I. FRANCIS GNANASEKAR &amp; S. M. MOHAMED MISKEEN</i>	20
6.	A STUDY ON CONSUMER'S ATTITUDE TOWARDS ADVERTISEMENTS THROUGH SOCIAL MEDIA WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO FACEBOOK <i>DR. M. SUMATHY &amp; VIPIN.K.P</i>	24
7.	ILLEGAL ECONOMY Vs. SOCIALIST SOCIETY <i>DR. PRAMILA CHOUDHARY</i>	28
8.	RISK AND RETURN ANALYSIS OF SELECT PSBs <i>K.V.RAMESH &amp; DR. A. SUDHAKAR</i>	33
9.	INFLUENCE OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES ON ORGANISATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOUR <i>SEEMI AZAM &amp; RASHMI KUMAR</i>	45
10.	WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN INDIA THROUGH CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: POLICIES & CHALLENGES: A CASE STUDY OF NTPC LTD. <i>DR. AJAY AGRAWAL, DR. AMITABH PANDE &amp; POORVA PANDE SHARMA</i>	50
11.	CONSUMERS' COGNIZANCE TOWARDS THE INDIAN POSTAL PRODUCTS AND SERVICES: A STUDY REPORT OF NORTH GOA DISTRICT <i>DR. GAJANAN MADIWAL</i>	53
12.	THE YOUNG SAUDI EMPLOYEE AND THE CURRENT LABOR MARKET DYNAMICS OF SAUDI ARABIA: A PARADIGM SHIFT <i>DR. DEEPANJANA VARSHNEY</i>	56
13.	MOBILE BANKING IN THE PRESENT SCENARIO <i>SEBIN GEORGE</i>	61
14.	A STUDY ON INVESTORS' SATISFACTION TOWARDS MUTUAL FUNDS RETURNS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO CHITTOOR DISTRICT <i>DR. U. RAGHAVENDRA PRASAD</i>	64
15.	IMPACT OF GLOBALIZATION ON SELECTION PROCEDURE AND TRAINING PROGRAMMES IN BANKING SECTOR <i>ANAND T. DESHPANDE</i>	68
16.	RISK ATTITUDE: AN INVESTIGATION INTO RELATIONSHIP WITH PERSONALITY TYPE <i>AMIT KAPOOR</i>	73
17.	A STUDY ON CUSTOMER SATISFACTION OF HONDA ACTIVA AMONG WOMEN WITH REFERENCE TO KONNI TALUK, KERALA <i>SWATHY. P</i>	76
18.	THE FAVOURABLE DATA FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF M-GOVERNANCE <i>BASAVARAJ NAGESH KADAMUDIMATHA</i>	80
19.	ROLE OF MICRO CREDIT PROGRAMME IN THE FINANCIAL AND SOCIAL EMPOWERMENT OF WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS <i>SANTHOSH KUMAR.K</i>	84
20.	IMPACT OF NATURAL DISASTER ON TOURISM IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR: A CASE STUDY OF FLOOD 2014 <i>NASEER AHMAD MAGRAY</i>	88
	<b>REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK &amp; DISCLAIMER</b>	<b>91</b>

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**IMPACT OF NATURAL DISASTER ON TOURISM IN JAMMU AND KASHMIR: A CASE STUDY OF FLOOD 2014**

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**STUDENT (MASTERS IN TOURISM MANAGEMENT)**  
**IGNOU**  
**SRINAGAR**

**ABSTRACT**

*Jammu & Kashmir is northern part of India and is known as "Paradise on Earth" and "Switzerland of the east" due to its mesmerizing beauty and its potential for becoming one of the best tourism destination in the world, tourism has always been considering an economic bonanza for the state, but owing to a unique geo political and geographical setting, this part of world has long history of devastating natural disasters, leads to loss of precious life & property and its vulnerability is increasing. Natural disasters like Volcano, floods, cloud burst, landslide, drought, avalanches etc. are part of our life, it is a law of nature and we do not have total control on them, nether we can predict actual time & place of its occurrence. The objective of this research paper was to study the impact of natural disaster on J&K tourism sector and its future prospective.*

**KEYWORDS**

J&K, disaster, flood, nature, impact.

**TOURISM IN J&K**

**T**ourism is phenomenon involving the activities of persons traveling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes. Tourism, thus, refers to all activities of visitors, including both "tourists (overnight visitors)" and "same-day visitors" (W.T.O, 1994).

Tourism industry is one of the fastest growing industries in the world and is considered as tool for economic development, increasing employment opportunities, and is a main source of bringing foreign exchange in the region. International tourism currently accounts for 9% of global Gross domestic product GDP, 30% of services exports and 1 in every 11 jobs (UNWTO 2016). Tourism is the most vibrant tertiary activity and a multi-billion-dollar service industry in Jammu and Kashmir and right vehicle for developing the state's economy. It has employed a large number of people, both skilled and unskilled. Hotels, travel agency, craft industry, transport including airlines benefit a lot from this industry. Jammu and Kashmir is one of the popular tourist destinations in world for delighting backwaters, hill stations, trekking trail, snowy mountains, meadows of flowers, lakes, garden orchards, monuments, and landscape make J&K a beautiful tourist destination, for it the great Mughal emperor Jahangir rightly said it as 'Paradise on Earth. Jammu & Kashmir valley offers various categories of tourism. These include adventure tourism, Wildlife Tourism, Winter Tourism, Eco-Tourism, Rural Tourism, Cultural Tourism and Heritage, religious tourism, etc. Year 2103 was boom for tourism sector in J&K, the tourism sector earns a revenue generation of more than Rs. 3,000 crores provide employment to about 5 lakh people in J&K. (MSME, J&K Report, 2013).

**TABLE 1: TOURIST ARRIVALS DURING THE LAST 4 YEARS IN J & K**

Year	Kashmir Valley		Jammu	Ladakh	Total
	Domestic/Foreign	Amarnath Yatra	MataVisnu Deviji Yatra's	Domestic/Foreign	
2012	621000	621000	10394000	178750	12502515
2013	1171130	353969	9287871	137650	10950620
2014	1167618	372909	7803193	181301	9525021
2015	737815	352000	7700000	190000	927815

(Economic Survey 2014-15, Govt. of J&K/department of Tourism J&K)

**NATURAL DISASTER**

*A disaster refers to a catastrophe, mishap, calamity or grave occurrence from natural or manmade causes, which is beyond the coping capacity of the effected community (disaster management Act, 2005). A natural disaster is an event with a natural, as opposed to human, cause that results in large-scale loss of life or damage to property. It could be related to weather, geology, biology or even factors outside the Earth. Examples are earthquakes, landslides, droughts and flooding. Disease epidemics are sometimes considered natural disasters, but may be put into a different category. In some cases, natural and human factors may combine to produce a disaster.*

**TOURISM INDUSTRY & NATURAL DISASTER**

Tourism has always been regarded as the source that brings in foreign exchange, employment generation, new business opportunities and economic development for a region, but tourism is highly vulnerable to external, non-controllable events. Ecological balances disturbed by human activities in most of the cases may results in disastrous event or exacerbate the natural disaster. From last decades many new destinations have been explored and open for tourist, it is a positive thing for the regional development of that area, but it also increases the impact of natural disaster on that area, e.g. deforestation for construction, encroachment on steep hill slopes are anthropogenic activities resulted in landslides during heavy rainfall, uncontrolled, unscientific housing construction on hill or on river bank often washed away by the flash floods. Such things have been neglected by destination managers and tourism planners. The impacts of natural disaster have been more proactive from last decade due to changing weather pattern, globalization, urbanization & lack of mitigation and institutional weaknesses. According to a 2004 report by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), about 75 percent of the world's population was affected at least once by natural disasters during the 20 year period from 1980 to 2000. Tourism industry is such, whose success is entirely dependent on the ability of people to travel, disaster whether natural or manmade have a clear impact on this industry globally, like

- The earthquake in Nepal in 2015 led to 80% cancellations of hotel reservations in the months that followed, and an estimated 45,000 tourists left the country. (economic times 5-2015)
- During the tsunami, the Car Nicobar Islands (India) were the worst hit. Many islands have been washed away and some like the Trinket have been split into two. This has completely disrupted tourism and today, there is nothing in these areas.

There is no single measure of a disaster that can capture the full effect of a disaster. A common measure is the number of people killed or affected or how it has affected socio- economically etc. We cannot stop disaster but we can keep a disaster plan ready to mitigate its effects on that particular destination or area.

**OBJECTIVES/AREA OF RESEARCH**

1. To study J&K state as vulnerable to Natural disasters.
2. To examine the impact of flood 2014 on tourism sector in Jammu & Kashmir.
3. To provide some feasible suggestions that may prove valuable for the mitigating the effect of natural disaster on tourism in J&K.



**MATERIAL AND METHODS**

The study is based secondary data, sources of data was collected from books, journal, survey reports, dailies, brochures, booklets, data records from various state institutions viz., central and state departments of tourism and disaster management, tourism development corporations, and Non-Government Organizations, Jammu and Kashmir Tourism Development Corporation and State Disaster Management Authority, Directorate of Tourism, Annual Economic survey of J&K, United nations world Tourism organization, International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and other research published in national and international journals.

**VULNERABILITY OF J&K STATE TO NATURAL DISASTERS**

Area of study : Jammu & Kashmir  
 Area : 222,236 km<sup>2</sup>  
 Founded : October 26, 1947  
 Population : 12.55 million (2011)  
 Capitals : Jammu (Winter), Srinagar (Summer)

The state of Jammu and Kashmir has three distinct regions, viz, Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. All the three regions have immense potential for tourism from both domestic as well as international tourists. While mountainous landscape of Kashmir valley has attracted tourists for centuries across the globe. Tourism in Kashmir depends greatly on the natural resources that this place has to offer for economic profitability. Tourism provides good sustenance to the local population and revenue to the State exchequer. The visits from domestic and international tourists provide a valuable source of earning. Visitors spending generate income for both public and private sectors besides effecting wages and employment opportunities.

The J&k sate has a vast history of natural disasters like earthquakes, floods, fires, droughts, avalanches and landslides, cloud burst and accidents, etc. (table 2). Due to its extreme weather conditions, undeveloped economy, and poor infrastructure & modes of communication, the State has suffered a lot on account lost of property & lives of natural disasters. The Kashmir valley located in North-western Himalayas lies between the Pir-Panjal and the Zaskar thrusts, making it vulnerable to earthquakes, landslides and also to floods. Most parts of the Kashmir Valley (11% of the area of the state) covering the districts of Srinagar, Ganderbal, Baramulla, Kupwara, Bandipora, Budgam, Anantnag, Pulwama, Doda, Ramban, Kishtwar come under zeismic Zone V, where around 50% of the population of the State lives. Rest of the State including whole of Ladakh region and Jammu Division (90%of the total area of the state) are under the Seismic Zone IV.(NIDM,2015, GOI)

**TABLE 2: HISTORY OF NATURAL DISASTERS IN J&K**

Type of natural disaster	Year	Area hit	Effects
Earth quake	2082-2041 B.C	Sandimatnagar	submerged the whole city into lake(wular lake)
Flood	879 Ad	Baramulla	Half of valley submerged,lost of property &lives
Earth quake	1873	Baramulla	10,000 houses were destroyed, Death of 3,400 human lives and 40,000 cattle
Flood	1893	Valley	25,426 acres of crops were submerged, 2,225 houses were wrecked and 329 cattle killed."
Flood	1903	Srinagar	7000 houses were taken away
Snow Blizzard	2015	Waltengu Nad (Kulgam)	128 families,death of 175 lives
Earthquake(7.6)	2005	Uri	993 dath,418 injuries,23,782 houses damaged
Cloud burst	2010	Leh	250 death, loss of property and landslides
Earth quake	2015	J&K	Damage to property

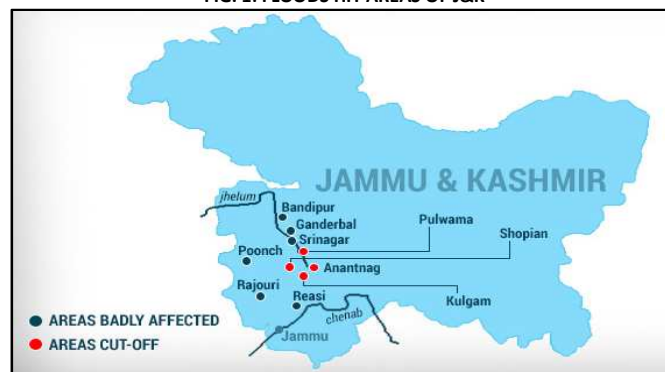
(Anees.S, 2007, Lawrence S.W 1895, NIDM JK portal)

The natural disaster can hit the tourism sector badly, it can decrease the number of tourists visiting the destination or area, it can devastate or damage the natural environment, the infrastructure, roads and accommodation sector of the destination, which means that most tourist would choose not to visit the particular area /destination, thus budget kept or planning for development process is now utilized in reconstruction purposes for that area/destination.

**CASE STUDY OF FLOODS OF 2014**

Continuous rains from 1<sup>st</sup> Sep to 6<sup>th</sup> September cause heavy flood in some parts of Jammu and most parts of Kashmir. The main rivers of J&K Chenab, sindh, jehlam, lidder, along with their tributaries where flowing above danger line and Jehlam river in Srinagar was flowing 22.4 feet which was 4.40 feet above danger mark, and have starting embankments and submerged hospitals, schools, resident building, and all infrastructure. The flood water was carrying a sediment load, the force swept away the bridges low lying areas of Kashmir valley, especially Awantipora, Srinagar, Sonawari, Bemina, and Qammarwari, etc. all where under flood water. In Jammu flash flood washed away 400 houses, landslides triggered by heavy rainfall, all mode of transport system "railway, airlines, and roadways was stopped,(Fig.1). It is a combination of an intense and unprecedented rainfall event combined with mismanagement (of drainage) and unplanned urbanization and lack of preparedness," (Sunita Narain, CSE director general) causes flood in J&K.

**FIG. 1: FLOODS HIT AREAS OF J&K**



More than 700 villages, Srinagar city got submerged due to flood water. About 300 persons lost their lives in floods. 53,082 persons were injured/ sick, 226,000 were vacuated, 6.48 lakh hectares of agricultural/ horticultural land got affected. About 3 lakh houses got fully or partially damaged. Govt. of J&K assessed the damages at Rs 43959.56 crore (Economic survey 2014-15, J&K)

**Impact of flood 2014 on Tourism sector in Kashmir**

- Industry sources said airlines and hotel cancellations are 100% till the end of October 2014.
- Overall Tourism infrastructure losses was 1700 crore.
- Hotel has suffered losses of 200 crores.
- Yatra.com cancels 70 % of air & hotel booking to Kashmir.

- Foreign tourist arrival (FTA's) dropped from 78802 in 2013 to 60845 in 2014 23 % (economic survey 2015J&K).
- Leisure travel firm TUI has seen a 75% drop in new bookings for Kashmir compared with the same period last year.
- 100 house boats in Dal & Nagin lake are affected and some of them were totally submerged in flood.
- The entire infrastructure at TRC was badly affected by flood.
- GSDP of J&K State is registering a negative growth of -1.57% during the year 2014-15 as compared to 5.63% during 2013-14 (economic survey 2015J&K).
- 200 vehicles of state road transport Corporation got inundated.

### CAUSES OF FLOOD 2014 IN J&K

- Unprecedented rainfall/climate change: "unseasonal and extreme rainfall" and at many places as it rained more than 200-mm in 24 hours - 400 per cent more than the monthly average causes floods in J&K.
- No dams: State has no permit to construct dams under the Indus water treaty. Dams could have hold large quantity of water.
- Lake of technology: The center water commission or Metrological department of J&K failed to give forecast of heavy rainfall or possibility of flood. Early warning could have save precious lives and lesser damage to property.
- Lake of communication: The department of irrigation & flood control did not monitor or maintain embankment when they were breached especially in district Srinagar.
- Encroachment of Riverbeds, lakes and flood channels of valley: along with encroachment of riverbeds lakes and flood channels, indiscriminate construction on marches, wetlands and other water bodies acerbated the disaster as they act as sponge, natural drainage system has collapse.

### CONCLUSION/SUGGESTIONS

Tourism in J&k is a tool for economic development and employment generation we cannot think J&K without tourism but, J&K state is proven to natural disasters, we have witnessed devastating disasters in past and such things will happen in further. The study reveals that the occurrence of natural disaster like flood & earthquake in J&K is increasing, we cannot stop such things but their impact on the tourism, socio-economy and on the people can be reduced by undertaking proper mitigation plans and strategies. Time has come when all the stockholders of tourism industry in J&k should come in front and develop mechanisms to manage disasters at the grass-root level through proper planning & execute activities related to disaster risk reduction and management, so to stop natural hazard from becoming disaster, and laid foundation for the development of tourism sector in this paradise of world.

Some of Suggestions that may be successful in mitigating the impact of natural disaster on J&K tourism are:

- The department of tourism should frame a disaster cycle of preparedness, response, reconstruction and mitigation, so to ensure safety of tourists in valley.
- Early warning regarding any disaster by nodal agencies likes Indian meteorological department (IMD), Snow and avalanches study establishment (SASE), etc. to mitigate the impact of disaster.
- Construction of infrastructure and superstructure like hotel or tourist building, bridges, parks etc should be strictly enforced as per geological & civil engineering guidelines, so that it should have least impact of disaster like flood, earthquake or fire.
- There should be a local train group/agency private, government or NGO which will response in the emergency phase by rescuing those affected, providing first aid, know evacuation routes and communicating for help, before help from outside is provided.
- Press plays an important role in promotion & development of state tourism, they should stop negative stories about J&K tourism sector, instead should focus on telecasting /writing, post recovery developments in tourism sector.

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