

Effect of Covid-19 on the Tourism Industry of Bangladesh: A Qualitative Study on Kuakata Sea Beach

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Abstract

We must recommend or support the "tourism sector" because it allows us to unwind, enjoy ourselves, be refreshed, and learn new things. This paper aims to examine the Effect of COVID-19 on Bangladesh's tourism industry before and after COVID-19. This is a qualitative study. The paper is based on primary data where we went to root-level people, took their own opinions, and focused on identifying how COVID-19 has affected tour operator organizations (hotels, motels, and restaurants), floating businessmen and tourists at Kuakata. We tried to find out the adjustment strategy of tour operator organizations to overcome the problematic situation the existing conditions of tourism sectors based on consumers' current situation after COVID-19. Non-probability sampling method has been used to choose the sample through convenience sampling and judgment sampling. To collect data face-to-face and telephone in-depth interviews were used. Qualitative content analysis was used for analyzing data. This paper's findings showed that before COVID-19 the traffic of tourists at residential hotels, motels, and restaurants was significant. During the pandemic time, all the activities of tour operators were locked. This paper also found that after COVID-19 the number of tourists increased for Payra Bridge and Padma Bridge which is a positive side. After COVID-19, everyone moves to maintain a hygienic way, but tourists don't enjoy their time because the side roads and other visitable areas like Lal Kakrar Deep, Fatrar Chor, Jhau Bon, Shutkipolli, Narikel Bagan, etc. haven't proper transportation system. The findings of the paper will play an important role theoretically and practically.

Keywords: COVID-19, tourism industry, tourists, qualitative study.

Introduction

Background

Every nation aspires to attain economic freedom, solvency, and rapid economic growth. So, the policy to achieve economic solvency does not exclude our sectors related to tourism. When considering our existence and way of living in the world, we must suggest the "Tourism sector". In addition to this, tourism encourages cultural awareness, aids in the preservation of regional culture and traditions, and protects historic sites. Modern social

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arrangements gave rise to tourism, which first appeared in Western Europe in the 17th century (Walton, 2023). In Bangladesh, we can see many tourist areas among them one of the major parts is the southern part of Barishal. Here we see the sea beach which is renowned as “Sagor Konna”. The southern point of Bangladesh has a seaside community called Kuakata. Kuakata, which is part of the Patuakhali District, is located 320 kilometers (200 miles) south of Dhaka and 70 kilometers (43 miles) away from the district's administrative center. It boasts a large sandy beach. 30 kilometers (19 mi) long and 6 kilometers (3.7 mi) wide describe Kuakata Beach (Wikipedia, Tourism in Bangladesh, 2023).

The COVID-19 pandemic has posed a challenge to the global tourism industry, which has taken one of the heaviest knocks. Covid-19 has had a tremendous impact on the travel and tourism industry, which has had a substantial impact on Bangladesh. After covid-19 we see huge changes positively and negatively. Immediately after COVID-19 conditions in tourism areas were vulnerable. Thus, this study focuses on the effect of Covid-19 on the Tourism Industry. Most of the scholars showed their paper results based on secondary data but the authors went to root-level people and took their personal opinions. This study used qualitative data to reach at the findings. It is a strength that fulfills the literature gap. Most of the scholars showed customer satisfaction, investment, asset, blue economy, and reconciliations strategy in the tourism sector but this paper focused on the impact of COVID-19 on tour operator organizations, socio-economic conditions of Kuakata tourism areas people, and conditions of tourists. This paper also tries to fill the gap by showing the time of COVID-19 and the post-COVID-19 situation.

Research Question

Research questions can be from main objectives basis and those are:

1. What is the impact of COVID-19 on tour operator organizations at Kuakata?
2. What is the impact of COVID-19 on the socio-economic condition at Kuakata local areas' floating people?
3. What is the impact of COVID-19 on the tourist in Kuakata destination areas?
4. What is the reconciliation strategy of tour operator organizations?
5. What about the consumers' current situation after COVID- 19 ?

Objectives

The main objectives of the study are:

1. To identify how COVID-19 has affected tour operator organizations at Kuakata.
2. To identify the Impact of COVID-19 on floating businessmen of local areas at Kuakata.
3. To know the impact of COVID-19 on the tourists at Kuakata destination areas.
4. To find out the adjustment strategy of tour operator organizations to overcome the problematic situation after COVID-19.
5. To find out the existing conditions of tourism sectors based on consumers' current situation after COVID-19.

Literature review

Tourism Industry

Tourism is a social, cultural, and economic phenomenon that entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes (Glossary of tourism terms, 2023). By bringing in a variety of economic benefits and values as well as aiding in the development of a nation's brand value, image, and identity, tourism greatly contributes to the overall growth and development of a nation. Dhaka, Sylhet, Chittagong, Cox's Bazar, Khulna, and Barishal are the major areas to attract tourists in Bangladesh, the tourism sector in Bangladesh has mostly evolved to focus on these areas (Horaira, 2021). Now, we see Kuakata Sea Beach in Barishal, where huge tourists come from different areas to enjoy their free and leisure time. Here tourists easily can see both sunrise and sunset which is not possible in another places of Bangladesh.

Covid-19 and Tourism

Globally, 6,955,141 deaths and 769,774,646 confirmed cases of COVID-19 have been reported to WHO as of 6:30 p.m. CEST on August 16, 2023. 13,498,472,794 vaccine doses have been administered as of 12 August 2023 (World Health Organization, 2023). In Bangladesh, there have been 2,045,077 confirmed cases of COVID-19 with 29,476 fatalities reported to WHO between 3 January 2020 and 6:30 pm CEST on 16 August 2023. A total of 360,177,584 doses of vaccine have been given as of June 24, 2023 (World Health Organization, 2023). Previous research has demonstrated an unfavorable correlation between the tourism sector and the coronavirus outbreak (Horaira, 2021). The tourism sector of Bangladesh and the entire world will experience a major catastrophe, and this dire condition will last until the COVID-19 situation returns to normal. To resolve this issue, the entire tourism industry as well as the decision-makers need to practice good management and planning to resume their activities (Hassan, 2020).

Table 1: Contribution of Tourism 2020- 2022

Country name	Travel and Tourism contribution 2019	Travel and Tourism Contribution 2020	Travel and Tourism contribution 2021	Travel and Tourism Contribution 2022
Bangladesh	4.4%	3.0%	3.02%	7.76%
India	7%	4.3%	5.8%	12%
Nepal	7.9%	4.4%	5.4%	11%
Sri Lanka	4.28%	0.8%	5.3%	10.3%
Bhutan	4.7%	3.3%	4.62%	7.6%
Maldives	9.8%	8%	6.9%	12.3%
Pakistan	7.2%	2.7%	2.3%	6.14%

Source: (Statista, Knoema, World Travel and Tourism Council Travel, Trading Economic, Statisticammaldives. Gov Company).

From this table, we can easily notice that in most of the countries in 2019, the contribution of the tourism sector was high but for COVID-19 it gradually went down in 2020-2021. This huge loss day by day was overcome and in 2022, contributions of the tourism sector were higher than before COVID-19.

Review of the Past Literature

The paper confirmed that throughout the outbreak the First COVID-19 wave was between January and March, while demand for air travel, tourism, and hotel accommodations plummeted by 60 to 80 percent. The impact has been severe, so government-enforced national social distancing measures to stop the transmission of illness. (Koh, Wee, & Chian, 2021).

Here discussed to manage the post-COVID-19 crisis in the tourism and hospitality sectors, this study intends to provide efficient and long-lasting methods. According to this survey, the most important variables influencing travel behavior are travel risk management, service delivery systems, hygiene, and safety (Deb, Kumar, Ahmed, & Saud, 2022).

The study showed unfavorable aspects of travel, as a result, COVID-19 has hurt China's tourism sector. The country's crisis management stakeholders must develop measures to stop the spread of COVID-19 (Waleed, et al., 2022).

Here examined in this study to enhance the social and economic circumstances first have to identify potential opportunities to build a strong blue nation, it is making significant investments in the maritime and tourist industries. The blue economy sectors in Pakistan have enormous potential, but in order to fully harness all of these resources, it is necessary to develop benevolent policies and make large investments. Bangladesh is making commendable efforts in this tourism sector after covid-19 (Faran & Ejaz, 2022).

Here showed tourism sector economy vibrant and tourism is the main weapon to combat economic crisis in the post-COVID-19 world. Various research and statistics have revealed that post-Covid-19 up to 2022 people will go for outings and it will give momentum and already indicate that domestic tourism has gained momentum as well as tourism areas are the most attractive places (Sufian & Parvez, 2020).

The current study's findings might not have been as generalizable in the past due to the absence of control variables on the link between all predecessors, destination revisit intentions, and all of the data acquired from domestic visitors. This means that in order to make more generalizations study is required to confirm these findings using a range of samples (Hossain, Abul, Hossain, Sarmin, & Nuruzzaman, 2022).

Empirically studied to uncover the true mechanism of tourism development and poverty alleviation for the Bangladeshi regions of Cox's Bazar, Rangamati, and Kuakata. Determining the effect of pro-poor tourism and reducing poverty is the primary goal of the current study (Ara, Hossain, & Sardar, 2020).

This study might prompt a reexamination of problems about tourist sites. Government and non-government organizations, public institutions, the Bangladesh Tourism Board and the Bangladesh Planning Commission, politicians, and even scholars might utilize the study's findings to inspire them to visit particular tourist destinations in Bangladesh again (Islam, Mazumder, & Hossain, 2022).

Methodology

Research Design and Research Area

This study includes qualitative research method with non-numerical data. The main theme of this study is to describe the effect of COVID-19 in Bangladesh's tourism industry especially in Kuakata. Kuakata has been selected as the research area because it is a suitable place for investigating the effect of COVID-19 on Bangladesh's tourism industry.

Sampling and Sample Size

The population of Kuakata stands for 5,270 among them male was 2,668 (50.6%) and the female was 2,602 (49.4%) (Cityfacts, 2015). Non-probability sampling method has been chosen to collect data. Here convenience sampling and judgmental sampling were used for collecting data. The sample size of this research paper is 50. The period of data collection was from June, 2023 to mid-August, 2023.

Method of Data Collection and Analysis

Non-numerical primary data were collected through personal face-to-face and telephone interviews through semi-structured open-ended questionnaires. Data were collected from the Kuakata tour operator organizations (hotel, motel, restaurant, and other business people) and especially local areas' floating people. All of the respondents took an average of 5-10 minutes to complete their interviews. So, the researchers went to root-level respondents, asked open-ended questions, and recorded their own opinions in Bangla, and converted their own Bangla interviews into English. For qualitative data analysis, content analysis method was used. Secondary data were collected from different websites, previous research papers, journals, articles and thesis papers. For rapport building and collecting data, the English language was used in the questionnaire.

Data analysis

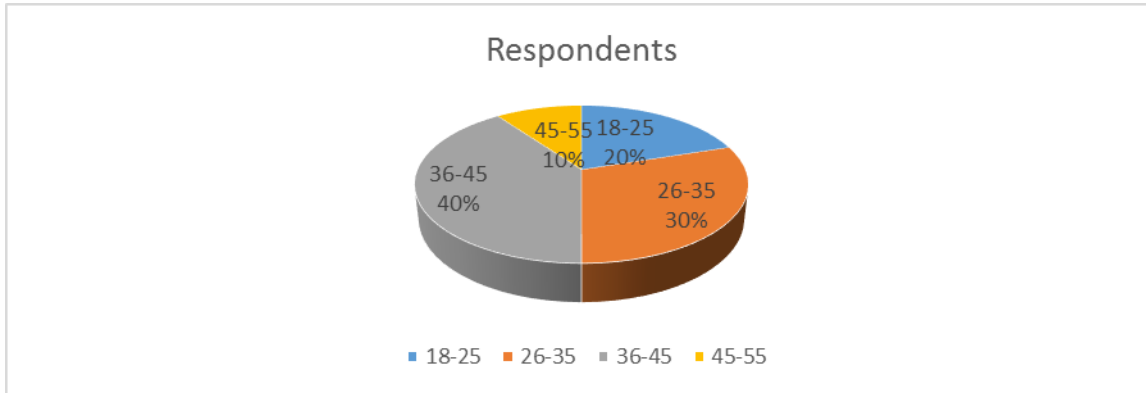
Demographic Information of the Tour Operators (n=10)

Table 2: Age of the respondents

Age	Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
18-25	2	20%	20%
26-35	3	30%	50%
36-45	4	40%	90%
45-55	1	10%	100%

Source: Field data collection, 2023

Figure 1: Age of the respondents



Source: Field data collection, 2023

Gender of the respondents

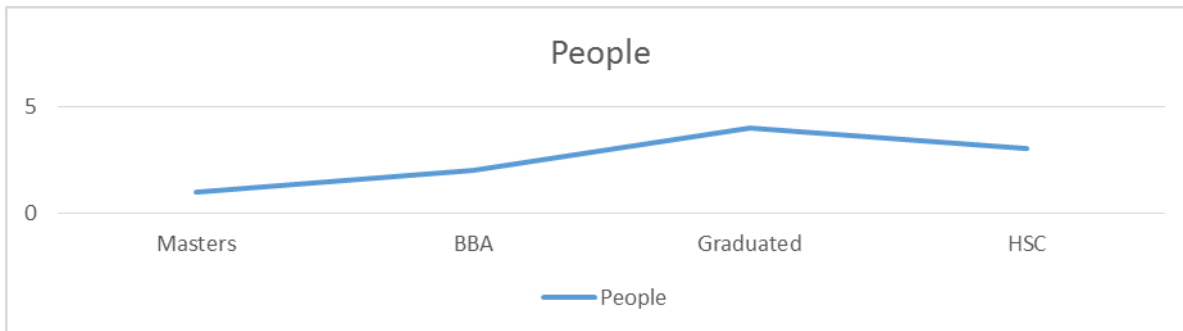
The sample size and respondents was 10 and all of the respondents were male according to their gender.

Table 3: Educational qualification of the respondents

Education	Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Masters	1	10%	10%
BBA	2	20%	30%
Graduation	4	40%	70%
HSC	3	30%	100%

Source: Field data collection, 2023

Figure 2: Educational qualification of the respondents



Source: Field data collection, 2023

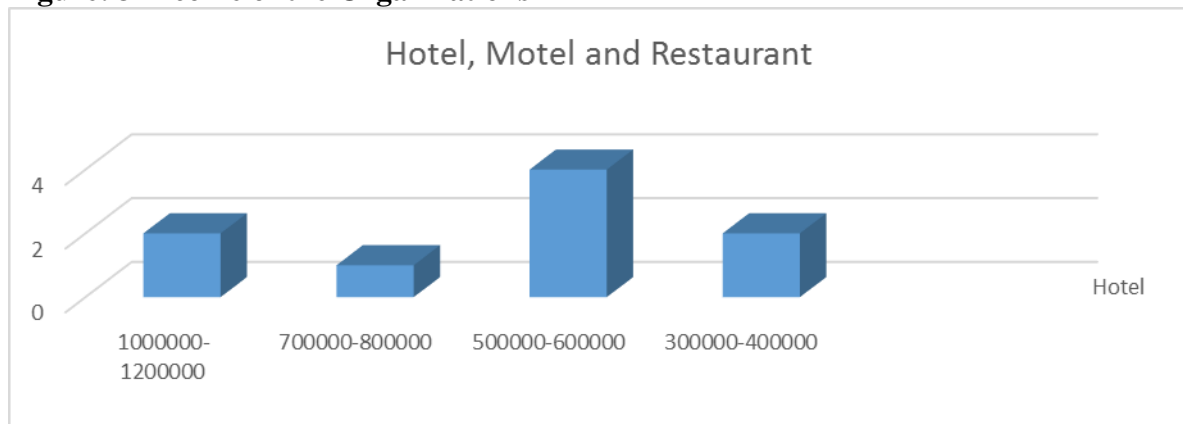
Occupation of the respondents

The sample size was 10 and all of the respondents were the managers of Hotels, Motels and Restaurants.

Table 4. : Income of the Organizations:

Organizations' Income	Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
1000000-1200000	2	20%	20%
700000-800000	2	20%	40%
500000-600000	4	40%	80%
300000-400000	2	20%	100%

Source: Field data collection, 2023

Figure: 3 Income of the Organizations

Source: Field data collection, 2023

Qualitative Data Analysis of the Tour Operators

I. Tourist's traffic at residential hotels Before Covid-19

Among 10 respondents, 3 respondents said that the number of tourists was average, 2 of them said good and 2 said very high. 3 respondents said that most of the tourists visit Kuakata in the seasonal period especially in last of winter season and during spring.

II. The conditions of hotel business during Covid-19

All of the respondents said that the conditions of hotel businesses were as poor as there were lock down everywhere and they couldn't open their hotels, motels and restaurants as they were under govt. restriction and the number of tourists were a big 0.

III. Increasing\decreasing the number of tourists and the causes behind it after Covid-19

According to their personal interviews, 3 of them said immediate after covid-19 the number of tourists was less because of the poor transportation system. 7 of them said that the number of tourists increased for the betterment of transportation, the construction of Padma Bridge, and tourists got scope or opportunity to spend free time as well as to get rid of fumble situation.

IV. Time duration of tourists staying at residential hotels and motels

1 respondents said that the tourists stay at their hotels at an average of 3 days, 4 of them said 2 days, and the other 5 said 1 day.

V. Reasons behind spending time at present at hotels than at the time of Covid-19

6 of them said that after covid-19, The Padma Bridge has been opened for vehicles and the transportation facility has opened a huge opportunity for tourists, especially government employees, and students can easily visit Kuakata more than before. 3 of them said that for increasing familiarity, more interest, recreation, and entertainment opportunity consuming less time they can come to Kuakata by bus. 1 of them said after covid-19, the tourists stay there less time for as they cannot bear more rent than before covid-19.

VI. Increasing hotel rent a little than before

9 respondents said that they have increased the rent of their residential hotels than before Covid-19 and 1 of them strongly said that they have not increased the rent of their residential hotels.

VII. The reason for increasing rents

7 of them said that they have increased their hotel rents because of price hikes, increasing rates of daily necessary things, huge increases in electricity bills, and employees' salaries. Another opinion of the respondents was that the employees of their hotels have not been given any subsidies from the government or any NGOs.

VIII. The impacts of increasing the rents affected in reducing the number of tourists at hotels

3 of them said that the number of tourists in their hotel have increased instead of reducing. 7 of them said that the tourists come to their hotel at an average and some tourists don't look at their money, they only focus on entertainment.

IX. Lay off workers/employees for reducing the number of tourists during Covid-19

1 of them said that they did not need to turn out their employees and the owner of the hotels paid their salaries due time. 2 of them said that at the time of covid-19, they were given vacation and they were ensured that after Covid-19 they could easily join the job again without any conditions. 7 of them replied in the affirmative and said that had no way because they could not pay their salaries due time as they had no income because of the lockdown. So, they had to turn out some of their employees.

X. Incentives/subsidies from GOs or NGOs during/after Covid-19 to continue their business

All respondents said that they did not get any help from GOs or NGOs.

XI. The steps should be taken to increase the number of tourists

1 of them said that the authority has to give more security, increase the beauty of spectacular sights, need some five-star, seven-star hotels, need to develop the service system, need to

develop the environment for making more attractive for both local and international tourists. 7 of them said that the owner of restaurants needs to develop their food quality, ensure fair food prices, the behaviors of the waiters should be more elegant and acceptable, road construction should be constructed, and the beach needs to be attractive, to be protected from fragmentation or breaking. 2 of them said that the authority needs to protect the beach from pollution, has to show the beach to the people as well as to encourage the tourists.

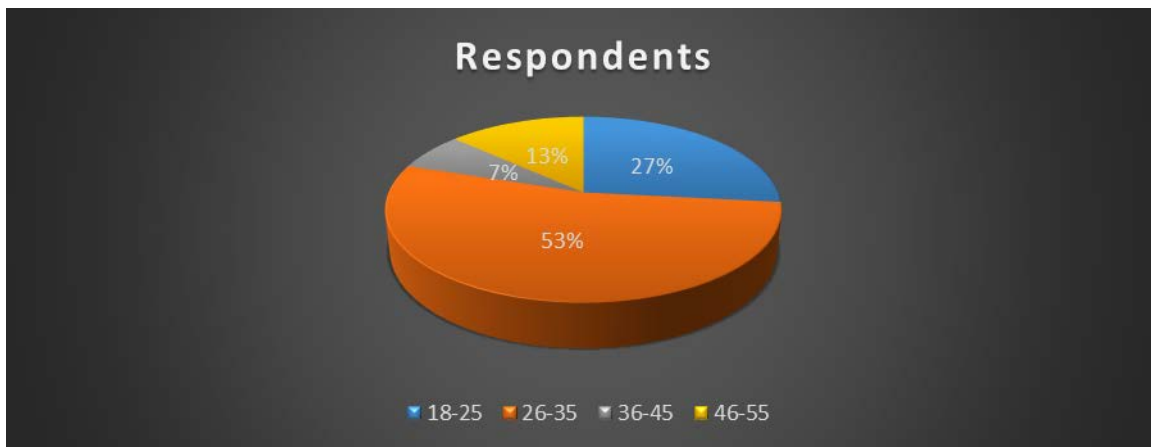
Demographic information of the Floating Businessmen (n= 15)

Table 5 Age of the respondents

Age	Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
18-25	4	26.67%	26.67%
26-35	8	53.33%	80%
36-45	1	6.67%	86.67%
46-55	2	13.33%	100%

Source: Field data collection, 2023

Figure 4. Age of the respondents



Source: Field data collection, 2023

Gender of the respondents

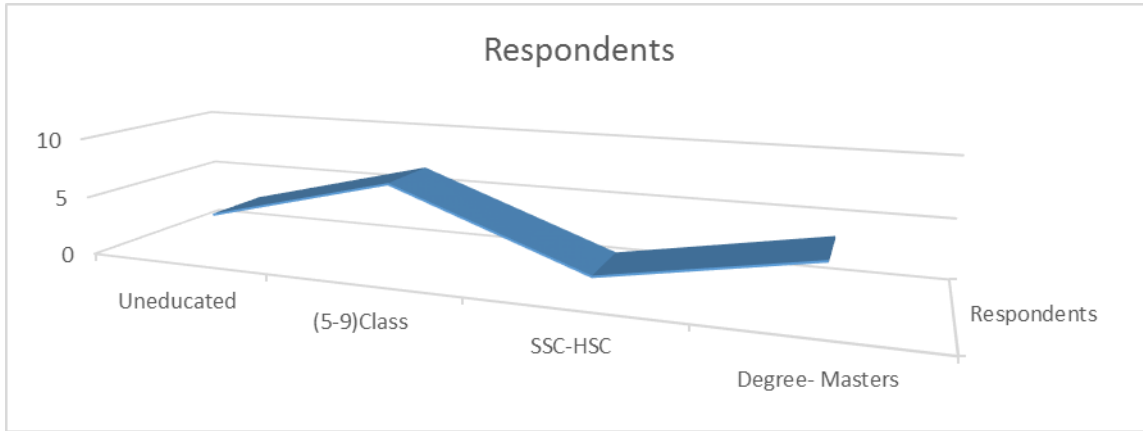
The sample size was 15 and all of the respondents were male.

Table 6 Educational qualification of the respondents

Education	Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Uneducated	3	20%	20%
(5-9)Class	7	46.67%	66.67%
SSC-HSC	1	6.65%	73.33%
Degree- Masters	4	26.67%	100%

Source: Field data collection, 2023

Figure 5: Educational qualification of the respondents



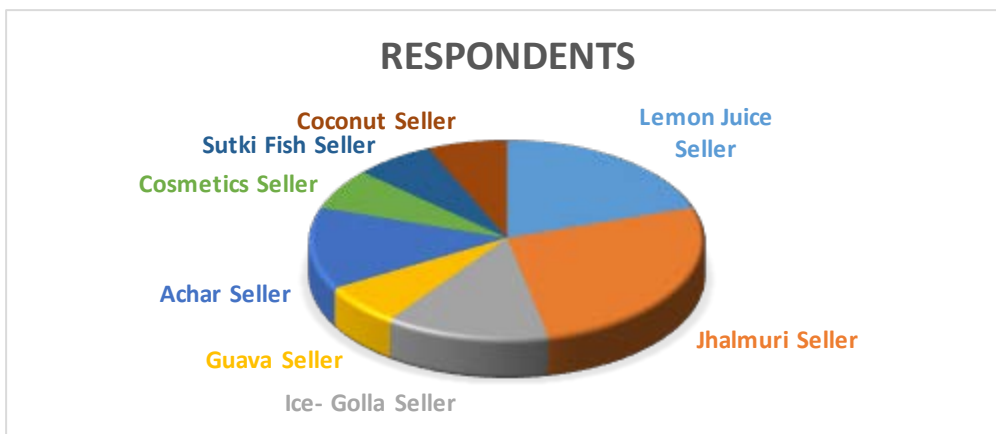
Source: Field data collection, 2023

Table 7: Profession of the respondents

Profession	Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Lemon Juice Seller	3	20%	20%
Jhalmuri Seller	4	26.66%	46.66%
Ice- Golla Seller	2	13.33%	59.99%
Guava Seller	1	6.67%	66.66%
Achar Seller	2	13.33%	79.99%
Cosmetics Seller	1	6.67%	86.66%
Sutki Fish Seller	1	6.67%	93.33%
Coconut Seller	1	6.67%	100%

Source: Field data collection, 2023

Figure 6: Profession of the respondents



Source: Field data collection, 2023

Table 8: Income of the respondents

Daily Income	Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
5001-6000	2	13.33%	13.33%
2001-3000	2	13.33%	26.66%
1001-2000	4	26.67%	53.33%
500-1000	7	46.67%	100%

Source: Field data collection, 2023

Figure: 7 Income of the respondents

Source: Field data collection, 2023

Qualitative Data Analysis of the Floating Businessmen

I. Did you stay at Kuakata during Covid-19?

Here sample size was 15. 13 of them said that they stayed there during Covid-19.

II. The condition of your business during Covid-19

2 of them said at the time of covid-19 their business were closed but if they got any chance they opened their shops, 3 of them said they couldn't open the door of their shops, 10 of them said there were very bad situation everywhere and couldn't come outside home.

III. Whether the number of tourists decreased/ increased than before Covid-19 according to the respondents

4 of them said that after covid-19 the number of tourists was more than before covid-19, 10 of them said a large number of tourists have increased, and 1 of them said that the number of tourists is still as usual as before Covid-19.

IV. Whether their selling remains the same before and after Covid-19

13 of them said that after covid-19, their business is in a good position than before covid-19, 2 of them said that they can sell their commodities only on Friday and Saturday because these are the weekend and all kinds of people visit Kuakata that time.

V. The reasons behind the increase/decrease of their sales

Most of the respondents said that their sales have increased because now tourists can visit the tourist areas, especially Kuakata. For being a tourist dependency area, sales will increase a lot when they will come. 4 of them said the guest increased from Dhaka for the construction of the Padma Bridge within five or six hours, and tourists can come easily and frequently so their sale also increases.

VI. Whether they have been given any subsidies from the GOs/NGOs after Covid-19

2 of them replied in the negative and said that they have just heard about it but they never get it in their hands. 1 said he got only a TCB card and 12 of them said in the negative and said that they didn't get anything after Covid-19 and also during the Covid-19 pandemic.

VII. Whether they have taken any loans from NGOs to restart their business

12 of them said no they didn't take any loan, 3 of them said yes, they took loans from NGOs and Banks.

VIII. The process paying their loan whether they took loans

12 of them said that they need not and even they didn't take any loan at the time of their dangers. So they needn't to repay. 1 of them said that he repays the loan monthly and he does not face any problems if he can continue his business without any problems. 2 of them said that they repay the loan from the money they earn from their business.

IX. The strategy and steps should be taken by the authority (local government) to increase the number of tourists and encourage them to travel according to the respondents

6 of them said less developed areas should be developed and for this the steps need to be taken by local governing bodies, need large flash light, need a park besides the resort, Red Crab Island, (Lal Kakrar Dip according to the locals) and Sundarban areas, transportation as well as road construction need to be developed as well as environment must be good. 3 of them said need to develop five star hotel, motel and need to smooth road construction in Trimohona, Lebur bon, and Buddomondir areas need to be developed. 2 of them said need to develop infrastructure and should give them permission to do business permanently. 4 of them said beaches must be neat and clean and construct a strong dam beside the beach.

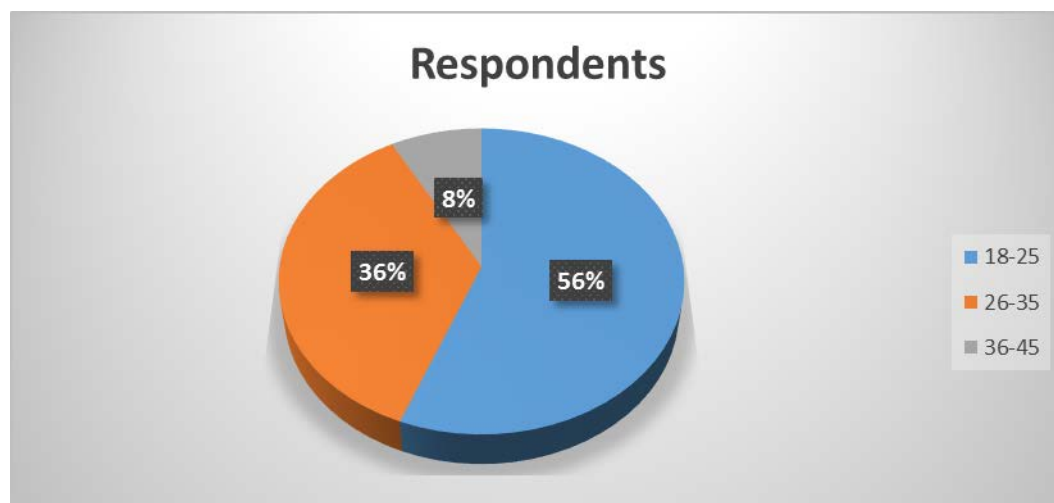
Demographic Information of the Tourists (n=25)

Table 9: Age of the respondents:

Age	Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
18-25	14	56%	56%
26-35	9	36%	92%
36-45	2	8%	100%

Source: Field data collection, 2023

Figure 8: Age of the respondents



Source: Field data collection, 2023

Table 10: Gender of the respondents

Gender	Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Male	15	60%	60%
Female	10	40%	100%

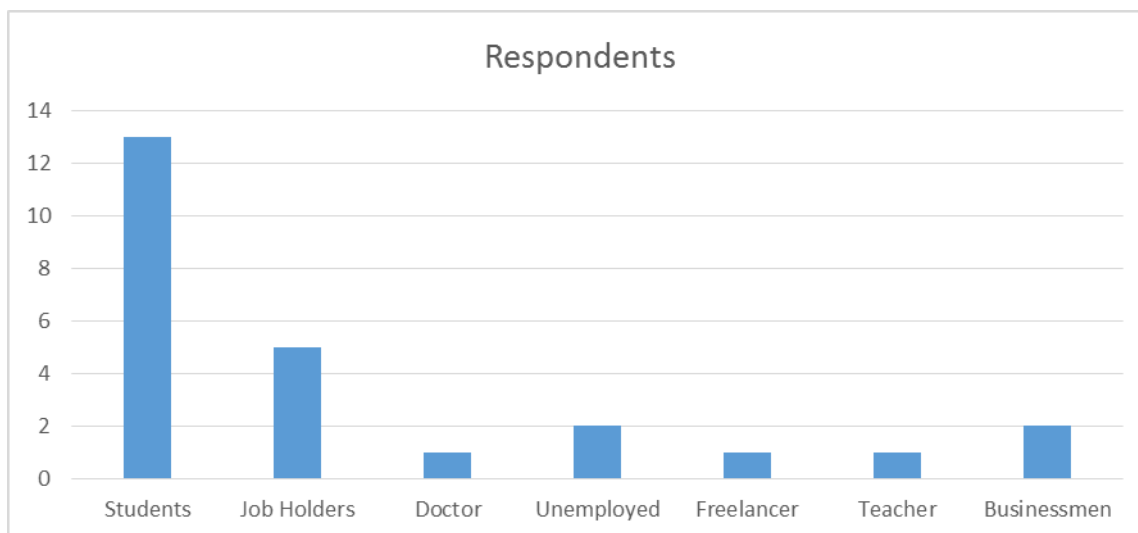
Source: Field data collection, 2023

Table 11: Profession of the respondents

Profession	Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
Students	13	52%	52%
Job Holders	5	20%	72%
Doctor	1	4%	76%
Unemployed	2	8%	84%
Freelancer	1	4%	88%
Teacher	1	4%	92%
Businessmen	2	8%	100%

Source: Field data collection, 2023

Figure 9: Profession of the respondents

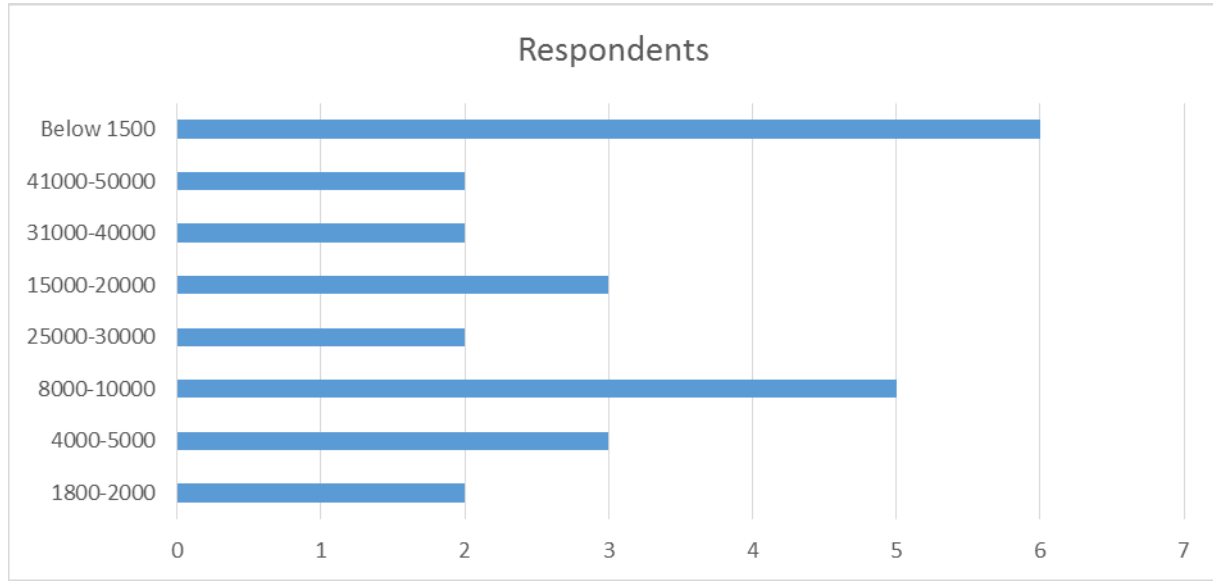


Source: Field data collection, 2023

Table 12: Income of the respondents

Monthly Income	Respondents	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
1800-2000	2	8%	8%
4000-5000	3	12%	20%
8000-10000	5	20%	40%
25000-30000	2	8%	48%
15000-20000	3	12%	60%
31000-40000	2	8%	68%
41000-50000	2	8%	76%
Below 1500	6	24%	100%

Source: Field data collection, 2023

Figure: 10 Income of the respondents

Source: Field data collection, 2023

Qualitative Data Analysis of the Tourists

I. Whether they visit Kuakata before

The total respondents were 25 and 19 of them replied positively and 6 of them said that they visit frequently whenever they get time.

II. Whether they visit Kuakata during Covid-19:

23 of them replied in the negative and said that, at the time of the pandemic situation, nobody could move and visit any tourist place without the indigenous people as well as transportation systems were stopped. 2 of them said that they visit two times.

III. If they were willing to visit Kuakata at that time:

The respondents were 25 and according to their personal interviews, 12 of them said that at pandemic time they wanted to visit the tourist spots especially Kuakata as they badly needed places for relaxation but that time it wasn't possible for government impediment. 11 of them said no because it was a big issue so didn't wish to go outside as conscious citizens. 2 of them said that they visited Kuakata during Covid-19.

IV. Any changes before and after Covid-19 in Kuakata according to the tourists

Among 25 respondents, 23 said yes, 1 of them said that he/she notices few changes. 1 of them said he/she did not find any changes.

V. Forms of changes they have noticed there

6 of them said that road construction has been developed, hotel service, for Padma Bridge many people come to Kuakata than before Covid-19. 6 of them said that Payra Bridge before wasn't and now takes less time to go to Kuakata and it is a positive side after covid-19, cleanliness, everyone moving to maintain a hygienic way, and tourist police activities also active. 4 of them said that before covid-19, Sea Beach was so long but now it is reducing day by day by bank erosion of the sea. 3 of them said a price hike means more prices of foods, especially seafood, gift items, and transportation costs impact tourists. 5 of them said that the number of people is increasing regularly. 1 of them said he/she noticed no changes.

VI. The rent of residential hotel and motel's room according to the visitors

7 of them said that the hotel rents are average as usual but in the seasonal time they take more rent like 1400/1500 taka for single bed and less in the off season like 800-1000 tk. for single bed. 4 of them said that the rent is reasonable or adjustable according to room, 14 of them said that rent are more than 2000/3000 for couple bed room.

VII. Whether the rent of the hotel and motel are more expensive than before Covid-19

All the respondents said room rents are higher than before Covid-19.

VIII. The reasons for increasing the prices of food items after Covid-19

12 of them said that after covid-19, they feel lacking in daily necessary things and are trying to back up their business, so all these circumstances forced them to increase the prices of foods and in the seasonal period, they increase more price. 10 of them said that they have very strong syndicate. 2 of them said among the businessmen most them are bound to the middlemen. 1 of them said that Russia and Ukraine war has a great impact on it because they can't import all necessary things properly.

IX. Whether the extra rent of residential hotels and excess prices of food items have impacts on tourists according to the tourists

20 of them said 'yes' strongly and added that some tourists can't bear the budget so they reduce their travel and it is a negative impact on tourism industry. 3 of them said also 'yes' and included that for the huge price of the restaurants and a huge rents of residential hotels and motels, they do not get their desired services and beyond their purchasing power. 1 of them said yes because transportation cost increases, hotel rent increases, and more prices of foods at restaurant, people who like to visit can't bear these expenses, so they can't stay a long time and can't enjoy their leisure time properly. 1 of them said no because the people who really love to visit will visit and they never think of money, they just want to enjoy.

X. The solutions to these problems according to the tourists

11 of them said the authority have to give more priority to the Sea Beach area protection and needs water activity. 4 of them said room service quality and food quality must be improved

by the authority of residential hotels and motels. 5 of them said that only government can't work here, it's totally impossible for the government individually. Local businessmen, people, and tourists have to do their responsibility as well as the people who are related with Kuakata sea beach shouldn't make dirty any place, or environment and shouldn't make a high sound at night. 2 of them said that the authority have to establish strong dam which is very important otherwise the Sea Beach will go under the sea, need to develop the local roads, need a park beside the beach, tourist police need to become more active and friendly to the tourists and control high food prices. 1 of them said that the employees of the restaurants and residential hotels and motels should be educated. 2 of them said that the local government should make category of the residential hotels which clarify the rent of these hotels like 2 star, 5 star, 7 star etc. They also added that the outside businessmen should be polite and tourists should be responsible for keeping our environment neat and clean.

Discussion and Findings

The economy of Bangladesh receives a typical amount of revenue from the tourism sector. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic's frequent lockdowns, the prohibition of transportations especially human travelling, and business closures without daily necessary things and medicines, insecticides and fertilizers, the economy of the world including Bangladesh saw a decrease in travel and tourism expenditures. The ultimate aim of this research was to find out the overall scenario of tourism sectors in the pre-COVID-19 periods, during Covid-19 and post-COVID-19 periods, especially at Kuakata, Kalapara Upazila of Patuakhali District, Bangladesh. For a researcher, it is not the job to solve the problems but investigate the facts behind the problems. In this research, the impacts of Covid-19 on tourism sectors have been identified. All of the respondents were categorized into 3 parts and all of the respondents were asked the questions through a personal (face-to-face) interview. At the time of Covid-19, tour operators could not continue their business and they had to close their residential hotels and motels as tourists could not come out from home and could not visit anywhere. As a result, tour operators of Kuakata Sea Beach had to face a great economic loss. The floating people who were outsiders of Kuakata had to leave Kuakata Sea Beach as they had no customers to sell their goods. The owners of the hotels and motels had to lay off their employees as they had no income source and their residential hotels had to turn off due to government restrictions and scheduled lockdown. Thus the important findings of the study are mentioned below:

- Traffic of the tourists at residential hotels before Covid-19 was average and most of the tourists visit Kuakata during the seasonal period, especially in the last of the winter season and during spring.
- Conditions of the hotel business during Covid-19 were so poor that there were lockdowns everywhere and the authority restricted people to move from one Upazila to another, the number of tourists was big 0 and they had to face a great economic loss.

- Number of tourists increased after Covid-19 for the betterment of transportation, the construction of Padma Bridge, and tourists got scope or opportunity to spend free time as well as to get rid of fumble situation.
- Tour operator organizations have increased hotel rents because of price hiking, increasing rates of daily necessary things, huge increases in electricity bills, and employees' salaries.
- Tour operator organizations haven't seen any financial crisis for increasing additional hotel rents.
- Tour operator organizations and floating businessman did not get any help from GOs or NGOs.
- After Covid-19 to restart their business they didn't take any loans from NGOs for their small business.
- After Covid-19 the conditions of business are very well according to the respondents.
- To increase the number of tourists and encourage them to travel, less developed areas need to be developed by taking steps from local governments, need a large flashlight, need a park beside the resort, Lal Kakra Deep and Sundorbon areas need smooth transportation system, road construction needs to develop as well as environment must be good.
- All of the respondents visited Kuakata twice or more. But they didn't visit Kuakata during Covid-19 because, at the time of the pandemic situation, the environment was not favorable for the tourists and anyone couldn't move as well as transportation systems were being stopped.
- Most of the respondents wished to visit Kuakata during the pandemic because that time they really needed a place for relaxation but it wasn't possible for covid-19 virus and government impediment.
- The respondents noticed a huge change between before and after the Covid-19 time period in Kuakata.
- Payra Bridge, Padma Bridge now take less time to go to Kuakata and it is a positive side after covid-19.
- The rent of the hotel is more than before Covid-19 because of increasing the prices of all kinds of products after covid-19.
- The reason for increasing the prices of food items after Covid-19 was because of rising commodity prices. Most of the businessmen follow the syndicate and after covid-19 they felt the lacking of daily necessary things and are trying to back up the loss in their business.
- Most of the respondents (tourists) strongly suggested that the authority has to give more priority to protect the Sea Beach area, and has to make strong dams which are very important otherwise the Sea Beach will go under the sea and needs water activity games, local people have to be cooperation-minded, and the local government has to be concerned to reduce the price hike.

Discussion and Conclusion

Conclusion

The Covid-19 epidemic has had a considerable influence on the travel and tourists sector, particularly in Bangladesh. The study has found that during Covid-19 the number of tourists was a big 0 so the hotel business had to face a great economic crisis but the number of tourists increased after Covid-19 for better transportation, the construction of Padma Bridge and to get rid of the fumble situation. Tour operator organizations said they have increased the rents but it doesn't affect them because some tourists don't look at their money so organizations haven't seen any financial crisis for increasing additional hotel rents. After COVID-19 the conditions of floating businessmen have become very well but immediately after COVID-19 they felt the need for subsidies from the GOs/NGOs but didn't get. During the pandemic, tourists needed a place for relaxation but it wasn't possible for covid-19 virus and government impediments so after COVID-19 it has been found that a huge number of visitors started to come to Kuakata to spend time. Reviewing the COVID-19 pandemic's successful outcomes could be the starting point here. To increase tourists most of the respondents suggested that less developed areas need to be developed by taking steps by local governments, need a large flashlight, need a park beside the resort, Lal Kakra Deep and Sundarban areas need a smooth transportation system, roads, infrastructures need to be developed as well as environment must keep healthy. According to the result, the hotel's rent has increased after COVID-19 from the past, and as a result, the price increases for a variety of goods. It is totally impossible and unbearable to pay extra rent basically for students or less-salary job holders. So, it reduces the visiting time in tourist spots. The seamless development of the tourism industry would make it one of the most desirable travel destinations worldwide through appropriate planning and potential recovery strategies.

Theoretical Contributions

- 1) By examining the effects of COVID-19 on local floating businessmen, residential hotel and motel businessmen, restaurant owners, and tourist satisfaction, this study expands on the scant prior research on the impacts of COVID-19 on the tourism sectors, particularly in Kuakata.
- 2) To the best knowledge of the researchers, no prior study has empirically examined the effects of COVID-19 on the tourism industries. This study has demonstrated that COVID-19 has a significant impact on tourism industry.
- 3) Most of the previous studies worked on the economic basis or socio-economic impacts of COVID-19. This study shows the impacts of COVID-19 on tour operator organizations, floating business people, and tourists and overall the scenario of COVID-19 on the tourism sector.
- 4) Most of the scholars used secondary data and quantitative methods but in this study, we used qualitative methods and primary data. The findings of the study will be helpful for academics and researchers.

5) This study is based on Kuakata, so it will be helpful for Bangladeshi researchers who work in the related sectors of tourism. And also international researchers would be apply this paper to use broadly in tourism sectors.

Managerial Implications

- 1) This study helps tour operator organizations to know about customer perception, satisfaction, service quality, service systems, and other lacking in their organizations.
- 2) Tour operator organizations can get directions about the rent range of their hotels, motels, and restaurants.
- 3) Tour operator organizations didn't get any subsidies from the GOs/NGOs. So this paper will be helpful for organizations to get financial support such as bank loans because it will be more noticeable among different GOs/NGOs.
- 4) The floating businessmen don't have any specific fixed place to set up their business shop permanently. So, this study will be helpful for them to get support from the authorities.
- 5) Since, this paper mentioned transportation systems and infrastructure, it seems that the local government and powerful authorities will be more concerned about transportation facilities, and all kinds of tourists, tour operator organizations, and floating businessmen will be benefited.

Recommendations for Strategy Development

- 1) Tour operator organizations have to reduce their rent and keep it bearable according to their room condition and have to provide the proper amenities.
- 2) Tour operator organizations should confirm extra facilities to satisfy the tourist as extra rents are given by them.
- 3) GOs or NGOs organizations should give concerned about tourist spot areas especially at the Hotels, Motels and Restaurants so that they can continue their business properly in times of crisis.
- 4) The owner of the restaurants should develop their food qualities, and ensure fair food prices, and the behaviors of the waiters should be more elegant and acceptable.
- 5) Road construction should be constructed smoothly, and the beach should be made more attractive.
- 6) Floating businessmen have no specific areas to be settled and continue their businesses, so, there should be given specific areas to continue their business properly without trouble made from the powerful authority.
- 7) The government has to sanction loans with low interest for home craft businessmen for the betterment of their business, actually for tourists.
- 8) Overall all kinds of people related to tourist spots including tourists, restaurant owners, tourist police, floating businessmen, owner of vehicles, owner of residential hotels and motels, and the local government should raise awareness to keep the tourist spots neat and clean, visitable and acceptable.

Limitations and Directions for the Future Researcher

One limitation of this study was that the respondents might not give proper data which makes the study objectives unimaginable. The area of research is too small to get a realistic result. The data provided are not always reliable. There might be some sampling errors. The samples taken may be biased to some extent. The data-collecting devices like questionnaires may not be accurate wholly. It might provide results based on misleading conclusions. Since the sample size was small, the information gathered may not be representative. This study can be more beneficial for those researchers who will conduct qualitative research this analysis is based on primary data that is openly accessible. It will assist researchers in expanding their knowledge of the effects of COVID-19 on the growth of the tourism industry. On the basis of the primary data, additional research may be carried out employing, to a greater extent, quantitative analytic techniques.

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