

An Empirical study on the Impact of Covid 19 on Selective Service Sectors in Madurai District from the Consumer's Perspective

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Abstract

A new virus was spreading across the globe in early 2020. The virus was first discovered in Wuhan, the capital of the People's Republic of China's Hubei Province. The virus immediately spread and was discovered in hundreds of nations, including the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, New Zealand, India, and others. The virus was given the designation "SARS-CoV-2" and the sickness was given the name COVID-19 when it was reported to the World Health Organization. The virus expanded to the point where it was called a pandemic. On the thirty-first day of the Gregorian calendar month of 2020, India reported the first verified case of the novel SARS-CoV-2 illness in the state of Kerala. At Prime Minister Narendra Modi's request, India imposed a 14-hour voluntary public curfew on March 22nd. It was followed by mandatory lockdowns in all major cities and COVID-19 hotspots. During the nationwide lockdown almost all the economic activities stopped for a while. Both the manufacturing sector as well as the service sector faced severe challenges in terms of production of tangible goods as well as intangible service. After a slow and steady nationwide unlock the economic activities resumed. However the impact of Covid 19 still taunts several industries and business. This paper discuss the impact of Covid 19 on selective service sectors in Madurai district.

Keywords : SARS-CoV-2, COVID-19, Lockdown, Unlock

Introduction

People all throughout the world have had a difficult time in the months leading up to early 2020 as the pandemic continues to take its toll. Despite the chaos and anxiety, the world is attempting to return to a new normal. During this unprecedented occurrence, all sectors are witnessing the start of a dramatic reorganisation of the economic and social order. Despite all of the upheaval and fear, the world is attempting to return. Every sector/industry/business unit is experiencing the commencement of an intense formation in social-economic activities as a result of this new reality.

About Madurai District

Madurai is a major city in the state of Tamil Nadu in southern India. It is bounded on the North by the districts of Dindigul, Thiruchirappalli and on the East by Sivagangai and on the West by Theni and South by Virudhunagar.

Geographical location :

North Latitude : Between 9°30.00 and 10°30.00

East Latitude : Between 77°00.00 and 78°30.00

Languages spoken : Tamil, Telegu, Sourashtra, English, Hindi

Population: 17,60,000 +

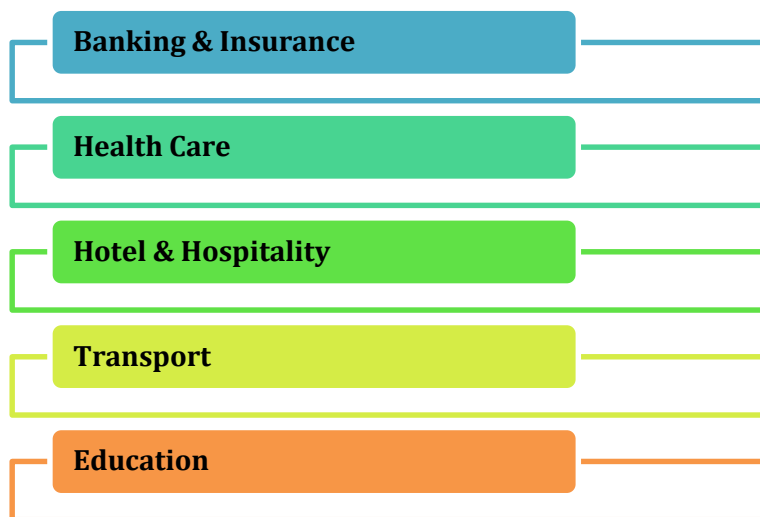
Madurai is the second largest corporation city by area and third largest city by population in Tamil Nadu. Located on the banks of River Vaigai, Madurai has been a major settlement for two millennia and is one of the oldest continuously inhabited cities in the world. Madurai is closely associated with the Tamil language, as all three primary congregations of Tamil scholars, the Third Tamil Sangams, were held in the city between 1780 BCE and the 3rd century CE.

Research Methodology

Data Collection: Primary data was collected through questionnaire. Secondary data was collected through World Wide Web and Published Materials. Non-Comparative Scaling technique was applied. Snowball Sampling method was adopted.

Service Sectors Selected for the Study

Services sector covers a wide variety of activities among which the following act as the nervous system without which the economy and the society will face the downfall.



Banking Sector

Finance is the life blood of any business. Banks as financial intermediaries ensures constant flow of funds between the seekers of funds and suppliers of funds. Banks can be classified into Public Sector Banks, Private Sector Banks, Foreign Banks and Regional Rural Banks.

Challenges Faced

Due to lockdown, several people have lost their employment or their income was significantly reduced. As a result, the banks were unable to receive EMI on-time from the borrowers and the NPA was significantly increased. Secondly, the workforce has to deal with the customers especially the deposit holders who stood in que to withdraw funds rather than utilizing the alternate banking channels. However, the Millennials have utilized the alternate banking channels to an optimum level. In Madurai, the banks have to incur addition expenses to create covered space for the customers to maintain social distancing.

Insurance Sector

Insurance is a mechanism in which the losses of few are shared by many. Insurance companies undertaken this effort. Insurance can be classified into Life Insurance, General Insurance. General Insurance can further be classified into Marine Insurance, Fire Insurance, Motor Insurance, Health Insurance, Engineering Insurance, Aviation Insurance, etc.

Challenges Faced

As far as the general insurance is concerned, the period of cover is short, for example a Motor Insurance policy taken on 01.06.2019 will be valid till 31.05.2020 (midnight). Premium payment on time is essential for keeping the policy in force. For many, whose income has decreased during the pandemic period, they skipped their premiums and only few are convenient in using digital channel in the payment of premium.

Health Care

Many have witnessed the importance of health care during the Covid 19 Pandemic. In Madurai, people have access to health care through Private Hospitals, Government Hospitals, Primary / Urban Health Centres and Mini Clinics. Health care includes, standalone laboratories, diagnostic centres and allied service providers also. Madurai has more than three hundred private hospitals (includes Super Speciality Hospitals, Multi Speciality Hospitals, Nursing Home, Clinics) and more than forty Primary Health Centres.

Challenges Faced

During Covid 19 period, patients faced a lot of challenges in accessing health care. Number of surgeries were postponed. Only during emergency, patients were admitted. As a precautionary measure, Covid 19 screening was made mandatory which ultimately increased the health care cost. Several hospitals introduced the concept of tele medicines.

Hotel & Hospitality

Madurai can be rightly called as the Food Capital of Tamil Nadu. There are food outlets functioning 24/7. Range of hotels from 5 Star to Street Food attracts significantly large number of tourist every year.

Challenges Faced

Due to Covid 19 Pandemic, for several months, only take-away system was followed. Food delivery partners like Zomato and Swiggy played a pivotal role in delivering food to customers. Accommodation facility was also not available during the pandemic period.

Transport

Madurai is well connected by road ways and railways. There are there major bus termini out of which one is dedicated for private transport. Apart from this there are two termini operating buses in the city.

S.No	Name of Bus Terminus	Major Destinations Operated
1	MGR Bus Stand – Mattuthavani	Chennai, Cuddalore, Neyveli, Bangalore, Puducherry, Tirupati, Hosur, Guruvayur, Tiruchirapalli, Tiruvannamalai, Viluppuram, Ariyalur, Perambalur, Natham, Sivagangai, Thondi, kotaipatinam, Thanjavur, Chidambaram, Kumbakonam, Mayiladuthurai, Nagapattinam, Tiruvarur, Pudukottai, Karaikudi, Vedharanyam, vellankanni, Devakottai, Aranthaangi, Pattukottai, Ramanathapuram, Earvaadi, Rameshwaram, Paramakudi, Kilakarai, Rajapalayam, Tenkasi, Srivilliputhur, Sengottai, Sankarankoil, Papanasam, Kadayannallur, Aruppukkottai, Thoothukudi, Tiruchendur, Sivakasi, Sattur, Virudhunagar, Tirunelveli, Nagercoil and Kanyakumari.
2	Omni Bus Stand – Mattuthavani	Chennai, Tirupathi, Ernakulam, Pondicherry, Bangalore.
3	Arapalayam Bus Stand – Arapalayam	Dindigul, Karur, Salem, Kodaikanal, Munnar, Kumili, Coimbatore, Theni, Bodi, Cumbum

There are number of private taxi service providers and bike taxi service providers in Madurai.

Challenges Faced

Due to Covid 19 pandemic, there were restrictions in number of travellers in commercial vehicles. As the fuel price and toll charges increased at an alarming rate, the private operators find it very difficult to operate their commercial vehicles in various route. Many taxi operator were unable to get commuters and they were unable to repay their vehicle loan. As far as the customers are concerned, restriction in number of travellers resulted in hiring another vehicle which increased the cost of travel.

Education

The pandemic has wreaked havoc on the education system, which is a key predictor of a country's economic destiny. Closing schools and colleges has far-reaching consequences for not only students, instructors, and families, but also for overall socioeconomic advancement. The Indian government conducted multiple aircraft to the countries in order to bring the stranded students back to their homes and reunite them with their loved ones. The worry of corporates withdrawing job offers has haunted

the minds of graduates as a result of the COVID 19 pandemic. Education can be classified into School Education and Higher Education. Madurai has more than three hundred and fifty primary, secondary and higher secondary schools. As far as higher education is concerned, there are two Medical Colleges, more than ten Engineering Colleges, Arts and Science Colleges. Further to this there are several Polytechnique and ITI Colleges.

Challenges Faced

The flow of funds is the lifeblood of any organisation. Many people have lost their jobs as a result of the pandemic and lockdown. As a result, the parents were unable to pay the price for their ward, causing a chain effect. Without a steady stream of cash, educational institutions struggled to keep up with day-to-day activities.

Strategies adopted by Educational Institutions – Challenges and Opportunities

How higher education teams can cope with COVID-19 lockdown is a big challenge. In response to the nationwide closure amid Covid-19, educational institutions are being advised frequently about suitable actions from government agencies and regulatory bodies. These recommendations suggest that all educational institutions must prepare as soon as possible for taking necessary measures to ensure continuity of learning during this crisis.

Challenges	Strategies Adopted
To ensure that kids' learning is not disrupted.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Open-source digital learning solutions and Learning Management Software were implemented so that teachers can conduct online teaching using various platform, which has a reach throughout all Indian states.
Content distribution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Many aspiring facilitators have pioneered unique, mobile-based learning strategies for excellent education delivery that others can emulate. •This can also be called as Instructor-Led Live Sessions.
Job offers, internship programmes, and research projects may be withdrawn.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Institutions may begin entrepreneurship and skill-based courses; digital term papers and online internships were given.
The facilitators had some initial problems when transitioning from classroom to online format.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Educational institutions established their own learning management system as a result of their desire to study.
Maintaining social distance within the company.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •A shift system was implemented, as well as working on alternate days.

Exam administration and monitoring	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •The computer-based and remote proctoring modes ensure that results are accurate and published on time.
Facilitators face the most difficult task in ensuring student attendance and discipline in an online class.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •It is critical to undertake random periodic verifications of student presence during the conduct of classes. •Educating students on the ethics, moral values, and agony that facilitators go through when conducting online classes on a regular basis.
Peer pressure and psychological effects	Psychologists, motivators, alumni members, parents, and mentors should be consulted to help students cope with the pressures of online learning when compared to traditional teaching methods.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Hypothesis 1

Ho – There is no significance difference between age factor and utilization of digital channels in Financial Services.

H1 - There is a significance difference between age factor and utilization of digital channels in Financial Services.

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences		t
		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
		Lower	Upper	
Pair 1	Age - Utilization.of.Digital.Channels.in.Financial.Services	22.418	28.693	16.415

Inference

Calculated Value of 't' not belongs to Confidential limit, hence we accept H1.

Hypothesis 2

Ho – There is no significance difference between age factor and utilization of digital platform in Hospitality Services.

H1 - There is significance difference between age factor and utilization of digital platform in Hospitality Services.

Paired Samples Test

		Paired Differences		t
		95% Confidence Interval of the Difference		
		Lower	Upper	
Pair 1	Age - Utilization.of.Digital.Platform.in.Hospitality.Services	23.370	29.874	16.500

Inference

Calculated Value of 't' not belongs to Confidential limit, hence we accept H1.

Conclusion

The impact of Covid 19 on various sectors/industries and general public was adverse, making individual persons and businesses to face significant challenges. By adopting to the new technologies, one can easily overcome the challenges.

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