

Covid -19 Pandemic and Impact on Public Spaces of Tourism and Hospitality in Dubai- an Exploratory Study from a Design Perspective

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Abstract : The Covid 19 pandemic has badly mauled Dubai's GDP heavily dependent on hospitality, tourism, entertainment, logistics, property and the retail sectors. In the context of the World Health protocols on social distancing for better maintenance of health and hygiene, the revival of the battered tourism and hospitality sectors has serious lessons for designers- interiors and public places. The tangible and intangible aesthetic elements and design -ambiance, materials, furnishings, colors, lighting and interior with architectural design issues of tourism and hospitality need a rethink to ensure a memorable tourist experience. Designers ought to experiment with sustainable places of tourism and design, develop, build and projects are aesthetic and leave as little negative impacts on the environment and public as possible. In short, they ought to conceive public spaces that makes use of little untouched materials and energy, and creates pollution and waste that are minimal. The spaces can employ healthier and more resource-efficient prototypes of construction, renovation, operation, maintenance, and demolition and thereby mitigate the environment impacts of the construction activities and it is sustainable. These measures encompass the hospitality sector that includes hotels and restaurants which has taken the hardest fall from the pandemic. The paper sought to examine building energy efficiency and materials and design employed in public places, green buildings to achieve constructive sustainability and to establish the benefits of utilizing energy efficiency, green materials and sustainable design; to document diverse policy interventions, design and Spatial dimensions of tourism and hospitality sectors; to examine changes in the hospitality, aviation sector especially from a design perspective regarding infrastructure or operational constraints and additional risk-mitigation measures; to dilate on the nature of implications for interior designers and architects to design public places to facilitate sustainable tourism and hospitality while balancing convenient space and their operations' natural surroundings. The qualitative research approach was adopted for the study. The researcher collected and analyzed data in continuous iteration. Secondary data was collected from articles in journals, trade publications, government reports, newspaper/ magazine articles, policy documents etc. In depth interviews were conducted with diverse stakeholders. Preliminary data indicates that designers have started imagining public places of tourism and hospitality against the backdrop of the government push and WHO guidelines. For instance, with regard to health, safety, hygiene and sanitation, Emirates, the Dubai-based airline has augmented health measures at the Dubai International Airport and on board its aircraft. It has leveraged high tech/ Nano-tech, social distancing to encourage least human contact, flexible design layouts to limit the occupancy. The researcher organized the data into thematic categories and found that the Government of Dubai has initiated comprehensive measures in the hospitality, tourism and aviation sectors in compliance with the WHO guidelines.

Keywords : Covid 19, design, Dubai, hospitality, public spaces, tourism

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