

Cultural Tourism: A Study of Surajkund International Crafts Fair

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ABSTRACT:

Cultural tourism is one of the main forms of tourism. This type of tourism encompasses local culture, heritage sites, dressing style, language, food, values, etc. It requires active involvement of both the visitors and the host communities. Fairs are important manifestation of a culture. These events are increasingly becoming popular among visitors. *Surajkund International Crafts Fair* is one such event. It is being organised at Surajkund, Haryana (India) since 1987 and visited by more than 1 million tourists including foreigners (Haryana Tourism, 2020). This event has significantly contributed to the local economy. However, relatively very few studies have examined the characteristics of tourists visiting the fair.

Methodology: So, this research uses *Surajkund International Crafts Fair* as a case study and examined tourists visiting the fair. Logistic regression was used for finding out the probability of satisfaction from the fair on the basis of the different characteristics of the population and their travel motivations.

Results: The statistical analyses led to the conclusion that the satisfaction of visitors from the fair was found significantly associated with their gender and independent of other socio-demographic and travel characteristics of visitors.

Value: It is of unique value as few studies have been carried out by researchers in Indian context.

KEYWORDS: Culture, Fair, Tourism, Visitors, Rural, Craft Fair, Surajkund.

INTRODUCTION:

Since last nine years, the growth of Travel and Tourism industry has incessantly outperformed the global economic growth (WTTC, 2019). In 2019, the industry posted a growth rate of 3.5 percent as compared to total growth rate of 2.5 percent. This industry contributed US\$8.9 trillion to the GDP of the world which is approximately 10.3 percent. Along with this, it has also generated 330 million jobs in the world i.e. 1 in every 10 jobs. For many countries, this sector is a major driver of economic growth, employment generation, foreign exchange earnings and overall development. This sector has also made significant contributions in the Indian economy. The industry has contributed US\$ 234.03

billion in 2017 which is expected increase with a rate of 6-7 percent to become US\$ 492.21 billion in 2028 (IBEF, 2021). However, there will be an estimated earnings of US\$ 50 billion from the sector by the end of the year 2022. This sector created 3900 thousand jobs in 2020 which were approximately 8.0 percent of the total jobs in India; and this is further expected to increase to approximately 52 million jobs by 2028.

This sector has tremendous potential especially due to its rich and varied culture, heritage, natural beauty and ecology. India is home to second largest segment of people on the earth. The population vary in languages, music, dance, architecture, foods and customs. Foreigners visit India to experience its unique cultural. This form of tourism is known as cultural tourism. Worldwide, cultural tourism is regarded as one of the most important type of tourism due to its positive economic and social impacts. UNWTO (2018) estimated that, internationally, the number of cultural tourists has increased to approximately 500 million in 2018 from nearly 350 million in 2006 and 200 million in 1995; making it one of the fastest growing forms of tourism. Cultural tourism helps a society in saving its culture and heritage, builds image, and reinforces identity. Fairs and festivals are integral part of cultural tourism. In India, people celebrate these events with full enthusiasm, color, joy and rituals. Apart from religion based events, certain man-made cultural fairs have gained popularity and are attracting tourists from every part of the globe. *Surajkund International Crafts Fair* is one such event. This is one of the biggest art and craft fairs of India. The fair is organized every year at Surajkund, Haryana, from February 1 to 15 since 1987. This annual event has been showcasing different forms of arts and crafts of India and other partner nations. A typical rural setting is created by artists and craftsmen to bring alive the age-old crafts, customs and heritage. The fair attracted 1.2 million tourists, including 160000 foreigners, in 2015.

LITERATURE REVIEW:

Cultural Tourism:

Cultural tourism includes visit by outsiders to a host society and the main motivation for the visit is to enjoy the historical past, artistic, lifestyle, heritage of the community (Silberberg, 1995). It involves enjoying and consuming the distinctive features such as culture, history, traditions etc. environment of a place or society by the tourists (Copley & Ian, 1996). *International Scientific Committee on Cultural Tourism* (1997) defined this form of tourism as activities facilitating tourists in understanding the lives of people of different societies through experiencing their indigenous customs, local traditions, the physical milieu, the intellectual ideas along with the architecture, history, archaeology of the region. The main aim of this form of tourism is to gain knowledge about the destination.

Australia has specified cultural tourism as a phenomenon where tourists visit cultural events i.e. specialised in various ethnical visual and performing art forms, and historical sites or monuments (Bureau of Tourism Research, 1998). Whereas, Estonian, Latvian and Lithuanian National Commissions (2001-2003) considered it experience of cultural environments, sites, art forms i.e. visual and performing, indigenous lifestyles, customs, traditions, fairs, festivals etc. along with many other methods of inter-cultural exchange. Tourists visiting cultural sites apply visual information for choosing their destination (Ooi, 2002). They use different kinds of information sources as visible mediators i.e. internet, written brochures, books, TV programmes and on-line movies; especially and especially to reduce the risks of the journey.

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This form of tourism is considered as a form of special interest tourism (SIT) which is based on the culture of the destination for attracting tourists (Mckercher and du Cros, 2002). The tourism resources in it can be categorised into tangible and intangible features that are unique to an area or a society and can make significant contribution to the tourism activities (Lvanovic, 2008). In the definition of cultural tourism, UNWTO (2018) included unique attractions and products of a society which may be physical, intellectual, spiritual and emotional. These may cover unique style of artifacts, architecture, history, heritage, culinary traditions, literature, music, lifestyle, value systems, beliefs, traditions etc. Cultural tourists can be categorised into two categories i.e. general and specialized. The first category of tourists preferred visiting multiple geographic sites and knowing different cultures. Then they become specialised and focus on selected number of geographic and cultural sites. The later type of tourists make several visits to a particular destination to gain better understanding of the host culture (Stebbins, 1996).

Tourists visiting the destination considered the culture as a main attraction and contributed significantly in the local economy as it provides incentives in the form of extra income to the locals for preserving their heritage, as this heritage is the main pull factor for tourists (Richards, 2018). So it was very important that the tour operators and travel agents must market the cultural resources in different tourist generating areas (Yun, Hennessey, Macdonald & Maceachern, 2008)

Fairs:

Fairs not only attract the tourists to a particular destination but also helps in local development and creating an image of the society or the region (Getz & Frisbee, 1987; Hall, 1989). These are platform to showcase and sell traditional products, manufactured by artisans in traditional way. Apart from this, these events are seen are opportunities to exhibit indigenous art-forms, and traditional way of life (Tayab, 2003). Fairs and festivals, based on their scale and importance, can be classified into two categories i.e. small local festivals and large scale events. The small local scale included neighborhood festivals, zonal festivals; whereas the latter category encompassed events like trademarks or large events. Regardless of their size, these attracts national as well as the international tourists (Getz, 2005). If the festival organisers wish to plan a successful event and achieve maximum visitors' satisfaction, they should carefully position their event and design a better marketing strategy. Apart from these, they should study the tourists' motivations behind attending these festivals (Kitterlin & Yoo, 2014).

By promoting fairs like the Surajkund Mela, the government is detrimental for providing a stage to artisans for presenting and selling their products and skills. The event ensures economical benefits to the artists and craftsmen. However, the whole experience is considered as artificial rather than natural (Jauhari & Munjal, 2015).

Stankova and Vassenska (2015) expected the locals and organizers to constantly improve awareness of local traditions with the help of festival tourism. This type of tourism helps in creating job opportunities, increasing income and investment in the region apart from attracting large number of tourists. These events revitalise the cultural values of the region along with its local culture and traditions. Tourists visit fairs to enjoy forgotten culture of the host population. As they have lost their culture due to their busy life in metros. They find it very comforting. Cultural tourists enjoy shopping in fairs for ethnic products instead visiting malls to shop branded items (Dutta & Durgamohan, 2016).

Surajkund International Crafts Mela is a unique experience which offers a variety of ethnic products i.e. textiles, paintings, wood art, ivory work, pottery, terracotta, stonework, lacquer ware, cane, grass

etc. The main aim of the fair is to promote traditional art forms and the skilled artisans who prepare traditional ethnic items with the help of indigenous technology. Through this fair or mela Surajkund Mela Authority and Haryana Tourism tries to provide a direct selling opportunity and market to these artisans (Surajkund International Crafts Mela, 2021).

Tourists Bisiting Fairs:

Eurobarometer (2013) has confirmed that cultural tourism has also been found affecting the choice of the destination by majority (68 percent) of European tourists. 91 percent of tourists from Poland replied in confirmation to the question that they consider cultural heritage of a destination before selecting their destination followed by tourists from Sweden (82 percent), Denmark (78 percent). However, less but a significant number of tourists from Portugal (57 percent), Greece (55 percent) and Hungary (51 percent), also, supported the hypothesis.

Hennessey, Yun, and Macdonald (2014) categorised cultural tourists visiting Prince Edward Island, along with its the size and importance, in two significantly different segments i.e. “culture-seeking tourists” and “other interest tourists”, especially according to their spending pattern. It was found that notable economic contribution was made by cultural tourists contributed to the destination. This may be due to longer stay, more emotional association, and higher spending by the tourists at the site.

Qi, Wong, Chen, Rong and Du (2018) used data from Trip Advisor to categorise tourists into five types identified on the patterns of visits to Macau. They created typology of cultural tourists through social media. However, no differences were found on the basis of age, gender and region among the different categories of tourists. Visiting cultural sites was the main aim of a significant number of tourists, however they were found to be dissatisfied with the overall experience. Malik and Manisha (2018) studied Surajkund International Crafts Fair and concluded that the visitors were satisfied with services related to hygiene and sanitation; parking; food and beverage; and safety and security at site. However, the respondents’ opinion about complaint/grievance handling, ticketing, Information services, and public conveniences were found to be significantly varying on the basis of gender.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE:

The research used Surajkund International Crafts Fair as a case study to examine cultural tourists. Logistic regression was used for finding out the probability of occurrence i.e. satisfaction from the fair on the basis of the socio-demographic and travel characteristics of tourists visiting the fair.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The present study is mainly based on the primary sources of data collection. For thus purpose, the primary data was collected through structured questionnaire for the study from the tourists visiting Surajkund International Crafts Fair. A total of 500 questionnaires were distributed and a total of 312 were found usable after screening. Independent Sample *t*-test was used to evaluate the relationship between various predictor variables and satisfaction of the visitors. Then logistic regression was also used to analyse the prediction of the probability of satisfaction on the basis of socio-demographic and travel characteristics of tourists visiting the fair.

RESULTS AND CONCLUSIONS:

Tourists Visiting the Fair: An almost equal number of male (51.6 percent) and female (48.4 percent) tourists visited the fair. Majority of tourists, 152, were upto 20 years of age; closely

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followed by tourists from the age group of 21 to 30 years i.e. 143. These two categories constituted nearly 95 percent of the total sample. This clearly marked that the fair is more popular among people below 31 years of age. Most of the visitors i.e. 278 to the fair were unmarried. About 33 percent of the tourists were 12th pass and a higher number i.e. 45.8 percent were graduates. Post graduation was the degree of merely 15.7 percent respondents. The fair was found to be least popular among retirees i.e. 0.6 percent and housewives i.e. 1.9 percent. Students comprised the largest portion (73.7 percent) of visitors; followed by employed (15.7 percent); and unemployed (8 percent). Almost 44 percent of interviewees were from Haryana; 30.8 percent were locals; 24.7 percent were from other states; and only 0.6 percent were foreigners. As far as the purpose of visit to the fair was concerned, most of the respondents i.e. 44.6 percent were for enjoyment; followed by relief from stress and tension of routine i.e. 15.1 percent; to learn and discover something new i.e. 11.5 percent; for shopping i.e. 7.4 percent; to relax mentally & physically i.e. 6.4 percent; to spend time with friends and family i.e. 5.8 percent; and to have something enjoyable to do i.e. 5.1.

Logistic Regression Results: The satisfaction from the fair was measured on the binary scale of yes or no. So to find out the probability of satisfaction from the fair on the basis of the socio-demographic and travel characteristics of tourists visiting the fair logistic regression was used. But before that Independent Sample t-test was applied to check whether the socio-demographic variables are significantly contributing towards the satisfaction or not.

	Overall, I am satisfied with this fair/festival.	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
You are (Male/Female)	Yes	261	1.51	.501	.031
	No	51	1.35	.483	.068
Your age (in years)	Yes	261	1.62	.721	.045
	No	51	1.47	.644	.090
Marital status	Yes	261	1.11	.310	.019
	No	51	1.12	.325	.046
Education qualification	Yes	261	1.92	.810	.050
	No	51	1.88	.909	.127
Occupation	Yes	261	2.62	.793	.049
	No	51	2.75	.771	.108
Place of your residence	Yes	261	1.97	.736	.046
	No	51	1.84	.880	.123
Purpose of your visit	Yes	261	3.58	2.168	.134
	No	51	3.96	2.530	.354

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
								Lower		Upper
You are	Equal variances assumed	23.784	.000	2.055	310	.041	.157	.076	.007	.307
	Equal variances not assumed			2.107	72.640	.039	.157	.074	.008	.305
Your age (in years)	Equal variances assumed	.012	.911	1.418	310	.157	.154	.109	-.060	.368
	Equal variances not assumed			1.531	76.660	.130	.154	.101	-.046	.354

Marital status	Equal variances assumed	.184	.668	-.217	310	.829	-.010	.048	-.105	.084
	Equal variances not assumed			-.210	68.899	.835	-.010	.049	-.109	.088
Education qualification	Equal variances assumed	4.342	.038	.324	310	.746	.041	.127	-.208	.290
	Equal variances not assumed			.300	66.408	.765	.041	.137	-.232	.314
Occupation	Equal variances assumed	1.473	.226	-1.061	310	.290	-.128	.121	-.366	.110
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.082	72.269	.283	-.128	.119	-.365	.108
Place of your residence	Equal variances assumed	12.063	.001	1.116	310	.265	.130	.117	-.099	.359
	Equal variances not assumed			.990	64.359	.326	.130	.131	-.132	.393
purpose of your visit	Equal variances assumed	6.230	.013	-1.120	310	.264	-.382	.341	-1.054	.290
	Equal variances not assumed			-1.009	65.121	.317	-.382	.379	-1.139	.374

The results of Independent Sample t-test shows that only gender is found to be significantly affecting the satisfaction of the visitors coming to the fair. However, the age, marital status, education qualification, occupation, place of residence, and purpose of visit of the tourists were not found to be significantly affecting their satisfaction. So for further analysis, gender was used as an independent variable and satisfaction as a dependent variable. Logistic regression analysis was conducted. The first two tables, no.3 and 4, of the output provided the information about the sample size and coding of the variable.

Unweighted Cases ^a		N	Percent
Selected Cases	Included in Analysis	312	100.0
	Missing Cases	0	.0
	Total	312	100.0
Unselected Cases		0	.0
Total		312	100.0

a. If weight is in effect, see classification table for the total number of cases.

Original Value	Internal Value
No	0
Yes	1

The next part of the output was a *null model* where only intercept was used as a parameter to predict the probability of visitor satisfaction. The value of intercept was found to be significant in predicting the satisfaction of visitors to the fair (Table no. 5 and 6).

Block 0: Beginning Block:

	Observed	Predicted		
		Overall, I am satisfied with this fair/festival.		Percentage
		No	Yes	Correct

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Step 0	Overall, I am satisfied with this fair/festival.	No	0	51	.0
		Yes	0	261	100.0
	Overall Percentage				83.7
a. Constant is included in the model.					
b. The cut value is .500					

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 0	Constant	1.633	.153	113.728	1	.000	5.118

			Score	df	Sig.
Step 0	Variables	Gender	4.191	1	.041
	Overall Statistics		4.191	1	.041

Table no. 7 of the null model indicates that the variable not included in the model i.e. gender ($\chi^2=4.191$, $p<0.05$) was also found to be making significant contribution towards the tourists satisfaction.

Block 1: Method = Enter

	Observed	Predicted			
		Overall, I am satisfied with this fair/festival.		Percentage Correct	
		No	Yes		
Step 1	Overall, I am satisfied with this fair/festival.	No	0	51	.0
		Yes	0	261	100.0
	Overall Percentage				83.7
a. The cut value is .500					

The table no. 8 depicted that there was no change in the percentage of predicting probability of satisfaction even after the inclusion of gender as variable in the model. However, importance of gender in predicting the satisfaction has already been established by the Table no. 7 and also supported by Table no. 9 ($\chi^2=4.253$, $p<0.05$).

		Chi-square	df	Sig.
Step 1	Step	4.253	1	.039
	Block	4.253	1	.039
	Model	4.253	1	.039

Table no. 10 provided details of the logistic regression model. The effect of gender on satisfaction was registered as significant ($\chi^2=4.104$, $p<0.05$). So it can be inferred that gender can help in predicting the satisfaction of the visitors to the fair.

		B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 ^a	Gender	.644	.318	4.104	1	.043	1.905
	Constant	.711	.464	2.346	1	.126	2.036
a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: A1.							

CONCLUSION & IMPLICATIONS:

The statistical analyses led to the conclusion that the satisfaction of visitors from the fair was found significantly associated with their gender. Although, the other socio-demographic variables such as age, marital status, education qualification, occupation, place of residence, and purpose of visit of the tourists were not found to be playing prominent role in determining their overall satisfaction from the fair. Moreover, the fair was found to be popular among both male and female visitors. But fair was more popular among young people i.e. below 30 years of age. Most of the tourists were students and were locals. The main reason for visiting the fair was to enjoy. Its findings revealed that the fair couldn't attract foreigners despite being organised very close to Delhi and branded as a cultural event. Therefore, it can be suggested that the organisers should develop a marketing plan to attract more and more cultural tourists, both foreigners and Indians, as well. More activities and attractions related to local culture may be added to the fair so that more and more tourists of diverse age group may get attracted towards the fair. This will help in enhancing the economical significance of the fair.

The study includes few socio-demographic variables which can be termed as its biggest limitation. More variables such as income, type of tourists and satisfaction levels need further exploration. Comparative evaluation among two or more fairs may be carried out to investigate underlying dimensions of satisfaction of different types of tourists. However, this study can provide deeper insight into studies related to fairs and festivals.

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