



A STUDY ON LOCAL FESTIVALS IN CONNECTION WITH TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN MAHARASHTRA.

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Abstract:

After pandemic tourism sector has experienced a great fall and tremendous loss of the sector has predicted. Till to date situation is not much promising and the sector will have to take much efforts to re-boost. Tourism word was introduced by many cultures in different ways. Past people generally used to move around for certain specific reason and one major reason was Local Festival. Local festivals being the base of tourism from ancient period. Generally married women used to move to their parent's place with these festival reason. And from that time Local festivals got an important place in movement of man and material and ultimately became a new form of Tourism. Local Festivals were also the major reasons in Indian culture which have supported tourism from many years. Tourism was not leisure or a holiday trip, at that time people used to move around with certain reasons. One of those reason was "Local festivals.". For that particular festival which seems to be happened ones a year generally, the whole family started moving from one place to another. It was a great change for them, it was a small trip or a family tour. Transport facilities were limited but still families loved to move for a change. There are many local festivals arranged and celebrated by people in the whole world. Some of them are very famous, and Tourism industry had taken all the advantage of those festivals like "Tomato Festival" in Italy, Shopping Festival in Dubai etc.. From the viewpoint of a foreign traveller, a word tantamount with India is 'culture'. Many tours are arranged by taking this Festival as a base. If we go on searching, we could find many exciting and totally unknown festivals are there even in Maharashtra state. Looking out the data for the famous festivals and the tourism development in those areas, we could find that there is a vast scope for the development of Maharashtra tourism on the basis of these Local

festivals. This research will find out the relationship of local festivals in tourism development as well as in employment generation at local level. After pandemic these festivals can also prove to be the easiest solution for bringing back tourism sector on the track for.

Keywords: UNWTO, MTDC , MTO, Mahotsav, V-shaped , Warli, Tarpa.



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Introduction

The coronavirus crisis was very difficult for tourism sector. Movement of the Man and material is the base of Tourism industry which has been stopped in pandemic and Tourism is one of the sectors most affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. Indeed, the number of international tourist arrivals declined by 84 per cent between March and December 2020 compared with the previous year, according to data observed by UNWTO. A drop in tourist sales leads to a 2.5-fold loss in real GDP, the economic losses could range between \$1.7 trillion and \$2.4 trillion in 2021. The results highlight the importance of the vaccine rollout in getting global tourism restarted and other mitigating measures. One more reason for not boosting up the situation is almost all tourist places have implemented travel restrictions of one sort or another, such as travel bans, visa controls and quarantines. As a result, international tourism was almost totally suspended in April and May of 2020. Inbound tourist arrivals declined 74 per cent between January and December 2020, about 1 billion trips.

Travel restrictions, slow containment of the virus, low traveller confidence and a poor economic environment. Travel has adapted to the impact of COVID particularly in terms of travel restrictions. Domestic travel has increased, but this does little to help developing countries that are dependent on international travel. The prominent and non-seasonal customers that is, Retirees, who tend to spend more per trip, are more likely to stay at home. Younger travellers, such as backpackers, who seem more willing to travel during this pandemic tend to stay longer but spend less than older travellers. Cruise ships, involving extended confinement, are likely to be less popular. Developing countries dependent on cruise ship arrivals may need to diversify their industries. The proportion of vaccinated people can be an indicator of tourists' wanderlust and their possibilities to travel. Although the proportion in the countries of origin as well as in the destination can be decisive, it is likely that tourists will nevertheless hesitate to travel long-distance,

preferring closer destinations with high vaccination levels. The share of vaccinated people varies significantly across countries. It is likely that tourism in countries with a high share of vaccinated people will rebound faster than in countries with a low share. This situation is all around the world for tourism sector. For 100% vaccination and then waiting for the tourist found difficult in near days. Tourism sector could be gear up with small, steady and safe steps to start again. V- shaped growth like in economy is expected in tourism sector too. But local tourism has suffered a lot due to the downfall of the sector. In a nation as diverse as India, several cultures have, over the centuries, made India a land of everlasting festivals. In this paper Local festivals are suggested to be the great support for the tourism sector.

Objectives-

- To make the tourist aware about some famous and interesting Local festivals in Maharashtra.
- To research the connections of these local festivals with tourism sector.
- To assess the employment generation and economic stability of the people around of these local festivals.

Earlier festivals were associated with key calendar moments, linked specifically to particular seasons and heritage sites. Over the last decade these have been changed and developed, and there is now a broad and diverse range of festivals and events taking place all over India through the year. The situation is returning to normal slowly, Maharashtra is gearing up to welcome tourists. Tourists are waiting to go out of the house as everyone was locked at home from last one hand half year. The festival will provide an opportunity to roam around the state and Tourism sector is appealing to tourists to join the festival with the aim of understanding Maharashtra. The state has a great cultural heritage. Tourists will get a chance to see the culture and beauty of the state through these festivals. Local festivals do have emotional connections with local people. Its providing employment and means of earning to uneducated, unskilled workers. It has considerable capacity of revenue earning and the approach of the people make the movement possible. This of the movement of people will bring positive effect on tourism sector. Local festivals are entertaining. It got importance with some local product and agriculture in that area. It's a type of marketing where local produces also sold in the Jatras and festivals. Generally, these festivals are attached with the religious God or religious festivals. The Ladakh Festival, conducted for 15 days every year, is one such festival.

Apart from music, folk dancing and archery competitions, one of the festival's main attractions are polo matches played in a dusty ground framed by the former royal palace and stark rocky ridges. Ladakh as a destination has grown in popularity, especially among domestic tourists due to the extensive promotion of festivals like the Ladakh Festival. Many tours for the Ladakh Festival have been launched in the market. The festivals will welcome tourists to join the festival with the aim of understanding Maharashtra. Tourists will get a reason to see the heritage and beauty of the state through these festivals. The festivals are also attached with some seasonal produces. Its very easy to sell the seasonal product on a large scale in this Mahotsav's. one can achieve economies to scale by supporting such different festivals. Local talent could get platform and stage because of such types of festivals. we can take the example of "Amba Mahotsav" or "Mango Festival" in Konkan and " Chikoo Festival" in Bordi. To promote tourism, the Maharashtra government has decided to organise 20 cultural festivals in different parts of the state. The festivals will be organised by the Regional Offices of the Directorate of Tourism with the help of the local district administration. The places identified for the festivals are the six divisions of the state - Konkan, Pune, Nashik, Aurangabad, Amravati and Nagpur. The festivals are arranged with taking some specific local occasions and make the people aware about the places and cultural heritage of that place. Local people were already celebrating the festivals in their own ways, now the efforts are taken by the government along with MTDC to promote it from the development point.

Following is the list of different Festivals arranged in Maharashtra –

- Grape Harvesting Festival in Nashik district
- Kajve Festival in Bhandardara
- Nandur Madhameshwar Festival
- Laling Fort Festival in the Dhule district.
- Vengurla -Sagareswar Festival in the Sindhurg District
- Shrivardhan Festival in the Raigad District
- Katalshilpa Festival in the Ratnagiri District and
- Velas /Anjarle Festival.
- Kapildhara festival in Beed district
- Sindkhed Raja Festival in Buldhana district
- Narnala Fort Festival in Akola district
- Tipeswar Sanctuary Festival in Yavatmal district.

- Amba Mahotsav in Konkan
- Orange festival in Nagpur
- Elephanta Festival
- The Ellora Festival
- Kalidas Festival
- Strawberry Festivals

In this research paper a detailed study of “Chikoo Festival” in Bordi (Dahanu District) is analysed and It has been proved a smart step towards Tourism development.

Between November to February around 200 tons of Fine quality chikkos has been produced daily in Bordi. While the demand for Chikoo is less in Bordi, its demand in the city and all over India , even in the world is High. It’s highly perishable in nature. To create a demand and capture new markets with new customers, The economy of the region largely depends on Chikoo production and other agro-based activities. Recently Dahanu-Gholvad has been awarded “Geographical Indication” for their quality production of Chikoos. The aim behind organising Chikoo Festival is to boost tourism development in the region. This festival then became a tradition for the people of Bordi.

Festival has proved the right step forward. Chinchani to Zai situated in Dahanu district in Northern Maharashtra is a storehouse of culture, history and traditions. It’s just 3-hour drive from Mumbai. Warli tribe is the base of this region. They are known for their world famous Warli paintings. To add to this, the region is also famous for awesome food, activities galore, and the Chikoo Festival. Dahanu-Gholvad has a history of growing the best Chikoos in Maharashtra. Long acres of lush greenery, a serene coastline dotted by Casaurina / Suru trees and rows of Chikoo trees adorning the countryside, this region is one of the best places one can visit to rejuvenate and for a short Change. The economy of the region largely depends on Chikoo production and other agro-based activities.

Incepted in the year 2013, the Chikoo Festival is an initiative of MTDC, supported by State Agriculture Department and local organizations. To add to its relevance, the event is organised by the local people that makes the festival a success, each time. The production of Chikoo, holds a huge significance to the economy of the Dahanu region. The idea behind arranging such festivals is to boost the local culture, maximum use of the local produce, avoid the wastage and turn it towards revenue generation to the local people. Instead of taking it to the market, the customers are brought to the place of production. The festival is combination efforts of all the farmers, local authorities, Local

people for delightful foods, fun filled activities, farm visits and happiness, all in one place. The World Tourism Organization suggests that more than 40 percent of all international tourists are “cultural tourists”

The study of festivals and events is now an important and preferable area of tourism research enquiry. Local festivals basic aim is to boost rural economy by encouraging entrepreneurship through sustainable means including agriculture, food processing, tourism, art and culture. By providing the customer and the market, such festivals create a self-sustaining and prosperous rural economy and eco-friendly society by promoting sustainable means of occupation. The festivals along with the produce, cultural heritage, Explore the authentic rural cultural flavours while enjoying Chikoo Safari in the fruit orchards, witness the first ever Chikoo Winery and Dance with the tribal Warlis on their traditional Tarpa tune at the two-day specially curated festival.

Facts and Figures-

- Chikoo Festival is visited by approx. 1.5 lakhs tourists in 2 days since last 7 years.
- Approx. Revenue for the local people in all goes up to 1.7 cr.
- Local 200+ retails stalls are exhibited in 2 days of handicraft, clothing, furnishings made by local people with Warli or other art.
- 40 + food stalls with different Chikoo receipies are enjoyed by the tourists every year.
- 25 + different activities including local folk culture, music , dance for entertainment and fun are organised in the festivals.

Conclusion-

Festivals have been generating a significant number of tourists and are being recognised as a form of cultural tourism. Millions of tourists attending major Indian festivals each year. Cultural tourism is one of the significant branches of tourism. Festivals and events have flourished in recent decades and interest in understanding their significance in the tourism academy has risen accordingly. Festivals are now being developed with the primary motive of promoting them as tourism products and also increasing tourist visit for the destination.

The Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation (MTDC) has recently started cashing in on this niche segment by developing festivals and fairs around its region all throughout the year by showcasing Maharashtra’s rich heritage through festivals. The fairs and festivals of this country are some of the key contributors to the image of Incredible India.

Festivals have the potential to extend tourist seasons, peak seasons and introduce a “new season” for a destination. Events such as festivals not only attract tourists but also help to develop or maintain a community or regional identity. Festivals constitute one of the most exciting and fastest growing forms of leisure, business, and tourism-related phenomena. Fairs and festivals are rising in popularity and are generating demand among tourists, along with creating trends in the niche tourism segment. Tourism boards across the world have used festivals for generating opportunities to promote tourism. It is time that India follows a similar trend and slowly makes its mark as a premier events and festival destination.

Local festival celebrations have generated great curiosity in the domestic and inbound markets. This recent trend is turning into a big advantage for the Indian tourism industry and the major stakeholders believe that with the correct marketing and positioning of the festival or event. There is incredible scope for Festival Tourism as there is a lot more in this segment to travel around. However, A suitable promotional strategy with special focus on Festival Tourism is necessary to create more awareness about the fairs and festivals of this country. Another important challenge is safety and awareness still remain the two roadblocks faced by tour operators. Festivals empower rural economy by creating employment opportunities through agriculture, art, tourism, food processing and local craftsmanship.

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