Chapter 7
Emergence of Metaverse:
An Innovative Technological Fusion in Indian Festivals

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ABSTRACT

This chapter aims to examine how the metaverse has given rise to new interpretations of Indian festivals,which also covers a number of difficulties in establishing connections with the communities. The exploratory study that served as the basis for this chapter aimed to gather factual information regarding the current situation and the emerging metaverse related trends. The actual procedures that stakeholders followed were analysed using a qualitative case study. This research uses secondary data from other scholarly papers and articles to offer the authors' perspective on the metaverse festival blueprint. This chapter focuses on the evolutionary concepts of the metaverse and its implications on intangible ceremonial activities.Since there isn't much previous research published in the literature, there isn't a lot of discussion about metaverse in Indian festivals at the moment.

INTRODUCTION

The vibrancy and diversity of Indian festivals have long been celebrated as integral components of the country's cultural fabric, reflecting a rich tapestry of traditions, beliefs, and rituals (Shah P.et al., 2023). From Diwali's illuminating festivities to Holi's kaleidoscopic splendour, these annual celebrations serve as occasions for communal bonding, spiritual reverence, and artistic expression. However, in an increasingly digitised world characterised by technological advancements and virtual interactions, the question arises: how can Indian festivals adapt and thrive in the metaverse?The metaverse has created a stir in the business sector because to its capacity to remodel an ecosystem for new goods, services, and developing synthetic consumer experiences. However, there is a dearth of information about the metaverse and its potential for use by scholars and practitioners worldwide (Buhalis et al., 2023).

The metaverse, a phrase popularised by science fiction and currently gaining prominence in technical discussions, denotes a shared virtual realm where individuals can engage, generate, and investigate in real-time (Bibri,SE.et al., 2022). The convergence of immersive technologies like virtual reality (VR), augmented reality (AR), and other technologies creates for consumers a smooth integration of digital and physical lives (Dwivedi, Y. K., et al., 2022). Festival celebrations may change dramatically as the metaverse permeates many sectors, including entertainment, education, commerce, and social networking.

A major effect of the COVID-19 pandemic has been on the travel and tourist sector. In response, a lot of travel agencies have included Metaverse technologies in their offerings to satisfy customers (Chen, 2021). A digital revolution is now taking place in the industry in response to the emergence of digital platforms (Cuomo et al., 2021). Traditional travel models can no longer satisfy consumers who want personalised experiences and deep connections. More clever and efficient tourism services must therefore be developed (Zhou et al., 2019).

This technology also addresses challenges related to limited mobility, expensive travel expenses, and environmental considerations. Prominent travel companies and large technological firms are currently investigating the potential of Metaverse tourism. A number of companies have already launched Metaverse platforms. With the progression of Metaverse technology, it will become indispensable to the tourism industry, expanding the horizons of travellers (Go and Kang, 2023).

The metaverse is a combination of several technologies that are rapidly evolving. The objective is to comprehend the potential impacts of integrating the metaverse into Indian festival culture through ongoing discussions, case studies, and previous academic papers. Developing a fully immersive metaverse that accurately renders

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