

Chapter 6

A Study of Tourism Promotion Through Fairs and Festivals of Mewar Region: Rajasthan, India

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ABSTRACT

Within the contemporary tourism sector, festivals and cultural events play a crucial role in fostering and strengthening cultural tourism. These events provide tourists with additional incentives to visit a destination, beyond the usual cultural offerings. Festivals provide an extra incentive for cultural tourists to visit a location because of the focused unique offering they provide for a short period of time. For this study, the festival covered includes Kumbhalgarh Festival, Mewar Festival, Gavri Festival, Lake Festival, Udaipur World Music Festival, Shilpgram Festival, Meera Mahotsav, Jauhar Mela and Chittorgarh Fort Festival. We have tried to measure the Role played by Fairs & festivals in tourism development in the Mewar region. The Judgemental sample of 400 Tourism Stakeholders from the Mewar Region of Rajasthan was taken which includes Travel Agent, Hotelier, Service, Guides, Govt Officials. The study found that seven variables were found significant in contributing to the importance of fairs & festivals in tourism development at Mewar region.

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INTRODUCTION

India is acknowledged for its pivotal role in shaping the global economy's future. In the 21st century, tourism has emerged as a central force impacting social, cultural, and economic aspects. India, renowned for its abundant cultural heritage and mystique, attracts tourists eager to personally immerse themselves in the experience. The surge in India's tourism sector can be largely attributed to cultural tourism, with Rajasthan standing out as a prominent destination. From spirited dances and captivating melodies to vibrant festivities and intricate architecture, every step, every beat, every taste, and every word whispers tales of cultural fusion and rich heritage. Fairs and festivals are one of the best platforms to showcase all the perspectives of one's culture. Rajasthan is divided into different estates or regions i.e., such as Mewar, Marwar, Shekhawati, Hadoti, Vagad. The present study examines the potential of fairs and festivals as tourism products and focuses on the role and development of cultural tourism in the Mewar Region. Furthermore, the study extends to give recommendations and suggestions to develop cultural tourism in the Mewar region in the context of fairs and festivals.

Fairs and festivals are a key way to promote tourism by showcasing a destination's culture and heritage, and offering unique experiences for tourists. They also benefit local communities by preserving their cultural identity and boosting the local economy. In India, fairs and festivals play a vital role in the growth of the tourism industry. Many tourists visit India to enjoy the country's special fairs and festivals. India has been enriched with its glorious heritage and cultural traditions, convention and moods, consisting unity in diversities. Fairs and festivals have unique ways of presenting the cultural glimpse of a region. They are helpful to show case the rich heritage, life style, festivities and cultural strength of a destination. Delhi has unique characteristics as this city has multiple culture diversity and influence of most of the religions and regions of India. The multiple culture and diversity of Delhi provides excellent opportunities to organize various fairs and festivals to promote cultural tourism in this capital city. Many of these festivals have the potential to attract the cultural connoisseur and tourists including foreign as well as domestic, besides providing entertainments to the local citizens. Festivals and events serve as potent tools for drawing both newcomers and returning visitors, thanks to the distinctive advantages they can provide (European Travel Commission, 2005). Recent surveys have shown that the vast majority of cultural tourists are also interested in event and festival tourism; in fact, 88% of respondents to an online questionnaire agreed that attending cultural festivals and events was an important part of their decision to travel to a particular destination (European Travel Commission, 2005). The importance of cultural events, festivals, and parades in attracting tourists is difficult to quantify, but it is safe to say that they focus primarily on musical and artistic celebrations (though they may also feature displays related to religion, folk art, film, and history). There is a correlation between the number of festivals in an area and that area's economic development and the education level of its citizens. Festivals and events play a crucial role in combating seasonality, as the vast majority of them are organized during the off-season. This is because the majority of festivals and celebrations occur during the off-season. Conversely, when contemplating the scale of parallel combinations and the capacity of venues, one might emphasize the potential adverse impacts of cultural events and festivals on the environment and local communities. This is particularly evident in the substantial influx of visitors to these locations within a compressed timeframe, posing significant challenges.

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