

A Study on Socio-Cultural Impact of Tourism in the City of Pushkar, Rajasthan

***Dr. Padma Meena**

Abstract

The study looks at how the perspectives of the local population compare to existing research on the socio-cultural effects of tourism, namely culture and heritage tourism. This research not only identifies the effects of demographic variance on local residents' views toward tourism but also the socio-cultural influences seen by inhabitants as the repercussions of tourism development. The current research attempts to investigate the interaction between inhabitants and tourists in the context of the concerns that locals value most, such as local or private matters. The study uses Rajasthan as an example to show the broad effects of tourism. The major information sources for analysis are primary and secondary sources of data. The Pushkar local community saw the growth of tourism from both positive and negative angles. However, the prevailing opinions confirm that they constitute a positive aspect of tourism.

Keywords: Residents Attitudes, Socio-economic Demographics, Heritage Tourism, Socio-Cultural Impacts.

INTRODUCTION:

The tourism industry is a substantial part of the economy and has a considerable impact on both the GDP and foreign exchange earnings of the nation (FEE). With its connections to other economic sectors like transportation, building, handicrafts, manufacturing, horticulture, agriculture, etc., tourism has the ability to not only drive the economy but also serve as a powerful weapon for reducing poverty and promoting development that is equitable. With an 8.6% GDP contribution, the tourism sector is India's biggest service sector. The Merwara-Marwar Circuit, which attracts visitors from all across India, is home to key pilgrimage sites including Ajmer and Pushkar. Pushkar is well-known across the world for its annual camel fair, which takes place in November and draws several foreign visitors each year. Although there are large visitor arrivals during the Pushkar Fair and the yearly URS in Ajmer, the tourism season is well distributed throughout the year.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

There is plenty of literature on the many facets of tourism. However, only in western nations can one find literature on the numerous facets of travel, tourism, leisure, and hospitality. Numerous academics have published books that express their opinions on various tourism-related concerns. Cooper C.'s book "Tourism Principles and Practices," published in 1999, elaborated on the theoretical underpinnings of tourism. He emphasised the idea and signs of the tourist demand. He also stressed

A Study on Socio-Cultural Impacts of Tourism in the City of Pushkar, Rajasthan

Dr. Padma Meena

the effects of economic, environmental, and sociocultural factors on the growth of tourism. He emphasises topics important to the growth of tourism in the future. In 2003, Romila Chawla published a significant book titled "Tourism in the 21st Century." She stressed the significance of the tourist sector, its role in fostering a pleasant social and cultural environment and the nation's integration, and suggested that promoting the arts, crafts, and culture leads to wealth and sustainable growth. The twenty-first century is the era of tourism and information technology. She discusses contemporary tourism's characteristics and difficulties. The book "Tourism Development Principles and Practices" was written by Dr. O. P. Kandari and Ashish Chandra in 2004.

Planning and evaluation, he said, are crucial components of the growth of tourism sustainably. He emphasised issues related to the growth of the tourism industry, particularly from economic, ethnic, and environmental perspectives. He also discussed the objectives and plans for effective tourism practises that I had identified, as well as the crucial problems of carrying capacity and community involvement. He said that tourism has a key important function in rural development and can support and enhance the standard of living there. It includes essential information on tourist planning and management, and important topics are given an in-depth study in Manish Ratti's 2007 book "Tourism Planning and Development," which deals with the tourism business and also offers a variety of work prospects to the local population.

In their 2008 book "Tourism in India," Dr. Kulwant Singh Pathania and Dr. Arun Kumar concentrated on all facets of tourism and outdoor recreation as resources that have been beneficial for the growth of any tourist destination in India. An significant book series on "Encyclopedia of Tourism" was written by Dr. M.M. Khan (2009). He focused on the theoretical underpinnings of the growth of tourism, including its core components, distinguishing traits, and organisational structures. For the growth and promotion of the tourist sector, he discusses the role that tourism organisations play at the national and worldwide levels; these phenomena are covered in Volume I. He discussed the history of tourism, various tour operator types, social organisation systems, various theories of criminal behaviour, and the relationship between the hospitality and tourist industries in Volume II. Vol. IV covers the fundamentals of ticketing and booking, international ticketing, and the whole history of ticketing and booking for travel by land, sea, and air.

OBJECTIVES:

- To study and look at the socio-cultural effects of the tourist boom in Pushkar from a spatiotemporal viewpoint.
- To comprehend public opinion and examine governmental directives.

METHODOLOGY:

The current research is based on primary information, a field trip, and secondary information (from the internet, journals, newspapers, books, and articles from published publications).

STUDY AREA:

Rajasthan enjoys a significant place within India's tourist sector because to its remarkable history

A Study on Socio-Cultural Impacts of Tourism in the City of Pushkar, Rajasthan

Dr. Padma Meena

and culture.

The Pushkar Lake in Rajasthan, 14 kilometres from the city of Ajmer, is regarded as a sacred lake. In the Kartik month, it is believed that a plunge in a lake can wash one of their sins and ailments, but are we truly cleansing ourselves, or are we only contaminating the natural element of Earth, water? With more than 500 temples in and around the town, Pushkar is one of the four main Hindu pilgrimage sites in the area. The Brahma Temple is among the most revered of these temples. This holy town is located in the valley of the Aravalli Mountain and is built around the revered Pushkar Sarovar (Lake). The Pushkar Sarovar was built where a lotus flower reportedly dropped from Lord Brahma's hands and struck the earth in Padma Purana, Srstikhanda, Chapter 17. The words "Pushp" and "Kar," which together mean "flower" and "hand," are the origin of the name Pushkar. Lord Brahma was looking for a location where he could execute a Vedic yagna (sacrifice). While he was thinking, a lotus dropped from his palm to the ground, and three locations began to erupt with water. One of these sites was Pushkar, therefore Brahma chose to carry out his yagna there. Pushkar was designated as a holy town after Brahma carried out the yagna. Man is said to be cleansed of all his sins by taking a bath in the sacred Sarovar. Its presence in the late 2nd century BC is shown by the inscriptions discovered at Sanchi. The discoveries of perforated coins, Greek, and Kushan coins move the date of Pushkar's founding back to the 4th century BC. The fact that Pushkar lies far from any major trade routes makes the finding of these coins more intriguing. This appears to imply that visitors to Pushkar only come there for the sake of pilgrimage.

Major Tourist Destinations in pushkar:

1. Pushkar lake
2. Brahma temple
3. Gurudwara singh sabha
4. Varaha temple
5. Savitri temple
6. Rangji temple
7. Pap mochini temple
8. Sri panchkund shiva temple
9. Atmateshwar temple
10. Man mahal

Regional Setting of Pushkar:

12 kilometres to the NW of Ajmer is where Pushkar is located. It has a height of 530 metres above mean sea level and is situated in latitude 26°27' North and longitude 74°37' East. The town is situated in a valley created between two parallel Aravalli range hills that extend from the south-west to the north-east. The hills are anything from 650 metres to 856 metres tall. Around the lake, the town has grown. The town is connected to various pilgrimage sites through Ajmer, including Mathura (NH48) and Ujjain (MP, SH17). Pushkar and Ajmer are connected by the State Highway (SH-18),

A Study on Socio-Cultural Impacts of Tourism in the City of Pushkar, Rajasthan

Dr. Padma Meena

which also runs for 70 kilometres (km) via Merta and Nagaur (150km). Here, the soil is mostly sandy and has a relatively limited ability to retain water. The town is located in a valley created by two Aravalli range hills that run parallel to one another from south to north-east. These hill ranges vary in height from 650 metres to 856 metres on average.

Climate:

The town has a semi-arid climate with a dry, scorching summer and a chilly winter. The peak temperatures in May and June are approximately 45°C, while the greatest mean temperature in winter is 25°C. Sand dunes are created as a consequence of the summer's strong winds. South-west to north-east is the predominant wind direction. The monsoon season, which lasts only from July to August and typically produces 400 to 600 mm of rain, may also sometimes bring rain to the months of January and February owing to western disturbances.

Population:

Pushkar has 21,626 residents as of the 2011 Census. Pushkar's population increase is mostly the result of organic natural growth. There is a sizeable day migration into Pushkar, with estimates ranging from 3,000 to 5,000. There are 10,291 women and 11,335 men in the whole population. In the city, there are 4288 households, with an average of 5 people living there. The city's population has grown by 46.2% during the last ten years.

Population Density:

A 25 square kilometre region split into 20 administrative wards makes up the little town of Pushkar. 865 people per km² is an extremely low average town density. The unequal density of the town of Pushkar, which is expanding quickly, emphasises the necessity for careful planning in the future since it has negative effects on the infrastructural networks.

Occupation:

The town's primary economic activity is tourism, which serves as a foundation for other economic sectors. Pushkar is mostly a pilgrim town because of the approximately 500 temples that are located there and nearby. For the majority of the populace, these temples provide their means of subsistence. The town's local population works mostly in the tourist and religious industries. Younger generations are starting enterprises these days since they are exposed to international tourists and have improved communication skills. Another significant event that draws many vendors and artisans from all around the state is the livestock fair. This fair has grown to be a popular tourist destination, particularly for international visitors. The fair's main attractions are cattle trade, cultural events, artisan bazaars, etc. During the Pushkar Fair, the Pushkar Municipal Board generates 80% of its yearly revenue. The sole important industrial activity, which employs around 5,000 people and most of them are from adjacent villages, is garment manufacturing. Traditional handicrafts and the manufacturing of rose by-products, such as Gulkand, rose oil, and rose water, are included in the cottage industries.

TOURISM IN RAJASTHAN

One of India's most well-liked tourism attractions, for both local and international visitors, is Rajasthan. In the last 30 years, the number of visitors to the state has multiplied by four, and in 2009, the state welcomed 0.8 million overseas visitors in addition to almost 7 million domestic visitors.

The state is renowned for the richness of its natural riches, cultural legacy, historical treasures, and uncommon wildlife. For visitors visiting the state, the forts and palaces, historic inns, vibrant fairs and festivals, local artwork and handicrafts, etc. have all been attractive selling points. Visitors, especially international tourists, are drawn to the state's western desert regions for a variety of reasons.

Four decades ago, Rajasthan's tourism business was a modest one that was mostly restricted to high-end international visitors and domestic pilgrim traffic. The number of visitors was limited to a few thousand each year, and they were mostly concentrated in a few locations, including the state capital of Jaipur, Udaipur, and Jodhpur (for international visitors), as well as the pilgrimage sites of Ajmer, Pushkar, and Nathdwara (for domestic tourists). The sector's job opportunities, economic impact on the state, and employment potential were all constrained.

However, over the past few decades, as a result of the concentrated efforts of Rajasthan Tourism, various State Government agencies, and a few select businesspeople/individuals, tourism has developed from an elite and pilgrim phenomenon to a mass phenomenon, firmly positioning Rajasthan on the map of popular tourist destinations both domestically and abroad. Additionally, today's travellers have a wider variety of destinations, attractions, and activities to select from in the state than they had in the past, when desert tourism, historical tourism (forts, palaces, etc.), and pilgrim tourism were the only forms of tourism available.

Today, the sector directly and indirectly employs more than one lakh people.

It now contributes more than Rs 2000 crore to the state economy, according to estimates. The State Government of Rajasthan granted tourism an industry status beginning in 1989 due to the sector's growing significance in the state's overall socioeconomic growth.

Together with the DoT-promoted Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation (RTDC), which was founded in November 1978 primarily to serve as a catalyst by developing tourism infrastructure facilities (for domestic and foreign tourists), particularly by way of basic amenities like accommodation, catering, and organised tours/sightseeing facilities, the Department of Tourism (DoT), Rajasthan has played a significant role in this growth as the nodal agency to promote tourism in the state.

Result and Discussions

Tourism has risen in Pushkar if we look at the data of last 20-25 years. It is accommodating domestic as well as international tourists. The natural beauty of holly Pushkar Lake, old temples and havelis, handicrafts and folklore etc. are the attraction points of tourists. It is confirmed that tourism has

become a job generating industry in the district. The table 1 shows the no. of tourist visited Pushkar from 1991 to 2015. And by analyzing the table we can infer that around the year 2013 the no. of tourist has increased tremendously which is attributed to the tourism promotion by state and national government, medical tourism, visa friendly policies, trade and business visits, study visits and natural beauty of Pushkar.

Table-1

Tourist Influx in Pushkar			
Year	Domestic Tourist	International Tourist	Total
2013	104620	38110	492730
2014	103209	46115	149324
2015	113265	36295	143560
2016	126500	73305	199805
2017	122900	73610	166510
2018	250750	91760	342510
2019	266200	84545	350745

Hotels and Occupancy Pattern

65.4 percent more hotels were built between 2001 and 2016. And the same has been seen in the quantity of rooms and beds. This demonstrates how Pushkar's hotel infrastructure has grown to handle the city's rising visitor population.

We may also draw the conclusion that the growth of the road system, security staff, taxi services, and other ancillary services went hand in hand with the expansion of hotels. In order to handle the huge number of travellers, the number of beds each hotel has also expanded.

Increasing Handicraft and Cottage Industries

According to the opinions of the respondents, who were separated into the general, OBC, SC, and ST categories, 46% of the SC group believe that the handicrafts sector has not evolved successfully, whereas 35% of the general population believe that it has and has produced jobs. It indicates that the general population, rather than other groupings, has reaped the most advantages. Overall, all communities acknowledged that tourism has led to an increase in the selling of handmade goods.

Purchasing power effects

depicts the relationship between tourism and locals' buying power. 52% of South Carolinians say that their buying power has not changed, which may indicate that they have not benefited directly from the tourist sector. In general, 25% of respondents agree that it has improved people's economic circumstances and given them jobs.

Occupational Status

This graph demonstrates a significant improvement in Pushkar's ability to create jobs. With the exception of SC, all four groups believe that Pushkar's employment has grown along with the city's tourist industry. 50% of respondents in the SC category feel that job creation has made very little progress. This is concerning, and the public and private sectors need to work together to address the problem. This amplifies the problem of SC people's lower involvement and marginalisation in this economic process.

Employment Shift

Depicts profession or job transition, which indicates that individuals have switched from one line of work to another. It may range from a main activity that is still practised today, such as farming, mining, or raising animals, to a secondary or tertiary activity, such as handicrafts, box-making, transportation, trading, hotel employee or owner, tourist guide, liaison officer, or folk performer. In all categories, more than 80% of respondents agreed that tourism provided many individuals the chance to change their line of work and that these people are now actively engaged in alternative vocations of their choosing.

The effect on folklore

Before, persons who had some familiarity or proficiency with their local folklore were unable to capitalise on their skills. However, they are now financially successful and support themselves by entertaining visitors and playing folk music.

In Pushkar, tourism has opened up several chances for residents to utilise their rich culture and tradition as a source of income.

This demonstrates that more than 65% of respondents across all categories agree that some social ills, such as drinking, crime, looting, and robbery, pollution, the issue of solid waste and rubbish, the exploitation of water resources, the danger to wildlife, etc., have become worse. Therefore, by drawing attention to these issues, we anticipate action from the local government and state government to adopt regulations and create a welcoming atmosphere for travellers.

Conclusion:

The research discovered that Pushkar residents are very friendly and that the area, particularly the Brahma Temple, holy town, and Pushkar Sarovar (Lake), which is located in the Valley of the Aravalli Mountain, has enormous tourist potential. According to the research, the city's booming tourism has effects such as an improved road system, the growth of hotels and guest houses, taxi services, the development of a long street market in the fort area, an increase in employment opportunities and purchasing power, educational opportunities, communication methods, a shift from traditional to western clothing styles, dietary habits, etc. On the other hand, there are issues that need to be resolved, like the overuse of water resources, massive accumulations of trash and municipal solid waste, risks to wildlife resulting from rising tourism, etc. Despite all of these findings, there is still

room for improvement in a number of areas, including the use of rainwater harvesting techniques, the recycling of water resources, proper waste management, minimal human interference in protected wildlife areas, proper guide training, the opening of information kiosks, rent control for lodging, upkeep of older structures, and the accessibility of medical services.

***Lecturer
Department of Political Science
L.B.S Govt. College
Kotputli (Raj.)**

References

1. Bhasin M.K and Bhasin Aveena (1999), Rajsthan Ecology, Culture and Society, Kamalraj Enterprise. Department of Tourism, Ministry of Tourism, Art and Culture, Government of India: 20 Year Perspective Plan for Sustainable Tourism in Rajasthan. Final Report, Prepared By A. F. Ferguson & Co., 2015.
2. Gjerard, O.(2005) Socio-cultural impacts if tourism: a case study from Norway. Journal of tourism and cultural change 3 (1): 36-58. Hawkins, D.E. 1994.
3. Haley, A.J, et.al. (2004) The social impacts of tourism a case study of Bath, UK, Annals of Tourism Research, Elesvier, vol 32, 2005.
4. Jon A.P and John L. Crompton (1993), Residents Strategies for Responding to Tourism Impacts, Journal of Travel Research, Vol 32, No.1, 47-50 (1993) and preservation of the rich cultural heritage of Jaisalmer folklore.
5. Khatri. L.N. (2009), Jaisalmer –Folklore, history & architecture. Hindustan printing house Jodhpur.
6. King Brian, et, al (1993), Social Impacts of Tourism. Tourism Management, 15(1) pp 53-61.
7. Krishana, A.G., (1993) "Case study on the effects of tourism on culture and environment: India; Goa, Khajuraho, Jaisalmer."
8. Mathur. U.B. (1986) Folkways in Rajasthan, Jaipur Printers, Jaipur.
9. Nazma, A.T (2008) "Socio-cultural impacts of Tourism on the rural areas within the world Heritage sites- The case of Kwazulu-Natal, South Africa. South Asian Journal of Tourism and Heritage (2008), Vol, No. 1
10. Peggy.T, (1994) Assessing socio-cultural impacts: the case of Singapore, Tourism Management 1994, 15(2).
11. R, Acharya (1980) Tourism and Cultural Heritage of India. RBSA publication, Jaipur.