

Economic Growth and Sustainable Development through Festive tourism –with special reference to Mysore Dasara festival

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Abstract

The paper focuses on achieving economic growth and sustainable development in Mysore district through focus on prioritising Dasara tourism. Mysore Dasara is one of the traditional festival celebrations. It has long history and royal touch. 2022 Mysore Dasara is 412th year of celebration and is very auspicious and grand. Italian traveller Niccole Conti described this festival in detail and contemplated on the grandeur and tradition attached by royals to this celebration. The celebrations include paying highest gratitude and reverence to goddess Chamundeshwari or Durga, the warrior goddess in Hindu mythology. The traditional Dasara celebrations included Acrobatics, Athletic competitions, dance and songs, fireworks, pageantry, military parades and varieties of indigenous sporting activities. Through the ages this festival has become a part of Mysore cultural and has added substantially to the economic development of Mysore district. Lakhs of people visit Mysore during Dasara festivities and become involved in Jamboo savari, equestrian events, procession and . The Mysore district has branched out the Dasara main festivals as youth Dasara, Children Dasara, Cine Dasara, Yoga Dasara, Health Dasara, Flower Dasara, Folk Dasara, etc. The district has added attractions like palace decoration, public building lightings, exhibitions, amusements, children enjoyment sports, Yoga, dance competitions, comedy shows, flower shows, folk songs competitions, etc. It is estimated that nearly 10 lakh people visit Mysore during Dasara festival. It is to be noted that this heavy influx of tourists can be a boon towards achieving sustainable development. The district authorities can make optimal use of resources and support local heritage and cultural tradition. As known sustainable development is a continuous process and it requires constant monitoring of impact introducing necessary preventive or corrective measures where ever necessary. It can aim at achieving optimum tourist satisfaction and ensure a meaningful experience to the tourists raising their awareness about sustainability issues and promoting sustainable tourism practices among general public through Dasara festive activities.

Keywords: *Festive tourism, Mysore Dasara festival, Economic Growth, Sustainable Development,*

Introduction

Mysore Dasara has elongated history. Contemporary Historical and literary evidences suggest that Dasara festival was observed with magnificence grandeur by Vijayanagara kings in 15th Century and was followed by Wodeyar kings of Mysore with same dignity, solemnity and veneration in 1610 AD. A detailed account of Dasara festival is provided by foreign tourists who visited Vijayanagara Empire.

Special attractions in Mysore Dasara festival

1. **Mysore palace lighting** - Mysore palace is lit with one lakh bulbs for all 10 days .Visitors are enthralled by the perpetual beauty of the palace with lights illuminating and enhancing its royal exquisiteness.
2. **Participation of royal family** - Royal family of Wodeyar is involved in the festivities. They perform **Puja** for goddess **Chamundeshwari** the goddess of the Mysore and hold Royal durbar.
3. **Elephant procession**- On the 10th day **Jamboo savari** is taken as a procession . The golden idol of goddess **Chamundeshwari** is seated on the Howdah ,though out the royal procession people pay reverence to the goddess.
4. **Procession** - This Dasara procession is joined by tableaus, drawings , paintings , dance groups , music troupes , armed forces, decorated elephants (**Gaja Pade**) , camels , horses (**Ashwa Pade**) , royal family members and such other folk dancers.
5. **Panjina Kavayitu**-A torch show is also held at the last day marking the closure of 10 day festivities it is called **Panjina Kavayitu**. It is followed by brilliantly fused laser show and astonishing fireworks. It is viewed by thousands of tourists with awe and admiration.
6. **Exhibition** -Exhibition lasts till December and several stalls eateries, food courts attract tourists. This exhibition reflects the cultural diversity of India and exhibits products from across India. This exhibition is a showcase for exquisite hand made products produced by Local handicraft associations, Folk culture associations , women self help groups, Urban Haath, etc.
7. **Golden chariot train** - This highly luxurious and exquisite train services take tourists to Mysore from across India and abroad. People love to travel through this train because it gives them royal feeling.

Sl. No	Details of visitors	Number in lakhs in 2019-20
1	Visitors to Mysore Zoo	1.52 lakh
2	Visitors to Mysore palace	2.10 lakh
3	Visitors to Mysore exhibition	2.85 lakh
4	Visitors to Mysore durbar	1.16 lakh

Source: Karnataka tourism.com 2019-2020

Challenges: Dasara festival brings heavy tourists during Dasara vacation and tourists cause number of problems in Mysore.

1. The management of hotel booking & hospitality services ,
2. The management of plastic waste ,
3. The management of private vehicle parking ,
4. The management of public drinking water units ,
5. The management of public health care system ,
6. The management of public toilets ,
7. The management of public transport ,

There are other challenges as well. It is the challenge of air pollution and noise pollution. This causes harm to heritage buildings, delicate structures and monuments. Besides, city of Mysore surfaces problems of dust and filth caused by overcrowding and carbon emission. Streets become congested, hotels become jam packed, shelters become crammed, and home-stays become stuffed, private accommodations become over-loaded.

Considerations -The district administration needs to involve all stake holders

1	Strengthening cultural ties with surrounding tourism authorities to assist in local places of visits or historical importance for example Sri Rangapattana, Talakadu , Rangana tittu , Mahadeshwara , Hassan , Mandya , Chamarajanagara etc.
2	Monitoring near the sites with volunteer service or NGO trained volunteers.
3	Data collection about visitors and their experiences. This helps to make supplementary arrangement or to correct any lapses. It is known through studies that increased academic collaborations support in coordinating programmes on development of tourism policies, tourism standards and tourism norms . Increased academic collaborations support in professional personnel exchange, , Home stay management , Hospitality management , health care support ,Museum volunteers support, Museum equipment acquiring etc. Partnerships support in sharing outreach capacity which help aspiring students.
4	Training trainers to interpret historical details clearly – which can be included with tour guides , private guides , conservation specialists ,epigraphists etc.
5	Partner NGOs- This would link private NGOs which can become supportive in volunteer services. NGOs and women self help groups can be involved to create awareness among women to showcase their products and thereby increase benefits from handicraft manufacturing This also will benefit in marketing and creating an organized supply chain link.
6	Supporting accession to cultural exchange with neighbouring states of Tamil Nadu, Maharastra, Kerala etc This will help in achieving finest tourist fulfilment and ensure a consequential familiarity. This will help tourists in raising their awareness about sustainability issues and promoting sustainable tourism practices among general public through Dasara festive activities.
7	Prioritization of museum visit in tourism itinerary -Tourists often will be unaware of the museums. Tour operators also highlight listed destinations and often ignore museum visit in the tour schedule. But if the museum visit is made part of the tour , tourists will be glad to visit them and this creates cultural heritage awareness.
	Archaeologists, Cultural organization managers , Curators, Heritage organization professionals, Ethnologists, Historians, IT specialists etc need to be involved in drafting guidelines for Dasara festival tourism management.

Conclusion

Thus, Mysore Dasara festivities can be linked with economic development of the Mysore district. Hence, there is a need for creating guidelines towards cultural policy monitoring with national counterparts across the Mysore heritage region. This will aid in expanding global circle of cultural monitoring process

and visitors will have further satisfactory experience. There is a need for implementing policies to encourage, creation, production, distribution of access parameters to diverse cultural goods and services more unreservedly and more authentically. There is also a need for capacity building programme for participatory policy involving all stake holders.

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