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Khajuraho Dance festival and its Tourism importance

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Cultural Tourism has emerged as one of the greatest attractions for foreign tourists and has tremendous potential for tourism development. My Research paper highlights one such aspect of cultural tourism –the dance forms of our country. The traditional dances of India are being emphasized in many of the dance festival held every year. Khajuraho dance festival is one such festival held to promote Indian culture. Khajuraho dance festival is conducted as a celebration of the cultural heritage of khajuraho temples and preserving it for the coming generation. The dance festivals help to sustain over culture and its give face of Indian culture and tradition. And to promote any and destination dance festival play very effective role. So we can say to make stable our culture and spread it to our self, dance festival is very necessary. Dance festival also attracts lot of tourist they have to do two things in one time. First tourist has participation in a dance show and also visit that destination by which popularity of destination grow. There is little main dance festival in India, which ready to make India cultural country.

Cultural tourism has a tremendous potential to grow specially in a country like ours. Every aspect of Indian culture & tradition has something new to offer to its visitors. But in this drive to gain tourists we should not forget. The negative aspects of tourism the commercialization of culture & tradition, and over exposure along with the strain on resources.

OBJECTIVES

The objective of my paper is to emphasis contribution of Indian dance to Indian tourism. We can conclude that dance can be a significant contributor of culture tourism and it can create more scope as a new dimension of tourism. The present paper is

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focused on Khajuraho dance festival, which is a part of culture tourism. In this tourism, tourist also face similar problem as other tourism. Therefore, I discussed on few select problems and solution there to regarding culture tourism.

KHAJURAHU DANCE FESTIVAL

Khajuraho is famous for its enchanting temples and its legendary Khajuraho dance festival. The name khajuraho is derived from the khajur tree (the date palm tree), which is grown abundantly in the region. The temples of this place are known for the erotic sculptures, through the sculpture reflects the life, moods and religious faith of that time. Most of these temples are thousand years old, and most the temples are dedicated to gods and goddesses like shiva, jagadamba and Vishnu and jain temples. Khajuraho dance festival is held every spring in the town of khajuraho in order to celebrate the glory of the temples. It is believed that classical dance basically comes from the hindu temples and attained its maturity. This festival is a cultural festival for the celebration of the Indian arts dance and music handling down from generation to generation. The khajuraho dance festival shows the best classical dancers and dances in the country. Khajuraho dance festival is a weeklong dance festival and is held during the month of February and March in khajuraho. Different classical dances are presented during this festival, like the kathak, Bharatnatyam, kuchipudi, odissi, Manipuri etc. the main idea behind khajuraho dance festival is to make the cultural heritage of khajuraho relevant to the present society and preserving it for the coming generation. On the occasion a number of renowned artists and craftsmen participates in the workshop and seminar and present their art to the numerous visitors and tourist. And during this seven days festival, there is also a market in an open field where the visitors can get the entire local made articles of khajuraho. This festival is known not only in our country but also to the outside world at large.

The year 1999 was celebrated as the silver jubilee of the dance festival of khajuraho. Artists and dancers celebrated this year with self-composed dance and music pieces specifically created for this occasion. A new music festival on the design of the dance festival was organized in October and is turned into an annual tradition. Events such as, a film festivals, seminars related

to art, an international sculptor meet, a theatre performance on khajuraho is only a few to mention from the many events planned. This cultural extravaganza is organized by the Madhya Pradesh tourism department and is promoted as one of the major cultural event in khajuraho. This cultural event takes place at an open-air auditorium in front of the Chitragupta temple. The chitragupta temple was built thousands of years ago and is a dedication to the sun god apart from the chitragupta temples the khajuraho dance festival is also organized at the vishwanatha temple that is a dedication to lord shiva.

Khajuraho dance festival is a comparatively new dance festival and was first organized in the year 2002. Although this festival is just few years old this festival has earned a great deal of reputation among locals and foreigners. The dances performed here are truly divine with the wonderful backdrop of the sculptures of khajuraho. The temples are brightly lit and are shimmering with the lights.

The dances that are portrayed here are that of kathak, kathakali, Bharatnatyam, kuchipudi, odissi, Manipuri. The best in these dances are specially invited for performing their art here. The artists are honored for their performances and it is an truly cultural delight for the lovers and admirers of these ancient dance forms.

TOURIST REACTIONS

India is a land of wonders and Madhya Pradesh is always known as the land of gods. However, any tourist coming to the land of gods does not come with religious motives alone. There is lot more for an average tourist. An understanding of their would help develop the tourism infrastructure according to the patterns of the market.

The study was made to get detailed information on tourist perceptions, problems face by tourists etc.

1- Repeat Visit

According to the primary data every of the three tourists coming to India repeat their visit there were various reasons attributed to this phenomenon. Hospitality, spirituality, History, Archaeology, Environment and flora and fauna are some of the reasons given by them. With regard to the average length of stay of tourists in the state, it was found that a maximum percentage (41.79%) of foreign tourists stay for 2-3 weeks. For domestic

tourists this goes up to more than six weeks from their places of origin.

2- Visit to other states

According to the survey, most of the people who visited Madhya Pradesh also went through many other states. Of the states visit many found Madhya Pradesh as the best, among the Himachal, Assam, Rajasthan, Delhi, Madhya Pradesh, Kashmir, Gujarat, Haryana and west Bengal were other states found attractive by the tourists.

Khajuraho vis-à-vis other destination

The popularity rating of khajuraho with regard to other tourist place is not less. This view subscribed by about 35 per of the tourist. However, about 7.29 percent perhaps to avoid any controversy. Preferred to be tight lipped about this kind of comparison. The remaining tourists were divided by keeping Khajuraho above or below other statistics.

Enjoyment of Khajuraho as a tourist place

An overwhelming 56.67 percent of the tourists immensely enjoyed khajuraho as a tourist place whereas about 30 percent just enjoyed it remaining 12 percent had little enjoyment in khajuraho.

Stay Arrangements-

According to the primary data, about a quarter of the tourists coming to India take prior information with earlier about the likely stay arrangement. About 40 visitors percent stay with friends etc. and remaining are spread over private/government hotels, guest houses etc.

Shortcomings of the Accommodation

The tourists coming from abroad mostly face the problem of qualitatively good accommodation. This was highlighted by the survey also.

Over 90 percent of the tourists complained about the poor sanitation standards observes by the hotels/ guest, houses, poor quality of drinking water and quality of food as the major shortcomings.

Normal mode of travel

Most of the tourists coming to this country use rail as the major mode of transport. This is substantiated with buses and taxis depending upon degree of opulence.

Quality of transport facility

Although about seventy percent of the tourists feel that the transport facilities are good but an equal number finds them as

average or unsatisfactory.

Accessibility to Natural scenery

According to survey the state of Khajuraho actually lags behind in providing accessibility to natural sceneries. Most of the tourists find this as merely satisfactory or even unsatisfactory.

Country side of Madhya Pradesh

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People of Madhya Pradesh

The tourists were asked to give their opinion about the people of Khajuraho it is heartening to note that over 70 percent of the tourists found their great and hospitable.

Services of M.P. Government tourist’s offices

It was surprising to note that over 81 percent of the tourists did not take any services form the M.P. Government tourist offices and most of these who took the services found the quality of services as average or bad.

Domestic Tourists

As in the case of foreign tourist, an exercise was also made with regard to the domestic tourist. The questions asked wre same as asked with the foreign tourists albeit with some modification. The results are summarized as below.

1. When asked as to whether they had made any prior visit to the state about 58 percent answered in affirmative.
2. With regard to their average length of stay in the state it was heartening to note that about half of the tourists spent over six weeks in the state.
3. Most of the Domestic Tourist (58.98%) confirmed that while on route or separately they visit other states of the country as well. The remaining used to came to Madhya Pradesh and go back.
4. When asked as to what rating they would like to give to Madhya Praesh. Most of the tourist put Madhya Pradesh at

- per with other states. However, the number of non-committed tourists was also sizeable.
5. With regard to enjoyment of Madhya Pradesh as a tourist's destination a majority of them agreed that they enjoyed Madhya Pradesh very much. Some of them also put it at overage rate also.
 6. According to the data, most of the domestic tourists like to stay in hotels or with friends and relatives. This is normally subscribed to their being in the budget category.
 7. As regards the normal mode of travel like foreign tourists, most of the domestic tourists also prefer Railways. This is followed by taxi cars, air crafts, Government buses, private buses etc.
 8. The domestic tourists were asked about the quality of transport services provided to them. Most of them were satisfied with the serviced whereas some of them found it so-so. Some of them were dissatisfied with the services.
 9. When asked as to what is the facility or reaching the natural scenery, most of them found if to be excellent, good or satisfactory. However, about 24 percent found it to be totally unsatisfactory.
 10. Most of the domestic tourist found the countryside of Madhya Pradesh as Gorgeous or Picturesque. However, some of them also termed it as unimpressive or insignificant.
 11. Most of the domestic tourists do not utilize the services provided by the Madhya Pradesh Tourist Office and most of even those who utilize find it bad or average.

Problems Related To Tourism in Khajuraho

The problems that the tourism industry faces in Madhya Pradesh Today are Complex, broadly, these problems may be divided in to tow parts.

1. Problems in the Private Sector
2. Problems in the Public Sector

A) Private Sector

Private Sector plays an important role in providing facilities to the tourists. It has over 3000 hotels/guesthouse in all major tourist centers and it is natural that all these wish to earn maximum.

Profit obviously in such a service-based sector only profit

orientation cannot work and thus lead to numerous problems quite similar in nature as faced by the public sector units. So here I am trying to throw light on some of the problems that the private sector faces.

Quality of Accommodation

1. It is commonly observed that barring in the five star hotels the regularity of air-conditioning and air-cooling facility in the hotels is by and large not up to mark. It was observed that even in a two star hotel like Diamond Hotel Khajuraho, air conditioning facility is irregular. This is in fact a common complaint against a majority of hotels similar problems are found.
2. It is also commonly observed that the moment a tourist reaches at the Bus station, Railway station or Air port, middlemen for Hotels mob tourists like a honey bee and try to influence his decision these people sometimes tell a lie to the tourist that the hotel where he wants to stay has no vacancy or is taking higher charges whereas the hotel that he proposes is cheap and the best these trends make a tourist scared of the place itself and he does not dare visit the spot again.
3. Most of the employees of majority of hotels are inexperienced and raw hands. Managements prefer because they ask for less salary. But ultimately these people neither benefit the organization nor do they serve tourists in a professional manner here too both management and tourists remain in satisfied.
4. Madhya Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation should make a committee which will look at for facilities which provided by the hotels and if hotels do not provide facilities according to its categorisation than category should be taken out from the hotels and there is need of more Active Tourist Police to solve the problem which come from the Hawkers side.

Guides and Guiding

1. It is commonly observed that none of the hotels barring a few five star ones provide any facility of guides. Even if they do provide in some cases, these guides suffer from in. Because of this inadequacy of tourist guides language

problem most of the tourist are forced to fend for themselves this leads to cropping up of unauthorized guides who work as hawkers.

2. About 50 persons are working as guides in Khajuraho most of these are illiterates and earlier used to work as hawkers. These people have managed to get stay orders from the courts to work as guides against the court order of banning these practices as guides.
3. Another aspect emerges from this problem is of inadequate facility of guides. It is the absence of proper map and guiding material
4. For eradication of these type of problems Madhya Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation, should run Guide training program specially for Madhya Pradesh and as well as they should provide proper and latest material and literature in tourist offices, with which tourist can get right information.

Transport and package tour

1. The tourist, however, complain of many problems that they face during such package tours like inadequacy of lodging. Impolite-behaviors of the tour managers lack of time discipline. Insufficient time for sightseeing heavy charges, non-availability of good guides. These are enough to cause serious problems to any tourist. S
2. Transport is the backbone of successful tourism. In fact, tourism development is based on the development of transport facility therefore more buses and package tours are needed to boost tourism, however private tour operator are not able to do so due to lack of funds, license or registration problem etc. this casts its shadows on effective development and management of tourist in.

To conclude I feel that accommodation units in the Public Sector are not functioning properly. There is also a problem of too much job security, which has made their personnel defiant and unprofessional. In most of the cases it was observed that their personnel do not bother about tourist needs and do not behave in courteous manner since the higher officials are also professionals, the removal of their problems also faces non-bureaucratic solution.

A Food and Breakfast

Tourists when out of their homes aspire for only two things comfortable stay and good food at reasonable prices. This is

unfortunately not happening in Madhya Pradesh Particularly in government owned hotels and tourist bungalows. In some of the hotels in Khajuraho revealed that firstly there rates of food items are higher in government owned hotels, secondly, the quality of food is not. Good and thirdly they do not provide regional specialties.

Transport System/Khajuraho

Although package tours, conducted tours, sight seeing and daily tour are important part of tourists' services. In Agra, the coach buses are of poor quality. In Khajuraho, these facilities are provided by the Madhya Pradesh State Road Transport Corporation and they have to suffer from lack of time schedule, discourteous behaviour of tour operators and now availability of deluxe buses.

In Khajuraho there is no such facility although peripheral attractions of Gwalior and Orchha etc. are equally important and attractive and are situated at a distance from each other.

In Khajuraho, MPTDC has not taken off due to poor response and ingressive selling. Apart from these aforementioned problems, there are some smaller problems and irritants which give tourism management in public sector a laughing stock some of these are.

1. In most of the cases, rail and air reservation facilities are non-existent giving a lot of problems to the tourists.
2. The facilities of entertainment are also inadequate at most of the places. It was found that in cases where people tried to present local tradition bases cultural programs the officers did not support such ideas.
3. Most of the tourist hotels/bungalows are situated at inconvenient places which face tremendous problems including that of security.
4. The room tariffs that these hotels/bungalows charge are too high for a middle class tourist. Keeping in mind that domestic tourists outnumber foreign tourist these hotels and bungalows fail to attract them.
5. Like room tariffs, the rates of eatables in government hotels/tourists bungalows are comparatively higher. It goes even higher because public sector imposes sales tax/service charges/surcharge also naturally, tourists do not want to make use of these facilities and prefer to eat elsewhere.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

It is evident from the pages of history that Madhya Pradesh has been a state with many important destination of historical importance, from the pre-historical era of Ramayana, Mahabharata to the Mughals Period, every important ruler of India has his capital somewhere in Madhya Pradesh.

After independence the potential of this industry has been realized and the efforts for growth and development of the industry have started. A tourist organization was set up in 1956 and July 1971, a separate department of tourism was created and finally in 1974. The Madhya Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation limited was created to set up, develop and publicize tourism in this region.

From the day of MPTDC has worked for the development and growth of the industry. It has taken several measures for attracting tourists. But as all departments of govt. of India this department also faces problems, mainly due to lack of capital and resources. Even the funds it receives from the government, is not properly used.

I have tried to analyses the works done by the department and the challenges it faces. I observed that the following steps might help tourism to flourish in Khajuraho.

1. Corporation should make proper plan for protection of the monuments , art works and the security of tourist
2. Time to time it should organized tourism awareness program for the people of Madhya Pradesh.
3. Corporation should make effort for easy accessibility in this region.
4. Corporation should start its own guide training program especially for Madhya Pradesh, and it should appoint Authentic guides for monument.
5. Corporation should publicize the tourist destination of Madhya Pradesh through electronic and print media not only in India but also all over the world.
6. Corporation should suddenly takes actions on any type of tourist complain.
7. Corporation should follow the single window system mean all work should be completed form one counter or table.
8. Corporation should start its own tourism-oriented course in the Madhya Pradesh

9. Promoting the Dance festival is very important, a large number of foreign tourists come to India for a culturally enriched show of classical dances like Khajuraho Festival of Dances.
10. To aim of organizing this Dance festival is also to promote cultural heritage and traditional dances of India in international level.
11. Corporation should improve the quality of its hotels and tourist bungalow.
12. The local responsible authority should arrange toilet near about monuments festival place.
13. Corporation should realized the word of “ Adithi Devo Bhava”

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