

## **Socio-Cultural Impacts of Tourism in the City Of Pushkar, Rajasthan: India**

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### **ABSTRACT**

*This article looks at how well community members' own ideas about the social and cultural effects of culture and heritage tourism square with what has been written about those effects elsewhere. The consequences of demographic variance on locals' perspectives on tourism are also identified, in addition to the socio-cultural repercussions that locals believe tourism development will have. The current research endeavours to analyse the connection between residents and tourists in light of citizens' priorities, whether those priorities are local or individual. The paper utilises Rajasthan as a case study to showcase the various ways in which tourism has affected the state. Analysis relies heavily on information obtained from primary and secondary sources. Residents of Pushkar's host village had mixed feelings about the industry's growth. The majority of opinions, however, confirm that they show a positive aspect of tourism.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Socio-cultural Impacts, Residents Attitudes, Socio-economic Demographics, Heritage Tourism.*

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### **I. INTRODUCTION:**

The tourism industry makes a sizable contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and Foreign Exchange Earnings (FEE) of the country. Tourism has the potential to not only be the economy driver, but also become an effective tool for alleviating poverty and ensuring growth with equity, thanks to its backward and forward linkages with other sectors like transportation, construction, handicrafts, manufacturing, horticulture, agriculture, etc. At 8.6 percent of GDP, tourism in India is the country's single most important service sector. The Merwara-Marwar Circuit, which includes Ajmer and Pushkar, is the epicentre of India's pilgrimage industry. Every year in November, Pushkar has a camel market that draws in a great number of tourists from all over the world. Although the annual URS in Ajmer and the Pushkar Fair see exceptionally high visitor numbers, tourism is consistently strong throughout the year.

### **II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

There is already sufficient written material on all of tourism's many facets. However, only in the West can you find books dedicated to the many facets of the travel, tourism, recreation, and hospitality industries. There are a number of books out there that present the opinions of many academics on various aspects of tourism. Cooper C.'s "Tourism Principles and Practises" (1999) elaborated on the field of tourism's theoretical foundations. The idea and signs of tourism demand were emphasised. The economic, ecological, and societal effects of tourism expansion were also highlighted. He brings up important concerns for the growth of the tourism industry in the future. An essential work on the subject, "Tourism in the 21st Century" by Romila Chawla (2003). She praised the tourism industry for its many benefits, including national integration, a more peaceful social and cultural environment, the promotion of arts and crafts, and long-term economic growth and development.

The twenty-first century is the era of travel and information technology. She discusses modern tourism and the difficulties it presents. The book "Tourism Development Principles and Practises" was written by Dr. O. P. Kandari and Ashish Chandra in 2004. He stressed the significance of planning and evaluation in achieving long-term success in the tourism industry. The goals and tactics for effective tourist practises, which I identified, as well as significant challenges related to carrying capacity and community participation were the main points of his talk on the topic of tourism development. He added that tourism has a crucial economic role in rural development, which may help to maintain and increase rural communities' standard of living. Manish Ratti's "Tourism Planning and Development" (2007) discusses the tourism industry, which has both positive and negative effects on various destinations (including the creation of jobs for locals) and offers a wealth of information on tourism planning and management while also delving deeply into pressing issues.

The growth of any tourist destination in India has been aided by the work of Drs. Kulwant Singh Pathania and Arun Kumar, whose 2008 book "Tourism in India" covered all facets of the tourism industry, including outdoor leisure. An essential "Encyclopaedia of Tourism" series was written by Dr. M.M. Khan in 2009. Specifically, he focused on the theoretical framework of tourism development, which includes things like the fundamentals, highlights, and different types of organisation. All phenomena have been addressed in Vol-I, and he explains the role of tourism organisations at the international and national levels in developing and promoting the tourism industry. In Volume II, he discusses the industry's beginnings, the many tour operations available, the structure of society, the various criminal theory frameworks, and the connection between the hospitality sector and tourism. Ticketing and booking for travel by air, train, water, and road are the focus of Volume IV, which covers these topics as well as their comprehensive histories.

**AREA:**

Because of its extraordinary history and culture, Rajasthan is one of India's most popular tourist destinations. The holy lake of Pushkar is located in Rajasthan, around 14 kilometres from the city of Ajmer. People in the Kartik month believe that bathing in a lake will wash away their sins and cure whatever illnesses they may have, yet by doing so, they may be damaging one of Earth's most vital resources. Over 500 temples can be found in and around Pushkar, the most revered of which being the Brahma Temple. Pushkar is considered one of India's four great teerths. Located in the valley of the Aravalli Mountains, this holy town is centred on the revered Pushkar Sarovar (Lake). The Pushkar Sarovar was formed where a lotus blossom dropped from Lord Brahma's hands and landed on the ground, as described in Padma Purana, Srstikhanda, Chapter 17. The words "Pushp" and "Kar," both meaning "hand," combined to form the name Pushkar. As a vedic yagna (sacrifice) approached, Lord Brahma looked for a suitable location. Brahma was thinking about where to do his yagna when a lotus he was holding slipped from his fingers and landed on the ground, releasing water at three separate locations. One of these was the holy city of Pushkar. Pushkar became a holy city after Brahma performed the yagna there. It is thought that a plunge in the sacred Sarovar will wash away one's sins. Inscriptions discovered in Sanchi date the city to the second century BC. The presence of Pushkar is dated back to the fourth century BC thanks to the discovery of perforated coins, as well as Greek and Kushan coins. The fact that Pushkar is not located on any major trade routes makes the discovery of these coins all the more intriguing. This would indicate that the majority of visitors to Pushkar were pilgrims.

**Regional Setting of Pushkar:**

Ajmer is located 12 kilometres (km) to the north-west of Pushkar. It stands at an elevation of 530 metres above sea level in the coordinates 26°27' North, 74°37' East. The village sits in a valley between two parallel hills in the South-West to Northeast-running Aravalli ranges. The hills are between 650 and 856 metres tall. The lake is the focal point of the city's planning. Through Ajmer, you can reach additional religious hubs like Mathura (National Highway 48) and Ujjain (Madhya Pradesh State Highway 17). SH-18 joins the two cities of Pushkar and Ajmer, and the same route also connects the two cities of Merta (70 km) and Nagaur (150 km) from Pushkar. This area is characterised by sandy soil that has a relatively limited ability to retain water. The village sits in a valley between two south-west to north-east flowing Aravalli ranges. These mountain chains typically sit at an elevation of between 1,650 and 1,856 metres.

**Climate:**

The town has a semi-arid climate, with hot, dry summers and mild, wet winters. May and June have average highs of 45 degrees Celsius, while the coldest months of the year see average highs of 25 degrees Celsius. In the summer, when the winds are at their strongest, sand dunes form. The wind is blowing mostly from the south west to the north east. It rains on average between 400 and 600 millimetres during the brief monsoon season of July and August, although it occasionally rains in January and February as a result of western disturbances.

**Population:**

According to the 2011 Census, 21,626 people called Pushkar home. The majority of Pushkar's recent population increase may be attributed to organic growth. There is a sizable daytime influx of people into Pushkar, with estimates ranging from 3,000 to 5,000. There are a total of 10,291 females and 11,335 males in the population. There are 4288 families in the city, and each one typically contains five people. The city's population has grown by 46.2% in the last decade.

### **Population Density:**

Pushkar is a relatively small town, with a total area of only 25 square kilometres and 20 separate wards for government purposes. With only 865 people per square kilometre, the town has an extremely low population density. Uneven population growth in Pushkar, which has serious implications for infrastructural networks, underscores the need for careful planning in the years to come.

### **Occupation:**

The town relies heavily on tourism, which serves as a foundation for the rest of the economy. Pushkar and its environs are home to an estimated 500 temples, making it a popular destination for religious tourists. Most locals make their living in one of these temples. The town's main industries are the temples and the tourism industry.

As a result of increased exposure to international travellers and improved language skills, more and more young people are starting their own businesses. The cattle fair is another major occasion that draws merchants and artisans from all around the state. Foreign visitors, in particular, have made this fair a must-see. Cattle trading, cultural performances, craft bazaars, etc., are the main draws of the fair. The annual Pushkar Fair is responsible for 80 percent of the revenue earned by the Pushkar Municipal Board. The garment industry, the only major employer with roughly 5,000 people, draws its workforce primarily from the surrounding rural areas. Some examples of cottage businesses are the making of traditional handicrafts and rose-related items like Gulkand, rose oil, rose water, and so on.

## **TOURISM IN RAJASTHAN**

In recent years, Rajasthan has become a major draw for visitors from all over the world. Over seven million domestic tourists and over 0.8 million international tourists visited the state in 2009. This represents a fourfold increase in visitor numbers over the previous thirty years. Natural resources, cultural history, historical and archaeological treasures, and uncommon animal species all contribute to the state's reputation for diversity. The state's forts and palaces, heritage hotels, lively fairs and festivals, local art and handicrafts, etc. have all contributed to the state's success in attracting visitors. Western Arizona's desert landscape is a big draw for tourists, especially those from out of the country.

Forty years ago, domestic pilgrims and wealthy international visitors were the mainstays of Rajasthan's tourism economy. Only a small number of visitors travelled to Jaipur, the state capital, Udaipur, and Jodhpur (for foreign tourists), and Ajmer, Pushkar, and Nathdwara (for domestic tourists) as pilgrimage locations. Few people were employed in the field, and it didn't do much for the state's economy or provide many opportunities for new jobs.

Tourism in Rajasthan was once limited to a small number of wealthy pilgrims and business elites, but thanks to the dedicated efforts of Rajasthan Tourism and other state government agencies and a few enterprising people, the industry has expanded to become a major economic driver, solidifying Rajasthan's position as a popular destination for tourists from all over the world. Additionally, whereas in the past, tourism in the state meant desert tourism, heritage tourism (forts, palaces, etc.), and pilgrim tourism, today, travellers have a far broader canvas from which to pick, making their time in the state that much more enjoyable.

More than one million people are currently employed either directly or indirectly by the sector. It is estimated that it currently contributes more than Rs 2,000 Cr. to the State's GDP. Since 1989, the State Government of Rajasthan has recognised the tourism industry as a vital contributor to the state's economy and quality of life.

The Department of Tourism (DoT), Rajasthan has been instrumental in this expansion as the state's official tourism promotion agency. The DoT also promoted the Rajasthan Tourism Development Corporation (RTDC), which was founded in November 1978 in order to act as a catalyst by creating new tourism infrastructure facilities, both for domestic and international visitors.

### **Major Tourist Destinations in Rajasthan**

Almost the entire state of Rajasthan is open to tourists, while most visitors focus on just six major cities that act as "tourist hubs" for other attractions in the area. We refer you to Jaipur, Jodhpur, Pushkar, Bikaner, Udaipur, and Mount Abu as these "hub" cities. These "tourist hub" destinations are sure to be on the agenda of nearly every traveller to Rajasthan (with the possible exception of pilgrims). Each of these centres often participates in the following Tourist Route:

- Jaipur is included in the 'Golden Triangle' itinerary that includes Delhi, Agra, and Jaipur and is particularly popular among foreign visitors.
- The 'Desert Circuit' of Rajasthan consists of the cities of Jodhpur, Bikaner, and Pushkar.

Mount Abu, Rajasthan's solitary hill station, is mostly a solo tourist destination for domestic tourists (particularly from Gujarat but also Western India), whereas Udaipur serves as the entry point into south Rajasthan and serves as the centre of tourist activity in the Mewar region of the state.

The Rajasthan Department of Tourism has designated nine tourism circuits based on topography, attractions, and coverage by individual and tour groups. The following circuits are studied as part of the study:

The Jodhpur–Pushkar–Bikaner–Barmer Desert Circuit; the Udaipur–Rajsamand–Chittaurgarh–Bhilwara Mewar Circuit; the Dungarpur–Banswara Vagad Circuit

Shekhawati Circuit: Sikar–Jhunjhunun–Churu Hadoti Circuit: Kota–Bundi–Jhalawar Dhundhar Circuit: Jaipur–Dausa–Tonk Godwar Circuit: Sirohi–Pali–Jalore Pushkar–Marwar Circuit: Ajmer–Nagaur Brij–Mewat Circuit: Alwar–Bharatpur Karauli Dholpur Sawai Mad

All of Rajasthan's tourist sites may be seen on these routes. The Jaipur (Dhundhar) Circuit, the Desert Circuit, and the Mewar Circuit are the most well-developed, whereas the other circuits only cover one or two destinations.

### III. Result and Discussions

Pushkar's tourism industry has grown in the recent 20 to 25 years. Tourists from all around the world can stay there. Holy Pushkar Lake's natural beauty, ancient temples and havelis, handicrafts and folklore, etc., are all major draws. The growth of the tourism industry as a source of local employment is verified. Table 1 displays the total number of tourists who visited Pushkar between 1991 and 2015. After examining the data, we can conclude that the rise in visitors to Pushkar can be attributed to the city's natural attractions as well as the government's efforts to promote tourism through initiatives such as medical tourism, visa-friendly policies, trade and business visits, study visits, and promotional campaigns.

**Table-1**

<b>Tourist Influx in Pushkar</b>			
<b>Year</b>	<b>Domestic Tourist</b>	<b>International Tourist</b>	<b>Total</b>
1991	104610	38103	142713
2001	103109	46107	153233
2011	113259	62969	174128
2012	126490	73299	199789
2013	122883	73607	196490
2014	250716	91759	342475
2015	266175	84533	350708

Source- MoTAC- Dept. of Tourism, Government of Rajasthan

#### **Hotels and Occupancy Pattern**

The number of hotels has grown by 65.4% between 2001 and 2016. The same holds true for the total number of bedrooms and beds. As the number of visitors to Pushkar grows annually, the city's hotel industry has expanded to meet demand.

As the hotel industry grew, so did the surrounding infrastructure, including the roads, security forces, taxi services, and so on. The average number of hotel beds has also increased to better accommodate guests.

#### **Development of Handicrafts and Cottage Industry**

All, 46% of those who identified as members of the SC group felt that the handicrafts sector had not progressed well, whereas 35% of those who identified as members of the General group agreed that it had progressed well and generated employment opportunities. It indicates that the greatest number of people in the community as a whole have reaped the benefits. In addition, nearly every community has come to acknowledge that tourism is largely responsible for the boom in the handicraft industry.

### **Impacts on Purchasing Power**

shows how visitors' spending affects the local economy. Fifty-two percent of South Carolinians disagree that their purchasing power has not been affected by the tourism business. About a quarter of respondents think it has improved people's economic circumstances and helped them find work.

### **Employment Status**

Impact on Pushkar's economy appears to be quite beneficial. With the exception of the SC, all other groups recognise that the growth of the tourism industry in Pushkar has led to an increase in available jobs. There has been very little improvement in the creation of jobs, according to 50% of those in the SC category. This raises serious concerns, necessitating both government and business sector action to address the problem. This issue of SC people's marginalisation and under-participation in the economic process is brought into sharp focus.

### **Occupational Shift**

This represents a demonstration of the reality that many people nowadays are transitioning from one line of work to another. Primary occupations include farming, mining, and animal husbandry; secondary and tertiary occupations include working in transportation and commerce; working in hotels as a worker or owner; guiding tourists; liaising between hotels and tourists; and playing music as a folk musician. More than eighty percent of respondents across all demographics agreed that the tourist industry has enabled them to pursue careers of their choosing.

### **Impact on Folklore**

means that in the past, persons who knew or were good at traditional folklore were not able to capitalise on their abilities. But things have turned around for them, and now they make a career performing folk music and catering to tourists. Pushkar's thriving tourism industry has allowed residents to put their diverse cultural backgrounds to work. That more than 65 percent of people across demographics say that drinking, crime, looting, theft, pollution, the rubbish and solid waste problem, water resource exploitation, threats to natural life, etc., have increased is indicative of this. We hope that the state and municipal governments will respond to our concerns by issuing recommendations and improving the atmosphere for visitors by addressing the issues we've brought to light.

## **IV. Conclusion:**

The residents of Pushkar are extremely welcoming, and the area around the Brahma Temple, the holy town of Pushkar, and Pushkar Sarovar (Lake), which is located in the Valley of the Aravalli Mountains, has great potential as a tourist destination. According to the findings, the city's infrastructure has improved (with the construction of new roads, hotels, guesthouses, taxi services, and a longer street market in the area surrounding the fort), and its economy has benefited (with more jobs and higher wages, access to better education and healthcare, and a shift away from traditional to more Western fashions, among other things). However, there are also problems that must be fixed, such as the over use of water supplies, the accumulation of massive quantities of trash and municipal solid waste, the endangerment of native species because of rising tourism, and so on. Despite these results, there is still room for development in a number of areas, such as the implementation of rainwater harvesting techniques, the recycling of water resources, and the proper management of municipal waste, the restriction of human interference in natural habitats, the education and certification of tour guides, the provision of information kiosks, the regulation of housing costs, the preservation of historic structures, and the accessibility of medical care.

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