

Sustainable Tourism: A Step Towards Sustainable Development

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Abstract

The contemporary era is marked by major technological innovations and far reaching environmental, socio-cultural and economic changes. These changes have been driven by the process of globalization, information revolution and technological progress that have resulted in heightened social interaction, time space 'distanciation' and 'disembedding' (Giddens, 2000) and high degree of fluidity or 'liquidity' (Bauman, 2000). These trends have further led to global affluence resulting in pervasive consumerism in almost all spheres of life. It has also significantly affected the nature of contemporary tourism. Tourism, which was earlier more of a western phenomenon has become a domestic and middle-class phenomenon in India. The tourism industry in India has become one of the largest employment generation industries today which has both positive and negative impacts. On the one hand, the rapid increase in tourism has come with an increased sense of 'risk' to both the natural environment and built environment (Beck: 1986); while on the other hand it earns revenues for a society and enhances its natural, social and cultural heritages. The idea of Sustainable Tourism thus emerges as the key to social development and progress. It has created awareness among scholars, policy makers and public and private sectors about socio-cultural and environment conservation. Sustainable tourism enhances the resources of tourist spaces without disturbing the local socio-cultural and environmental ecology of the area. It also makes efforts to make the local culture and heritage appealing to the tourists to get maximum benefits from tourism. This paper seeks to analyze the role of sustainable tourism towards sustainable development with reference to Mandawa town in Rajasthan.

Keywords: Sustainable development, tourism and sustainable tourism.

Introduction

The contemporary world has been accelerated by the processes of globalization, liberalization and various technological innovations which have created the shift from "Mechanical Solidarity" to "Organic Solidarity" accompanied by "dynamic", "moral", and "material" density. (Durkheim, 1893). The increase in population has inevitably increased the demand for resources. These increasing demands are being met by the improvement in technology which has, in turn, led to improvement in transport and communication system. The improvement in technology has further resulted in easy access to resources; giving impetus to "consumerism". In a Consumerist society, it is said that everything, including culture, heritage and traditions are for sale, The idea has been elaborated by Adorno and Horkheimer in 'The Culture Industry: Enlightenment as Mass

Deception” wherein they propose that popular culture made available through mass media creates false psychological needs; rendering the masses docile and passive consumers (1944). According to Baudrillard (1988) society has transformed from “Capitalist productive Society” to “Neo-Capitalist Cybernetic order”⁴; the latter aiming to manage control through simulations and consumerism. According to Baudrillard, Simulations, represent the reality of society, i.e. there is no gap between reality and image. These simulations/ images reproduce identical objects made on a massive scale (Fordism)⁵. However, Baudrillard’s third order indicates total absence of reality, a society dominated by codes, signs and images. In such a society, the line between simulation and reality diminishes and there is no way of differentiating real from the imagery. Baudrillard writes that even day-to-day needs are structured by signs and images. For example, shopping for clothes, food and other items are largely structured by the simulations. When we go for dress shopping, we choose between western wear, beach wear, ethnic wear and so on; those which suit our image. Similar is the case with other needs like food, entertainment, housing, products of daily need and leisure. We choose from what is projected and sold by media; which floats a large number of signs and images. The simulations create needs that are not ‘real’ and ‘consumption’ does not give ‘satisfaction’ instead it gives pleasure. The whole society is organized around consumption, pleasure and display of commodities through which one gains prestige and identity in the society. Individuals gain pleasure from things such as expenditure, festivities, travel and so on.

In contemporary era, travel and leisure have become a status symbol and identity of an individual in society; a need created by the media (mass media and social media). With the hike in income levels and leisure time; travelling has become one of the most desirable social activities. Earlier, travelling for leisure was the exclusive preserve of the elite class or a business phenomenon. In the not so elite, pilgrimage was the reason to travel. Today, the alluring travel packages offered by travel market agencies have made travelling a middle-class phenomenon, which has become conspicuous consumer of the travel market. To quote Yadav (2013), “There has been an attitudinal change towards leisure and holidaying, the packages, higher disposable incomes, easier bank loans, cheaper airline fares, and more countries having visa relaxations for Indian families are all further boosting the foreign travels for the middle class.”

Globalization, which involves the free flow of people, information and technology throughout the world has altered the face of tourism all over the globe. Tourism has become a ‘global process of ‘consumption’, ‘consumerism’, ‘commodification of culture, heritage and tradition’, and it has become a phenomenon of global interest by virtue of its role in socio-cultural and economic development. According to (WTO: 1995), “tourism comprises the activities of people travelling to and staying at places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business or any other purposes”. Being a tourist industry, it entails the interaction between people belonging to diverse social, cultural, geographic and economic background. The diversified nature of tourism brings changes in the host society. Tourism plays a positive

role in maintaining and preserving the heritage, facilitates infrastructural development (education, health centres, improved transport and communication, better roads, etc.) and promotes local art and craft. Economically, tourism strengthens a society by creating new job and entrepreneurial opportunities, generating foreign exchange, creating employment for women; thereby improving the local economy and reducing migration. It also supports ecology by raising awareness for natural habitat and conservation of wildlife and other natural habitats. However, tourism can be disadvantageous as well. It can result in displacement of the local residents in lieu of tourism development, increase in cultural clashes resulting in increased crime rate, prostitution, health issues and commodification of culture. It can negatively affect the economy due to increase in prices of general goods and services, scarcity of basic goods, seasonal unemployment and inflation or high land values. The ecological consequences of tourism can be most serious as it can lead to depletion of natural resources, increased congestion, pollution, deforestation and vandalism. To combat the negative impacts of tourism and to accentuate the positive aspects of tourism, there is a need to make tourism sustainable so that it can contribute to the sustainable development of societies. Hence the concept of 'Sustainable Development' and 'Sustainable Tourism' gains the focus for further discussion.

The objectives of the paper are:

- To analyse the factors responsible for growth of tourism in Mandawa town.
- To find out the emerging occupations for the natives as a result of tourism.
- To know the traditional skills which have been recognized at global level as a result of tourism.
- To study the economic development that has taken place in Mandawa due to tourism.
- To assess the impact of tourism on the ecology of the town.

Sustainable Development and Sustainable Tourism: The Conceptual Framework

Sustainable development is a new paradigm of development which focuses on holistic development of society in co-ordination with natural resources. Development, followed by rapid industrialization and urbanization led to the emergence of various socio-cultural, economic and environmental problems. According to Ritzer (2011), "Industry and its side effects are producing a wide range of hazardous, even deadly consequences for society as a result of globalisation". Beck (1986) refers to such society as a "risk society". Mostly the startling predicament of pollution and environmental degradation has made scholars to envisage about an approach of development which would focus on diminishing these threats. This ushered the emergence of concept of sustainable development. It has been defined by the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED: 1987) in the report "Our Common Future" as "development that meets the needs of present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs". There are three

interconnected factors of sustainability namely; the environment, socio-cultural and economic factors. The key principles identified in reports are:

- Inter-generational equity which means that wide array of activities and ecological diversity which is needed by current generation must be available to the future generation.
- Intra-generational equity means to improve the well-being of the residents residing in the community at an equal level and which does not only benefit the powerful or elites. It also provides social justice to all and helps in alleviation of the poverty.
- To deal in cautious manner with risk and uncertainty.
- Public participation which means to community makes decisions collectively

Tourism on the other hand is a fast-growing industry and need of the hour is to make it sustainable. The concept of **sustainable tourism** as defined by WTO, refers to tourist activities “leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social, and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining the cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity and life support systems”. (UNWTO:2005). Sustainable tourism adheres to the principles of sustainability in tourism industry in all its segments. Unsustainable tourism consumes local resources at the same time it creates no profit for the local communities; the concept of sustainable tourism has been required to benefit the local communities.

In Indian context, sustainable tourism has been considered as the best way of generating the revenues as well as preserving the natural and cultural environment. The vitality of sustainable tourism lies in its motive to conserve and preserve the resources and increase the importance of local culture and tradition without causing any damage to it and its contribution towards economic betterment of the society. Three pillars have been identified as the principles of sustainable tourism.



- **Economic sustainability:** To generate economic gains by promoting small scale industries and providing direct or indirect employment to locals in tourism related activities in community to ensure current as well as long term economic gains to the community.
- **Ecological sustainability:** To conserve and develop both natural environment (forest, water, and other natural resources) and built in, man-made or artificial environment (cultural heritage, historical monuments, art and architectural importance).
- **Socio-cultural Sustainability:** The motive is to encourage the positive aspects of tourism while reducing the negative influence through the tourism. It also focuses on promoting the cultural exchange between tourist and the residents by preserving the local traditions and cultural heritage of the destination society.

It is one of the industries which is adequate to maintain the sustainability because of the following reasons:

- Tourism consumes only transport resources for its purpose and other than this it does not exhaust any other non-renewable resources.
- The core resource used by tourism industry is the community resources, like its culture, traditions, fairs, arts, handicrafts, heritage and other leisure facilities.
- For remote or underdeveloped communities with unique or traditional culture, tourism exemplifies one of the rare economic opportunities.
- It creates the opportunity to reduce the poverty and creates employment to both skilled and unskilled labour which further encourages the regional development.
- It creates the understanding and peace between the people of different nations and increases the global consciousness.
- It is meant to revitalize the culture and tradition.
- It also contributes a financial incentive to conserve the cultural and natural resources.

Thus, Sustainable tourism can become a good source of income for any society because of its varied nature.

Role of Sustainable Tourism in Sustainable Development

The concept of sustainable development has been applied to the tourism industry and it has gained immense attention from planners, policy makers and researchers because of its holistic development approach. Tourism can lead to the path of sustainability as it depends on natural environment, society's culture, heritage and traditions. It is clear that the industry generates revenue as well as revitalizes the culture of the society. Sustainable tourism, on the other hand, ensures the continuity of the industry to get maximum benefits without destroying the

resources on which this industry is based. To constitute sustainable tourism a tool for sustainable development it should adhere to the following principles:

- It must aim to improve the quality of life of the people residing in the tourist destination.
- It should encourage multiple employment opportunities for the natives of the destination place.
- It should aim to preserve the natural (habitat) and built in environment (heritage and culture) for both the current as well as future generations.
- It must ensure to provide wide array and qualitative experience for tourists while at the same time paying attention towards socio-cultural and environmental wellbeing of the natives.
- It must lead to enhanced social capital and local culture.
- It should ensure to promote “social cohesion” and “social solidarity” among the people.
- It must be informative for tourists to know about the destination’s culture and tradition; so that they also contribute towards sustainable development.
- It should facilitate livelihood opportunities and contribute to preservation of environment for sustainable development.

Theoretical framework

The concept of development has increased the popularity of different approaches of development. **Ethno-development perspective** is one of the perspectives of sustainable development based on natural potentials of destination which contribute to the preservation of its natural resources and cultural heritage. More importantly, it deals with culture as the key term for the rural development i.e. it promotes the role of indigenous or traditional culture, heritage, skills and talents for effective sustainable development of the area. It is defined as a specific type of development approach which focuses on development on the basis of local communities. In the field of tourism, it aims at familiarizing tourists with the culture, architecture, tradition and lifestyle of people who live (or have lived) in a particular tourist destination. It is based on the desire of tourists to explore the specific cultural heritage, language and customs of certain ethnic communities. Thus, it contributes to the preservation of the cultural identity of local communities and maximizes the economic and social benefits without negative impacts on the environment. The ethno- development contributes to the growth of employment and economic recovery of rural areas, it encourages the development of micro, small and medium enterprises and the development of related economic activities like agriculture etc., it promotes the traditional artistic events and contributes to the preservation of local craft skills. Therefore, the development of this type of tourism allows to the local communities to generate significant income, which is usually used for future improvement of quality of local peoples’ lives (through development of education, health services,

etc. The main agents of the ethno-tourism development are local communities. For instance, Mandawa town in Rajasthan holds importance for its heritage and rural culture but with time, the people of the community have realized that the place holds the potential for tourism through which they can enhance their livelihood. Almost 25-30 old **Havelis** have been converted into hotels and restaurants and approximately 4-5 new resorts have been constructed in the outskirts of Mandawa. This structural change has resulted in increase in employment opportunities along with revival of traditional occupations; contributing towards the economy of the town. Within this theoretical framework, the researcher will examine the sustainability of tourism in Mandawa town which has become a favoured tourist destination.

Research Methodology

As mentioned above, the area selected for the study is Mandawa town of Rajasthan. Mandawa is a town situated in the district of Jhunjhunu of Shekhawati region located in northeast part of Rajasthan. According to 2011 census, the town has a population of 23,335 out of which 11,682 are males and 11,653 are females. It is a historical town famous for its havelis and forts. The fort and other havelis of the town are painted with murals, frescoes, and pictures depicting mythological characters. As township developed, few tourists visited the town and appreciated the historical sites which created the consciousness among residents about the potentiality of tourism in the town. As a result, many Havelis and the fort of Mandawa were converted into heritage hotels. This led to a sharp rise in tourism in Mandawa town since the last two decades. The study is conducted to analyse the impact of tourism on the economy of the town and to understand whether the development is sustainable both economically and ecologically.

The universe includes all adult residents of the town. The sample size includes 350 respondents; both males and females above the age of 20 years. The sampling method used for the study is Purposive sampling. Both primary and secondary sources have been used to collect data and the techniques employed to collect Primary data are Interview Schedule method and Unstructured Interview method. The conclusions have been drawn on the basis of following research questions:

- Q1. What are the factors responsible for growth of tourism in Mandawa town?
- Q2. What are the emerging occupations for the natives as a result of tourism?
- Q3. Which traditional skills which have been recognized at global level as a result of tourism?
- Q4. How economic development has taken place in Mandawa due to tourism?
- Q5. What are the impacts of tourism on the ecology of the town?

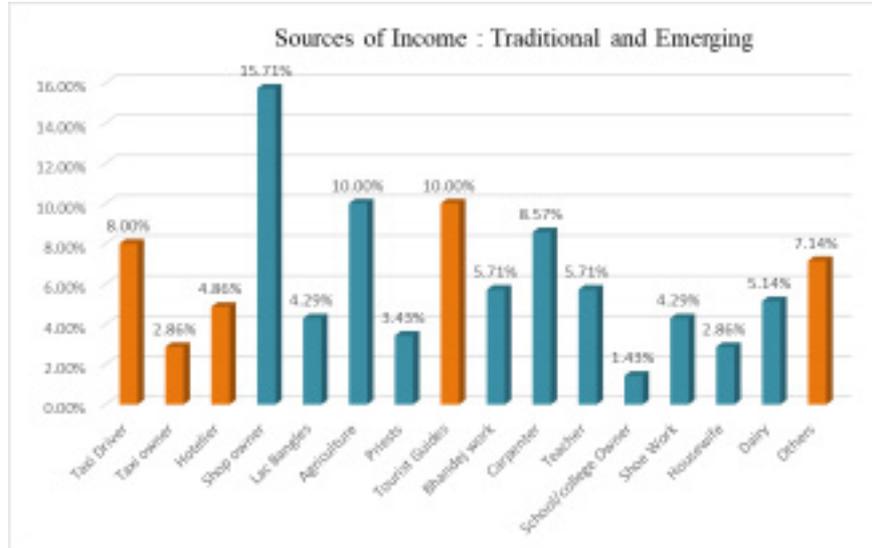
The findings of the study are given below:

I. Demographic Profile

Table : I (a) Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Variables	Categories	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Age	20-30	74	21.14%
	30-40	100	28.57%
	40-50	80	22.86%
	50-60	47	13.43%
	Above 60	49	14.00%
Total		350	100%
Gender	Male	225	64.29%
	Female	125	35.71%
Total		350	100%
Annual Income	0-1 Lakh	82	23.43%
	1-5 Lakh	150	42.86%
	5-10 Lakh	100	28.57%
	Above 10 Lakh	18	5.14%
Total		350	100%
Education	Below Secondary	125	35.71%
	Secondary	70	20.00%
	Senior Secondary	35	10.00%
	Graduation	90	25.71%
	Post-Graduation	30	8.57%
Total		350	100%

The above table represents the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Out of 350 respondents, 21.14% respondents belong to the age-group of 20-30, 28.57% of respondents belong to the age-group 30-40, 22.86% belong to 40-50, 13.43% of respondents belong to the age group of 50-60 and 14% are above 60 years of age. 64.29% respondents are males and 35.71% are females. Out of the total respondents, 20% have passed the Secondary Examination and 10% have passed the Senior Secondary Examination. 25.71% are Graduates and 8.57% are Post-graduates. The annual income of the respondents varies from 1 lakh to 10 lakhs and above.

I(b) Sources of Income: Traditional and Emergin**Diagram 1(b)**

The Respondents are involved in various occupations. 15.71% respondents are shop owners selling garments, grocery, sweets, local art and handicraft items, etc. 10% are involved in agriculture and related activities; 10% are working as a tourist guides who have greater knowledge of the town; 8.57% are carpenters and 8% are taxi drivers. 7.14% are involved in other sources of income like washer man, cook, and housekeepers. 4.86% are hoteliers. 10% are skilled labourers involved in the tie and dye work and manufacture and supply of lac jewellery. 2.86% are taxi owners, 2.86% are housewives and hence do not have any source of income. 5.14% of respondents earn their livelihood by running a dairy. Out of the above, few occupations are traditional and are being carried since several years. However, few of them like hoteliers, tourist guides, taxi drivers and owners, washer men, cooks, housekeepers and some of the showroom owners are relatively new occupations and have emerged due to rise of tourism in Mandawa town; increasing the employability of the local residents.

Factors Facilitating Tourism

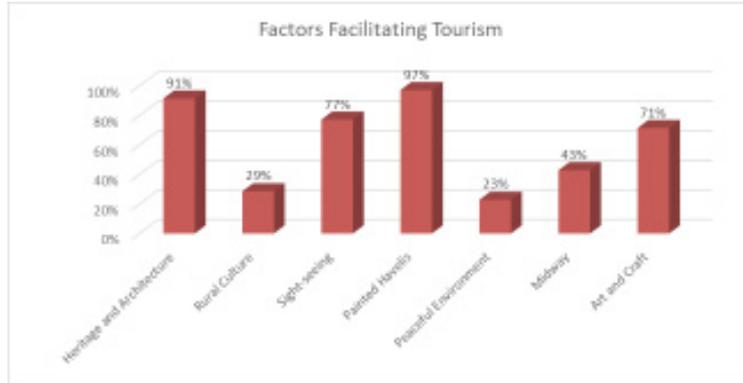


Diagram II

(Figures overlap because respondents have given more than one answer)

The diagram shows the factors which are responsible for the growth of tourism in Mandawa. There are various factors like the heritage, peaceful environment, architecture, enriched culture and mainly the painted havelis of the towns. Among the painted havelis, few have been converted into hotels and restaurants as tourists want to experience the heritage lifestyle. Some stop by at Mandawa for relaxation as it falls midway between Delhi and Bikaner and spend few days on sight-seeing. The walls of the Havelis are painted with stories of Lord Krishna and pictures from medieval times. The paintings also depict the royal life of ancient times. The *Chhatris* (canopies) and *baolis* (wells) attract the attention of the tourists. Another factor responsible for increased tourism is the Bollywood shoots which have made Mandawa visible. Movies like Bajarangi Bhaijaan, PK, and Jab We Met have made the town popular.

Revival of Traditional Skills

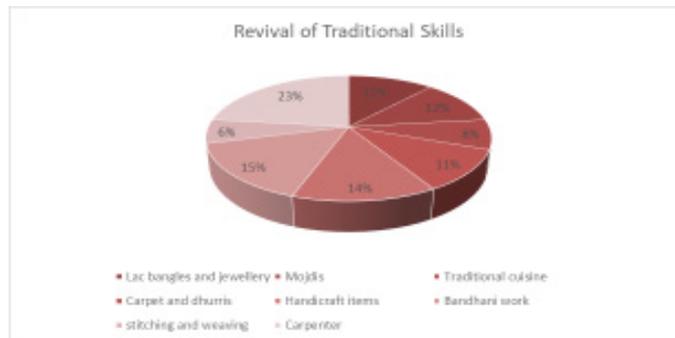


Diagram III

It was found that amongst the total respondents, 37.14% of people are employed in traditional skills. Among the people employed in traditional skills, 6% are involved in stitching and weaving of items like rugs, table mats, jackets, clothes, cushion covers, winter clothes, socks, handkerchiefs, etc. 12% are engaged in manufacturing lac jewellery like bangles, earrings, necklaces that are quite popular among women. 12% are involved in making *mojdis* (leather shoes). 8% are involved in manufacturing traditional food items like pickles, *mangodi*, *papad*, *sharbat*, *chooran*, etc. used for both local sales and export. 11% are making carpets and durries from discarded clothes. 14% are involved in handicrafts or paintings 15% are involved in *bhandej* or *bhandhani* work (tie and dye). 23% are occupied in making wooden items like side tables and chairs. Tourists like to buy items that reflect traditional art as a token of remembrance or gifts for near and dear ones. Tourism has not only generated employment in Mandawa but has also given impetus to the traditional occupations and has helped them in economic empowerment.

Table 2 : Infrastructural Facilities

Facilities	Before 2000	After 2000
School	1 Government School 1 Private School	2 Government Schools Approx. 5 Private Schools
College	-	2 Private Colleges
Hospitals	1 Government Hospital	2 Government Hospitals 1 Private Hospital
Clinics	1 Clinic	3 Clinics
Banks	2 Banks (SBBJ, BOB)	4 Banks :(Yes Bank, SBI, BOB, Axis Bank)
Currency Exchange	1	5
Road	No Proper Road Connectivity, Unpaved Roads	Proper Road Connectivity, Paved Roads
Road Lights	-	Proper Road lights
Water	Had to fetch water from wells	Underground water (Boring)

The table represents the infrastructural facilities before and after tourism flourished in the town. Tourism flourished in the town after 2000. Before 2000, there was one private and one government school and presently there are two government schools and approximately five private schools. There was no college in the town. If natives wanted to go for higher education, they had to go to another city. New schools and colleges have opened to promote better educational facilities. It is evident through data that the awareness for education among the natives have increased over the recent times. There was no private hospital in the town and only one clinic was there for medical consultancy and now there are three hospitals. The number of clinics has increased in recent times. In present

time, natives do not need to visit another area for medical consultancy. Earlier, there were two banks and presently private bank is operating in the town. Foreign currency exchange office has also increased in the town due to requirement for exchanging currency. Other facilities have also improved in the town such as proper road connectivity, paved roads, water facilities and road lights. Tourism has led to improved transport system and road connectivity. Road connectivity has made the travel easier for the natives and it has increased the market facilities also. In recent years, the town has developed as compared to earlier times.

Occupational Benefits of Tourism

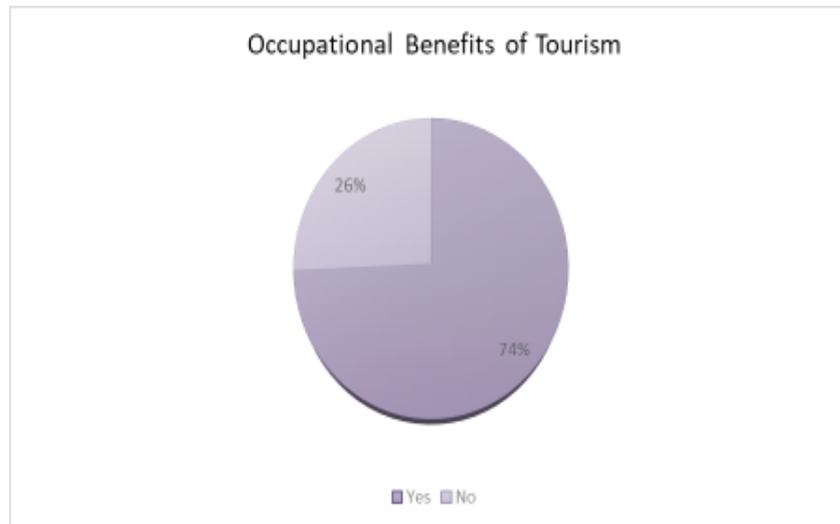


Diagram IV

The above diagram represents the occupational benefits of tourism. 74% respondents who are engaged in various occupations believe that tourism has been beneficial for their occupation as it creates a demand for various items. The respondents whose livelihood was based on agriculture said that they do not need to go out of the town to sell their surplus production of wheat, fruits or vegetables because hoteliers require them on large scale. Those involved in traditional skills say that, tourism increases popularity of their products; thereby increasing the demand. Tourism has generated new jobs/ professions like tourist guides, hoteliers, artists, taxi owners and drivers. This has prevented out migration and a stable socio-cultural and economic fabric. The 26% respondents who said that tourism is not beneficial for their occupation are those who are working as teachers and the owners of the educational institutions. The housewives also do not feel that tourism has helped them in generating income.

Tourism and Ecology: Waste Management, Water Management and other sustainable techniques in the Study Area

During the informal interviews, it is found that there is absence of sustainable techniques for waste and water management. Open wells and small tanks made of mud to serve the purpose of water conversation. Other than this, in 45.71 % household, there is a system of using ground water through boring. The concern to manage and save the rain water however is increasing among the natives. Efforts are being made to build the wells for proper management of rain water.

Similarly, there is a rise in concern for the waste management. Earlier the waste was dumped, without any concern for the cleanliness and hygiene, but with the time, the consciousness for cleanliness and hygiene has increased and now the waste is now collected door to door and the waste is disposed in a dump yard on the outskirts of the village. The vehicle comes to collect the waste. The Municipality of the town is responsible for the smooth functioning of the scheme. It is also found that there is a planning of creating a bio gas for solid waste management. There are plenty of solar plants in the agricultural fields giving rise in sustainable development.

For the development process, barren lands are used for the construction of new hotels, restaurant, resorts and educational institutions. Hence, development has been done without causing harm to agricultural fields. A number of farmers in the town have opted for organic farming that keep away chemical pesticides, and uses less water. They cultivate wheat, chickpeas, and *Bajra* (millet).

Discussion

The Ethno-development perspective underpins aspects such as preservation of natural resources and traditional culture and heritage that contribute towards sustainable development. It also focusses on the use of traditional skills and talents for economic and social development. The current study has been undertaken to study the development in Mandawa town within the framework of Ethno-development perspective. For instance, the residents of Mandawa town have tried to preserve and promote its culture, heritage and traditional skills through which tourism has flourished in the town; making the community members of Mandawa self-sufficient. According to majority of respondents, heritage is one of the main factors which contributes in tourism development and majority feels that havelis painted with frescoes is the major factor promoting tourism development. Out of total respondents, some respondents are employed in traditional skills such as *bhandhani* (tie and dye), *lac* jewellerys, traditional cuisines, carpet and dhurrie making, etc. Residents have tried to generate employment opportunities through tourism development while reviving the traditional skills. Some respondents are employed through the generation of new employment opportunities like taxi owners/ drivers, hoteliers and tourist guides. In terms of sustainability, Mandawa town is making its way towards sustainable tourism development as good number of the agriculturalists have opted organic farming and have got solar plants installed in their agricultural

fields. Thus, it is evident through the representation of data that study area is on the path of sustainable development.

Conclusion

Tourism has become a worldwide activity as societies progress from simple to complex forms. However, excessive tourism can negatively impact the tourist destination. As a result, the idea of sustainable tourism is gaining importance both in academics and social planning. The idea behind sustainable tourism is to conserve and preserve the resources and to retain or revive the local culture and tradition without causing any damage to it. The ethno-development perspective supports the idea that indigenous or traditional culture, heritage, talent and skills can be utilized for effective sustainable development of the rural area. The Mandawa town in Rajasthan has gained popularity as a tourist destination because of its traditional heritage. By converting their heritage havelis and the fort, the natives have been able to attract tourists from all over the world. Consequently, Mandawa has witnessed economic development along with socio-cultural changes at a large scale. The employment opportunities for the local residents have increased. As a result, the quality of life of residents have improved. Tourism has increased the livelihood opportunities. The infrastructural conditions of the town have been improved as well. There is better road connectivity and transportation. Various traditional skills are still employed and being sought by the tourists. It has also been observed that there is an increased awareness about the conservation of environment. Solar plants are used in hotels and agricultural fields, open wells for rain water harvesting, dump yards are situated at the outskirts and trees are not being cut for development process. A number of farmers are engaged in organic farming. Despite the economic development, the socio-cultural fabric has not altered much. The traditional skills are employed to earn the livelihood, the community sentiment prevails and people prefer to live in joint families. Mandawa's development has largely proved to be sustainable and with more efforts it will create a benchmark for rural and heritage tourism. To make society more sustainable, both tourism and ecology should be given priority. Sustainable tourism is an integrative reaction of economic, societal, and cultural phenomena, which indicates that sustainable tourism leads to sustainable development of society.

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Annexure I



Map of Mandawa Town
Source: castlemandawa.com