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Urban Based Cultural Tourism: A Creative Influence on the Modern Society by the Rural Talents of Santiniketan, West Bengal

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Abstract

Urban based cultural tourism is niche tourism that is achieving great prosperity today; as is shown in this study where the efforts of rural people directly influence the habit and lifestyle of urban societies. The objective of the study is to draw the relationship between cultural tourism and urban societies that fosters art and craft activities in Santiniketan. The paper considers this rural influence created by the local handicraftsmen as entrepreneurs in the area and explains the role of cross-cultural linkage on modern society. Such niche tourism aspect has ability to bring positive influence on rural employment and income generation in Santiniketan, hence it develops a creative type of tourism for both rural and urban areas. The primary data were collected from 100 respondents through both questionnaire and observation at the destination. The methods of the study are qualitative and quantitative that details the influence of rural talents of Santiniketan on the other part of the world. The major finding is based on primary data where various products being prepared here are showcased and the rise of several niche concepts is explained. The primary data collected from 50 people are mainly analyzed using Likert scale rating from 1 to 5, few of which were explained using bar graphs, the analysis tool used was Pearson Correlation analysis and the rest 50 were observed at the destination. The sampling technique is random sampling. Secondary data were used to support literature review. Qualitative data were used to discuss the attributes of the destination. This original work investigates the specific problematic context of rural cultural tourism of Santiniketan identifying several initiatives for development. This shift from 'traditional' cultural tourism towards creative tourism is a sustainable approach.

Keywords: Urban Cultural Tourism; Creative Tourism, Human Sustainable Development

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism is an ever-expanding industry with a direct contribution of GDP of USD 2,570.1bn (3.2% of total GDP) in 2017 and was forecasted to rise by 4.0% in 2018. In some places such as Istanbul, Vienna, Japan, New York, India (especially Varanasi), Barcelona, Rio-de-Janeiro are already gaining popularity because of its cultural tourism. Cultural tourism is the essence of Indian society as it is diverse in its form. During January-July 2018 foreign exchange earnings from tourism increased 12.1 percent year-on-year to USD 17.09 billion (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2018a-b). Among all the twenty-nine states and seven union territories, they all reflect vibrant culture which is unique in its form. Cultural tourism on the other hand including its sectors has emerged worldwide as leaders in the revitalization of redundant buildings and open spaces for

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contemporary purposes, providing opportunities for sustaining traditional and contemporary cultural values. Cultural tourism itself has contributed a lot in maximizing the revenue for the tourism market. For example, revenue from ticketing at Archaeological Survey of India's monuments was INR 269.4 crores (Press Information Bureau, Ministry of Culture, 2019). Ministry of Tourism, Government of India has taken several indigenous tourism projects in India like in Kerela the government is promoting the underdeveloped regions of India and reflecting out its beauty in front of the society. Further several heritage tourism projects launched to explore the history and its art-forms (Ministry of Tourism, 2018). Bengal is no less in cultural tourism as it is said to be the cultural center of India. Recently West Bengal Government is taking initiative to promote cultural tourism in Darjeeling hills by showcasing the customs, food habits and rituals of the tribal groups residing there (West Bengal Tourism, 2019). Likewise, several MSMEs (The Micro Small and Medium Enterprises) are targeted to promote the local efforts of the villagers. Especially in the villages of West Bengal one could find the role of MSMEs as they are promoting the local craftsmanship and their unique handicraft products. Some examples are like Kamarpukur of Hoogly, Alipurduar in Jalpaiguri, etc. Also, Khadi Village Industries Commission (KVIC) getting fame because of its unique Khadi works (Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, 2009).

The concept of urban-based cultural tourism is a new phenomenon and a niche aspect. Urban based cultural tourism is gaining popularity in Indian states as there exists a strong bonding with village lands. Almost 70-5% of the country's population lives in the village and almost all Indians are associated with some of the other villages, either because of their ancestral origin or because of rural occupation. The real taste of India lies over there in those lands where one could find unique culture, tradition, art, craft, festivals, fairs, dance forms, cuisines or folklore (Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, 2009).

The method applied to the study is both qualitative and quantitative-based mainly on primary data, and secondary data to provide overall support of the study. This study is helpful in showcasing the rural art and craft, techniques to create handwoven and handicraft materials that are sold in the local market of Santiniketan to the outside tourists who usually belong to urban areas. They prefer to wear or use such items in their casual habits, thus more demand for rural products is created through them. The study is important as it explores such human nature of bringing new change in daily lifestyle. The modern society today thrives for advancement in fashion and infrequent changes. The study is helpful in knowing about the tourist preferences, lifestyle and usage habits in relation to these handicraft products in the present scenario. Hence is helpful in drawing the relationship between cultural tourism and urban societies.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Urban Based Cultural Tourism

Cultural tourism of urban space said to be involving the experience or of having contact of differing intensity with the unique social fabric, heritage, and special character of places; moreover, by experiencing wider urban culture the tourist will have a chance to learn about the local community or will have an opportunity to learn something about the significance of a place and its associations with the local community, that is its heritage (McKercher & du Cros, 2002).

The development of this urban strategy towards sustainable cultural tourism helps to preserve the local heritage and quality of life and this requires effective integration between the urban activities and the actors concerned and vice versa. It is said when the efforts are coordinated, it becomes very challenging for the urban managers and decision-makers, particularly in smaller cities and towns which generally lack the capacities or the

concept of strategic defines implementing 'good urban governance' for sustainable cultural tourism. It is very important to analyze the role of integrated cultural tourism by the urban authorities and the stakeholders (Paskaleva-Shapira & Besson, 2006).

2.2. From Cultural Tourism to Creative Tourism

Cultural experience-based tourism to creative tourism has been explained by Richards and Raymond (2000). According to the study, the shift from tangible to intangible tourism resources places pressure on destinations to become ever more creative in their development strategies. Creative tourism is a further development of tourism towards more experiential forms of consumption which emphasize personal development. The role of ICTs (Information and Communication Technology) and of devices such as smart environments could play a fundamental role in the shift from cultural (even experience-based) to creative tourism, as ICTs could play a pivotal role in the way's heritage assets are accessed and experienced. Many cultural tourists aim to have a learning experience while enjoying their destination. Not only their personal preferences but also the way the site is managed and serviced, are at the basis of their destination's choice (Riganti, 2008). He analyzed deeply the relationship between cultural heritage and tourism and then it was observed that 'the new cultural tourism is based on offering experiences with three basic elements: diversity, interactivity, and context'. The question of 'diversity' in particular revolves around the question of how cities can use culture and cultural heritage to create a sense of place (Delgado, 2001, p.105). The 'interactivity' the scholar referred to was not the technological one, which is undoubtedly important (D'Auria, 2009), but a broader cultural concept in this sense, distinction depends not just on physical space, but on the use of those spaces and the way in which people interact with one another. This makes not just interaction important, but also the third element, the 'context'. The development of creative tourism presents new challenges for both the tourist and the destination. One of the important implications of creative tourism is that the destination has to be creative in order to develop intangible cultural resources, which are characteristic of the destination (such as traditions or local skills) into creative experiences for the tourists. It is not just a question of the tourists themselves engaging in creative activities, but it should be a system of 'co-production' between the tourist and the producers in the destination.

2.3. Concept of Creative Tourism

Creative tourism means a visit that usually offers the travelers and the visitors a unique kind of opportunity for developing their creative potential through their various learning experiences and active participation in related courses which are further the attribution of the holiday destination where they are undertaken (Richards & Raymond, 2000, p.16-20). At the same time it is said that creativity is now a more important element in regional development strategies because of three main reasons "Firstly the rise of this symbolic economy (Lash & Urry, 1994) privileged creativity over cultural products, secondly those regions and cities have increasingly used culture as a form of valorization" (Ray 1998) and therefore it is utmost needed to find new culture for creating distinction in an increasingly crowded marketplace and thirdly destinations which lack a richly built heritage need to find the new means of competing others" (Richards & Wilson, 2007, p.27). Many countries, regions, and cities are now naming themselves as 'creative'. Perhaps Australia being the first example, positioned itself as a 'Creative Nation' in 1994. The Helsinki region in Finland now positions itself as 'the most creative region in Europe', it's because of its high rating for research and development and ICT employment (Florida & Tinagli, 2004). The most important boost to creative development came from famous The Creative Class, in which the topic of the argument among the scholars was the basis of economic advantage that has shifted away from basic factors of production, such as raw materials or cheap labor, towards human creativity. It is important for the destinations to develop, attract and retain creative people who can stimulate these innovations and develop the

technology-intensive industries which power economic growth. The creative people collectively and ultimately make up the 'creative classes', also emphasized that what is important to the creative class is the 'quality of place', which combines factors such as openness, diversity, atmosphere, culture and environmental quality. The concept of dealing with relatively intangible rather than fixed cultural assets focuses attention on the shifting cultural phenomena that are at the same time the object of tourism and the basis of the tourism culture itself (Florida, 2003). According to Richards (2007), perhaps one should be shifting attention away from concepts of culture as a collection of 'products' (museums, heritage centers, events, and so on) toward a more fluid concept of culture as 'process' (links between production and consumption, processes of capital accumulation, identity formation and image creation). The emphasis on intangible factors has now arguably become more important than 'traditional' cultural assets. One might also assume, therefore, that tourists would also be attracted to such destinations since many tourists are in search of 'atmosphere' and difference (OECD, 2009). Cultural tourism strategies have therefore been supplemented by creative tourism products in many destinations, emphasizing intangible and symbolic elements of local society. All the aspects of creativity and creative tourism, when joined together, can give deep meaning to this urban-based cultural tourism when it is connected to cultural factor of a region. The detail about cultural creative tourism is discussed later in this study.

3. METHOD

3.1. Methodology

The work is completed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The study aims to showcase the culture of Santiniketan and explains the concept of Urban based culture tourism through creative tourism. It further aims;

1. To foster the development of rural craftsmanship through the urbanized dwelling
2. To promote urban-based cultural tourism in West Bengal
3. To analyze the relationship between cultural tourism and urban societies

3.2. Sample and Data Collection

Primary data were collected at the destination of Santiniketan. A sample of 100 people who visited Santiniketan is studied using both quantitative and qualitative studies. The population of the sample study is diverse. Out of 100, the data were collected from 50 people through a Likert scale questionnaire and few were represented using the bar graphs. With due reference secondary data is also used for elaborating literature review and supporting the study. The sampling technique used was simple random sampling at the destination of Santiniketan, West Bengal, India.

3.3. Qualitative and Quantitative Method

Observation is done to collect the qualitative data like the cultural outputs like art, crafts, technique, creation, presentation, design, quality of handicraft products, the behavior of the tourists, their preferences, the diversity at the destination, the contribution of the people involved and the overall strength of the destination from the aspect of urban-based cultural tourism.

A mainly Likert scale questionnaire is prepared to study the opinion of the first 50 tourists visiting Santiniketan. The results of Likert scale ratings were explained to analyze the quantitative data which were used to fulfill the objectives and give recommended suggestions.

3.4. Data Analysis

For data analysis, the quantitative data from 50 people were taken. The first 50 out of 100 populations that were represented through bar graph were further analyzed by Pearson correlation technique using SPSS version 23. The data collected from rest 50 were taken through observation at the destination. This analysis was used so that the level of significance could be traced between the different variables. The significant variables create a direct impact on the behavior of the tourists and overall activities at the destination. In order to create a relationship between the two variables, this analysis technique is used.

4. FINDINGS

According to the personal observation done at the destination following explanation are provided.

4.1. Qualitative Findings

Santiniketan and Its Cultural Importance; Santiniketan a place situated in the eastern corner of West Bengal, is about 158 km northwest of Kolkata in Bengal's rural hinterland. Santiniketan carries Rabindranath Tagore's vision of a place of learning that is untouched by religious and regional barriers. The place actually got established in 1863 with the mission of helping education go beyond the confines of the classroom. Santiniketan grew into the famous Visva Bharati University in 1921 attracting some of the most creative minds in the country. The youth from all across the world today participate in various educational programs of mostly the Arts department of Visva Bharati University. Santiniketan carries huge cultural importance and is known for its beautiful craft and design works. The Bengali boutique work is popular for its designs and is used in clothing, wall hangings, and various decorative materials. The Kantha stitch *sarees* are the symbol of Santiniketan culture. The circulation of these beautiful crafts is found all across the nation. The villagers are mostly involved in cultural art and creative design works. The representation of Santiniketan's culture can also be seen in the local fest and celebrations. Various stalls are installed in the *Pous Mela*, *Vasant Utsav* and *Magh Mela* (seasonal fairs) which is celebrated annually in these locations. The flow of creativity is found in all the nearby villages of Santiniketan who participate in these fests. The *Bawl* singers are also a creative attraction of these locations. They are talented enough to present the beauty of Bengal in local Bawl lyrics and songs. Using the local instruments, they are often found singing and dancing in these locations. The creativity of art can be also seen in the local bamboo works in several unique designs. The overall beauty of Santiniketan can be viewed through the mirror of its cultural diversity. Various handicraft materials that are sold in Santiniketan;

Kantha Stitched Products; These are a rare collection of handcrafted material. A type of embroidery craftwork namely Kantha art along with Kantha Stitched *Sarees* are actually done in the eastern regions of the Indian subcontinent of West Bengal, Tripura, and Odisha. Kantha *sarees* are traditionally worn by women in Santiniketan region of the West. The traditional method of making other materials by the rural women in West Bengal typically is through the use old *sarees* and clothes and they layer them with *Kantha* stitching to make material such as a light blanket, throw, or bedspread, especially for children. *Kantha* Stitch Patterns of Bolpur is also known by the name "*Nakshi Kantha*". Various other garments are prepared like, *dupatta*, shirts for men and women, bedding and other furnishing fabrics. The tribal women seen engaged in making those fashionable jewelry made up of seeds. This is a skill of micromanagement done by rural men and women.

Bamboo Work; Bamboo craftwork is quite famous in the area of Santiniketan. Here the craftsmen bring out the best in their artworks. They try to tweak existing processes and bring about design innovation in products like fan, stationeries, showpieces, flower vases, etc. Especially these products can be seen in Amar Kutir, a place close to Sriniketan at Bolpur. Almost all the products are designed in Santiniketan and in their surrounding villages. People from Kolkata are also seen coming to the place to buy these handicraft materials

Leather Products: For the leather works, it only has a strip, the rest is dealt with by the craftsmen team. They cut, skive, dye and stitch very creatively with the help of hand and machinery. There are several workshops located in those handicraft villages like that in Amarkutir Society for Rural Development which is a self-help group situated in a village. Products for example purses, bags, etc are mostly sold.

Khesh and Cotton Weaved Products: *Khesh* weaving is continued in Birbhum since many years. Many weavers in and around Santiniketan believes that it was started in *Shilpa Sadan* in the early 1920s. This was considered to be the vocational training center of Rabindranath Tagore which was set up in Sriniketan, adjacent to Santiniketan. *Khesh* is a form of weaving with fine artistry. The process of weaving is like a warp which is with new yarn and the weft is with strips of thin cloth obtained by tearing old *sarees* lengthwise. Bed-sheets are prepared. Many weavers depend on householders to give them old *sarees* that get woven into bedcovers. The weaver needs six *sarees* for a single bedcover and ten for a double. Apart from this, bags are prepared with *Khesh*. It is compulsory that the old *sarees* have to be of cotton form in order that they tear easily for the further process. Sometimes experiments using synthetic *sarees* have also been undertaken since many women also like too weak synthetic *sarees* and that is easily available. But the problem with such *sarees* is that they cannot be torn by hand and have to be cut by scissors. Thus, increases the time and therefore the cost. The tearing process is a labor-intensive technique as weaving is typically done by female members of the weaver's household. Some shortcuts have been found to make the process less tedious and time-consuming. The *saree* is first torn into five or six parts lengthwise. One end of each part say about five inches is then torn into strips. The person who torn then picks out alternate strips and holds them together in one hand, and the remaining on the other hand. She then pulls in two opposite directions giving him many strips at one go. Typically, a *saree* yields about seventy-five to eighty stripes. The strips are then hanged. After that the beauty of *Khesh* fabric is revolved, the person designing, or the weaver can only specify the color of the warp. It is observed that the color of the weft is completely a matter of chance. Only when the fabric is woven then only one can see how the colors in the old *sarees* have blended into the new fabric. The weaving is done either intensely with the old *sarees* or with gaps in between depending on the effect that is desired to be given.

Cotton weaving especially printed fabrics in Khadi cotton is quite popular in Santiniketan. Various designed and printed fabrics are available in shops in the Santiniketan area. Traditional Bengal handloom weavers are there in rural locations of Bengal including selected units of Birbhum.



Figure 1- Cotton handloom material at Amarkutir, Santiniketan



Figure 2- Kantha Stitch Saree of Santiniketan

Dokra Handicraft Products: Basically, Dokra handicrafts are brought from the villages of the place of Bankura (Bikna village) and Burdwan (Dariyapur village). There are several artisans in Handicraft villages of Bankura and Burdwan engaged in making Dokra handicraft products. Dokra handicrafts are prepared by metal casting using the lost-wax casting technique. There are two processes of lost wax casting, one by solid casting which is predominant in the south of India and hollow casting which is more common in Central and Eastern India. It is believed that this sort of metal casting has been used in India for over 4,000 years and is still used. Products like statues, flower vase, home décor items, pots, jewelry, lamp, tub, crockery, tiles are mostly sold. And most of them are sold through Biswabangla, Kolkata.

Cultural Tourism to creative tourism in Santiniketan: Cultural Tourism has been considered as people's engagement in a region's art, architecture, religion and other elements that help shape their lifestyle. Cultural tourism is also creative in itself as it is influencing the present society to create a new image and that's further helping to a new trendy lifestyle. It is believed that cultural tourism is more associated with being surrounded or taking yourself between such culture that is unfamiliar to you, and that's how a cross-cultural linkage is created between different groups.

Creative tourism is not only creating active participation in courses but in anything that is connected to learning that may be an area, group, village, family or anything. Cultural tourism gives an opportunity to highlight one's culture to a foreign individual coming crossing borders and their creativity is reflected when they buy materials over here and take them to their place. They try to use such materials in their day to day lifestyle and create a blend of modern and traditional culture. That is also a part of creativity.

In Santiniketan, one has immense options to get involved either directly or through shopping through some sources. People come here directly during festive occasions of *Magh Mela*, *Vasanta Utsav*, and *Poush Mela*. In those days Santiniketan is crowded by the Bengali people of nearby regions and far away districts. Even we could see foreigners who are studying at Viswabharti University (a central university at Santiniketan) or who are part of *Kala* or *Sangeet Bhawan* (Art and music department) in the university comes here and participate in the culture.

Thousands of artisans bring their product to the venue and sell them to the tourists directly. We could find many items being sold at this place like Dokra Jewellery and idols, *Sarees*, *Kurtas*, *Pijamas*, Cotton weaved half coats, bed-sheets of *Khesh* products, household materials made up of bamboo craft, decorative items, bamboo crafted hats, showpieces, etc. These are in great demand across Santiniketan. Apart from season, one can find a crowd every Saturday at *Sanibarer Haat* at *Sonajhuri* area of Santiniketan. Here dokra products from Bankura and Burdwan, bamboo products made by local craftsmen of Ballavpur Danga and Amarkurtir are bought and sold here. Also the *Bawl* singers are seen singing their melodious songs in their rhythmic tunes with their musical instruments and the tribal ladies seen performing Santhali dance altogether.

4.2. Quantitative Findings

The rating was from scale 1 to scale 5 where scale 1 was least agree/ least recommend scaling 5 which was strongly agree/ strongly recommend. This means the one who least prefers goes for 1 rating, then 2 who prefers a little more, the one on an average will prefer 3 which means he neither agrees nor disagrees, neither like nor dislikes and the one is more used to or likes a lot will rate 4 and lastly 5 for those who highly recommend.

A whole of 50 respondents could complete the questionnaires in which 35 were females and the rest 15 were male respondents. They were mostly from the places of Kolkata, Durgapur, Rampurhat, Bankura, Asansol, Ranchi, New Delhi, Canada, and

Germany. The people from West Bengal and nearby states were the frequent visitors, whereas the foreign people have visited Santiniketan and now resides in their respective countries.

Following is a graphical representation of the bar graph, stating seven parameters of 7 selected questions. The first graph describes axis X as number of visits where axis Y is number of individuals. The number of visit ranges from scale 5 which are the most visited and 3 to the neutral visit. Similarly, second graph with axis X denoted as recommending someone to visit Santiniketan. It ranged from scale 4 to 5 denoting strongly agreeing to just agreeing. The third graph with axis X denoted as recommending someone for buying handicraft during the visit to Santiniketan. Again, it ranged from scale 4 to 5 denoting strongly recommend to just recommended. The fourth graph with axis X denoted as preferring to wear jewelry of Santiniketan outside the place. It ranged from scale 4 to 5 again denoting strongly agreeing to just agreeing. The fifth graph with axis X denoted as recommending the use of handicraft for household purposes. It ranged from scale 4 to 5 denoting strongly agreeing to just agreeing. The sixth graph with axis X denoted as agreeing to the fact that these items add uniqueness to the attire. And again it ranged from scale 4 to 5 denoting strongly agreeing to just agreeing. The Seventh graph with axis X denoted as agreeing to the fact that Dokra jewelry adds beauty to the attire on festive occasion. And again, it ranged from scale 4 to 5 denoting strongly agreeing to just agreeing, but we find some are at scale 1 denoting that they don't agree. Three of the individuals don't agree where the maximum majority says yes. The people who least agreed where mainly from Ranchi, Jharkhand and they haven't bought the Dokra material as such.

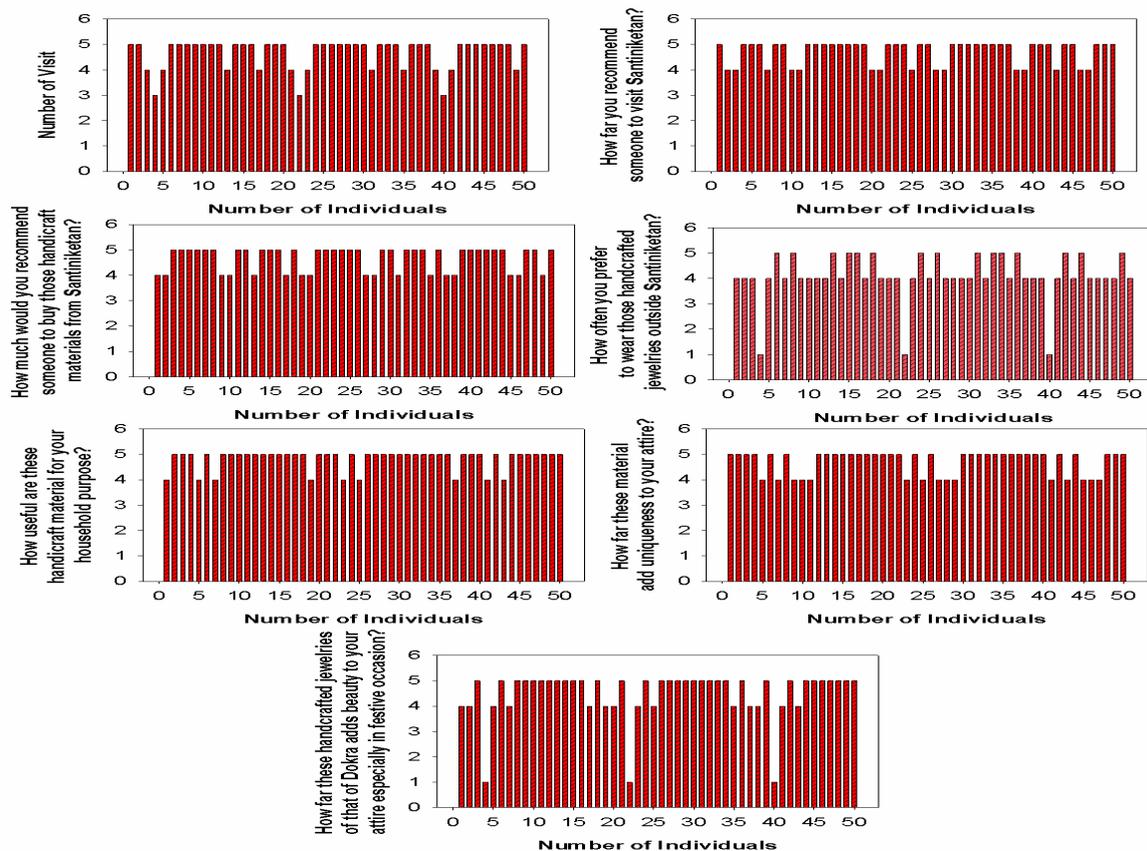


Figure 3- Graphical representation of the parameters in the questionnaires

The rest seven parameters were not explained through the graph but follow the same sequence. The parameter asks about how far this handcrafted jewelry of that of Dokra adds beauty to your attire especially in festive occasion? It asks about the Kantha stitched

Sarees (for women) or *Kurtas* (for men) are good to wear in festive occasions or not and it is seen that it ranged from strongly agree to neutral, ranging from scale 5 to 3. Most of the people were strongly agreed. Further the next parameter asks whether they like to buy these handicrafts for their relative as well. And most of them were strongly agreed and a few were just agreed with the scale ranging from scale 5 to 4. The next was about their preference in carrying them in other countries, it ranged from scale 5 to 1 because few of the foreigners agreed with it and the rest Indians disagreed and rated 1. The next rating was about wearing jewelry with casual wear and it ranged from average to strongly agree, only 1 member disagreed. The next rating was about buying bamboo crafts items to decorate their home and here it ranged from strongly agree to neutral, where 90% were strongly agreed. Further it was asked to rate behavior of the entrepreneurs with the tourists and it ranged from strongly agreed to neutral where the maximum was strongly agreed, few were just agreed and one disagreed. The last but not the least, the rating for good affordability of the handicrafts ranged from highly agreed to neutral, where most were happy with it, 20% were just satisfied and the rest were just agreed. The following data were used to discuss the relationship between significant variables.

Table 1. Correlations Between Variables

	RECF	RECM	WEAR	USE	UNI	FESS	KKS	REL	COUN	CAS	DES	ENT	AFF
VIS	-.156	-.056	.639**	-.005	-.156	.698**	.238	-.222	.655**	.166	.231	.105	.213
RECF		.083	.086	.034	.429**	-.080	.169	.600**	.098	.487**	-.114	.413**	.152
RECM			-.045	-.007	.083	-.036	-.069	.253	-.321*	-.009	.066	.130	-.062
WEAR				.062	.086	.874**	.080	.099	.354*	.080	-.046	.092	.071
USE					.375**	.228	.391**	.625**	.256	.507**	.571**	.710**	.752**
UNI						-.080	.169	.600**	.098	.044	.342*	.413**	.152
FESS							-.056	.112	.309*	.091	.042	.137	.107
KKS								.266	.759**	.653**	.436**	.724**	.784**
REL									.037	.389**	.479**	.721**	.399**
COUN										.635**	.389**	.578**	.679**
CAS											.212	.753**	.845**
DES												.502**	.524**
ENT													.776**

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

In the above table the code relates to following questions (refer appendix section):

VIS- You visit Shantiniketan most of the time?

RECF- How far you recommend someone to visit Santiniketan?

RECM-How much would you recommend someone to buy those handicraft materials from Santiniketan?

WEAR-How often you prefer to wear those handcrafted jewelries outside Santiniketan?

USE-How useful are these handicraft materials for your household purpose?

UNI-How far these materials add uniqueness to your attire?

FESS-How far these handcrafted jewelries of that of Dokra add beauty to your attire, especially in festive occasion?

KKS- Kantha stitched Sarees (for women) or Kurtas (for men) are good to wear on festive occasions? How far you agree

REL- Do you like to buy these handicrafts for your relatives as well?

COUN- Do you carry them in other countries?

CAS- Do this handcrafted jewelry goes side by side with your casual wear?

DES- Do you buy those bamboo crafts items to decorate your home?

ENT-It is true that the entrepreneurs are very friendly to the tourists? How far you agree?

AFF- Are those handcrafted products available at an affordable rate?

According to Table 1., VIS is shown highly significant at .639 to WEAR which means tourists especially visit Santiniketan most of the time so that they could buy those handcrafted jewelry and could wear in some other locations also. VIS is seen correlated to FESS at a highly significant level of .698 which means when tourists consisting of females visit Santiniketan especially during festival time like Pous Mela or Magh Mela, they prefer to buy and wear handcrafted jewelry of Dokra. VIS is correlated to COUN at a highly significant level of .655., that means among the tourist who visits Santiniketan most of the time, some of them also take those handcrafted jewelries (which they buy at Santiniketan) to some other countries. RECF is correlated to UNI at a highly significant level of .429. This means that tourists usually recommend someone to visit Santiniketan because the jewelries here add uniqueness to attire. RECF is correlated to CAS at a highly significant level of .487 which means that the tourists who recommend someone to visit Santiniketan and prefer to buy handcrafted jewelries; they love to wear them with their casual wear. RECF is correlated to ENT at a highly significant level of .413 which means that the tourists usually recommend someone to buy handcrafted jewelries from Santiniketan because the entrepreneurs are very friendly to the tourists. RECF is seen negatively correlated to COUN at slight significant level of -.321 which means that least number of tourists is there who suggests people to come and visit Santiniketan so that other people could buy and carry these handicraft products to other countries as well. Then WEAR is seen correlated to FESS at a highly significant level of .874 which means tourist specially females who visit and buy handcrafted jewelries of Dokra also prefers to wear that outside Santiniketan. Then WEAR is seen correlated to COUN at a slight significant level of .354, this says that some tourists who prefer to wear handcrafted jewelries outside Shantiniketan usually take them to other countries as well. After this USE is seen correlated to UNI at a highly significant level of .375 which means that handcrafted products are useful for household purposes, also the handcrafted materials add beauty to their attire. Then USE is seen correlated to KKS at a highly significant level of .391 which says that the tourists who come to buy the household products are also interested to buy the *Kantha* stitched *sarees* and *kurtas*. USE is seen correlated to REL at a highly significant level of .625 which means tourists who buy handicraft materials for household purpose also likes to carry them for their relatives. USE is seen correlated to CAS at a highly significant level of .507 which means the tourists who buy handcrafted materials; it is useful for their household products. Also, they prefer to buy handcrafted jewelries that go side by side with their casual wears. USE is correlated to DES at a highly significant level of .571 which means for some tourists the handcrafted household products are not only useful but are also helpful to decorate their home. Then USE is seen correlated to ENT at a highly significant level of .710 which means tourists who are interested to buy handcrafted household products from the entrepreneurs who are friendly to them. USE is seen correlated to AFF at a highly significant level of .752 which means handcrafted products that are bought by the tourist for household purposes are available at an affordable rate. UNI is seen correlated to REL at a highly significant level of .600 which means that there are tourists who think that these handcrafted materials add uniqueness to their attire; they also buy them to their relatives. UNI is seen correlated to DES at a slight significant level of .342 which means that the tourists who prefer to buy handcrafted products that add uniqueness to their attire, also look for products to decorate their home. Then UNI is seen correlated to ENT at a highly significant level of .413 which says that they buy unique handcrafted products from the entrepreneurs who are friendly to them. After this KKS is seen correlated to COUN at a highly significant level of .759 which means that most tourists prefer to buy *Kantha*

stitched *sarees* and *kurtas* in festive occasions which they even like to carry to other countries. Also KKS is seen correlated to CAS at a highly significant level of .653 which says that the tourists who buy handcrafted jewelries for casual wear also buy *Kantha* stitch *sarees* and *kurtas* to wear on festive occasion. Then KKS is seen correlated to DES at a highly significant level of .436 which means that there are tourists who buy *kantha* stitch *sarees* and *kurtas* to wear on festive occasions, are also interested in bamboo materials to decorate their home.

KKS is seen correlated to ENT at a highly significant level of .724 which means there are tourists who prefer to buy *Kantha* stitch sarees and kurtas says that the entrepreneurs from whom they buy are quite friendly with them. Then KKS is seen correlated to AFF at a highly significant level of .784 which describes that most of the tourists who buy *Kantha* stitched *sarees* and *kurtas* from Santiniketan, they are quite affordable for them. Then REL is seen correlated to CAS at a highly significant level of .389 which means that most tourists buy handcrafted materials especially jewelries for their relatives that go fine with casual wear. REL is seen correlated to DES at a highly significant level of .478 which says that the tourists who buy handcrafted materials including bamboo items for their relatives for decorating their homes. REL is seen correlated to ENT at a highly significant level of .721 which says most tourists buy the handcrafted products for their relatives as well because the entrepreneurs are very friendly, and they motivate them to do so. REL is seen correlated to FSS at a highly significant level of .399 which simply means that most tourists buy handcrafted products for their relatives in Santiniketan because the products are available at the affordable rates. Then COUN is seen correlated to CAS at a highly significant level of .635 which says that most tourists who visit other countries use these handcrafted materials of Santiniketan with their casual wear. COUN is seen correlated to DES at a highly significant level of .389 which describes that the tourists, who carry these products to other countries, also buy bamboo materials to decorate their homes. COUN is correlated to ENT at a highly significant level of .578 which means that tourists usually take handcrafted materials to other countries because the entrepreneurs motivate them to buy because of their friendly approach. COUN is seen correlated to AFF at a highly significant level of .679 which says that many tourists carry the handicraft products to other countries because it is available at an affordable rate. Then CAS is seen correlated to ENT at a highly significant level of .753 which means many tourists even if they have no plan for buying the handicrafts, buys it as those materials can go well with casual wear and they are motivated by the friendly approach of the entrepreneurs. CAS is seen correlated to AFF at a highly significant level of .845 as simply because the tourist who is willing to buy the products to wear with their casuals, it is available at an affordable rate. Then DES is seen correlated to ENT at a highly significant level of .542 which again says that the tourist usually buys handicraft materials to decorate their home as because the entrepreneurs are quite friendly to the tourists which motivate the tourist to buy. DES is seen correlated to AFF at a highly significant level of .524 that says that the tourists mostly buy bamboo craft materials to decorate their home because they are available at an affordable rate. Lastly ENT is seen correlated to AFF at a highly significant level of .776 which says that tourists are interested to buy the handicraft products of Santiniketan because the entrepreneurs including sellers are very friendly to them and things are available at an affordable rate.

5. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

As per the research survey and further feedback it was found that most people usually visit Santiniketan during festival time. During the off-season mostly the local people from Kolkata, Durgapur, Rampurhat come as the place which is known to them. They are fond

of buying bamboo crafted artworks, cotton handloom *sarees* and visits *Sanibarar Haat* at Sonajhuri for buying *Dokra* handicraft. Some go to Amarkutir society for Rural Development for buying cotton and *batik* clothes from the showroom there. Some of the foreigners who are studying at Vishwabharti University mostly buy things for their relatives and wear those traditional hand-crafted jewelries with their casual attire. Some who come from other states like New Delhi and Jharkhand are fond of household decorative items and souvenirs. Approx 75% of the population are Bengali people, where 10% are foreigners and the rest 15% are from other Indian states. Few of them are not so much satisfied with the cost of the product as the added GST (Goods and Service Tax) takes the price at high scale and has to pay more from pocket. But rest part of Santiniketan and their culture is loved a lot.

5.1. Urban Based Cultural Tourism in Santiniketan

The overall development of this creative tourism aspect is giving rise further to a new form of niche tourism called as urban cultural tourism or urban-based cultural tourism. As per the literature survey made earlier in this study, urban cultural tourism was about enhancing cultural tourism in urban areas. But this paper tells that when a tourist who comes to rural areas buys a lot many things for their family and friends and hence brings them to their home which may be in urbanized areas and changes the culture of urban life and the trend of today. This is because they use such products with their urban lifestyle and hence a blend of culture is created and is reflected in their habits. In simple words cross-cultural linkage is created through these businesses of MSMEs located at Santiniketan.

These days in India, fashion is at its peak and in every new season, we find fashion getting more unique and trendier. When urban inhabitants use such rural materials, such blend adds a new fashion, whether it is through their attire or through the decoration at their homes. The most important benefit of such tourism is that it is generating income for the rural dwellers that are poor and earning just for their food, clothing, and shelter. The local vendors are also creating influence on the other part of society. The exchange of culture here means that urban society is influenced by the talents of rural society and this pulls them to Santiniketan again and again. The same impact is created when the same culture is being transmitted to some other rural society, hence brings new ideas and creativity in occupational level for the other rural society as well.

5.2. Creative Tourism in Santiniketan

Creativity is seen in the art and crafts materials prepared by the handicraftsmen of Santiniketan in the form of jewelries especially made of seeds. The efforts they put in these materials of jewelries and clothes are mostly handmade and rest bags, finishing of dresses, purses, etc are machine-made. *Kantha* products are prepared and designed first by hand and then finished by machine. The handicraftsmen here in Santiniketan are also the entrepreneurs who at the same time make efforts for selling their products in the local fairs or market. They work together as a family in harmony and provide their unique designs and sharing various ideas and techniques. This type of effort is regarded to be as intangible cultural resources, which are characteristic of Santiniketan and thus providing creative experience to the tourists. The Creative Class also exists here in Santiniketan because the entrepreneurs are anyhow accumulating the capital resources which is very limited and planning for development of their businesses in a small space. There are self-help groups like Amarkutir Society for Rural Development who are providing assistance to the handicraftsmen. The poor laborers and entrepreneurs are helping their society and group to form an identity of their MSMEs businesses among the tourists who visit their place and thus getting a little fame by the tourists coming here and the third parties like Biswabangla and Banglanatak.com. There comes the amalgamation of culture when local people carry these handicrafts like decorative souvenirs, clothes like *Kantha* stitched materials like saree

and kurtas, gods and goddesses idols to other locations or countries. This creates a visual impact on other societies. Countries with modern habits love to bring changes to their lifestyle, likes to wear colorful ethnic wears and hence demand is created. The purpose of the visit of Santiniketan and purpose of buying material is also influenced by other people whether through the mouth of words or through advertisement and publicity. Through this research study an initiative is taken for sustainable approach. Sustainability of culture, art-forms, lifestyle, and habit is created when it is carried forward by the future generation. For creative tourism which is part of Urban Cultural Tourism according to the study, personal preferences of the tourists are almost important which creates a motivating factor among the handicraftsmen as entrepreneurs to provide them exactly what they want and even more than what they expect.

There exists diversity in the population of the tourists and diversity in the choices and preferences of the tourists of Santiniketan. Interactivity exists here between the local residents and the tourists. When tourists come to Santiniketan, they get a learning experience about the art and crafts making by those handicraftsmen, various other cultures like dance-form, songs folklore, traditions and earning and living in a limited source of income. This is also part of creative tourism. This particular observation and impression tourists carries them in their mind for lifetime and helps to transfer it in the form of mouth of word to the other part of society. Thus a human sustainable developmental approach emerges through this study which clearly states that humans can explore more in a limited income, and if more assistance is provided, one day it can be a pioneer.

5.3. Problems existing in the present scenario of Santiniketan

Santiniketan being the small place has well preserved its culture and is well famed about literature and music through the novel laureate Shri Rabindranath Tagore and tradition but is not well-famed about the traditional ethnic products. Initiatives have been taken so far by Banglanatak.com and Vishwabangla for promoting their products. The poor laborers work hard day and night for earning their living. Income status is quite low in the region. There is a lack of intermediaries for promoting the destination. Secondary there is lack of shelter for the handicraftsmen where they work especially in the villages of Amarkutir Society, Ballavpurdanga, Gualpara, etc.

5.4. Suggestions

Hence it is suggested that such type of urban-based cultural tourism and creative tourism must be promoted so that the rural society and their poor people are not just exploited, as the reward of their work is being taken away by big multinational or private organization who buys their product at cheaper rates from them and sells them at higher rate in some other places or through their websites. The rural workforce should be rewarded equally for their work and dedication. Their society needs further improvement by the local, state and central government. Further it has been seen that Ministry of Tourism, Government of India has given influence to rural tourism in some places including Bishnupur and Mukutmanipur, Ballavpurdanga in Santiniketan so rural tourism in Santiniketan can be more promoted by undertaking such rural tourism projects as the influence of one project is not highly effective in the present scenario. More amenities like restaurants, ATMs, drinking water or RO points and toilets could be established in several locations as it is the prerequisite for the entire tourist who comes to this place, especially during the festival days. The culture of Santiniketan is unique and colorful as it is seen in the Indian states of Gujarat and Rajasthan but the main problem here in Santiniketan is lack of marketing. Better publicity through some tourism slogans could help the place to get enriched. West Bengal Tourism, Government of India could take initiative to promote Santiniketan through such slogans. Ministry of Tourism, Government of West Bengal is already planning for its development at a wide level. With the theme of creative and urban-based

cultural tourism in Santiniketan, it can easily be marketed in other states and in other countries because someone from another country always looks for something unique and uncommon products which are here in the abode of Nobel Laureate Rabindra Nath Tagore. More and more research and development programs could be initiated in the area by various organizations so that the drawbacks could be minimized to some extent. Poverty is the main issue existing here. Economic empowerment is needed so that the infrastructure could be developed in proper way. Through this study it is easily identified that there is a huge scope of MSMEs (Micro Small and Medium Enterprises). So, the Ministry of Micro Small and Medium Enterprises, Government of India could join hands together with Ministry of Tourism and can handle certain projects on the villages around Santiniketan, West Bengal. Lastly role of ICT (Information and Communication Technologies) is utmost needed for promotion and development of Santiniketan at a broad level. More update information is needed to be fed on the websites. Online marketing access is needed to be created more for common tourists apart from Banglanatak.com and Biswabangla. There should be a portal for the MSMEs at Santiniketan from where all the stakeholders could be connected. There is a huge scope for development at Santiniketan, only a safe shelter is needed by the government so that things could gain a certain level of accuracy.

5.5. Limitation

The findings of this study are based on the 100 respondents of limited places. Hence the overall views of a large population cannot be drawn with this. At the same time, the study is helpful for the readers in getting an idea about niche cultural tourism which is present in Santiniketan. The study is useful in providing a draft of present preferences of the tourists in relation to those of traditional arts and handicrafts. It is important as it clarifies the concept of urban-based tourism through creativity of rural men. This demand for rural products creates a strong impact on buying behavior of other tourists. In this way the local income is raised which can be further utilized in welfare of the rural society. Hence a sustainable initiative is taken for preserving the rural heritage of Santiniketan, West Bengal.

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APPENDIX

Visitors satisfaction questions

1. You visit Santiniketan most of the time?
2. How far you recommend someone to visit Santiniketan?
3. How much would you recommend someone to buy those handicraft materials from Santiniketan?
4. How often you prefer to wear those handcrafted jewelries outside Santiniketan?
5. How useful are these handicraft materials for your household purpose?
6. How far these materials add uniqueness to your attire?
7. How far these handcrafted jewelries of that of Dokra adds beauty to your attire especially in the festive occasion?
8. Kantha stitched Sarees (for women) or Kurtas (for men) is good to wear on festive occasions? How far you agree
9. Do you like to buy these handicrafts for your relatives as well?
10. Do you carry them in other countries?
11. Do these handcrafted jewelries goes side by side with your casual wear?
12. Do you buy those bamboo crafts items to decorate your home?
13. It is true that the entrepreneurs are very friendly to the tourists? How far you agree?
14. The handicrafts are available at a very affordable rate. How far you agree?

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