

“AN OPINION OF THE PEOPLE TOWARDS THE STATUE OF UNITY AS A SUSTAINABLE TOURIST DESTINATION”

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ABSTRACT

Sustainability is a buzz word today. It is applicable to every industry and it is very much relevant to tourism also. The concept of sustainable development is the result of knowledge and perceptions about the dangers of policies for economic development for man and Earth, which imposed serious need for taking urgent measures to regenerate the Earth. SDGs in their recent forms are a universal set of goals, targets, and indicators that UN members' states will use to frame their agendas and policies over the next 15 years. This study focuses on one of the greatest majestic landscape Statue of Unity.

Research in area of sustainable tourism is crucial to the future development, management and marketing of sustainable and competitive destinations for the well-being of tourists, their host communities and their overall destination experience, which are crucial to their ultimate success. Keeping this in mind, an opinion study was conducted to know what people of Gujarat are thinking about the world's tallest statue. An opinion was studied with the use of structured questionnaire. Collected data were analyzed with the use of Exploratory Factor Analysis – EFA, Independent Sample T-Test and OneWay ANOVA. Factors extracted have been mapped with the relevant SDGs of UNWTO.

Key Words: Sustainability, Tourism, SDGs, UNWTO, Statue of Unity.

1. INTRODUCTION

TOURISM

Despite jumping directly into the topic, let us understand first what tourism stands for.

"Tourism basically means people who travel to different places for fun and entertainment purposes that cannot be fulfilled at home."

Since many years a slogan is considered in India, i.e. 'ATITHI DEVO BHAVA' which means 'Guest is equal to God' hence India consists of a large number of tourist places and in this we will describe one of those tourist places.

As there are number of ways tourism can be defined: Tourism is a social, cultural and economic phenomenon which entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purpose and those people are said to be as the visitors (which may be either tourists; residents or non-residents) and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which imply tourism expenditure.

-United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2008

Tourism can play a big role in reviving the economy hit by Covid-19, Prime Minister, Narendra Modi told chief ministers and he pointed to be potential of domestic tourism as well as the opportunity to attract a large number of overseas travelers since many of the key destinations have faced brunt of pandemic.

PM said to the centre and all of the states to think seriously about the "post-corona tourism" would look like as India has adequate opportunities in the sector, according to people to the details of conversation.

As it is been said that the Gujarat is the most attractive tourist destination for both domestic and international travelers and also those states are been blessed with the diverse attractions such as world famous architecture, temples, historical monuments, exotic wildlife and many more...

STATUE OF UNITY

On 7 October 2010, our Honorable Prime Minister, Mr. Narendra Modi, revealed the creation of the 'Statue of Unity' in a press conference to mark the start of his 10th year as Gujarat's chief minister. The project was named at the time to be "Gujarat's national tribute." In support of this campaign, 'Statue of Unity Movement' was launched in which farmers contributed their used farming tools and 135 metric tons of scrap iron were collected by 2016. Michael Graves Architecture and Design (MGA) planned and perfected this statue, and it was beautifully designed by Indian sculptor Ram V Sutar. Designing the memorial took eight years, and constructing four years. The construction began in October 2013, finishing in October 2018 and is 600 feet tall.

Instead, the Statue of Unity has been included in the list of "8 SCO wonders" by the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. The SCO refers to a coalition of eight nations including China, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Russia, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, India, and Pakistan. Among eight top structures located in the nations above, the statue of Sardar Patel has featured.

STATUE OF UNITY ATTRACTIONS is as below:

- Exhibition hall/ Museum & Wall of Unity
- Laser light & Sound show
- Valley of Flowers
- Sardar Sarovar Dam & its dykes
- Boating
- Helicopter ride
- Shopping
- Cactus Garden
- Ekta Nursery
- Vishwa Van
- Sight-seeing of historical Shoolpaneshwar Sanctuary and Temple

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 global goals intended to be "a blueprint for a happier and more sustainable future for all." The SDGs, set by the UN General Assembly in 2015 and planned to be met by 2030, are part of UN Resolution 70/1, the Agenda 2030.

The Sustainable Development Goals are:

Goal 1: No Poverty

“End poverty in all its forms everywhere”

Goal 2: Zero Hunger

“End hunger & achieve food security and improved nutrition, and promote sustainable agriculture”

Goal 3: Good health and well-being for people

“Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages”

Goal 4: Quality education

“Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all”

Goal 5: Gender equality:

“Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls”

Goal 6: Clean Water and sanitation:

“Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all”

Goal 7: Affordable and clean energy:

“Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all”

Goal 8: Decent work and economic growth:

“Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth full and productive employment and decent work for all”

Goal 9: Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure:

“Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation”

Goal 10: Reducing inequalities:

“Reduce income inequality within and among countries”

Goal 11: Sustainable cities and communities:

“Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”

Goal 12: Responsible consumption and production patterns:

“Ensure sustainability consumption and production patterns”

Goal 13: Climate action:

“Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impact by regulating emissions and promoting developments in renewable energy”

Goal 14: Life below water:

“Conserve and sustainability use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development”

Goal 15: Life on land:

“Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems, sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, and halt and reverse land degradation and halt biodiversity loss”

Goal 16: Peace, justice and strong institutions:

“Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”

Goal 17: Partnerships for the goals:

“Strengthens the means of implementations and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development”

The best known definition of sustainable development is 'development that meets the needs of present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs'

- *WCED, 1987*

Sustainable tourism growth meets the needs of current visitors and host areas, while at the same time protecting and improving potential opportunities. This is intended to contribute to the management of all resources in such a way that economic, social and aesthetic needs can be met while maintaining cultural identity, critical ecological processes, and structures for biological diversity and sustaining life.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Planning and policy that used to be involved the consideration of “political debate about what the agenda is, issues are, who is going to be involved or affected, and the alternative courses of action that is used to address the problems” (Dredge & Jenkins, 2007)

Tourism and its impact on natural and socio-cultural environment must be permanently available as to the general population, especially the local population, they would use to be participate in the planning process of bringing all important development decisions. The concept of sustainable development is the result of knowledge and perceptions about the dangers of policies for economic development for man and Earth, which imposed serious need for taking urgent measures to regenerate the Earth. Thus was created the paradigm of sustainable development, located in Agenda 21, which provides recommendations for sustainable resource management in the 21st century (water, forest, land) (Tanja Angelkova, 2012)

SDGs in their recent forms are a universal set of goals, targets and indicators that UN members' states will use to frame their agendas and policies over the next 15 years. They also used to follow and expand on and the millennium development goals (MDGs) which were agreed by governments in 2000. (Evans and Steven, 2012)

Economic growth, environmental protection and social equality are the main three issues of sustainable development. On this basis, it can be argued that the idea of sustainable

development is essentially based on three philosophical pillars. Such foundations are 'economic sustainability,' 'social sustainability' and 'environmental sustainability.' (Taylor, 2016)

This study reflects an emerging paradigm shift that includes a deeper appreciation of the benefit received at the destination level from an approach to health and well-being. (Heather Hartwell, Alan Fyall, 2016)

The review identified three key perspectives, namely tourist industry, the destination community and the destination itself. (Cheryl Willis, Stephen Page, 2016)

The authors conclude that research in this area is crucial to the future development, management and marketing of sustainable and competitive destinations for the well-being of tourists, their host communities and their overall destination experience, which are crucial to their ultimate success. (Adele Ladkin, Ann Hemingway, 2016)

The term "sustainable development" has three main vectors: people, the planet and prosperity and, on the other hand, the SDG's sustainable development goals have 17 objectives, while the ultimate goal is partnership with the objectives that have been used to develop and achieve goals and also to address resource challenges. (United Nation, 2016)

Among the SDGs, there is a positive and negative correlation between the pairs of indicators allowed for the identification of specific global patterns. For that SDG 1 that is (no poverty has a synergetic relationship with most of the other targets, while the SDG 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) is the goal most often associated with trade-offs. The trade-offs also highlighted, In order to achieve the SDGs, it is necessary to negotiate and make structurally non-obstructive changes to the current strategies. (Jurgen P. Kropp, 2017)

“Features of statue of unity” division into 4 zones of the statue of unity i.e. zone 1 is the memorial garden and a museum. The zone 2 reaches up to the statue’s thighs, while zone 3 lifts up to the viewing gallery at 153 meters. Zone 4 is the maintenance zone, comprises the head and shoulders of the statue. (The times of India, 2018)

Opportunities for sustainable tourism development and preservation of its competitiveness, is largely influenced by the quality of the environment, and for that to preserve and attractive natural and cultural heritage and other values, goods and resources. For sustainable it is considered as any kind of tourism that used to be contributes permanently for the protection

and promotion of the environment, natural and other resources, cultural values and integrity of the local community. (Tanja Angelkova, 2018)

It defends the relationship between fictitious resources of the three foundations of SD and how SDs and SDGs can be seen as embedding what has been disembodied for too long. Considering the fact that SDs and SDGs are now on the UN agenda for 2030 and the truth is that there is a great way to say that there is space for social science to exploit, despite its multidisciplinary existence. (Neves, 2018)

This focuses primarily on key issues related to the principles of growth, sustainability and sustainable development. Issues that include the context of SD, as well as the foundations and values of the definition. It also sets out the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the related discussion on trade-offs, complementarities, costs and benefits, as well as what can be done to achieve the much-talked-about SD. (Mensah & Enu-Kwesi, 2018)

3. RESEARCH DESIGN FOR THE STUDY

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Sustainable tourism development meets the needs of present tourists and host regions while protecting and enhancing opportunities for the future. It is envisaged as leading to management of all resources in such a way that economic, social, and aesthetic needs can be fulfilled while maintaining cultural integrity, essential ecological processes, biological diversity, and life support systems. The STATUE OF UNITY is the tallest statue in the world; taller than the 153 m tall Spring Temple Buddha in China and almost twice as tall as the world-famous Statue of Liberty in New York. This paper aims to explore an opinion of the people of Gujarat to promote Statue of Unity as sustainable tourist destination.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

In this paper, following objectives are studied:

- To identify the factors affecting an opinion of the people towards the Statue of Unity as a Sustainable Tourist Destination.
- To study the influence of Age & Gender on the factors affecting an opinion of the people towards the Statue of Unity as a Sustainable Tourist Destination.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This paper aims to study an opinion of the people towards Statue of Unity as sustainable tourist destination. 17 SDGs proposed by UNWTO was referred to develop a data collection instrument. Therefore, the research design adopted was Descriptive research design.

Researcher went to Statue of Unity to gather the data. Total 250 visitors out were approached and they had agreed to participate in research after visiting the site. Respondents were contacted personally by researcher to note their responses to the survey instrument.

RESEARCH ANALYSIS METHOD

Questionnaire was developed to understand an opinion of the people towards the statue of unity. 17 sustainable development goals were referred to develop an opinion scale.

Researcher found Exploratory Factor Analysis as a suitable test to extract the factors for the study the people's opinion with the use of SPSS Software. Along with it, Independent Sample T-Test in case of Dichotomous Variable such as Gender and One-Way ANOVA were used to study the mean difference among the groups in demographic variables in SPSS Software.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Before applying exploratory factor analysis on the data, it is very important to check the data suitability. Therefore, KMO and Bartlett's Test was applied on the data.

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's test

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.911
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	1978.312
	df	171
	Sig.	.000

KMO values depicted on the above table is very well above 0.7 level and values shown here is 0.911 which denoted that reliability of this data is 91.1%. Significance value in Bartlett's test is 0.00 lower than 0.05 also proves the data suitability for further analysis. These tests confirm that the study is free from random error and data exhibits internal consistency as items in the scale were measured on Five Point Likert Scale.

Table 2: Rotated Component Matrix

Sr. No	Items	Component		
		1	2	3
		Holistic Tourist Destination	Environment Friendly Tourist Spot	Economic Empower ment
1	I believe that statue of unity is an attractive tourist site.	.609		
2	According to me less environmental damage has done to the area near statue of unity.		.782	
3	Statue of unity will lead to economic growth and development to the nearby area.			.648
4	A part of income generated through Statue of unity can be used for the well-being of local community.	.650		
5	Statue of unity can also contribute to women empowerment by providing income generating opportunities to them.			.868
6	Statue of unity will help us in reserving cultural and heritage of local community.	.795		
7	Aquatic animals such as crocodile near SOU have been shifted to reserve area to preserve life below water.		.719	
8	Statue of unity will play vital role in preserving freshwater ecosystem in Narmada River.		.715	
9	Statue of unity is a manmade majestic landscape.	.753		
10	Statue of unity with pristine forest and biodiversity will be of great value in promoting it as a sustainable tourist destination.		.712	

11	Statue of unity provides a platform to tribal people from nearby area to showcase their diverse cultural background to the visitors	.686		
12	Statue of unity is built by public private partnership and it has engaged multiple stakeholders which has lead foundation for the development of this tourist destination.			.688
13	SOU supports to maintain clean atmosphere with the use of renewable resources.		.749	
14	Natural and cultural landscape of SOU promotes it as a preferred tourist destination	.650		
15	SOU is the place for nature lovers.		.688	
16	SOU promotes recycled products such as bamboo craft, patrali (Areca Palm Leaves) plates (Organic Plates).			.674
17	SOU also promotes organically prepared local food such as tribal teas, shankhpushpi.			.610
18	SOU also serves as a place that preserve honeybees and rare species of chicken through dedicated place to preserve it.			.780
19	It also spread the message of UNITY through garden called EKTA NURSERY.	.709		
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization.				
a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.				

Interpretation starts with identification of the variables having higher loading under factor extracted in exploratory factor analysis. Principle component method with varimax rotation was applied to extract the factors. Total three factors have been extracted in this study. Factor loading higher than 0.5 is significant for the study. Here, variables categories under factors have loading higher than 0.5. As per the researcher's understanding factors are given names. So, Factor 1 is named as **Holistic Tourist Destination** comprises of the variable such as site

attraction, wellbeing of local community, culture and heritage of tribal people, landscape of the site etc.

Environment Friendly Tourist Spot is the name used for the Factor 2 as the variable extracted under this group as mainly sharing a very common theme. This factor helped researcher to understand relevance of sustainable goals to statue of unity. Because this factor comprises variables that represents sustainable goals such as life below water, ecosystem in river near the site, protecting the environment, biodiversity and use of renewable resources.

Factor 3 is named as **Economic Empowerment** as this factor consists of the variables such as economic growth of an area near the site, women empowerment, income generation sources for tribal people and preserving the natural resources.

HYPOTHESIS TESTING

Another objective of the research was to study whether demographic variables like age and gender, influence opinion of the people towards statue of unity or not. So, hypothesizes were developed and Independent Sample T- Test and One-Way ANOVA were used to test hypothesizes.

H1: There is a significant difference between Gender and factors affecting an opinion of the people towards the Statue of Unity as A Sustainable Tourist Destination

In this hypothesis, researchers aim to study whether an opinion differs from male to female or not. Do they believe that site can be promoted as holistic tourist destination or environment friendly tourist spot? Whether this site has led to economic empowerment or not. As gender has only two groups: Male & Female and hence Independent Sample T-Test applied on the variables. Test result shows the value of 0.330, 0.377 and 0.243 for holistic tourist destination, environment friendly tourist spot, and economic empowerment, respectively. Therefore, researcher had failed to accept hypothesis and inferred that both male and female have similar opinion towards Statue of Unity as A Sustainable Tourist Destination

H2: There is a significant difference between Age and factors affecting an opinion of the people towards the Statue of Unity as A Sustainable Tourist Destination

It was an intent to check whether age influence an opinion of the people or not. To study this, One Way ANOVA test was applied on the variables and test result has given significance value of 0.664, 0.416 and 0.730 for holistic tourist destination, environment friendly tourist spot, and economic empowerment, respectively. This leads to an interpretation that age has no influence on opinion of the people.

5. CONCLUSION

Findings of this paper help in understanding the 17 sustainable development goals in context a very famous Majestics landscape of Gujarat – Statue of Unity. A need of study was felt to know what people of Gujarat are thinking about the place. Exploratory Factor Analysis has given three factors - holistic tourist destination, environment friendly tourist spot, and economic empowerment. These factors (as per the variables grouped in each factor) have been mapped against SDGs and much relevance was found in this mapping.

Factor Extracted	Mapping With UNWTO' Sustainable Development Goals.
Holistic Tourist Destination	SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being SDG 9: Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure
Environment Friendly Tourist Spot	SDG 6: Clean Water and Sanitation SDG 7: Affordable and Clean Energy SDG 15: Life on Land
Economic Empowerment	SDG 5: Gender Equality SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth SDG 17: Partnerships for the Goals

It was also important to explore the demographic variables of the visitors and their influence on their opinion towards the statue of unity. It was not a surprise for researcher that gender and age do not influence their opinion. Almost every individual that had visited this mesmerizing place had almost fallen in love with it. There is no doubt that Statue of Unity is a holistic tourist place that have many things such as honeybee preserves, EKTA nursery to offer. It truly represents the Unity of our Nation. Thus, through this study, researchers want to emphasize that Statue of Unity meets majority of the Sustainable Development Goals as

per opinion of the visitors and believe that it should be promoted as Sustainable Tourist Destination.

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