

**FAIRS AND FESTIVALS AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT****S. H. Suma,****Reg. No. 21113161082007****PhD Full Time Research Scholar,****Department of History,****Scott Christian College (Autonomous),****Nagercoil.****and****Dr. D. Dathi, MA., M.Phil., Ph.D.,****Assistant Professor of History****Scott Christian College (Autonomous),****Nagercoil.****Affiliated to Manonmaniam Sundaranar University,****Tirunelveli****Abstract**

*Fair and Festivals have direct and indirect impacts on communities. In Kanyakumari District, people become active agents of fair and festivals. They provide opportunities for participation, skills development, volunteering and social, cultural economic and environmental developments. Community events and festivals can attract tourists and visitors at regional, national and international level. Festivals help to capture attention and promote attractions and infrastructures. They make it possible to maximize and rationalize the use of certain spaces. Preservation of these spaces may result in financial benefits and dissemination of artistic and cultural heritages. Social benefits of festivals to communities can be extensive, particularly when the draw is from outside the region. Festivals and events have impacts that go well beyond what can be measured in economic terms. They contribute to the quality of life across Kanyakumari district by strengthening communities, providing unique activities and events, building awareness of diverse cultures and identities, and acting as a source of community pride.*

**Key words:** Festivals, business, development, divine, awareness and tourism

**Introduction**

Before independence, Kanyakumari was part of the ancient kingdom of Travancore. Kanyakumari people are predominantly Dravidians. Their culture is heterogeneous. In Kanyakumari District, Community festivals and events have been revolutionizing businesses and prompting economic development across the state since 1991. Community events, festivals and arts venues create jobs, support local businesses and attract visitors. Governments offer a wide range of products and services to help promote community events in rural areas. Community events and festivals can make a significant contribution for rural development with strategic planning, well-defined goals, local level partnerships and funding. However rural communities often organize tourism events to inject cash into their economies. This cash is not enough to achieve comprehensive rural economic development. Events assist the tourism

businesses of the region but are not enough to revive the entire economy. Every year, festivals and events generate more than 22,000 jobs in Kanyakumari district. People are able in their being and functioning, to relate more intimately their faith and experiences of life. The programmes of fair and festivals create an atmosphere of social unity, peace and harmony among the people after Covid 19 and concentrate for social development.

### **Importance of Fair and Festivals**

Fair and festivals like Kuzhithurai Vavubali Exhibition, Kanyakumari Bagavathiamman Temple fest, Mandaikadu Bhagavathi Amman Temple fest, Kottar St. Xavier's Church fest, Shivalaya Ottam, Suchindram Thanumalayan Temple feast, Thovalai Murugan Temple feast Sooramskaram and Thuckalay Peer Mohammad make an event successful every year in Kanyakumari district. Along with the big temples, thousands of other festival centres in the Temples have been built and brought to prominence. The thematic nature of events can be used to either justify or disqualify the benefits or advantages of events based on their importance to the host community. An event that spreads the seasonality of tourism in a region also distributes the flow of money into a region, increasing the opportunities for full time employment. Though in principle fair and festivals are recognised as social and religious events, they imply experiences of local culture and socio-religious events.

The social thrust of the programmes are to increasing visitor length of stay in region/town; increasing visitor expenditure in region/town; improving destination awareness; and increasing civic pride or community solidarity. The aim of celebrating Temple festivals is to seek blessings, protection and miracle from the gods and goddesses. Many of those who make the arduous journey have a very focused appeal. One of the biggest festivals in Kanyakumari district, Mandaikadu Bhagavati is in honour of the many forms and struggle of the divine feminine. This helps host communities foster local development, leadership and networking.

These factors are beneficial to a region and its tourism industry, although the cost at which they are obtained must be justified. Furthermore, these impacts differ due to the size and scale of the event ranging from a local community based event such as an art show to a mega-event, such as the Olympics. For instance, little real estate speculation could occur as a direct result of the hosting of a local event such as an art show, compared with the hosting of a mega-event such as the Olympic Games.

Festivals attract tourists who might otherwise never visit the area, and the benefits of festivals extend well beyond generating tourism dollars and include strengthening rural communities and enriching the quality of small-town life. In addition to the social positives, holding festivals also improves the environment of the host community.

In the villages of Kanyakumari district, festivals are the celebrations of something the community wishes to share; their objective is to attract the maximum number of people to participate or, to provide the opportunity for —a public, themed celebration. Historians suggest the increasing number of festivals is due to small and large communities seeing the opportunity to obtain tourism money transactions. Further they suggest that events are seen as creating income and jobs in the short term and generating increased visitation and related

investment in the longer term. All levels of government see them as a way to promote tourism, while regional tourism operators use them as part of their marketing strategy.

In general, festivals are organized for reasons that include the preservation of culture and history and the provision of recreation and leisure or for their ability to give an area a competitive advantage by targeting special interest markets that may lead to the meeting of social, economic, and environmental goals. Festivals and community events have the ability to revitalize, re-image, and expand existing markets and in most cases bring economic benefit to the destination that stages them

Festivals have direct and indirect impacts on their communities through the opportunities they provide for; participation, skills development and volunteering. They can also have environmental and political impacts. Benefits of festivals to communities can be extensive, particularly when the draw is from outside of the region. Local vendors, artisans, craftspeople, restaurateurs, hoteliers and innkeepers are kept busy and may indeed make a large portion of their annual income during the course of a weekend. Main street revitalization can also be a positive economic spin-off from festivals and special events. Appearance improvements made for an annual celebration have year-round benefits and can create stimulus for improved downtown retailing and service industries.

### **Importance of Economic impact**

The economic impacts of events on the macro-economy of a region are categorized into primary and secondary economic impacts. The primary impact is the direct economic impact of the event measured by surveying participants or measuring business sales. Secondary impacts are those that result from the introduction of new money into the economy. Economic impact studies provide a good tool to estimate the influence of particular events on the economy. The results of economic impacts are useful in making decisions and may assist developers and local politicians to justify public funds by citing the economic benefits events have for the whole community. The studies of economic impact focus on how a project can impact the surrounding community by creating employment, income, and helping territory spatial organization.

Economic impact is not just about direct or directly-induced expenditures. In a brief recently released by the National Governors Association (USA) on the Role of the Arts in Economic Development, it was noted that "the non-profit arts industry is a potent force in economic development nationwide. States and communities have integrated the arts into their economic development arsenal to achieve a wide range of direct and indirect economic goals. Arts and festivals assist municipalities in the following ways: They leverage human capital and cultural resources to generate economic vitality in under performing regions through tourism, crafts, and cultural attractions; They restore and revitalize communities by serving as a center piece for downtown redevelopment and cultural renewal; They improve quality of life, expand the business and tax revenue base, and create a positive community image; and They make communities more attractive to highly desirable, knowledge-based employees thus stimulating new forms of knowledge-intensive production to flourish.

Events are increasingly used in place marketing and can offer the following advantages: They can attract tourists and visitors, both national and international. The tourism influx

generated is especially welcome when it occurs in a medium or low-tourism season since it reduces seasonal ebbs. Events help to capture attention and promote attractions and infrastructures. They make it possible to maximize and rationalize the use of certain spaces. Preservation of these spaces may result in financial benefits and dissemination of artistic and cultural heritages. Through cultural events, places may attract not only tourists but also investments. The tourism industry that supports events generates employment and economic diversification.

Other possible impacts of community events and festivals can be: increased expenditures, creation of employment, increase in labor supply, increase in standard of living, increased awareness of the region as a travel/tourism destination, increased knowledge concerning the potential for investment and commercial activity in the region, creation of new accommodation and tourist attractions Increase in accessibility Construction of new facilities Improvement of local infrastructure, preservation of heritage, increase in permanent level of local interest and participation in types of activities associated with event(s), strengthening of regional values and traditions, increased local pride and community spirit, increased awareness of non-local perceptions, enhanced international recognition of region and values and development of skills among planners.

### **Social Development**

The principle operative in the fair and festival is the meaningful expression of one's faith, which is communitarian. A communitarian expression of faith involves transcending the religious realm and involvement in the realities of life around. Therefore fair and festivals in principle, are open to move beyond the religious realm and be committed to the welfare of the society at large. They get involved in several socio-economic aspects to improve the quality of life for the people around. Village people in the fair and festivals involved in activities of social mobilization for developmental purposes.

The area of social development consists of promoting integral human development with a rights-based approach. Conducting and disseminating analyses of the social situation focuses in the region on particular issues and with respect to specific groups of the population. It analyses the impacts, levels of investment and management of social policies and programmes implemented by the governments in the region, at their various levels; disseminating details of successful or innovative experiences to inform decision-making in villages where fair and festivals organised. It is advising governments in the region on issues of social development; and helping train the professionals and technicians of the relevant public bodies.

The services and outputs of the Social Development include regional, national and sub-national studies. Comparative analyses of policies and policymaking services start from local festivals where people gather every year. The areas identifies dissemination and exchange of experiences in respect of analytical models and policy alternatives; the collection, processing and dissemination of data on indicators and the management of social policies; the coordination of stakeholders and specialized institutions; technical assistance and training for national working groups. Its main areas of fair and festival include social

protection, poverty and inequality, education, management and social investment/spending, social innovation, children and young people, food and nutritional security and persons with disabilities.

Event tourism can contribute to economic diversification and profitability by increasing employment, improving basic services, and increasing economic equity between urban and rural populations. Events and festivals can help people be more aware of their capabilities, perceive new job and business opportunities and improve quality of life. Community events and festivals can attract local, national and international tourists and visitors. Events help to capture attention and promote attractions and infrastructures. They make it possible to maximize and rationalize the use of certain spaces. Preservation of these spaces may result in financial benefits and dissemination of artistic and cultural heritages. Events and festivals play a role in putting a region on the map and distinguishing their basket of attractions from other similar regions. Events can also result in social benefit such as increased community pride and enhanced community image.

## Conclusion

The study shows that the more involved local people and suppliers in the fair and festivals are of provision of services, food, beverages, and attractions, the greater the economic benefits to the region. Local vendors, artisans, craftspeople, restaurateurs, hoteliers and innkeepers may make a large portion of their annual income during the course of an event. Organizers should build partnerships and involve the greatest number of possible local operators. Organizers should think about all the potential benefits, and consider the community events to be an investment in community sustainability. Community events and festivals can make a significant contribution for rural development with strategic planning, well-defined goals, local level partnerships and funding. However, rural communities often organize tourism events to inject cash into their economies. This cash is not enough to achieve comprehensive rural economic development. Events assist the tourism businesses of the region but are not enough to revive the entire economy. The way of life, objectives, structures and programmes of the fair and festivals open up new avenues to forge fresh relationship with the neighbours in Kanyakumari district. This is vital for the unity, welfare and social development of the people in the district as a whole.

## Endnotes

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