



Tribal Fairs And Festivals In Two Telugu States : Surplusness For Tourism

Mr. Surendra Dokka, Research Scholar,

Dept. of. History & Archaeology,
Yogi Vemana University, Kadapa,
Dr.Y.S.R.District, Andhra Pradesh, India.

ABSTRACT:

This paper examines Tourism with Tribals and its potential. India is home to a vibrant and diverse range of tribal communities, their culture, therefore, manifests some of the oldest tribal traditions in the country. Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, both are home to indigenous communities. Tribal tourism is one type of tourism which provides opportunity to connect the tribal and indigenous people. The Andhra Pradesh and Telangana states has tremendous potentiality for Tribal tourism. Tribal tourism is its role in preserving indigenous cultures. By showcasing traditional practices, rituals, and crafts, tribal tourism helps in keeping these traditions alive. Tourists' interest in authentic cultural experiences incentivizes the community to maintain their heritage. Traditional practices, including rituals, ceremonies, and festivals, attract tourists seeking unique cultural experiences. This paper deals Tribal Tourism in two telugu states and how development is going on.

Key Words: Tribal Tourism, indigenous, Culture, Heritage, Traditional Practices

INTRODUCTION:

India is home to a vibrant and diverse range of tribal communities, with the **Scheduled Tribe (ST)** population recorded at **10.45 crore, or 8.6% of the total population**, according to the **2011 Census**. These communities, comprising over **705 distinct groups**, are spread across the country, often living in remote and inaccessible areas. To assist and support these tribal communities, the Indian government has launched various schemes and policies aimed at their upliftment, with a focus on sustainable development, cultural preservation, and socio-economic empowerment. The financial commitment has significantly increased, with the **DAPST budget rising from ₹25,000 crore annually to ₹1.2 lakh crore in 2023-24**. The Union Budget

2024-25 has further increased the **allocation to ₹13,000 crore** for the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, reflecting a **73.60% increase** over the previous year's estimate.

The tourism industry in India is rising and has excellent potential to create jobs and produce a large amount of foreign capital, thereby promoting the region's overall economic and social growth. The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) forecasts India's fifth-largest tourism sector growth. Tourism will give primary benefits include financial funding for restaurants, grocery shops, travel, fun and attractions, while indirect services include public expenditure on associated facilities and household Indians spending on tourism.

Tribal tourism may be defined as sum of total activities undertaken by a person like traveling and staying in a tribal area for leisure, culture or any other purpose. Any person who is undertaking tribal tourism can experience something new and unique depending on his/her interest and possibilities like the day to day course work of a tribal family will be entirely different from that of any urban family.

Tribal Tourism refers a form of travel in which tribes allow tourists to experience authentic indigenous life (travel habitat, heritage, history and handicrafts culture, values and traditions) by allowing the tourists to visit their villages for them to be exposed to a culture completely different from their own.

In India, this concept is in its nascent stages but it is popular in countries like Ethiopia, Kenya in Africa; Ecuador, Peru, Brazil in South America, etc. Ethnic Tourism, Tribal Tourism, Indigenous Tourism, Rural Tourism, Eco-Tourism, Nature Based Tourism, Agri-Tourism, Community Based Tourism, Responsible Tourism are few terminologies which are all closely aligned and used in academia to explain the concept of travel to tribal areas. These concepts are a part of the wider umbrella of Alternative Tourism which in essence means tourism activities or development that are viewed as non-traditional, often defined in opposition to large-scale to mass tourism to represent small-scale sustainable tourism developments.

Objectives of the Study:

1. To Examine Tribal Fairs and Festivals in Two Telugu States
2. To Identify Tribals related with Tourism

Andhra Pradesh, state of India located in the southeastern part of the subcontinent. It is bounded by the Indian states of Tamil Nadu to the south, Karnataka to the southwest and west, Telangana to the northwest and north, and Odisha to the northeast. The eastern boundary is a 600-mile (970-km) coastline along the Bay of Bengal.

Telangana state is situated between 15°55' to 19°56' north latitudes and 77°15' to 80°47' east longitudes. It ranks 12th among the states of India in size, occupying an area of 114,840 square kilometers in the Deccan Plateau. Direction State Bordering Telangana Northeast Chhattisgarh Northwest Maharashtra West Karnataka East and Southeast Andhra Pradesh Telangana is made up of the Eastern and Western Ghats as well as plain areas.

Andhra Pradesh and Telangana, both are home to indigenous communities. Hence in recent years both states are witnessed a rise in the new tribal tourism projects which aims to attract tourist to the local tribal customs and lifestyle. While tribal tourism projects help the indigenous population in multiple ways, it has also negatively impacted the traditional way of life of these communities. It has raised the threats of losing privacy, indigenous ownership, misrepresentation and misinterpretation of tribal culture, the dominating role of mediators, commercialization of tribal culture, and so on.

Tribal tourism will promote the development of locally generated goods, apart from direct and indirect jobs, and have essential multiplier effects as money is recycled into communities. Tribal Tourism will promote the development of locally generated goods, apart from the development of direct and indirect jobs, and have essential multiplier effects as money is recycled into communities.

Under tribal tourism, community gives a chance to the tourists to explore and experience the traditional and authentic way of living, heritage, history, handicrafts, and so on. The governments and communities put their share of interest in promoting tribal tourism, which helps to boost the economy of the communities and stimulate more opportunities to interact with the tourists and sometimes it helps them to maintain long-term relations.

TOURIST ACTIVITIES IN THE TRIBAL REGIONS

As tribal groups are located in rural areas, many tribal tours combine cultural tourism with outdoor exploration and hiking, or visits to national parks, wildlife sanctuaries and tiger reserves. When a tourist is planning a tribal tour, one must look for opportunities to sample local cuisine, hear live music, attend a festival or see traditional folk dancing. Some village's house small museums containing tribal artifacts and others may offer educational tours for tourists to learn about traditional agricultural methods.

Festivals provide a platform for the preservation and revitalization of traditional arts, crafts, music, and dance, showcasing the cultural richness of different communities and empowering artists and craftsmen. They blur societal divisions, blurring caste, creed, and economic status, and create lasting memories that connect people across generations. Festivals often highlight important social issues, encouraging discussions and actions to address them. Regional festivals celebrate local heritage and traditions, uniting communities around a shared sense of identity and pride in their cultural roots. They foster interfaith understanding, cooperation and promoting peaceful coexistence. In a world marked by divisions, Indian festivals play a crucial role in cultivating unity and solidarity among diverse communities, transcending cultural values, linguistic, and socio-economic differences.

ANDHRA PRADESH TRIBAL FESTIVALS:

1. VISAKHAPATNAM:

A two-day traditional and indigenous seed festival (Patha Vithanala Pandaga), aimed at the conservation of native seed varieties and their usage sharing among farmers, commenced at Killoguda tribal hamlet of Dumbriguda mandal in Alluri Sitharama Raju (ASR) district on Saturday, April 26. The festival was organised by the environment protection society "Sanjeevini". Tribals, farmers, and voluntary organisations from various states—working extensively on seed conservation, organic fertilisers, and natural farming practices—actively participated in the festival. Over 60 stalls showcasing traditional heirloom seeds and indigenous products attracted and impressed the visitors.

2. Bani Festival, Andhra Pradesh:

During the Dusshera festival lathi-wielding devotees from Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh gather at the Devaragattu Temple in Kurnool to hit each other on the heads to commemorate the killing of a demon by Mala-Malleshwara (Shiva).

3. Gonds Festivals:

Gonds have their own calendar. Their cropping pattern and festivals follow their calendar. Their year consisting of 12 months being with the month of Duradi which corresponds to February-March. The subsequent months are Chaith (March-April), Bhawe (April-May), Burbawe (May-June), Akaari (June-July), Pola (July-August), Akurpak (August- September), Diwali (September- October), Karti (October-November), Sat (November-December), Pus (December-January) and Mahon (January-February). Some of the names of their months appear to be corrupt form of months according to Telugu calendar.

4. The Tribals celebrate festivals according to their calendar:

They observe Chenchu Bheemana festival in the month of (March- April). In Bhawe (April-May), Persaphen worshipping is observed. In Burbawe (May-June) vidri Mahatuk festival is celebrated. They offer sweets made with jower to Aki devara. In Akari (June-July) they worship Akiphen and go to crops to pick up waste grass in the fields. They pray to gods to grow their crops abundantly. In the month of Pola (July-August) Polala festival is celebrated as other communities celebrate. In the month of Akurpak (August- September) pethramasa a feast to the deceased souls is celebrated. They have no festivals in the month of sat (November-December). At the end of December after new crops they celebrate satti festival. The Gonds also celebrate Dasara and Deepavali which symbolizes the victory of God over evil. In connection with Deepavali festival, they perform Dandari dance. They go to surrounding villages to cultivate relationship and unity among all the Gonds. In pus (December-January), Sankranthi and ugadi(January- February) are celebrated.

5. The Gadabas:

Gadabas are designated Scheduled Tribe in Andhra Pradesh and Odisha annual festivals are Asadhi, Gandisa, Bandapana, Dussehra, Chaitha Parba, Pushya, etc. Chaitha, Pushya are communal festivals and the

former one is a most important festival. It continues for a month with hunting, if any male member failed to hunt then women humiliate them.

6. The Koyas

celebrate four important religious festivals viz. Bijja Pandu, Bimud Pandu, Kodta Pandu, and Ikk Pandu. There are agricultural festivals that represent the whole Koyas' agricultural society. As we know from other tribes Chaitra month is one of the sacred months in every tribal religion. In this season, Koyas celebrate 'Bijja Panndu'; it is a harvest festival related to the sacred seed that is offered to village goddess believing it will become productive. On this occasion, they start eating mangoes. Bimud Pandu is another festival celebrated in the month of the rainy season (to rain god) after the harvests. Whereas, Ikka Pandu is observed during February and March when tamarind will ripe and tamarind is considered to be an important food of the Koya tribe. Lastly, Tadi Pandu is observed during March or in summer to celebrate palm trees and drink 'tadi' or juice.

Art, Dance and Music:

Tribal dances of Dhimsa and other forms are an integral performance art done during celebrations and even weddings. When the women rejoice in their traditional costumes, they move round and ring while beating the ground with their warm handmade drummers. They also make a variety of items for example, bamboo baskets, clay pots, and complex bead chains but these items have also got a more decorative aspect as well.

In the Araku Valley, the tribes enjoy nature a lot as it is intricately connected with the local environment and its practices through generations of traditional ecologies.

Tribal Fairs in Telangana:

Telangana is known for its rich tribal diversity and cultural uniqueness. Tribal fairs play a significant role in highlighting the traditions, customs, and rituals of the indigenous communities in the region. These fairs are vibrant and colorful events where people come together to celebrate their tribal heritage, offer prayers, and enjoy traditional performances and crafts. The major tribal fairs in Telangana are *Medaram, Keslapur, and the Bourapur jataras*.

The *Keslapur, Medaram, and Bourapur Jatharas* are important cultural and religious festivals in Telangana, particularly for tribal communities. These events blend cultural heritage and spirituality, featuring rituals, traditional music, and vibrant dances. The *Medaram Jathara* is renowned for attracting millions of pilgrims every two years who come to honor the deities *Sammakka and Sarakka* through offerings, traditional meals, and colorful processions, fostering a sense of belonging among attendees. These Jatharas also serve as platforms for indigenous practices like storytelling and traditional crafts, helping to preserve and revitalize tribal heritage for younger generations. They powerfully showcase the resilience of cultural traditions and significantly enhance community well-being by establishing vital spaces for reflection and celebration.

Furthermore, they actively promote unity and foster cultural exchange between tribal and non-tribal communities, instilling a profound sense of mutual respect and understanding.

1. Keslapur Nagoba Jatara:

Keslapur is a remote village in the Adilabad district, renowned for the vibrant celebration of the Nagoba Jatara by the Gonds each year. The Mesram clan of the Gonds leads the rituals to honor Nagoba, a powerful serpent god. This worship is not just a tradition but a means of seeking divine protection and safety from snake bites and misfortunes. Through their reverence for Nagoba, the Gonds confidently assert their bond with the divine, ensuring their well-being within their community.



2. Bhramaramba Jatara:

The Bourapur Shivalayam temple, nestled amid the serene and dense Nallamala forest in Nagar Kurnool district, holds profound significance for the Chenchu tribe of Telangana. This temple, steeped in history, serves as a central hub of spiritual and cultural life for the community. "Principal deity resided in two wooden lingams nearly decayed by the weather, and there seemed to be a number of small stones putt up in couples or singly in the neighborhood," Bhramaramba and Mallikarjuna, and is marked by rich traditions and rituals that echo the tribe's deep-rooted heritage.



3. Medaram Sammakka – Saralamma Jatara: Telangana State Festival:

The Telangana region, over the centuries, has come to be identified as a symbol of defiance and dissent, thanks to the legacy of Sammakka and Saralamma, who defied the mighty Kakatiya rulers. It served as a source of inspiration for many people's movements and struggles in the region -- revolt against the tyrannical Razakars of Nizam's forces, armed struggles of farmers. The vibrant jatara unfolds in the picturesque Mulugu district of Telangana, renowned as the second largest fair in the country, following the grand Kumbh Mela.



Methodology:

The data obtained from the respondents were carefully recorded. For more detailed information regarding the living pattern of target-group, to execute qualitative research. The data obtained through quantitative and qualitative research was analysed.

Conclusion: This paper concludes with Tribal Festivals and how attracted tourists then how benefitted to Tourism. They powerfully showcase the resilience of cultural traditions and significantly enhance community well-being by establishing vital spaces for reflection and celebration. Furthermore, they actively promote unity and foster cultural exchange between tribal and non-tribal communities, instilling a profound sense of mutual respect and understanding. Tribal tourism holds significant potential for the development of tribal communities. It offers economic, cultural, and social benefits, contributing to sustainable development. However, it also presents challenges that need to be managed through strategic planning and community engagement. By leveraging the unique cultural assets of indigenous communities, tribal tourism can create a mutually beneficial relationship between tourists and tribal people.

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