

Challenges in Tourism Entrepreneurship – A Thematic Analysis

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Abstract:

Tourism industry in India has vast scope in generating employment and can be used as a preferred sector in the process of economic development of a nation thriving on 1.2 billion people. Employment in this sector can be generated at multiple levels, to both skilled and unskilled workers. Additionally, it can incorporate high involvement of rural population and women, paving way for possible inclusive growth in the future. Under this pretext, there is a need to boost entrepreneurship in tourism industry in India. The philosophies of entrepreneurship can help lower unemployment rate, especially among the educated youth. Concepts of experiential tourism can be integrated with cultural tourism, religious tourism and textile tourism not only to attract domestic tourists but also foreign tourists. Entrepreneurs can be motivated to start their ventures in this area. The present paper makes an attempt to understand the issues faced by small-time current entrepreneurs of the tourism industry and assess the role of digital and theatre intervention in this regard. For the purpose, extensive interviews were conducted among fifteen entrepreneurs of Kathputli colony and their responses were analysed qualitatively, using thematic analysis. The preliminary results indicated that managing workload during peak season is one of the biggest challenges faced by these entrepreneurs. To curb these issues, entrepreneur resort to outsourcing their work to other artists and have worked on developing websites and other social media pages to facilitate pre-booking their services, thus benefitting the buyers and sellers alike.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Indian Tourism Industry and Tourism Entrepreneurship

With increased population living in urbane set up, their participation and involvement in local festivities reduced which further dipped with advent of technology driven lifestyles and increased number of households with working women, in last two to three decades (Scott, 2008). However, this trend is reversing now and people look forward to re-live their childhoods and want their children to know about their childhood days and the solace then. According to Bennet (2004), cultural industry forms an important part of tourist destination and with urban people trying to relive their childhood days from the suburbs in their busy schedule, a trend of shifting the cultural industry to the urban setup is being encouraged, wherein people can experience the rural and

suburban life, within the confines of their cities itself. This has provided new avenues for expansion for the tourism entrepreneurs of developing nations like India, which is known for its rich cultural heritage. Due to such recent developments, tourism entrepreneurship is garnering widespread attention among researchers. Tourism enterprise is defined by Ateljevic & Doorne (2000) as various kinds of business ventures associated to the tourism industry and is allowed within the confines of the National Constitution. Just like the other enterprises, tourism enterprises are also regarded as those business ventures that tend to follow preparative principles but tend to work on an extremely wide scale. Furthermore, as per McGehee, Kim, & Jennings (2007), tourism enterprise is regarded as the arrangement of goods that involve entertainment, natural resources, catering, accommodation, transport and all such facilities like tour operators, banks and shops that form the

backbone of tourism industry. Tourism entrepreneurship is defined by Bagherifard, Jalali, Jalali, Khalili, & Sharifi(2013), as set of activities that is associated to the creation and operation of an enterprise of the legal tourists. Due to the potential of the tourism industry in the present scenario, it is imperative to identify the factors suppressing the development of tourism entrepreneurship in Kathputli colony, a touristic province Delhi, India and find the opportunities for overcoming these hurdles.

Although tourism still revolves around the act of visiting beautiful locations, cultural heritages, site seeing, there has been a considerable shift in how it is offered and enjoyed in the present scenario. Cultural goods like theatre, street art, local/folk music, local makeshift markets, handlooms, handicrafts and the list are endless can be promoted with tourism that may lead to more inclusive growth. In fact, a study by Rajendran & Indapurkar(2018) shows that there exist different determinants for the demand of cultural goods, which should be tapped into, so as to promote the consumption of cultural goods, specifically performing arts by gently nudging the people towards the cultural goods and away from the otherwise mind-numbing leisure activities. This would help boost the small-time entrepreneurs sell their cultural goods, thus benefiting both the cultural industry as well as the tourism industry. However, despite the numerous initiatives undertaken to help the tourism entrepreneurs, Ateljevic(2009) argue that these entrepreneurs are facing several issues and are not able to reach their full potential, owing to the infrastructural bottlenecks, changing tastes and preferences of the consumers, competition from film and media industry and their likes. Hence, it is necessary to shed light on their plight and understand the measure undertaken by them to overcome the issues to some extent.

1.2 Research Aim and Objectives

In light of the above discussion, the aim of the underlying paper is to discuss the challenges faced by entrepreneurs of the tourism industry of Delhi NCR, with a specific focus on the entrepreneurs of Kathputli Colony and assess the role of digital and theatre training and social capital in the tourism industry in the present context. In this regard, the specific objectives of the study are:

- To identify the current issues faced by entrepreneurs of Kathputli Colony.
- To assess the impact of digital and theatre training interventions on tourism entrepreneurship of the study area.

1.3 Scope for Future Research

The current study plays an important role in keeping the street arts alive in the technologically driven era, where people prefer entertainment at their fingerprints, instead of going out and consuming cultural goods. This has demotivated several artists from continuing their legacy in the art form and instead want their children to be engaged in a safe and secure job. However, majority of the participants also indicated the need for digital and theatre training interventions and felt that adequate training in these aspects of business can significantly boost their businesses. In fact, the ones who have already undergone either of the interventions have experienced a considerable boost to their businesses and spoke enthusiastically about expanding their business and passing on the legacy to the future generation. This paves way for future research, wherein, the current study shed light on the ways through which tourism entrepreneurs of Kathputli colony overcame their current challenges and further research could specifically focus on the progress of these measures, so that the successful stories could be replicated for other entrepreneurs.

2.0 METHODOLOGY

A. 3.1 Data Collection

The current paper relied on semi-structured interviews to gather data of the experiences of 15 tourism entrepreneurs of Kathputli Colony, Delhi, India. The request to participate in the study was sent across 50 artists, whose information was provided by Kalakar Trust, an NGO functioning in the study area. From the 50 artists, 15 agreed to participate in the study. The data was collected by the researchers at the houses of each of the participants after taking prior appointments from the respondents, wherein the interview lasted for 45mins to 1 hour with each participant. The data obtained was assessed based on the principles of constructivist grounded theory, which as per Mills, Bonner, & Francis(2006) is often regarded as a systematic process of constructing theories through the methodical collection and analysis of qualitative data. The study was conducted in Kathputli colony, as it is the epicentre of street arts in Delhi, wherein over 3400 families of street artists have been residing for ages(Banda, Vaidya, & Adler, 2013). The colony also boasts the sustenance of several small-time entrepreneurs who are striving to keep the ancient art form alive in India, thus forming the backbone to the tourism industry of India. The study area is especially of interest in the current scenario, because of a redevelopment program initiated under the public private partnership of the Delhi Development Authority (DDA) and a private firm, Raheja Developers, which is the first in-situ slum redevelopment program in the capital (Gupta, 2018). In times of such transition, it is imperative

to assess the challenges faced by the entrepreneurs of this colony and the ways through which they curb these challenges.

B. 3.2 Data Analysis

The paper aims at treading on the path of qualitative research, wherein thematic analysis is used to derive the results. According to Smith (2006), grounded theory is adopted in a research when the aim is to follow an inductive approach that dictates the collection of data and its analysis, which in turn would guide the researchers to move from particular observations to general theories. In this method, the data is analysed through the formation of a framework, which in turn will help in the generation of a theory (Glaser & Holton, 2004). In this process, Braun & Clarke (2006) argue that the method aims at developing new thematic codes, instead of relying on the previously used thematic codes. This would help in analysing the numerous ways through which people tend to engage in the management and interaction of their social settings and evaluate the influence that interactions have on the social procedures (Vaismoradi, Turunen, & Bondas, 2013).

The data collected through the semi-structured interviews is firstly transcribed into a Word Document, which is then imported in the NVivo software, a software program that is extensively used for qualitative analysis for the purpose of line by line coding of the collected interview data (Barbour, 2001). The coding was done from the approach followed by Saldana (2009), who developed different themes and categorised the transcripts based on the identified themes. This process is known as the identification of nodes, which are further categorised into subthemes and themes and is exported back to Word document in the form of tables. The themes would then be presented in the form of a written narrative that helps in the description of the challenges faced by small-time entrepreneurs in the tourism industry.

3.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data collected in the current study included the interview data collected from 15 entrepreneurs of Kathputli colony who are working towards the development of Indian street arts. It encompasses direct quotes that shed light on the thoughts, feelings and issues of the respondents. The current study used initial coding method, which is as per Michie & Prestwich (2010) is a variant of coding method that enables the generation of themes from the collected data and is therefore beneficial in grounded theory. The codes were converted into nodes, which are buckets developed by NVivo software.

Objective 1: To identify the current issues faced by entrepreneurs of Kathputli colony

As per the respondents, in addition to the daily struggles that cottage industry entrepreneurs have to face, the tourism entrepreneurship in the study area has taken a hit since they were asked to move to a transit camp in Kathputli colony. In this light, the study tried to segregate the issues faced by the entrepreneurs due to external factors and those faced internally.

The following table 1 sheds light on the internal and external issues faced by the 15 tourism entrepreneurs in the sample:

Table 1 (Internal and External Issues faced by Tourism Entrepreneurs)

Raw Data	Subtheme	Theme	Category
Participant 6# "Old-age has taken a toll on me and I often have to leave projects due to my poor health, which is adversely affecting my business."	Poor health	Health	Internal Factors
Participant 1# "I had shut down my business for three months in 2019 because my wife had a chronic disease and hence, I was busy taking care of her."	Family Emergency	Family Commitments	
Participant 3# "I have declined projects as they clashed with the school exams of my children."	Commitment to Children		
Participant 2# "My brother and I started our business of puppetry, dhols and turbans. Ever since, we developed our website and made pages on social media, the demand for services have increased exponentially but due to lack of manpower, we have to often let go off shows during peak season."	Social Media Pressure	Work Mismanagement	
Participant 4# "It is a loss for us to let go off work during peak season, as we strive on the earnings of those 4 months for the rest of the year."	Lean season plight		
Participant 5# "Only if priests could choose auspicious dates throughout the year."	Over-booking during peak		
Participant 8# "Since my husband's demise, I have been looking after the family business and I had to let go off clients during the weddings of all eight children of mine, especially during the weddings of my daughter. However, to minimise the losses, we deliberately fixed their wedding dates during the lean season of work."	Festivals, maniges and other social obligations.	Social Obligations	
Participant 9# "I had to leave Lucknow and my loyal Qawwali clients back in the 90s and flee to Delhi because of the communal riots that took place around that time. It took me long time to regain my customer base here."	Communal violence	Migration	External factors
Participant 10# "I had to migrate from Bhopal, where our music business was setup, owing to the Bhopal gas tragedy. We lost a lot of clients in this process."	Man-made disasters		

Participant 11# "We are facing a several issues since we moved to the transit camp, owing to lack of public transport in the vicinity, internal conflicts with the Panch, loss of customer's details and other important documents during the transition."	Transportation Issue	Slum Redevelopment Program
Participant 12# "My income took a hit when I moved from Shadipur and I can say that my affordability has lowered considerably after the transition."	Lowered Affordability	
Participant 13# "Event management companies act as middlemen between small-time entrepreneurs like us and the customers, which significantly increases the expenses of the customers and lowers our earnings as well because of the commission taken by the event management companies. A platform that could directly link us to the potential customers could eliminate the middlemen."	Middlemen crisis	Event Management Companies Havoc
Participant 14# "I would like to take a workshop to enhance my digital skills, so that I can mark my presence in social media and not rely on event management companies for work. This would also help us expand our clientele and boost our business."	Need for Digital Intervention	

The above table 1 illustrates the current hardships faced by tourism entrepreneurs of Kathputli colony. They are subjected to both internal and external factors, which were the two categories identified for the current objective. The internal issues faced currently by tourism entrepreneurs of Kathputli colony have been identified as health issues, mismanagement of work, family commitments and burden and social obligations. As quoted by the respondents, these issues tend to have an adverse impact on the entrepreneurs of the study area.

Furthermore, the external issues faced by the tourism entrepreneurs of the study area were majorly segregated into migration-related issues, the problem of middlemen that is arising from event management companies and the current slum redevelopment program in Kathputli colony that is creating temporary ripples in the area. It was particularly interesting to note that the effect of migration in the 90s is still affecting the entrepreneurial activities of the street artists in the study area.

Objective 2: To assess the impact of digital and theatre training interventions on tourism entrepreneurship of the study area.

The objective aims at assessing the role of digital and theatre training interventions in tourism entrepreneurship. In other words, the objective is to evaluate if such interventions have helped the tourism entrepreneurs overcome their internal as well as external issues or if it has worsened the situation, or had no major role to play.

Table 2 (Role of Digital and Theatre Training Interventions in Tourism Entrepreneurship)

Raw Data	Subtheme	Theme	Category
Participant 3# "I learnt to use a smart phone to keep up with the study curriculum of my school and then extended the knowledge of smart phones to get in touch with potential customers. This has helped me eliminate event management companies and now I can get gigs on my own."	Elimination of Middlemen	Digital Platform	Digital Interventions
Participant 2# "My brother and I developed our website and learnt how to operate it. I also built a page on Facebook for our dhol and turban business. Ever since, our business has shot up and our customer base has increased because we can connect with a wider audience through digital media, because of which, the shift to the transit camp also didn't really affect us."	Increased Market Access		
Participant 15# "Theatre training and expanding the lessons to my family members helped us diversify our skills and also eliminated the problem of peak season faced by other artists in my locality. Our diverse skills have helped us work all through the year."	Diversification of Skills	Formal Training	Theatre Training Interventions
Participant 9# "My guru was extremely popular in Lucknow, which benefited all his disciples as we were recognised in the industry, even before commencing with the profession."	Networking		

The table 2 above sheds light on the role of digital and theatre interventions in tourism entrepreneurship. The category of digital interventions, is further broken down into a theme titled 'digital platform', which speaks about the role of different digital platforms in tourism entrepreneurship. The participants of the research were highly inclined on switching their business from the traditional physical market to the online market, owing to the ease of doing business on an online portal. They were of the opinion that digital platform helps in eliminating middlemen like the event management companies and further provides a wider market for their street arts, by helping them connect directly to the potential consumers. Moreover, theatre training interventions was broken into formal training, which was seen to benefit the participants of the research by diversifying their skills and boosting their network. Formal training helped them overcome the confines of limited peak season because the tourism entrepreneurs, who had undergone formal training could find different kind of work throughout the year and also gave them an incentive to pass on the skills to the next generation. Moreover, the people imparting the knowledge of street arts usually have a well-established customer base, which can be used by their students as well. This greatly benefits the tourism entrepreneurs as they can use the networks and contacts of their formal theatre trainers to expand their own business in the long-run. The same has been highlighted by Epskamp & Epskamp(2006), who show emphasise on the fact that networking is extremely

crucial for artists, who even go to the end of stating that the bitter reality of the cultural industry is that it relies majorly on networking and connections more than the talent of the artist itself.

4.0 DISCUSSION

Although government is working towards improving environment for small entrepreneurs, the findings of the study indicate that the small-time entrepreneurs yet to find ways to compete with film and television industry when it comes to cultural industry. In the wake of government-initiated modernisation in the Kahtputli colony, the transit camps in Anand Parbat has further added to their atrocities, by adversely affecting their vulnerability context, particularly with respect to the increased transportation costs, cut-off from the existing consumer base and the likes. The lack of adequate infrastructure, improper implementation of the tourism and arts and culture related policies, low domestic and inbound tourism, lack of information on entrepreneurial opportunities to the street artists, lack of a digital platform for all street artists, mismanagement of work during peak season, event management companies, forced migration and other such social and economic problems have been identified as the major hindrances, stopping the tourism entrepreneurs to reach their full potential. The results of the current study in this respect is in congruence with previous literature like the studies conducted by Surugiu & Surugiu(2015) and Ndabeni & Rogerson(2005), who have highlighted the same in this regard.

In order to curb these issues, the participants of the research have relied on numerous measures. The current study was particularly interested in understanding the role of digital and theatre training interventions in tourism entrepreneurship. This is crucial because the successful interventions could be replicated in a similar group in another region, thus creating an opportunity to boost the tourism entrepreneurs of different parts of the nation. Similar conclusions have been made by Alrawadieh, Karayilan, & Cetin(2019), who have shown that business in the global era are facing numerous challenges, thus making it all the more difficult for businesses to evaluate the preferences of the potential consumers, wherein the need is not just to assess their physical needs but also have an overview of their aspirations. There are a few entrepreneurs who have shown their inclination towards diversification and digital and theatre training interventions have helped them achieve the same. Digital interventions as basic as training to use smart phones are also reported to have positive influence in dealing with the problems of peak and lean season. However, the proliferating event management companies have acted as middlemen and

have raised the prices, the risen prices however not percolating to the artists. Under such circumstances, digital media plays an important role to understand the psyche of the consumers (Stephen, 2016). However, digital media comes with its fair share of opportunities and challenges for the tourism entrepreneurs, with regard to development of a marketing mix and acknowledgment of the preferences of the visitors or tourists to a particular tourist destination (Alrawadieh, Karayilan, & Cetin, 2019). It is evident that consumers have slowly shifted to the online media, thus compelling the entrepreneurs to mark their presence online, so as to move closer to the market. The current study also reflects the same, wherein those tourism entrepreneurs who have undergone digital interventions and have websites, social media pages and online followers for their products and services are better able to cope with the internal and external issues previously identified in the study. They are able to cater to the needs of the consumers and market themselves accordingly on the online platform, thus making it convenient for both the parties. However, it was seen that formal theatre-training has not created any major difference for the entrepreneurs because the respondents felt that the formal training is still not helping them market themselves. Due to this reason, they emphasised on the need for workshops that could specifically focus on personality development and networking skills, so that they could market their street arts to the potential consumers.

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