

Indigenous Games: Game Changer for Indian Tourism Industry?

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Abstract

Tourism in India has primarily been associated with culture without much emphasis being assigned to other tourist motivators. Many tourist destinations across the globe have started promoting event-based tourism by repositioning their marketing strategies. India, being a blend of modernity and ancient culture, has a treasure of many indigenous, long forgotten traditional games. Considering the cultural paragon in the form of traditional Indian games, this paper is an effort to gauge the effectiveness of indigenous games as catalysts for enhancing destination competitiveness leading to enriching the tourism resources of India. A survey of 100 domestic tourists visiting Himachal Pradesh (a small North Indian hill state) was conducted by way of administering close ended questionnaire to study their profile and to gauge their opinion regarding traditional game-based events. Respondents were selected randomly. The survey led to the findings that for majority of respondents traditional game-based events appeared as one of the major pull factors for tourists.

Keywords: Inventory, Event, Traditional Games, Indigenous, Destination Competitiveness

Introduction

Tourism in India has primarily been associated with culture without much emphasis being assigned to other tourist motivators. While it is a fact that India is extremely rich in her heritage, not much is done to explore the ethnicity, authenticity, rurality, and uniqueness of India as a tourist destination. Harboring one of the oldest civilizations of the world, the country has been a reservoir of art, architecture, handicrafts, and rich textiles since time immemorial. The quaint customs, age old traditions and culture are quite unique and peculiar to this nation. Diving into the ocean of knowledge and picking from the ancient wisdom, people of India had created their own traditional, indigenous games. These were popular not only among children but were also enjoyed in abundance by the adult population. These games were meant to break monotony of daily life of people by rejuvenating them. With the passage of time these unique, brilliant yet simple indigenous games lost their spark and were assigned to oblivion. These games have become obsolete now due to technological advancement. Computer and mobile phone games have replaced the exuberance of indigenous, traditional games.

Although 'nascent tourism' in India has become popular in recent years, the concept of 'tourism' has not been new to India. People have been travelling to this ancient land of wisdom and centre of knowledge since long. However, India has yet to make a strong mark on the global tourism scenario. A careful inventory of tourists' resources needs to be prepared for effective tourism planning and aggressive marketing. Many tourist destinations have started promoting event-based tourism by repositioning their marketing strategies. A number of destinations view the successful hosting of events as a vehicle for growth, and tourism bodies are devoting resources to attracting and supporting major events as part of a broader strategy (Glenn Van Eck, 2018). Events could prove to be catalysts for enhancing image of a destination. Events could strengthen destination attractiveness as has been proved by a number of tourist destinations. Traditional and indigenous games could become an essential constituent of a cultural event hosted by a destination. Realizing the importance of traditional game-based events, this paper is an attempt

to gauge the effectiveness of traditional/indigenous games as catalysts for enhancing destination competitiveness thereby enriching the tourism resources of a country/destination.

Review of Literature

Travel and Tourism have accounted for 10% (8.9 trillion US\$) of the global GDP, 330 million jobs (one in every ten jobs), 6.8% (1.7 trillion US\$) of total global exports and 4.3% (940 billion US\$) of total investments in the year 2019 (WTTC, 2020). The dawn of 2020 has presented an unprecedented situation before the entire world. The COVID-19 outbreak has brought the world to a halt (Barua,2020).Global tourism suffered its worst year on record in 2020, with international arrivals dropping by 74% according to the latest data from the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). Destinations worldwide welcomed 1 billion fewer international arrivals in 2020 than in the previous year, due to fall in demand and widespread travel restrictions. This compares with the 4% decline recorded during the 2009 global economic crisis(WTO, 2020). According to the latest UNWTO World Tourism Barometer, the collapse in international travel represents an estimated loss of USD 1.3 trillion in export revenues, more than 11 times the loss recorded during the 2009 global economic crisis (UNWTO, 2020). The crisis has put between 100 and 120 million direct tourism jobs at risk, many of them in small and medium-sized enterprises (WTTC, 2020). Till date international borders are sealed barring a few travel bubbles. People across the globe are constantly living under the grip and stress of COVID-19. It has been postulated by relaxation theory that plays or games are utilized by individuals to recover from stress, work-related activities and to restore energy (relaxation theory) (Levy, 1978). In these times of uncertainties, anxieties, and turmoil, specially created traditional game-based events could function as major pull factors (Getz & Page, 2016) especially in rural and remote destinations that are still considered COVID safe to some extent.

Traditional games could prove to be a bridge between culture and ethos from the ancient world and the modern contemporary world. Like culture these traditional games are very much alive and pulsating with life. These games are simple, easy to learn and are evolved with time. There are certain values inherent in indigenous games. These games may contribute towards character building, honesty, leadership, co-operation etc. These indigenous games are reflection of the leisurely lifestyle and spontaneity that community in the by gone era had enjoyed. Traditional games have been passed down from one generation to the next (Bishop& Curtis, 2001).Unfortunately, these fun games of bygone era have started to disappear from the lives of common men as other activities have gradually replaced these games. Besides providing a glimpse into the lives of people and identifying with the local culture to the extent that these become manifestations of native culture (Akbari, et al., 2009; Lavega, 2006, Dharmamulya, 2006; Sedyawati, 1999), these traditional games also portray human culture and human behaviour.

Many countries are now making a conscious effort to revive their long forgotten indigenous games. Resumption and promotion of indigenous games would gain more relevance in the wake of on-going COVID crisis. Europe has started an organized and formal effort for revival and promotion of traditional/indigenous games. European Traditional Sports and Games Association (ETSGA) has been founded for the purpose of safeguarding and promoting traditional sports and games (TSG). European Commission's Agenda in 2013 has put forward the case of TSG as an alternative to modern sports and integral part of the national, European, and global cultures (AEJEST, 2012). UNESCO addressed TSG in their resolutions as cultural phenomenon and cultural heritage, closely linked to issues related to cultural diversity (Lavega, 2006). The call for proposals launched by the European Commission in spring 2014, entitled 'Promoting European Traditional Sports and Games', recognises UNESCO's statement that 'traditional sports and games are part of the intangible heritage and a symbol of the cultural diversity of our societies. They are also an efficient means to convey values of solidarity, diversity, inclusiveness, and cultural awareness' (UNESCO, 2008).

Australia has also made earnest efforts to preserve and popularize its traditional games among the masses. Like India, Australia also has a rich and unique diversity of indigenous games and fun pastime activities. Some indigenous games have recently been documented (e.g., kee'an, tarnabai, kalq) and efforts are being made to persuade people to play and appreciate them and the indigenous culture (Dixon, 2008) by way of making these games an integral part of special events created for tourists. Events are temporary occurrences, either planned or unplanned, and they usually have a finite length which is normally fixed or publicized for planned events (Getz, 1997). Successful planning of events cannot be done without the support and active involvement of native community. Events should be matched with the aspirations, objectives, and opinions of community (Zhou, 2006) as it would enhance the spectators' experience and contribute to the location's overall attractiveness as an event tourism destination (Madrigal, 1995).

Tourism can contribute to host communities in many ways. It is important to keep governments/organizer's aims and motivation, and residents' perceptions in harmony with each other (Zhou, 2006). Tourism enriches the lives of community socially, economically and it also aids in conserving environment if planned carefully. Special events are created all across the globe for the purpose of attracting tourists and increasing their duration of stay. Creating and promoting events have been thought of as measures of economic development and destination marketing and also as means to enhance destination attractiveness amongst the visitors. The term 'event tourism' was explained by Getz in 1989. Conceptualized as encompassing festivals and events, event tourism is understood to be at the nexus of tourism and event studies (Getz 2008: 406). Janiskee (1980:97) described events as pleasurable activities and entertainment that celebrate some concept, happening or fact. These celebrations often matched the activities of the agrarian societies of yesteryears (Rolfe, 1992). Events and festivals were meant to celebrate with the entire community with a specific period set aside for the celebrations. These events and festivals have strengthened the age-old rituals and have provided a robust platform to revive and relive the long existed cultural values, knowledge, and practices by way of recreation and fun. As people in all cultures recognise the need for community creativity and celebrations (Turner, 1982), the same could be implemented in promoting traditional games as events among tourists. Tourists seek unique and authentic travel experience in terms of nature, history, events, and culture (Craik, 1995). Events are created attractions designed to successfully develop and promote a destination (Šušić & Dordević, 2011). Events could be planned and promoted as activities reflecting rich cultural heritage of destinations visited. Events could be described as special rites, rituals, presentations, performance, or celebration which is continuously planned and created in order to mark special events and/or to achieve special social, cultural, or corporate aims and targets (Bowdin et al., 2006). Events are organized around a pre-conceived, and perceived concept, which could be customized to achieve the aims and objectives of organizing that event (Jayaswal, 2008). Well planned and organized events in appealing locations and at convenient times would have the potential to emerge as rich tourist resources as more people would visit tourist destinations to enjoy these events (Bjeljac et al., 2013). Traditional games could be packaged and promoted as special events among the tourists and visitors.

It has been observed that globalization has created paradoxes. In a bid to adapt to global culture people have severed ties with their roots and have bartered complexities with the simple joys of lives. These traditional games could be promoted and marketed to augment the existing tourism products of a particular destination. This could also be used as USP (Unique selling proposition) of a tourist destination, differentiating it from the other similar tourists' destinations. Contemporary tourists seek authenticity in their travels and are also desirous of actively experiencing culture of destinations visited (Agarwal & Brunt, 2006). Traditional games are a country's cultural wealth (Sedyawati, 1999). Traditional games/indigenous games could be used as a very effective programming tool for enhancing the tourist appeal of a destination. These traditional/indigenous games could be promoted as an integral part of cultural festivals/events by the authorities and communities. These events could be categorized based on their amplitude:

a 'home-grown' festival, a 'tourist-tempter' festival and a third category of 'big-bang' festival (O'Sullivan & Jackson, 2002). 'A 'home-grown' festival is essentially small scale, bottom-up and run by one or more volunteers for the benefit of the locality. A 'tourist-tempter' festival is one that is aimed specifically at attracting visitors to stimulate local economic development. A 'big-bang' festival is essentially a marketing tool that promotes a myriad of related activities over a defined geographical area (D. O'Sullivan & M. Jackson, 2002:331). Based on the above categorization, indigenous games could be turned into a 'tourist-tempter' festival and with some more collaborative efforts of community and authorities; this could be converted into a 'big-bang' festival. Some of these indigenous games could even be promoted as hallmark events. Hallmark events are the events which are the best events of a destination and are embedded in its culture and customs. These recurring events become so much associated with the destination that they become essential part of the image and branding (Getz et al, 2012). Events could prove to be beneficial for the economy, culture, community, and tourism of the host destinations. These events have the potential to create employment avenues for the host community (Yolal, Cetinel & Uysal, 2009). If promoted in a well-planned manner these traditional games-based events could prove to be the much-desired key to attracting and holding new tourists and also could emerge as a tool to iron out the seasonality in tourists' demand (Getz, 1997; Ziakas & Costa, 2011). The same could be elucidated from the success story of Kerala's Snake Boat Race Events. Snake Boat Race of Kerala or The Nehru Trophy Boat Race or Vallam Kali (literally boat game or a form of canoe racing) is a home-grown event, which has become hugely popular among tourists and locals alike. The event is named after the hooded Cobra shape of the boats. Celebrated during the spring times on the backwaters of Alappuzha, Kerala, the event is participated by a large number of domestic and international tourists alike. To give a boost to monsoon tourism in Kerala, tourism department of Kerala planned to kick-start its Champion's Boat League (CBL) conceived on the IPL (Indian Premier League) format in the year 2019. The highlight of this event was that weekend tourists coming to Kerala during monsoons would be able to witness 'Champions' Boat Race' in any of Kerala's backwaters. CBL has been planned to cash on the popularity of Snake Boat Races of Kerala. Data has revealed that these events became immensely popular with tourists, besides providing tourists' opportunity to actively participate and experience the native culture. Such events could emerge as important tourists' pull factors in post COVID tourism scenario and also could give a much-needed push to local economy (Manju, V. 2019). From boat races to martial art of warriors, India has a lot to offer to tourists in terms of traditional games.

There is an abundance of traditional games being played in Himachal Pradesh having potential to be rich tourism resources. Every nook and corner of the State presents a cultural collage. Thoda is a martial art from Himachal Pradesh, dating back to the days of the Mahabharata. The sport tests the contestants' dexterity in archery. Players shoot arrows, with a round piece of wood fitted to the head of the arrow to reduce its wounding ability. The game is normally held on Baisakhi (month of April). The archers, separated by about 10 metres in a marked area, aim their arrows to hit an opposing team member's legs below the knee while the majority of the crowd plays martial music in the background and dance with their sword (<https://sportscafe.in/sports/articles/2015/nov/11/traditional-sports-of-india>). There is a unique stone game festival being organized close to Shimla, the capital of Himachal Pradesh. It is said that the erstwhile queen of Dhami (place close to Shimla) sacrificed herself to end the practice of human sacrifice prevalent in the area and asked people to start a fair in which people of two clans will throw stones at the sky and continue until someone is hit, and the blood of that person would be then offered to the goddess. Since then, this fair has been celebrated here for centuries. It is believed to be more than 400 years old fair. (<https://www.firstpost.com/india/centuries-old-tradition-of-stone-pelting-marked-in-himachal-pradeshs-dhami-village-on-the-day-after-diwali-5523601.html>).

Research Methodology

From the review of literature, it emerged that traditional or indigenous games could contribute towards enriching the tourists' experience and could prove to be instrumental in creating awareness among tourists about native culture and lifestyle. Considering the rich cultural tourism resources of the state of Himachal (a small North Indian hill state), this paper is an attempt to find out the awareness about indigenous game-based events amongst the tourists visiting the State and also to investigate their willingness and keenness to experience such events. With these objectives the exploratory study attempts to answer the following research questions which have been framed after reviewing the existing literature.

R.Q. 1. What is the awareness level of tourists on indigenous game-based events in Himachal Pradesh?

R.Q. 2. How willing the tourists would be to experience such events in the State?

To find out the awareness level of tourists about traditional game-based events in Himachal and also to evaluate their willingness to participate in such events, a sample of 100 tourists visiting the study area i.e., Shimla (India) was selected on random basis. They were administered using a close ended questionnaire. Shimla being the capital of Himachal Pradesh was selected to collect the sample as the city tops in tourist arrival figures (both domestic and international tourists) in the State. To avoid response biases, only one person was selected randomly in each family; the participant was then asked to fill the questionnaire. Owing to the prevailing COVID-19 conditions resulting in international travel restrictions, only 100 domestic tourists could be contacted. In what follows the paper presents and discusses the study's findings.

Findings and Discussion

It is evident from the demographic profile (Section A) of the respondents that 45% tourists visiting Shimla, belonged to less than 25 years of age group followed by 30% domestic tourists belonging to the age group of 25-40 years, whereas 25% belonged to above 40 years age group and majority of them were working in private set up. It was also evident from the findings that 45% tourists were from the income group of 30000-40000(5000\$ and above), whereas 36% belonged to 40000 and above income bracket. It can be deduced from the findings that tourists visiting Himachal Pradesh, generally belong to the middle-income group. For majority of travellers, the purpose of their visit had been holiday, rest, and relaxation. Majority of the tourists had no inkling about cultural diversity of the State, which may be attributed to the fact that no substantial efforts have been made to promote cultural tourism. It is apparent from the survey that people visiting Himachal Pradesh generally travel with their families (51%). This trend of travelling with families has picked up post-COVID, as revealed by tourists through interviews. For only 27% of respondents, it was their first visit to Shimla (Himachal Pradesh), whereas the rest 73% were enjoying their repeat visits to the State. It was observed that during this on-going COVID crisis, social media/ electronic media and travel websites have emerged as the major influencing factors (for 57% respondents) for travel. It has also been noticed that for majority of respondents, length of stay at Shimla, Himachal Pradesh has not been more than 3 days. This may be attributed to the fact that the State has not made any substantial efforts to increase the length of stay of tourists by planning and creating tourists'-oriented events. State has been banking upon the climate and natural beauty that it has been bestowed naturally. This is further substantiated by the fact that more than 60% tourists visiting Shimla, Himachal Pradesh, have been motivated by good climate and scenic beauty. For tourists Himachal Pradesh is synonymous with natural beauty and good climate. Tourists visiting the state of Himachal Pradesh prefer to stay in medium priced or budget accommodations. They are also willing to experiment staying in home stays. This is obvious from the findings as more than 80% respondents preferred to stay in such accommodations. Tourists appeared to be desirous of getting first-hand experience of the local

hospitality and ethnic culture by staying with the community. This is also deduced from the fact that more than 50% respondents visiting Himachal Pradesh wished to explore off beat and unexplored places situated away from popular tourists' destinations.

Section A--Social demographic profile of domestic tourists visiting Shimla

Variables	Categories	Number	%	
Age	Below 25	45	45	
	25- 40	30	30	
	Above 40	25	25	
Occupation	Public Sector	20	20	
	Private Sector	35	35	
	Student	30	30	
	Any Other	15	15	
Monthly Income	Below 500 US\$	10000-20000	09	09
	500-1000 US\$	20000-30000	10	10
	1000-5000US\$	30000-40000	45	45
	5000 US\$ and above	40000 and above	36	36
Purpose of Visit	Business & Official		07	07
	Education		13	13
	Sports and Events		0	0
	Visiting Friends and Relatives		04	04
	Holiday/ Relaxation		64	64
	Health		0	0
	Religious		12	12
Are you travelling as	Single/Independent		22	22
	Couple		08	08
	Family		51	51
	Group		19	19
It is your	1 st Visit		27	27
	2 nd Visit		23	23
	3 rd Visit		27	27
	More than 3 rd		23	23
Who has influenced you to visit this State	Tourist Offices		03	03
	Travel Agents		05	05
	Friends & Relatives		35	35
	Travel Guides		0	0
	Websites/Social Media		45	45
	Electronic Media		12	12
Your length of stay in the State	1-3 days		64	64
	4-5 days		19	19
	6-10 days		11	11
	More than 10 days		06	06

What has motivated you to visit the State	Culture/heritage	04	04
	Good Climate/Scenic Beauty	64	64
	Adventure	02	02
	Buddhism	01	01
	Inexpensive Holiday	04	04
	Proximity/Accessibility	25	25
	Any Other (Kindly specify)	0	0
Type of accommodation preferred by you during your stay in the State	Luxury Hotels	05	05
	Medium Priced Hotels	35	35
	Budget Hotels	09	09
	Rest Houses/Guest Houses	20	20
	Friends & Relatives	04	04
	Home Stays	27	27
	Any Other (Kindly specify)	0	0
Your choice of destination	Very wellknown destination	21	21
	Moderately known destination	24	24
	Unexplored/offbeat destinations	55	55
	Any Other	0	0
Your familiarity with traditional games/ sports being played in Himachal Pradesh	Yes	24	24
	No	76	76
Your familiarity with any traditional games/ sports based events in Himachal Pradesh	Yes	15	15
	No	85	85

The state of Himachal Pradesh is culturally extremely rich but unfortunately cultural aspects of the State are very less explored. This is obvious from the findings that more than 80% of tourists visiting the State were not familiar with the concept of traditional games and were also unaware of the indigenous games being played or any events based on such games in Himachal Pradesh, this despite the fact that Himachal Pradesh boasts of plethora of cultural activities. This is also obvious from the findings that very few respondents were familiar with the cultural plenteousness of the State. The same is reflected in the traditional games that are very little explored. These games are played in abundance in every nook and corner of the State having potential to be attractive tourists' resource.

Section B—Experience Assessment of tourists on Traditional Game Based Events

Sr. No.	Opinion Statements	Responses		
		Agree	Disagree	Can't Say
1	Traditional Game Based Events reflect culture and lifestyle of native community. (RQ1)	86	02	12
2.	Your reasons for participating in traditional game-based event would be to know native's lifestyle and to establish a strong bond with the locals. (RQ2)	86	02	12
3.	Traditional game-based events prove beneficial for the local economy and in augmenting the local infrastructure (RQ1)	74	07	19
4	You would want to schedule tour trip to coincide with traditional game-based event (RQ2)	95	0	05
5.	You would like to visit the State again to experience traditional game-based events. (RQ2)	92	06	02
6.	You would recommend the State to others on account of indigenous game-based events. (RQ2)	95	02	03

It is evident from the experience assessment (Section B) of domestic tourists on traditional game-based events that majority of tourists visiting the State were familiar with the indigenous games as more than 85% respondents agreed that traditional game-based events reflect culture and lifestyle of native community. Tourists showed their inclination to experience this participative form of tourism, it may be deduced from the fact that majority of respondents (86%) were desirous of experiencing natives' lifestyle and culture by playing their indigenous games. Native community would be an integral constituent and the most important stake holder of traditional game-based events therefore such events could prove beneficial for the local economy and also in augmenting the local infrastructure. This is opined by 74% of the respondents visiting the State. Traditional game-based events could emerge as major attraction as 95% of domestic tourists were willing to schedule their trip to coincide with traditional game-based events. More than 90% respondents wanted to visit the state again to experience such events. Interviews with the tourists revealed that they perceived traditional game-based events as events reflecting native culture, offering fun and frolic, entertainment along with an opportunity to mingle with locals and experiencing native culture. 95% tourists were willing to recommend the State to others on account of such game-based events. It is apparent from the statements of tourists that they would be keen to experience traditional game-based events as this would give them an opportunity not only to experience natives' culture but also give them a chance to develop a strong connection with the destination visited.

Section C Opinion Survey on General Perception on Indigenous Games Based Events

Sr. No.	Opinion Statements	Responses		
		Agree	Disagree	Can't Say
1	Indigenous game-based event has the potential to become major tourism motivator on their own	65	0	35
2	Tourist events should include indigenous games as major attraction	90	02	08
3	Such events connect tourists with the hosts more strongly	82	0	18
4	Traditional game-based events involve active participation of tourists	79	11	10
5	Participating in indigenous games provides a very unique and authentic experience	80	12	08
6	Traditional game-based events inculcate sense of pride among local people on account of guests showing interest and participating in their culture and ways of life.	73	10	17
7	Traditional games help in showcasing and preserving the local heritage	88	0	12
8	Traditional games-based events can contribute to breaking seasonality factor	71	22	07
9	Indigenous game-based events can highlight the uniqueness of a destination,	93	0	07

Tourists surveyed (65%) have agreed to the fact that traditional game-based events can prove to be significant tourists' influencer. It has emerged from the opinion survey (Section C) of tourists that traditional game-based events could emerge as the main pull factor for tourists (90%) provided these are developed and promoted in a well-planned manner. By participating in such events tourists (82%) were hoping to establish a much stronger bond with the hosts. Contemporary tourists wish to indulge in participative form of tourism rather than being passive observant of tourism activities. The fact that traditional game-based events involve active participation of tourists is understood by majority of respondents as 79% have agreed to this. Such game-based events could also provide a unique and authentic experience to tourists (80%). Majority of the respondents (73%) were of the firm belief that such events inculcate a sense of pride among local people for their cultural heritage. It is evident from the opinion survey of tourists that such game-based events help in showcasing and preserving native culture (88%), also such events could prove to be instrumental in ironing out the seasonality factor (71%). More than 90% tourists have agreed to this statement that traditional game-based events could help in distinguishing one destination from the others by way of highlighting cultural uniqueness of destinations. It has been observed that majority of tourism destinations appear to be imitations of one another and are very easily substitutable. Cultural homogenization (Ritzer, G.1993) has made it impossible for destinations to retain their uniqueness. In such a global scenario, indigenous games could prove to be a game changer for tourist industry if these are protected and promoted as part of cultural events. Interviews with tourists also revealed that celebrating such

events may infuse a new lease of life in the COVID-torn tourism industry besides proving as stress busters for tourists.

Conclusion

If revived and promoted, traditional games could prove to be beneficial not only for children but also for society at large. These games require creativity, imagination, social skills, camaraderie, and physical strength. Indigenous games are combination of fun, frolic, and learning, knowledge, and skill along with mental and physical strength. Traditional games are called so because these have been played from time immemorial, so much so as to become part of habit or customs of native population. The soul of the traditional games is still intact and has not been diluted by modernity. A few countries/destinations have successfully integrated traditional games/sport to be part of their 'hallmark events' while some others could be assimilated with an event for boosting the existing tourism products. Literal meaning of 'hallmark' is a typical characteristic of a thing or person, or a symbol of quality or authenticity differentiating some goods from others. It is apparent from the responses of tourists that they would eagerly participate in these games and get a first-hand authentic experience of the native culture and celebrations as till date these traditional games have not lost their authentic charm, fun, energy, and innocence, portraying the true essence of culture.

Earlier, there was a "society of deficiencies" in which with one's imagination, creativity, and available resources one had to produce own playful material, conquering spaces of next surroundings, in modern world there exists the opposite, a "society of abundance" in which at every turn one is encouraged to consume (Nasser et al, 2007). These indigenous games do not require expensive gears as these have always been games of the masses. Bestowed with the qualities of bridging generations these games also lead towards building life skills through simple and basic ways. These indigenous games could prove to be the most efficient and interesting tool to pass on heritage. Native communities would be instilled with a sense of pride for their heritage and would also make efforts to preserve these indigenous games as tourists are the most likely to enjoy the events having traditional games as a part of festivities. In the light of COVID-19 impacts this might be the right time to connect to the roots and revisit our simple and stress-free past by packaging and promoting the *joie de vivre* of the era gone by. This would provide a real glimpse to tourists of our heritage and cultural treasures and also aid in preserving our culture through special events. Tourism should be exploited as a resource for community and not community as a resource for tourism (Laws et.al, 2011). Such traditional game-based events are expected to benefit community the most and community undoubtedly has to be the most important tourism stakeholder.

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