

A SWOT Analysis of Rann Utsav Kutch (Gujarat)

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Abstract – The paper is aimed to describe one of the most famous tourist destinations of the country, Rann Utsav. The fair has much strength like handicrafts, traditional cuisine, traditional hut etc. and also have some weakness like lack of basic amenities. Here the researcher identifies strength and weakness of Rann Utsav. Future is uncertain but in planning process detection of opportunities and threats can sustain this fair for long time.

Keywords: SWOT, Rann Utsav, Kutch, Handicrafts

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INTRODUCTION

Kutch region of Gujarat state in western India covering an area of 45,674 Sq.km. Kutch literally means something which intermittently becomes wet and dry; large part of this district known as Rann of Kutch is shallow wet-land which submerges in water during the rainy season and becomes dry during other seasons. The word kutch is also used for a tortoise in Sanskrit. It is interesting that when its map viewed upside down, it resembles a tortoise. Kutch Utsav commonly known as the Rann festival, organized by the Tourism Corporation of Gujarat Ltd., as the name suggests, the Great Rann of Kutch is reputed as the largest salt desert in the world. The Rann Utsav is more or less a journey to understand the values and culture of the place. Gujarat is a land of fair and festival. Kutch is a unique mixture of culture, traditions, people, history, wildlife and nature. Kutch is famous for its rich living heritage of handicrafts like embroideries, bandhani tie-dye, block printings, metal work, woodwork, and mirror work. Mr Narendra Modi had said that "Terrorism divides, while tourism unites the world," inviting the tourists to experience the beauty and power of boundless land of white desert in Kutch.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

"SWOT Analysis is a simple but powerful tool for sizing up an organization's resource capabilities and deficiencies, its market opportunities, and the external threats to its future" (Thompson et al., 2007). The acronym SWOT stands for strengths, weakness, opportunities and threats.

Tourism industry refers to a set of economic activities that offer some certain products and services to the tourist. This leads to some ambiguities in the determination of its boundaries and limits and, on the

other hand, its relationships have been extended to all economic sections

SWOT analysis (the evaluation of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) is not a new technique, but has been developed to assess the status and prospects of businesses. Strengths and weaknesses are internal to the entity under evaluation whereas opportunities and threats refer to the broad context or environment in which the entity operates (Lawhead, Veglak & Thomas, 1992).

Rural tourism enterprises do not differ significantly from tourism enterprises in general, in that the consumer requires accommodation, catering, and entertainment facilities. However, such enterprises are typically small in scale, often owner-operated, and they may be found at locations that are difficult to reach. Yet their individuality may be part of their attraction, contributing to the creation of rural ambience and a distinctive sense of place (Clarke, 1995).

SWOT Analysis is a device used for strategic planning and strategic management in tourism industry. It can be used effectively to build tourism industry strategy and competitive strategy. In accordance with the System Approach, tourism industry whole that are in interaction with their environments and consist of various sub-systems. In this sense, a tourism industry exists in two environments, strength and weakness are internal factor and opportunities and threats are external. This process of examining the tourism industry and its environment is term SWOT Analysis.

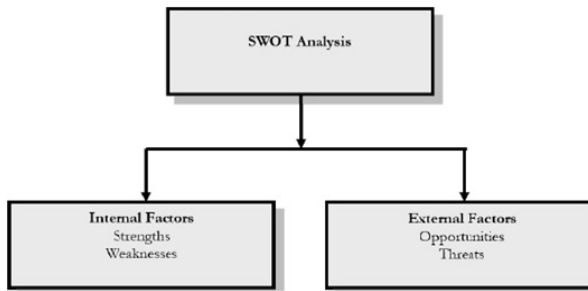


Figure 1 SWOT Analysis

OBJECTIVE:

- To know the status of Rann Utsav of Kutch
- To examine the Rann Utsav through SWOT analysis.

SWOT ANALYSIS OF RANN UTSAV

Every destination has its own life cycle, some sustain for long time and another for short span. For long life cycle there is need to assess destinations strength, weakness, opportunities and threats. Through assessment destination development planning may be sustainable and planners work according to their strength and weakness. Rann Utsav's SWOT analysis is described below.

Strength of Rann Utsav

- **Handicrafts villages:** The Rann festival is tribute to the artisans, craftsman and an eye opener to relish the flavour of varied Kachchhi heritage. Kutch area belongs to low income district and they are dependent on animal husbandry and production of handicrafts. Their handicrafts are worldwide famous some of the famous handicrafts are Embroidery, Metal work, Wood carving, Rogan art, Mirror work etc. There has been initiation of projects for the Mir community in the Rann, which is very poor but is getting good revenue from making bangles for tourists, and is promoting the embroidery and Bandhani work of the local Rabaris and Bharwads.
- **Scenic View:** every destination has its own attraction and Rann utsav is famous for its full moonlight, sunset and sunrise view at white sand. Most of the tourist visit at the time of full moon night for splendid experience.
- **Location:** Kutch District is located at Indo-Pak border and tourist visit Kala Dungar (Black hill) for border line viewpoint. Kala Dungar is highest point of Kutch area. Tropic of Cancer passing from Kutch region. That's all making it a unique destination while visiting Rann Utsav.

- **Marketing:** Gujarat tourism appoint film star Amitabh Bachhan as Brand ambassador for tourism promotion, their marketing skill promote Gujarat as a hub of tourism destination, some punch line are very famous like - *kutch nahi dekha to kuch nahi dekh* (If you have not seen Kutch, you have seen nothing), *kuch din to gujaro Gujarat mein*, and *Khusboo Gujarat Ki* etc, he also said that "why people go to the moon when they can see moon here on earth in Kutch during full moon" in Kutch Utsav. Shooting of movies like *R...Rajkumar*, *Refugee*, *lagaan* etc promote Kutch area worldwide.

- **Traditional food:** Food comes under one of the physical need (food, shelter, cloth) and traditional cuisine attracts more tourists. Traveler visit for unique experience and Kutchi food provides them that uniqueness. Kutchi Cuisine consists of Roti or Rotlas, Theplas and Khakras, Adadiya, Gulab Pak, Son Papdi, Mewa Peda, Khaman dokla, Gathia, Undhia, Muthia, Kachori, Bhajia, Bhaji, Dabeli, Puri Shak, Pav Bhaji, Bhakarwadi, Papdi, Kadak, etc.

- **Celebration of Fair and Festivals:** Most of the fair and festivals of India celebrated between November and March, which are Diwali, Christmas Day, New Year Celebration, Kite Festival (Uttrayan), Valentine's Day, and Holi. Rann Utsav celebrates all these fair and festivals.

- **Attractive Accommodation:** Accommodation is a basic component of the tourism industry. Gujarat tourism offers luxury tent accommodation amenities during Rann Utsav. There is over 400 tents availability which attracts national and international tourists. Gujarat tourism board collaboration with some villages Panchayat set up traditional Bhungas for tourists. Surrounding villages also provide Home Stay for tourists like Dhordo, Hodka, Gorewali, Bhrendiyara etc.

Weakness

- **Lack of Transportation:** Transportation is the basic part of tourism, without transportation the tourism industry will be paralyzed. There is limited transportation facility during Rann Utsav. Gujarat tourism should provide airtaxi for Rann Utsav from Bhuj and only two trains run on this route from Delhi, so transportation facility is necessary for tourism growth in the area.

- **Lack of Cheap Accommodation:** Rann Utsav is promoted for elite class; accommodation facility is very costly in the area. Bhunga, tent city and home stay's charged between 3000 to 10,000 rupees per day. Low income family can't pay this huge amount for day. There is need to develop cheap accommodation for kutch tourism.
- **Costly in Peak Season:** most of the tourist visit Rann Utsav at the time of weekend and holidays, the flow of tourist reached more than facilities so due to huge demand professionals charge more from tourists.
- **Infrastructure:** Rann Utsav is celebrated in rural area, which is far from the city. There is shortage of facility like drinking water, hospitals, sewage, telecom, lighting etc. Roads from main city are not proper maintained like zebra crossing, lighting, signboard, road side boundary etc.
- **Cleanliness:** Cleanliness at the destination attracts tourists and they can promote destination through word of mouth, prime minister's campaign "*Swachh Bharat*" promote India as a tourist destination. Cleanliness at Rann Utsav is major issue because there is no infrastructural facility like sewage and dustbin. Sustainability approach is needed for cleanliness drive.

Opportunity

- Rann Mohatsav is an important fair for growth of Gujarat and tourism industry. It generates jobs and this fair is source of income for local.
- This fair contributes in GDP of state and Country, and provides lots of foreign exchange. This income can invest for development of Infrastructure facilities.
- Job opportunity for local people through the Rann Utsav. Many Non-government Organization (NGO) working in Kutch region and provide jobs to community. Locals prepare handicrafts, handloom and finished products for NGO and they pay for the same. NGO provides them job for full year.
- Promotion of rural tourism
- Great Rann of Kutch is the largest salt desert in the world and spans an area of 7505.22 Sq. km. and Kutch is biggest district in India. Tourists came in Rann Utsav for experiments and experience tradition from all over world.

Rann Utsav may be seen on world tourism map.

Threats

- Congestion in peak season may affect tourist flow
- Sustainability approach may be ignored for quick development
- Social evils- drug addiction, crime, prostitution
- Terrorism
- Cultural disturbance
- Xenophobia
- Natural calamity

Suggestions

- Infrastructure facilities may be improved
- Cleanliness is required for future approach
- Ticket price of white Rann should be low.
- Government should invest in cheap accommodation.
- Connectivity for Rann Utsav may be improved
- Proper signboards required for direction to handicraft villages
- Medical and first aid facility at Rann Utsav
- Display of required information

CONCLUSION

Rann Utsav has vast potentiality for generating employment and earning foreign exchange. According to SWOT analysis finding, Rann Utsav have much strength like attractive tent accommodation, scenic beauty, handicrafts villages. Weakness of Utsav is lack of transportation, insufficient infrastructure, cleanliness, high price in peak season. Opportunities of Rann Utsav will be promotion of rural tourism, foreign exchange earnings, and GDP growth. Every destination has some future threats and Rann Utsav fear from terrorism, cultural interruption, Natural disaster, Terrorism, social evils, etc. Researcher concluded

that Rann Utsav has potential to be famous worldwide.

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