

## THEORY OF PLANNED BEHAVIOUR: FAIRS, FESTIVALS AND INDIAN YOUTH

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### Abstract

*The rich Indian heritage has been kept alive through the various fairs and festivals being celebrated in the country throughout the year. These fairs have long known to attract in-bound tourism. The paper explores how the tourists in India can be attracted to these fairs for growth opportunities and also to pass on the culture to the next generation. Research was conducted by holding focus group for the target audience to delineate their preferences and perceptions. This was then tested through questionnaire on larger audience base to check validity of the delineated constructs. Through the study it is found that youth have a positive attitude towards fairs. They are willing to invest time and money to visit fairs and the numbers can be enhanced provided certain dissatisfiers are managed. It is found that TPB is applicable and knowledge impacts attitude, perceived behavioural control, subjective norm and purchase behavior directly as well. With the 'westernization' of the youth there is a need to balance this with proper communication about our own traditions so that our distinctive world identity is maintained. This understanding can therefore give practical insights on how to communicate with the youth to influence them further. The study is unique as it provides insights into the Indian youth with reference to fairs.*

**Keywords:** Fairs, Culture, India, Youth, Perception

### Introduction

India is very often described as a country with unity in diversity. The diversity that one refers to is multi-dimensional, wherein the cultural diversity is very significant and unique in this second most populous country in the world. This cultural diversity gets manifested in Artifacts, behavior, feelings, values and beliefs. (The Cultural Onion, 2014). India is a country of continental proportions with physical diversity and cultural diversity. This gave rise to distinct sub-cultures with different languages, food habits, rituals, folk tales, fairs and festivals. These fairs and festivals are region-specific and happen during a particular period of the year.

Tayeb (2003) defined culture as "historically evolved values, attitudes and meanings that are learned and shared by the members of a community and which influence their material and non-material way of life." Shwartz (2006) views culture as "the rich complex of meanings, beliefs, practices,

symbols, norms and values prevalent among people in a society. "Hofstede defines culture is defined as "the collective programming of the mind distinguishing the members of one group or category of people from others" (National Cultural Dimensions, 2014). Culture is the acquired knowledge that people use to interpret experience and generate social behaviour. This knowledge forms values, creates attitudes, and influences behaviour (Luthans, Doh, 2012). From these definitions it becomes evident the complex nature of culture. However, one can recognize culture as that is acquired and distinct, passed on from generation to generation consists of artifacts, norms, values, and beliefs, and influences behavior. Mahatma Gandhi, the apostle of nonviolence said that "a nation's culture resides in the hearts and in the soul of its people" (HPC Report, 2014).

Estimates by Tourism Australia show that by the year 2020 the outbound tourists from India would total fifty million travelers from 15 million in the

year 2013 (Goyal, 2013). The potential for tourism among Indian masses is highlighted by the fact that even though world economy has seen turmoil in the last few years, outbound tourism has shown a consistent growth since the year 2001 with outbound departures being double the inbound arrivals. 'According to Amadeus-Frost & Sullivan tourism industry report, 2013, Indians travelling to Asia-Pacific alone spent \$13.3 billion in 2011. This figure is set to zoom to \$91 billion by 2030, making Indians the second-biggest spenders, after China, in the world on overseas travel' (Goyal, 2013). This shows that there are people willing to travel and spend money but marketers have not been able to target this segment with attractive offers to divert them to explore destinations within the country.

Fairs and festivals are specific to a place and represent the culture of the people residing there. A number of research studies have looked at the impact of tourism on fairs and festivals (Ray, Das, Sengupta and Ghosh, 2012; Sharpley and Sundaram, 2005; Jauhari, 2010;

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Agrawal, Choudhary and Tripathi, 2010). However, the youth today have a mind of their own and are questioning everything rather than blindly following tradition. The purpose of this paper is to highlight the mindset of the youth to understand their perceptions about and preference to visit various fairs which are held annually like SurajKundMela etc. in Delhi and NCR, PushkarMela in Rajasthan, Kumbhmela in Uttar Pradesh etc. These fairs have long known to attract in-bound tourism. There is however no study regarding the impact of these fairs and festivals on the local youth and how they perceive these festivals for tourism destinations. The paper explores how the tourists in India can be attracted to these fairs for growth opportunities and also to pass on the culture to the next generation.

### Fairs and Festivals of India

India is a land of multitude of fairs, with every region having specific fairs. The National Portal of India provides links to fairs and festivals of Rajasthan, Gujarat, Haryana, Mizoram, Assam, Kerala, Sikkim, Goa, to name a few, and ancient cities like Varanasi. (Fairs and festivals, 2014). This confirms that India is a land of fairs with a wide variety of fairs happening in different regions of the country at any point of time. These fairs are not only a place to sell traditional products manufactured in a traditional way, but also are centers of demonstration of art-forms and traditional methods of manufacture – the material way of life, as described by Tayeb (2003). Fairs not only preserve traditions, but also inform and educate the present generation about the traditions, rituals, etc.

Some of the important fairs of Northern India are the “Pushkar Cattle Fair”, the Camel Festival of Bikaner, The Desert Festival of Jaisalmer, Rajasthan, The Rajasthan Tourism website lists 43 fairs and festivals that are held in the state of Rajasthan. (Rajasthan Tourism Festival Calendar 2014-2020).

One of the important fairs sponsored and managed by the state of Haryana is

the “Surajkund International Crafts Mela”, (Mela means Fair) which is held every year from 1st to 15th February. It showcases regional and international crafts and traditions and celebrates the unique diversity of Indian culture and traditions. (Surajkund International Crafts Mela, 2014) This “Mela” was held for the first time in the year 1987 with a rural ambience (Past Mela, 2014). From then onwards it has become an annual feature and important fair in the tourism calendar of India. The vision of the Mela Authority is to preserve the arts and crafts of India and promote the skilled artisans of India.

Gujarat State Portal lists 10 fairs, like “Chitra-Vichitra Fair”, “KutchhUstav”, etc. (Fairs, 2014).

Even abroad fairs portraying culture and traditions are held regularly. The “Westcott Street Fair”, USA is held annually to celebrate the diversity and uniqueness of Westcott neighborhood through its culture. Even though it is held only for a day visual and performing arts, food, etc are an integral part of the fair (2015 Westcott Street Fair, 2014).

“The Asian Fair” held annually on the South Florida Fairgrounds, is also an annual event started in 1992 that promotes the importance of cultural diversity in building a vibrant, prosperous and healthy community. It showcases the diverse Asian culture and heritage (Asian Fair, 2014).

In New Zealand, “World Food, Craft and Music Fair, held annually in the city of Palmerston North is also a fair to celebrate art, culture and lifestyle. A cuisine show called “A Taste of Culture” is also part of the fair (Festival of Cultures, 2014).

From the above one can infer that fairs are usually held to celebrate, propagate and inculcate the culture of a region or in Indian context a sub-culture.

### Literature Review

Fairs mirror the socio-economic and cultural heritage of a particular society.

Fairs in Indian context are held due to various reasons like religious, harvest, based on certain historical happenings, but are a symbol of celebration. Fairs have several functions as enumerated by Mane, C. U. (2010). These are: firstly fairs offer a network of markets for village crafts and industry; secondly they help to connect economic interests with social and religious movements; thirdly they serve the ancient and modern routes of population movement.

Kulkarni, S and Bhopatkar, A (2013) argued that local festivals promote tourism activities in the area where they are held and creates the cultural environment in the area. They concluded that these festivals have a significant economic impact too.

Valle, P.O. et al (2011) in an article titled “The cultural offer as a tourist product in coastal destinations: The case of Algarve, Portugal” have stated that cultural products can add value to the core product of a destination and enhance its competitiveness. Focusing on coastal destinations they concluded that provision of a comprehensive set of high quality and diversified cultural attractions and events will increase the competitiveness of a coastal tourist destination and reduce the negative impact of the seasonality.

A case study of the impact of various types of sports, culture and business events on Korean undergraduates' attitudes toward Germany, by Woo Jun and Lee (2008), seems to show an interesting contrast between the impact of sports and cultural events. Both sports and general art events were found to positively influence attitudes towards the brand Germany, but no effect was found for business events and cultural festivals. However, the value of this study is limited as the events chosen to represent the two latter types turned out to be relatively unknown to respondents. As a result, the study offers no hard evidence of specific impacts associated with specific types of events, and concludes that only internationally renowned events impact country brands.

In a study carried out by Jun and Lee (2008) on the impact of sports, culture and business events on Korean students' attitudes towards Germany, it was found that sports and general art events had a positive influence on the attitudes towards brand Germany. However a major limitation of the study is the business and cultural events chosen were relatively unknown to the respondents.

Mason and Beaumont-Kerridge (2004) have concluded based on the literature review carried out in their study of Sidmouth International Festival that the majority of the research on festivals did not consider or gave less importance to socio-cultural, environmental or political impacts.

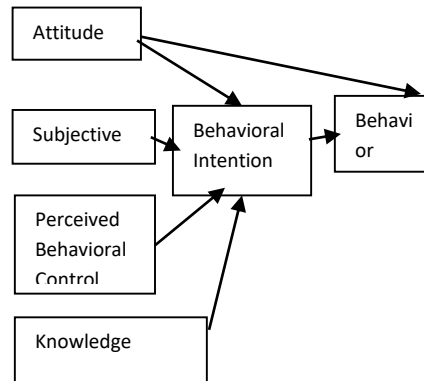
### About the study

The current study focuses on how the Indian youth that is predominantly influenced by western culture looks at the fairs. Indian youth is exposed to the fairs from their childhood but what motivates them to visit the fairs and their feeling towards the same is of concern. Since fairs also pass on the cultural heritage to the next generation the attitude of youth towards fairs is important. Since there is a paucity of literature in this context, the paper focuses on qualitative research to understand the factors influencing the youth to visit fairs. These factors are then grouped into various attributes of Theory of planned behaviour (TPB) (Ajzen, I., & Fishbein, M. 1975) to study how these impact the behaviour of the youth in general. The results aim to highlight the factors that motivate the youth to make the final purchase that is visit these fairs.

The theory of planned behaviour looks at how attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control, and knowledge impact behavioural intention and in turn the control over an individual's behaviour (Ajzen, I., & Fishbein, M. 1975). The theory of TPB has been used to predict a number of behaviors like academic misconduct (Kisamore and Stone, 2010); healthy

eating (Fila and Smith, 2006); work schedule, reliance on fast foods (Power et al., 2010) etc. and we hope to see how it predicts the attitude of youth towards fairs.

Figure 1: Proposed model for behavior towards fairs.



### Methodology:

Focus groups of college and post graduate students were conducted to delineate their preferences and perceptions regarding various fairs that they have been visiting. The main findings were then used as observed variables for the TPB's latent variables. This was then tested through questionnaire on larger audience base to check validity of the delineated constructs. Data was analyzed with the help of SPSS and LISREL.

### Data Collection

Three focus groups were conducted with 7 people each. Two focus group included youth in the age of 20-24. The third included working executives and two visiting professors from Austria who had visited the Surajkund fair at least twice in the past. A semi-structured interview was conducted to highlight the various drivers for visiting the fair along with suggestions for improvement. A questionnaire was prepared on the basis of focus group. This questionnaire included both open and close ended questions. Open ended questions included questions like the last time they visited the fairs, the name of the fairs visited, reasons for visiting/

not visiting the fairs etc and close ended questions included twenty six observed variables for the different latent variables of TPB which were highlighted from the focus group. Responses were collected from college/graduate students and post-graduate students including working executives who were pursuing their post graduate degrees. A total of 148 questionnaires were collected from various institutes from Delhi and National Capital Region (NCR) of which 126 questionnaires were complete in all aspects and could be utilized for the study. The open ended questions were analyzed through content analysis method and the close ended questions (where responses were captured on a five point likert scale) were subjected to factor analysis and path analysis using Lisrel 9.1

### Analysis and results

#### Qualitative analysis

The focus groups and content analysis of the responses showed that the responses could be grouped in the following themes. The first theme that could be grouped under knowledge included the following aspects. Youth felt that fairs were important to continue the heritage of a place; people should participate in the fairs to showcase the culture of the place; it is important for individual customers to visit these fairs and consumers felt that they could have a meaningful impact in sustaining culture by visiting the fairs. The second theme that emerged was subjective norm. Two constructs could be identified under this and respondents felt that they could continue the tradition by visiting these fairs and also influence other people to visit these fairs when they purchase from the fairs. The other theme that emerged could be grouped under attitude and respondent felt that visiting fairs was a necessary and beneficial behavior and that people that are important to them agree with their behavior of visiting fairs. The next broad category that emerged could be grouped in perceived behavioural control and respondents felt that most people that are important recommended

a visit to the fairs and festivals and they would be excited and happy if they could revisit the fair. The other category to emerge was purchase intention. This showed that respondents really looked forward to visiting fairs and would be sad and angry if they would not be able to do so. Thus the last category was purchase behaviour which highlighted that respondents would be making a special effort to revisit the festival in the near future, spend time and money in the fairs. They would really like to revisit the fairs.

The 126 final respondents had all visited some fair or the other in the last two years. Of these 61% had visited a fair in 2013 and the rest had visited a fair as recently as 2014.

The fairs that had been visited both recently and regularly are Surajkund fair, Pushkar Fair, Kumbh fair, various fairs organized at the time of Diwali, Durgapooja, Teej, Dusshera, Fairs at Delhi Haat, Gadhi Fair at Silchar, Assam, bihumela in assam, Mango festival are the ones most visited among the respondents. Respondents felt that they got exclusive items at affordable prices in the fairs. The respondents majorly identified these fairs with traditional clothes, foods, animal rides, various games, handicraft items, hand-made products and especially with 'fun, excitement, activities, games, family or friends time'. All the respondents felt that these fairs reflected the unique culture through dresses, food, dances, games, animal rides, and the various traditional products on sale. All the respondents also felt that they were motivated to visit these fairs so as to get close to their culture and to bring awareness in their generation about our traditions and values. All the respondents also responded positive to the question 'do you recommend visiting a traditional fair to your friends and relatives' as it is a miniature India and we can see various cultures at the same place. They also felt that visiting fairs should be encouraged to 'know India in a better way in terms of culture and diversified deep heritage.'

The respondents had favourable views on these fairs and felt that 'fairs attract foreign tourists, they educate us and new generation about our traditions, is a place where we can taste all states foods in one roof, buy various types of things like clothes, handicrafts, ornaments musical instruments etc., it keeps one connected with our soil, does not let anyone forget their age old culture'. They felt that fairs promote cultural values, integrate producers and suppliers and bring together people from various backgrounds and were a great way to buy traditional handicrafts that were not available in malls. These fairs are a unique confluence of traditional and modern and offer unique experience of India's traditional bazaars and reflect India's culture pertaining to that state. They also felt that government should ensure good, hygienic environment with proper public utilities. One respondent felt that the fairs were to attract the foreign customers only, and two felt that mishaps might happen at such fairs like pick pocketing, and were de-motivated by the jousting of the crowd and long queues. Some respondents did not visit fairs regularly due to lack of information about the same.

All the respondents felt that the fairs should be continued as these fairs were primarily to pass on knowledge about our cultural heritage to the younger generation and this was true for all times and not for this century only. Fairs unite people of different region and this is important 'as people are forgetting traditional culture (especially in big cities like Delhi) and there is lack of unity between people.' Fairs motivate local artisans and show the 'real India' to outsiders,

#### Quantitative analysis

TPB was applied to study how attitude, knowledge, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control affects purchase intention and ultimately the purchase behaviour towards fairs. The 26 potential indicators were subject to factor analysis where extraction method was Principal Component Analysis and rotation method was Varimax with

Kaiser Normalization. The rotation converged in 6 iterations and the indicators were reduced to 6 factors that comprised of 16 indicators (see table 1). These factors explained 69.388% of the total variance. This included three observed variables for attitude, two for subjective norm, four for knowledge, two for perceived behavioural control, two for purchase intention and three for purchase behavior.

Table 1: Observed variables for the TPB Latent variables

Factors	Latent variable	Observed variable
1	Knowledge	1. Fairs are important to continue the heritage of a place 2. People should participate in the fairs to showcase the culture of the place 3. It is important for individual customers to visit these fairs 4. I think I can have a meaningful impact in sustaining culture by visiting the fairs
2	Subjective Norm	1. I feel I can continue the tradition by visiting these fairs 2. I think I can influence other people to visit these fairs when I purchase from the fairs
3	Attitude	1. I think visiting fairs is a necessary behavior 2. I think visiting fairs is a beneficial behavior 3. Most people that are important to me agree with that visit the fairs
4	Perceived Behavioral Control	1. Most people that are important to me recommend that I visit fairs and festivals 2. If I revisit the fair I will be excited and happy
5	Purchase Intention	1. If I can't revisit the fair I will be angry 2. If I can't revisit the fair I will be sad
6	Purchase Behavior	1. I will make an effort to revisit the festival in the near future 2. I am willing to spend time and money in the fairs 3. I would like to revisit the fairs

To see if these are relevant the Cronbach alpha, Average variance explained (AVE) and square root of AVE were calculated as summarized in table 2. The Cronbach alpha for only perceived behavioural control is less than 0.5 and AVE for purchase intention is low and these need to be looked at further.

Table 2: Summary of findings for latent, observed variables and their factor loading, Cronbach Alpha, AVE (Average Variance Explained) and Square root of AVE

Latent variables	Observed variables	Factor Loading	Cronbach alpha	AVE	Sq Root of AVE
Knowledge	Know_1	0.551	0.726	0.4762	0.69
	Know_2	0.712			
	Know_3	0.795			
	Know_4	0.680			
Subjective Norm	SubN_1	0.758	0.768	0.6041	0.7772
	SubN_2	0.797			
Attitude	Att_1	0.614	0.624	0.5489	0.7408
	Att_2	0.742			
	Att_3	0.848			
Perceived Behavioral Control	PBC_1	0.926	0.164	0.8292	0.9106
	PBC_2	0.895			
Purchase Intention	PI_1	0.565	0.640	0.2802	0.5293
	PI_2	0.491			
Purchase Behavior	PB_1	0.751	0.590	0.5983	0.7735
	PB_2	0.779			
	PB_3	0.790			

The resultant model produced good fit indices  $\chi^2 = 150.62$ , degrees of freedom (df) = 89, goodness-of-fit index (GFI) = 0.881, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.074 (well below the 0.08 guideline) adjusted goodness-of-fit index (AGFI) = 0.818, comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.959. The GFI is close to the norm of 0.9 and AGFI is also above the recommended value of 0.8. The ratio of  $\chi^2$  and degree of freedom is 1.692 which is below the recommended upper cut-off value of 3 and so the model can be said to define consumer behavior towards fairs. The t values corresponding to all the items were significant (p is 0.00005 which is less than 0.001). The correlation and AVE have been highlighted in table 3. There is positive correlation between all the factors subjective norm and behavioral intention. To assess the discriminant validity, the square root of AVE should be higher than correlation between the constructs therefore the discriminant validity of all the constructs were supported. For assessing the convergent validity of the scales the value of AVE should be greater than 0.5(Kumar, 2010). Table 3 shows the AVE for the different constructs is more than 0.5 (except for purchase intention and knowledge) and therefore confirms convergent validity.

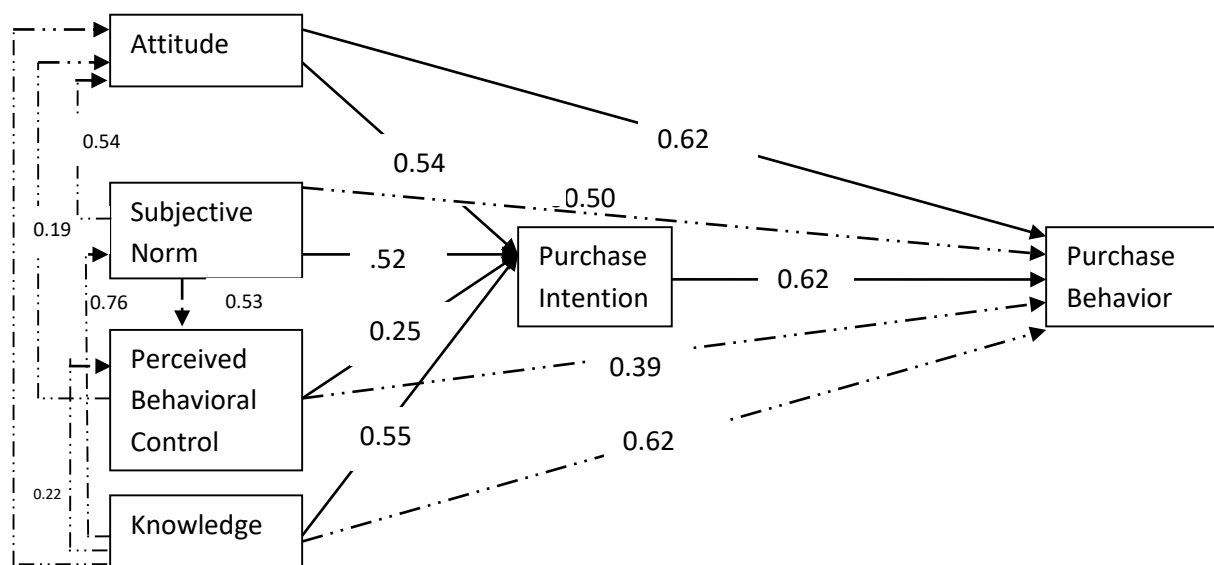
Table 3: Correlation and Square root of Average Variance Explained

	Attitude	Subjective norm	Knowledge	Perceived Behavioral Control	Purchase intention	Purchase Behavior
Attitude	<b>0.69</b>					
Subjective norm	0.49	<b>0.78</b>				
Knowledge	0.39	0.43	<b>0.74</b>			
Perceived behavioral control	0.17	0.18	0.20	<b>0.91</b>		
Purchase intention	0.44	0.42	0.52	0.35	<b>0.53</b>	
Purchase Behavior	0.49	0.54	0.49	0.23	0.47	<b>0.77</b>



The structural model derived from LISREL highlights that attitude, subjective norm, knowledge and perceived behavioural control all impact purchase intention and purchase behavior. The path estimates are given in figure 2. Solid lines here represent the original linkages and the dotted lines in the figure represent the impact from the study. There is significant positive relationship between knowledge and subjective norm (path estimate 0.76) and between knowledge and attitude (path estimate of 0.44) and also on perceived behavioral control (path estimate of 0.22). Also attitude and knowledge (both with path estimates of 0.62) are found to influence purchase behavior and purchase intention also has a positive (path estimate of 0.62) impact on purchase behavior. This shows that the consumers have a positive attitude and if they are informed about the various fairs as tourist destinations they would be willing to explore these places.

Figure 2: Resultant Structural Model derived from the study for consumer behavior towards Fairs among Indian Youth



### Suggestions

India's rich cultural heritage is marked by many fairs and festivals celebrated across the length and breadth of the country. Fairs form the fabric of Indian culture and both are so tightly woven that it can be said that fairs rose from culture and now form the culture of a place. In the words of one respondent 'Fairs provide a touch of our culture in a time when most of it is lost. It reminds us of our childhood'. Marketing these fairs as prospective tourist destination therefore makes sense as people connect to them and have been spending time and money there.

Qualitative research shows that people like to visit the fairs as it not only reminds them of their culture but also of culture of other states at one place. This touch of culture is lost in the daily hustle and bustle of life and is very relaxing for the respondents especially of metro cities. They also feel that malls and shopping centers are commercialized and 'brands' are

prevalent everywhere. They have to make special efforts to get the ethnic products but at the fair they get ethnic products of all states at one place. Foodies also have a great time at the fair as they can taste the street food of different states and countries at one place. Cultural programmes are another attraction for them. For photographers the fairs provide a riot of colours and hence great photo-opportunities. Respondents also felt that they got great entrepreneurial ideas which requires less investment and planned to pursue the same in the near future. Thus there are a number of motivators which drive people to the fairs. Foreign tourists felt the prices for traditional products at the fairs was very reasonable compared to local shops (for example at Janpath).

The Government has to take note as the respondents felt that though there was complete security in the venue but these fairs (for example Surajkund) are located at off-beat places. The route to these places is unsafe specially in the

evenings. They did not feel safe leaving from these places after sunset. Foreign visitors hiring taxis faced challenge as the taxi driver did not know the route to the fair which was not told to the tourists in advance. Foreign tourists had to tell the way from their smart phones and so were saved by technology. There were no indicators on the way. Thus government should ply buses from different metro stations to the venue. They should also ensure safety of the tourists by putting security measures in place outside the venue and till the metro station or till where traffic takes over.

Banks should set up mobile ATMs at these places as the visitors felt that if they ran out of cash they had to come back again the next day to make purchases which was tedious and many times not possible due to their hectic schedules.

Business schools can promote these fairs by motivating their students to visit these and come out with ideas as to how

they can help the people at the bottom of the pyramid. Each stall had the name of the funding agency and the fund received from them. The craftsmen are illiterate and students can help form bridges between them and different agencies like distribution, export agencies etc. In the process they will learn various problems faced by these craftsmen and help provide more opportunities for them.

Also these fairs are not promoted extensively and many times respondents remember once these are over. Thus government and other agencies responsible for organizing these fairs should promote them more – both nationally and internationally.

Fairs form an attractive tourism destination and have been used to draw tourism. However for the local youth there are a number of implications. Job creation and revenue generation has been explored in detail but the exploration of behaviour of youth as a customer is also important as they also form the target market. To explore the behaviour as a customer the use of theory of planned behaviour gives a complete study of how attitude, knowledge, subjective norm, impacts perceived behavioural control and in turn the purchase intention. It has been seen that knowledge has as significant direct and indirect impact on both purchase intention and purchase behavior. Knowledge impacts attitude, subjective norm, perceived behavioural control and purchase intention. It directly also impacts the purchase behavior. Thus the same should be built towards fairs and how it impacts the lives of the people across strata of society to show its benefits to the economy. The unique display of India's unity and diversity also attracts a number of foreign tourists which is also important for the economic growth.

Perceived behavioral control is found to impact attitude apart from the impact on purchase intention. It is found to impact purchase behavior directly as well. Thus marketers can highlight how visiting fairs creates happy moments for the

customers and revisiting a fair will bring happiness and excitement.

Pride in ones culture and tradition and the need to preserve this and pass it on to the future generations can be highlighted as it forms the subjective norm. This subjective norm is found to influence purchase decision. It is also found that it influences perceived behavioural control, attitude and purchase behavior directly as well.

It is heartening to know that the youth has the right attitude towards fairs. They feel that visiting fairs is necessary and a beneficial behavior and their attitude impacts both purchase intention and purchase behavior.

The purchase behavior shows that consumers are willing to invest time and money in visiting fairs. Since these fairs are held at regular intervals of time, for the local consumers fairs should create differentiation in terms of quality and acceptance of offerings. The fairs like Surajkundmela should offer something new and exciting each time so as to keep the excitement alive and motivate people to visit.

The government should ensure good, hygienic environment with proper public utilities to encourage participation. Measures should be taken to ensure law and order so that people are not deterred by the crowd which is found to be the main reason why youth does not want to visit a fair. In short if managed well, it will result in three benefits: we can gift the tradition and culture to our youngsters, local business and people will be benefited and our heritage will be alive.

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