

**ASSESSING THE INFORMATION VALUE OF
CULTURAL PROPERTIES IN MUSEUMS
OF INDIA: A STUDY**

**ABSTRACT
of
Thesis**

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ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION

The valuable part of the cultural history of our world is mirrored in human-made remaining and things related to the past such as prehistoric evidences and also example of planned and developed civilization like Indus valley civilization and their antiquities which have a unique and great social and cultural importance. The term “heritage” not only describes landscapes, natural history, buildings, artefacts, and cultural traditions literally or metaphorically passed on from one generation to the other, but also describes items which can be portrayed for promotion as tourism products. In this connection Museums are not mere buildings: they are the virtual documents of history and heritage.

Culture and heritage are often considered as the fundamental aspects underpinning a country’s national identity and sovereignty. Cultural heritage including historic buildings, sites, cultures and other invaluable assets are the distinguished elements that encapsulate a nation’s soul and spirit. The concept of cultural heritage invariably differs from one nation or region to another. In a broad sense, it is perceived as movable and immovable assets of artistic, literary, architectural, historical, archaeological, ethnological, scientific or technological values that embody the essence of a nation.

MODERN CONCEPT OF MUSEUM

Present time the scope of museum has been changed and the concept of museum has undergone a big change during the last 2 centuries. Earlier museums established for a saving rare collection but now a day’s museum is not only preservation centre of ancient collection these are educational institution and provides recreation by means of its activities, such as display, exhibition, education, research, entrainment, publication and public relation the society. Museums also act as with its cultural resources a type of effective media of non-conventional education.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The study was carried out keeping in view the several objectives, major objectives of the study are:-

1. Increase the value of cultural properties as an information source.
2. To study the museum as an information centre.
3. To know present status of selected museums in India.
4. To reveal the collections of the selected museums of India
5. To highlight the different types of cultural properties in the museums
6. To describe the various aspects of cultural properties of museums.
7. To find out the antique or unique piece of the museums.
8. To assess the information value of museum's cultural properties with internal and external assessment through museum professionals and visitors.
9. Lead to new ways of using the collection as a learning resource
10. To raise public awareness of the existence and purpose of the museum and its education service.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study covered 11 pure Government museums under State/Central Government (including under UT Government and Archaeological Survey of India). These museums divided into 5 zone of India i.e. east, west, north, south and central zone which have cultural background and archaeological & historical importance. The study gave preferences those museums which were situated at near/ in the capital or popular places of the selected States of India. This study did not include those museums which were depended on any trusts/societies/foundations etc. The selected museums are helpful to reveal cultural history from every direction of India. The following museums are selected for the study:

- State Museum, Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh
- National Museum, New Delhi
- Govt. Museum and Art Gallery, Chandigarh
- St. George Fort Museum, Chennai, Tamil Nadu
- A.P. State (Dr. Y.S.R.) Museum, Hyderabad
- Government Central Museum (Albert Hall), Jaipur, Rajasthan
- Archaeological Museum, Lothal, Gujarat
- Patna Museum, Patna (Bihar)
- Orissa State Museum, Bhubaneswar (Orissa)
- State Museum, Bhopal, M.P.
- Mahant Ghasidas Memorial Museum, Raipur (Chhattisgarh)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In the starting of research the problem, objectives and hypothesis should be clear stated and after this with the suitable research methods according to your research problem collect the Information and after deep analyzing the research give fruitful result which can be very useful for the nation.

SELECTION OF RESEARCH METHOD FOR THIS STUDY

For the present study the method of survey research (descriptive, observation method) has been adopted to conduct the study. This method is the most suitable one to complete the research study. The primary data were collected through a survey of museums of India by using questionnaire method, observation method and interview method. Other secondary and tertiary data were collected through journals, directories, bibliographies and web sites etc. The advantage of a questionnaire method is its more complete coverage characteristic.

The study is required data on the status, collections, variety, conditions, function and services, information value and contribution with special focus on cultural properties of museums and its visitor's assessment. museum survey and

museum observation method used in the depth examination of the cultural properties in museums of India in special reference to information value of cultural properties and museums with respect to the nature and the objective of the study. In order to do so structure questionnaire instrument developed for the study contained multiple items questions. In this connection two questionnaires used one for the Director, Curator or In-charge of the museums to know the detail description of the cultural properties and second for visitors of the museums to rate the contribution of the cultural properties as an information source. Both questionnaires were designed to assess the informational value of cultural properties in museums of India. The questionnaire for Museum's Director or In charge of the museum consisted both types of questions open ended and closed with focused on an administration, organization, collections, detailed description of cultural properties and its information value, facilities of the museums etc. and the second questionnaire for visitors consisted-rating base questions focused on contribution of the cultural properties.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

The following hypotheses are formulated for the study:

- Conditions of the cultural properties are good in the selected museums of India.
- Large numbers of visitors come to see cultural properties in the museums.
- Government is providing sufficient budget for preserving the cultural properties and other activities of the museums.
- Cultural properties give very strong contribution as an Information source to the society and having high Informational Value.

UTILITY OF THE STUDY

- This study will help in find out the rare collections of India.
- This study will create an understanding of museums as information centre and cultural properties as information source.

- This research study would create an awareness regarding the information value of cultural properties of museums.
- This study would help in understanding the detailed aspects of cultural properties of the museums.
- This research study will also promote the tourism and historical research.

CHAPTERIZATION

This research study is divided into six chapters, which are briefly described as follows:

Chapter- One	Introduction
Chapter- Two	Review of Literature
Chapter- Three	Information Value of Cultural Properties of Museums
Chapter- Four	Profile of Selected Museums of India
Chapter- Five	Data Analysis and Interpretation
Chapter- Six	Findings, Conclusion and Suggestion
Bibliography	
Appendices	

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The collected data and the responses of the questionnaires from the selected museums of India and its visitors viz. SML, MGMM, GCMJ, PM, SMH, FMC, OSM, NMND, GMC, AML and SMB are analysed & interpreted and hence the following results have been obtained:

General Information

- It has been found from the study that maximum numbers of museums established after independence.

- It has been observed in this study that most of the museums were state level museum under state government.

Finance

- According to the collected information it is concluded that 54.54% museums were depend on state government and 36.36% museums were depend on central government whereas 9.09% museum received financial assistance from both state and central government.
- It is revealed from the study that National Museum New Delhi received highest plan and non plan budget and Mahant Ghasidas Memorial Museum, Raipur got lowest plan and non plan budget in comparison to other museums for the year 2011-12, 2012-13, 2013-14.
- It has also observed from the study that maximum 63.64% museums were satisfied with museum budget.

Exhibitions/Programmes

- It is has been cleared from the study that 90.91% museums are arranging the exhibitions or other programs for visitors whereas 9.09% museum did not response on this.

Method for Documentation of collection

- It has been observed that maximum (54.54%) museums are using computerized format for the documentation of the collections.

Conditions

- It has been found that the condition of the building in all of the museums was good.
- It has been observed in this study that 90.91% museums are having good condition of the cultural properties whereas 9.09% (1) museum is having excellent condition of cultural properties.

Visitors Statistics

- It has been found in this study that annual range of visitors was between 10000 to 50000 in 6 (54.54%) museums whereas annual range of visitors was over 50000 in 5 (45.45%) museums. It is cleared from the study maximum numbers of visitors come to see cultural properties of the museums.

Collection and Period

- It has been observed in this study that all of the museums are having archaeological collections and any other collections were also available in the maximum number of museums.
- It is found from the study that total collection of the cultural properties in the museums in which approx 99219 number of cultural properties in SML, 12000 in MGMM, 20658 in GCMJ, 52520 in PM, 291788 in SMH, 758 (only displayed collection) in FMC, 60611 in OSM, 203816 in NMND, 11490 in GMC and 21,925 in SMB were available in the museums whereas AML did not provide total number of objects. It gave only details about which types of antiquities were available in the museum.
- It is also found from the study that large numbers of coins were involved in the total collection of the cultural properties in maximum numbers of museums in which SMH have large collection of coins i.e. 2, 82,000. On the other side NMND is having approx 1, 20,000, SML is having 76,500, PM is having 23775, SMB is having 16844, and OSM is having 13500 numismatic collections.
- It is also found from the study that range of period of the cultural properties was between prehistoric period/200 million years before from today to modern period.

Gallery

- It has been revealed in this study that maximum museums are having above 10 galleries for display of the cultural properties in which National

Museum New Delhi is having highest number (22) of galleries for display of the collections.

Conservation and Preservation Agency

- It has been observed in this study that 63.64% of museums are approaching any other agency to preserve the cultural resources of the museum whereas 36.36% museums are not approaching.

Human Resource

- It has been observed that maximum numbers of staff were in NMND i.e. 186 and the minimum staff were in AML i.e. 16.

Languages and scripts

- It has been observed that Sanskrit, Urdu, Arabic and Persian languages are found in the maximum numbers of museums.
- It is found from the study that Brahmi and Nagari scripts were seen on the cultural properties in maximum numbers of museums. In addition to this Kharosthi, Pali, Devnagari etc. have seen in the museums.

Materials

- It is observed from the study that paper, terracotta, wood, stone, metal and various kinds of materials highlighted in the maximum number of museums.

Equipments

- It is observed from the study that mainly photographic, chemical equipments, CCTVs and fire equipments were highlighted in the museums.
- It has been observed in this study that the fire detection system installed in all museums.

Reason of Attractiveness of Cultural Property

- It is observed from the study that the Majority or 8 (72.73%) museums highlighted oldness in reference to reason of attractiveness of the cultural property in the museum.

Library facility

- It is also found from the study majority or 7 (63.64%) museums are having library facility for the users.

Information Value

- It is observed from the study that the information values including scientific, aesthetic, social/spiritual, political, economical and educational information values which mentioned in the study have accepted by the 9 (81.82%) museums whereas 2 museums did not response on this.
- On the basis of raring of value/contribution of the cultural properties by the visitors of the museums, it is observed from the study that cultural properties give very strong contribution in various forms to the society which has proved on the basis of high rating of contribution of the cultural properties by the visitors of the museums which is highlighted in the following way:

Channel for Getting Closer to Different Culture

- It is observed from the study that total 434 (85.10%) and 76 (14.90%) out of 510 visitors favoured that cultural properties work as a channel for getting close to different cultures which is proved on the basis of selection of rank 1 (very strong contribution) and rank 2 (strong contribution) respectively.

Deep Knowledge of history

- It is revealed from the study that maximum (82.16%) visitors were with rank 1 (very strong contribution). It means the value of cultural properties on this attribute was is high.

A vital information source

- It is highlighted from the study that majority of visitors given response to very strong contribution and accepted the value of cultural properties in the form of vital information source. On the other side only 1.57% visitors were with normal contribution.

Increase interest towards history in the people

- It is cleared from the study that 80.20% visitors rated to very strong contribution and 19.80% rated to strong contribution which indicate that cultural properties play a significant role to increase interest towards history in the people.

Represent whole story of the kingdom

- It is found from the study that total 61.57% visitors were with rank 1 and 32.94% visitors were with rank 2 whereas only 5.49% visitors were with rank 3 in reference to represent the whole story of the kingdom.

Helpful for economical growth of the country

- It is clarified that majority of visitors i.e. 319 and 161 categorized the rate of contribution of cultural properties in the form of rank 1 and 2 which means cultural properties of the museums are also very helpful to economic growth of the country.

An important Centre of tourist attraction

- It is observed from the study that 79.61% visitors chosen rank 1 whereas 20.39% visitors selected rank 2 for rating the value of cultural properties in reference to centre of tourist attraction. Here it is cleared that museums and cultural properties are the very important source of tourist attraction in comparison to other sources.

Generate an effective way of learning

- It is revealed from the study that 54.51% visitors favoured to very strong contribution and on the other side 14(2.74%) visitors were with weak contribution in this context of effective way of learning.

Highlight the philosophy of living

- It is found from the study that total 246, 179, 64 and 21 out of 510 numbers of visitors accepted very strong value, strong value, normal value and weak value respectively in this reference.

Better Explanation of artistic value

- In this connection total 67.84% visitors were with rank 1 and 28.43% visitors were with rank 2 whereas 3.73% visitors were with rank 3.

Provide opportunity to observe the details in a work of art

- Majority of visitors 63.53% were with very strong contribution. It means the value of cultural properties is very strong in reference to provide opportunity for observation the details in a work of art. It is cleared that cultural properties have high value in terms of art.

Way of communication with information seekers/others

- It is highlighted from the study that 48.04% visitors from all museums selected rank 1, 32.55% visitors selected rank 2, 13.14% visitors were with rank 3 and 6.27% visitors were with rank 4. Here it is cleared that visitors accepted the contribution of cultural properties in the category of very strong, strong, normal and weak contribution in the context of way of communication.

New and unusual experience

- It is clarified that maximum numbers of visitors (375) given response in the form of very strong contribution whereas minimum numbers of visitors (8) given response to the category of weak contribution in

reference to new and unusual experience in term of cultural properties of the museums.

Imagine feel of living in a different time or place

- It is found from the study that total 70.98% visitors chosen the rank 1 (very strong contribution) whereas 22.94% visitors chosen the rank 2 (strong contribution). On the other side 6.08% visitors selected the rank 3 (normal/average contribution) in this reference.

Beauty of the cultural properties is enjoyable and pleasurable

- Majority of visitors 76.08% were with very strong contribution whereas only 4.90% visitors were with normal contribution in terms of aforesaid aspect of cultural property.

Show like a live pictures of the things

- It is cleared from the study that maximum i.e. 67.65% visitors favoured to rank 1 whereas 24.51% and 7.84% visitors favoured rank 2 and 3 respectively in the reference to live pictures of the things.

Remove stressful social environment

- It is revealed from the study that 49.61% visitors from all museums rated rank 1 whereas 30.20% visitors rated rank 2. On the other hand 14.31% visitors' rated rank 3 and 5.88% visitors rated rank 4 for contribution in reference to remove stressful social environment by the museums.

Feeling a real sense of pride

- It is found from the study that majority 355 out of 510 (69.61%) of visitors were with very strong contribution in this reference.

Support to bring change and growth of communities

- It is found from the study that highest response of the total visitors were 42.55% from rank 1(very strong contribution) whereas lowest were 4.51% from rank 4 (weak contribution) in reference to growth of communities.

Surprise with its unique collection

- It is observed from the study that total 395 visitors from all museums rated the category of very strong contribution whereas 103 visitors rated the category of strong contribution and only 12 visitors rated the category of normal contribution in reference to surprise with unique collection.

Helpful to discover new things

- It is revealed from the study that 45.69%, 38.63%, 12.35% and 3.33% visitors supported the rank 1,2,3 and 4 (very strong, strong, normal and weak contribution) respectively for rating the contribution of the cultural properties in terms to support discover new things.

Open minds to new ideas

- It is cleared from the study that majority of visitors (53.92%) rated the rank 1 whereas very less number of visitors (0.39%) rated rank 4. It is clear that cultural properties play a very vital role to open mind for new ideas.

Understanding of other subjects

- It is found from the study that majority 270 out of 510 (52.94%) visitors selected the category of very strong contribution which means cultural properties are having strong ability to provide understanding of other subjects.

Inspire to make something creative task

- It is observed from the study that maximum no. of visitors were with very strong contribution i.e. 220 in this context.

Create link with past, present and future

- It is revealed from the study that 58.43% visitors accepted the category of very strong contribution for creation of link between past, present and future whereas 37.06% visitors were agree with the rating of strong contribution and 4.51% visitors were with normal contribution in this context.

Highlight the living standard of people lived in past

- It is found from the study that maximum number of visitors i.e. 319 favoured the rank 1 (very strong contribution) in reference to highlight the living standard of the people of the past.

Focus on Studies change in past (old) technology

- It is observed from the study that majority of the visitors i.e. 56.08% were with the rating of very strong contribution in this reference.

Effective Explanation of cultural variation

- It is cleared from the study that 62.55% visitors favoured to rank 1, 32.55% visitors favoured to rank 2 whereas 4.90% visitors favoured to rank 3 for rating the contribution of the cultural properties in terms of effective explanation of the cultural variation. Here is found that cultural properties are having a very strong ability to explain the cultural variation because majority of the visitors accepted the category of very strong contribution.

Understanding of place variation

- It is highlighted from the study that maximum (63.92%) visitors from all museums given response in the form of very strong contribution for rating the value of cultural properties in special reference to explanation of place variation.

Understanding of material variation

- In this connection 63.53% visitors were with very strong contribution whereas 29.80% were with strong contribution and 6.67% visitors were with normal contribution.

Clarify the processes of human past (ancient)

- It is revealed from the study that maximum numbers of visitors i.e. 352 out of 510 selected very strong contribution in this reference.

Realistic

- It is observed from the study that 75.10% visitors gave response in the form of very strong contribution, 22.94% gave response in the form of strong contribution whereas only 1.96% visitors were with normal contribution.

Unique aspect of history (pre and pro)

- It is found from the study that maximum (65.49%) visitors given response in the form of very strong contribution whereas 28.63% visitors accepted the value in the form of strong contribution and only 5.88% visitors accepted normal contribution.

Self awareness

- It is clarified that 58.63% visitors accepted that cultural properties provide self awareness very strongly whereas 28.23% visitors accepted strongly contribution of the cultural properties. On the other side 10.59% visitors selected normal contribution and 2.55% visitors selected weak contribution in reference to self awareness.

Very important for every Nation

- It is cleared from the study that maximum numbers of visitors i.e. 402 out of 510 were with very strong contribution.

Public Educational Development

- It is proved from the study that cultural properties are helpful for the public educational development because 59.21% visitors favoured the very strong contribution.

Support to Tourism

- It is observed from the study that majority i.e. 77.65% visitors were with very strong contribution in reference to support tourism.

Improve literacy level

- It is found from the study that 45.69% visitors accepted the contribution of the cultural properties for this purpose very strongly, 35.29% visitors and 14.51% visitors accepted the contribution strongly and normally

respectively. On the other side 4.51% visitors categorized the response in the form of weak contribution.

New opportunity to invest knowledge and new ideas

- It is found from the study that Maximum 52.16% visitors favoured the very strong contribution in terms of new opportunity to invest knowledge in the reference of cultural properties.

More Authentic than books stories

- It is observed from the study that 73.33% visitors accepted that cultural properties are more authentic than book stories with the rating of very strong value/contribution.

Experience of real beauty

- It is highlighted from the study that maximum numbers of visitors i.e. 273 and 215 out of 510 were with very strong contribution and strong contribution respectively in reference to provide experience of real beauty.

Spiritual feel

- It is revealed from the study that majority i.e. 54.70% visitors accepted the very strong contribution, 30.98% visitors accepted the strong contribution, 11.18% visitors accepted normal contribution and 3.14% visitors accepted weak contribution in the context of spiritual feel.

New understanding of scientific or technical concepts

- It is observed from the study that 49.80%, 37.06%, 9.02% and 4.12% visitors from all museums rated the contribution of cultural properties in form of very strong contribution, strong contribution, normal contribution and weak contribution respectively for this aspect.

High Support in historical research

- Maximum responses of visitors were with very strong contribution (69.21%) and strong contribution (27.65%). It means cultural properties are playing a very significant role in historical research.

Enough detail of past

- It is found from the study that 63.14% visitors were with very strong contribution and 34.12% visitors were with strong contribution whereas only 2.74% visitors were with the normal contribution in reference to provide enough detail of the past.

Overall contribution of cultural properties

- It is observed from the study that majority (71.57%) visitors favoured to rank 1 (very strong contribution). It indicates the overall contribution of the cultural properties of the museums is very strong in the society.

TESTING OF HYPOTHESIS

The analysis of the data affects the hypotheses in the following way:

S. No.	Hypotheses	Supported/Not Supported/Null	Remarks
1.	Conditions of the cultural properties are good in the selected museums of India.	Supported	It is confirm from chapter-five “analysis of data” (table 5.1.13)
2.	Large numbers of visitors come to see cultural properties in the museums.	Supported	It is confirm from chapter-five “analysis of data” (table 5.1.14)
3.	Government is providing sufficient budget for preserving the cultural	Supported	It is confirm from chapter-five “analysis

	properties and other activities of the museums.		of data” (table 5.1.7)
4.	Cultural properties give very strong contribution as an Information source to the society and having high Information Value.	Supported	It is confirm from chapter-five “analysis of data” (table 5.1.24 and maximum tables of section 5.2-‘visitor assessment’)

SUGGESTIONS

- There should be Proper record of numbers of cultural properties of the museums
- Some collections are preserved in the reserve sections it should be exhibit to the public also.
- There should be best software to include all details of the objects in the museums.
- Digitization process of the cultural properties should be improved.
- Vacant posts in the museums should be filled.
- Library facilities should be increased in the museums.

AREA OF FURTHER RESEARCH

- Present Status of the Libraries in the Museums of India.
- Visitors’ Satisfaction toward Museums of India.
- Conservation and Preservation of Cultural Resources of the Museums.
- Digitization of Cultural Properties of Museums of India

CONCLUSION

The culture and heritage are often considered as the fundamental aspects underpinning a country’s identity and sovereignty. The cultural heritage includes historic buildings, sites, cultures and other invaluable assets. These are

the distinguished elements that encapsulate a Nation's soul and spirit. In a broad sense, it is perceived as movable and immovable assets of artistic, literary, architectural, historical, archaeological, ethnological, scientific or technological values that embody the essence of a Nation. India has a rich cultural heritage which conserved valuable information about the historical aspects of the ancient time. India's magnificent past can be seen all round in the spectacular monuments, forts, cultural sites, temples and museums etc. India's museums house valuable and greatest artistic treasures ever produced in the subcontinent.

The study is presented the handy introduction to some of vital museums and to the wealth and richness of Indian art and history in the form of cultural properties which is considered as a mode of transformation of information in the historical, scientific, social, etc. perspectives. The main objective of this study was to reveal the various collections and varieties of the cultural properties in the context of informational value and contribution. It is concluded that India's museums are the houses of rare collections and huge numbers of cultural properties. The coins are the major collection in the India's museums. It is also revealed from the study that range of period of the cultural properties is from pre historic period to almost upto modern period. The large numbers of visitors are coming to see the cultural properties in the museums. It is concluded that all of the museums are having archaeological collection whereas some museums are also having the geological, anthropological, natural history and other collections. Condition of the cultural properties is good in the museums which are very important aspect to assess the informational value in future as well. In reference to languages/scripts and material variation, Sanskrit, Urdu, Persian etc. are major languages and Brahmi and Nagari etc. are major scripts which are found on the cultural properties in the museums. In addition to this some other languages and scripts are also found on the cultural properties in the museums. In the context of material variation, stone, metals, wood, paper and its various types, terracotta, cloths, ivory etc. materials are found in the cultural properties of the museums. The government is providing sufficient financial assistance to the museums for preserving the cultural properties but there is also a need to increase the additional financial support. The majority of museums arrange the exhibitions or other related programs for visitors to increase the interest towards cultural

properties. The majority of museums accept 'information value' in the form of scientific, aesthetic, social and spiritual, political, economical, educational in their respective collections. On the other hand, on the basis of rating of value/contribution of the cultural properties by the visitors of the museums, it is also concluded that cultural properties give very strong contribution in various forms and attributes to the society in special reference to informational value and contribution which has proved on the basis of high rating of contribution of the cultural properties by the visitors assessment in the museums.