



Tourism Development and Local Livelihoods in Cavelossim-Mobor Peninsula

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Abstract

Tourism as a social phenomenon, can bring sweeping transformations in the host community. The introduction and development of tourism in the coastal village of Cavelossim sparked radical transformations in the livelihood of local population, with a shift from traditional occupations to tourism-related occupations. This paper is a qualitative ethnographic study, exploring the socio-historical transformations of the research area which came to the limelight of international tourism in the 1980s. It aims in investigating the ways in which tourism development has led local people to give up their traditional livelihood/occupations and become dependent on tourism related businesses like renting houses and shops, operating shacks, restaurants and taxis.

Keyword: tourism, livelihood, traditional occupations.

Introduction

Tourism has the potential to promote social development through creation of employment although seasonal, income redistribution and poverty alleviation. (Lourenço, Machado, & Jorge, 2009:16). Tourism can potentially open up new vistas when it comes to livelihood opportunities for a local community (Guha & Ghosh, 2007:5). Cavelossim or 'kelshi' as locally known, is a village located at the extreme southernmost end of Salcete Taluka, which is bounded by the east by river Sal and west by the Arabian Sea, north by the neighbouring village of Carmona and south by the mouth of the river Sal where the river Sal meets the Arabian Sea. It encompasses a total area of about 834.13 hectares including Mobor. Cavelossim was the original abode of the goddess Shantadurga, which was taken from the village to Kawlem in Ponda taluka of Antruz Mahal in the fear of Portuguese inquisition around 1665 to 1738 (Gomes, 2000:5).

Objectives of the study

Tourism is considered by locals as a backbone of the village economy as majority of the villagers as well as other surrounding areas are directly or indirectly involved in tourism. The main objective of this study to analyse the reasons for the shifts in livelihood from traditional occupations to tourism related occupations in the coastal village of Cavelossim.

Methodology

A qualitative ethnographic research design and unstructured interviews were conducted among the local villagers and the tourist visiting the village. The sample for the study was selected through a snowball sampling method. This study is based on both primary and secondary data. This study was also based on participant observation, as a resident of the village, the researcher gained the opportunity to participate and witness the shifts in occupations.

Transformations in Local Livelihood- Traditional occupation to Tourism related occupation

The heart of Goa lies in her village life. But today with rapid modernization, the ancient traditional occupations have lost its charm. Toddy-tapping, fishing and farming, were since time immemorial the primary occupations of the villagers, which served the very foundation of the village economy. Today, urban office employment, overseas shipping jobs and most importantly tourism, has significantly detracted a number of youth from entering the profession of their forefathers (Gomes, 1987).

The main occupations of the village during the Portuguese era was fishing, toddy tapping, and coconut plantation, distilling cashew and coconut fenni and paddy cultivation. While some villagers migrated to Bombay, Africa and other Portuguese colonies to earn a living. Prior and during the Portuguese period, agriculture was the backbone of the village. With predominant cultivations of coconut palms and paddy fields. The villagers also cultivated other crops like sweet potatoes, chillies, watermelon were grown in large numbers after the kharif season. One of the respondents proudly mentioned that, the village was at one time regarded as the 'agricultural basket of Salcete', due to its abundant agricultural produce. It was mainly the gaunkars of the ten clan/vangods or the original settlers and the mundkars engaged themselves in cultivation along with animal husbandry. Every household would have two or more cattle for the purpose of ploughing and for dairy. The main crop grown in the village was paddy, of which two crops were raised, one each in the 'kharif' called as the 'sorod' and 'rabi' called as the 'vaigonn' seasons. As far the continuity and discontinuity is concerned, only five families have continued their traditional occupation of cultivation. As observed, the sorod is grown by all, while the vaigonn is grown only by the one cultivator, as it requires a water from the lakes or wells. The cultivation of the vegetables has continued to some extent but in a smaller quantity. The gaunkars cited that the discontinuation of cultivation was not only due to one specific reason, but a cluster of factors like overseas jobs, where fast money can be earned. Most of them have settled abroad in U.S, U.K and in Portugal. Other factor for the discontinuation was lucrative tourism related occupations. Indirectly, it was the advent of tourism in the village that sounded the death alarm its agricultural sector. Gone are the days, were we could see people cultivating in their fields.

Cashew plantations was also done in the village but not in any planned commercial manner as a cash crop. It is mostly a wild growth and it was found close to the sea. The entire Mobor area is covered with cashew cultivation. The lands under the comunidade of Cavellissim are dominated by cashew cultivation, which are auctioned and leased for a period of three years. Liquor was distilled in two places. The distillation of cashew fenni has become a memory of the past. Most of the villagers are mainly involved only in the selling of the cashew nuts, due to great demand for them in the local markets. The people who used to bid in the auctions have also given up the occupation and are involved in tourism, by renting the rooms, two-wheeled vehicles for the tourist. Through tourism, they are earning more than what they would have earned by distilling cashew fenni. Many of the villagers regarded distilling fenni as time consuming, tedious, labour intensive and less profitable compared to the income earned from tourism related activities.

The other traditional occupations of toddy tapping, fishing and boat canoeing were mostly concentrated in the beach area and primarily dominated in the Mobor ward of Cavellissim. Both toddy tapping and distillation of coconut fenni, is a lost art of the village. The reason of this change, were the increasing opportunities created by tourism. One of the respondents said that if there was no such opportunities created by tourism, some of the of the toddy tappers occupation would have survived in their families. The older generation expressed

their willingness to continue the art of toddy tapping but due to old age are unable to do so. Another factor was the increase in education and literacy levels. Many locals who have discontinued the occupation were first generation learners. The traditional occupation of toddy tapping was also negatively linked to lower social status in the social hierarchy. Even though it is lucrative business today, none of the youth aspire to take up toddy tapping due to the lower social status associated to it.

It is impossible to imagine the landscape of Cavelossim beach without fishermen and fishing boats. In the fishery sector, while fishermen do not always compete with tourists for shore space, there are instances on the Goan coasts where traditional fishing operations have been constrained by lack of shore space (Sawkar, Noronha, Mascarenhas, Chauhan, 1998:8).

As far as, traditional fishing was concerned, it has still continued with not much change in the traditional techniques, as they do not use any mechanical fishing techniques. Many of the traditional fisherman had tried their luck in the mechanised fishing industry, some were successful while others after a failure reverted back to traditional technique of fishing. The key players in traditional fishing has witnessed a change. Especially in the Mobor Ward, new players have entered in the traditional fishing industry, who had formed their own ramponn. An obvious change is observed in the labourers working in the ramponn, as there are more migrant labourers from other states working in this fishing business. Migrants from the other states, who are dependent on tourism for their livelihood get business only during the tourist season. While during the off season, these migrants survive on the ramponn to get their daily wages, which are both in form of cash and kind.

Boat canoeing was one of the thriving business before 1980s. Before the liberation there were no pakka roads in the village. A road was constructed only after the liberation until the Rodrigues Ward, while the entire Mobor peninsula was isolated from the rest of the village. There was only one kaccha road along the bank of the River Sal from Cavelossim to Mobor. For the purpose of buying daily subsistence like vegetables, the people residing in the Mobor peninsula used their canoes to cross the river and to reach Assolna or to reach the Khandy Ward of Cavelossim. The Khandy Ward served a dock for all the people. Until the year 1985, canoes were very much functioning in the village. It was only after the introduction of tourism, construction of roads and the introduction of a ferry to cross the River Sal to Assolna, that the traditional boat canoeing occupation lost its significance.

In the village of Cavelossim in general and Mobor Ward in particular, most of the villagers performed two or three traditional occupation for their livelihood. The most common combination of the occupations was of toddy tapping, fishing and boat canoeing. But with tourism, this complexity remained the same but the combination differed. As toddy tapping was replaced by tourism industry and canoeing got replaced with water sports. While fishing remained the same, but a change was observed from a subsistence level to more profit making business. Today, the most popular tourism related occupations are renting apartments and vehicles, operating shacks, restaurants and small sized roadside eateries, water sports, taxi operators and drivers, organising tours for the tourist and working in the stared hotels. While, selling garments, wooden handcrafts, artisanal pieces and gold and silver ornaments are dominated by migrants from Karnataka (Iamani tribe), Gujarat, Uttar Pradesh, Bihar, Jharkhand, West Bengal, Assam and Kashmir.

Conclusion

The Gram Sabha of the Cavelossim Panchayat in its resolution recognised the cause for the loss of traditional occupation were due to industrialization and pre-eminence of tourism on the coastline and the local inhabitants of Goan ancestry were deprived by their traditional livelihood. Thus, forced to depend on tourism related activities as a source of livelihood

occupations (Solomon,2009:21). Subsequently, this resulted in the emergence of a segment of population who are increasingly dependent on the tourism related occupations. But now a prominent question that arise is the sustainability of these tourism related occupations and after its saturation does the locals have another alternative source of livelihood.

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