

## An Empirical Study on International Surajkund Fair: Swoc Analysis

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Rukmini Devi Institute of Advanced Studies

E-mail : [effulgence@rdias.ac.in](mailto:effulgence@rdias.ac.in), Website : [www.rdias.ac.in](http://www.rdias.ac.in)

<http://effulgence.rdias.ac.in/user/default.aspx>

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Dr. Anjali Singh<sup>1</sup> ✉

Dr. Urvashi Sharma<sup>2</sup>

### *Abstract*

*India is rich in culture and heritage from the ancient age. Indians have embraced almost all major religions of the world. Some of the major festivals are celebrated with a great zeal and enthusiasm such as Deepawali, Holi, Dussehra, Pongal, Baisakhi, Bihu etc. To promote festivals and festivities of Indian culture and heritage Government initiated the various fairs and exhibitions, so that more and more artisans can participate and market their home-made products. Few important fairs and festivals are organized in several states such as Gujrat, Rajasthan, Tamil Nadu Delhi etc. Delhi is the capital of India and Government has located few major hubs and spots where craft mela and exhibitions can be organized like Pragati Maidan, Delhi Haat and Surajkund etc. Haryana Govt and Delhi Govt help, support provide aid and facilities to arrange Surajkund Craft International Mela at grand scale every year. The study attempts to analyze socio cultural benefits of the entire mega event. The data collection will be done through structured questionnaire and personal interviews of artisans, industry experts and government officials. The study will be related to data will be analyzed through quantitative techniques.*

**Keywords:** *Systematic arrangement, Craft Mela, Cultural diversity, Digitalization and Techniques.*

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1. Associate Professor, [anjali.slm@mriu.edu.in](mailto:anjali.slm@mriu.edu.in)

2. Associate Professor, School of Leadership and Management, Department of U G Management Studies Manav Rachna International Institute of Research and Studies, [urvashi.slm@mriu.edu.in](mailto:urvashi.slm@mriu.edu.in)

## INTRODUCTION

Occupying a place of pride on the international tourist calendar, more than a million visitors throng the Mela during the fortnight including thousands of foreign tourists. The Surajkund Mela is unique as it showcases the richness and diversity of the handicrafts, handlooms and cultural fabric of India, & is the largest crafts fair in the world.

Amongst the dusty, bustling plains of the NCR, an oasis of color materializes for two weeks each year. The Surajkund International Crafts Mela has been bringing together artists, artenthusiasts and tourists together for 34 years now, since it was founded in 1987 by the Haryana Tourism Department ("Vision..." 2020). It started as a small gathering of select artists from around the country to showcase their work, from where it grew exponentially with growing support from consumers, and backing from various stakeholders.

Popularly known as the largest art-and-crafts festival in the world ("At a glance..." 2020) this grand festival presents itself as a hub for cultures to collide. Each year it showcases hundreds of art-forms from various different cultures: from performing arts to handicraft, to a base of lakhs of visitors: 13 lakh as of 2018. The Mela attracts international interest as well, with over 1 lakh visitors hailing from other nations ("32nd Surajkund International...", 2018).

Surajkund Mela is a platform that brings together artists and performers not just from India, but from all over the world to come display the best of their cultures. Not only does the Mela facilitate the interaction between diverse people from around the world such as artists, performers, consumers and organisers, but also between varied cultures through artwork, handicrafts, handlooms and food. As it was known to be the world's largest arts and crafts festival in terms of footfall and number of participants, the whole team was curious to know how it came to be what it is today, and what the Mela stood for Another reason undertaking this

research was believed to be of paramount importance was the lack of academic documentation and general awareness about the Mela. Being such a large scale event involving a large amount of money and people, it was surprising to find barely any credible secondary data. The few articles that were found offered very basic data (mostly just a description of the event), and nothing really dug deep into the inner workings of the Mela. This did nothing but reinstate the need for the team to study the Surajkund Mela.

## REVIEW OF LITREATURE

Surajkund is an ancient reservoir of the 10th century located on the Southern Delhi Ridge of the Aravalli range in the city of Faridabad, Haryana about 8 km from South Delhi(Sharma). Surajkund is known for its annual fair "Surajkund International Craft Mela", and the 2015 edition of this fair was visited by 1.2 million visitors including 160,000 foreigners with more than 20 countries participating in it("29th Surajkund International...", 2015). 2.4 Notable Stalls

Surajkund Mela has a wide variety of stalls. In 2016, the Human Kind Foundation, an NGO that works towards spreading awareness about the sustainable disposal of waste products set up a stall at the Mela. At their stall, they had a wide range of composters displayed which helped in converting kitchen waste into manure for plants(Kumar, 2016). In the same year, Mitti Cool also set up at the Mela with the motive of raising awareness about keeping the environment clean while giving back to nature. They displayed a vast variety of colourful cookware of various designs made from clay. 2.5 Empowerment The Surajkund Mela empowers a number of minority communities. The 'Haryana Welfare Society for Persons with Speech and Hearing Impairment' is one of the country's largest and oldest organisations working towards the overall development of people with speech and hearing impairment in Haryana and its neighboring states. In 2018, this organisation set up a stall where all the items that were up for sale were made by their

students. They did this with the intention to sensitize society towards the community and initiate social integration (“Stall with a difference...”, 2018). In 2016, Surajkund Mela provided the opportunity to prison inmates of Haryana to showcase their art and skills by having a stall at the Mela. Their stall displayed the different art products crafted by these inmates, made from paper, wood and straw. These inmates were given training in tailoring, chocolate making, etc. and were able to curate a collection of wall hanging, wood crafted animals, hand painted sceneries and many more handicrafts (Kumar, 2016).

As previously mentioned, Surajkund Mela partners with a different country every year in order to showcase their culture alongside India’s own. This allows the Mela to bring in many international stalls from different countries that bring something new to the visitors, the Mela and the country each year. In 2016, Faizi Kaabi, a Tunisian craftsperson brought an array of Olive wood utility items like chopping boards, salad bowls, chess boards, mortar and pestle and fruit trays in very unconventional shapes and sizes. “Olive wood carved in various shapes has been generating equal interest amongst visitors, as there is a craze for olive oil due to the health benefits it offers” said Kaabi (Kumar, 2016). In 2017, the theme state was Jharkhand and the partner nation was Egypt. Besides Egypt, more than 20 countries from Europe, Africa and South Asia participated and artists from Tunisia, Zimbabwe, Tanzania, Mongolia participated for the first time (Garg, 2017).

The Surajkund Mela started in 1987 making it a very young Mela when compared to other Melas of similar scale that take place in the country such as the Kumbh Mela, Dilli Haat, Gandhi Shilp Mela etc. (Spot, n.d.). The Surajkund Mela and Dilli Haat are both organised by the Government of India and their main aim is to provide a platform for artists all over the country to showcase their handicrafts and sell their products. The Government bodies involved in organising these Melas are the Development Commissioner of Handicrafts, Development Commissioner of Handlooms, Ministry of Textile

and the Ministry of Tourism (“Haryana Tourism”, n.d.). They both go on for 15 days, and have cultural performances and a huge food court with a wide array of Indian cuisine. There are three Dilli Haats when compared to only one big Surajkund Mela. The original Dilli Haat has only 62 stalls (Verma, 2011) and is spread over 6 acres of land (Cook, 2019) whereas the Surajkund Mela has about 1200 stalls spread across 40 acres (“Haryana Tourism”, n.d.). The footfall at Dilli Haat on a daily basis is approximately 300 people on a regular day. When there are special events, this number increases to 5000-6000(Sultan, 2019). As for the Surajkund Mela, the footfall is about 1.3 lakh visitors a day. This vast difference in footfall tells us that Dilli Haat is a small and focused festival whereas Surajkund Mela takes place on a much larger scale. The Dastkari Haat Samiti Mela was founded in 1986 by Mrs. Jaya Jaitly who has succeeded in bringing 1400 artisans and craftsmen from all around India to help them gain recognition (Mukherjee, 2018). This festival goes on for 15 days, just like the Surajkund Mela. The main aim of this Mela is to have a small number of artisans: 180 in total to display and sell their handicrafts. Gandhi Shilp Melas are organized in consideration with important fairs/festivals/historic places and places of tourist interest. The usual duration of one is about 7-10 days, and they accommodate 60-100 stalls with a maximum financial limit of 26 lakhs (“Gandhi Shilp...”, 2011). There are multiple Gandhi Shilp Mela (GSM) that are organized in different metropolitan.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the growth and evolution of the Surajkund International Crafts Mela, and how it has impacted the consumer and artists communities that participate in it.
2. To understand the involvement of various government institutions and the role they play in the functioning of the Mela.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The aim of this research is to collect detailed information about expectations and related committees who are having stalls/shops in the mela campus in Surajkund International Craft Mela, Haryana. It has been endeavoring of the researcher to make an empirical study by analyzing and critically examining the relevant statistical collection from primary and related information from secondary sources.

**Primary Data :** The collection of ground information includes questionnaire; discussions; and observations to find out artisans satisfaction level about the various services provided at the Craft Mela.

**Secondary Data:** The collection of information with different sources such as Books, Journals, Review research papers, Newspapers and Magazines.

**Study Areas and Sample Size**

Sample size of 50 approx artisans those who had shops in the SurajKund Craft Mela, Faridabad is taken on convenient cum Sentiment basis.

**Questionnaire Design**

The questionnaire consists of various relevant statements, which are related to accommodation, safety and security, transportation and so on. Scaling: Five-point scaling i.e. Highly Satisfied, satisfied neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, Dissatisfied, and Strongly Dissatisfied.

**Data Analysis**

With the help of an unstructured questionnaire. The data so collected is analyzed by SWOC Analysis.

**STRENGTH**

Excellent Location  
 Exclusive Customer  
 Wide Variety Range

**WEAKNESSES**

Unorganized System  
 Unwanted Crowd  
 Focus on Window Shopping

**OPPURTUNITIES**

Business /Entrepreneurs have capacity to enlarge post Mela sale  
 More Business Ideas will be Develop  
 Government and other officials supported the Artisens

**CHALLENGES**

Overcrowded  
 Theft and lost occurs  
 Limited Sanitation provided  
 Safety and Security issues

## CONCLUSION

Fair, exhibition and mela on International and National level always boost tourism activities and enlarge the employment opportunities in the society at different levels since ancient times. Till date, there are so many junctions in all over the country is being organized to grow markets and enhance sale by the customers of craftsmen's, artisans, public transport etc. These types of events encourage communal harmony and national integration. Surajkund International craft mela is one of the biggest fates in Delhi NCR that motivates and influence the customers to a great extent. Also, it is very interesting for the family-oriented people to visit mela. However, to make mela more reverent and purposeful it is quite important to get full facilities to the stall makers/shopkeepers and artisans in the form of Transportation, accommodations, food facilities etc.

The data gathered and analyzed shows that the artisans are facing several types of problems like safety and security of their products and post mela how they retain their customers and promotions of products etc. The artisans and craftsmen did not seem to be very much satisfied with the facilities provided to them and the profits that they made from this Mela in spite of their huge effort and interest shown in their participation. But it is understood Craft Mela was no exception in this regard because nature of our Indian visitors and buyers is such that they do not value the efforts put-in by the craftsmen to keep their skills alive in this highly competitive and least cost-effective small-scale business- ventures. Their margin of profits remains the same in almost all such, but higher Crafts and Fairs the average foot-fall of Foreigners in this particular Craft Mela because of its close- proximity with the National Capital makes their participation worth and meaningful.

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## ANNEXURE

Questions from the organizing committee:

Before coming to Surajkund mela

Question	Answer
1. Whom do you contact in the organizing committee?	
2. How do you book your stalls? Is there any preference considered? How many total shops/stalls are there? What are the sizes of the stalls available? What is the cost involved in getting the stalls?	
3. What transport do you use to transport your belongings and material to sell?	
4. How do you warehouse your materials? Is there any warehouse facility give to you by the organizing committee	

Questions from the Artisans?

Stalls: National/International	
Name:	
Location:	
Contact Details:	
How many times you visited this mela?	
Have you visited any other mela/fare in India? If yes, which location	
Do you have your products available online too? Share the website	
Do you have fixed price shop or you permit bargaining	
Question (Before coming to Surajkund mela)	Answer

1. Whom do you contact in the organizing committee?	
2. How do you book your stalls? Is there any preference considered? How many total shops/stalls are there? What are the sizes of the stalls available? What is the cost involved in getting the stalls?	
3. What transport do you use to transport your belongings and material to sell?	
4. How do you warehouse your materials? Is there any warehouse facility give to you by the organizing committee	
Question (After coming to the Surajkund mela)	Answer
1. Where do you stay? Within the Mela? Outside the Mela? What is the cost involved?	
2. What do you take as food? Buy locally Cook your own food? If you cook from where do you get the raw material?	
3. What are the Basic necessities do you get at mela Like bathing Wash room facilities Water Etc	
4. What time you open the shop/stall What time you close the shop/stall	
Question (Challenges)	Answer
1. What are the challenges that you face while coming to Mela?	
2. What are your challenges while at the mela	

<p>Safety of products</p> <p>Safety of females</p> <p>Safety of belongings</p> <p>Safety of cash and other precious things</p> <p>Currency exchange and other issue</p>	
3. Any other challenge that you faced or facing during this visit to mela	
<p>4. Will language training help if provided</p> <p>How you can be supported during the mela to get more successful</p>	
<p>5. How do you decide about the price of the product?</p> <p>What are the factors that you consider while pricing?</p>	
6. How do you decide about the product to be displayed for sale?	
7. Do you bring same product each year or modify it	
<p>8. How do you market your product?</p> <p>Only at mela</p> <p>Any other location</p> <p>Do you sell to customer or to Businesses only</p>	