

Challenges Facing the Museum in 21st Century

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ABSTRACT

Museums are institutions that reflect human activities and connect people to their past, sustaining collections by preserving natural and cultural heritage. They function as learning centers, research hubs, and spaces that welcome diverse cultural backgrounds. However, in India, museums are often perceived merely as storage for artifacts rather than multifaceted institutions. Museums can reflect continuity and change, preserving cultural and natural heritage while showcasing human expression and nature through exhibitions. While museums globally have transformed with technology, India lags in this development, presenting challenges and prospects explored through qualitative research.

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At the present time I start with a very famous saying here. The phrase "One physical look is better than to refer to 100 books" points out that the effect of seeing anything in real life lasts a long time on the human mind, meaning that what is not possible with a lot of reading becomes possible at a glance. The only thing that can be done is a museum. On this earth created by God, human beings have adapted themselves and created a culture that is in harmony with the surrounding environment.

The word is thought to have originated in Europe. The word museum was first used in Alexandria (present-day Greece) 2,000 years ago in 283 BC.⁽¹⁾ The word museum is derived from the original Greek word "Museion". That is why the temple of Muses is the protector of God, art and science. The first Museion to be established in Greece is attributed to Ptolemaies (I), which was founded during the Hellenic culture of ancient Greece.⁽²⁾ According to Greek religious tradition, Muses was the daughter of Zeus. While Zeus was the god of the Greeks.⁽³⁾

Current public museum activity developed in the west. Such a museum was first established in England in the middle of the 18th century and the 17th museum collection was launched in India following the Britishers. 'Indian Museum' developed in 1814 and after 63 years the first museum in Gujarat came into existence under the name 'Kutch Museum in Bhuj'. In India at the time, museums were considered "rugged with wonders" but were later given a modern definition as their purpose and scope expanded. According to which "Museum is a non-profit permanent

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organization serving the society and its people. Acquisition of evidence of human and environmental evidence for the purpose of study research and recreation.⁽⁴⁾ The concept of a museum has changed over the last two centuries. In another modern sense, "a museum is a place where visitors feel mentally satisfied by seeing real objects tailored to their needs and requirements."⁽⁵⁾ There are about 400 museums in India and 30,000 museums in the world.⁽⁶⁾

A museum is one such place where not only educational objectives are achieved but also public relations is strengthened by today's performance, research and entertainment. In my opinion, as long as the museum has a close relationship with various interdisciplinary branches of education, it will hardly be found in any other place or institution. It becomes a medium that provides all the information about Archeology, History, Geography, Coinage, Ethnography, Culture, Zoology, a

It becomes a medium that provides all the information about geology, botany and art subjects in one place. Yet the reality is that the fact that it is being ignored is really worrying.

The year 2005 was celebrated as Tourism Year by the Government of Gujarat with the objective of acquainting the visitors from home and abroad with the culture, heritage and special places of Gujarat. In which the museum can play a key role but at present the museum faces many challenges which becomes necessary to take note of. First of all our country is known for various religions, languages, customs, traditions, dresses. Unity in diversity is our identity. In other words, there are many Indians living in one India. These people. The magnificent heritage is housed in the museum. This unity is to be strengthened by taking lessons from it, but despite the museum displaying our systemic traditions, there are often inter-conflicts among the people. That can be considered really regrettable. India is a meeting place of different cultures. Different tribes have colorful cultures, jewelry, arts, crafts dialects that vary in different fields. (North Eastern, Frontier Agency (NEFA), Madhya Pradesh. Gujarat Orissa, Manipur, Bengal, Andhra Pradesh and Rajasthan etc. we experience diversity but there are similarities in human creative and ideological matters. And if any one of these groups loses culture, It can be considered as humanity will be permanent lost.⁽⁷⁾

There is a mother of nature that everything is perishable i.e. the death of the one who is born is certain. If there is a rise, then there is also a set of disappearance, then its dissolution will happen sooner or later. But the sad thing is that our museums have been damaged by man-made problems rather than nature-created processes. If we talk about the first creation of nature, our country and state have come to such a geographical location, where the seasons change rapidly which has an impact on the atmosphere. And the atmosphere has a severe effect on the things stored in museums.

Museum experts also acknowledge this and are in favor of creating an ideal environment.⁽⁸⁾ The biggest challenge is man-made pollution due to which the museum cannot be isolated. The four most harmful elements in environmental pollution are Soot, dirt, dust and Lint.⁽⁹⁾ Thus, what is sinful for the present human culture is just as destructive to the heritage of human culture, which we have to solve.

The solution to the above problem can only come from public awareness of the museum. In addition, one should be proud of one's luxurious heritage. In other words, we have failed to create public awareness. The museum has a deep connection with education. The late Sir Ashutosh Mukherjee was one of the first Indians to associate the museum with an educational role.⁽¹⁰⁾

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The security of the museum requires both internal and external arrangements. The biggest threat to the museum is fire. Apart from this, elements like light, rain, temperature, dust and humidity are also a challenge to the existence of the museum.⁽¹¹⁾

Scientific tools, technical and skilled manpower are required to face the challenge of the elements. Also a properly trained person is essential. It is a mistake to assume that every museum has one and that training institutes are needed to solve the problem, but unfortunately, except for Maharaja Sayajirao University in Gujarat, there is no diploma level course. So whether there will be a museum custodian in the future? We do not have the answer. This is because in the future, it is challenging to acquire the knowledge of chemistry and the preservation of physical assets and the manpower to understand its historical value for the preservation of mummies.

It is a commendable step that the Government of India and the State Governments have set aside the Tribal Art Museum but it is in the hands of a man who is not familiar with the tribal area and culture. In fact, the purpose of such a museum can only be achieved if the people of the tribe are actively involved in such a museum.⁽¹²⁾ In addition, the maintenance of the museum requires sufficient financial viability for its operation and maintenance. But it is often the case that the government seems indifferent to the financial liquidity. In addition, the public attitude towards the museum is still traditional. The budget provision behind the museum is not as much as it should be so the problem is faced.

The government seems to be indifferent in terms of financial liquidity. In addition, the public view of the museum is still traditional. People still don't consider museums to be anything more than a repository of antiques which is also a challenge to change the mindset and bring awareness. Like different models of New Museology. Most of the people are unaware of Neighborhood Museums, community museum, integral museum, living history museum, 'eco museum etc.⁽¹³⁾

In the end it can be said with certainty that if the people and the government do not take these challenges seriously, the situation will get worse and our glorious and priceless heritage will be lost and future generations will hold the present generation responsible for it.

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Conflict of Interest

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