

Tourism Potential in Akole Tashil

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Abstract

Ever since human amalgamation was started, his wondering for different activities was stopped and new concept was began of recreation, leisure. The recreation, leisure and travelling of medical, sport, educational purpose has been called as tourism. Tourism becomes more popular activity as new world explored by the travelers. Physical features along with climatic condition are attracting travelers, researchers' towards the nature. The climatic conditions are extreme according to the season in the study area. Temperature remains much lower in winter, much higher in summer and experiences heavy rainy season.

The study area has rich flora and fauna potential for the ecotourism development and recently the peoples in and around Bhandardara dam has started the encashment of natural beauty by organizing tent camping but still the larger segment of rural tribal community is not aware about the ecotourism and the values of medicinal plant. Somehow the Villagers are in changing their traditional functioning and turns from Cattle and Goat grazing to providing tourist service as considered an economical activity which have some scope for earning. Natives of forest are protector of forest by this rule the government agencies as MTDC, forest department is actively engaged in promotion of area for selling as tourists destination, which is attracting people all around and number of tourists are increased. To promote this side for tourism well planed infrastructure should be created. Construction of good hotels and restaurants is necessary so as homely cottages with local impact in food and building material should be consider. Boost in number of tourist will provide the job opportunities which will be beneficial to increase the economic condition of local tribal community.

KEYWORD: Tourism, ecotourism development, flora and fauna, tribal community, Culture, environmental conservation.

INTRODUCTION:

Tourism is travel for recreational, leisure or business and also touring, business of attracting accommodating, entertaining tourists and operating tours. The World Tourism Organization defines tourists as people "travelling to and staying in places outside their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes". Tourism has become a popular global leisure activity. During the pandemic world was smothered and after relaxation of travelling In 2021, there were over 6.33 million international tourist arrivals, with a growth of 64.6% as compared to 2020. The concept of tourism has been going under change rather living in costlier hotels, motels peoples are preferring to live in tent and destinations which brings tourist closer to nature. Tourists are aware about their responsibility of nature

conservation, respects integrity of local communities. It contributes to the welfare of local and indigenous population. The main characteristics of modern tourism were obvious in the changes in mental attitudes towards pleasure seeking, to find relief from daily routine and the city dweller's yearning for physical adventure and pleasure. Scenic attractions are a very important factor in tourism, scenery of the landscape consisting of mountains, rivers, water falls, lakes, man made water reservoirs, glaciers, wide life, forests, deserts are the strong forces attracting people to visit them. Hence, it gives birth to a new concept a new concept of tourism called as "ecotourism". Ecotourism has been relatively new around since the nineteenth century, it has grown considerably in popularity and commercial importance in just the past ten years in response to interest in the environment and adventure, increase in leisure time and personal incomes and most important is accessibility to many natural attractions. Ecotourism is primarily an activity to enjoy natural beauty and authentic culture.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

The discoveries by the navigators, their writings have explored the new world which has attract the tourists from all around. Earlier navigators, tourists have published their experiences in paper, and journal etc. Related to tourism from local to international level many studies has been done and published. The tourism is dynamic process and continuously changing. Darade J.U. has published paper entitle "The Geographical Resources and Tourism potential of Akole Taluka" and tried to classify the aesthetic values of physical features of tourist places and available natural resources. Auliana Poon (1994) has written research paper entitle " The 'new tourism' revolution", in particular research paper the new trend of tourism development is clearly stated, tourist's awareness about environment conservation is increasing, and his tend towards the wealth creation. Bernard Lane (2009) in his research paper "What is rural tourism?" defines the rural tourism as a discrete activity with distinct characteristics which may vary in intensity, and by area. It discusses the differences between agri-tourism and rural tourism, and examines why there should be a special relationship between tourism in the countryside and the concept of sustainable tourism.

Objectives:

The study is aimed at investigating the following objectives in the study area:

- To assess the natural potentials for development of tourism.
- To find out the recent trend of tourism development in the study area.
- To made tourism classification according to places

Study Area:

The study area lies between n 190 15' 14" N to 190 44' 59" N latitude and 730 37' 00" E to 740 07' 24" E longitudes. The total agriculture lands have about 98712 hectares with the population of 32,808 including 80.7% tribal population (1991) of 23 villages selected for the study, which are situated in the western part of Ahmednagar district of Maharashtra.

The study area has tremendous potential for ecotourism development which is very useful for economic development of local tribal community.

Criteria for the assessment of resource potentials for Tourism:

Tourism is based on natural and cultural attributes, Primary tourism is done for recreation leisure, adventure, study and also for the conservation of natural resources . While assessing potential of tourism sites, the following factors are considered:

- Scenic beauty
- Flora-fauna
- Water resources
- Cultural and historical uniqueness
- Accessibility

Physical features:

Mountains and Valleys carry great aesthetic appeal than the lower relief. The study area is situated in the Sahaydri mountain range. the highest peak of Maharashtra Kalsubai (1646mtrs), Harishchandra (1422mtrs), Ratangarh (1297mtrs) are the main attractions of this area. Bari pass (Ghat), Konkankada at Ghatghar, Harishchandra provides road connection from the historical time. River Pravara originating at Ratangardh from Western Ghats adds charm in to this scenic location.

Sandhan valley, "The Great Canyon" in the Sahyadri ranges which is a combination of a canyon and a valley. Located near Samrad village in the Akole tehsil of Ahmednagar district, Maharashtra, India, near the fort Ratangad. Sandhan valley is undoubtedly The Valley of Shadows. Surrounded by mighty and jaw-dropping mountains of Ratangad and Kalsubai, the valley stands at the height of 4255 ft high above sea level, which is the perfect spot for trekking and other adventure activities. The trek goes through 200 ft deep and 2 km long gorge carved by water between the narrow walls

Climate:

The climatic conditions are very healthy and pleasant in the study area. Temperature increases from about the latter half of February up to May. May is the hottest month with mean daily max. Temperature 37.4° c. Temperature starts decreasing from the month of June still August. December is the coldest month with the mean daily min. temperature at 11.2°C. Annual Max temp is 32° C and min is 17.8°C. Rainfall mainly receives in the month June to Sept. from the monsoon.

Forests and Wild life

The study area has occupied the area of 1505sqkm out of which agriculture occupied 65.59%, forest 27.7%, others 6.71% land. The region is named as Kalsubai- Harishchandra Wildlife sanctuary and has natural cover of vegetation. The floral wealth of study area is great in terms of variation during rainy season will found greenery everywhere during summer it converts into deciduous type of forest. In this forest teak is the main species, other closely associated species are Sadada or Ain, Hed, Kalam, Sisum, Khair, Tiwas, Bibla & Dhavda in varying proportions. Bamboos are also common in western part. The vegetation is generally found along terraces and sheltered belt. The major portion of the study area of forest has been occupied by 'Reserved' forest.

The study area has an abundance of wild life, A number of species are found including insects, mollusks, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibian and fishes. The state animal 'Shekaru' is the inhabitant of this wildlife sanctuary. The tiger 'Wagh'

(Felis Tigris) is common in the study area. The panther 'bibtya' (Felis parades), Wolf (Canis pallipes), Fox, Monkeys, Mongoose and Jackals are commonly found in the study area. The Baglan panthers are especially large in size, many of them over seven feet in length.

Apart from these, the Stag Sambar (Rusa aristotelis) the spotted deer, chital (Axis maculates), Nilgay (Portax pictus) wild boar 'dukkar' (Sus indicus) the barking deer (Cervulus aurcus) are found in small number.

Water resources:

Water bodies constitute major resources for ecotourism promotion. Lakes, tanks, dams etc can play a vital role in the aesthetic and recreational activities of the people. Water sports like swimming, boating, river rafting and other related activities can be developed in study area.

The headwaters of the Pravara river rise from the Sahyadris east of Ratangargh hill and Bhandardara dam (11 tmc) is constructed across the river. The structure and natural site of dam attracts people of boating and rafting and recently natives around the dam has started the tent camping which can develop the tourism situation in area. Another major water resource the Mula river which is originated in Harishchandra hills and Mula Dam 26 tmc is constructed across it. Another major river is the Adhala river. Nilwande is other major project within study area. These rivers are flowing from mountainous region which can provide water sport activity but still not developed.

During rainy period there are number of waterfalls can be seen in study area and they are named according to their shape and size example Umbrella fall, Neckless Fall etc.

Cultural and historical uniqueness:

People themselves are major source of tourist attraction. The total tribal population is 90% This study area as a cultural landscape of the region carries an imprint of Agasti Rishi Ashram and Amriteshwar. The agastirishi ashram is situated on the bank of the Pravara River, this legendary dwelling finds a place in the scripts of the Ramayan. The great historical background in study area and supported Ramayan even at Randha fall 'Sita pauli' is an area indicates that Sita was resident of area at once. Amriteshwar temple is build up in on dated 1100 AD this temple Hemadpanti style.

The natives of the area are Hindu Thakar, Hindu Mahadeo Koli in majority. These people speak Marathi with unique style. The people of the region are straight forward, simple, hard working and love their motherland. The culture and art of this tribal community have significant potential for tourism development. They have a distinctive way of building their houses on the foothills of mountains. In addition their traditional dances, music, wedding ceremonies, their fairs and festivals are unique examples of culture. Three day celebration once in a year takes place by performing Ramlila known as 'Bhawada' and also 'kamdawane' (Tribal Dance) local language. This tradition is going on from last 300 years in this region.

RECENT TREND IN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT:

There has been a considerable change and increase in tourist arrivals (only domestic) in this region. Religious motivation plays an important role in pilgrimage tourism in study area. Bhandardara, Nilwande and Adhala Dam their surrounding natural beauty attracts the tourist. Konkan kada (stiff escarpment) at Ghattghar, Harishchandra gardh, Ratangardh

Fort, Vishramgarth fort and other sculptures and monuments attracts tourists. Apart from these holy places, many trekkers, excursionists, nature lovers, students are visit this area. As per the information collected from local people, nearly 100 to 150 tourists are visiting this place in a day. Natives of forest are protector of forest by this rule the government agencies as MTDC, forest department is actively engaged in promotion of area for selling as tourists destination, which is attracting people all around and number of tourists are increased. Till then the advertisement of this area is needed for further development.

Infrastructure:

This area is well connected with Nasik, Thane and Pune road. In the study area every village is connected by tar road. State highway No. 45 is an important road along with Pravara river passes east to west which provides accessibility to the tribal people. M.S.R.T.C buses run frequently in the study area, private jeeps also provide transportation.

The accommodation facilities are not fully developed there is lack of good hotels and restaurants. Accommodation is provided by MTDC Bhandardra and private hotels, tents. Primary health centers, Hospitals are located at Bhandardra, Akole, Rajur, which provide medical facilities for rural population.

CONCLUSION:

The study area has rich flora and fauna, natural scenery and cultural aspects which have tremendous potentials for the tourism development but the majority of rural tribal community is not aware about the development. Natives of forest are protector of forest by this rule the government agencies as MTDC, forest department is actively engaged in promotion of area for selling as tourists destination, which is attracting people all around and number of tourists are increased. Till then the advertisement of this area is needed for further development To promote this side for tourism well planed infrastructure should be created.

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