



AN ASSESSMENT OF TOURISM POTENTIAL: A CASE STUDY OF PARNER TAHSIL, DIST. AHMEDNAGAR(MS)

Dr. Sambhaji M. Kale

Dept. of Chemistry and Research Centre, New Arts, Commerce and Science College,
Parner, Dist.- Ahmednagar(MS), Email: sambhajikale@gmail.com

Dr. Manohar R. Erande

Dept. of Geography, Shri Mulikadevi Mahavidyalaya, Nighoj, Tal.- Parner, Dist.
Ahmednagar(MS).

Abstract

Tourism has become a fashionable universal free time activity. Tourism has important contribution in sustainable development, economic upliftment and social benefits, if planned systematically. Since the last decade it has become a major thrust area in India to address the aforesaid issues, to utilize its wide variety of destination resources and also to optimize the level of financial involvement for developing tourist infrastructure in a constraint economic domain. Tourism industry in Maharashtra has a tremendous potential for growth, given the availability of basic infrastructure and the variety of tourist themes offered by various destinations in Maharashtra. Parner is one of the most famous cities of Southern Ahmednagar. Parner, in Ahmednagar, is situated at approximate distance of 40 to 42 km from Ahmednagar as well as 70 km from Pune. The present study aims to identify various determinants of tourism potential of the Parner Tahsil. The secondary data as well as personal interview was conducted from the tourist visited to Parner tahsil tourist place. It has been observed that, good accessibility, food facilities, road, and infrastructure facilities, other entertainment facility etc. attracts large number of tourist towards Parner. Now a day's Parner Tahsil had develop potential growth in tourism and economy.

Keywords: WTO, Tourism, Sustainable development, potential of growth.

Article History

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Corresponding author: Dr. Sambhaji M. Kale

1. Introduction

‘The Vedic Indians had a great love for nature and animal life and the preservation of what nature has bestowed on us. There can be no better example of this love than the following Sanskrit mantra from the Atharvaveda.’ Natural tourist centers are abundant in natural scenery and unique geographical features. It can be defined as ‘responsible journey to natural areas which conserves the environment and improves the well being of local

people'. Thus, ecotourism demands a responsible travel so that the impacts of ecological footprints are minimized and the benefits of this travel are passed on to the local people.

The Government of India has realized the importance of eco-tourism in the National Tourism Policy 2002. Government of Maharashtra has also followed the same by forest department. The researcher has choose the following natural tourist centers, they are - Bhandardara, Mula Dam, Kalsubai Pick, Nizarneshwar, Randha fall, Harishchandragad, Ratangad, Shri Hari Hareshwar Devastan, Vrudheshwar, Pengari, Nighoj and Pravara Sangam-Toka.

'India is a vast land with varieties of villages that give us an ample scope for village tourism. As per 2001 Census, 74% of Indians live in 638,365 different villages. The size of these villages varies considerably. Most villages have their own temple, mosque or church, proving unity in diversity. The world Tourism organization (WTO) defines of the tourists "Travelling to and staying in places outside their environment for not more than one consecutive year for leisure, business and other purposes". Tourism has become fastest growing industry and popular global free time activity, develops job opportunities to the local people. Tourism also increases the foreign exchange and increase the standard of living (Shrivastava, 2011). There is no much difference in tourism and travel, in general both terms are used as synonyms (Nanthakumar *et al.*, 2008) Tourism industry in Maharashtra has a tremendous potential for growth. The tourism activities increased due to availability of basic infrastructure and the variety of tourist schemes offered by various destinations in Maharashtra. (Tourism Department Report, 2003). Tourism Potential "is a widely used and accepted term in tourism domain, however, sometimes create misunderstanding as potential expresses some territorial capabilities, which holds a little narrower domain.(Mamun, 2012) As prescribed (Formica, 2000) the term "potential" may be replaced by "Attractiveness" which clearly indicates the relations between demand and supply of tourism. However, several other researches follow the term Potential though this may be assumed to be synonymous to Attractiveness. The river Mula and Kukadi flows through the Tahsil. The Malganga temple was constructed on the banks of kukadi have made Nighoj and Takali Haji Village one of the holiest places for Hindus all over the India.

2. Materials and Methods

In the present study, the emphasis is given to identify various determinants of tourism potential of the Nighoj Village and to assess the various facilities.

2.1 Study Area

The Parner Tahsil is situated in the District of Ahmednagar, in the western Maharashtra, between 19°00'18" North latitude and 74°26'34" East longitudes. It is connected by road to Ahmednagar (40 km.) and to Pune (70 km). Parner tahsil is very famous for its Onion and pomegranate growing. The tahsil has become the centre of attraction because of its beautiful surroundings and cool, calm, pleasant climate. Parner has a personality of its own due to its mythological, historical, social and cultural importance. The village is vibrant and active on the industrial, political, social and cultural fronts. Many great personalities such as Maharshi Parashar, Semapati Bapat, Anna Hazare etc. were initially immersed from Parner Tahsil.

2.2 Methodology

Methodology is one of the important parts of analysis. Output or result of analysis highly depends on the methodology will be used for the data processing or analysis purpose. the following methodology will be adopted:-

Step -I Primary data will be collected; exhaustive literature survey of the topic of investigation is to be undertaken. Published literature, reports will be collected from various libraries, Institutes and government departments etc. Besides this relevant literature will also reference books, bulletins, reviews will also be etc.by obtained through Internet.

Step –II various places were identified which having determinates of tourism potential of the Nighoj. Like as accessibility, health facilities, road, and infrastructure facilities, other entertainment facility

Step –II with the help of health facility, education facility, entertainment facilities etc. tourism potential of Nighoj Village was assess.

3. Results and Discussion

In the Nighoj tourism potential is very good condition of

3.1 Tourist Place in the Parner Tahsil

Several places such as Shiddheshwar, Korthan Khandoba, Ralegan Shiddhi, Nighoj Pot Holes, Chincholi, Karandi, Ganesh Khind, Jamgaon, Takali Dhokeshawar (Dhoki), Palashi, Vadgaon Darya, etc. were the famous tourist places situated in the different parts of the Parner Tahsil.

3.2 Special Events and Festivals

By far the most spectacular of all the events is four day Malaganga yatra in Nighoj. The famous Rath Yatra of goddess Malganga, Large number of hindus take part in this Rath Yatra and they pull the Rath by hands. In Navratri a fair is occurred near Ambika Devi Temple in devibhyore. People gather together to worship the goddess Ambika and celebrate the victor of Maa Durga's victory over Maheshasur and God Rams victory over Ravana. Same type of fare is occurred near Siddheswar temple in the month of February on the occasion of Shivratri.

3.3 Nearest Tourist Place of Parner

So many famous tourist places were situated near Parner city. The Shiddheshwar situated near about 2 km away from the Parner city. Ganesh Khind, which is famous for Ganesh Mandir situated 65 km away from the Nashik city. The chandvad city is famous for Renuka Mata Mandir, which is 5 km away from the city. The famous Ralegan Shidhi was situated 10 km from Parner city. The Korthan is famous as hill station and highest rain fall is occurred there in Parner. The Korthan is only 35 km away from the Parner city. Nighoj is located 25 km away from Parner taluka to west side and 24 km from Shirur taluka to north side. This village is famous for the naturally created potholes on the riverbed of river Kukadi. Experts from all over the world come here every year to study the phenomenon of their formation. It is said that many years ago there was a huge amount of rainfall in this area and the River Ghod flood from the gorge-like structure with such force that erosion of the rocks took place and resulted in the formation of these potholes.

3.4 Accessibility

Parner is well connected by State highways; Parner – Supa, Bhalawani, Shirur, Alkuti to major cities of Maharashtra like Mumbai, Pune and Ahmednagar. The nearest railway station for Parner is Ahmednagar Railway Station and nearest airport is Chhatrapati Sambhaji Maharaj International Airport, Pune 70 km away from the Parner.

3.5 Education Facility

As per the provision of Bombay Provincial Municipal Corporation act 1949 facility of primary education for the welfare of poor people is mandatory. There are total 450 primary and 82 Secondary schools in the tahsil with a student population of 34367 for primary and 8685 for secondary schools. In addition to this education department has around 171 Pre-Primary education center called as “Anganwadi” for children below age group 5 years. Beside this Parner tahsil had senior colleges, Engineering colleges, Agricultural colleges etc.

3.6 Health Facility

For the purpose of health services to the poor communities our health department has provided with 7 Primary health center, 41 sub centers and 114 Privet Hospitals. These hospitals are equipped with facility of treatment for major illness of the poor category citizens. Along with this government is also having primary health center at around 49 locations in the tahsil. Beside this number of private hospitals were situated all over the tahsil area.

3.7 Social Infrastructure (Entertainment Facility)

3.7.1 Sport Complex

Parner Tahsil Sport Department has developed one sport complex in Parner area with facility of indoor stadium, cricket ground, football, badminton, and volleyball.

3.7.2 Recreational Park

For the recreation of the citizens as well as tourist a full fledge recreation park in the name of Vadgaon Darya, Nighoj. This recreation center is equipped with the facility of a big garden. In these villages two big exhibition halls, a mini auditorium and a food mall is also developed.

3.7.3 Drama Theater / Town Hall

A full fledge hall in sitting capacity 1000 is constructed by various trust in Nighoj, Korthan, Ralegaon Shiddhi. These facilitate the citizen for their cultural and social and amusement activities. There is two more Town Hall one in Korthan area having sitting capacity 5000 and other in Palashi area having sitting capacity 500. One mini auditorium with sitting capacity 250 is constructed in Ralegaon Shiddhi area also.

3.7.4 Community Centers, Gymnasiums, Jogging Tracks

For day-to-day cultural & social activities in various pockets of the city local trust has constructed 10 no of Community Centers, 7 no of Gymnasiums and 3 no of Jogging tracks.

3.7.5 Library & Study Rooms

Local trust has constructed number of study rooms to facilitate the student from poor community & lower & middle class of the society. Such library is constructed at Malganga Trust, Nighoj, Hind Seva trust Ralegaon Shiddhi and also 3 other location. This study rooms are provided with library facilities. The total no. of a study rooms are 9 in the whole tahsil.

3.7.6 Gardens

There is total 5 no. of small gardens constructed in the different location of the tahsil. There are also major gardens for the recreational activities as below – 1) Kund Paryatan Nighoj, 2) Korthan Kandoba, Pimpalgaon Rotha, 3) Ralegaon Shidhi, 4) Vaogaon Darya, 5) Nageshwar Garden, Parner,

3.7.7 Sanitation and Toilet Facilities

For the use of some dwellers and urban poor of the tahsil local trust has constructed public toilets and urinals as below

- 1) Total No. of toilets sheets constructed by trust – 50 no.
- 2) Sulabh Type Toilets on non-payment basis – 10 blocks
- 3) Urinals – 40 seat.

3.7.8 Other Local Infrastructure

In the Parner tahsil Entertainment facilities ,Telephone, Internet, Post Office, Civic Amenities, Eating Joints Medical, Travel Agents, Taxi Operator, ATM etc.

4. Conclusion

Parner tahsil like other major tahsil of Ahmednagar, hosts many industrial giants like Kanhhya Milk Prt. Ltd. Co. Nighoj, Dere Farm, Alkuti, Supa MIDC etc. Parner is also a good education centre with Arts, Commerce, Science, Pharmaceutical and Agricultural institutions. Moreover, PARner is also famous for its Pomegranate and onion produce. Thus, the dependency on tourism for employment is not much, especially in Parner Tahsil. Parner will remain as peaceful, clean, green and artistic cultural center apart from the busy industrial and tourism activity.

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