



A GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS OF MAJOR TOURIST ATTRACTION IN PUNE DISTRICT, MAHARASHTRA STATE

Amol S. Shinde

Dept. of Geography, Walchand College of Arts and Science, Solapur (M.S)
asshinde23@gmail.com

Abstract:

The natural resources, coastal lines, waterfalls, hot springs, temples, historical forts, caves, wild-life, hill ranges, scenery and amenable climate are very important resources of tourist attraction. The various facilities available to the domestic and foreign tourists in Pune district. These include natural resources, transportation, infrastructure, hospitality resources and major tourist attractions. For the research work Pune District is selected. This district has at Pune its Satara district at south, Thane and Ahmednagar state at North, Raigad district west, Solapur district east. The object of study region is, to highlight the attractive tourist destinations and religious places, Historical, Nature and Cultural Place etc. This study based on primary and secondary data. Tourist attractions in the district as is, natural beauty, caves, temples, forts, mini garden, rock garden, tracking, rock climbing, wild life, festival's fairs, arts, handicrafts, creeks, lakes etc. places. To the stay of tourist, which requires natural resources, infrastructural and transportation facilities, accommodation, food, recreation, sightseeing, shopping and variety of facilities and services for use and enjoyments? The source of tourism depends on all these facilities.

Keywords- Pune District, Maharashtra, Tourism, Natural resource

Introduction:

Pune District, also known as Educational Capital of the state of Maharashtra. Agriculture and household-industries are the main sources of livelihood. Pune also has hill station – Lonavala which is very famous hill station. It is just few kilometers away from Mumbai. One can spend his time on the peaceful hill station. The natural beauty of Lonavala is really mesmerizing. Places to visit in the city are Bhimashankar Temple, Vingneshwar Temple, Shaniwar Wada, Agakhan Palace, Sinhagad Fort, Shivneri fort, Mulshi Dam, Bhimashankar Wildlife Sanctuary etc. These include natural resources, transportation, infrastructure, hospitality resources and major tourist attractions along with ropeway and boating etc. Natural resources includes climate, Natural beauty, wild life, hill lakes, ponds, rivers, waterfalls in Pune district. In infrastructural facilities like water supply system, accommodation, electricity and power supply system, communication system etc. are the basic requirements of Pune to achieve the goal of tourism. Transportation includes surface transport, Railways and aviation services etc. The various facilities available to the domestic and foreign tourists in Pune district. These include natural resources, transportation, infrastructure, hospitality resources and major tourist attractions along with ropeways, boating etc.

Objectives:

The main objectives of the study were as follows

- ✓ To study the profile of Pune district.
- ✓ To highlight places in study area.
- ✓ To review the progress of tourism related works in the study area.

Study Area:

Pune district is located between 17° 54' N and 10° 24' N latitude and 73° 19' E and 75° 10' E longitude. The district has geographical area of 15,642 km² having population 72,24,224. Pune district is bound by Ahmednagar district, Solapur district, Satara district Pune district and Thane district. It is the second largest district in the state and covers 5.10 percent of the total geographical area of the state. The landscape of Pune district is distributed triangularly in western Maharashtra at the foothills of the Sahyadri Mountains. Administratively the district is divided into 14 talukas. These are Junnar, Ambegaon, Khed, Maval, Mulshi, Velhe, Bhor, Haveli, Purandar, Pune City, Indapur, Daund, Baramati and Shirur. Pune city is the administrative headquarters of the district. **{Fig. No-01}** There are around 1,866 villages in the district. Slope is towards south-east. The study area has basaltic base having step like topography. In the west, there is Sahyadri basaltic mountain running north to south, and towards east, basaltic Deccan plateau, lying gentle slope towards east. In Pune district, there are four soil types, namely, coarse shallow, medium black, deep black, laterite and mountainous soil. Ten crops have been identified for considering spatio-temporal analysis of cropping pattern. These crops are rice, jowar, bajra, sugarcane, groundnut, gram, safflower, fodder crops, fruits and vegetables and wheat. The net sown area has decreased from 60.95% to 60.23% in last 25 years. But the irrigated area increased by 8.68% with 10,374 electric pumps. In view of study of

Pune District has been under taken for the research paper.



Figure. 1: Location Map of Pune District

Hypothesis

Tourism can generate employment opportunities especially in the interior and coastal areas of the district.

Database and Research Methodology

The present study is based on the primary and secondary data. Primary data was collected from visits to the various tourist centers taken photographs, interviews and sample tourists. Secondary resources were made for tracing the history of tourism development in Pune district. Secondary data was collected from reference books review, periodicals, booklets, news papers, magazines, research report, internet, thesis etc.

Tourist Attractions in the District

Some important tourist centers in the Pune district are explained as follows:

Major Attractions Tourism Places in Pune District:

A. Religious Places

1. Bhimashankar Temple, Khed Tahsil

Bhimashankar is an ancient shrine situated in the Sahayadri Hills in the state of Maharashtra. It is one of the well known Jyotirlinga, amongst the twelve jyotirlingas situated all over India. Bhimashankar is located in the village of Bhorgiri, around 125 km away from Pune in Sahyadri Hills. In recent times it has gained tremendous significance since it was declared as "Wildlife Sanctuary" in 1984.

2. Chintamani Temple at Theur, Haveli Tahsil

Theur is located at a distance of about 25 kms from Pune. This temple is "one of the larger and more famous" of the Ashtavinayaka, the eight revered shrines of Ganesh in Maharashtra. The temple is associated with Saint Morya Gosavi (dated between 13th to 17th century).

Though the temple is believed to be ancient, the current structure of the temple was built by him or his descendant.

3. Vingneshwar Temple at Ozar, Junnar Tahsil

The Vingneshwara Temple or Vighnahr Ganapati Temple of Ozar is a Hindu temple dedicated to Ganesha, one of the eight Ashtavinayak located at a distance of about 100 km from Pune. Legend has it that a demon by name Vignaasura created obstacles to every good deed performed by the sages and the other inhabitants of the world.

4. Jejuri, Purandar Tahsil

Jejuri is located in Purandar tahsil at a distance of 51 km from Pune & famous for pilgrimage. It is situated at a elevation of around 718 meters (2,355 feet) from mean sea level. It is more a village than a town and derives its importance from the religious fairs held in honour of the god Khandoba, who is also called Mhalsakant, Martand-Bahirav, Malhari. It is situated on a high level and is surrounded on all sides by fertile and cultivated lands.

5. Alandi, Khed Tahsil Alandi

is popularly known as "Devachi Alandi" is situated on the banks of River Indrayani. It has Samadhi and a temple of 'Sant Dnyaneshwar' who spent most of his life-span there. The temple was built in 1570. The famous wall on which 'Sant Dnyaneshwar' flew to meet 'Chandev' is also present here.

6. Dehu, Haveli Tahsil

Dehu is situated in Haveli Tahsil at a distance of around 24 km from Pune. Dehu is a place of Sant Tukaram where he worshiped Lord Vitthal. The 'Palakhi' in the month of 'Ashadh' from Dehu is one of the main attractions of Dehu. Dehu is a place where the 'Abhang' of Sant Tukaram can be remembered. One can see his temple here on the banks of the river Indrayani.

7. Chatushrunji Temple, Pune City

Chatushrunji temple is located on the slopes of a hill on Senapati Bapat Road in Pune city. It is said to have been built during the reign of the Marathaking Chhatrapati Shivaji Raje Bhosle. The presiding deity of the temple is Goddess Chaturshringi, also known as Goddess Ambareshwari. She is also considered as the presiding deity of the city of Pune.

8. Kamar Ali Darvesh Dargah at Khed Shivapur, Haveli Tahsil

Khed Shivapur Dargah is of Sufi Saint Kamar Ali Durvesh who lived here around the year 1200. Khed Shivapur is situated in Haveli Tahsil about 23 kms away from Pune. It is about 700 years old Dargah. This Dargah is on the main

highway of Pune -Satara road. It is located in a small village known as the Khed Shivapur. There are two large stones placed near the contour of the Dargah premises.

B. Historical Place

1. Shaniwar Wada, Pune City

This imposing palace was built by the successors of Shivaji Maharaj, the Peshwas in 1736. A massive fire destroyed the building in 1827. Most of the palace interiors also got destroyed and all that remains is the old fortified wall. This Palace situated in the heart of the city near to Shivajinagar, and Laxmi Road, has become the symbol of the culture of Pune.

2. Agakhan Palace

The Aga Khan Palace was built in 1892 by Sultan Muhammed Shah Aga Khan III in Pune, Maharashtra. The palace was an act of charity by the Sultan who wanted to help the poor in the neighboring areas of Pune, who were drastically hit by famine. The palace is closely linked to the Indian freedom movement as it served as a prison for Mahatma Gandhi, his wife Kasturba Gandhi, his secretary Mahadev Desai and Sarojini Naidu.

3. Sinhagad Fort, Haveli

Sinhagad is a fortress located roughly 30 km from Pune. Previously called Kondhana, the fort has been the site of many important battles, most notably the battle of Sinhagad in 1670. Perched on an isolated cliff of the Bhuleswar range of the Sahyadri Mountains, it is situated on a hill rising 1312 mt. (4,304 ft.) above mean sea level. One of the most famous battles for Sinhagad was fought to recapture the fort by Tanaji Malusare, a general of Shivaji Maharaj in March 1670.

4. Shivneri fort, Junnar Tahsil

Shivneri fort is located 105 km away from Pune at a Height of 689 mt. (2260 ft.) above mean sea level. Shivneri is the birthplace of the King Chhatrapati Shivaji. Shivneri is a highly defensible location, with steep rocks on four sides and a strongly built citadel. Inside the fort is a small temple dedicated to the goddess Shivai Devi, after whom Shivaji was named. At the centre of the fort is a water pond which is called 'Badami Talav'.

5. Karla Caves, Maval Tahsil

Karla Caves or Karle Caves are a complex of ancient Indian Buddhist rock-cut cave shrines developed over two periods—from the 2nd century BC to the 2nd century AD, and from the 5th century AD to the 10th century. The caves lie near a major ancient trade route, running eastward from the Arabian Sea into the Deccan. The main cave features a large, intricately

carved chaitya, or prayer hall, dating back to the 1st century BC.

C. Hill Station Place

1. Lonavala, Maval Tahsil

Lonavala is a town and a hill station Municipal Council in Pune district. It is about 64 km away from the Pune, 96 km away from Mumbai. Lonavala is a popular hill station at a height of 625 mt. (2051 ft.) above the mean sea level. It is famous throughout India for the hard candy sweet known as 'chikki'. In 1871, the Lonavala and Khandala hill stations were discovered by Lord Elphinstone, who was the Governor of Bombay Presidency during those times. Also Lonavala is about 3 km away from Khandala, while Karla Caves, Bhaja Caves and Bedsa are close to Lonavala. Both the Mumbai-Pune Expressway as well as the Mumbai-Pune highway passes through Lonavala.

2. Khandala, Maval Tahsil

Khandala is a hill station in the Western Ghats, located about three kilometres from Lonavala and 68 km from Pune at an elevation of 625 m (2,051 ft) from mean sea level. Due to the ease of accessibility from nearby cities, Khandala is a common area for hiking. One destination is the nearby peak of Duke's Nose, which offers a panoramic view of Khandala and the Bhore Ghat.

D. Nature and Cultural Place

1. Mulshi Dam, Mulshi Tahsil

Mulshi Dam is located at a distance of about 25 km. at a distance of about 43 km. from Pune. Water from the dam is used for irrigation as well as for producing electricity operated by Tata Power Company LTD. Mulshi Lake is primarily a week-end get-away for nearby Pune. The area is a perfect spot for picnic, with scenic surrounding, unexploited Sahyadri hilly terrains, lush green dense forests which also offer sightings of some rare wild animals

2. Panshet Dam, Velhe Tahsil

Panshet Dam, also called Tanajisagar Dam, is a dam on the Ambi River about 50 km southwest of the city of Pune in western India. The dam was constructed in late 1950 for irrigation and, along with three other dams nearby, Varasgaon, Temghar and Khadakwasla. Panshet is one of the famous picnic spots of Pune and attracts many visitors from Mumbai. The lake is made because of the backwater from the Panshet Dam.

3. Bhimashankar Wildlife Sanctuary

was created in the Ambegaon and Khed talukas of Pune District, in the Western Indian state of Maharashtra in order mainly to protect the habitat of the Indian Giant

Squirrel. Its area is 131 km² (51 sq mi) and is a part of the Western Ghats (Sahyadri Ranges). This sanctuary was created in 1984 and includes 9 tribal villages. The area's biodiversity has been retained as it will be preserved as a cluster of sacred groves for generations.^[2] These sacred groves act as gene pools of this area, from where seeds were dispersed.

Summery and Conclusion

To the stay of tourist for several days. Which requires natural re-sources, infrastructural and transportation facilities, accommodation, fort, recreation, sightseeing, shopping and variety of facilities and services for use and enjoyments? The success of tourism depends on all these facilities. Disrictwise various tourist attractions in the district consisting of temples, forts, ports, festivals, fairs, art and handicraft, waterfall, caves, creeks, beaches, lakes, hill-stations etc. Week-long dream journey of Deccan odyssey and royal facilities provided to tourist. Eco tourism is environmentally responsible tourism, which must incorporate the following key elements (i) Nature based, (ii) Ecologically, Socially, Culturally and Economically sustainable (iii) Educational and Interpretative (iv) Locally participatory. Various promotional activities were conducted to encourage eco-tourism. Lastly about Overall Explained tourist Attractions and The tourism activity generates employment opportunities in various part of study area.

References:

1. **Rana Pratap and Kamala Prasad (2003):**“Tourism Geography” Shree Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi.
2. **Amol S. Shinde (2016):**“A Major Tourist Attraction in Raigad District-A Geographical Analysis” Research Front, An International Multidisciplinary Research Journal, ISSN:2320-8341, National Seminar on (WDIIR-Balwant College,Vita-26-27Aug.2016), Special Issue No-1, Aug-2016, pp.241-246.
3. **Bagade B. R. (July 2012):**“Eco-Tourism in Coorg: A Geographical Study” Geographical Eye of Union Geographic Information Technologists Volume-1 No-1.pp.01-07.
4. **Bhatiya A.K. (1997):** Tourism Development, Principles and Practices, Sterling, New Delhi.
5. **Kulkarni D. (1998):** Maharashtraatil Dhamic Sthane.
6. Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation, Mumbai (2007-08) Pune District.
7. **<https://www.tourismguideindia.com/Pune.html>.**