

Socio – Economic Impact of Tourism on Host Population
(A Case Study of Mahabaleshwar in Satara District of Maharashtra)

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Abstract:- Tourism is today the world's largest and fastest expanding industry. Tourism today presents on unparallel challenges to the economics of developing world. The rewards to be gained both financial and sociological are immense Cultural and heritage sites have a natural and historical significance to the community. Tourism creates employment in the region; tourism brings socio – economic benefits to the community in terms of faster economic growth and balanced development of backward areas. Mahabaleshwar is a famous tourist center in Satara district. It has natural gift and natural importance. Mahabaleshwar.

Introduction:- The word Present research paper tries to find – out socio- economic impact of tourism at 'tourism' relates to the interest of various in place and regions for recreational purposes. Tourism can be considered to be a movement of people away from their normal place of resident. Conceptually, tourism arises for the movement of people to and their stay in different destinations. Tourism is the totality of the relationship and phenomenon arising from the travel and stay of strangers, provided the stay does not simply the establishment of a permanent resident and is not connected with a remunerated activity. "Tourism is not just an aggregate of merely commercial activities; it is also an ideological framing of history, nature and traditional framing that has the power to reshape culture and nature to its own needs. Tourism is therefore a composite phenomenon, which embraces the incidence of a mobile population of traveler who are strangers to the place they visit.

Cultural and heritage constitute vital resource for tourism development. The word culture is usually used to a way of life or to the product of a particular culture or individual (Richards 1996). The National tourist for historic preservation in the United States defines heritage tourism as "traveling to the places and activities that authentically represent the stories and people of the past and present". Mahabaleshwar is an important natural heritage tourist center located in Satara district. It is natural heritage as well as hill station. Present research paper has attempted that socio – economic impact of tourism on host population at Mahabaleshwar.

Objectives of the Study:

- To study the growth of tourism at Mahabaleshwar
- To study the role of infrastructural facilities in tourism development.
- To find out the impact of tourism on socio- economic development at Mahabaleshwar.

Methodology:- The present study is based on library and field work. Keeping in view the objectives of the study relevant data have been collected from primary and secondary sources. Data collection and observation during field work have been the basis of present analysis. Primary data is collected from Mahabaleshwar Tourist Center, Nagar Parishad and Collector office Satara. The data have been processed and represented by different statistical and cartographic techniques is used for highlighting the intensity of impact.

Study Region:-The height of Mahabaleshwar is 1438 meter from mean sea level. It is an important hill station, which is located in Satara district. It is 56 km away from north west of Satara City. The River Krishna takes its sources from this place and it flows towards Maharashtra, Karnataka & Andhra Pradesh and merges in Bay of Bengal. Mahabaleshwar is a popular tourist place because of the climate of this place. It is also famous for Honey and Straw berries. Due to climatic condition of this place it is possible to take maximum agro production of straw berries and Mel berries. The Venna Lake is also one of the place of attraction for the tourist. Boating facilities is available here for the tourist. Most of the tourist attracted towards boating facility. This lake is adorned by trees by all sides. This is the best advantage taken by the tourist. The Season begins from October to June is best of tourist. The atmosphere is healthy and suitable for human health.

Mahabaleshwar has number of Vintage points to enjoy the beauty of nature. The following are the major tourism resources of Mahabaleshwar. Wilson Point, Hunters point, Elphinstone Point, Savitri Point, Arthur Seat point, Bombay Point, Kate's Point, Monkey point, Venna Lake, Mahabaleshwar Temple,

Panchganga temple, Krishna Temple, Kshetra Mahabaleshwar these are main tourist attractions at Mahabaleshwar.

Infrastructural Facilities in Mahabaleshwar:- Infrastructural facilities play an integral and vital role in the development of tourism. These include transportation accommodation, human services and other entertainment facilities. For providing facilities to tourist these basic amenities are needed on a large scale because tourist is attracted towards the places where basic facilities are available. Mahabaleshwar is connected by good transport facilities it is connected to Satara and Kokan by Tar road. Mahabaleshwar has good accessibility and connectivity, it helps to tourism development.

Accommodation Facilities at Mahabaleshwar:- Mahabaleshwar is most important natural and heritage tourist place in Satara district. Daily thousands of tourist visited this place by Bus or Private Car. Mahabaleshwar have Natural and Geographical background help to attract tourist in the development of tourist following facilities are plays important role.

Accommodation Facilities at Mahabaleshwar:-

Table No. 1

Hotel in Star Category				No. Of Hotels
5 Star	4 Star	3 Star	2 Star	
01	05	13	07	26

Source : Compiled by Author

Above tables shows that in Mahabaleshwar tourist center having good accommodation facilities there for daily thousand of tourist are visited this place. This accommodation facilities are plays vital role in the development of tourism activity in this center.

Economic Impact of Tourism on Host Population of Mahabaleshwar:- Tourism is not only that important economic activity but it also the earning a sources of host community at the place of destination. Host Community it meanse the persons and public and private bodies who are potentially affected both positively and Negatively by the impact tourism development within the boundaries of the destination area. (Peterson and Mc Carthy). Tourism is also an important medium to the economic social, and cultural development of the region. It is important that to study the economic impact of tourism on destination. At the local level tourism helps to generate employment, to increase the standard of living of local people and to provide linkage effects with other sector of the economy.

Following Economic indicators have been considered to study the economic impact on host population.

1. Increase in income of residents
2. Increase in employment opportunities
3. Increase in cost of land and housing
4. Increase in Education health facilities
5. Increase in standard of living
6. Increase in price of goods and services
7. Increase in local taxes
8. Increase in opportunities for Shopping
9. Increase in infrastructural facilities
10. Rental house as a source of income

As per using above indicators with the questionnaires we are collected the Primary data at Mahabaleshwar. Following table Shows the economic impact of tourism on host population. In the last Five years, tourist arrival in Mahabaleshwar has increased but there is no uniformity in the growth rate of tourist arrival. A comprehensive increase has been observed which has boosted tourism in the state and it has been a most remarkable factor in the present status of tourism in the state. The Statistical unit of the Department of tourism, Government of Maharashtra and other organizations have undertaken demographic study of the tourist centers in Maharashtra giving accurate numbers of domestic and foreign tourists visiting the tourist places.

Tourist Arrival at Mahabaleshwar: Table No.- 2

Sr. No	1	2	3	4	5
Years	2007 -2008	2008 -2009	2009 -2010	2010 -2011	2011 -2012
No of Tourist	1031000	1040000	1148500	1194000	1235000

Source : Mahabaleshwar Municipal Crporation

According to table 2 from last five years, trend of tourists arrived at Mahabaleshwar is increased. In 2007-2008 near about 10 lakh tourist visited to Mahabaleshwar, it increased upto 12 lakh in 2011-12. It reveals that every year no. of tourists visited to Mahabaleshar have been increased.

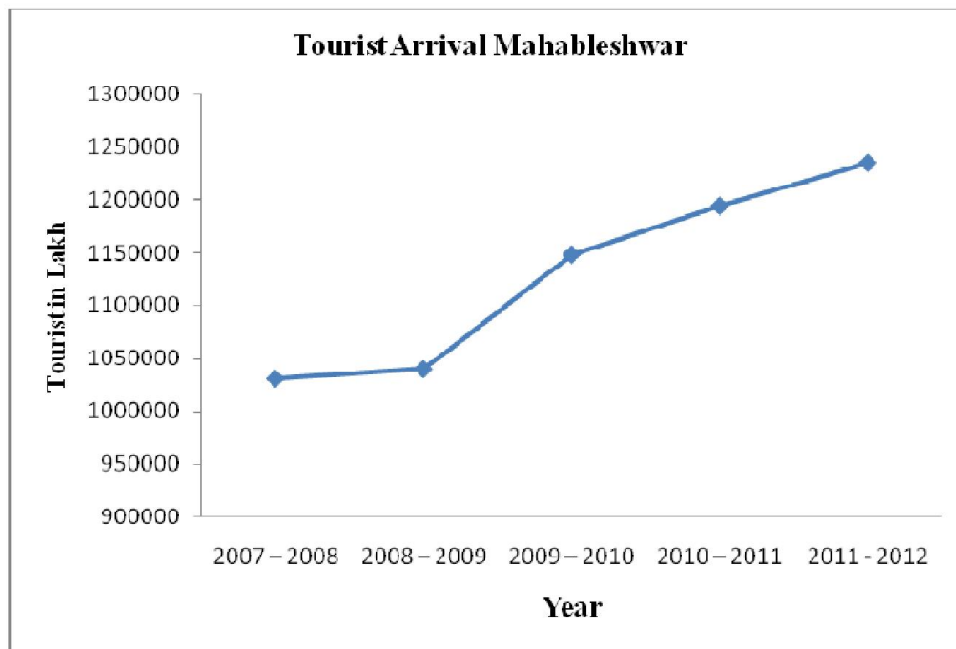


Fig No. – 1

For the study of Socio – Economic impact on host population we are selecte the one tourist centers namely Mahableshwar. This center is hill station located in Satara district. To the study of socio Economic impact selected the different indicators and with the help of questionires find out the response host population.

Table No 3

Economic impact – Response of Host Population Mahableshwar

Sr. No	Indicator of Economic Impact	Response of residence (in percent)	
		Agree	Disagree
1	Increase in income of residents	72	28
2	Increase in employment opportunities	76	24
3	Increase in cost of land and housing	71	29
4	Increase in Education health facilities	52	48
5	Increase in standard of living	68	32
6	Increase in price of goods and services	75	25
7	Increase in local taxes	77	23
8	Increase in oppotunities for Shopping	87	13
9	Increase in infrastructural facilities	95	5
10	Rental house as a source of income	65	35

Source : Complied by Author

According to above table No 3 indicate that the response of host population in answer agree or disagree no of tourist. Total 150 interviews are taken for the present study and the response of host population about the economic impact is shown in percent. From the views of host community it reveals that highest economic impact of tourism is shown on the increase in personal income and business increase in employment opputunities and cost of land Mahableshwar is fast growing center every year the arrival of tourist has increase and do to this different infrastructural facilities are increase at Mahableshwar. With this growth of tourism the price of goods and services and local taxes also increased. Today at Mahableshwar private English medium school are established and hence education and health facilities are increased more

than 75% response of host population about the economic impact is positive. Above discussion reveals that tourism is most important economic activity in the development of economy of the region and it helps to give the different opportunities to local community and the tourism also helps to increase the standard of living of host population.

Socio – Cultural Impact of Tourism

Table No 4

Socio – Cultural impact on the Host Poulation Mahableshear

Sr. No	Indicator of Socio Cultural impact	Response interpreneurs (in percent)	
		Yes	No
1	Increase in crime	36	64
2	Increase in Begger	41	59
3	Increase in Helth and Sanitation Problem	52	48
4	Overcrowding and Pollution	75	25
5	Improvement of Standard Living	68	32
6	Increase in environmental Problem	78	22
7	Increase in Transport Problems	83	17

Table no – 4 shows that socio – cultural impact of tourism on host population at Mahableswar. It reveals that at Mahableswar standard of living of local people has increased as well as with increasing number of tourist crime rate and beggars also increased. At mahableswar over crowding and pollution of air is the main problem 75% respondent. Agree about this aspect. Like this 80% respondent says that in Mahableswar last few years environmental problem transport problem are increased. According to above discussion concluded that with increasing tourism activity some environmental and Social problems are created at Mahabaleswar.

Conclusion : Mahableswar is an important natural tourist center in Satara District it is a famous hill station in Maharashtra. Daily thousands of tourist visited this place. Mahableswar has good accessibility and good accomodetation facilities socio – economic impact of tourism on host population have been studied at Mahableswar. Analysis of primary data shows that high impact of tourism is shown on increasing cost of land, increasing various facilities, increasing employment opportunities. Conclusion is made that tourism is playing important role in socio – economic development of Mahableswar. Tourism is also important activity in social and cultural change of Mahableswar.

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