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“ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT OF PILGRIMAGE TOURISM- A CASE STUDY OF JEJURI TOWN IN PUNE DISTRICT (MAHARASHTRA)”



ABSTRACT:-

Tourism is largely a nature based industry, and as such, it impacts the natural resources like, air, land and water. Well managed and controlled tourism leads to betterment of these resources and conversely if the same is not well managed, may result in to various types' social evils and pollution. The study has analyzed the present nature of pilgrimage tourism in the study region and also found out strength and the constraints for development there of. This study has been carried out to understand the nature of present tourism in the study area, role, ways functioning of the dependent business, Guravs and Vaghya-Muralis operating thereat. The suggestions in the study are based on the potential strength of the local people and participation of all the businessmen. A 'self-sustainable model for economic development and growth' designed and implemented with joint endeavor of the state government and relative large business houses can bring about sea change in study region. The study of the relationship between religion and tourism has generally focused on religion or tourism, depending on the case, with little equal and cross treatment of both. The Government of Maharashtra, through using its various arms like department of archeology, department of Culture, Home Ministry and Finance Ministry can play a role at Jejuri.

Mrs. Vaishali Ravindra Talele
Lecturer

KEY NOTES: *Economic Development , social evils and pollution.*

1. INTRODUCTION

In this study an attempt has been made to analyze the situation at Jejuri from various dimensions. An attempt has been made to find answers to following questions

Whether the shops supply quality of goods that are required by pilgrims?

Whether the hotels provide hygienic food and quality services to pilgrims?

Whether the pilgrims are satisfied with the services offered by Guravs?

Whether the 'Vaghya-Murali' tradition has the respect in 'spirit and substance'?

The various purposes of for which people embark upon a pilgrim have been explained. Further to conceptual explanation of mass tourism, it has been identified as an economic activity. A pilgrimage tourist has been differentiated from a tourist. After the focus of the study is taken to the location of the study area, the propose of selection of the area.

2. STUDY REGION:

The holy town Jejuri is in Purandher tahsil in Pune district of Maharashtra. Jejuri is situated at 18. 28 North 74. 17 East longitudes. Jejuri is to the south – east of Pune toward Phaltan. Jejuri is also of historical importance and is well-known for the Lord Khandoba Temple. The temple of Lord khandoba is situated on a small hill. The Lord Khandoba of Jejuri is particularly popular amongst the Dhangars engaged in business of maintenance of sheep as shepherd. As of 2001 India census [2], Jejuri had a population of 12,000. Males constitute 52% of the population and females 48%. 40

kms away from Pune is a well known place for the Khandoba Temple. The study region Jejuri which is a highly positioned spiritual holy place for the Khandoba temple is geographically situated in Pune district, Maharashtra state. The Lord Khandoba temple surrounded by various other spots and temples which have specific importance for the pilgrims. The Jejuri town has a great cultural heritage. The town experiences three main seasons in a year - summers, winters and monsoons. The summer season stretches on from the month of March, till mid-June. During this time, the maximum average temperature remains in the usual range of 30 deg C to 38 deg C. Jejuri witnesses' extreme heat in the month of April. The annual average rainfall received by the city is approximately 400 mm, most of which is expected between June and September. The martand-bhairav came down to earth at the location of Kadepathar.

Following Hindu calendar seven major fairs have been held in a year in Jejuri at the time of Chaitra Shuddha Pournima, Gan Pooja, Champa Shashthi, Poush Pournima, Magh Pournima, Maha Shiratra, and Somavati Amavasya; various festivals are also celebrated in town. More than four to five lakh people to visit Jejuri annually. A number of devotees visit Jejuri generally on Sunday. Apart from logistic convenience, there is one more reason for selecting Sunday. It is believed that it was Sunday on which Lord Shiva took form of Martand-Bhairav.

3. HYPOTHESIS:

It may be hypothesized that development of pilgrimage tourism, economic development in the study region along with maintenance of ecological balance in the study region could be possible if appropriate plan is formulated for infrastructural development, social education, security and hygienic environment.

4. OBJECTIVES:

The main objective of the study is

- 1) To assess the development of Jejuri and to identify the area requiring special attention,
- 2) To understand the tourism activity of the tourist destination.

5. METHODOLOGY:

To conduct a sample survey a questionnaire was prepared and filled up by shopkeepers, hotel owners, Guravs and Vaghya Muralis.

Usual computer techniques have been employed for completion analysis and presentation of the data, collected from the primary and the secondary sources. GIS techniques have been used for thematic maps, statistical techniques like percentage, average, score etc also used to summarize the quantitative data.

The purpose of the study is understanding profile of the shop keepers, hotel owners, Guravs and Vaghya Muralis. Since most of these are not literate enough to comprehend and respond to the set questionnaire, dialogue process was more helpful. The research methodologies, sources of methodology including primary and secondary data are elaborated. The techniques that have been employed to conduct this study have been enlisted.

PROFILE OF SHOPKEEPER

The survey conducted on different days and a total of 50 shopkeepers were surveyed on the basis of purposive random sampling. The basis was to cover variety of shopkeepers.

The place wise distribution, Sex wise report, age group and sex wise distribution, education level, income group, number of years in business, number of dependents, material sourcing places, means of transport for carrying of material. The above study reveals that 38 (76%) of the shops are run by male members while 12 (24%) shops are run by female members.

It was also revealed in the study that the support staff in these shops mainly contained family members of the shop keeper and no external employees were opted for. Most of the shops are owned and managed by the male members in the family.

This study revealed that of the 50 shops 38 shops (76%) were managed by male members in the family whereas 12 shops (24%) were managed by female members. The overall age group distribution indicates that 14 (28%) of the shops were managed by individuals having age below 30 years, 19 shops (38%) were managed by

individuals within age group of between 31 to 50 years while the rest 17 shops (34%) were managed by individuals who are above 50 years of age.

Among the shops managed by male members 10 (26.32%) shops were managed by individuals below 30 years of age, 13 shops (34.21%) were managed by individuals between 31 – 50 years of age while the rest 15 shops (39.47%) were managed by individuals having age above 50 years.

Among the shops managed by female members 4 (33.33%) shops were managed by individuals below 30 years of age, 6 shops (50.00%) were managed by individuals between 31 – 50 years of age while the rest 2 shops (16.67%) were managed by individuals having age above 50 years. The above study reveals that shopkeepers belong to all the age groups.

This study reveals the level of educational background of the shop keepers in Jejuri. 4 (8%) of the shop keepers were uneducated, 3 (6%) have had primary education, 24 (48%) have had secondary education, 13 (26%) have had higher secondary education while the rest 6 (12%) were graduates. No shop keeper was found above graduation level or having any additional or technical qualification.

This study focuses the financial condition of the shopkeepers and reveals that 4 shop keepers were earning less than Rs. 2000 per month. Earning of 16 shop keepers (32%), was between Rs. 2000/- to 4000, 16 shop keepers (32%) was between 4001 – 6000 while for rest of the shop keepers it was above Rs. 6000/- per month.

The income earning potential of the shops at Jejuri is limited. Hardly 14 (28%) of the shop keepers informed their earning above Rs. 72000/- per year. Increase in the number of pilgrims is one of the major ways out to increase their income level for improvement in standard of living.

PROFILE OF HOTEL

25 hotels were visited and hotel owners were interviewed for the purpose of this study. The number, type and class of majority of the people with their choice and preferences have a discernible impact on the profile of hotels at Jejuri. Other factors where such impact can be seen are variety of food items, facilities at the hotels and lodges, employees at the hotels etc. The peak business seasons i.e. festivals do not have noteworthy impact on the business style and size of the hotels.

The facilities provided at hotels This study reveals that 19 (76%) of the hotels do provided the commonly demanded snacks on regular basis whereas 6 (24%) hotels provide need based snacks and so not keep ready all the snacks all the time. The basic facilities in the above table include proper wash basin, sufficient water and toilets. The entertainment includes availability of television set, radio and alike facilities for customers in the hotel. The 16 (64%) of the hotels provided these facilities while the rest 9 (36%) did not have those. The accommodation includes facility of stay at the hotels. The 10 (40%) of the hotels provided these facilities while 15 (60%) did not have those.

The above statistics reveals that majority of the hotels have focused their services to providing snacks, basic facilities and entertainment. Accommodation, however, is considered as supporting and secondary activity. Since, majority of the pilgrims do not opt for overnight stay, accommodation is not considered on priority by the hotel owners.

Employees working in hotel this study revealed the administrative strength of these hotels. Since most of the hotels are small and family owned cum managed precise identification as regards the job roles of the owners was not possible. In a few hotels the owner's role was limited to sheer supervision while in a few hotels; the owner was required to perform all the functions i.e. cook, at In 14 hotels a person was recruited as manager to take care of the managerial duties while in 16 hotels this function was performed by the owner himself. The total numbers of cooks operating in the hotels at Jujuri are 32 while 4 owners were performing cook's function as well. In all 20 attendants were found in the hotels while in 8 cases the owner was looking after this function. In all 53 individuals were working as waiters whereas 7 owners were found performing this function in their hotels. In case of 5 hotels an independent person was appointed to act as watchman while in 11 hotels, the owner was found performing these functions. The study also revealed that 10 in hotels employees were recruited where 11 hotels were exclusively run by the owner himself.

The component of self employment in the overall employment at the hotels at Jejuri reveals that almost all the hotel owners work in their hotels in some or the other capacity. During the interviews it was noticed that while in some hotels the role of owner was sheet handling the cash counter, in other cases the owner was controlling

practically all the functions at the hotels. Nevertheless, in all the hotels, consideration of security was far from satisfactory, attendant, waiter, dish washer, cashier and watchman etc place wise employees working this study revealed the extent of migration for the purpose of job in hotels at Jejuri.

In all 191 employees were found in employment in hotels at Jejuri. 172 (90.05%) of the employees had Jejuri as their native place indicating virtually insignificant migration for the purpose of jobs in Jejuri or the place is not a preferred place. Workers migrated from Solapur, Usmanabad and Sangli were 3 each (1.57%). 3 workers were also found from the state of Uttar Pradesh. 2 workers had their origin from Latur, while workers migrated from Bid, Dhule, Pandharpur, Roha and Pune were 1 each.

The above statistics reveals that almost all the employees working in the hotels at Jejuri are staying at Jejuri. So the locals are benefiting in terms of employment for unskilled workers. This would also reveal that the salaries offered at these hotels are not attractive enough to attract the job hunters in neighboring areas.

Income level of hotels this study revealed that 1 (4%) hotels had their monthly income less than Rs. 5,000/- and 2 (8%) hotels had their monthly income ranging between Rs. 5001/- to Rs. 10,000/-. The 11 (44%) of the hotels had their monthly income ranging between Rs. 10,001/- to Rs. 20,000/- and 5 (20%) hotels had their income ranging between Rs. 20,001/- to 40,000/- while the rest 6 (24%) hotels had their income above Rs. 40,001/- per month.

This study reveals the disparity as regards size and revenue generation in hotels. While one hotel earns just Rs. 60,000/- per year, six hotels earn more than Rs. 4, 80,000/- at the tiny town of Jejuri.

Despite having located beside Pune, the town of Jejuri falls under underdeveloped region which becomes evident from above mentioned table. The 15 (60%) of the hotels expressed their concern over cleanliness in the area while 17 (68%) expressed their concern for the roaming street pigs. Environment was expressed as the biggest concern by 15 (60%) of the hotels. Finally availability of adequate and suitable transport facilities was expressed as the prime concern by 13 (52%) of the hotels.

Pilgrim tourism can be improved at the holy town of Jejuri subject to certain concerns expressed by the hotel owners from their perspective. All the concerns expressed by the hotel tend towards very basic issues of cleanliness, environment, transport facilities and pigs roaming and spreading further dirt in the vicinity.

Profile of Gurav

Gurav's are the people, generally the community people, who look after performing pooja, cleanliness at the temples and attending the devotees who have come there for expressing their gratitude for Lord Khandoba. The Guravs also provide residential accommodation to the pilgrims who intend to perform pooja.

The Income source for the Gurav's is from 'dakshina' and charges for the accommodation provided to devotees. A few Guravs were found charging room rent of Rs. 150/- per day to Rs. 300/- in which case the 'dakshina' for performing pooja was charges separately. In a few cases a consolidated 'dakshina' was charges for all the services provided by the Guravs. These services include material for performing pooja, cost of accommodation, cost of naivedya, lunch / dinner to the devotees, tea / coffee etc.

During visits to Gurav's places, 50 Guravs interviewed. Since the Gurav profession is run by the male member and the female members in the family remain occupied with household duties, all the 50 Guravs who were interviewed are male. The survey conducted on different days and a total of 50 Gurav were Surveyed.

Education wise report of Gurav, The required knowledge for the Guravs to perform their rituals and poojas is traditional. The earlier generation provided the requisite vocational knowledge to the later and the profession continued for generations. Outsiders, despite having the requisite knowledge of performing pooja, are not allowed to guide the devotees in performing rituals. Therefore, possessing academic education is not strictly the requirement of Guravs. However, in order to effectively survive basic literacy is required.

Education wise report Of the 50, 3 (6%) of the Guravs were uneducated, 5 (10%) had primary level education, 14 (28%) had secondary education, 22 (44%) had higher secondary education while the rest 6 (12%) had graduated. No Gurav was found above graduation level.

The above statistics reveals that the need for academic education is either not felt by the Guravs or they are of the opinion that the academic education will not support them for their economic betterment in their way. None of the interviewed Gurav had academic education above graduation level.

Age wise report of Gurav, The physical age of the Guravs has hardly any impact on their performance. Due

to lack of adequate academic education, these Guravs also have very limited scope of diversification into other professional areas. However, the above table brings out more concrete facts. Of 50 Guravs interviewed, only 1 Gurav was below 30 years of age. 26 Guravs (52%) were within a range of 31 – 50 years while the rest 23 (46%) were above 51 years of age. The profession of Gurav is generally managed and controlled by the senior most male member of the family.

Income wise report of Gurav This study revealed that 2 Guravs informed their monthly income to be below Rs. 5,000/- per month, 28 (56%) informed their income ranging between Rs. 5001/- to Rs. 10,000/- while the rest 20 (40%) informed their income to be above Rs. 10,000/-.

The monthly earning of most of the Gurav family is reasonable. A fair amount of Guravs (40%) informed their earning more than Rs. 10,000/- which may be considered as sound income. All the members, including female and minor members, in the family contribute in the Gurav activity some or the other way. The female members take care of the kitchen and preparation of naivedya while the minors take care of the miscellaneous functions. However, the income level and the standard of living are greatly impacted by the number dependents in the family.

Number of dependents In Gurav profession all the adults' members, irrespective of their gender, play a definite role and hence it is run like a 'family business'. While the male members remain busy in performing poojas and rituals, the female members perform household duties such as cooking, serving the guests, maintaining the premises clean and tidy. The children support their mother in serving the guests. Of the 50 interviewed Guravs 4 (8%) informed to have number of dependents ranging between 0 – 5, 42 (84%) reported 6 – 9, and the rest 4 (8%) reported the number to be more than 10.

As stated under income wise report, the number of dependents might have direct impact on the standard of living. Almost all the families were found oversized. The advantage in having oversized family is that since all the members of the family take effort in the activity of Gurav a considerable cost that might have been required to pay had some outsider employed, could be saved. Number of rooms available with Gurav of the 50 interviewed, 5 (10%) had number of rooms ranging between 1 – 3, 14 (28%) had rooms between 4 – 6, 23 (46%) had rooms between 7 – 9 while the rest 8 (16%) had number of rooms above 9.

The rent income of Guravs depends upon room occupancy. Therefore, number of rooms available for letting out plays vital role. In this work it was revealed that majority of the Guravs had good amount of rooms. Capacity of rooms in terms of persons like number of rooms available with the Guravs, the size of rooms that can accommodate certain number of persons determines the income level. Of the total 50 Guravs interviewed, 8 (16%) had rooms having capacity between 1-6, 31 (62%) had a capacity of 7-9 while the rest 11 (22%) had a capacity to allow more than 10 persons. The capacity of rooms affects income level of the Gurav's directly. In this work it was revealed that the Guravs have tendency towards offering bigger and bigger size rooms to the pilgrims.

Facilities for increasing earning and number of pilgrims Of interviewed 50, for 45 (90%) of the Guravs the main concern was the dirt spread by the street pigs, for 41, (82%) the transport facilities, for 34 (68%) the cleanliness in the periphery of temple, 28 (56%) about maintenance of the garden while for 24 (48%) expressed concern over other matters.

In order to increase the number of pilgrims and develop the holy town of Jejuri and thereby strengthen the financial resources, the Guravs have certain observations. The concerns expressed by them are towards cleanliness and infrastructure.

PROFILE OF VAGHYA MURALI

India has been witness to the dancing girls in the temple who were popularly known as Devdasis. Vaghya Murali is the male and female children offered to God Khandoba, a local malevolent deity. The third deity of Devdasis is Khandoba of Jejuri, although there are eleven 'pithas'. It is the 'kul-daivat' of dalits, though many others worship him including some Muslim devotees, who presumably were dalits, and worshipped this deity before their conversion to Islam. Even robbers would attend the annual fair and finalize their plans there. They were, presumably, of ex-criminal tribes, which was a part of the Dalit community. Brahmins have homologized this deity and made out stories that Shankara took this form of Martanda, to protect the Brahmins from the Asuras.

The survey conducted on different days a total of 21 Vaghya and Muralis were Surveyed, sex wise report

this study revealed that 8 (38.10%) were female (murali) and 13 (61.90%) were male (vaghya).

Native place wise distribution, this study revealed that 6 (25.57%) of Vaghya Muralis had their origin in Jejuri itself, 3 each (14.29%) each had their origin in Beed and Satara. Only one each VM was observed from Ahmednagar, Aurangabad, Khed-manchar, Latur, Natepute, Palashi, Sangamner, Usmanabad and Baramati. The tradition of Vaghya Muralis has its origin in the holy town of Jejuri itself. Hence the larger number of them had their native place in Jejuri.

Age group & sex of Vaghya Murali in Jejuri, This study revealed that all the 8 females (Muralis) were below 30 years of age. Only 1 male (Vaghya) was found below 30 years of age, 10 were within a range of 31- 50 while the rest 2 were above 50 years.

Majority of the Vaghyas had their age ranging between 31-50 or even above, while all the Muralis were below thirty years of age. The Muralis after attaining age of thirty years, do not remain in this profession while the Vaghyas have to continue education level, this study revealed that 5 (23.81%) of the Vaghya Muralis were illiterate, 9 (42.86%) had primary education, 5 (23.81%) had higher secondary and the rest 2 (9.52%) were graduates.

None of the Vaghyas or Muralis had attained education more than graduation level. One of the possible reasons for the continuance of ills involved in this tradition may be traced back to the educational level of Vaghyas and Muralis. Due to lack of education, the Muralis cannot change their profession and forced to remain as Muralis only. Income group The 7 (33.33%) of the Vaghya Muralis earned less than Rs. 2,000/- per month, 7 earned income between Rs. 2001 – 4000 while the rest 7 earned between Rs. 4001 – 6000.

The above data reveals the unpredictability of income of the Vaghyas and Muralis. During discussions with the Muralis it was gathered that the age and physical attributes of the Muralis had influence over their income level.

Facilities for improvement in standard of living

Sr. No	FACILITIES
1	The biggest concern of the Vaghya Muralis was their rehabilitation (punarvasan) in the territory of Jejuri
2	The second requirement expressed by the Vaghya Muralis was recognition by the Government for this folk art and provision of periodic honorarium and pecuniary support.
3	Need for academic education was expressed as the third need of Vaghya Muralis.

CONCLUSION

Jejuri is an important pilgrimage due to the temple of Lord Khandoba who is worshipped by majority of the tribes in the state of Maharashtra and neighboring states. During the fair times lakhs of pilgrim visit the Lord Khandoba temple. Therefore, it is very necessary to take care of the location from various dimensions such as hygiene, availability of transport facilities, quality of food, availability of drinking water, vehicle parking area, darshan, overall cleanliness at and around location and nowadays the security of the temple from possible internal and external terrorist attacks.

Lord Khandoba is worshipped by millions of people in the state of Maharashtra and neighboring states. The number of pilgrims visiting Jejuri is considerable. Particularly, during festivals and fairs the number of visitors touches few lakhs per day. Shops around Jejuri are mainly in the nature of family businesses run by native people and all the family members work at the shops. All these shops are engaged in retail business wherein goods are purchased mainly from Pune. Most of the shop keepers have low school level education and so have limited career options. The economic standard of the shopkeepers is ‘hand to mouth’. The shops around Jejuri temple mainly meant to serve the devotees. As such the product range offered at these shops is restricted to requirements of devotees. These shopkeepers solely depend upon the purchases made by the pilgrims for their livelihood. The very nature of shops does not allow them any flexibility or chances of diversification in business area. Since, the expectations of the devotees are generally met; the devotees appeared satisfied about quality of shops. The hotels at Jejuri are mainly aim providing services to pilgrims visiting the Khandoba temple. The size of hotels range from small temporary constructions to decent hotels. Majority of the shops are middle range hotels and earn moderate

income. There have been restrictions on business growth of these hotels because the pilgrims are not inclined towards halting at Jejuri. The pilgrims who intend to perform rituals and pooja at the temple prefer to stay at the Guravs place rather than staying hotels. Cleanliness, hygiene and the dirt spreading because of roaming pigs cause business hazards for the shop keepers. Unavailability of good type roads and inadequate transport facilities from neighboring localities and market places are the limiting factors for possible business expansion. Gurav are the people (families) who are engaged in supporting the devotees performing their pooja, arranging all the resources for comfortable stay at their places in consideration of 'dakshina', fees. All the family members of the Gurav's take part in this service. Stay at Gurav's place is preferred than staying at hotels. Guravs are engaged in their activity for generations. No formal academic education is required for this vocation and therefore hardly any Gurav was educated up to level of graduation.

However, Guravs can render better services if their concerns as regards, pigs roaming in the surrounding of temple are removed, transport facilities are improved, Garden and surrounding area is maintained clean and tidy. The tradition of Vaghya Murali once had great importance in the culture however, with passage of time, the importance declined and today these people are living in pathetic conditions. Due to economic issues, these people have to make undue compromises which leads to further degradation in their life style. Lack education and resistance from the educated and civilized public to accept active involvement of these people in social activities other than 'Jagran and Gondhal' keeps them isolated from general society.

SUGGESTIONS

Lord Khandoba is worshipped by majority of the people in vicinity and neighboring states. Despite this, condition of the temple and its surrounding is precarious. In order to have improvement in this condition the following measures may be taken up. The State and Local Government should put in place concealed drainage system rather than existing old drainage canal system. The government may improve condition of access roads and make available adequate power supply. This should make the marketing easier and less cumbersome. Guravs do not seem to have major concerns over the situation apart from the only issue of security to the temple and other areas. The tradition of Vaghya-Murali is now in pathetic stage. A lot of social education along with enforcement of law is essential. Since this is possible only in presence of political will, the social and religious will should pressurize and necessitate the Government machinery to look in to the problems at Jejuri. However, to begin with the following steps may be taken for improvement of these people. Considering the volume of daily pilgrims and visitors, the Jejuri Trust authorities should (with subsidy from the State Government) depute security forces. Special Security forces should be deputed during festivals seasons.

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