



## IMPACT OF TOURISM ON DROUGHT PRONE AREA DEVELOPMENT – A CASE STUDY OF SOLAPUR DISTRICT

**Prof. Dr. S. C. Adavitot**

Principal & Head , Department of Geography ,  
C.B.Khedgi's B.Science, R.V.Commerce, R.J. Arts College, Akkalkot.



### ABSTRACT

Droughts are the natural disaster caused by lack of water in the region. It can be result of less rainfall, which happens mainly due to large scale of deforestation excessive use of water resources like well and tube well etc. lead to water shortage. Drought affected district in the state of Maharashtra set annual rainfall in the range between 600 to 700 mm through SW monsoon. Once in five years deficit rainfall is reported. Akkalkot taluka is one of the drought prone taluka in the Solapur district. It had mainly rainfall less than half of the normal. Tourism is an increasingly wide spread and complex activity. It is a multidimensional industry generating various types of impacts. Akkalkot taluka has number of tourist destination such as Akkalkot, Gaudgaon, Bruhanpur, & Haidra etc. During the XII five year plan Ministry of tourism planning commission has set target by adapting pro-poor tourism approach which contributes significantly to poverty reduction. In drought prone region sever poverty is always hampering the life of the people. The present study examines the impact of tourism on development of tourist destination in such region. Present study is based on secondary and primary data and this data is analyzed with help of statistical and cartographic technique. The study reveals that Akkalkot, Gaudgaon, Bruhanpur, & Haidra etc. and adjoining tourist destinations are attracting lakhs of tourist and it has generated 60 percent employment opportunity directly and indirectly to the population of drought prone region.

**KEYWORDS:** Drought Prone, Employment, Economic Development.

### INTRODUCTION:

Droughts are the natural disasters caused by lack of water in the region. Analysis of rainfall behavior for the past 100 years in study area reveals that the frequency of occurrence of below-normal rainfall which causes severe and rare droughts occur once every eight to nine years in arid and semi-arid zones.

Tourism is an increasingly widespread and complex activity. According to Musa (2003) tourism is seen as one of the keys to promote a greater understanding of the various cultures and life styles of the multi-ethnic population. The positive contribution of tourism is significant, but there are a number of challenges to be set it the potential for sustainable local development and poverty elimination, through the localization of benefits, is to be realized. These challenges include issues of ownership, economic leakage (from the local economy and through imports), local employment, benefit distribution, social and environmental impacts and dependency. These problems can only be effectively addressed at the destination level with the participation of the local communities. Therefore here an attempt has been made to examine the role of tourism to reduce the negative impact of drought.

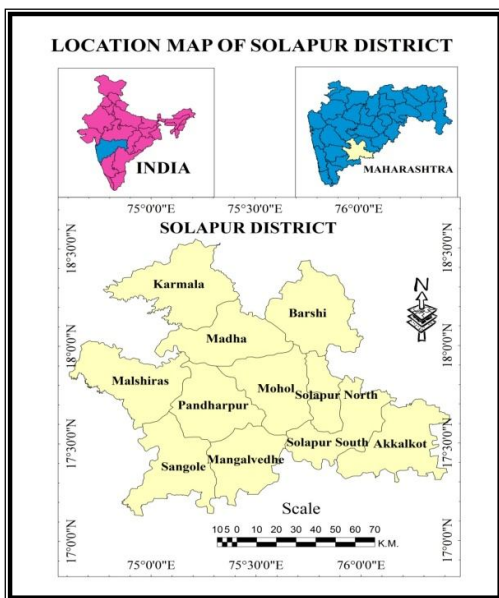
**Objective:** To examine the role of tourism on drought prone area development.

**METHODOLOGY:**

The present paper is based on secondary data which is published by Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India and other published sources of information. With the help of Buffering technique concentric zones of tourist destinations were mapped , Solapur is considered as district headquarter a first 50km circle is drawn in which prominent pilgrimage destinations are located i.e. Akkalkot, Pandharpur second circle is drawn taking 100km distance in which Ganagapur and Vijapur destination are located. It forms a travel circuit.(Map1.2)

**LOCATION:**

Solapur is one of the drought prone district of Maharashtra state which is located at in Southern part of the state, at 17.68°N 75.92°E. It has an average elevation of 458 meters (1502 feet). It is bordered by Ahmednagar district on the north; Osmanabad district on the north and northeast. Gulbarga district (Karnataka state) on the southeast and south; Bijapur District (Karnataka State), Sangli district on the south and southwest; Satara district on the west, and Pune district on the northwest (map no. 1.1.) According to national disaster monitoring authority Solapur district falls under drought prone region. Major Pilgrimage destinations are located in and around Solapur.



**DISCUSSION:**

The study area is always hampered by severe drought. As per Koppen climate classification district falls under dry region i.e. arid and semi arid. The highest temperature ever recorded is 48 °C (118 °F) in April 1988. The entire district receives an average rainfall of 545 mm. Industrially and agricultural development is very poor, therefore employment generation is also hampered .Tourism is the only solution to remove the economic backwardness and severance of the drought in the district.

Tourism is now well recognized as a major growth engine. Tourism has great capacity to create large-scale employment from the most specialized to the unskilled. The rapid growth in domestic tourism can be attributed to the ever increasing middle class, increase in disposable income improved facilities, stress on urban families and improved connectivity to tourist destinations. The pilgrim tourists visiting those destinations are Multi-Cultured, multi-caste and

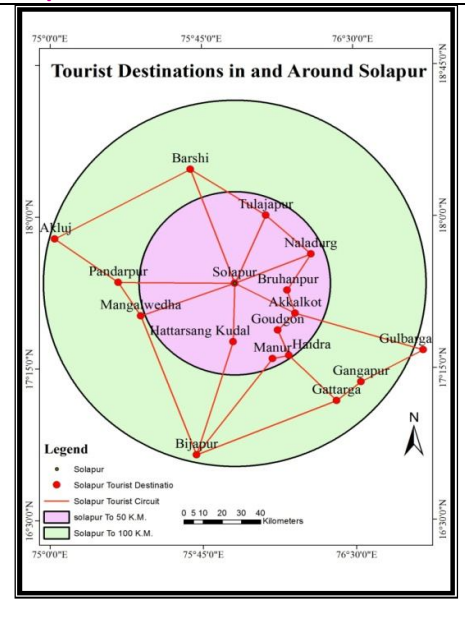
multi-lingual community. (Smith M. 2009).The major destinations are discussed in detail.

**Solapur District: Month wise Distribution of Domestic & Foreign Tourist Arrivals:**

The development of any tourist destination depends upon the flow of tourist to those particular destinations which are existing in the district. Pandharpur, Akkalkot, Akluj and Solapur is having important tourist destinations, where lakhs of tourists visits regularly.

As compare to 2010 figures of tourist arrivals in the district the year 2011 shows that there is net increase in tourist arrivals, in the month of September, 2011 the ratio of tourists was (3.04). Followed by the month of December, 2011(1.59).on an average the growth ratio of tourist is 1.40. It means that still there is wide scope for tourism development in the district.

**Map No.1.2 Tourist Destinations**



**Akkalkot: A Pilgrimage Destination:**

Akkalkot is a temple dedicated to Shri Swami Samarth Maharaj, a forth incarnation of Lord Dattatreya. Lakhs of devotees and tourist from all over India Visiting Akkalkot. As per table no.1.1 the tourist flow to the destination is 2,24,212 (2011). Therefore government of Maharashtra has declared as Tirthkshetra destination in 1995.

**Solapur: A Religious, Historical and Textile Centre**

Solapur city is a district head quarter and well connected with Road and Rail network towards all directions of our country. Solapur is an ancient historical and religious place of Shri Siddharmeshwar as its "Gramadaiwata".. It is most famous for cotton textile industry, such as Chaddars, bed sheets and towels etc. The location of city is so access to pilgrims either they travel from Akkalkot or Tuljapur even from Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh they visit this place and market to purchase the textile products. The table no. 1.1 highlights the tourist flow to Solapur, throughout the year more than 81,347 tourist visited this temple and city.

**Table No.1.1  
Akkalkot: Distribution of Tourists**

Destination	Tourist Category	Jan.12	Feb.12	Mar-12	Oct. 11	Nov. 11	Dec.11
Akkalkot	Total Tourist	210774	206275	207442	188576	195212	224212
	DT	210753	206254	207421	188567	195201	224196
	FT	21	21	21	09	11	16
Pandharpur	Total Tourist	271263	265461	275392	224558	268958	288545
	DT	271236	265434	275364	224536	268933	288512
	FT	27	27	28	22	25	33
Solapur	Total Tourist	81347	92828	78590	84684	85892	86541
	DT	81339	92819	78582	84684	85892	86539
	FT	8	9	8	0	0	2

Source: Tourism Survey for State of Maharashtra (2011)

**Pandharpur A Pilgrimage Destination:**

Pandharpur is a pilgrimage city situated on the banks of Bhima River in Solapur District. The Vithoba temple attracts a million Hindu pilgrims during the major yatra (pilgrimage) in the month of Ashdha (June-July) i.e. Ashadi Ekadashi.

It is also known as Pandhari, hosts the renowned Vithhal Temple on the banks of Bhimā. "Vithoba", "Pandurang", and "Pandharinath" are the popular alternate names of the deity, Viththal. It is also called as **South Kashi**. The table 1.1 explains the growth trend of pilgrims. Throughout the year more than 2.71 lakhs pilgrims seeks darshan of Vitthal. The participation of foreign tourist in Vari is most important for future planning of the destination.

### Adjoining Destination

1. Tulajapur : It is a pilgrimage destination located 55 km. from Solapur where lakhs of pilgrimage visit to seek darshan of tuljabhavani one of the Shaktipitha. (Map no 1.2)
2. Gangapur : Adobe of Datta Sampraday located 74 km from Akkalkot. Pilgrims always travel from Akkalkot to Gangapur. (Map no 1.2)

### Income and Employment Generated Through Tourism

The effort has been also made to highlights the impact of tourism to remove the drought proneness of the district directly or indirectly. The table reveals that how the tourism helps to remove the intensity of drought by the generating employment to the population of Solapur District.

**Table No.1.2**  
**Solapur District: Income and Employment Generated Through Tourism**

Sr. No	Source of Income (Direct)	No. of Employees & Income Generated	Source of Income (In Direct)	No. of Employees & Income Generated
1	Destination Site	1185(20.80)	Hotel Industry	12500(82.61)
2	Tours & Travel Agent	3500(61.45)	Flower Merchants	680(4.59)
3	Devotional goods & books	760(13.34)	Paying Guest	650(4.29)
4	Guide services	250(4.38)	Others	1300 (8.59)
	Total	5695 (100)	Total	1510 (100)

Source: Respective Authority, (Numbers in brackets denotes percentage)

Table no. 1.2 denotes that direct and indirect income and employment generated through tourism in Solapur district. Table indicates that highest proportion of direct income and employment by tours and travel agent and least by guide services. Indirect employment and income by hotel industry is highest i.e. 82.61 percent and least from devotional goods and books.

### CONCLUSION:

Droughts are the natural disaster caused by lack of water in the region. Tourist places are the boon to drought region. The ratio of pilgrims visited Solapur as compare to Maharashtra state was highest in the month of September i.e.3.04 followed by the month of December, 2011(1.59). The number of foreign tourist was negligible in number. It has generating 30 percent employment and income opportunity directly and indirectly to the population of drought prone districts.

### SUGGESTIONS:

1. To strengthen the existing tourist destinations by providing special development grants for various infrastructural provisions, such as accommodation, quality transportation basic amenities etc.
2. A Tourist Travel Circuit will emerge and it should be strengthened with necessary action. It will help for HR development.
3. It is necessary to develop destination wise tourist data base for the development of human resources development.

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