

DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM IN NASHIK DISTRICT: A GEOGRAPHICAL ANALYSIS

**Mrs. Priti Thakkar*

**Assistant Professor, SIES College of Commerce and Economics, Sion(E), Mumbai, Maharashtra.*

Abstract:

Tourism has grown from the pursuit of a privileged few to a mass movement of people with the urge to discover the unknown, to explore new and strange places, to see changes in environment and to undergo new experiences during the post- world war period when tourism grew into a mass tourist industry. Tourism is multi-faceted and has its various links with the manufacturing and retail sectors. It has numerous seasonal or unofficial businesses which makes assessment of the market size of tourism extremely difficult

The present paper aims to understand the tourism development potentials of Nashik district.

Both Primary and Secondary data has been used to understand the patterns of tourism. Nashik has tremendous growth potential for tourism with the given climatic conditions, natural historical and cultural factors.

Tourism development is of great importance because of the anticipated economic benefits which tourism brings in with increased income and employment opportunities.

Since tourism is now an integral part of modern societies its study and analysis become imperative if its potential economic and Social Benefits Are To Be Maximized and Developed in a Manner Consistent with the Society's Goal.

Key Words: *Tourism, Nashik, Potentials, Patterns of Tourism, Geographical Analysis*

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Introduction:

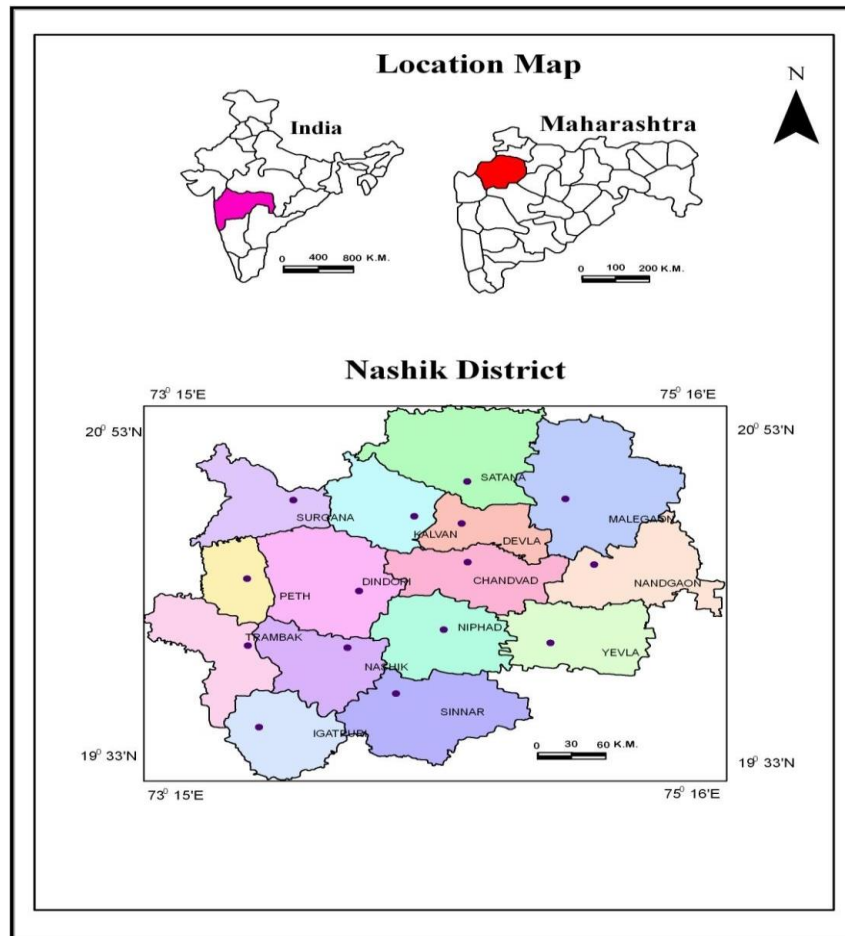
Tourism industry in Maharashtra has a tremendous potential for growth. The tourism activities increased due to availability of basic infrastructure and the variety of tourist schemes offered by various destinations in Maharashtra. (Tourism Department Report, 2003).

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 research follow the term Potential though this may be assumed to be synonymous to Attractiveness. The river Godavari flows through the city. Large number of Temples and Ghats was constructed on the banks of Godavari have made Nashik one of the holiest places for Hindus all over the World. Nashik is one of the five places in India where the famous Kumbh Mela is held once in 12 years. The diversity and magnificence of the Nashik district makes it attractive to the tourists and hence has lot of potential for development.

Location:

Nashik District is situated partly in the Tapi basin and partly in the upper Godavari basin. It lies between 19° 35' and 20° 52' north latitudes and 73° 16' and 74° 56' east longitudes. It is surrounded by Dhule District in the north,

Jalgaon and Aurangabad Districts in the east, Ahmadnagar District in the south, Thane District in the south-west and Gujarat in northwest.



As per Census, 2011 the district has an area of 15,530 sq. kms and its population is 61, 07,187. While the area of the district accounts for 5.05 percent of the total area of the State, the District population constitutes 5.43 percent of the total State's population. The density of population is 393 persons per sq. km. Among the 35 Districts of the State, the District ranks 3rd in terms of area, 4th in terms of population and 7th in terms of density.

The District derives its name from that of its headquarters, Nashik. It is situated on both sides of the sacred Godavari River and is well connected by rail, road and air.

Studies Conducted at National Level:

Significant regional studies conducted by scholars also highlight the role of geography towards shaping the tourism activity and its development.

Thampi, S. Santhosh. (2002) in his famous book, "Eco- Tourism Marketing" explained the basic foundations of tourism planning and development. The book is very useful to tourism designers, planners and developers having varied experiences and vast knowledge for planning of tourism industry. He also describes the concept of tourism Planning, approaches, techniques and principles of tourism, which can be applied at various levels.

Romila Chawla (2003) in her book entitled *Tourism in the 21st Century* emphasized on important features of the tourism industry, its contribution to the national integration and creation of harmonious social and cultural environment and also suggested the promotion of arts, crafts and culture and brings about prosperity and sustainable development. Changing patterns of international tourism suggest that new tourism geographies are already emerging.

Tourism is multifaceted field and tourism research focuses on variety of aspects.

Saurabh Rishi & Sai Giridhar B. (2004), "Himachal Tourism: A SWOT Analysis", noted that planning and

assessment are important parts for sustainable development of tourism. Further he focused on burning issues of tourism development i.e. economic, ethnic and environmental perspectives. They explained the goals and strategies for effective tourism practices, and identified the key issues of carrying capacity and active participation of community and stated the role of tourism in rural development, fundamentally an economic one to sustain and improve the quality of life in rural areas.

Dr. M.M. Khan (2009) wrote an important book series on 'Encyclopaedia of Tourism'. He emphasized on theoretical framework of tourism development such as fundamental aspects, salient features and various organizations. He emphasized the role of tourism organizations at the international and national levels in Vol-I.

In Vol-II, he stated the origin of tourism, types of tour operations, system of social organizations, different theories of criminality, relation between tourism and hotel industry.

Vol - IV deals with the basic aspects of ticketing and booking, global ticketing, complete history of ticketing and booking of air, rail, and water and road transportation for travelling

Gadakh, Bharat L & Jaybhaye, Ravindra & Nalawade, Dr. Pravin. (2015) worked on assessment of Tourism Potential in Nashik City, and found that tourism has important contribution in sustainable development, economic upliftment and social benefits, if planned systematically.

Aims of the Study:

The broad aim of the study is:-

1. To study various physical divisions in the Nashik District of Maharashtra
2. To study various potentialities of tourism in the Nashik District of Maharashtra

Methodology:

This work is dependent on the secondary data. It mainly uses information research Articles, Books, Nashik District gazetteer, reports, and various information sources on the Internet. This information is also based on information from the internet/ website and other research papers. Primary data is collected with the interviews with the tourists to understand their expectations from the travel.

Results and Discussions:

PHYSIOGRAPHY

India has been divided into four macro level physical divisions. These are The Northern Mountains, The Great Plains, The Deccan Plateau and the Coastal Plains and Islands.

Maharashtra falls under two of these macro level divisions 1) The Deccan Plateau and 2) The Coastal Plains and Islands. The north-south running Sahyadri range separates these two divisions. The Deccan Plateau lies to the east while the Coastal Plains and Islands lie to the west up to the Arabian Sea. The Deccan Plateau is much larger of the two divisions and includes twenty nine Districts of the State while only six Districts lie in the Coastal Plains and Islands.

The whole Deccan Plateau is sub-divided into 12 meso regions. Of these, only 2 meso regions i.e. Northern Maharashtra and The Maharashtra Plateau lie within the State. Northern Maharashtra is further divided into 2 micro regions i.e. The Tapi-Purna Valley and the Wardha-Penganga- Wainganga Plain. The Maharashtra Plateau is also further sub-divided into 2 micro regions i.e. The Eastern Plateau and The Western Plateau with Protruded Hills.

The Coastal Plains and Islands are divided into 4 meso regions i.e. Gujarat Region, Western Coastal Region, Eastern Coastal Region and The Islands. Of these, The Western Coastal Region covers Maharashtra. This region is divided into 4 micro level regions i.e. Maharashtra Littoral, Goa Coast, Karnataka Coast and North Kerala Coast. Only Maharashtra Littoral falls within the State of Maharashtra.

The hierarchy of these macro, meso and micro level physiographical divisions within Maharashtra State are as below:

(A) Deccan Plateau:

(i) Northern Maharashtra:

- (a) Tapi-Purna Valley: Includes the Districts of Nandurbar, Dhule, Jalgaon, Buldana, Akola, Washim and Amravati.
- (b) Wardha-Penganga-Wainganga Plain: Includes the Districts of Wardha, Nagpur, Yavatmal, Bhandara, Gondiya, Gadchiroli and Chandrapur.

(ii) Maharashtra Plateau:

- (a) Eastern Maharashtra: Includes the Districts of Aurangabad, Jalna, Parbhani, Hingoli, Nanded, Bid, Osmanabad, Latur, Solapur, Sangli and Kolhapur.
- (b) Western Maharashtra with Protruded Hills: - Includes the Districts of Nashik, Ahmadnagar, Pune and **Satara**.

(B) Coastal Plains and Islands:

(i) Western Coastal Plains:

- (a) Maharashtra Littoral: Includes the Districts of Thane, Mumbai (Suburban), Mumbai, Raigarh, Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg.

Nashik forms a part of the western plateau with protruded hills micro level division of the Deccan plateau and is situated in north-west Maharashtra. The physiography of the District may be grouped into 6 parts namely (i) Sahyadri Hills, (ii) Satmala Hills, (iii) Girna Basin (iv) Godavari Basin (v) Sinnar Upland and (vi) Yevla Plateau.

i) Running north-south in the western part of the District, the Sahyadri Hills cover the entire Tahsils of Peint, Surgana (except for a small part in the east) and parts of Kalwan, Nashik, Trimbakeshwar, Igatpuri, Dindori and Baglan. This region has an altitude varying between 900 to 1,200 metres. The central parts of these hills are more elevated than the northern and southern portions. The hills are densely covered under forests and these are mainly reserved forests.

This hill range is the source of many rivers flowing through the district. In fact, it serves as a water divide between the rivers and those flowing west. The rivers Godavari, Darna, Kadya, Girna and Mosam are the main east flowing rivers. Par, Dhamanganga and Wai are the main west flowing rivers. As such the region is highly dissected. In fact, the region is series of valleys and interfluves resulting from dissection by streams running in deep beds.

ii) Satmala Hill Range is an offshoot of Sahyadries. It covers parts of Kalwan, Baglan and Deola Tahsils and small parts of Malegaon, Chandwad and Surgana Tahsils. It is water divide between the systems of Godavari and Girna within the District. The hills have an altitude varying between 800 to 1,100 metres and it is fairly covered with forests which are mainly reserved forests.

iii) Girna Basin is located in the north-eastern part of the district. The basin includes entire Tahsils of Malegaon and Nandgaon, part of Baglan and Deola Tahsil and small parts of Kalwan, Chandwad and Yevla Tahsils. It has an altitude varying between 400 and 700 metres. However, a few hillocks located within the basin have a much higher elevation. This region, in general, slopes toward east. The hillocks and the upper reaches of the basin have some forest cover. The western part is relatively more dissected than the central and eastern, as such the western part is comparatively more uneven. In general, the topography of basin is rugged and soils are generally light.

iv) Godavari Basin includes parts of Dindori, Niphad, Chandwad, Nashik and Sinnar Tahsils. This basin, in general, has an altitude of between 500 and 900 metres. The northwestern part is more elevated and it slopes towards south-east. Except for small forest cover in the north-west, the region has practically no forest. The surface is undulating in nature but near the rivers soils are very fertile. It is a well-known area for grapes plantation and

cultivation of onion and other vegetables.

- v) Sinnar Upland is situated in the extreme southern part of the District. The upland spreads over parts of Igatpuri and Sinnar Tahsils. Broadly, this plateau has an elevation varying from 600 metres to 960 metres. The plateau is dissected by numerous streams and the surface is uneven.
- vi) Yevla Plateau covers most of Yevla Tahsil and very small parts of Niphad, Chandvad and Nandgaon Tahsils. This plateau has an altitude of 500 and 600 metres. The plateau descends gently towards south. Mainly small streams drain it. All these streams meet the main river Godavari flowing in the south.

Places of Religious Importance

Most of the fairs held in the district are associated with important deities and religious festivals. So far as the trade is concerned, fairs are complementary to weekly markets. Large quantities of agricultural produce and other articles of daily use are brought for sale. Once in twelve years, Sinhashta Kumbhamela is held on the banks of Godavari River at Nashik and lakhs of devotees gather from across the country. Additionally, the fair of Saptashringi Devi at Saptashringagad in Dindori Tahsil is held twice in a year. Other fairs viz., Khandoba fair at Peint in Peint Tahsil, Bhairavnath fair at Vadner Bhairao in Chandvad Tahsil, Shani Maharaj fair of Pardhadi in Nandgaon Tahsil and Shri Kshetra Trimbakeshwar fair at Trimbak in Nashik Tahsil are important fairs.

There is a lot of diversity in Nashik district from a religious point of view but Nashik district is famous for some temples in Nashik district in which eleven important temples are generally considered important for tourists. These temples have huge potential for tourism development, but some of these temples are not developed for tourists. Trimbakeshwar is one of the most famous places in Nashik district. It has a 'Jyotirlinga' (There are only 12 such places in India) and it is also a place of Kumbh Mela (There are only 4 such places in India). People, mostly Hindus, from all over the world visit here for religious ceremonies. You can see that some tourist centers in Nashik city have been developed and Shree Saptashringi Gad Wani has been developed religiously but the rest of the tourist centers are underdeveloped even though they have a lot of potential. The potential for development among the following religious tourism centers is as follows, Tapovan and Kalaram temple, Mangi Tungi Temple, Kushavart Tirtha, Shree Someshwar Temple, Dhammagiri – Vipassana Centre, Sita Gumpha etc. Other famous temples are Goddess 'Saptashringi Devi' (Kalwan Tehsil), Goddess 'Renuka Devi' (Chandwad Tehsil), God Ganpati temples at Thengoda (Baglan), Khedgaon (Kalwan) and Navashya Ganpati (Nashik). Ancient Gondeshwar temple at Sinnar is one of the examples of great ancient Indian art but not so popular. It is a Hemadpanthi style temple. The Archeological Survey of India has been working on the restoration of this temple.

Places of Historical Importance

Forts, old temples and picnic points in the district play an important role in shaping the socio-economic pattern of the district. Kalsubai, the highest peak in Sahyadri Mountains is located in this District. Trimbakeshwar, Panchavati and Saptashringagad are among the religious places. Thousands of tourists visit these places on various occasions. Gangapur dam, Igatpuri (for its cool and bracing climate), Bhagur (the birthplace of freedom fighter Veer Savarkar), Yevla (for silk sarees and birthplace of famous revolutionary Tatyasaheb Tope) are some other important places to visit. Nashik is the headquarters of the district. It is situated on the bank of river Godavari and famous as a Tirth Kshetra in India. Lakhs of pilgrims throughout the year visit the place to take bath in holy Ram Kund and also for immersing the ashes of their deceased parents and other relative in the Ashti Vilaya Kunda believed to dissolve the bones in a matter of few hours and also to perform obsequious. There is a famous temple of God Kalaram and Naroshankar temple. Panchvati and Muktidham are among the holy places in Nashik.

Trimbak popularly known as Trimbakeshwar, is a famous place of pilgrimage situated at 28kms., from Nashik at the foot of Bramhagiri hills, a range of Sahyadri mountains. It is important due to its being (i) the source of river Godavari (ii) samadhistan of Nivrutinath and (iii) the seat of Trimbakeshwar, the first of twelve Jyotirlingas. It is

also a place of mythological significance as being the place (I) where Parshuram practiced penance. (II) where the three incarnations (Shripad Vallabha, Nrishinha Saraswati and Trimbak) of God Dattatraya visited (III) where Lord Ramchandra, while in exile at Nashik, is believed to have performed his father's Shradha. Pilgrims from all parts of the country visit this place throughout the year. Besides, Trimbakeshwar Mandir, there are other temples like Krishna Mandir, Laxminarayan Mandir, Gangagoda Mandir, Ram Mandir and Parshuram Mandir. This holy place is also best known for Sinhastha Kumbha Mela held every 12 years and the Narayan Nagbali rite performed by pilgrims. The caves at Chambhar Leni are the Jain caves of the 4th century and also one of the sacred spots for the Jain religion.

Forts at Ankai-Tankai at Yevla, Dhodap at Chandvad and Aundhapatta in Igatpuri Tahsil are the important forts in the District.

Nashik District has ancient, historical and cultural background. Though this is an agricultural District, it is fast developing industrially. The western part of the District viz., Peint, Kalwan, Dindori, Surgana and Igatpuri Tahsils is hilly. Due to Godavari and Girna river basin, the soil is rich in the eastern part of the District; main crops in the District are Bajara, Jowar and Rice. The District is famous for grapes produced mainly in Nashik, Niphad, Sinnar, Chandvad and Dindori Tahsils with a great demand in the country as well as globally. Factories for preserving and drying the grapes are running in the District. Also, Lasalgaon is one of the epicentres of production of onion and is well known not only in country but globally. The school of artillery at Nashik Road at Deolali is an important Military Centre for training Senior Officers of the Indian Army.

Religious festivals like Diwali, Holi, Ramnavami, Hanuman Jayanti, Pola, Ganesh Utsav, Dasara, Christmas and Muharram are celebrated in the District. Pola is the most important festival of the people in the District. On this day the farmers decorate their bullocks and bullock carts. They also pray and feed sweets to bullock. On this day, especially Puranpoli is prepared in almost all the houses. A procession is taken out with coloured and decorated bullock carts with singing, dancing and rejoicing by the people.

Nashik District has given the country great freedom fighters like Swatantrya Veer V.D. Savarkar and a revolutionary like Tatyasaheb Tope. The well-known Hindustani musician Pt. Vishnu Digambar Paluskar, pioneer of the Indian Film industry Shri Dadasaheb Phalke and Marathi author V.V. Shirvadkar (Kusumagraj) all hail from this District.

Conclusion:

Tourists visiting the district appreciated the scenic beauty of the place. While they were dissatisfied with roads, public utilities and also facilities for children.

General awareness of the economic benefits of tourism needs to be created within the locals and also the Government officials. This will help boost tourism in the economy.

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