



CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN TOURISM DEVELOPMENT IN PIMPRI CHINCHWAD AND PUNE REGION

Mrs. Sandhya Gore

Research Student, Agasti collge, Akole

Prof. (Dr.) Jyotiram More

, Head, Deaprtment of Geography, BJS College, Wagholi, Pune.

Abstract:

Tourism holds significant potential to drive economic growth, job creation, cultural exchange, and urban development in rapidly urbanizing Indian cities. This paper examines the current state of tourism development in PCMC (Pimpri-Chinchwad) and Pune city, identifies key challenges hindering its growth, and highlights emerging opportunities, especially under recent policy plans by district authorities. Through reviewing scholarly research, municipal reports and recent tourism-development initiatives, outline of a roadmap for sustainable and inclusive tourism that leverages both heritage and adventure assets, while addressing infrastructural, social, and institutional constraints. This study examines the current status of tourism and hospitality in PCMC and Pune, highlights challenges such as environmental sustainability and infrastructure gaps, and identifies opportunities for growth, including the promotion of offbeat destinations by fostering sustainable practices and leveraging technology.

Keyword; *Tourism development, Hospitality, Cultural exchange, sustainability*

Copyright © 2025 The Author(s): This is an open-access article distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License (CC BY-NC 4.0) which permits unrestricted use, distribution, and reproduction in any medium for non-commercial use provided the original author and source are credited.

Introduction:

Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad form a part of a dynamically growing metropolitan region in Maharashtra, combining industrial growth, educational institutions, urban expansion, and social diversity. The twin-city configuration offers unique prospects: while Pune is a well-known historic and cultural city, PCMC adds the dimension of a newer urban/industrial zone with growing modern amenities. Tourism including heritage, cultural, adventure, eco-tourism, and leisure can play a key role in diversifying the local economy, creating jobs, and promoting urban-region identity. However, realizing this potential requires confronting a series of structural challenges and reorienting planning, infrastructure,

and governance. This research paper aims to explore both challenges and opportunities for tourism development in PCMC and Pune, identify gaps, and suggest policy and operational recommendations.

Aim and Objectives:

1. To analyse the tourism and hospitality industry of Pune and PCMC, focusing on its key attractions, infrastructure, and contribution to the state's socio-economic development.
2. To evaluate the potential and challenges in tourism development of PCMC and Pune region.

Current Tourism Landscape in PCMC and Pune:

PCMC contains several noteworthy attractions: parks (e.g., Durga Tekdi), recreational sites, amusement areas (Appu Ghar / Indira Gandhi Udyan), interactive



science-education space (Pimpri Chinchwad Science Park and Planetarium), lakes, temples and other public-amenity zones. These attractions indicate that PCMC has a mixed portfolio: recreation, education, heritage (e.g., local temples), and green spaces which can serve as a foundation for local tourism development.

The district government recently unveiled a broad tourism-development plan that aims to boost adventure tourism (paragliding, hot-air balloon festivals, water-sports at dams, cycling challenges), heritage-site promotion (forts, temples, ghats), and cultural festivals (music, theatre, poetry, folk art) to create a distinctive identity for Pune's tourism. The plan targets substantial growth: e.g., aiming for 4 million tourists in next few years, with long-term goals reaching 10 million tourists with expected large economic and employment gains. Thus, in the greater Pune region (which includes PCMC), there is a policy push to leverage both natural, cultural, historical and adventure assets for tourism growth. This evolving landscape shows that both PCMC and Pune possess the building blocks for tourism but success depends on addressing structural constraints.

Challenges to Tourism Development:

1. Infrastructure & Public Transport Limitations:

In PCMC (Pimpri-Chinchwad), despite rapid growth, there is a noted shortfall in public transport infrastructure. Reports highlight an insufficient fleet of buses to meet demand and demand for sustainable mobility solutions. For the wider Pune city, persistent problems include overcrowded and inefficient buses, infrequent schedules, limited connectivity, and general inadequacy of public transport to support tourist mobility. For tourism, especially for visitors from outside (domestic/international), poor public transport means difficulty in reaching destinations, lack of

ease in intra-city travel, and generally lower comfort discouraging tourism.

2. Lack of Adequate Tourism-Ready Facilities & Amenities:

In heritage and cultural tourism segments, there's documented lack of basic facilities: e.g., earlier surveys found absence of adequate toilets (especially for women), poor sanitation and drinking water facilities at several historical / museum sites in Pune. Museums and heritage-site maintenance were rated poorly by many tourists in past assessments: maintenance, cleanliness, display quality and signage were often cited as sub-par. More generally, across the hospitality and tourism sector, there is a recognized shortage of "good quality tourist infrastructure," including recreation, accommodation, safety, and other amenities a noted challenge across Indian tourism contexts.

3. Inadequate Awareness, Promotion & Professionalism:

Despite assets, one key limitation is poor marketing and visibility of Pune/PCMC as tourist destinations. Compared to other better-branded Indian destinations, awareness among domestic and especially international tourists remains low. Moreover, many tourism service providers' guides, hospitality staff lack proper training, language skills (especially for foreigners), or professionalism, which undermines visitor experience and lowers satisfaction. Local communities and businesses often don't fully recognise tourism's potential, leading to limited community participation, underutilization of local heritage/cultural resources, crafts, and less entrepreneurial activity around tourism.

4. Seasonal and Demand Fluctuations, Sustainability Concerns:

Tourism in the region tends to have seasonal peaks



(e.g., favorable weather months, festivals) and off-season lows. For instance, monsoon or winter may attract more visitors, but summer or off-season months often see a slump affecting income stability for those dependent on tourism. Environmental and sustainability challenges are notable: as more tourist spots and periphery destinations (hills, dams, ghats, rural hinterlands) are promoted, there is risk of environmental degradation, stress on infrastructure, unmanaged waste, and ecological damage, especially if growth is uncontrolled. This is a recognized problem in broader Maharashtra tourism contexts.

For PCMC particularly, urban expansion and industrialization may conflict with preserving green spaces, water bodies, and maintaining natural heritage which are essential for eco-tourism or leisure tourism.

5. Institutional, Planning & Policy Gaps:

Tourism development requires coordinated planning, investments, regulatory clarity, and long-term strategic vision. Historically, in Pune/PCMC, tourism has not always been high priority compared to industrial or urban development. Lack of continuous funding or under-investment in maintenance and upkeep of heritage/cultural sites weakens the long-term sustainability of tourist attractions. Additionally, the limited capacity in human resources trained guides, hospitality staff, and management, plus the difficulty of regulating and organizing small-scale tourism enterprises, constrains growth and quality. Opportunities & Potential for Tourism Development Despite these challenges, the region (PCMC + Pune) has several promising opportunities.

1. Diverse Tourism Portfolio: Heritage, Adventure, Culture, Eco & Urban:

The recent tourism plan by Pune district officials aims to promote adventure tourism (paragliding,

hot-air balloon festivals, water sports, cycling, etc.), which caters to younger, adventure-seeking travellers and helps diversify tourism beyond heritage and leisure. Cultural tourism via festivals, including music, theatre, literature, folk arts, along with the promotion of historic forts, ancient temples, scenic ghats, offers a way to tap into heritage-oriented tourism. In PCMC itself, attractions such as science parks, amusement parks, green zones and water-body parks give scope for urban recreation tourism, local weekend getaways, and family-oriented visits. Eco-tourism / peri-urban tourism: As urban expansion pushes city boundaries, developing tourism in the periphery (rural hinterlands, hills, dams) as proposed in district plans can both reduce pressure on core city and open new growth corridors. This model has been studied in similar regional contexts.

2. Economic and Employment Potential:

The district tourism plan projects substantial economic gains: increased GDP contribution (in thousands of crores), direct and indirect employment opportunities (both in tourism & allied sectors), jobs in hospitality, guiding, transport, events, adventure tourism, crafts, etc. For PCMC residents (industrial/working population), improved tourism and recreational infrastructure can enhance quality of life, create small-business opportunities (local eateries, shops, guiding, services), and foster entrepreneurial growth.

3. Urban Growth & Infrastructure Improvements as Catalysts:

Ongoing improvements in urban transport, mobility planning, and sustainable urban design such as public transport expansion, street design guidelines, and walkable/cycling-friendly developments, can benefit both residents and tourists, making transit to attractions easier and more sustainable. The presence of modern



amenities, educational institutions, and industrial/IT hubs in PCMC means that tourism doesn't have to rely solely on traditional heritage; there is scope for business tourism, edu-tourism, MICE (meetings, incentives, conferences & exhibitions) tourism especially as companies invite clients/guests from across India or internationally. Indeed, research on "business tourism" in Pune points to infrastructure, transport, and skilled manpower as key, but also sees potential in urban/regional business-travel markets.

4. Policy Momentum & Strategic Planning

The recent tourism-development plan by district authorities demonstrates political and administrative will to invest in tourism: if implemented effectively, this can serve as a turning point for unlocking tourism potential in the Pune metropolitan region. There is room for public–private partnerships, local stakeholder involvement, community-based tourism, and civil-society collaboration (NGOs, local businesses) especially to develop lesser-known attractions, rural/eco-tourism circuits, and community-driven cultural/heritage experiences. This aligns with broader models of sustainable tourism advocated in South Asia. Balancing Growth and Sustainability: Developing tourism in PCMC and Pune offers a double-edged scenario: while growth can bring economic, social and cultural benefits, unchecked development may create environmental, infrastructural and social problems.

5. Sustainability is key: As newer attractions (dams, ghats, hills, periphery areas) are developed, planning must integrate environmental safeguards — waste management, water conservation, pollution control. Lessons from broader Maharashtra tourism show that habitat loss, pollution, waste and ecological stress are real risks.

6. Inclusive community participation: Local communities should be involved, both for preserving authenticity (heritage, culture, crafts) and for equitable distribution of benefits (jobs, small businesses). Without that, tourism may benefit only large investors or outsiders.

Professional and quality-oriented service delivery: To attract domestic and international tourists and encourage repeat visits, there is need for trained guides; quality hospitality; good signage, safety, multilingual support most currently lacking. This will require investment in training, certification, regulation and standardization. Balanced infrastructure development: Transport, connectivity, basic amenities (sanitation, toilets, drinking water), public transport, parking, roads all need upgrading to support increased tourist flow without burdening local residents.

Marketing and branding: For Pune/PCMC to compete with established domestic and global tourist destinations, a coherent branding and promotion strategy is vital, emphasising unique heritage, adventure-cum-culture mix, and urban-nature balance.

Policy Recommendations:

Based on the analysis, following are key policy and planning recommendations for sustainable tourism development in PCMC and Pune region:

1. Integrated Tourism Master Plan: Develop a long-term tourism master plan for the metropolitan region (including PCMC), integrating heritage, adventure, eco, urban-recreation and business-tourism, with clear zoning, carrying-capacity guidelines, and infrastructure and environment safeguards.
2. Improve Public Transport & Connectivity Expand and upgrade public transport (bus, metro, BRT), ensure last-mile connectivity to tourist spots, and



design tourist-friendly transit routes linking heritage, leisure, adventure and peripheral destinations.

3. Invest in Tourism Infrastructure & Amenities Upgrade tourist-site facilities: sanitation, drinking water, toilets (especially female-friendly), signage, information centers, safety/first aid, parking, and waste management, maintenance especially at heritage and high-footfall sites.
4. Capacity Building & Skill Development Launch training programs for local youth in hospitality, guiding, languages, safety, customer service; encourage certification and professionalism to raise service standards.
5. Community and Private Sector Engagement Encourage community-based tourism, small-business participation (local crafts, homestays, guided tours), PPPs (public-private partnerships) for developing and maintaining attractions with benefit-sharing frameworks.
6. Marketing, Branding & Promotion Strategy Develop an integrated tourism brand for Pune/PCMC, promote region domestically and internationally, use digital marketing, cultural festivals, adventure events, and heritage tours to create distinct identity.
7. Ensure Environmental Sustainability Adopt eco-friendly practices for tourism development: regulated waste disposal, water-body protection, green belts, controlled footfall especially at fragile ecological zones (hills, dams, rural hinterlands).
8. Monitoring, Feedback & Governance Establish monitoring mechanisms (tourist satisfaction, environmental impact, social impact), periodically review policies, involve stakeholders (government,

community, private) ensure transparent and adaptive governance.

Conclusion:

Pune and Pimpri-Chinchwad stand at a promising juncture: with policy momentum, a mix of heritage, culture, recreation and adventure assets, and a growing urban/regional profile, the region has strong potential to become a well-rounded tourism destination. However, success depends on how local authorities, communities, and private stakeholders address deep-seated challenges infrastructure gaps, service quality, environmental sustainability, and promotional neglect. With careful planning, inclusive policies, investment in infrastructure and human capacity, and sustainable strategies, tourism can become a powerful lever for economic growth, social development and urban well-being in PCMC and Pune.

Limitations & Scope for Further Research:

This paper primarily uses secondary sources (municipal reports, news articles, and existing studies). Empirical research e.g., surveys of tourists, local community interviews, and environmental impact assessments, is needed to validate claims and test the feasibility of proposed strategies. More detailed financial analysis (cost–benefit) of investments (in infrastructure, transport, sustainable practices) vs. expected returns (tourism revenue, employment) would strengthen the foundation for policy recommendations. Research on carrying capacity, environmental impact (especially for eco-tourism sites), and long-term social impact (on local communities, cultural heritage) is essential before the large-scale tourism push. Comparative studies with other Indian cities/regions successfully balancing heritage, adventure and urban tourism could provide useful lessons and models.

Cite This Article: Mrs. Gore S. & Prof. (Dr.) More J. (2025). *Challenges and Opportunities in Tourism Development in Pimpri Chinchwad and Pune Region*. In *Electronic International Interdisciplinary Research Journal*: Vol. XIV (Number VI, pp. 181–185). Doi: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.18088768>