

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TOURISM ON RESIDENTS OF ELEPHANTA CAVES IN RAIGAD DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

Tourism is fastest and growing industry in the India, which is effect on the economy of destination. Tourism alters the economic structure of a destination. Tourists spend their money on a wide variety of goods and services and related tourism products. Tourism is encouraged to the local people due to ability to generate employment in hotels, resorts, transport, etc. Also change their lifestyle. The present paper is based on primary data which is collected through intensive field work and assess the impacts of tourism along with 9 indicators and available facilities. Seven Point Likert Scale is used for the measuring the attitude of the residents for better tourism development of Elephanta Caves. It is found that, the overall impact is positive as increases total income of residents, generate employment and tax revenue and infrastructural facilities need to be improved.

Key word: Tourism, development, infrastructure, employment, likert scale,

INTRODUCTION

Tourism geography is the main branch of human geography, it is multifaceted industry. Tourism industry provides employment opportunities to the local people. Economic development of any tourist place depends on nature of tourism and infrastructural facilities provided to the tourists. Tourists and local people of the destination can play an important role for the development of tourism and ultimately popularity of the destination.

India is an ancient country rich in monumental heritage. The caves in India are one of the best places to visit in exploring the architectural and sculptural brilliance of India's past. These caves are also storehouses of wonderful paintings that depict the lifestyle. Elephanta cave is the main attraction of the district which is close to Mumbai. UNESCO has declared it as a world heritage Site. Large numbers of domestic and foreign tourists visit to Elephanta caves, but due to lack of infrastructural facilities, this destination well known for one day visit. There are 10 group of caves are situated in the district along with their historical significance. Viz. Elephanta, Ramdharne, Ambivali, Thanale, Gomoshi, Kol, Kude, Kondane, Gandhar-pale and Khadsamble caves has potential tourism attraction but main barrier is inadequate infrastructural facilities of these places.

OBJECTIVES

- To examine the facilities provided by the tourists.
- To assess the economic impact on local people at destination.

METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on primary data, Intensive field visits have been conducted for collecting the primary data through questionnaires. These questionnaires were filled by the tourists and local people during the holiday, weekend time. After getting the questionnaire, the measuring the attitude of the tourists and residents has been computed by 'Seven Point Likert Scale' which is ranging from -3 strongly disagree to +3 strongly agree with '0' (zero) no response or undecided (-3, -2, -1, 0, +1, +2, +3). A questionnaire was designed for the assessment of economic impacts consists of 9 questions or indicators. The total 50 questionnaire were filled up by them. The response of each questions or indicators was rated.

STUDY REGION

Elephanta caves are located on Elephanta Island also known as *Gharapuri*. This island lies Uran tehsil of Raigad district. It is situated on an arm of the Arabian Sea. Elephanta caves were declared as 'World Heritage Site' by UNESCO in 1987. Gharapuri is a small village to the south side of island. This island is about 11 km east of the Apollo Bunder near the Gateway of India; Mumbai. The Island is 2.4 km in length with two hills that rise to a height of about 150 meters from MSL. There are three hamlets known as *Sheth bunder* in the north-west, *Mora bunder* in the north-east, and *Gharapuri* or *Raj bunder* to the south. Gharapuri village covers an area of 1.98 sq.km with population 860 and the whole island covers an area of about 10 sq. Km. at high tide and about 16 sq km at low tide.

Now these caves are preserved under the supervision by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI), Mumbai Circle. Elephanta caves are the architecturally rich with beautiful sculptures as well as crafts to these caves are the archaeological treasure. The whole complex of these caves consists of inner hall, grand hall, shrines and courtyards. It has a huge collection of exquisite stone sculptures of Hindu god and goddess. The Hindu caves contain rock cut stone sculptures representing the Lord Shiva. The present name of '*Elephanta*' is derived after a colossal *statue of Elephanta*, which once stood at the Raj Bunder and first discover by the Portuguese in the 16th century AD. Now this statue has been removed and shifted at Veermata Jijabai Bhosale Udyan, Byculla, Mumbai formerly known as Victoria Garden.

ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TOURISM

Copper and et al (1999), the economic impact of tourism on a host economy is generally positive but also carries with it some negative aspects. The literature is biased towards the positive aspects of economic impacts. It is important to establish how significant tourism spending is to an economy because this allows policy makers and planners to determine dependency and to develop strategies for the future.

PERCEPTION OF RESIDENTS RESPONSE TO ECONOMIC IMPACT OF TOURISM AT ELEPHANTA CAVES

Tourism has major effect on the local economy of destination. Tourism brings foreign earnings, tax revenue and income of local people, which is beneficial for the development of tourism at Elephanta caves. The economic impacts of tourism more is known about the economic benefits of tourism than the associated costs. Tourism can create employment opportunities, earn foreign exchange, produce return on investment for emerging economics, bring technology and improve standard of living. Tourism can also help to generate jobs and increase revenue to local people and shopping facilities. Tourism can cause major effect on economic of destination area for price of land to rise rapidly.

ECONOMIC IMPACT INDICATORS

Increase the income of residents, opportunity for shopping, generates jobs, demand for female labour, increase in general prices of goods and services, increased the number of hotels / resorts and commercial view of local people are the few indicators that indicate the economic impact of tourists.

Table 1 Residents Response to Economic Impact of Tourists on Elephanta Caves

Economic Impact of Tourists on Elephanta Caves										
Economic Indicators	Scale of Impact								Sum	Mean
	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	Total		
Increase in the income of Residents	0	0	0	0	12	20	18	50	106	2.12
Opportunity for shopping	0	0	0	0	8	24	18	50	110	2.2
Opportunity for jobs	0	0	0	0	11	24	15	50	104	2.08
Increased Demand for female labour	9	22	19	0	0	0	0	50	-90	-1.8
General prices of goods and services increased	0	0	0	0	14	20	16	50	102	2.04
Rental houses as source of Income	10	28	10	2	0	0	0	50	-96	-1.92
Scarcity of essential goods during season	13	23	14	0	0	0	0	50	-99	-1.98
Increased in the numbers of hotels / Resorts	0	0	0	0	16	22	12	50	96	1.92
Commercial view of local people	0	0	0	5	13	21	11	50	88	1.76

Source: Primary Survey, 2008, Compiled by Author.

Table 1 reveals that, residents of Elephanta caves felt that the tourist cause the higher effect on the increase in the income of residents (+2.12), increasing opportunity for shopping (+2.2), increasing opportunity for jobs (+2.08), increase in general price of goods and services (+2.04), increase in the number of hotels/ resorts (+1.92) and commercial view point of local people (+1.76). On the other hand, residents of Elephanta caves have observed and noted negligible economic impact on the demand for female labour (-1.8), rental houses as source of income (-1.92) and scarcity of essential goods during season (-1.98). An Elephanta cave is an island and located very close to Mumbai, so that tourists have made maximum economic impacts of tourism on residents of Sheth Bandar and Mora Bandar.

Overall the positive effects help to develop the economy of the region such as increase in income of the residents, increasing jobs and shopping facilities, but the rate of the effect is slow. After the completion of Warli to Navha – Sheva link sea routes, this destination has become popular. But during the rainy season all services are stopped. So, it is a seasonal activity.

CONCLUSION

Elephanta caves were declared as 'World Heritage Site' by UNESCO in 1987. The main attraction of Elephanta Cave is Trimurti. These three heads show different aspects of Shiva. Domestic as well as foreign tourists were frequently visited on Elephanta caves for seeing the sculpture of Trimurti. These hills are covered by the forests. Elephanta Island is great attractions; tourists are come from Mumbai, Thane, Pune and adjoining regions. But lack of infrastructural facilities tourists does not prefer to stay on island. Large numbers of tourists visit on holiday, weekend time. The experience of ferry boat is also attraction of the tourist. It is found that income of residents, increasing opportunity for shopping, increasing opportunity for job, increase in general price of goods and services, increase in the number of hotels/ resorts, commercial view point of local people have increased. But due do physical setting, there is limited scope for the development of infrastructural facilities. But accommodation, ferry transport and ancillary services are basic tourism products should be developed for better economic impacts on the residents which can be benefited for local people.

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