

Beach Tourism and Rural Development: Study of Nagaon Village in Raigad District “(Maharashtra)

Dr. Amol M.Bibe

Dr. Ramakant N. Kasbate

Abstract

Tourism is the most beneficial human activity in terms of regional development. India's tourism industry is one of the fastest growing in the country, and it contributes significantly to the country's foreign exchange earnings. It is feasible to raise the income status of rural people who primarily rely on farming, as well as improve social life conditions, with the help of tourism development. Rural populations can be integrated with tourism activities to reduce unemployment in rural areas. So here, Nagaon a beach tourist destination (village) has selected for study purpose.

Keywords: Rural development, Beach tourism, Local stakeholders.

Introduction:

Tourism has become an important aspect of the national economy in countries such as India, contributing a significant portion of the country's Gross National Income and providing several business opportunities. There are many different sorts of tourism, but beach tourism is becoming increasingly popular in recent years. The coastal location, creeks, tidal inlets and beaches, water bodies and waterfalls, as well as ancient forts and religious temples, provide the Raigad district a huge potential for tourism development. Alibag, Mandava, Kihim, Akshi-Nagaon Kashid, Murud, Diveagar, Shrivardhan, Harihareshwer, and others are among the 24 beaches that play an important part in beach tourism.

Objective: -The study's primary objective is to determine the impact of beach tourism on local residents (stakeholders) in Nagaon village.

Methodology: - The current research relies heavily on firsthand information. For the study, 67 local stakeholders with various occupations were chosen at random sampling method. The information was gathered through surveys from a variety of business owners, including stable hotel owners and moving merchants, such as milk product sellers and raw material suppliers to hotels and other service providers. The investigation was carried out using a suitable statistical and cartographic method.

Study Region: -The global location of Nagaon village is on 18°26'30" North latitude and 72° 54'20" East longitudes. The village is situated in Alibag Tehsil. Geographical area of Nagaon village is about 280.65 hectares. Total population village is 3837. Out of these 2013 (52.5%) males and 1824 (47.5%) are females. Nagaon is situated at the state highway no – 4 and it is about 11 km far from Alibag. Alibag is a tehsil and places of district headquarter. The distance between Alibag from Mumbai and Pune is 104 Km and 149 Km respectively.

Discussion

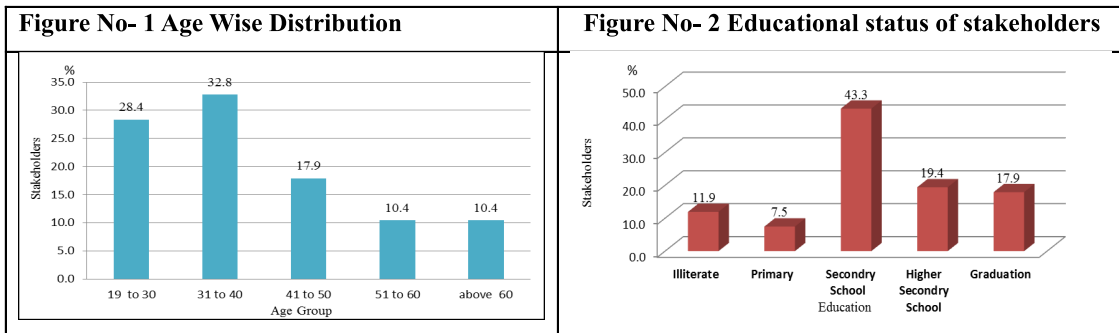
1. Age Wise distribution of the stakeholders

The figure (fig. 01) reveals that more number of stakeholders' (32.8%) are in the age group of 31 to 40 years. About 28.4% stakeholders belong to the age group of 19 to 30 years, and it is followed by 17.9 % stakeholders from the age group of 41 to 50 years. It was observed that comparatively less number of stakeholders (10.4%) came from the age group of 51 to 60 and the same 60 years and above respectively. This means that the stakeholders below 40 years are significantly more (61.4%) than that above 40 (38.7%). It is quite obvious that younger people engaged in the business which involves hard work. For example, fish sellers, water sports persons, horse riders, etc. have to be young people for carrying out required activities.

2. Education wise distribution stakeholders

Education is supposed to be essential for development of any kind of business. The tourism industry

may not be an exception. The figure (fig. 02) depicts the educational situation of stakeholders' in Nagaon. While inquiring about educational status of stakeholders, it is observed that majority of stakeholders (43.3%) are educated only up to S.S.C. and 7.5% are up to primary. Furthermore, about 11.9% stakeholders are illiterate. The proportion of graduates is just 17.9% and that of 12th standard is 19.4%.



3. Nature of occupation

Tourism provides a variety of business and work opportunities for both professional and untrained individuals (Bhatia, 1996). The nature of stakeholders' businesses is inextricably tied to tourism activity in order to meet the needs of visitors. The figure depicts the type of stakeholders' business (fig. 03). The topic of how long the company will be open for business has been raised. "Permanent" for year-round business, "Seasonal" for seasonal activity, and "movable" for hawkers, transporters, and others were the answers. The peak season, according to field observations and discussions with locals, is winter. However, some stakeholders are willing to wait for tourists during the off-season rather than during the summer and rainy season.

Those who are categorized as 'permanent' have stated that the tourists visit Nagaon beach mainly in November, December and January for about 25 to 30 days in a month. In summer months i.e. from March to June tourists flow is good for 15 to 20 days. It is as low as just 10 days or less in rainy season from July to September. October is also a month of low frequency of tourists. The survey reveals that permanently settled stakeholders are about 71.6 %. While 20.9% stakeholders prefer to do the business in winter season only. They are engaged either in agriculture or emigrate for labour work. It is necessary to provide them some kind of employment in the village in off-season. It may be associated with food processing or collecting forest products.

4. Purpose of stakeholders

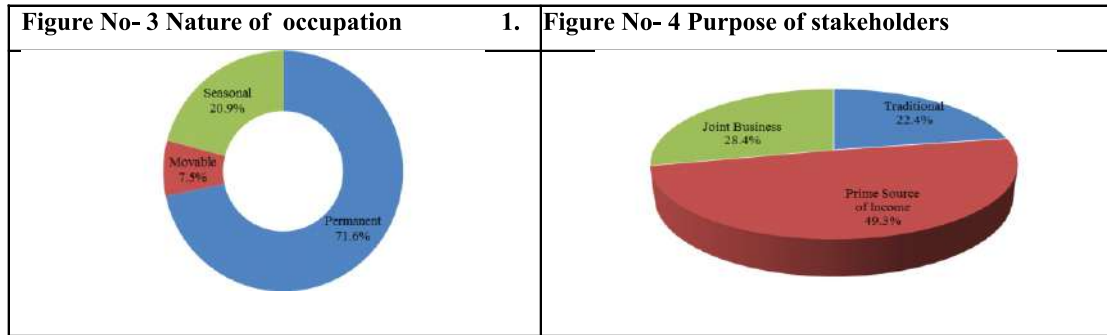
The inspiration behind to start the tourism related business is essential factor for stakeholder. It is helpful to understand the stakeholder's approach to the occupation. The information related to purpose of occupation has shown in the figure no 04. According to the Purpose stakeholders are converted into vis. Traditional business and joint business. It was noted that highest number of businessmen's (44.8%) have started their business as a major source of income since there is scope for business due to attraction of tourism. Ample number of businessmen's (40.3%) mentioned that their motive to begin business as to get supplementary earnings to meet their needs. About 14.9% businessmen's stated that they operate occupations as it is ongoing by their ancestors and it gives them adequate income.

5. Beginning year of occupations

How long these stakeholders are engaged in tourism may be an important query to understand sustainability of present tourist activities. The tourism activity has been promoted by government policies in the previous few decades. Therefore majority of stakeholders at Nagaon (41.8%) have been in the business since the year 2010. This may be because of lack of popularity of the destination till

2010. The popularity of this destination has probably been started since 2000, that is from the period when Alibag beach started crowding.

About 31.3 % occupations were started in between 2006 to 2010 and 22.4 % of businessmen started their occupations in between 2000 to 2005. It is clearly noted that only 4.5 % stakeholders started their own occupations before 1999. Therefore, it can be concluded that Nagaon Beach tourist destination is newly emerged as a tourist place after 2000. Due to growing number of tourists on the Nagaon Beach the stakeholders also increase.



7. People engaged in Occupations

The researcher feels that number of family members of stakeholders family participating in tourism activities may be useful to understand level of stake by the business family. The size of the business might be closely associated with number of family members' participation.

The study highlights that about 16 % stakeholders run their business with single handedly. They are mainly from movable categories as well as permanent like fish seller, transporters, photographers, etc. The data indicates that there are 49.3 % stakeholders family engaged with two family members in their business, followed by 10.4% showing participation of three persons in their business as a labour. They are mainly from movable categories as well as permanent like cottage, lodging, resorts and snack centers, etc. Due to increasing need of more number of people in occupation, businessmen ensure participation of their family members and at times member from extended family. It was found that 17.9% and 6% businessmen require four and five and more number of people in their business respectively. It also speaks about meager wages paid for the work. Obviously, family members and relatives can accept it. This means that business is not lucrative but just to meet the basic need of the family.

8. Place of material supply.

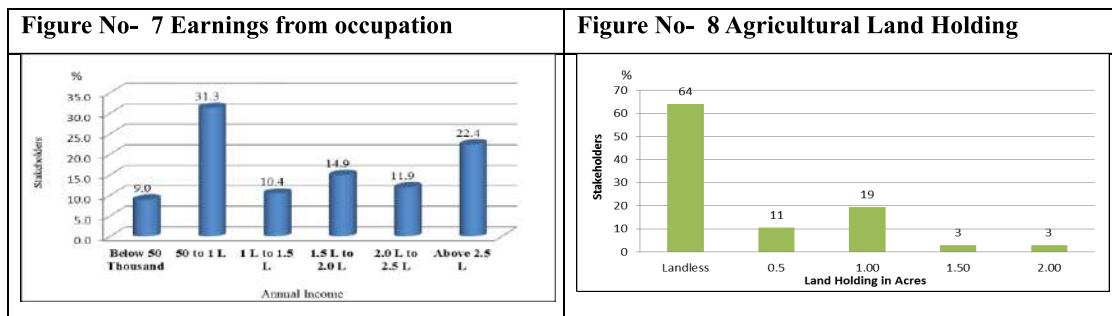
Tourism has played an important role in a social, cultural, and economic development of local community by creating various business opportunities in sectors like, transportation, hospitality, shopping, hotels, tour operators, travel agents, suppliers, entertainment, etc. Motive behind the study of material regarding the supply of required material is to understand the cash flow. It also helps to know the limit of influence by tourism activity at certain destination. This is a zone of supply of materials brought from within and outside the village of tourists destination. It may be considered as outgoing cash flow from the village. In the most of the cases it is observed that major share of money generated due to tourism goes outside the village and hence empowerment of local population is seldom achieved. This kind of observation has been made for the tourism activity at all the three beaches. In-depth cash-flow analysis may throw light on this. However, the present study has limited purpose of understanding the extent of zone of influence. Dependent on extra regional activities. However, it is good to note that about 25.4% local stakeholders bring their material and labour from the village only. About 20.9 % of local stakeholders surveyed get their material from villages around Nagaon. This means that about half of the business (46.3%) is based on rural materials and man power.

The rest (53.7%) is dependent on Alibag which is a place of tehsil headquarter and district headquarter. It is also revealed in the field study that the big stakeholders like hotel owners purchase required material and bring skilled man power from Mumbai.

9. Earnings from occupation to stakeholders

It is also interesting to find out income status of the stakeholders. For this, question regarding annual income has been asked. The six income slabs have been prepared and frequency of stakeholders has been plotted using bar chart (fig. 5). Income status of stakeholders is understood as per the answers given by the stakeholders. It is quite visible that most of the local stakeholders may be categorized as poor because only 22.4% have income more than 2.5 lakh per annum. It is observed that maximum number of stakeholders' (31.3%) income is between 50 thousand to 1 lakh and about 9% stakeholder earn even below 50 thousand per year from tourism business. It means that almost 40.3 % stakeholders' income is below one lakh. It may be because they are seasonal stakeholders and do not engage in tourism business throughout the year.

Next set of income group is between 1 lakh to 1.5 lakh. About 10.4% stakeholders come under this group. They are followed by 14.9 % of stakeholders who belong to annual income between 1.5 lakh to 2.0 lakh annually. About 11.9 % stated that they earn between Rs. 2.0 to 2.5 lakhs. Ample number of stakeholders (22.4%) declared that they get income above Rs. 2.5 lakhs per year from the business. It is noted that the stakeholders who earn above 2.5 lakhs may be the permanent stakeholder. It seems that average annual income of maximum number stakeholders (65.6%) is below two lakh, it is because of the periodic nature of tourism activity in Nagaon. This means that in the peak season stakeholders got more income but in the off season they do not get proper income from their business. This kind of issue must be addressed while designing action plan for perianal



10. Agricultural Land Holding of Stakeholders

It has already been discussed regarding economic status of the stakeholders' family with other services. It is also necessary to understand agricultural background of stakeholders. This is considered and questions were set to know the economic status. The figure (fig. 6) shows the agricultural land holding status of the local stakeholders.

It is observed in the survey that about 77.5% of the stakeholders are actively associated with tourism activities only. They do not own agricultural land. This may be interpreted that most of the stakeholders have been from the migrated families and hence they do not own land. However, field enquiry reveals that majority of stakeholders are local but landless. They come from famer's families. These landless people found good opportunity due to tourism since last few decades.

According to the field inquiry about 22.4 % stakeholders are having their own small and marginal holdings (less than 2 acres). These stakeholders are engaged in business and agricultural activities. Almost all the family support tourism activity during the peak season. The same family members engaged in agricultural field in off-season of tourism activity. This kind of situation is good as it gives full employment in the season in which agricultural operations are not going on. However, this kind of benefit has been restricted to less than 1/4th of the stakeholders surveyed.

Conclusions:-

1. The local population's income is low.
2. Tourism-related businesses are seasonal since tourism is a seasonal activity.
3. The study found that the educational status of stakeholders is low.
4. According to the report, the majority of business owners operate their businesses as their primary source of income.
5. The majority of village stakeholders receive raw materials from their own villages and surrounding communities. It shows that tourism is beneficial to the development of the rural economy.
6. The annual income from tourism and agriculture are both lower. This means that local stakeholders benefiting from tourism are only able to meet their basic demands.
7. The majority of stakeholders are landless farmers, implying that they are completely reliant on the tourism industry. Because tourism is a seasonal sector, the study emphasises the need for another economic activity to help the economy grow

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www.raigaddistrict.com, www.raigad.nic.in

Dr. Amol M.Bibe*

Department of Geography, PDEA's
Annasaheb Waghire College, Otur, Pune

Dr. Ramakant N. Kaspate**

Department of Geography, PDEA's
Annasaheb Waghire College, Otur, Pune