6.1 General Introduction

Tourism is one of the significant economic activities in the 21st Century recognized in the world as most diverse, prismatic, and fast-growing. It contributes one-fifth of national income and generates foreign exchange and employment. Tourism always remains a fascinating field to researchers. World Tourism Organization (WTO) and United Nations have been carried out many researches in western countries and recently in India at regional or intraregional levels to find out problems and perspectives to tourism activity. The development of tourism indicates the regional development in the study region. The present investigation is an attempt to assess, analyze, and interpret the tourism development in Raigad district of Maharashtra state at the macro level in general and micro level in particular based on both primary and secondary data. This chapter presents summary, major findings, suggestions, and conclusion in systematic manners for better tourism development in the study region.

6.2 Summary

The geographical and socio-cultural uniqueness in the study region as it is a unique primary tourist destination with its virgin beaches, historical monuments, pilgrims, and fascinating floral and faunal diversity. Raigad district, many splendid land is set in the very heart of Konkan extends from 17°51' to 19°18' north latitudes and 72°51' to 73°40' east longitudes. It has a component shape with a north-south stretch of 160 kilometers and the width (east-west) ranges between 25 to 50 kilometers spreads cover 7152 square kilometers. This region has typical physiography. The high land Sahyadri to the east, coastline on the west and in the centre is low-lying fertile plains. The study region is mainly drained by six rivers, namely, Ulhas, Patalganga, Amba, Kundlika, Savitri and Bhogavati which receive their water from Sahyadri ranges and flow from east to the west. Dharamtar, Rohe, and Rajpuri are the important creeks provide a base for mangroves. The study region experiences a hot and humid climate with plentiful regular rainfall. The mean annual rainfall in the study region is 3169 millimeters. The highest rainfall (4500 millimeters) is received at Matheran. The maximum temperature (41°C) is observed in May and
minimum \( (11^0\text{C}) \) in December. In general, climate of district is rather mild and healthy and winter is quite pleasant. The soils in study region are derived from the Deccan trap. The predominant soils in the district are lateritic which is bright red to brownish red in color. The arboreal wealth is considerable and myriad. The forests areas occupy 2076 square kilometers and forms 29 percent. Total population of study region was 2635394 persons accounting 2.32 percent of Maharashtra State. The density of population in 2011 was 309 persons per square kilometer. The proportion of literacy to total population recorded 77.32 per cent. The levels of literacy vary enormously from tahsil to tahsil between rural and urban areas and even among males and females. As per 2011 Census, 75.76 percent of the population lives in rural areas and 24.24 percent in urban areas in study region. The study region has well-developed road, railway and waterway network which helps for better rural-urban linkages and marketing facilities and tourists centers. The road length is 5663.14 kilometers. Most of tourist centers are connected with metaled roads. The study region has more than 165 natural and cultural tourist centres. The present research has made an indepth study of five centres based on physio-socio-economic setting and their nature and theme (hill resorts, historical monuments, beaches and pilgrims).

On the basis of study, first variable selected for assessment is demographic profile of tourists. In order to assess demographic profile age, gender, religion, occupation and educational background of tourists were taken into consideration. It is found that majority of tourists are young accounting 45.45 percent ranges between age groups (20-30) and (30-40) years together and are male dominated (58.95 percent). Alibag and Mahad show more interest from younger tourists than Matheran. The dominant age group was 20 to 30 years. In Matheran, 54.25 percent were male whereas 45.75 percent were females (Table-4.34). The male-female break up of tourists in Harihareshwar was 60.25 and 39.75 percent respectively (Table-4.34). Majority of tourists are Hindu by religion followed by Jain and were professional and businessmen by occupation (Table-4.34).

Tourist is who visit Matheran are found relatively possessing higher education on the contrarary, illiterates accounts 19 percent and farmers accounts are 20.50 percent observed in large proportion at pilgrimage, Harihareshwar when compared with other tourists centres in study region. The analysis consisting, origin place, income and expenditure patterns showed wide income gaps observed from rupees 20,000 to rupees 1, 00,000 and above. 39 percent tourists in Mahad are found 20,000
to 40,000 income whereas Matheran, Murud-Janjira and Alibag tourists were from elites having income rupees 80,000 to 100,000 accounting 18, 18.50 and 16.75 percent tourists (Table-4.5, 4.21 and 4.14) respectively.

The behavioral characteristics of tourists in study region have assessed with considering travel motivation, source of information, purpose of visit, duration of stay, choice of accommodation, means of transport, visit frequency and nature of tourist groups selected. It is found that due physical motives have reported by 1121 out of 2000 accounting 56.05 percent tourists. In order to get pleasure and relaxation have (55.55 percent). (77.50 percent) visited Matheran for enjoyment and pleasure (Table-4.9) and whereas lowest (36.75 percent) is found at Harihareshwar visit for spiritual cause (Table-4.39) 53.45 percent (1069 out of 2000) reported stay for a day followed by two days. Among case studies, 311 out of 400 (77.75 percent) tourist are day visitors (Table-4.39) and lowest in Matheran 21.75 percent summarized in Table-4.40 but visit for two days reported by 52.50 percent tourists in Matheran.

30 percent tourists have hotels as choice for accommodation followed by lodges (18.20 percent) and 31, 24.25, 34.75, 20 and 18.75 percent tourists are staying in hotels in Matheran, Alibag, Murud-Janjira, Mahad-Raigad and Harihareshwar respectively. The friends and relatives are preferred by 13.90 percent tourists. It was observed 79.60 percent tourists are repeatedly visiting to Matheran and Murud-Janjira (84.52 percent). Tourists who travel by own vehicles are found in higher ratio than private rental cars and taxies. This study has clearly indicated that there is great scope for tourism development in study region.

The nine major variables, namely, accommodation, transportation, food quality, attraction, entertainment, cleanliness and hygiene, personal safety, attitude of local people and general shopping are determined to measure their impact on tourist satisfaction by applying satisfaction index assigned as excellent, good satisfactory and unsatisfactory and weightage are given 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. The present study has identified high class accommodation to affordable class availed by tourists and were satisfied with the services available in these entrepreneurs. 42.25 percent tourists in Matheran viewed it is excellent, 31 percent said good, percent mentioned satisfactory. The tourists traveled through choiced means of transport destination and have mixed opinion. The satisfaction related to attitude of local people they were gently dissatisfied, shopping facilities are good. The varieties of items local and imported are purchased by tourists on large scale in study region. Among nine tourism
variables attraction has highest score and followed by accommodation showing satisfaction score. Shopping and food quality rank at the fifth and sixth place respectively.

Matheran has obtained maximum satisfaction followed by Alibag, Murud-Janjira, Raigad-Mahad and Harihareshwar. In order to assess impact of tourism, likers scale has applied. The variables selected are 84, 28 each for economic, socio-cultural and environmental impacts. Positive indicators and negative indicators have been taken into consideration. The economic impact was assessed and it is found positive and supportive for economic development, promote standard of living and regional development. But socio-cultural and environmental impacts are found negative as in certain cases. Tourism increases host-guest conflict and mental anxieties among local people resulting anti social behaviour. It was found that one bed provides at least six indirect job in study region. The highest employment involved in accommodation and transport sector in study region. The majority of work force engaged in this economic sector is male. Tourism, thus, has pervasive impact both positive and negative on economy, society, culture and environment in study region.

6.3 Suggestions

On the basis of the research findings, the following suggestions are made.

1) There should be a ‘District Tourism Development Authority’ at district level where local authourity, educationst may involved to increase attractions particularly at Alibag, Mahad and Harihareshwar and create tourists destination website for arrival information to tourist.

2) It is necessary to take initiative for publicity campaign to attract more and more rich north and south Indian tourists to visit the Mahad, Murud-Janjira and Raigad fort in study region destinations.

3) Creation of awareness and tourism ethics and culture amongst the hosts and the guests is the need of the hour to reduce the tensions and frictions created by the complex interaction between the visitors, the environment and the communities coherent and co-ordinated action committees should form at least at potential tourist centres namely, Khopoli, Mahad, Murud-Janjira.

4) Swimming, surfing, scuba-diving, snorkeling, sailing, canoeing, kayaking and fishing these water based activities should developed at Alibag, Murud, Nagaon, Kashid and Harihareshwar.
5) “Entrance Fee” and “polluter pay principle” for toilets, changing rooms (basically near the beaches), parking, drinking water.

6) It is necessary to introduce koli dance and song at Sajgaon (Dhakti Pandhari), Varsoli, Nandgaon during fair and festivals.

7) The forest department of the district should take initiatives in this regards and few sites can be develop as tourist destination such as Fansad in Murud tahsil and Karnala in Panvel tahsil with the help of Maharashtra Tourism Development Corporation.

8) It is suggested that the temple courtyard should be earmarked at Ballaleshwar Temple Pali, Shankar Mandir Harihareshwar and Astavinayak Temple Mahad in order to put their holy bundles and to create awarness among the devotees, pilgrims, tourists and local people and ensure proper quality of services to the devotees.

9) The museum of history of Buddhism and Maratha Empire, Alibag in order to study the cultural and history of tourist place so that the flow overseas and Mumbai and Pune with Alibag, Murud, Diveagar, Harihareshwar extend waterways from Mumbai, Alibag, Murud and Janjira upto Harihareshwar and Diveagar thereby increase the flow of tourists in study region.

10) Provide more incinator and dustbins for garbage disposal particularly at pilgrimage centres (Ballaleshwar-Pali, Harihareshwar and Mahad) and the beach sites.

11) Along these routes retiring facilities and fuel facilities may be provided for the tourists. Install shopping complexes on the co-operative basis like Raigad Bazar at selected tourist sites to supply local product, special articles and other necessary products at a reasonable price. Create website for study region with necessary information regarding tourist accommodation facilities, fuel centres, garages, restaurants, police stations, etc. Safety measures and rescue operation teams should be kept ready at call by the Government with proper training at most of the tourist sites especially at Kashid beach, Zenith fall, (Khopoli), Murud-Janjira and Harihareshwar and where the fatal incidents happen frequently, and strong iron grills should be built on upper stage at waterfall point. Widen all roads in the district mainly those connected with tourist centres and the internal roads of Murud-Janjira, Harihareshwar and Mahad.

6.4 Concluding Remarks
The physical and politico-historical geography of Raigad district offers a range of spectacular features including escarpments and sea coast. These provide a wide range of tourist attractions and attract more than 50 lakhs tourists annually including domestic and foreign tourists. Tourism department, local government and maritime boards in Raigad district are making efforts tourist arrivals. Although many tourist centres remain unexploited or developed without blue-print. The present study has much potential to attract experts from different fields like planning, administration, tourism and hospitality as well as economists and geographers for further study to prepare plans for sustainable tourism development in study region. The various stakeholders require to implement such plans and to create awareness among local residents who can adjust to the pros and cons of tourism in study region. Thus, there is a strong possibility that this study can be considered as a milestone and point of reference in tourism studies by stakeholders leading to a healthy growth and development of tourism in study region.