Chapter I

Appraisal of the problems
Chapter - I

APPRAISAL OF THE PROBLEM

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Appraisal of the Problem

1.0 Introduction:

Geography always tries to study about the physical and man
made aspects of the earth, which study the spatial variation on the
earth surface. It deals with relationships among spatial variables
and can be termed as spatial or aerial science. During the course of
time the subject matter of geography became very vast, due to this
various branches of geography emerged out in the form of
specialized disciplines. Among the various fields of geography,
social geography is one of the major branch of Human Geography
which concern with people, their activities and their spatial
distribution (Negi, 1979)

Geography is an indispensable subject for tourism, because it
gives an overall picture of a tourist place by its site, situation,
climate and other aspects. Geography of leisure and recreation,
Geography of pilgrimage etc. are the specialized branches of
social geography which is directly related to aerial variations on the
earth’s surface and man’s socio-economic activities.

1.1 Relationship between Geography and Tourism:

Geographers study the spatial expression of tourism as a
human activity, focusing on tourist generating and tourist receiving
areas and the link between them. The study can be taken at a
variety of scales i.e. the distribution of climatic zones in the world,
and the regional assessment of tourist resources to the local
landscapes and resources etc.
Geography of tourism has three main components. (Fig. 1.1)

1) The Tourist from different countries are called the generating areas
2) The destination areas means tourist receiving countries / Region / Local.
3) The routes traveled between the respective locations.

Relationship between Tourists Generating Region and Destination Areas

Fig. 1.1

The tourist generating areas comprise the home of the tourists where they start their journey and where they end it. (Lepier, N. 1976)

In the Sanskrit literature, there are three terms for tourism, Paryatana, Deshatana and Tirthatana (Gupta and Krishnala 1974, P.10) derived from the root atana, that is going out or leaving home for some other places, but each of these words has a different connotation. Thus Paryatana means going out for pleasure or knowledge, Deshatana means going out of the country primarily for economic gain and Tirthatana means going out to places of religious merits.
Tourism represents the particular form of recreation and is defined as, "A leisure time activity involving an over night stay or far away from home". (Small and Witherick 1980, P. 177). It is an outdoor recreation activity and can broadly be grouped into two categories, international tourism and domestic tourism. The international tourism has priority as it brings foreign currency and both creates employment opportunities in the destination areas. The domestic tourism plays an important role in the fields of economic, social and cultural benefits and key to national integration. Domestic tourism acts as a foundation stone for international tourism because domestic tourism generating direct and indirect income, employment opportunities for skilled, semi skilled and unskilled workers. There is an opportunity of economic prosperity to the backward regions through the development of indigenous resources based on small scale industries demanding little investments. With the demand for domestic tourism being more predictable as against the international tourism characterized strongly by external factors (as international economic prospects, political climate, price escalation, seasonal variation etc). The economic and social infrastructure development through domestic tourism promotion is also assured as a possible outcome.

1.2 Pilgrimage Tourism:

Pilgrimage is a particular form of domestic and international tourism. In the modern era of crises where we cry for an ecological order and human peace. Mass of people are still running after materialistic achievements. Nevertheless it is now realized that the lack of experience in harmonious relationship between man and nature. We are now searching for the earth spirit, a manifestive
divine and magnetic power through which we may feel ourselves cheerful and peaceful. Still in the modern era nature predominates on human being therefore pilgrims diverted towards mythic landscape which is in existence (e.g. Akkalkot). Everybody is free to choose performances according to his/ her own eternal quest or feelings however one has also to respect it local tradition by being part of it and a wish to have experience.

The institution of pilgrimages has its source in country’s civilization. The Tirtha concept (religious tourism) was quite comprehensive, it nevertheless symbolized the twin spirit of religion and tourism in its broadest sense. The concept of four Dhamas i.e. Badrinath, Dwarka, Rameshwar and Jagannath Puri established by Adi Shankaracharya. In modern times pilgrimage should not be viewed in isolation. The aim of pilgrimage is usually for religious gain but at the same time it is also linked with visiting of different places such as historical places, scenic beauty etc.

The term pilgrimage has its origin in the Latin word ‘Peregrines’ which means a ‘stranger’ or ‘wonderer’. It is also defined as a Spiritual odyssey. Its chief purpose is to gather religious merits (Punya) and absolve own sins (Pap) as well as to involve the blessings of the particular deity enshrined in the religious place. (Sinha Amita, 1999).

Pilgrimage refers to a journey that is motivated by religion or spirituality and plays a significant role in almost all world religions.

Pilgrimages are undertaken at certain times when people became free from their activities. They travel away from home to the holy destination, and the motive of this leisure time journey is clearly religious. People visit the places to worship their sacred
shrines. Therefore, pilgrimage tourism is defined as a visit to places of pilgrimage as a form of leisure behaviour (Sievers, 1987).

Peregrinology has recently drawn attention from many fields of study including geography and anthropology. The German school has taken peregrinology and tourism together through behaviourist approach (Angelika Sievers, 1987). The pilgrimage and tourism both have a direct relationship with the glories of nature and it would be quite rational to use multidisciplinary approaches and methodology for the study.

The pilgrimage and other forms of tourism have much in common. The common aspects are seasonality, economic importance local surplus in tertiary sector, high occupancy rate, camping capacity and good inter regional connection in the spatial activities of travelers (Gisbert and Sievers, 1987).

1.3 Significance of Tourism:

Tourism has assumed unprecedented importance in recent years and efforts have been made at the national and international level to promote it at a faster rate. Domestic tourism widens outlook in addition to cultural and linguistic ties amongst provinces /states leading to better national cohesion.

Today, there is major change in electronic information, technological system and communication system affects the changing nature of pilgrimage itself. The increased application of computer technology is giving pilgrimage increasingly secular character within a society. Therefore, the middle and lower income group pilgrims have more opportunities to travel anywhere. The volume of pilgrims seeking darshan and performing traditional religious tasks is therefore, likely to swell further.
In brief, the tourism development can play an important role in the economic development of the region. The study has a special significance for government, its agencies and other organizations concerned with the policy making, planning and development of the region.

1.4 Justification of Selection of Topic:
The choice of topic under investigation has been influenced by many considerations. The researcher is motivated by many factors to select the topic.

1. Tourism can provide employment opportunities.
2. Due to increased tourist facilities in terms of different socio-economic and marketing indicators benefited to Pilgrims and also for common man.
3. Akkalkot is one of the important pilgrimage center in Maharashtra. Which is associated with Shree Swami Samarth Maharaj.
4. Akkalkot is experiencing many changes in town morphology i.e transportation, accommodation, number and attitude of the people social and economic attributes perhaps result from pilgrimage.
5. No geographical investigation of Akkalkot is made so far to highlight as pilgrimage centre.
6. Since the researcher is born and brought up in this region he has a live mental map of his experience.
7. The study will be helpful in the development process of Akkalkot as the tourist centre.
Hence, the present study is undertaken to analyze the existing and potentialities for tourism development of the town.

1.5 **Aims of Study:**

The major objective of the present study is to make a geographical evaluation of Akkalkot as pilgrimage centre. However, the following are the specific objectives of the study.

1. To examine the impact of pilgrimage on structure, function and land use of Akkalkot.

2. To highlight the historical perspective of the town and Shree Swami Samarth temple.

3. To examine the spatio-temporal changes in infrastructure facilities of the study region.

4. To highlight in brief the development of tourism in India, Maharashtra and with special reference to Akkalkot.

5. To examine the growth trend of pilgrims in Akkalkot.

6. To find out division wise and state wise distribution of pilgrims visited to the Akkalkot.

7. To discover the age structure and purpose of visit of pilgrims to the Akkalkot.

8. To analyze the socio-economic background of the pilgrims.

9. To highlight the views of pilgrims about facilities used by them and their level of satisfaction.

10. To find out the travel circuit zones with the help of existing pilgrims centres located around the study region.

11. To make an assessment of the physical, economic and socio-cultural impacts of pilgrimage on host population.
12. To find out the potential tourist centres in Akkalkot.
13. To assess the present status of safety of the pilgrims and to suggest precautionary measures in the temple.

1.6 Sources of Data And Information:

Present study is entirely based upon primary and secondary data.

1. Primary data was collected from town itself.
2. Primary data concerning pilgrims was collected through the questionnaire and interview techniques conducted during April 2003 to May 2004.
3. Primary data pertaining to hosts regarding the impact of pilgrimage was also collected through questionnaires and interview techniques conducted during May 2004 to July 2004.

Secondary data was collected from following sources.

1. District Census Handbook.
2. District Statistical Department
4. The official record of Shri Swami Samarth Devasthan Committee Akkalkot.
5. The official record of Shri Swami Samarth Annchhatra Mandal, Akkalkot
7. District Town Planning office, Solapur.
8. Akkalkot Sansthan Authority.
9. The official record of Telephone Exchange, Akkalkot.
1.7 **Research Methodology Employed:**

A random sample survey of 620 pilgrims was conducted during April 2003 to May 2004. Through the designed questionnaire information was collected about geographical background, spatial background of pilgrims, age, religion, profession, mode of travel, duration of stay, income structure various facilities used by them etc. With the help of percentage method the effect and views of pilgrims and their behavioral attitude regarding the pilgrimage at Akkalkot is calculated. With the help of Satisfaction Index, a level of satisfaction is measured by applying the following formula.

\[
S_{II} = \frac{\sum M_{i}}{N}
\]

Where,

- \(S_{II}\) Satisfaction Index for the ‘i’ th factor.
- \(M_{i}\) Numerical values for particular level of satisfaction for the ‘i’th factor.
- \(N_{i}\) Number of respondents deriving the particular level of satisfaction for the ‘i’th factor.
- \(N\) Total number of respondents for that factors for all level of satisfaction.

The 620 pilgrims at Akkalkot destination were asked to mention their opinions about facilities by stating excellent, good, satisfactory and unsatisfactory. These factor wise views were collected in the year 2003 to 2004 at the time of Datta Jayanti, Shree Swami Samarth Prakat Din, Punnathi of Swamiji,
Pandharpur fair and Gangapur fair. These views were then converted into numerical values such as 8 to 10 for excellent, 6 to 8 for good, 4 to 6 for satisfactory and 0 to 4 unsatisfactory. The factor wise average values are derived by summing up the values given by the pilgrim tourists and dividing the total number of pilgrim tourists who noted that category (for ex. excellent noted by 142 pilgrims, good 206, satisfactory 223, and unsatisfactory 49). These averages then multiplied by respective frequencies would give total satisfaction and then the same when divided by the total frequencies for the respective factor would give the satisfaction index for that factor with the help of above mentioned formula. Then the ranks are given to these satisfaction indices.

To assess the impact of pilgrimage on host population the attitudinal survey has been conducted regarding physical economic and socio-cultural aspects. For this purpose residents (200), entrepreneurs (110) and administrators (65) were interviewed with the help of questionnaire. This survey was conducted during June 2004 to December 2004.

For the analysis of the attitude three community groups residents, entrepreneurs and public administration were selected from Akkalkot in the year 2004. A set of questionnaire was designed. The questionnaire consisted of 51 questions to measure a multitude of opinions on how pilgrimage affects different domains. These questions included such domains as physical, economic and socio cultural. The response to each question was rated on seven points “Likert Scale” ranging from -3 to +3 with zero equaling no effect on item resulting from pilgrimage. The reaction of these three groups in each case is analyzed.
Likert Scale is a technique for the measurement of attitude a scale giving values for individual reactive attitude. There were seven response alternatives for every attitude statement. These response alternatives for every attitude statement. These are strongly disagree, moderately disagree, disagree, undecided, agree, moderately agree and strongly agree. The resulting seven point scale could be represented by numbers ranging from -3 to +3 to find out the individual overall attitude (-3, -2, -1, 0, +1, +2, +3). This technique gives us not only direction (agree – disagree) but also degree of commitment to that response.

1.8. Limitations of The Study :

The present research work is based on primary and secondary data. Some of the following limitations are noteworthy.

1. Measurement of pilgrims is rather difficult task due to single handled research work.

2. Pilgrims hesitate to fill up the questionnaire. Every time research student had to convince that information so collected will be used for research work only.

1.9. Review of Literature :

Tourism and recreation as a field of geographic study were introduce in India quite late. Therefore, the literature on the various aspects of tourism are quite meager. Particularly the concept of pilgrimage tourism is found only in South Asian country. In our country a very limited work has been done by scholars. Therefore, here an attempt has been made to take the
review of literature available so far from various sources in India and abroad.

Bharadwaj Surinder M. (1987): An American Geographer in his article, “Single Religion Shrines, multi religion pilgrimage has explained the importance of faith which attracts pilgrims towards shrines. Along with this he has given the importance to religion in which a pilgrims ignored the religious boundaries under certain conditions of economic physical and psychological stress.

Jackowski, Antoni (1987): A polish Geographer in his article, “Geography of Pilgrimage in Poland” has studied the migration of pilgrims in Poland and their impact on historical, spatial and socio economic aspects of nation.

Noaln Mary Lee (1987): An American Geographer in the article, “Christian pilgrimage Shrines in South Western Europe and India – A primary comparison” has made comparison on between Christian shrines in India and Western Europe in which he has taken macro regional level unit and found similarities and differences.

Rinchede Gisbert (1987): A German Geographer in his article, “The pilgrimage tour of Lourdes” has evaluated impact of pilgrims on demographic and economic structure of the tour. He has showed the changes in occupational structure of the town from primary to tertiary sector.

Sievers Angelika (1987): A German Geographer in her article, “The importance of pilgrimage tourism in Sri Lanka has discussed the need of pilgrimage tourism and its role in socio geographical problems.

Stoddard Robert H. (1987): In his article, “Pilgrimage along sacred path” has explained that travel made by pilgrims with
religious motives which leads the changes in economic, political and social aspects of millions of pilgrims.

Louis J.D. Amore (2000) : “Spirituality in Tourism A Millennium Challenge for Travel and Tourism Industry. In his report he discussed the importance of peace which only comes from spirituality. A spirituality that is active in our local communities empowering one author.

P.C. Pondel and Rana P.B. Singh : In their article, “Pilgrimage and Tourism at Muktinath, (1994), Nepal” : A study of Sacridity and Spatial Structure,” explained the importance of sacred power of Muktinath and highlighted spatial structure of pilgrims along with socio economic background.

Issa M. Shari (1979) : R.R. Karan : “Geographic Patterns of Pilgrim Circulation to Mecca” In this article they have explained the pilgrim flow pattern towards Mecca, its increasing importance and pilgrimage pattern and they tried to give the rationalization of the Islamic World.

India :

Dube, Kamal Kant (1987), in his article “Tourism and pilgrimage in Varanasi” explained the facts and problems of tourism in Varansi city.

Singh, Rana P.B. (1987) : In his article “The pilgrimage Mandals of Varanasi” A study in sacred geography has given importance to the study, of pilgrimage Mandala in pilgrimage studies and sacred geography.

Kayastha S.L. and Singh S.N. (1977) : In their article, “A study of preference and behaviour pattern of tourists in Varanasi”. A geographical analysis. Where they have explained Varanasi as a
pilgrimage centre. They have assessed the behavioural pattern of
domestic and foreign tourists and made use of it to suggest the
future development of Varanasi through tourism point of view.

Dube D.P. (1987) : In his article entitled "Kumbha Mela
origin and history of India's greatest pilgrimage fair." has
highlighted the importance of religion fair and festivals in the
human life from the beginning of civilization.

Singh S.N. and Kayastha (1983) : In their article, "Tourism
in Varanasi city - A functional analysis" have explained the
functional characteristics of tourists activities in Varanasi City.

Singh Rana P.B. (1987) : In his article, "Peregrinology and
Geographical Quest." has given importance to the need of study of
peregrinology in geography through its spatial approach. He has
highlighted the need of study of pilgrimage and tourism together
with multidisciplinary approaches and methodology.

Ajin Ray (1996) : "Allhabad Kumbh Mela Celebration : A
study in Pilgrim Geography in which he discussed about the
cultural environment that is mental perception of the pilgrim in
spiritual, belief tradition etc. Along with this he has also explained
the management factor of conducting such Kumbha Mela.

Rajinder S. Jutla (2002) : "Understanding Sikh Pilgrimage"
in which he discussed about Sikh religion, its path and the status of
pilgrimage in Sikhism and their attitude towards pilgrimage.

Karve I (1960) : " On the road- A Maharashtra" written by
Karve pointed out the importance of Palkhi procession to
Pandharpur.

P.T. Malshe, Ghode S.K. (1989) : In their article
"Pandharpur : A study in Geography of religion" have highlighted
in detail about importance of religious field of Pandharpur.
Navale A.M. and Deshmukh S.B. (1989) : In their article "A view on pilgrimage tourism- A study in Human Geography" highlighted the importance of pilgrimage as a form of tourism and showed that pilgrimage tourism has emerged from the human geography.

Navale A.M. Deshmukh S.B. (1997) : In their article "Impact of pilgrimage tourism on Host population of Pandharpur" have discussed the impact of pilgrims in changing the socio economic and cultural aspects of local population of Pandharpur.

1.10. Chapter Outline :

The present research work has been organized into Eight Chapters.

The first chapter deals with the appraisal of the problem i.e. concept of pilgrimage tourism, its relation with geography, and significance of tourism. This chapter also deals with justification of the selection of topic, aims of the present study, source of data and information, research methodology employed, limitations of the study and Review of the literature and chapter outline.

Chapter second deals with physical setting of the study region which includes location, area, physiography, drainage, soil, and climate, economic setting of the town. Change in land use pattern, occupational pattern, and population characteristics of the study region are also highlighted in this chapter.

Chapter third describes in brief about the historical perspective of the town and Shree Swami Samarth Maharaj and daily rites in the temple of Swamiji. Along with this a survey has been made regarding infrastructure facilities available in the town and their development during the span of thirty years.
Chapter fourth describes in brief the history, development, planning and future of tourism in India, Maharashtra and in detail about Akkalkot and its development from tourism point of view. Here an attempt has been made to analyze the present status of safety of pilgrims in the temple of Swami Samarth.

Chapter fifth deals with detail investigation of functional attributes and socio-economic factors. The opinion of pilgrims about the different facilities available in Akkalkot is assessed and satisfaction index is calculated to represent their views. Here an attempt has been made to find out the travel circuit zone around the study region.

Chapter sixth deals with the impact of pilgrims on host population with the help of “Likert Scale”. With the help of impact indicators physical, economic and socio-cultural impacts have also been analyzed in this chapter. It is an evaluation of residents perception of impact of pilgrimage.

Chapter Seventh concerned with the potential tourist centres in Akkalkot. Here an attempt has been made to identify the present facilities available at each potential tourist centres, their problems and viable suggestion for improvement.

Chapter Eighth deals with the conclusion and suggestions. In this chapter conclusion have been presented with meaningful and viable suggestion for tourism development in Akkalkot town.
References:


