



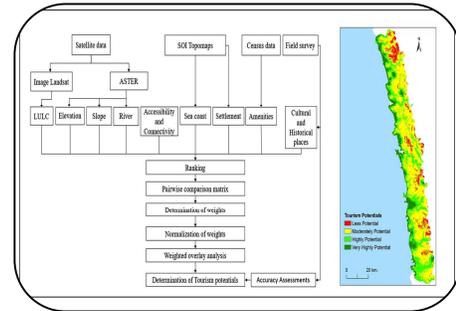
TOURISM POTENTIAL AND DEVELOPMENT IN RATNAGIRI AND SINDHUDURG: A REVIEW OF SCHOLARLY STUDIES

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ABSTRACT:

Konkan region is a narrow coastal plain situated between Arabian sea and Werstern Ghat. The region has endowed with beautiful nature, beaches as well as cultural and religious heritage. Rantagiri and Sindhudurg are the major districts in Southern Konkan. Tourism is one of the major resources along with agriculture and fishing in the region. Various reserachers have studied tourism problems, potential, tourist places etc. of the both district. Both districts have significant tourism spots with future potenital. Hence, the main aim of the present research paper is to review the tourism related research work for the Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg District. The research paper is mainly based on secondary data. This review addresses tourism in Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg district with highlighting on tourism situation, tourist places, problems related tourism, potential of tourism etc. related research work.

INTRODUCTION:

Tourism is one of the emerging sectors for the local economy and regional development. Konkan region is located along the western coast of Maharashtra with 720 Km coastline. The region is famous for the scenic diverse nature, beaches, forts, waterfalls, religious places, monuments, sacred groves, mangrove forests, creeks, rainy seasonal waterfalls etc. Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg District are considered as southern Konkan. Sindhudurg is the first tourism district of Maharashtra. Both districts have significant tourist spots due natural beauty, biodiversity and cultural heritage. Ganpatipuleand Kunkeshwartemples, Tarkarli beach, Sindhudurg fort are the major tourist spots that attracts local as well as foreign tourists.

Over the year various researchers have studied different aspects of tourism in Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg Districts. The studies include various themes i.e. tourism resources, tourism potential, problems, eco-tourism, coastal tourism, geographical influence, opportunities in tourism etc.

OBJECTIVES:

Present review article emphases on exploration of researches on tourism in Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg Districts of KonkanRegion. The major objective of the research is to analyse the research studies relatedRatnagiri and Sindhudurg Districtstourism and provide detail insight on future prospects of tourism in the districts.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Research methodology includes Article exploration – literature review – Integrative review and analysis.

STUDIES ON TOURISM IN RATNAGIRI DISTRICT:

In 2020, Dr. Madhura Vardam elaborated on the Opportunities & Importance of Tourism in South Konkan Region with special reference to Ratnagiri District. Her research was based on data collection from 335 tourists and data was collected from eight tourists' centres namely Parshuram, Pawas, Anjarle Murud beach, Guhagar beach, Kelshi, Ganpatipule and Marleshwar in Ratnagiri district. She found that the major tourists were from Ratnagiri districts while most of them are from higher and higher middle-income groups. Day trippers and one day stay tourists are larger in quantity. 51.94% tourists came by own vehicle while 21.49% were by rented vehicle. 78.89% tourists visited the places due to recommendation by their friends and relatives and 98% tourist rated visit as enjoyable and satisfactory. Improvement in highways and roads, bathroom, toilet and drinking water facilities at petrol pumps, good market and good quality hotels with reasonable charges were suggestions of the research. (Dr. Vardam, 2020)

In 2020, Mr. Hanamantrao Ratnappa Yadav, Mr. Rajesh Sidhartha Kamble analysed tourism potential and challenges in Ratnagiri district. They elaborated on tourist population in all tehsil; total spend expenses on tourism. They identified potential tourism places such as Anjarle, Dabhol, Asud, Velneshwar, Kasheli, Harnei, Panhalekazi, Gopalgad, Palshet, Govalkot-Govindgad, Sumargad, hill station i.e. Machal, Ambet etc, Ganeshgule, Ladghar, Kolthare, Rohile, Tawsal, Waterfalls of Nivali, Adare, Chuna-kolvan, Sawat Sada, Tivare and Unhavare, Aravali hot springs etc. Lack of proper marketing, Poor Transportation linkages, Lack of Infrastructure, Limited Integration of Local Communities are the major challenges regarding tourism. Development of infrastructure, communication facilities, passenger cruise ship service, and development of environmentally sensitive tourism were the suggestions. (Yadav & Kamble, 2020)

In 2021, Dr. Parkar Priya analysed geographical influence on tourism potential in Ratnagiri district. She explained geography induced tourism resources including forests, hill stations, waterfalls, forts, petroglyphs, hot water springs, beaches with marine biodiversity etc. SWOT analysis for tourism development of Ratnagiri district was included in the research. Training to local people, publicity and marketing, improving connectivity, rejuvenation of forts etc. were suggested measures. (Dr. Parkar, 2021)

In 2021, Sanjay B. Navale, Vijay S. Bhagat tried to detect and delineate the potential tourism areas along with coast of Ratnagiri district. They identified very high to less tourism potential areas with the help of multicriteria analysis in GIS. Sea coast, historical and cultural places, elevation, slope, distance from river channel, LULC, road density, settlements density, amenities etc. parameters were used to identify suitable sites. (Navale & Bhagat, 2021)

In 2021, Dr. M. B. Potdar and Dr. P.R. Talekar studied the impact of tourism on Anjarle Village of Ratnagiri district. She elaborated on major tourist attraction in Anjarle i.e. Kadyvaracha Ganpati and Anjarle Beach. They assessed economic impact of tourism using indicators such as increase in income, job opportunities, and increase in cost of land and housing, demand of female labour etc. They also assessed socio-cultural impact i.e. increase in density of population, increase in crime, prostitution, drug abuse and gambling, break down in community & family cohesion etc. Overcrowding, congestions, noise, air pollution, water pollution, slum, modernization of infrastructure were the parameters analysed for physical impact of tourism. Insufficient infrastructural facility, limited paying guest facilities are the major problems. Hence, improvement in accommodation facilities and supporting infrastructural facilities were needed. (Dr. Potdar & Dr. Talekar, 2016)

In 2023, Dr. Anita Jaipal Awati and Dr. Chandrashekhar R. Salunkhe studied problems of rural tourism in South Konkan. They identified the potential tourist resources. Virgin calm beaches of Ganpatipule, Guhagar, Murud, Tarkarli ; Waterfalls of Marleshwar, Sawatsada, Amboli and Chunakolvan; Backwater of Karli creek, Jaigad and Dabhol creeks; Parshuram, Kunkeshwar, Pawas and

Ganpatipule temples; Sindhudurg, Vijaydurg, Jaigad, and Harnai forts, Monuments of Panhalekazi, Thibav Palace, Dabhol masque; hot water springs at Aravali, Unhale, Unhavare, Rajewadi and Sahyadri Tiger project, Amboli forest, bird and crocodile, dolphin tourism, agro-tourism, fruit festivals etc. are the potential tourist resources. Also, they elaborated on positive economic, socio-cultural and environmental impact such as new employment generation, growth in government revenue, revitalization of cultural tradition, cultural exchange, conservation of local environment etc. Limited financial support from government, lack of proper transportation system, infrastructure facilities, lack of appropriate tourism policy and local awareness, absence of tourism related training institutes were the problems noted. Awareness and education of local people regarding tourism, infrastructural development, tourist information centres, medical centres, improvement in transportation, tourism promoting campaigns from governments were the suggestions. (Dr. Awati & Dr. Salunkhe, 2023)

In 2023, Vishal R. Tomar; Veena V. Sawant took an overview of the opportunities and challenges of tourism in Ratnagiri District. They elaborated on tourist places in Ratnagiri, present tourist population. They also prepared SWOT analysis for the tourism. They discussed the determinants of tourism i.e. accessibility, historical, religious importance, natural resources, basic amenities etc. They also elaborated on the problems such as lack of infrastructure, accessibility, environmental concern, lack of marketing, limited involvement of local communities etc. Better marketing strategies, active participation of local communities, infrastructure development were the recommendations. (Tomar & Sawant, 2023)

In 2024, Dr. Prakash Hajare studied about the tourism in Ratnagiri District. In his research he discussed various tourist places in Ratnagiri District categorised it in existing and potential tourist places. Ganpatipule, Pandhara Samudra, Ratnagiri beach, Velas beach and Guhagar beach are the existing tourist places i.e. most prioritized tourist destinations. While there are various other destinations that have potential of tourism also discussed by him. It includes historical places such as Ratnagiri Fort, Purngad Fort, Ambolgad Fort, Gopalgad Fort; beaches such as Aare Ware beach, Kasheli beach, Mirya beach and Neware beach. Religious destination includes Dhutpapeshwar Temple, Sri Kanakaditya Temple, Mahakali Temple, Rajapur Ganga. Also, there are some other tourist places i.e. Unhale Hot Water Spring, Rock Carvings / Katal Shilp in Dhartale village. His research suggests tourism infrastructure development especially transportation facilities, good quality hotels and restaurants etc. is important for the tourism growth in the region. (Dr. Hajare, 2024)

In 2025, Dr. Rajkumar Dnyanoba Kamble examined beach tourism in Ratnagiri district. He took review of beaches tourist places in Ratnagiri district. It includes beaches of Ganpatipule, Mandavi, Bhatye, Aare Ware, Guhagar, Anjarle, Velneshwar, Hedvi, Pawas, Jaigad. Diversity in beaches, natural beauty, complementary attractions, sustainable development and increasing investment are the potential for tourism. Lack of tourism circuit, inadequate promotions, poor public transportation, dependency on personal vehicles, lack of basic amenities, lack of planning and water sports, unorganized tourist sectors etc. challenges for tourism discussed in his research. (Dr. Kamble R. D., 2025)

STUDIES ON TOURISM IN SINDHUDURG DISTRICT:

In 2012, Sirsathe Shrikant assessed tourism development in Sindhudurg district. He elaborated on Tilar dam, Amboli hill station, Sindhudurg fort, Vijaydurg fort, Napane waterfall, Tarkarli beach, Sawantwadi palace, Niwati and Bhogave beach. He further discussed the potentials for development in tourism of Sindhudurg. It comprised natural factors i.e. scenery, clean beaches and biodiversity etc., socio-economic factors such as fairs, festival, arts, traditions and political factors including MTDCs resorts and policy. Lack of transportation and communication facilities, insufficient marketing strategies for tourism, lack of awareness about full potential of MTDCs were the problems identified. Organising packaging tours at reasonable price, improvement in infrastructural facilities, proper consumer research, improvement in transport and communication facilities and comprehensive strategy for the tourism development were the suggested measures. (Sirsathe, 2012)

Dr. Vijay M. Kumbhar (2012) studied tourists' expectations regarding agritourism. He analysed Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg district. He elaborated on tourists' expectation in agrotourism such as attractive location, convenience, peace, comfort of service from service providers, countryside accommodation, clean and green environment, food and cuisine image, chance to be involved in farm, educational and entertainment value, security, trust, parking facilities, purchasing opportunities, health cares, etc. (Kumbhar , 2012)

In 2013, Rathod B.L., Auti S.K. And Wagh R.V.analysed major tourist attractions in Sindhudurg District with geographical point of view. They discussed taluka wise major tourist attractions. That includes Napane waterfall and Dajipur wildlife of Vaibhavwadi, Kunkeshwar Temple of Devgad Taluka, Bhalchandra Maharaj Math and Gopuri Ashram from Kankavli, Rawool Maharaj Math of Kudal, Sindhudurg fort of Malvan, Nivati beach of Vengurla, Palace of Maharaja and wooden toys of Sawantwadi and boating sports at Dodamarg Taluka. (Rathod, Auti, & Wagh , 2013)

Yogesh Pisolkar and Navendu Chaudhary (2016) elaborated on the problems of coastal tourism as well as environmental, sustainable development in Sindhudurg district. They reviewed the problems such as temporal changes in LULC, changing coastline, less trained workforce, problems regarding authenticity of service providers and safety measures for scuba diving, lack of waste management policies etc. (Pisolkar & Chaudhary, 2016)

In 2018, Dr.Kamble B.P. deliberated on alternative tourism destinations along Sindhudurg coast. In his research he discussed on marine biodiversity at Sindhudurg coast. He noted that most of the tourist activities are located at the forts, backwater cruises, beaches, dolphin watches, scuba diving and snorkelling along the coast. He propounded the necessity of Scuba Diving centre at Malvan, Dolphin Safari centre at Vengurla, training for hotel management, aquarium maintenance, automobile repairing, tourist guide and sustainable tourism plan for development of alternative tourism sites. (Dr. Kamble, 2018)

In 2019, Dr. Ashish Naik analysed problems of tourism development Sindhudurg district. He discussed present situation of tourism in Sindhudurg. He elaborated on various tourist places in all tehsils. Also, he discussed on future scope for tourism in Sindhudurg district such as Eco Tourism, Leisure Tourism, Ethnic Cultural and Heritage Tourism, Health Tourism, Religious Tourism, Corporate Tourism, Agro Tourism, Special Interest Tourism etc. Lack of star international facilities of accommodation, poor road condition, lack of currency exchange facility and guide service were the identified problems. (Dr. Naik A. , 2019)

In 2020, Mr. Abhijit P. Mahale elaborated on eco-tourism project in Sindhudurg district in which he studied model project of Konkan Sindhu Paryatan Sanstha, Banda at Aarobag region. He analysed cultural heritage, biodiversity and geographical details. He also discussed on capital cost of the project, means of finance and projected financial performance for the 5 years. He concluded that the sampled eco-tourism project would be beneficial and small eco-tourism projects can be expanded at the locations of the same environmental eco system. (Mahale , 2020)

In 2025, Subandh Pallavi Sunil studied on challenges and opportunities of coastal tourism in Sindhudurg district. She analysed tourism trend from the year 2015 to 2015 with the help of Swadesh Darshan Scheme data. Downshift was experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. While after 2023 the tourism got increased till 2025 but not fully recovered as 2015. Coastal erosion, coral damage, increasing plastic waste and poor tourism practices put negative impact on coastal tourism. Chipi Air Port, declaration of Tourism District, Swadesh Darshan projects are the positive side for tourism. Tourism development strategy, environmental protection, community participation are required to encourage coastal tourism. (Subandh , 2025)

In 2025, Dr. Meena Potdar reviewed the tourism in Juva Pankhol Island located in Kalawal creek, Sindhudurg. Beach and vegetation are the key attraction of the island. She tried to analyse available infrastructure facilities, demographic structure, occupational structure, family size, educational status, annual income, agricultural land holding etc. Water sports, boating facilities, ecotourism development were the suggested measures for promoting tourism. (Dr. Potdar, 2025)

CONCLUSION:

There is variation in tourists' spots in both Ratnagiri and Sindhudurg Districts. Most of the researchers have tried to analyse the problems and potential of tourism. Agrotourism and Eco-tourism are new emerging sectors in the region. Both districts have some problems concerning tourism i.e. lack of transportation facilities, unsatisfactory marketing, poor road condition, lack of quality accommodation, lack of tour guide and water sports etc. But the both districts have noteworthy potential in beach tourism, eco-tourism, cultural and historical tourism. But it requires appropriate measures such as suitable planning, infrastructural development, nature conservation, improvement in road and communication network, improvement in accommodation facilities and home stays, community participation etc. to promote tourism.

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