



SOCIO-CULTURAL IMPACTS OF BEACH TOURISM: A CASE STUDY OF RAIGAD DISTRICT (MAHARASHTRA)

Uttam Gadhe, Ph. D.

Department of Geography, K.M.C. College Khopoli, (Raigad) – 410 203.

Email. uttambsp@gmail.com

Abstract

Tourism in recent decades has playing vital role in the economies of many regions like Konkan in Maharashtra, India. The present paper analyses perception of local people of two prime beach destination with regards to various socio-cultural issues seen as a result of tourism development in Raigad district. The indigenous community was very much alive to various issues. Irrational exploitation of tourism resources and immoral behavior of tourists leads to tourist host conflict, the current concerns and emphasis bother the local residents, policy makers and planners in relation to purity of culture before globalization and commercialization of activities taking place. The present study reflects the perception of indigenous communities about costs and benefits, causes and likely solutions for sustainable tourism development in the study region.



[Scholarly Research Journal's](http://www.srjis.com) is licensed Based on a work at www.srjis.com

Introduction

Tourism is a global phenomenon. It allows free mobility of people within or across the border to enjoy the natural scenic opulence, cultural heritage and beautiful beaches. Since the trio- globalization, liberalization and privatization emerged as a new economic system, tourism became a need of the modern urban technocratic society and rural community. It emerged as a new tool of multidimensional change process and regional development. Beach tourism is very often regarded as a ‘double-edged sword’ and the debate continues about cost and benefit of tourism. By and large, there is no agreement on the degree and direction of its consequences because the process of tourism development and social change has never been invariable in nature which spatially, temporally and culturally differs and depends upon the value system, government initiatives and the residents’ attitude towards any development. Sandy beaches in Konkan and Goa tend to be of great economic importance and are exposed to mass tourism that led to social degradation. The Barbarians in tourism harm the local culture and value system subjected to increase alcohol and drug abuse, obscene sexuality and host guest conflicts on one hand and it significantly improves the standard of living, quality of life, awareness towards preservation of cultural heritage and history on other hand.

Therefore, beach tourism is receiving increasing attention as a field of geographical attention. The modern tourists are heterogeneous in nature with different hues, colours, likes and dislikes, which change the contemporary societies of the world.

The prominent researches are Arkashali (1997), Potdar (2004), Vaiphei (2006), Das (2007) Anvari (2008). Tourism has clear socio-cultural implications. It affects tourist, host and host-guest relationship (Mathieson and Wall, 1982). Tourism is a pandemic activity based on host-guest contact. These contacts may give rise to health problems due to travels around the world. Tourist may spread diseases like AIDS, STDS Swine Flu, and Bird Flu. Malaria and Cholera. Further, movement of tourists leads to excessive use of facilities such as sewage treatment which may present health risks. In order to examine social and cultural impact of tourism on Raigad district following indicators were taken into account.

The previous studies have been carried out to discuss the perception of residence of an individual tourist center or a region such as by Grunewald (2002), Haley, Smith and Miller (2005), Alhasant (2010), Bloch (2017). Some others have employed to analyze residence attitude towards tourism development. However, there seems to be no study on the impact of beach tourism on coastal residence taking their views in consideration. Therefore, the present study attempts to analyze the attitudes of local people who live with tourism in Raigad district in Konkan region.

Tourism is one of the principal economic activities of the residents of Raigad district. The region under study takes an important place in the natural and cultural living areas of local community and shelter resources for tourism and recreational activities. Raigad district in Maharashtra state is a unique assemblage of virgin beaches and archaeological sites and centers consisting of caves ranging from 1st century BC and forts of 16th century. It attracts domestic as well as oversea tourists.

Study Region:

Raigad district, a narrow strip of land with an area of 7152 sq. km, situated between latitudes 17°15' and 18°18' North and longitudes 72°51' to 73°40' East forms ¼th quadrant of Konkan region of Maharashtra state. It is confined by Arabian Sea to the west and Pune district to the east, Thane district to the north and Ratnagiri to the south. The north south stretch of the district is 160 km. while the east west width is 50 km. The coastline is 240 km from Mandwa to Harihareshwar. The region is the home of 2.63 million people (2011). Out of these, 24.22% population lives in urban areas whereas 75.78% lives in rural areas. The

density of population is 368 persons per sq. km. Administratively, this region is divided into 15 tahsils (Fig. 1), namely Alibag, Uran, Panvel, Pen, Karjat, Kahalapur, Sudhagad, Roha, Murud, Mahad, Mangaon, Tale, Srivardhan, Mhasle and Poladpur consisting of 1960 villages and 26 urban centers. The highlands of Sahyadri, central plains, lowland areas and influence of the Arabian Sea creates myriad ecological possibilities and assets to the district's tourism. 2076 sq. km. (29%) area is under forests, which is the home of 1343 species of flora, 295 species of resident birds and 37 species of migratory fauna. The distinguishing climate characteristic is hot and arid. Mean minimum temperature varies between 27°C to 20°C. Average annual rainfall is 3029 mm. In general, the climate of the study region is salubrious throughout the year except the rainy season. The region has a good transport network of roads. The total length of road is 5663.14 km, railways radiates 299.34 km and 15 ports used for navigation.

Objectives

The present study has been undertaken to assess the socio-cultural impact of tourism development in Raigad district. The sub-objectives are as follows:

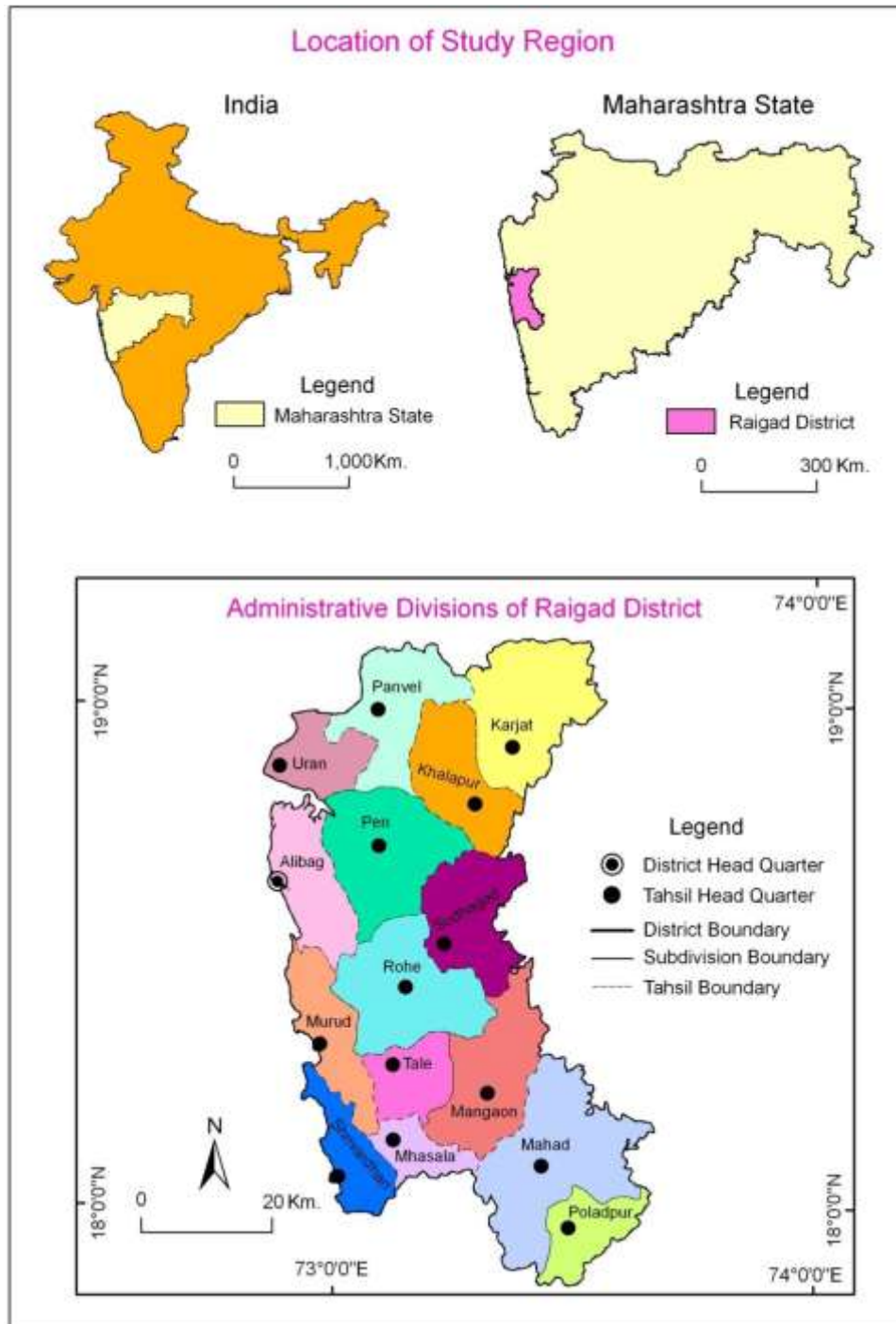
- 1) To study the composition of local resident respondents.
- 2) To analyze socio-cultural impact of tourism development in the study region.
- 3) To suggest measures for sustainable tourism development in the study region

Database and Methodology

The data from primary and secondary sources has been gathered for this research. Secondary data was collected from India tourism statistics, 2016, regarding arrival of tourists, Archaeological survey of India, District Census Handbook, Maharashtra Maritime Board, Public Works Department (PWD), Forest Survey of India and other published and unpublished reports, books and magazines.

This empirical study is based on a sample of 325 respondents (stakeholders) selected from two destinations, namely Alibag and Murud-Janjira by following random sample processes in two different tourist seasons- Summer vacations (April and May) and Winter vacations (Mid-October to Mid-November). In order to assess tourism impacts, a structure questionnaire was carried out which consists of 28 underlying attributes, the respondents were required to rate all questions using a seven point 'Likert like scale' ranging from -3 to +3 with zero equalizing no effect of tourism. The seven response alternatives for every question are +1 Agree, -1 Disagree, +2 moderately agree, -2 Moderately disagree and +3

Strongly agree, -3 Strongly disagree, where zero indicates no response. As assessment and quantification of tourism impact is highly subjective and qualitative in nature, to understand the direction and level of commitment of respondents towards response, and attitudinal survey has been carried out.



Socio-cultural Indicators

(A) Positive Indicators: (1) Active participation of locals toward facilities for tourists (2) Increased communication (3) Change in occupation structure (4) Awareness towards preservation of cultural heritage (5) Encourages brotherhood (6) Rediscovery of tradition (7) Responsible for cultural exchange (8) Preserves art and history (9) Encourages education and training.

(B) Negative Indicators: (1) Change in settlement pattern (2) Stress on public utility services (3) Commercialization of tradition and customs (4) Increases in mental stress (5) Change in interest (6) Westernization of culture (7) Stress on police and security persons (8) Tourist host conflicts (9) Threatening to community fabric and values (10) Increase in activities of drug abuse (11) Leads to gambling and Vandalism (12) Growth in activities of prostitution (13) Leads to pedophilias and rave parties (14) Increase in crime (15) Increasing number of beggars (16) Increases xenophobia (17) Spread of epidemic and HIV (18) Break down in family cohesion (19) Disturb religious practices.

Table-1: Comparison in Socio-cultural Impacts

(A) Positive Impacts Indicators	Alibag		Murud		Mean
Indicators	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Difference
Active participation of locals	2.06	0.86	2.02	0.77	0.04
Increased communication	2.20	0.77	2.14	0.76	0.06
Change in occupation structure	1.67	1.19	1.52	1.34	0.15
Preservation of cultural heritage	1.67	1.24	0.83	1.70	0.84
Encourages brotherhood	1.71	1.33	1.39	1.38	0.32
Rediscovery of tradition	1.51	1.38	1.34	1.32	0.17
Responsible for cultural exchange	0.81	1.64	1.08	1.11	0.27
Preserves art and history	1.16	1.43	0.84	1.23	0.32
Encourages education and training	1.28	1.55	0.66	1.34	0.62
Total	1.56	4.09	1.31	4.04	0.25
(B) Negative Impacts Indicators					
Change in settlement pattern	2.03	1.00	1.93	1.17	0.10
Stress on public utility services	1.82	1.22	1.63	1.22	0.19
Tradition & custom Commercialization	1.28	0.93	0.91	1.65	0.37
Increases in mental stress	0.93	0.96	0.47	1.81	0.46
Change in interest	0.90	0.92	1.37	0.84	0.47
Westernization of culture	1.71	0.79	0.69	1.49	1.02
Stress on police and security persons	1.68	1.27	2.21	0.78	0.53
Tourist host conflicts	0.16	1.55	0.55	1.78	0.39
Threat to community fabric and values	0.44	0.76	0.64	1.76	0.20
Increase in activities of drug abuse	1.02	1.02	1.40	0.99	0.38
Leads to gambling and Vandalism	0.77	0.88	0.67	1.98	0.10
Growth in activities of prostitution	0.22	1.48	0.36	0.73	0.14
Leads to pedophilias and rave parties	0.22	1.48	0.55	1.04	0.33

Increase in crime	0.68	0.83	0.62	0.96	0.06
Increasing number of beggars	0.97	1.07	0.30	0.68	0.67
Increases xenophobia	- 0.60	0.90	- 0.32	2.10	0.28
Spread of epidemic and HIV	0.36	1.53	- 0.15	1.07	0.35
Break down in family cohesion	0.44	0.76	0.11	1.97	0.33
Disturb religious practices	- 0.38	0.59	0.82	6.75	0.44
Total	0.78	5.63	- 0.15	1.07	0.63

Source: Computed by Researcher

Attitudes of residents of Alibag are examined towards socio-cultural impact of tourism development. The results of residents are given in Table-1. The residents of Alibag support and actively participated in providing facilities and services to tourists (2.06) and increase communication between host and guests (2.20). Tourism development responsible for cultural exchange rates low mean value (0.81). The rest six positive variables represent moderate mean values between 1 and 1.99. Tourism encourages brotherhood (1.71). The change in occupational structure and awareness towards preservation of cultural heritage has found mean score 1.67 for each one. Whereas local tradition (1.51), encourages education and training (1.28) and preserves art and history (1.16) are less mean score in this tourist center.

The host's interactions with tourists have found agree with the fact that tourism development brought about negative impact. Nineteen variables concerned with negative impact of tourist host interaction and regards as 'undesirable variable' includes change in settlement pattern (2.03). Tourism has responsible for host-guest conflict (0.16). There is growth in social evils like prostitution and pedophilias and rave parties with mean value 0.22. Tourism brought HIV and spreads epidemic (0.36), breakdown in family cohesions and threatening to community fabric and values with mean 0.44. Tourism is also a cause for crime (0.68). It leads to gambling and vandalism (0.77), interest of residents' change (0.90), increase in mental stress (0.93) and to a small extent beggar's increase with mean value (0.97) in this tourist center.

Table-2: Socio-cultural Attitude Index

Sr. No.	Mean Score	Alibag		Murud	
		Positive	Negative	Positive	Negative
1	- 2.01 to - 3.00	0.83	1.50	0.28	3.34
2	- 1.01 to - 2.00	1.78	2.52	2.38	5.81
3	- 0.01 to - 1.00	5.83	8.00	6.78	7.73
4	0.00	12.72	31.13	19.28	22.87
5	+ 0.01 to + 1.00	20.33	26.97	21.39	23.76
6	+ 1.01 to + 2.00	27.23	19.58	27.00	21.18
7	+ 2.01 to + 3.00	31.28	10.80	22.89	15.90
Total		100.00	100.00	100.00	100.00

Source: Computed by Researcher.

There are five variables of moderate impacts and mean ranging from 1.00 to 1.99 followed by problem of drug abuse (1.02), commercialization of tradition and customs (1.28), stress on police and security persons (1.68). Tourism causes westernization of culture with mean value 1.71 and stresses on public utility services have increase (1.82). Most importantly, residents of Alibag disagree with increase in xenophobia and disturbed religious practices with mean values (-0.60) and (-0.38) respectively. Attitudinal mean index provides analytical base which stands in tourism development in study region. The attitudinal mean score towards socio-cultural influence given in Table-5.14 indicates very clearly that the mean score for positive statements increases towards far end of scale. The majority (31.28 percent) perceived positive perception ranging higher mean score (+2.01 to +3.00). The middle range mean score estimates 27.23 percent responses followed by 20.33 percent in low impact mean score. 78.84 percent residents agreeing with positive influence while 8.44 percent disapproved positive impact of tourism on society and culture of the destination. Further 12.72 percent responses nun on the other hand 31.13 percent opinioned null and void to socio-cultural impacts (negative). Although, 57.35 percent is strongly associated with negative impacts and another 12.02 percent with disagreement. The substantial (26.97 percent) responses rates to low range (+0.01 to +1.00). Followed by middle score and 10.80 percent rates to high score (+2.01 to +3.00). * Percent among them rates negative score ranging (-0.01 to -1.00) and meager 1.50 percent centralized between (-2.01 to -3.00).

Socio-cultural Impact in Murud-Janjira

Table-1 presents the responses to 200 residents to nine positive and nineteen negative attitudinal statements. Residents of Janjira do have strong opinion about positive socio-cultural impacts of host-guest interaction and growth of tourism activity. The residents accepted that they were actively participated towards facilities (2.02) and increase the

communication between hosts and guests (2.01). Both these statements represent high positive socio-cultural impact having mean value is more than two. Tourism has changed occupational structure by 1.52 followed by encouraged brotherhood among hosts and host-guest (1.39) and created rediscovery of local tradition, customs and folklores (1.34) and is causes for cultural exchange with mean (1.08). These four statements have marked moderate impact. Education and training shows low impact with mean values 0.84 and 0.66 respectively. The residents are equally bothered about the pervasive socio-cultural impact of tourism. Here, nineteen parameters were taken into consideration to assess the negative socio-cultural impact on destination community. The high negative social and cultural impact rating goes to stress on police and security persons (2.21). This is because of frequent organization of different festivals on the contrary low impact and was associated with twelve attitudinal statements. Commercialization of tradition and customs rating has found 0.91 followed by westernization of culture (0.69), leads to gambling and vandalism (0.67).

Tourism is further responsible for threatening to community fabric and values and resulted increase the crimes. Host-guest conflicts and problem of pedophilias and rave parties have rating mean value 0.55 and increase in mental stress (0.47), growth in prostitution (0.36), increasing number of beggars (0.30) and disturbed religious practices mean value is just 0.11. Residents of Murud-Janjira are disagreed with increase xenophobia (-0.32) and break down in family cohesion (-0.15). Residents of Janjira rating differently to attitudinal statements Table-5.21 revealed seven ranges to socio-cultural attitude mean index for both positive and negative variables. Mean score for positive shows chronological ascending scores from high negative to high positive 71.19 percent agree that tourism development as a social force accounting 19.28 percent neutral 9.44 percent disagreed (27 percent). The middle of score (+1.01 to +2.00). Next 22.89 percent is found far end of scale (+2.01 to +3.00). Furthermore, 21.39 percent agree strongly but less rates was less score. Although 6.78 percent rate to score ranging from (-0.01 to -1.00). 2.38 has found negative score and 0.28 percent rate to high negative score. On the contrary, rating on negative impact of 23.76 percent rate lower mean score, middle score 21.18 percent and rate to high mean score 15.90 percent. It is noted that 22.87 percent is absolute zero. However, 16.89 percent was found negatively response accounting 7.73 percent residents index score ranges from (-0.01 to -1.00) followed by -1.01 to -2.00 with 5.81 percent and 3.34 percent far end of negative scale.

References

- Alhasant, S. (2010): "Socio Cultural Impacts of Tourism on the Local Community at Petra, Jordan", *European Journal of Scientific Research*, Vol. 44 No.3 Pp. 374-386
- Adavitot, S. C, (2006): "Akkalkot–A Geographical Study of Pilgrimage Tourism", Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, ShivajiUniversity, Kolhapur.
- Alonso, Abel Duarte and Nyanjam, (2016): "Tourism, Quality of Life and Residents of a Rural Town", *Tourism Analysis*, Vol. 21, No.6, Pp. 617-629
- Grunewald, R.A. (2002): "Tourism and Cultural Revival", *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 29, No.4, Pp. 1004-1021.
- Haley, J; Snaith, T and Miller, G. (2005): "Social Impacts of Tourism- A Case Study of Bath, UK.", *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 32, No. 2, Pp. 647-668.
- Eraqui, M.I. (2007): "Local Communities' Attitudes Towards Impacts of Tourism Development in Egypt", *Tourism Analysis*, Vol.12 No.2, Pp. 191-200
- Mathieson, A. and Wall, G. (1982): "Tourism-Economic, Physical and Social Impact", Longman London.
- Nicholas, L.N.; Thapa, B. and Ko, Y.J. (2009): "Residents' Perspectives of a World Heritage Site: The Pitons Management Area, St. Lucia", *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 36, No 3, Pp. 390-412
- Natalia Bloch, (2017): "Barbarians in India-Tourism as Moral Contamination", *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol.62, No.1 Pp. 64-77.
- S Mustafa, R., Jose, L. Roldan., Mustafa Jaffar and Ramoyah, T. (2016): "Factors Influencing Residents' Perception Towards Tourism Development-Differences Across Rural and Urban World Heritage Sites", *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol. 56, No. 6, Pp. 760-775.
- Li, M., Wu, B., and Cai; L (2008): "Tourism Development of World Heritage Sites in China-A Geographical Perspective", *Tourism Management*, Vol. 29, No.2, Pp. 308-319.
- Orams, M. (1999): "Marine Tourism Development Impacts and Mangement", Routledge, London.
- Teye, V., Sonmez. S.F. and Sirakaya, E. (2002): "Residents' Attitudes Towards Tourism Development", *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 29, No.3, Pp. 668-688.
- Wang, Y. and Pfister, R.E. (2008): "Residents' Attitudes Towards Tourism and Perceived Personal Benefits in a Rural Community", *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol. 47, No.1, Pp. 84-93.
- Wall, G. and Mathieson, A (2006): "Tourism Change, Impacts and Opportunities", Prentice Hall, London.
- Zamani- Farhani, H and Musa, G. (2012): "The Relationship Between Islamic Religiosity and Residents' Perceptions of Socio-cultural Impact of Tourism in Iran-A Case Study of Sarein and Masooleh", *Tourism Management*, Vol. 33, No. 4, Pp. 802-814.
- Stephenson, M. Land, Al Knight, J. (1993): "Dubai's Tourism Industry and its Social Impact-Social Implications and Sustainable Challenges", *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, Vol. 8, No. 4, Pp. 278-292.
- King, B; Pizam, A. and Milman, A. (1993): "Social Impact of Tourism- Host Perceptions", *Annals of Tourism Research*, Vol. 20, No. 4, Pp. 650-665.
- Gokhale, K., Sawant, N. and Ugavekar, N. (2014): "Goa-Tourism and Socio-cultural Implications, A Study of Selected Tourist Destinations of South Goa District, Goa, India", *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, Vol. 19, No. 10, Pp. 36-41.
- Gjerald, O. (2005): "Socio-cultural Impacts of Tourism-A Case Study from Norway", *Journal of Tourism and Cultural Change*, Vol. 3, No. 1, Pp. 36-58.

- Andereck, K. and Nyaupane, G. (2010): "Exploring the Nature of Tourism and Quality of life Perceptions Among Residents", *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol. 50, No. 3, Pp. 248-260.
- George, R; Croes, R. and Nijkamp, P. (2016): "Tourism Development- Quality of Life Nexus in Small Island Destination", *Journal of Travel Research*, Vol. 55, No. 1, Pp. 79-94.
- Ambli, S. M. (1990): "Tourism Development in Goa-A Geographical Analysis", Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, Karnataka University, Dharwad.
- Anvari, M. R. (2008): "Geographical Study of Tourism Development in Esfahan Province, Iran", Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, University of Pune, Pune.
- Arkshali, P. S. (1996): "A Geographical Study of Tourism Development in Mahabaleshwar-Panchgani Region", Unpublished Ph. D. Thesis, Shivaji University, Kolhapur.
- Basak, Rarak Nath (1985): "International Tourism in India", *Geographical Review of India*, Kolkata., Vol. 49, No. 1, Pp. 15-27.
- Batra, K. L. (1990): "Problem and Prospects of Tourism", Printwell Publisher, Jaipur.