

A Geographical Study of Tourism Potential at Siddhnath Temple, Mhaswad in Satara District

¹Dr. Vibhute N. M., ²Dr. Mane Deshmukh R.S.

¹Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, Chhatrapati Shivaji College, Satara

²Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, Chhatrapati Shivaji College, Satara

Article Info	ABSTRACT
Article History: Received: 15th Dec 2025 Accepted: 19th Dec 2025 Published: 20th Dec 2025	This study evaluates the tourism potential of Siddhnath Temple located at Mhaswad in Man Taluka of Satara district by analysing its physical environment, historical significance, socio-economic setting, visitor profile, and tourism facilities. Using both primary and secondary data, including a structured questionnaire survey of 150 visitors (136 valid responses), the study assesses visitor behaviour, satisfaction, travel patterns, and key attractions. The findings show that religious importance, fairs and yatras, and scenic surroundings are the major motivational factors drawing tourists, which is consistent with tourism development perspectives highlighted by UNWTO (2002) and Bhatia (1986). Transport accessibility is moderately developed, with visitors depending mainly on private and public transport. The study concludes that Siddhnath Temple has strong potential for sustainable religious tourism but needs improved infrastructure, accommodation, sanitation, and safety for better visitor experience and local development, aligning with cultural landscape studies such as Shinde (2012) and demographic insights from Census of India (2011) and Local Temple Trust Records, Mhaswad (2023).
Keywords: Religious Tourism, Visitor Satisfaction, Tourism Infrastructure	

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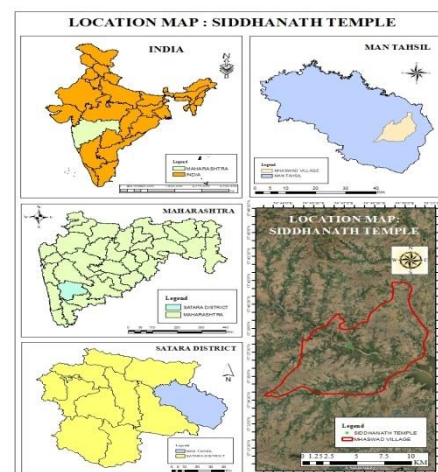
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INTRODUCTION

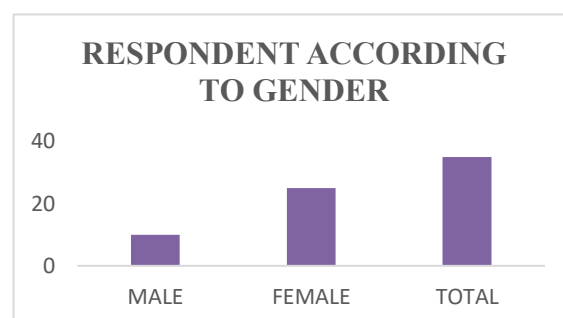
Tourism is an important socio-cultural phenomenon that contributes significantly to regional development, as highlighted by global studies on tourism-led growth (UNWTO, 2023; Richards, 2018). Religious tourism accounts for a large share of domestic travel in Maharashtra, where numerous shrines and pilgrimage centres attract millions of devotees annually (Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, 2022; Kadam & Patil, 2019). Siddhnath Temple at Mhaswad is one such sacred site with historical, mythological, and cultural relevance. The temple represents Hemadpanthi architecture, a style widely discussed in Indian heritage research (Dhere, 2014; Michell, 2016), and hosts the grand Siddhnath Yatra, which transforms Mhaswad into a vibrant pilgrimage destination. Understanding tourism patterns and visitor satisfaction in this region aligns with global frameworks on sustainable tourism and community-based development (UNDP, 2021; Lane, 2009) and helps identify opportunities to develop sustainable tourism infrastructure at the local level.

Study Area: Siddhnath Temple, located at Mhaswad in Maan Taluka of Satara District, is a major pilgrimage centre dedicated to Lord Siddhnath, a form of Lord Shiva. The temple lies on the left bank of the Manganga River at about 650–670 metres elevation in a semi-arid Deccan plateau region known for low and irregular rainfall. The area features undulating plains, black-cotton soil, and agriculture supported by river and tank irrigation. The annual Siddhnath Yatra attracts thousands of devotees and supports local livelihoods through religious activities, markets, and tourism services. Surrounding shops, rest houses, and eateries provide facilities for visitors and generate employment. According to the 2011 Census, Mhaswad has a population of 24,120 residing in around 4,812 households.



Objectives

1. To study tourism patterns and visitor satisfaction at Siddhnath Temple, Mhaswad.
2. To identify opportunities for sustainable tourism development in the region.



Methodology

Primary information was gathered through structured questionnaires

Table1-Respondent According To Gender

Gender	No of Respondent	Percentages
MALE	10	26%
FEMALE	25	71%
TOTAL	35	100%
Source- Computed by Researcher		

administered to visitors during January, May, and November, which represent the peak tourist seasons. Out of the 150 visitors selected for the survey, 136 provided valid responses. In addition to this, secondary data were obtained from various credible sources, including census reports, temple records, tourism

statistics, government publications, and relevant academic literature. For the analysis of the collected information, tools such as the Satisfaction Index formula, frequency tables, graphical representations, and percentage-based evaluations were employed to interpret and present the findings effectively.

Visitor Profile: Understanding the gender composition of respondents is essential for analysing tourist behaviour, decision-making patterns, and participation levels in any tourism study. Gender often influences travel motivations, perceptions, and satisfaction levels, as highlighted by earlier tourism research (Swain, 1995; Carr, 1999). Examining the gender distribution helps identify which group is more engaged in the survey and how this may shape the overall findings (Pritchard & Morgan, 2000). The following data presents the participation of male and female respondents at the study site, providing a basis for interpreting visitor trends and preferences.

The gender-wise distribution of respondents shows that the majority of participants in the survey were female. Out of a total of 35 respondents, 25 were female (71%), indicating a significantly higher representation of women in the study. Meanwhile, 10 respondents were male (26%), reflecting a comparatively smaller male participation. This distribution suggests that female devotees or visitors were more actively involved in the survey process, which may influence overall findings related to tourism behaviour, preferences, and satisfaction levels. The data also ensures a balanced understanding by capturing perspectives from both genders, even though the female share is dominant.

Age Group wise Visiting to the place:

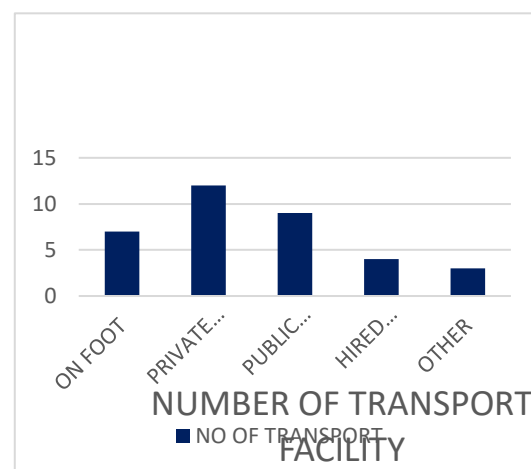
Analysing the age composition of respondents is important for understanding participation patterns in religious tourism. Age often influences travel motivations and involvement in pilgrimage activities (Smith, 1992; Raj & Morpeth, 2007). The following data shows the age-wise distribution of male and female visitors at the study area.

The data indicates that middle-aged respondents form the largest share of visitors. Among males, the 21–40 and 41–60 age groups each account for 33.33%, while among females, the 41–60 age group dominates with 45%. Younger visitors (0–20) also participate but in smaller proportions. This pattern suggests that religious tourism Siddhnath Temple is mainly supported by middle-aged devotees, especially women, which aligns with earlier studies on pilgrimage participation trends (Timothy & Olsen, 2006).

Table 2- Respondent According To Age G

Day Group	Male	%	Female	%
0-20	3	20.0	3	15
21-40	5	33.33	6	30
41-60	5	33.33	9	45
BOVE-60	2	13	2	10
TOTAL	15	100	20	100

Source- Computed by Researcher



at

Table 3 -Number Of Transport Facility

Transport Type	No of Transport	%
On Foot	7	20%
Private Veahicle	12	34.28%
Public Transport Bus	9	25.71%
Hired Vehicle / Taxi	4	11.42%
Other	3	8.57%
Total	35	100%

Source- Computed by Researcher

Tourism Facilities Assessed:

Understanding the mode of transport used by visitors is essential in tourism research, as accessibility directly influences travel decisions, visitor flow, and overall destination satisfaction (Page, 2009; Prideaux, 2000). Transport availability also affects how smoothly devotees can

reach pilgrimage sites, especially in rural or semi-urban regions. The following table presents the distribution of transport facilities used by respondents visiting Siddhnath Temple, Mhaswad.

The data shows that most visitors travel to the temple using private vehicles (34.28%), indicating a preference for comfort and flexibility. Public transport buses (25.71%) also play an important role, showing that many devotees depend on affordable travel options. Walking (20%) reflects traditional pilgrimage practices, while hired vehicles/taxis (11.42%) and other modes (8.57%) represent smaller shares. Overall, the transport pattern highlights a mix of personal and public mobility, which is consistent with findings in tourism accessibility studies (Page, 2009; Prideaux, 2000).

Socio-Economic Impact

Identifying the main factors that attract visitors to a religious site is essential for understanding tourism motivation. Tourist attraction preferences help reveal cultural values, emotional attachment, and behavioural patterns associated with pilgrimage destinations (Crompton, 1979; Raj & Morpeth, 2007). The following data presents the key elements that draw visitors to the Siddhnath Temple at Mhaswad, highlighting the temple's religious, cultural, and environmental significance.

Table 4 - What Attracts You Most To Siddhnath Temple		
Attract	No of Stay	%
Religious Significance	8	22.85%
Scenic Beauty And Loction	7	20.00%
Festival / Fairs Cyatras	11	31.42%
Important Of Histarical	5	14.28%
Other Pleace Specify	4	11.42%
Total	35	100%
Source- Computed by Researcher		

Conclusion:

Siddhnath Temple has strong potential as a religious tourism site due to its cultural value and high visitor interest. Middle-aged visitors and women participate most. Key attractions include fairs, religious significance, and natural beauty. However, the area needs better facilities such as cleanliness, accommodation, transport, and safety. With proper planning, the temple can significantly contribute to local economic and tourism development.

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