Research Paper Geography

Spatio-temporal Trend of Devotees Visit Mahalaxmi Temple of Kolhapur: a Geographical Analysis

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ABSTRACT

Kolhapur one of the most significant districts of Maharashtra is also recognized as 'Dakshin Kashi' sacred next to the 'Uttar Kashi' Banaras owing to the place of Mahalaxmi. Mahalaxmi, the goddess of wealth and one of the important 'Shakti-peetha,s' the places bearing divine womanly power in India. The place is therefore, visited by the people of all castes, creeds and religion. The present paper attempts to look into the Spatio-temporal trend of the devotees visit Mahalaxmi temple. The sample survey has been conducted to collect the information about devotees' general behavior to visit the temple for which random sampling method has been adopted. Duration from 7.00 to 10.00 pm and 3.00 to 6.00 pm all days of the week, occasion of fairs and festivals, auspicious days are primarily given importance. Said survey conduced during year 2012-13. It reveals that, the flow of devotees is mostly depending on seasons, climates, fairs, festivals and most auspicious days. The spatial flow of devotees decreases with increasing distance centripetally. However, number of devotees visit temple from southern states is rather bigger than that of the devotees visit temple from the northern states of the country.

KEYWORDS

Introduction

Being one of the great ancient temples of south India Mahalaxmi temple bears great importance in Hindu religion. It is most sacred and acclaimed '*Shakti-peetha*' in India and well known place of tourist attraction. For accomplishment of personal wishes thousands of the devotees visit the temple once in a year, month, weak and even daily. Many visitors visit the temple for its spectacular sculpture, figurines and carving. Devotees arrive from different region with different culture and religious background.

Methodology

The evaluation of spatial and temporal flow of devotees visit Mahalaxmi temple is measured by continuous monitoring during the period of 3 hours from 7.00 to 10.00 pm and 3.00 to 6.00 pm during year 2012-13.

Kolhapur city located between 16° 42′ north latitude and 74° 14′ east longitude at the mean altitude of 650 m above mean sea level. The total geographical area of Kolhapur city is 66.82 sq. km (2005) bearing the total population 4, 93,167 (2001).

Temporal Flow of Devotees

The flow of devotees mainly observed during the rainy, winter and summer season of year 2012-13. Table '1' indicates the status of diurnal flow of devotees in summer season. Wednesday, Friday and Saturday about 52.27, 47.01 and 47.88 per cent women visit respectively while 42.85, 46.65 and 42.76 per cent men visit respectively. The percentage of women visit temple is rather more than that the men devotees. The maximum flow of children observed on Sunday followed by Wednesday, Friday and Saturday. Moreover, mornings and evenings are seen more crowded. than afternoons. About 46.24 percent male devotees and 47.04 percent female devotees visited during the summer season.

Table: 1 Weekly distribution of devotees visiting Mahalaxmi temple

Days	No. of Devotees (mean of each day of month)						Total	%
	Men	%	Women	%	Children	%		
Monday	1383	47.62	1317	45.35	204	7.02	2904	13.83
Tuesday	1917	47.52	1905	47.22	212	5.25	4034	19.21
Wednesday	705	42.85	860	52.27	80	4.86	1645	7.83
Thursday	1207	47.99	1202	47.79	106	4.21	2515	11.98
Friday	1962	46.65	1977	47.01	266	6.32	4205	20.03
Saturday	901	42.76	1009	47.88	199	9.44	2107	10.03
Sunday	1632	45.58	1604	44.80	344	9.60	3580	17.05
Total	9707	46.24	9874	47.04	1411	6.72	20990	100.00

(Summer Season March to May).
Source: Based on fieldwork 2012-13.

In rainy season the status of flow of devotees is rather changed. Table '2' indicates the flow of men devotees are maximum than women devotees in all days. Diurnally Friday, Tuesday and Sunday are seen more devotees. Friday and Tuesday are considered the day of goddess Mahalaxmi. The maximum flows of children's are observed on Friday, Sunday and Tuesday. About 51.89 percent male devotees and 44.58 percent female devotees are visited during the observation period in all days in a week in rainy season. About 3.67 percent children's are visited in this period. Sunday is a day of holiday so most of the devotees are visited on this day.

Table: 2 Weekly distribution of devotees visiting Mahalaxmi temple (Rainy season June to October)

Days	No. of Devotees (mean of each day of month)						Total	%
	Men	%	Women	%	Children	%		
Monday	1585	57.69	1102	40.11	60	2.18	2747	13.70
Tuesday	1935	53.89	1540	42.89	115	3.20	3590	17.90
Wednesday	1097	50.43	996	45.79	82	3.77	2175	10.85
Thursday	1170	49.36	1115	47.04	85	3.58	2370	11.82
Friday	2032	51.28	1805	45.55	155	3.91	3962	19.76
Saturday	1086	48.18	1065	47.24	103	4.56	2254	11.24
Sunday	1497	50.78	1315	44.60	136	4.61	2948	14.70
Total	10402	51.89	8938	44.58	736	3.67	20046	100.00

Source: Based on fieldwork 2012-13.

Following table '3' shows 49.42 per cent women devotees and 48.40 per cent men on Friday. Sunday observed with 49.93 per cent women and 46.54 per cent men. Children are also seen maximum on these days. Maximum flows of male devotees are observed on Friday, Tuesday, Sunday it is 1937, 1904 and 1401 respectively. Maximum flows of female devotees are observed on Friday, Sunday and Tuesday, it is 1978, 1503 and 14.25 respectively. About 49.13 percent male devotees and 47.61 percent female devotees are visited during the observation period in all days in a week of winter season. About 3.25 percent children's are visited in this period.

Table: 3 Weekly distribution of devotees visiting Mahalaxmi temple

Days	No. of Devotees (mean of each day of month)						Total	%
	Men	%	women	%	Children	%		
Monday	1310	45.93	1401	49.12	141	4.94	2852	14.86
Tuesday	1904	55.96	1425	41.88	73	2.14	3402	17.73
Wednesday	907	49.15	898	48.67	40	3.82	1845	9.61
Thursday	1007	48.53	988	47.61	80	3.85	2075	10.81
Friday	1937	48.40	1978	49.42	87	2.17	4002	20.86
Saturday	960	48.04	941	47.09	97	4.85	1998	10.41
Sunday	1401	46.54	1503	49.93	106	3.52	3010	15.69
Total	9426	49.13	9134	47.61	624	3.25	19184	100.00

(Winter Season November to February)
Source: Based on fieldwork 2012-13.

The diurnal flow of devotees in winter season seen at morning and evening is maximum and at afternoon minimum. In summer season this afternoon flows are diminishes causing the scorching heat in the moths of March, April and May. In rainy season the months of June and July also adversely affects on the flow of devotees. However, maximum flow of male devotees (51.89) observed during the rainy season. After the *Gudi padwa*, New Year of Marathi calendar monthly festivals begin in Mahalaxmi temple as wel as in the month of *Shravan* maximum flow of devotees observed.

Spatial Flow of Devotees

Devotees come from different regions like other tahsils in Kolhapur district, other districts in Maharashtra, other states of India and even other countries in the world. Following table (4) shows the trend of devotees according to the tahsils. It indicates about 75.95 per cent devotees visit from Karvir tahsil, followed by Panhala (9.28 %) About 8.74 per cent devotees visit from Hatkanangle tahsil and 2.18 percent devotees visit from Radhanagari. There is less flow of devotees from Ajara, Gadhinglaj, Gaganbavda tahsils.

Table: 4 Trend of devotees from different tahsils of Kolhapur district.

Name of Tahsil	No. of Devotees	Percentage
Panhala	17	9.28
Karvira	139	75.95
Hatkanangale	16	8.74
Shirol	2	1.09
Gagan-Bavda	1	0.54
Radhanagari	4	2.18
Kagal	2	1.09
Gadhinglaj	1	0.54
Ajara	1	0.54
Total	183	100

Source: Based on fieldwork 2012-13.

Flow of Devotees from different districts of Maharashtra

Table '5' indicates about 41.12 per cent devotees are within Kolhapur district. About 15.73 per cent devotees come from Pune district while, 12.35 percent devotees come from Sangli district. About 10.11 per cent devotees come from Mumbai followed by Satara, Solapur, Nashik, Ratnagiri, Hingoli, Nagpur, Aurangabad, Jalgaon, Parbhani and Sindhudurg. There is minimum flow of devotees are observed from Raigad, Gadchiroli, Buldhana, Ahmadnagar, Yavatmal and Osmanabad. The flow of devotees from these districts is only below '1' per cent.

Table: 5 Flow of devotees from different districts of Maharashtra

Name of District	No. of Devotees	Percentage
Kolhapur	183	41.12
Thane/Mumbai	45	10.11
Pune	70	15.73
Satara	24	5.39
Ratnagiri	8	1.79
Solapur	22	4.94
Nashik	11	2.47
Sangli	55	12.35
Nagpur	5	1.12
Aurangabad	3	0.67
Parbhani	2	0.44
Jalgaon	3	0.67
Raigad	1	0.22
Sindhudurg	2	0.44
Gadchiroli	1	0.22
Buldhana	1	0.22
Ahmadnagar	1	0.22
Hingoli	6	1.34
Yavatmal	1	0.22
Osmanabad	1	0.22
Total	445	100

Source: Based on fieldwork 2012-13.

Flow of Devotees from different states of India

Following table '6' indicates 89.35 per cent devotees are from Maharashtra within, followed by Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and West Bengal i.e. 5.62, 1.40 and 1.00 per cent respectively. Minimum flow of devotees is observed from Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgad, Gujarat, Kerala and Goa. About 7.63 percent devotees come from southern states and mare 3.01 percent come from northern states. Form the other countries during the present fieldwork two tourists from Germany visit the temple out of their capacity.

Table: 6 Flow of devotees from different states of India

Name of State	No. of Devotees	Percentage
Maharashtra	445	89.35
Andhra Pradesh	7	01.40
Karnataka	28	05.62
Bihar	4	00.80
West Bengal	5	01.00
Uttar Pradesh	1	00.20
Madhya Pradesh	2	00.40
Chhattisgad	2	00.40
Gujarat	1	00.20
Kerala	1	00.20
Goa	2	00.20
Total	498	100

Source: Based on fieldwork 2012-13.

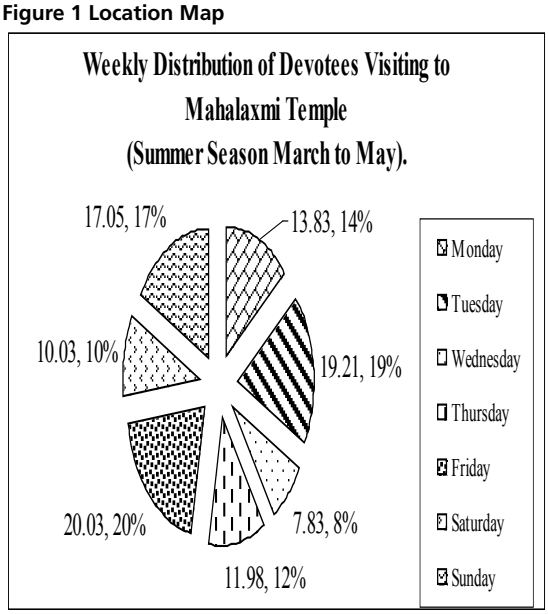
Conclusion

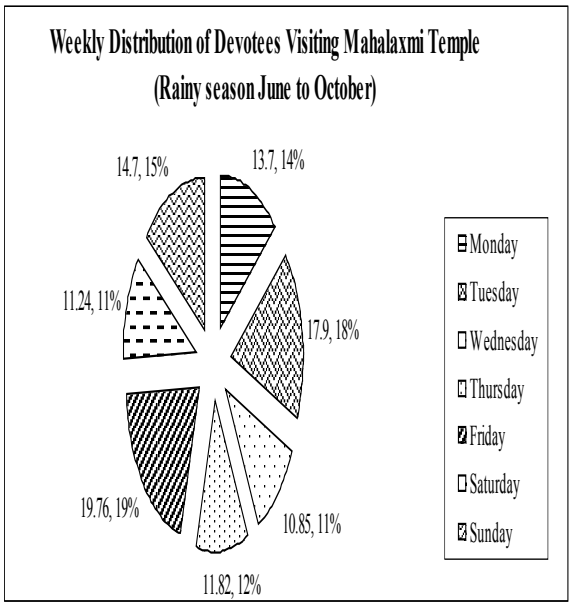
The daily flow of devotees at morning and evening on all days of a week is observed high. Maximum flow of devotees observed on Friday and Tuesday regarded as auspicious days of goddess. Being holiday Sunday is observed maximum flow of visitors with 17.05 per cent in summer season. In winter season owing to the Navaratra Utsav (the festival of nine auspicious nights of goddess) about 20 lakh devotees visit the temple during this festival. It is therefore, seen that, flow of devotees is greatly influenced by seasons with changes in daily weather, occasion of auspicious days.

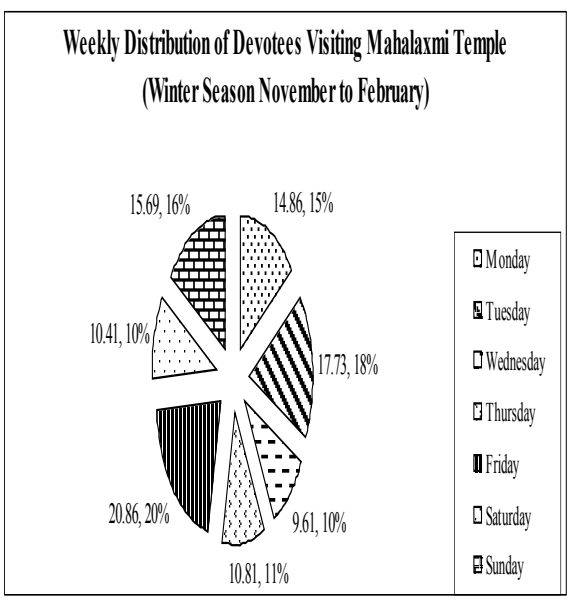
There is observed maximum flow of devotees from Karvir tahsil itself, followed by Panhala and Hatkanangale of Kolhapur district with 75.95, 9.28, and 8.74 per cent respectively. In Maharashtra state maximum flow of devotees is from Kolhapur district itself followed by Sangali and Pune with 41.12, 15.73, and 12.35 per cent respectively. Among the other states of India maximum flow of devotees from Maharashtra the home state followed by Karnataka and Andhra Pradesh, with 89.35, 5.62 and 1.40 per cent respectively. It is therefore 7.63 per cent devotees from southern states and mere 3.01 per cent devotees from northern states. It is therefore, concluded that, on the spatial flow of devotees increasing distance greatly affects.

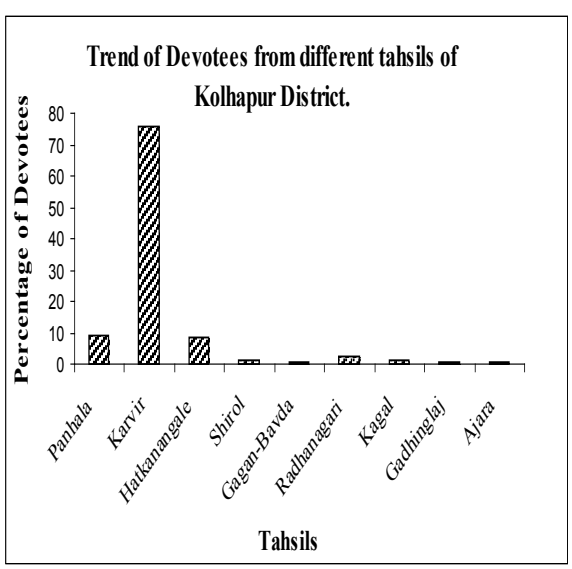


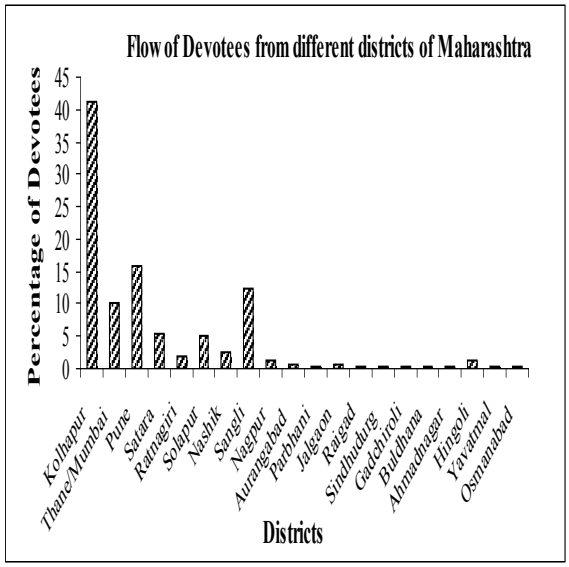
Figure 1 Location Map

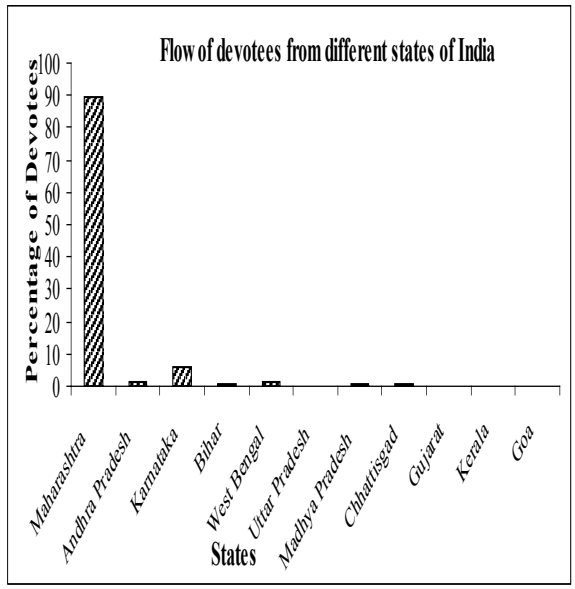












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