

A study of Hotel Industry at Hill Station with special reference to Matheran

* Mr. P. R. Karulkar



ABSTRACT

The topic of this paper is to study the hotel industry at hill station with special reference to Matheran. Hotel industry is one of the lucrative industries that cannot be developed without support of employees, local people and Government. This study is related to hill station of 'Matheran' which is very nearest to Mumbai. Due to lack of development of this tourist spot creates restriction for the development of hotel industry. After collecting and analyzing of information, this study reaches at conclusions and giving some suggestions to develop hotel industry at this hill station.

Key Words: Hotel, Hotel Industry, Tourism Industry, Tourists, Hill station

Introduction:

Industrial revolution took place in Europe in 1760. It gave momentum to the social and economical life of the people. The new concept of factory system provided by various physical and material amenities but adversely affected the Human Resources. Fatigue and Depression were the new diseases developed by this industrial phenomenon. J. B. Shaw, a great thinker in U.K in his famous Essay "where the wealth accumulates and the men decay" rightly pointed out mechanism of human talent. Doctors in Europe advised people to visit at hill station for mental relaxation. It was the correct remedy to come out from boredom and mental tension. In this millennium age, tourism has become a prominent part of human life, which gives synergy and energy to keep pace with the present competitive world.

The world's population is growing. "People over 50 have half of the disposable income in the U.S and those over 65 enjoy twice the discretionary income of people 25-34. The net worth of U.S. households headed by people over 60 grew by 30 percent over the last decade"¹

There are many other trends affecting travel. Many households have two income earners. This means that there are more discretionary funds for travel. Over the centuries, travel has developed for business, health, social and cultural reasons. Travel is an important part of our lives.

Now a day, people go to hill station mainly to relax and enjoy themselves. At such a place they derive pleasure from seeing historical monuments, natural scenery and sightseeing. Their satisfaction at hill station depends solely and largely on the hotel industry and service industry. Tourists frequently visit that hill station where they get good hospitality. Above all, where they are provided palatable dishes at reasonable rates. Matheran is an ideal hill station situated at Neral a scenic place in Raigad District of Maharashtra. Its

attraction to tourists is beyond dispute. It can further flourish in the field of hotel industry and service industry when the customer is treated as 'Atithi Devo Bhav'. This should be the main motto.

Significance of the study:

Hotel industry is one of the lucrative industries that cannot be developed without support of employees, local people and government. I have selected Matheran for the purpose of the study, as Matheran is a very scenic and beautiful hill station, which is very near to Mumbai. Mumbai is a capital city of Maharashtra. Most of the people from different places come to Mumbai for many purposes and few of them can also have a visit to Matheran. People coming to tourist place require good and comfortable hotel service; it should be economical and safe also. When they travel at that time they prefer hospitality services. When they will spend on hotels then there will be income for local government through taxes. It will also increase foreign exchange earnings. Whenever there is possibility of development of tourist place, hoteliers enter in this lucrative business. Increasing of tourism activity at any place depends upon the development of that spot. But Matheran is not as much developed once hill station as compared to others. Many problems create restrictions on its development. This indirectly affects on hotel industry. Hence, it has significant aspect to find out the problems behind, to slow development of hotel industry in Matheran.

Objectives of the Study:

- To study various types of hotels, their service and the problems they face.
- To evaluate the interdependence of growth of tourism on hotel industry.
- To analyse the socio-economic impact of hotel industry on local people
- To suggest some measures for the development of hotel business in the study area.

Hotel Business as an Industry:

The term 'Hotel' is defined by American Heritage Dictionary as, "an establishment that provide lodging and usually meals and other services for travelers and other paying guests".² What is the Hospitality Industry? This is not an easy question and books on the subject offer many different answers. Some view the hospitality industry as comprising four sectors; lodging, food, entertainment. "The U.S lodging industry employees about 1.25 million people., both part time and full time. Hotel Managers and assistant managers around 2 lack jobs. Self employed managers primarily owners of small hotels and motels hold a significant number of those jobs".³

The hospitality industry's growth in recent decades has been due in part to the average individual's higher standard of living, higher level of education and longer life span. The greater opportunities available in rapidly developing societies have also contributes to industrial expansion.

Findings:

For this study, out of 42 hotels 17 hotels are selected randomly which includes different categories like three star, two star, one star, only restaurant, snaks bar, Chinese corner etc. After conducting interview with hoteliers, hotel employees and local people, following problems have been noticed

- 1) It is one of the hill station in India where there is no inside transport allowed. So transport cost is high. Tourists have to pay more cost for each and every service. Either they visit one day or they stay at one night only.
- 2) Even though Tourists have to pay municipal tax and vehicle parking tax but they do not enjoy at Matheran when they compare with other hill stations.
- 3) Higher burden of taxes on hotels also creates financial burden on hoteliers.
- 4) Due to lack of awareness regarding hotel business, local people do not take proper education, training regarding hotel business. Most of the hotel staff is appointed on contract basis.
- 5) Political unrest creates problems of development of Matheran.
- 6) Improper Medical facility also restricts the tourists to come and stay for more days at Matheran.
- 7) Water and irregular supply of electricity create problem for all hoteliers. Due to this problem, they do not

- satisfy all promises ie. A/C rooms, swimming tank etc.
- 8) Local people are also not interested to stay for a longer period of time with their next generation because they want to shift from Matheran to any where due to lack of education, medical facilities. So, the small loal business those depend on tourist ie, also going to reduce day by day.
 - 9) Infrastructure problem restricts the tourist to attract this place.

Conclusion:

The object of this research paper is to study the hotel industry, its problems and development in future at Matheran hill station. Hotel industry is one of the lucrative industries that cannot be developed without support of employees, local people and local government. Increasing tourism activity at any place depends upon the development of that spot. But Matheran is not as much developed once hill station in Raigad district of Maharshttra. Problems of transport, lack of awareness of people, political problems create the restriction on its development.

Suggestions:

- After studying all the above problems, following suggestions will be definitely useful to solve the problems.
- 1) Transport problem can be solved by increasing train frequency from Neral to Matheran. Government should also construct the proposed substitute road from Panvel-Dhodhani to Matheran. Internal transport can be solved by allowing hackney and bullock cart which was previously permitted.
 - 2) By keeping tourism development aspect, the government should develop the sight scenes eg. Gardening, boating at lake water, rope way, play ground etc.
 - 3) ATM facility, Tourists Information Center, Medical facility should be provided.
 - 4) Reduce tax burden on hoteliers, on local people and on tourists
 - 5) Strict control on the registration and licensing of the hotels.
 - 6) Provide maximum facilities to the hotel staff so they will work sincerely and honestly for hotels.
 - 7) Local people should take proper education regard ing hotel business then they will capable to do jobs in hotels. They can also develop new business like supplying fresh fruits and vegetables to hoteliers.
 - 8) Shopping mall should be developed for modern style of customers.
 - 9) Internal conflict, political disturbance should be neglected for having development of Matheran and future prospect for Matheran.

* *K.G.Uran College of Commerce & Arts, Uran-Raigad*

REFERENCE

- 1) Angels Rocco M. and Vladimir Andrew n., A Hospitality Today, An Introduction, Lansing, Michigan (U.S.A): Educational Institute American Hotel and Lodging Association, 1991.p.30
- 2) The American Heritage Dictionary of the English language, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1994.
- 3) Ibid.p.31
- 4) Mr. Dabake Vishnu bhikaji, A Hand Book to Matheran, Panvel, Mumbai, Dabake Publication,1938,p30
- 5) Kavanaugh Raphael R. and Minemeier Jeek D., Suspersion in the Hospitality Industry, lansing, Michigan (U.S.A): Educational Institute of the American Hotels & Lodging Association, 2001.