

**CHAPTER - V**  
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**FUNCTIONAL ANALYSIS OF PILGRIMS DATA**

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References



### 5.1 INTRODUCTION :

Man always fulfils his desire with some activities for specific purpose which reflected in the functional characteristics of the activities. The functional analysis represents the description of temporal cross sectional properties of phenomena (Singh S.N. 1986, p.109). It may be noted that with varying attitude and changing context the functional properties change accordingly. Pilgrimage being a form of tourism, various types and forms of functional attributes are related to socio-cultural factors in space-time domain.

The problem of measuring pilgrims is a difficult and rather a complex task. The measurement of pilgrims refer to the volume of pilgrims arrival and their trend in time scale. The measuring of pilgrims is rather more difficult, mainly due to lack of counting agencies and complexity in the occurrence. Such a type of data is also lacking information of socio-economic structure of pilgrims. Therefore, to get proper information personal and sample surveys are made.

To conduct a sample survey a questionnaire was prepared. It includes geographical background, spatial distribution of pilgrims, age, sex, religion, profession, type of accommodation, mode of travel, duration of stay, income structure, mode of travel in the town and behavioural pattern of pilgrims. About 460 pilgrims were personally contacted, questionnaires filled and

interviews of a few learned pilgrims were taken. By this it became possible to understand the views of the pilgrims and also their behavioural attitude regarding the pilgrimage at Pandharpur.

## 5.2 SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF PILGRIMS :

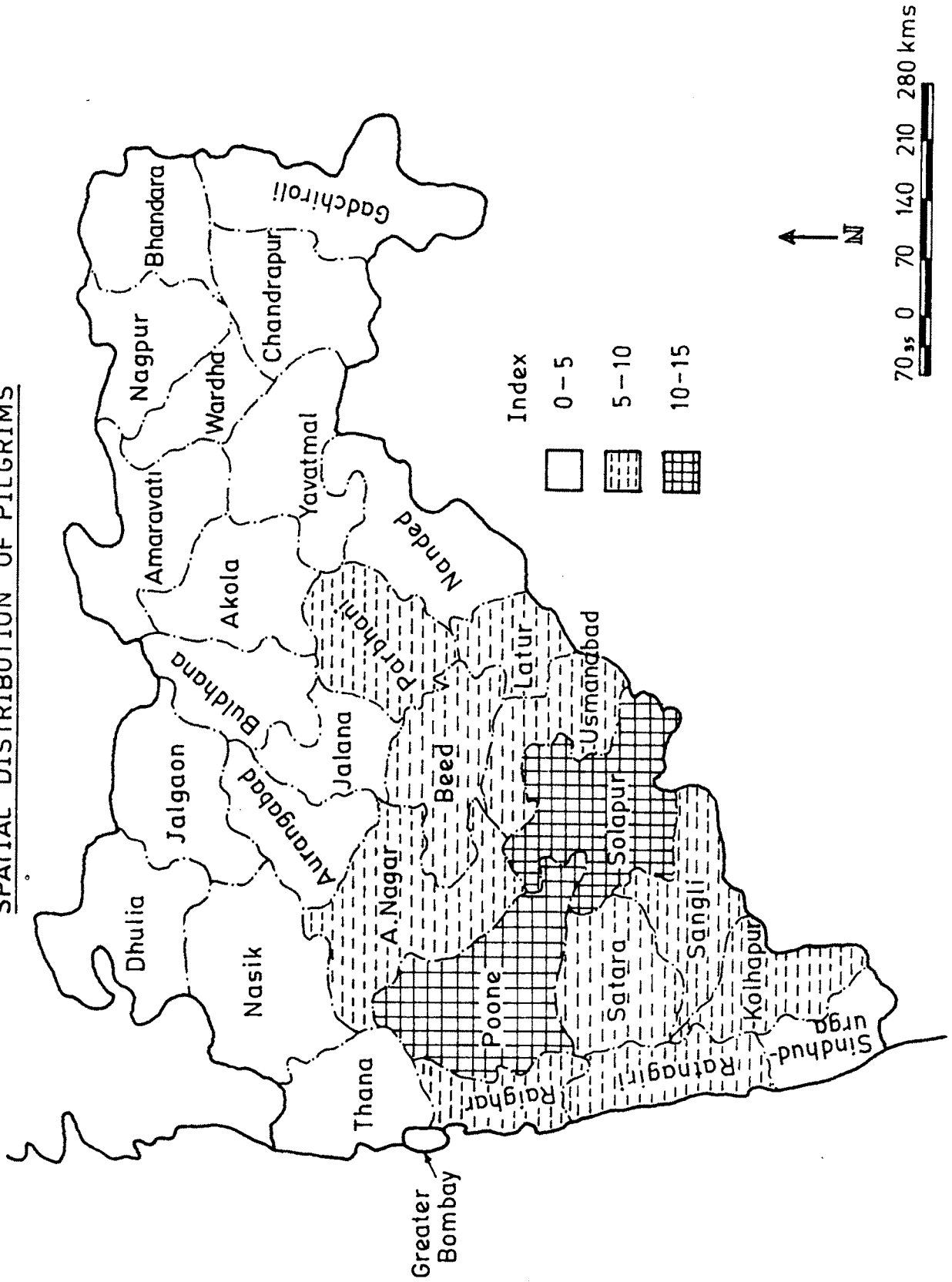
### 5.2.1 Statewise distribution of pilgrims :

The study of spatial distribution of pilgrims helps to understand the nature of flow of pilgrims from various parts of the country to Pandharpur. The table given below gives idea about the statewise distribution of pilgrims. The information is collected by the actual survey made by the author.

TABLE 5.1 : Statewise distribution of pilgrims (1988-89).

Sr. No.	States	Actual number contacted	Percentage
1	Maharashtra	377	81.95
2	Karnataka	41	8.91
3	Andhra Pradesh	21	4.56
4	Tamil Nadu	12	2.60
5	Gujarat	5	1.08
6	Uttar Pradesh	2	0.45
7	Punjab	2	0.45
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	Total	460	100.00

# SPATIAL DISTRIBUTION OF PILGRIMS



Map 5-1

Table 5.1 reveals that the largest number of pilgrims who visited the town came from different parts of Maharashtra. About 81.95 percent of pilgrims visited the town were from Maharashtra. It was followed by Karnataka (8.91%), Andhra Pradesh (4.56%) and Tamil Nadu (2.60%). About one percent pilgrims visited Pandharpur from Gujarat, and from Uttar Pradesh and Punjab is less than one percent. The discussion with the pilgrims from U.P. and Punjab, it is understood that their families are migrated to U.P. and Punjab for business purpose. They visit Pandharpur at the time of Ashadhi or Kartiki fair every year.

#### 5.2.2 Districtwise distribution of pilgrims in Maharashtra :

Map 5.1 clearly shows the districtwise distribution of pilgrims in Maharashtra. It is observed that in Solapur and Poona district percentage of pilgrims is high and varying from 10 to 15 percent. While in Satara, Sangli, Kolhapur, Ratnagiri, Ahmednagar, Beed, Latur, Osmanabad and Parbhani districts the percentage of pilgrims is varying between 5 to 10 percent. Remaining other districts of Maharashtra are found below five percent of pilgrims. The Poona and Solapur district have maximum percentage because Alandi and Pandharpur, the important places of Varkaris are located in these districts and the Dnyaneshwar Palghi procession goes through these districts.

### 5.3 CLASSIFICATION OF PILGRIMS :

#### 5.3.1 Classification of pilgrims as varkaris and pilgrim tourist :

The word Varkari is created from the words vari and kari. The vari means time, and it stands for the regular visit of pilgrims to Pandharpur. Kari means one who does it. Varkari, therefore, means one who goes to Pandharpur at the time of Ashadi and Kartiki Ekadashis. Some of them are going for monthly Ekadashis also. It is assumed that Varkari should go to Pandharpur at least twice a year on the Ashadhi and Kartiki Ekadashi days.

The pilgrims belong to Varkari panth wear a rosary of Tulasi beads, because Tulasi is a favourite plant of Krishan. The wearing of tulasimala is supposed as honour to Lord Vitthal. Varkari sometimes called as Malkari (who wears mala of Tulasi beads). Malakari is a vegetarian person.

Many pilgrims visit Pandharpur frequently. The purpose of visit is not only to pray God but also enjoy for some days. They have, no doubt, faith in God and Varkaris, but they could not follow the Varkari panth. They do not wear the rosary of Tulasi. They are not vegetarian. Sometimes they miss the Ashadi and Kartiki fairs or may give chance to other family member. Such persons are called as pilgrim tourists. It includes all other visitors who come for their office work, business work, to meet their friends and relatives and other not specified work.

**TABLE 5.2 : Pilgrims as varkaris and pilgrim tourists.**

Sr. No.	Distribution of pilgrims	Actual no. contacted	Percentage
1	Varkaris	143	31.10
2	Pilgrim tourists	317	68.90
Total		460	100.00

It is clear from the Table 5.2 that about 31.10 percent of the pilgrims are Varkaris. They visit the Pandharpur every year at Ashadhi and Kartiki Ekadashi days, while about 68.90 percent are pilgrim tourists.

### 5.3.2 Classification of pilgrims as per fairs :

Through this survey, it is observed that the pilgrims visit Pandharpur at different times. The following table suggests fairwise classification and attendance of pilgrims.

**TABLE 5.3 : Pilgrims percentage as per fair.**

Sr. No.	Visit to Pandharpur	Actual number contacted	Percentage
1	Ashadhi Ekadashi		
2	Kartiki Ekadashi	172	37.39
3	Ashadhi and Kartiki Ekadashi fair	172	37.39
4	Ashadhi, Kartiki, Maghi, Chaitri, Monthly fairs	116	25.22
5	<u>TOTAL</u>	460	100.00



Table 5.3 shows that for Ashadhi Ekadashi percentage of pilgrims is Nil because survey has been taken during the Kartiki fair. While at the time of Kartiki Ekadashi percentage is 37.39. It seems that these pilgrims visit the Pandharpur once in a year. The percentage of the pilgrims who visit Pandharpur at both the fairs (Ashadhi and Kartiki) is about 37.39. The four important fairs and all monthly fairs are attended by 25.22 percent pilgrims.

### 5.3.3 Classification of pilgrims by purpose of visit :

It is observed through a study that there are various purposes of pilgrims to visit Pandharpur. According to the purpose of visit to town, five categories are made. The pilgrimage, business, office work, visiting friends and relatives and others. The table below represents classification of pilgrims according to purpose of visit.

**TABLE 5.4 : Classification of pilgrims by purpose of visit**

Sr. No.	Purpose	Actual number contacted	Percentage
1	Pilgrimage	449	97.80
2	Business	5	1.10
3	Official work	3	0.70
4	Visiting friends and relatives	2	0.40
5	Others	1	0.20
Total		460	100.00

From Table 5.4 it is found that about 97.80 percent pilgrims came to Pandharpur to worship God and to get peace of mind at least for a few days. They believe that 'Lord Vitthal' will give impetus to solve their family difficulties. Every year they come and demand something from God and sometimes they felt that Lord Vitthal pleased with them and solved their difficulties. They come to thank God of the past work and again to put some new demands for future.

Many pilgrims come for their business work. In a survey it is observed that about 1.10 percent pilgrim tourists visited this place and even they will visit every year in future also because their main purpose is to earn money and also to worship God. Similarly some pilgrim tourists come to Pandharpur for their office work. Purposely they select this period of fair to come here because along with their routine office work they visit the temple of Lord Vitthal and to get peace of mind. Many persons come here to meet their friends and relatives at this time only because they intend to visit the temple. But it is found that in all these categories percentage is less than one percent.

It is also known that in pilgrims about 55 percent persons are farmers because Ashadhi and Kartiki fairs are held during off season of the agriculture. The people are free from their work therefore, they can come to Pandharpur. But the case of Varkaris is different. In case , whatever may be the difficulties, they come to Pandharpur for Ashadhi and Kartiki Ekadashi.

#### 5.3.4 Classification of pilgrims by age group :

It is very common that by visual observation one could judge the age group of pilgrims in fairs. It was felt that majority of the pilgrims were of middle age group. Our surveyed work reveals the result in Table 5.5.

**TABLE 5.5 : Pilgrims Age-group.**

Sr. No.	Age groups	Actual number contacted	Percentage
1	Below 20 years	42	9.13
2	20 to 60 years	323	70.22
3	Above 60 years	95	20.65
Total		460	100.00

The Table 5.5 represents that the pilgrims below age of 20 years were only 9.13 percent. The pilgrims between the age group of 20 to 60 years represent about 70.22 percent; while the pilgrims above 60 years represented by 20.65 percent. These figures denote that pilgrims in middle age group were dominant in attending the fairs. These people came to Pandharpur to get some relief from their daily routine and to have some peace of mind at least for two or three days.

#### 5.4 RELIGION OF PILGRIMS :

India is a land of religion. There are five major religions in India. These are Hindu, Buddha, Muslim, Christians and Jain. Each religion has its own traditions and many festivals and fairs are attached to them. We are proud that all these religions have free liberty to maintain their traditions. Not only this but people from different religions come together and celebrate the festivals which shows unique example of national integration.

Every village in the country celebrates fairs or festivals because majority of the villagers believe in God. Such fair and festivals are related to some God or Goddess. The Pandharpur is a town of fairs and festivals. Through out the year the fairs or festivals are celebrated. Ashadhi and Kartiki Ekadashis are important fairs in Pandharpur. People from all religions celebrate the fairs. The survey work done by the author at the time of Kartiki Ekadashi reflects in Table 5.6 below.

TABLE 5.6 : Religionwise pilgrims.

Sr. No.	Religion	Actual number contacted	Percentage
1	Hindu	418	90.87
2	Buddha	20	4.35
3	Christains	10	2.17
4	Muslims	12	2.61
Total		460	100.00

Table 5.6 reveals that about 90.87 percent of pilgrims are related to the Hindu religion. About 4.35 percent pilgrims are related to the Buddha religion. Christians are found about 2.17 percent, while Muslims are about 2.61 percent. By interviews of the pilgrims of the Buddha, Christians and Muslims, it came to know that they come to Pandharpur to worship Lord Vitthal. They believe 'Lord Vitthal' of Pandharpur, as they believe their own deities. No doubt, percentage of Hindus (90.37 percent) is highest as the Lord Vitthal is the deity of Hindu people.

#### 5.5 MODE OF TRAVEL :

Since Independence there has been two ways of travel, one is BLR and other is MSRTC Buses. Except these, private vehicles are used by many pilgrims. Many people go on foot to Pandharpur (Chapter-III). The table given below suggests classification of pilgrims by mode of travel.

**TABLE 5.7** : Classification of pilgrims by mode of travel (1988).

Sr. No.	Mode of Travel	Actual number contacted	Percentage
1	MSRTC Buses	289	62.82
2	Railway	73	15.86
3	MSRTC Buses and railway	62	13.48
4	Private buses	4	0.86
5	Other means of travel	32	6.98
Total		460	100.00

Table 5.7 reveals that MSRTC buses carried highest number of pilgrims from all over Maharashtra. About 62.82 percent of the pilgrims were carried during the Ashadhi and Kartiki Ekadashi. BLR carried about 15.86 percent pilgrims. It is known from the interviews that the pilgrims from adjoining areas preferred to go by buses. While people from long distance prefer to go by BLR. Contribution of private buses was less than one percent. The pilgrims travelled by other means of transport like motor cycles, cycles, bullockcarts are found about 6.98 percent.

#### 5.5.1 Mode of travel in the town :

The following table gives an idea about mode of travel in the town.

**TABLE 5.8 : Mode of travel in the town.**

Sr. No.	Mode of travel	Actual number contacted	Percentage
1	Rickshwas	23	5.00
2	Tangas	69	15.00
3	On Feet	368	80.00
Total		460	100.00

**SOURCE :** Compiled by the author.

Table 5.8 reveals that the mode of travel in the town is not an important factor because nearly 80.00 percent of the pilgrims visit different places in Pandharpur on foot. It is found that most of the Dharmashalas and Mathas are located near and around the main temple. The MSRTC Bus Stand is not far away. Many pilgrims use Tangas or Rickshwas, because railway station is away from the town. It is observed that about 5 percent of pilgrims move in the city by Rickshwas, while tanga was used by about fifteen percent pilgrims.

#### 5.6 TYPE OF ACCOMMODATION :

Accommodation at the destination plays very important role in tourism. The Pandharpur town has proved enough for this. But at the time of the fairs there is not possible to adjust such a large number of pilgrims and could not provide better facilities to them. During the survey period eight categories of accommodation are found. Other category includes pilgrims staying at MSRTC bus station and railway station. Table 5.9 indicates the provision of accommodation in Pandharpur.

Table 5.9 shows that the Dharmashalas and Mathas are important absorbants of the pilgrims. About 45.43 percent of pilgrims are staying in Mathas, and 24.36 percent of pilgrims are staying in Dharmashalas. These are non-profit establishments or having minimum charges. Idea of tents in the river bed at the

time of Kartiki Ekadashi is fantastic. Some pilgrims bring their tents along with them and utilize in the Pandharpur. During the Ashadhi Ekadashi the rain is there, the problem of residence in river bed arose and some alternative is made by the private schools and other social institutions. It is observed that about 16.08 percent of the pilgrims are adjusted in the river bed.

**TABLE 5.9 : Accommodation in Pandharpur.**

Sr. No.	Accommodation sought	Actual number contacted	Percentage
1	Hotel	9	01.96
2	Dharmashalas	112	24.36
3	Mathas	209	45.43
4	Rental houses	34	07.39
5	Friends and relatives	3	00.66
6	Tents in river bed	74	16.08
7	Holiday Home	5	01.08
8	Others	14	03.04
Total		460	100.00

Provision of rental houses made by the people of Pandharpur is very interesting. It is observed that about 7.39 percent of pilgrims are adjusted in such a houses. Of course, this happens at



the time of Ashadhi and Kartiki Ekadashi. The charges are not fixed. The purpose of house holders is to earn more with available facilities.

Contribution of holiday home is about 1.08 percent, while hotels accommodated about 1.96 percent of pilgrims. Accommodation by relatives and friends contributed by less than one percent. While about 3.04 percent pilgrims are accommodated by many other ways like railway and bus stations etc.

#### 5.7 INCOME OF PILGRIMS :

The study of income gives an idea about the financial position of the pilgrims. The Table 5.10 reflects this properly.

TABLE 5.10 : Income of pilgrims.

Sr. No.	Income group	Actual number contacted	Percentage
1	Low income group Rs.10,000/-	341	74.13
2	Middle income group Rs.10,000 to Rs.30,000	92	20.00
3	High income group Above Rs.30,000	27	05.87
Total		460	100.00

It is evident from the Table 5.10 that majority of the pilgrims are from lower income groups. It constitutes about 74.13 percent. While about 20.00 percent pilgrims are from middle income group and 5.87 percent pilgrims are from high income group. It is known from interviews of the these pilgrims of high income group that they stay in hotels and most of them book the hotels well in advance.

#### 5.8 DURATION OF STAY IN THE TOWN :

Fairs are held in Pandharpur on every Ekadashi (11th day) of Marathi month. Out of them Ashadhi, Kartiki, Maghi and Chaitri Ekadashi fairs are important. Ashadhi and Kartiki are the main fairs. Varkari and pilgrim tourists visit the town during these fairs. The important days are Dashmi (10th day), Ekadashi (11th day) and Dwadashi (12th day). The pilgrims arrive Pandharpur on Dashmi. On Ekadashi day, after ablution, they visit the temple of Lord Vitthal and other deities. They are on fast on this day. On 12th day they offer meal to the deity before taking their meal and then they leave the town. In Ashadhi and Kartiki Ekadashi fairs, some of them stay in the town upto full moon day and attend the 'Kala Festival' at Gopalpur. If possible next day they also attend the 'Kala Festival' in the temple of Lord Vitthal which is called as Namdeo Kala. Due to this their duration of stay in the town is different. Some of them after Ashadhi Ekadashi, stay in the town upto Kartiki

Ekadashi for four months (Chaturmasa). Following table explains the duration of stay at Pandharpur.

**TABLE 5.11 : Duration of stay of pilgrims.**

Sr. No.	Duration of stay	Actual number contacted	Percentage
1	One day	43	9.35
2	Two days	33	7.17
3	Three days	201	43.69
4	Five days	138	30.00
5	Eight days	35	7.62
6	Four months	10	2.17
Total		460	100.00

Above Table 5.11 reveals the fact that about 43.69 percent of pilgrims stay in the town for three days, that is on Dashami, Ekadashi and Dwadashi. About 30 percent of pilgrims stay in the town for five days. They arrive on Dashami and stay upto the full moon day. They attend the Kala festival at Gopalpur and then leave the town. About 7.62 percent pilgrims stay for eight days with Gopal Kala, they also attend the Namdeo Kala in the Lord Vitthal temple and leave the town. Those who are visiting the Pandharpur on every Ekadashi they stay in the town for one or two days. They account about 9.35 percent and 7.17 percent respectively.

About 2.17 percent of pilgrims stay for four months in the city. Period between Ashadhi and Kartiki Ekadashi is known as Chaturmasa (four months period). Lord Vitthal is supposed to start his four months long sleep, after Ashadhi Ekadashi, so it is known as Shayani (sleeping) Ekadashi. The Ekadashi, in the bright half of the Kartika, when he is supposed to wake up at the conclusion of Chaturmasa, being known as Prabodhin (waking up) Ekadashi. During this period many people stay in the town. They arrange recitals. During this period they avoid certain food articles like onions, garlic, bringal etc.

#### 5.9 PURCHASE OF DEVOTIONAL GOODS :

Trade in Pandharpur especially during the time of fair is concentrated around the devotional goods. The main items are the rosary of Tulsi beads and sweet items like sugar candy, sugar balls, churmuras, futane etc. which are used as prasad of Lord Vitthal. The table below elaborates purchasing capacities of pilgrims

TABLE 5.12 : Trade of devotional goods

Sr. No.	Purchasing in Rupees	Actual number contacted	Percentage
1	10	204	44.35
2	20	144	31.30
3	30	47	10.22
4	40	47	10.22
5	Above 40	18	3.19
Total		460	100.00

It reveals from the Table 5.12 that the purchase of devotional goods ranges from Rs.10/- to Rs.40/- per head. By surveyed work it is seen that about 44.35 percent pilgrims purchase devotional goods upto Rs.10/- only, while about 31.30 percent pilgrims purchase from Rs.10/- to Rs.20/- only. From Rs.20/- to Rs.40/- the percentage is about 20.44 and above Rs.40/- percentage is about 3.19. From these figures it is seen that maximum percentage (74.65%) of purchasing is from lower group. It also indicates that large number of pilgrims are from poor families.

#### 5.10 BEHAVIOURAL PATTERNS OF PILGRIMS :

To know the views of pilgrims attempt has been made to collect the information regarding the behaviour of the pilgrims. The opinion of pilgrims regarding the accommodation, transport facilities, Darshan of Lord Vitthal, opinion about town, behaviour of the citizens about the food facilities are collected, tabulated and analysed.

##### 5.10.1 Pilgrims opinion about accommodation facilities :

The views about the accommodation are collected from different pilgrims and tabulated as below.

**TABLE 5.13 : Pilgrims' opinion regarding accommodation facilities.**

Sr.No.	Tourist opinion	Actual number contacted	Percentage
1	Good	255	55.44
2	Average	205	44.56
	Total	460	100.00

Table 5.13 reveals the fact that about 55.44 percent of pilgrims feel that accommodation facilities are good. But 44.56 percent of pilgrims strongly showed in happiness about accommodation facilities. They say that the accommodation facilities are average. They complained about the filthy and unhygienic conditions of the rooms. The accommodation facilities are not sufficient. Sanitation facilities are very poor. Drinking water facilities in the Dharmshalas and Mathas are not sufficient. Also light arrangement is not good. They have also complained about the rental houses as they are taking high charges and not giving any facilities.

They feel that government of Maharashtra may take initiative in this regard and make provision of additional Dharmshalas with good facilities. For that they are agree to accept reasonable entry tax.

#### 5.10.2 Pilgrims opinion about transport facilities :

The views of the pilgrims about the transport facilities are noted in the table given below.

**TABLE 5.14 : Pilgrims opinion regarding transport facility.**

Sr. No.	Tourist opinion	Actual number contacted	Percentage
1	Good	236	51.30
2	Average	224	48.70
Total		460	100.00

Table 5.14 reveals the fact that about 51.30 percent pilgrims have a good opinion regarding the transport facility. Nearly 48.70 percent pilgrims have shown their disagreement about the facilities. According to them transport facilities are not sufficient during the Ashadhi and Kartiki fairs. They said that the fast buses should be provided for long distances. The MSRTC should arrange to provide buses on contract with usual charges.

For the Ashadhi and Kartiki Ekadashi fair MSRTC may give concessions in the charges, so that more people will get opportunity to visit Pandharpur. BLR services must be improved. It is necessary to convert this narrow gauge into the broad gauge as early as possible. It will help to reduce the pressure on MSRTC buses.

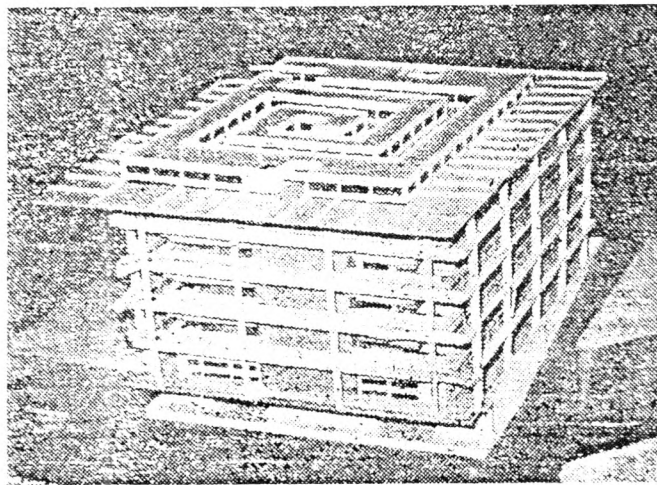
#### 5.10.3 Pilgrims opinion about darshan of Lord Vitthal :

The views about the darshan of Lord Vitthal noted in the table given below.

**TABLE 5.15 : Pilgrims opinion about the darshan of Lord Vitthal.**

Sr. No.	Darshan facility	Actual number contacted	Percentage
1	Good	85	18.47
2	Average	375	81.53
	Total	460	100.00

photograph No. 4.5.1



Proposed Darshan Mandap



Table 5.15 reveals the fact that 81.53 percent of pilgrims have showed their disagreeence regarding the darshan facility during the Ashadi and Kartiki Ekadashi fairs. They are not getting darshan easily. It is very time consuming process. For hours together they have to stand in row. Adequate police force is not there. Many have suggested that with the help of close circuit T.V. a darshan facility should made available out side the temple and in the river bed. The Darshan Mandap is under construction, will give a good facility for the pilgrims. The Mandap will be seven storied, each story will accommodate, six thousand one hundred twenty four pilgrims. The overall capacity of accommodation will be of 42,500 pilgrims. This will reduce the length of the queue. Each story will have the common amenities such as food, drinking water, toilet etc. There will also be police control room to redress the grievances of the pilgrims. The estimated cost of construction is around one crore rupees. After completion this Mandap will protect the pilgrims from heat and rain (Photograph No.5.1). It should be completed earlier. About 18.47 percent of pilgrims opinioned that the darshan facility is good but still it needs improvement.

#### 5.10.4 Pilgrims opinion about the town :

The pilgrims views about the Pandharpur are collected and given in Table 5.16.

Table 5.16 reveals the fact that 68.70 percent of pilgrims have a good opnion about the town. But nearly 31.30 percent of the

pilgrims have shown disagreeness regarding the facilities available in the town. According to them sanitation facilities must be made available during the Ashadi and Kartiki Ekadashi fairs. There should be a sufficent light arrangement on the roads. Drinking water facility must be made available at different places in the town.

**TABLE 5.16 : Pilgrims opinion about the town.**

Sr. No.	Opinion about town	Actual number contacted	Percentage
1	Good	316	68.70
2	Average	144	31.30
Total		460	100.00

The town should be clean, the roads should be widened. During the fair period vehicles must be forbidden at some reserved places, because the roads become overcrowded and congested. The pradakshana road should be widened.

#### **5.10.5 Pilgrims opinion about the behaviour of the citizens :**

By taking interviews author has collected information regarding the behaviour, attitude of the citizens and it is tabulated in Table 5.17.

**TABLE 5.17 : Behaviour of citizens.**

Sr. No.	Behaviour of citizens	Actual number contacted	Percentage
1	Good	260	56.52
2	Average	200	43.48
Total		460	100.00

Table 5.17 reveals the fact that about 56.52 percent of pilgrims are happy with the behaviour of the people of Pandharpur. But about 43.48 percent have shown unhappiness about the behaviour of Badvas (main Priests) in the temple. Many have complained against shopkeepers, they feel that during the period they sell devotional goods and articles at higher prices.

#### 5.10.6 Pilgrims opinion about food facility :

The views about the food facilities are collected from the pilgrims and tabulated as below.

**TABLE 5.18 : Food facilities.**

Sr. No.	Food facility	Actual number contacted	Perce ntage
1	Good	375	81.52
2	Average	85	18.48
Total		460	100.00

Table 5.18 reveals the fact that 81.52 percent pilgrims are happy with the quality of food. About 18.48 percent have their complaints about the quality of the food, and lack of good restaurants.

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