



TOURISM AND THE LOCAL COMMUNITY: AN ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVE ON COASTAL STRETCH OF EAST MEDINIPUR

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Abstract

Tourism is considered as a catalyst in employment generation and social integration and aims to spruce up economic growth of a place. Many local communities recognize tourism for its stimulating capacity to change in social, cultural, environmental and economic dimensions. Coastal area, consist a major proportion of population and economic activities, which depend mostly on its natural resources. Such conditions reflect the importance of these areas in terms of the welfare of the coastal communities. This paper intends to conduct an analysis of economic conditions of the coastal community in Mandarmoni, a tourism site along the coastal stretch of East Medinipur district, West Bengal. The analysis intends to pinpoint the major findings on impact of tourism on employment, labour supply, occupational structure, and level of income and also analyze the comparability of such factors among previous and present generation of the local community, to get the changing scenario over the time. The survey conducted, involved detailed field work, shows a significant impact of tourism on the economic profile of the local communities at Mandarmoni.

Keywords: *Coastal tourism, local community, economic condition*



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Introduction

The process of tourism incorporates man, space and time which involve the interactions between the host and the tourists, the expectations and adjustments made by the host community and the roles played by the various institutions which act as intermediates between them. Many coastal communities gets essential lifeline from tourism. The increasing financial hardship forced, more and more coastal communities to turn to tourism based occupation as a means of generating income and survival. The shift of people from the primary and secondary sectors to the tertiary sector is the result of the labour demand in tourism industry. Increasing the use of local food in the tourism industry is a way of increasing backward linkages from tourism, involving the local community and therefore, moving toward more diversified and sustainable development. According to Fennell (2003), tourism is increasingly seen as a key community tool, with the recognition of its economic contribution in bolstering stagnating economies and its ability to unify local community residents. At community levels, tourism offered opportunities for direct, indirect, and induced employment and income, spurring regional and local economic development (Coccosis, 2004). The economic impacts of tourism are the most widely researched impacts of tourism on community (Mason, 2003). Economic impacts are easier to research in a local community because it is small and generally easier to assess. Therefore, tourism can have positive economic effects on local economies, and a visible

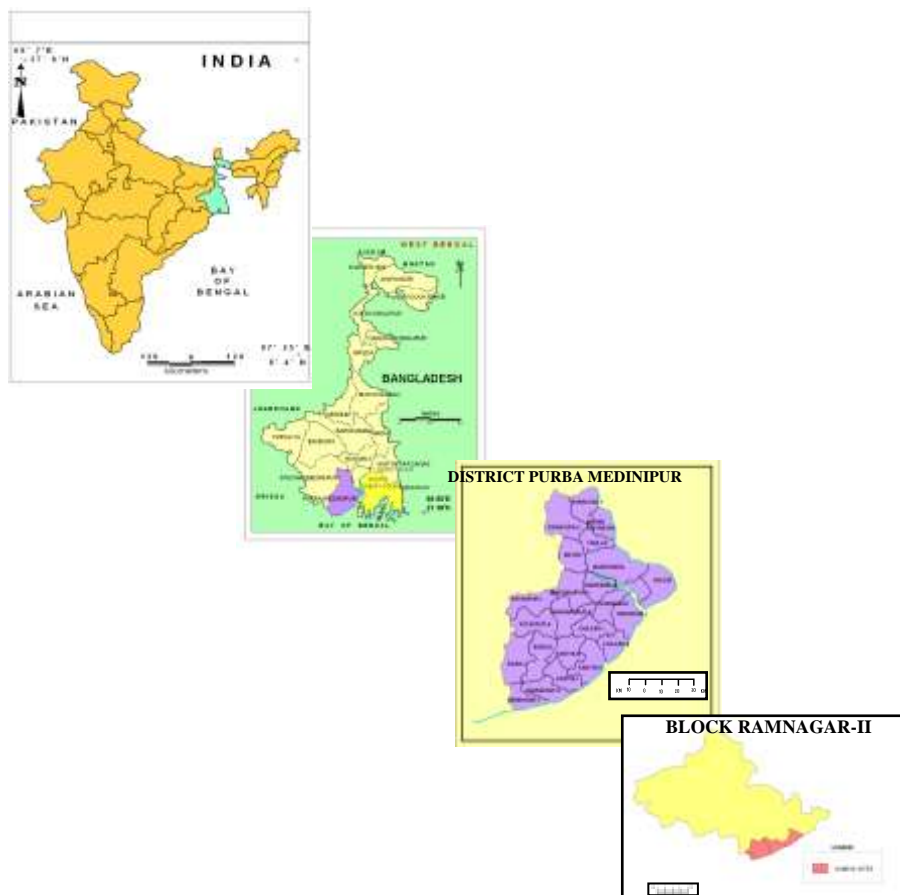
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impact on national GDP growth. It can be an essential component for both community development and poverty reduction (Ashe, 2005). The economic impacts of tourism are therefore, generally perceived positively by the residents (Tatoglu *et. al.*, 2000).

The main objective of the study was, to examine the impact of tourism on the economic condition of the study area, more specifically on the local community. The main issues that need to be addressed are- the impact of tourism on employment, labour supply, level of income.

Study area

The study area comprises four coastal mouzas of Ramnagar-II block in East Medinipur district. The mouzas are Dadanpatrabar, Sona muhi, Silampur and Mandarmani. The place is known as Mandarmani as a whole, and named after the last mouza. Geographically the place is extended from 21°39' N to 21°41' N and 87°39' E to 87°43' E. The first only resort established at Mandarmani on 2002, after 2002 there are so many hotels and resorts has been developed at this spot, and there is a rapid growth of tourism and tourism related activities. The spot is very much popular tourist destination for its beautiful sandy beach and peaceful environmental setup.



Source: DPMS, National Atlas and Thematic Mapping Organization; Census 2001: Medinipur

Materials and methods

The whole methodology followed by three basic steps, (i) selection of survey zones (ii) survey procedure and (iii) statistical analyses.

Selection of survey zones:

The study zones encompasses 4 mouzas Dadanpatra, Sona Muhi, Silampur and Mandarmoni. To study about the objectives, two target groups (*Local community and people who are engaged with beach activities*) were selected who were engaged with tourism directly or indirectly.

Survey procedure:

Questionnaire surveys of each target groups were performed to pinpoint the exact causes and effects of tourism on the economy of the local community. The samples (15% of households and people engaged with beach activities) were collected from each target group.

Statistical analysis:

To study, the economic impact of tourism on local community and people engaged with beach activities of the study area, the occupational structure of the target groups, changing pattern of occupational structure, previous and present income from previous and present occupation respectively, has been considered.

(a) To analyse the occupational structure the percentage share of population in different types of occupation in their previous generation and previous occupational structure of the local community and people engaged with beach activities as well as the present occupational structure of the local community, has been calculated. Income from both previous and present occupation has been studied.

(b) The paired t-test procedure is used to compare the mean difference between previous and present income from previous and present occupation of the local community and those people who were engaged with the beach activities.

The procedure is used to compare the mean difference between two populations when there some dependency exists. The paired t test provides an hypothesis test of the difference between population means for a pair of random samples. The paired t-test procedure has been applied through the popular statistical software package, MINITAB. To test whether the mean difference is significantly different from zero, i.e. test $H_0: \mu \text{ difference } 0$, versus an alternative hypothesis such as $H_1: \mu \text{ difference } \neq 0$, a column for the differences between the two measurement systems was created, and investigated the distributional properties.

(c) Descriptive statistics provides simple summaries about the sample and about the observations that have been made. These summaries may either form the basis of the initial description of the data as part of a more extensive statistical analysis, or they may be sufficient in and of themselves for a particular investigation. It is also a set of brief descriptive coefficients that summarizes a given data set, which can either be a representation of the entire population or a sample. The descriptive statistics were also used to get the difference among the factors under study (equality and inequality in income distribution from income from previous occupation and income from present occupation) of the local community and people engaged with beach activities. The measures used to describe the data set are

measures of central tendency (mean, median, mode) and measures of variability or dispersion (standard deviation).

Results and Discussion

Impact on people engaged with beach activities:

The people engaged with beach activities encompass beach vendors, horse riders, beach photographers, balloon sellers, coconut sellers etc. Primary survey shows shacks are the most important beach activity which is practiced most at Mandarmoni. Majority of the people engaged with beach activities 57.14% at Mandarmoni are shack holders who serve food to the tourists at cheaper rates. So shacks are very important beach activity in term of tourist demand. Except shacks other important beach activities are photography, coconut selling, shell and fancy items selling. Shacks are most dominant beach activity at both Mandarmoni. Oil massage and chair lending are another type of beach activity to study because a considerable number of people are engaged with this occupation. Some people serves body or head massage to the tourists on the beach, on the other hand some people provide sitting arrangements by lending plastic chairs to the tourists on the basis of per chair rate/hour. Duration of present occupation of the people engaged with beach activities shows majority (80%) of them are engaged with this occupation for less than 5 years, which reflects its rapid growth as a tourist destination. Residing of the people engaged with beach activities shows, majority of them (45.71%), are residing since birth, but most significantly 37.14% of the surveyed people have been migrated to the place for less than 5 years, which is again complimenting the growth of tourism at Mandarmoni. Tourism activities have developed at Mandarmoni since 2002 only.

The study about the people engaged with beach activities who has been migrated to Mandarmoni from their previous place shows that, most of them (26.32%) have migrated from Purusatyampur, 42.1% have migrated from both Kalindi and Contai (21.05% each), and others (31.57%) have migrated from Pichaboni, Shankarpur, Deuli and Mayna. The reasons behind the migration of these people to Mandarmoni shows, the major reason is better employment opportunity and then better wage, which are considered as pull factors of migration for them. The changing pattern of occupational structure shows, Where none of the surveyed population engaged with beach activities at Mandarmoni were engaged with tourism related activities in there previous generation as well as in their previous occupation, all of them are presently engaged with tourism based occupation. 94.29% of the previous generation of the people engaged with beach activities was engaged with primary sector of economy (agriculture, fishing) has decreased to 91.43% in their previous occupation for the present generation. At the same time people engaged with tourism based occupation was 0% in both their previous generation and their previous occupation. Income from previous occupation and income from present occupation of the people engaged with beach activities have been compared through paired t-test analyses.

The null hypothesis (mean of income from previous occupation - mean of income from present occupation = 0) is rejected on the basis of the present sample. Which reveals average income from present occupation of the people engaged with beach activities has increased in all four coastal mouzas.

**Table- 1.1 Previous and present income: People engaged with beach activities at Mandarmoni:
Paired *t* for present income - previous income**

	N	Mean	St Dev	SE Mean
Income from present occupation	35	3249	1735	293
Income from previous occupation	35	1871	757	128
Difference	35	1377	1765	298

Source: Primary Survey (2006-2010)

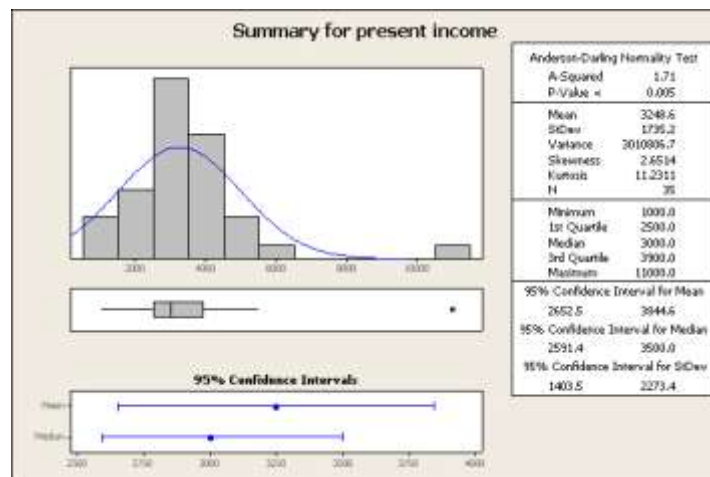
95% lower bound for mean difference: 873

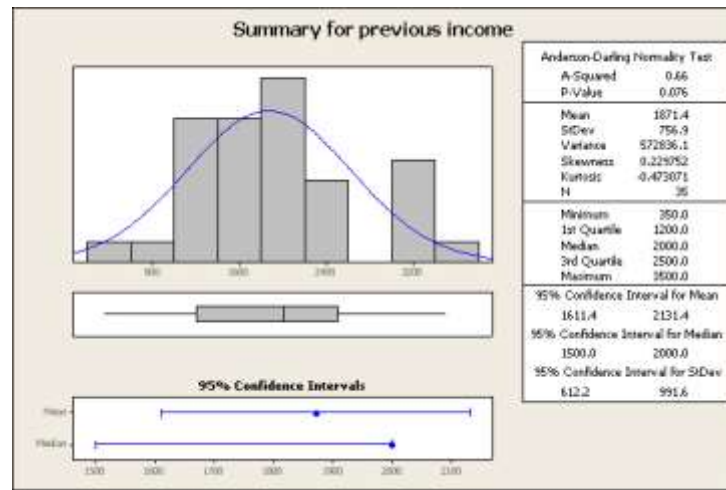
t- test of mean difference = 0 (vs > 0): T-Value = 4.62 P-Value = 0.000

The null hypothesis (mean previous income – mean present income = 0) is rejected at 5% level of significance. So, from one-tailed paired t-test we can conclude on the basis of the drawn sample that there is an increment in average per-capita income.

Also, from descriptive statistics, we can see that the although the per capita income has increased, the inequality in income distribution has increased in the present status as sd of present income is greater than previous one (Table. 1.1, Fig. 1.2).

MANDARMONI-PEOPLE ENGAGED WITH BEACH ACTIVITIES





Source: Primary Survey (2006-2010)

Fig. 1.2

Impact on local community:

To find out the impact of tourism on local community, economic activities have been classified into three categories- (a) people engaged in activities like agriculture, fishing, daily labour, salt production, net weaving, business other than tourism related activities, etc. (b) people engaged in tourism based occupation, more specifically, starting from small businessmen (specially beach vendors, road-side vendors, horse riders, tube-lenders, beach photographers etc.) to shop owners near beach or in the market, and people who are engaged as service person in the lodges. (c) People engaged in other activities. As same as people engaged with beach activities, 97.7% of the respondents at Mandarmoni, said, their previous generation were engaged with activities like- agriculture, fishing, daily labour, net weaving, salt production etc; and people engaged with tourism based occupation was 0%. People engaged with other occupation was only 2.29%. So, the occupational structure of previous generation of the local communities shows that, majority of them were engaged in primary economic activities and very few people were engaged in tourism based occupation.

The previous occupational structure of the local community shows about 96.55% of them at Mandarmoni, were engaged with primary economic activity and People engaged with tourism based occupation is 2.29%. The present occupational pattern of the local community shows, 68.97% of the respondents at Mandarmoni, are engaged with agriculture, fishing and net weaving activities. Which reveals a decreasing trend in number of people engaged in these activities. On the other hand, there is a significant increase in number of people engaged in tourism based occupation. Which was 0% in the previous generation of the local community at Mandarmoni it turned to 2.29% in their previous occupational structure and it again turned to 24.14% in their present occupational pattern. So, the change is very distinct and the number of people engaged in tourism based occupation has increased remarkably.

The changing pattern of occupational structure for all stations shows that tourism has a great impact on the occupational structure of the local community of the study area. Primary survey reveals that, previously there were 8 job options at Mandarmoni but after development of tourism, the options have been increased to 15. The changing pattern of occupational structure is also reflected from the study on previous generation and previous occupational pattern of the local community at Mandarmoni. Where, the previous generation were engaged with agriculture, fishing, daily labour, salt processing, business (other than tourism related activities) and net weaving, the present generation is engaged with both tourism based occupation (beach activity and hotel service) and primary activities. So, primary survey reveals the number of job options have increased in the present occupational structure of the local community in all three stations and tourism related activities has occupied a significant position. The null hypothesis (mean of income from previous occupation - mean of income from present occupation = 0) is rejected at 5% level of significance. So, it has been concluded that the income from present occupation of the local community has increased from their income from previous occupation on an average, in all three stations.

Table. 1.3 Previous and present income: Local community at Mandarmoni:

Paired t for present income - previous income

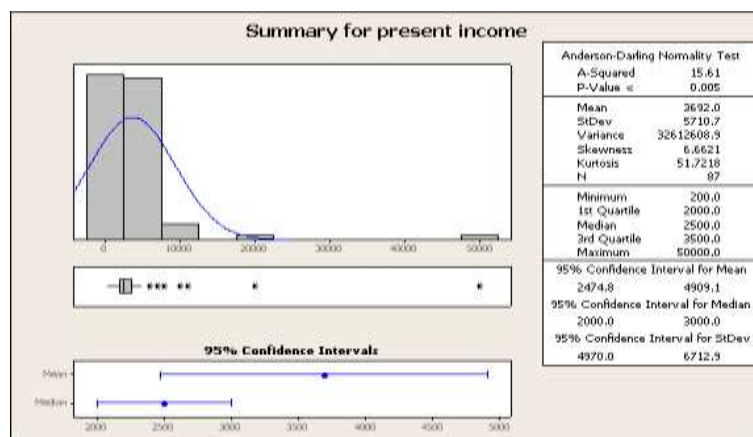
	N	Mean	St Dev	SE Mean
Income from present occupation	87	3692	5711	612
Income from previous occupation	87	2223	1980	212
Difference	87	1469	5217	559

Source: Primary Survey (2006-2010)

95% lower bound for mean difference: 539

t-Test of mean difference = 0 (vs > 0): T-Value = 2.63 P-Value = 0.005

MANDARMONI-LOCAL COMMUNITY



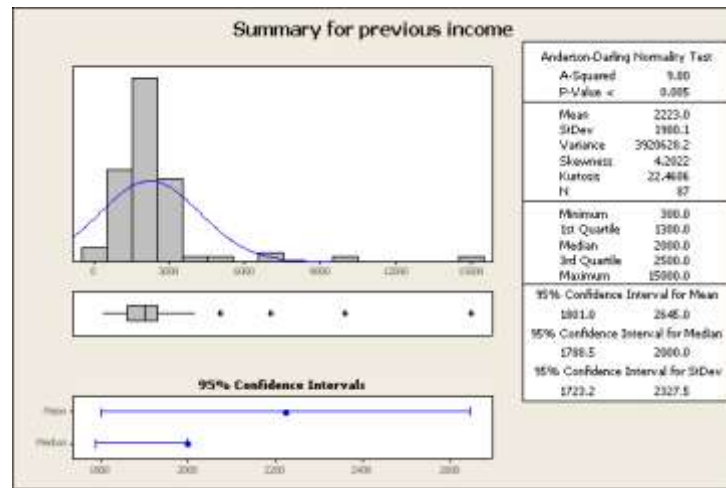


Fig. 1.4

The null hypothesis (mean previous income – mean present income = 0) is rejected at 5% level of significance. So, from one-tailed paired t-test we can conclude on the basis of the drawn sample that there is an increment in average per-capita income.

Also, from descriptive statistics, we can see that although the per capita income has increased, the inequality in income distribution has increased in the present status as sd of present income is greater than previous one (Table. 1.3, Fig. 1.4).

Conclusion: Tourism generates employment, increases labour supply, improves the standard of living of the local communities but also creates inequality in income distribution as the local community is also involved with other economic activities. Tourism has an overall positive impact upon the economic profile of a local community.

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