


Chapter 7

Evaluation of Tourism Infrastructure Around the Ancient Marvels of Mahabalipuram and Pattadakal

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ABSTRACT

India is rich in culture and well-known for its mythological knowledge. It has plenty of architectural marvels recognized by UNESCO and maintained by the Archaeological Survey of India (ASI). For this chapter, two of the cultural UNESCO sites, Mahabalipuram and Pattadakal, have been taken as the scope of the chapter. The introduction section talks about the history of the monuments and provides a brief overview of the tourism infrastructure. The following section, evaluation of tourism infrastructure, aims to analyze Mahabalipuram and Pattadakal's tourism infrastructure using four parameters: transportation and connectivity, accommodation, gastronomical facilities, and tourist amenities. An observational study of the sites was conducted between December 2023 and January 2024. This is followed by the recommendations provided by the authors to improve the tourism infrastructure in these sites and, finally, the chapter's conclusion and future scope for researchers.

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1. INTRODUCTION

India is rich in its cultural heritage and mythology. It has 42 world heritage sites, out of which 34 are cultural sites (UNESCO, 2024). The study's scope is two cultural sites: Mahabalipuram in Tamil Nadu and Pattadakal in Karnataka. These are well-known for their unique architecture which attracts tourists worldwide. Tourism infrastructure marks the foundation of a site or venue. Without proper amenities, a site does not get adequate recognition. As defined by Panasiuk, 2007 and cited by Som et al., 2020 and Rani et al., 2017, tourism infrastructure is a range of devices and institutions constituting material and the organizational basis for tourism development. Panasiuk has classified tourism infrastructure into four components: 1. Typically touristic infrastructure comprises accommodation facilities; 2. Para tourist infrastructure, which addresses the transportation facilities; 3. Gastronomy facilities, and 4. Services in the range of active leisure address recreational activities such as skiing, golfing, etc.

In today's world, the growth of tourism infrastructure at any site or place has become a priority for governments as this will help positively shape the destination's image and bring in more business and tourists. (Lanzara & Minerva, 2018) Tourism infrastructure has a vital role in the tourist's overall experience and impression regarding a specific destination. (Jovanovic & Ilic, 2016). The quality of tourism infrastructure is affected by the satisfaction of tourists in a destination. (Sugiyama, Oktavia, & Karlina, 2022) Satisfaction is essential to maintain tourist relationships, thereby increasing the chances of tourists revisiting the same destination again and in enhancing the development of a tourist site (Bazneshin et al., 2015). As defined by Vaselikh, tourism infrastructure is a combination of material objects, which are the carriers of various tangible and intangible properties that ensure the highest possible quantitative and qualitative implementation of the tourists' objectives in certain spatial-temporal parameters. (Velichkina, 2014)

The following sections will delve into the evaluation of the tourism infrastructure at Mahabalipuram and Pattadakal, highlighting areas that could be improved. The chapter includes the following sections: evaluation of the current tourism infrastructure, the methodology adopted, recommendations for improvement in both these places, and a conclusion.

Mahabalipuram

The Group of Monuments at Mahabalipuram, a UNESCO-defined site, was established by the Pallavan king, Narasimhavarman I (ca. 630–670), in the 7th Century AD. The place, also known as Mammallapuram, was named after his other name, Mammalla, meaning a wrestler. (Francis, 2024) Mahabalipuram, known by many

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