

RESEARCH PAPER

Management of agro-tourism case study (Parashar agro - tourism)

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ABSTRACT

Agro tourism is complimentary to traditional agricultural activities. It is an opportunity for farmers to use the available resources in a diversified and innovative way. It creates a win –win situation to farmers as well as tourists. Farmers earn better from innovative use of available resources and the tourist can enjoy village life and nature in an affordable prices. Not only are those, the villages also benefited due to the development of agro-tourism. Some cases of agro-tourism in Maharashtra dist. Raigad; Pune and Satara have proved that agro-tourism not only bring development of farmers but to the village as a whole from social and economic angle. Maharashtra is the third largest state in India, both in area and population. It is bestowed with 720 km long coastline. It is nestled in the Western Ghats and Sahyadri mountain ranges and with semi-evergreen and deciduous forests. Maharashtra is one of the major tourist centres in the India and there is large scope and great potential to develop agro-tourism. The scope of the study is limited to identify the satisfaction level and motivating factors for visiting agro-tourism. The present study was conducted on the Parasher agro-tourism at post Rajuri Taluka Junner district Pune is based on primary data. A sample of 60 visitors is selected at random to know their preferences to Parasher Agro- tourism. The primary data were collected through a direct interview schedule through a well designed questionnaire. In addition to this, Garrett's ranking technique was used to provide a rank order with respect to the important factors to participate agro-tourism. The result of the study showed that majority of respondents visited the agro-tourism to taste local cuisine, mental and physical relaxation, close to nature, escape from stress, to be together with family and friends, to experiencing agricultural life and an escape from city life. Being closer to nature factor received the highest mean score of 57.13. It proves that the being closer to nature factor was considered as the most important factor influencing the respondents' decision to visit an agro-tourism. Experiencing rural culture got the second rank with a mean score of 51.61, which proves that the urban people be in love with rural culture; farm stay got the third rank with mean score of 50.06. Other important factors are natural greenery, participating in farm activities and authentic rural hospitality in agro-tourism.

KEY WORDS : Agriculture, Agro -tourism, Rural tourism, Visitors attitude

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Agro-tourism is a part of tourism activities. It allows visitors to gain the knowledge of agriculture and appreciate the unique rural landscapes (Hall and Jenkins, 1998) and can be occasionally enjoyed as rural or farm tourism (Fleischer and Tchetchik, 2006). Tourism is now well recognized as an engine of growth in the various economies in the world (Kumbhar, 2009). Several countries have transformed their economies by developing their tourism potential. Tourism has great capacity to generate large-scale employment and additional income sources to the skilled and unskilled. Promotion of tourism would bring many direct and indirect benefits to the people.

Agro-tourism is complimentary to traditional agricultural activities. It is an opportunity for farmers to use the available resources in a diversified and innovative way. It creates a win-win situation to farmers as well as tourists (Mr. Pandurang Taware ATDC). Farmers earn better from innovative use of available resources and the tourist can enjoy village life and nature in an affordable prices. Not only those, the villages are also benefited due to the development of agro-tourism. Some cases of agro-tourism in Maharashtra dist. Raigad; Pune and Satara have proved that agro-tourism not only bring development of farmers but to the village as a whole from social and economic angle.

Maharashtra is the third largest state in India, both in area and population. It is bestowed with 720 km long coastline. It is nestled in the Western Ghats and Sahyadri mountain ranges and with semi-evergreen and deciduous forests. Maharashtra is one of the major tourist centres in the India and there is large scope and great potential to develop agro-tourism.

Objectives :

The objectives of this paper are follows:

- To identify the important motivating factors to participate in agro-tourism.
- To find out visitors satisfaction of Parasher agro-tourism.

METHODOLOGY

The scope of the study is limited to identify the satisfaction level and motivating factors for visiting agro-tourism. The present study was conducted on the agro-tourism is based on primary data. A sample of 60 visitors is selected at random to know their preferences to

Parasher agro-tourism. The primary data were collected through a direct interview schedule through a well designed questionnaire. In addition to this, Garrett's ranking technique was used to provide a rank order with respect to the important factors to participate agro-tourism. The questionnaire was divided into two parts. In the first part, the respondents were asked about their demographic information so as to collect information about there are, profession and economic status. In second part, the respondents were asked about billing pattern, mode of communication, satisfaction level and tourist expectation and experience and so forth.

Garrett's ranking technique :

Garrett's ranking technique was used to analyze the factors motivating the tourist to visit agro-tourism. Under the Garrett's ranking technique, the percentage position was calculated by using the following formula:

$$\text{Percentage position} = \frac{100(R_{ij}-0.5)}{N_j}$$

where,

R_{ij} = Rank given for i^{th} variable by the j^{th} respondents.

N_j = Number of factors ranked by the j^{th} respondents

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The findings of the present study as well as relevant discussion have been summarized under the following heads and Fig. 1 to 6.

Interpretation:

The respondents were asked to respond to the question regarding the motivating factors of them visiting parasher agro-tourism, and the result indicate that a majority of respondents visited the agro-tourism to taste local cuisine, mental and physical relaxation, close to nature, escape from stress, to be together with family and friends, to experiencing agricultural life and an escape from city life.

The respondents were asked to rank the six factors from 1 to 6. One objective of research paper was to identify the factors which influence the visitors of Parashar agro-tourism. The calculated percentage positions for the ranks from 1 to 6. For all the calculated percentage positions the table values are referred from Garrett's ranking table.

It can be inferred from the table that being closer to nature factor received the highest mean score of 57.13. It proves that the being closer to nature factor

was considered as the most important factor influencing the respondents' decision to visit an agro-tourism. Experiencing rural culture got the second rank with a

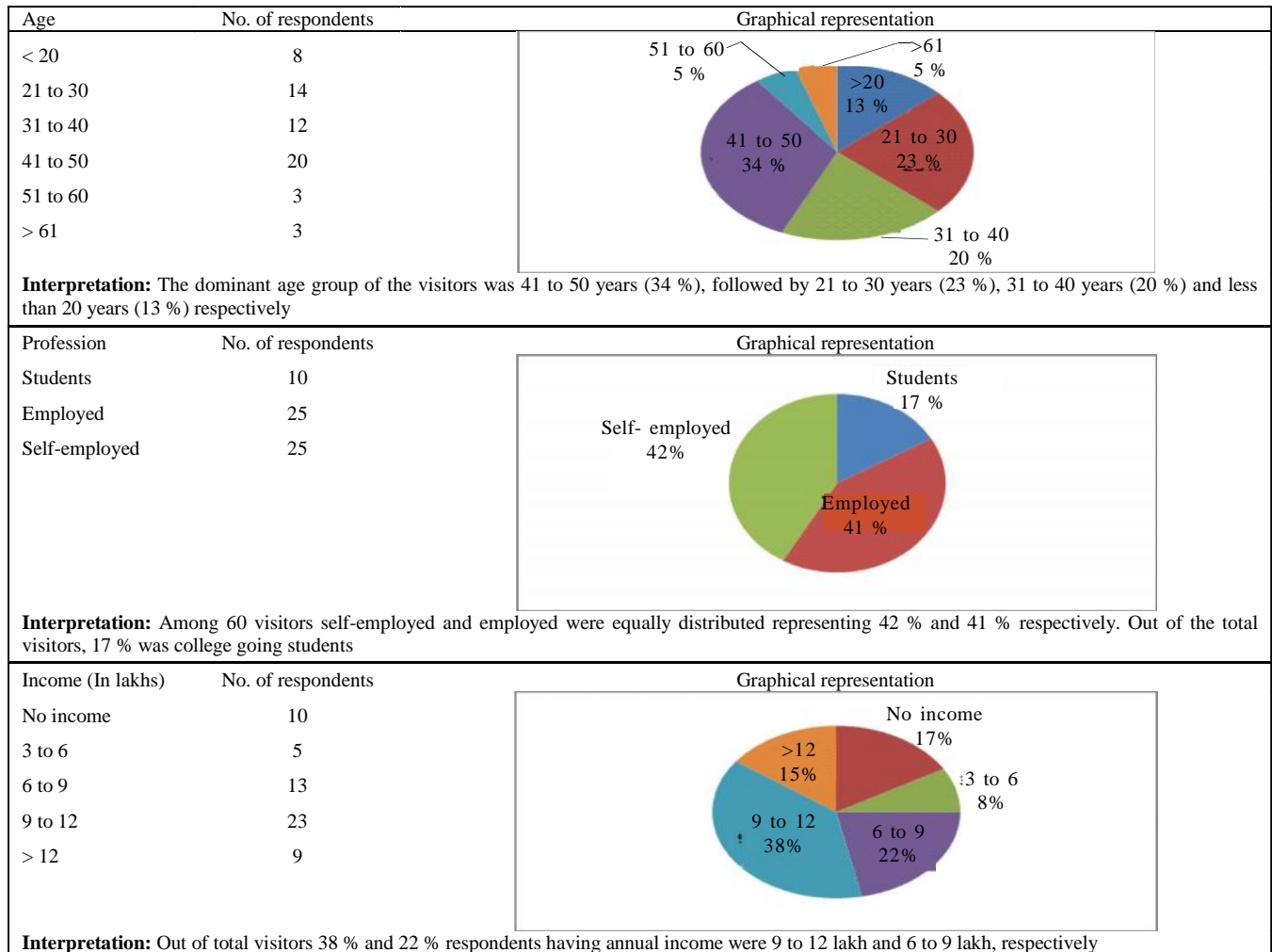


Fig. 1 : Demographic characteristics of the sample respondent

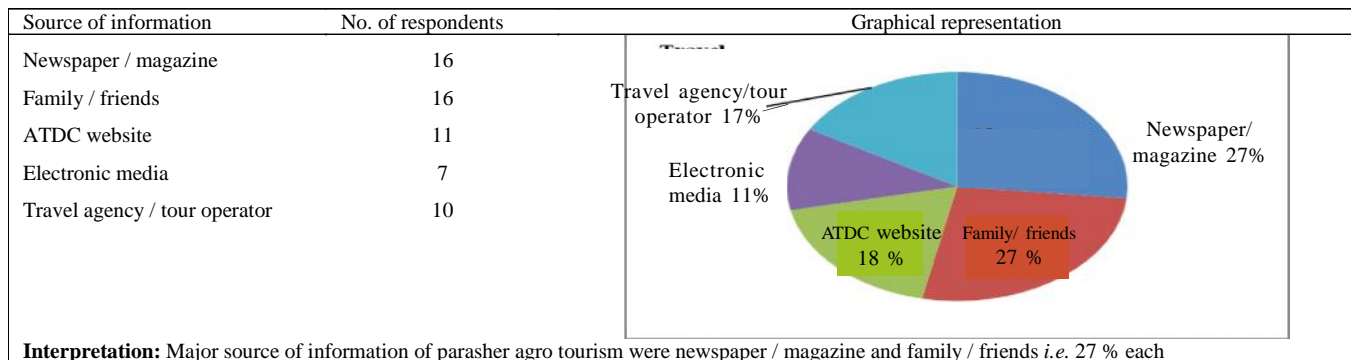
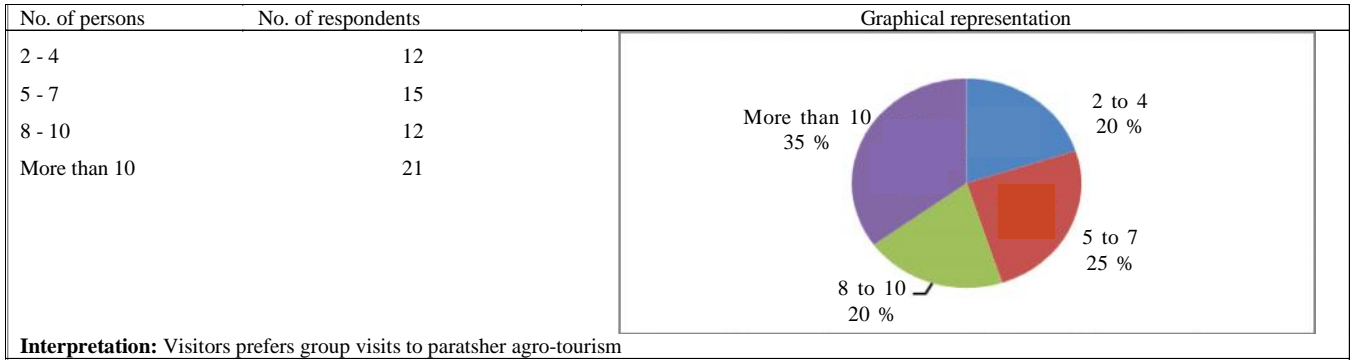
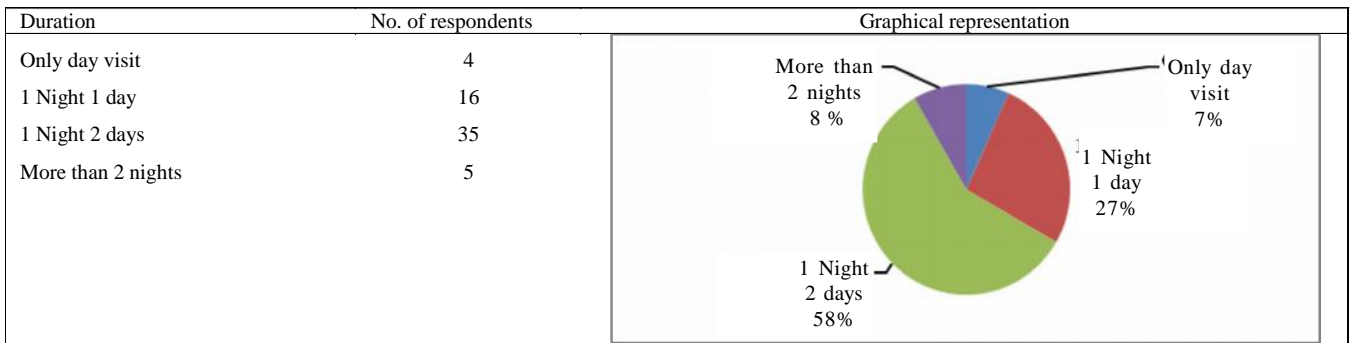


Fig. 2 : Source of information



Interpretation: Visitors prefers group visits to paratsher agro-tourism

Fig. 3 : Number of people travelling together



Interpretation: Maximum visitors preferred 1 night and 2 days (58 %) and 1 night 1 day (27 %) stay at Parasher agro-tourism

Fig. 4 : Duration of stay

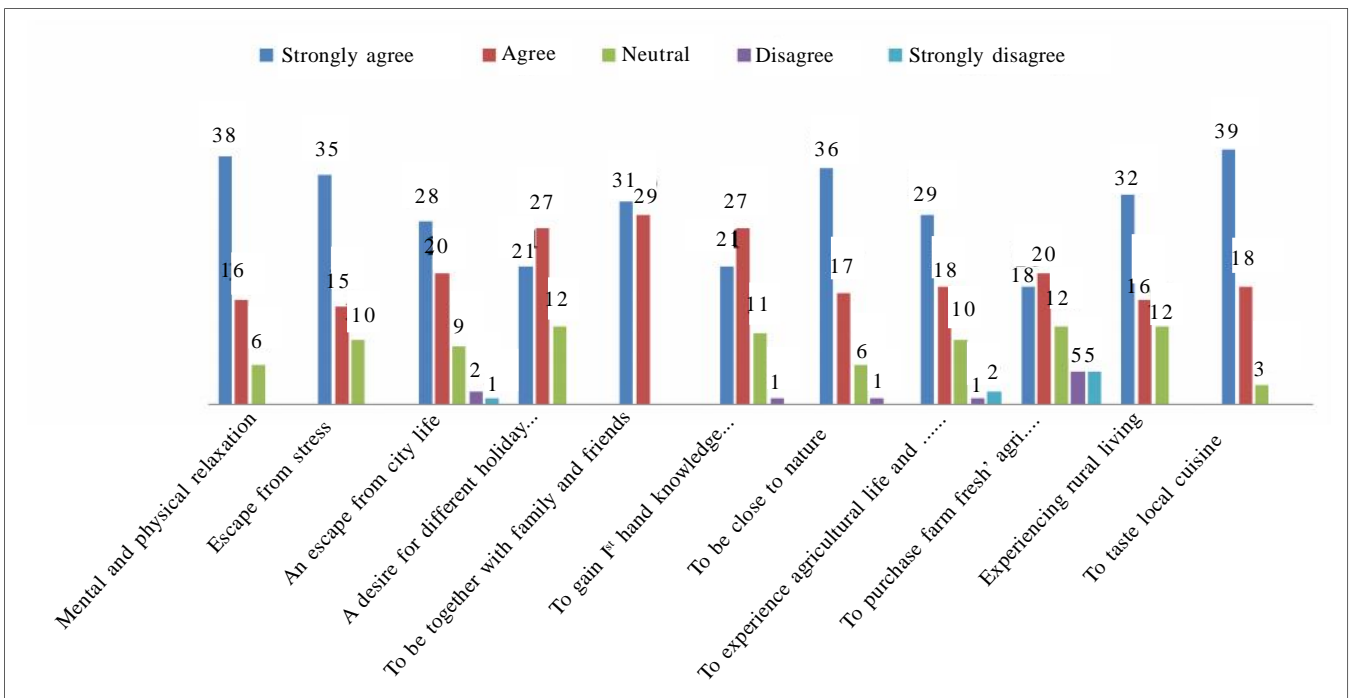


Fig. 5 : Motivating factors for visiting agro-tourism

Table 1 : As a tourist what attract you the most in agro-tourism?

Factors	Scale value (x)	Scale and scale value of ranks						Total score	Mean score	Mean rank
		1 (77)	2 (63)	3 (54)	4 (46)	5 (37)	6 (23)			
Being close to nature	f	28	4	6	4	7	11	3428	57.13	1
	fx	2156	525	324	184	259	253			
Experiencing rural culture	f	5	18	10	9	15	3	3097	51.61	2
	fx	385	1134	540	414	555	69			
Farm stay	f	6	11	13	15	8	7	3004	50.06	3
	fx	462	693	702	690	296	161			
Natural greenery	f	6	8	15	16	8	7	2969	49.48	4
	fx	462	504	810	736	296	161			
Participating in farm activities	f	6	10	9	8	17	10	2805	46.75	5
	fx	462	630	486	368	629	230			
Authentic rural hospitality	f	9	9	7	8	5	22	2697	44.95	6
	fx	693	567	378	368	185	506			

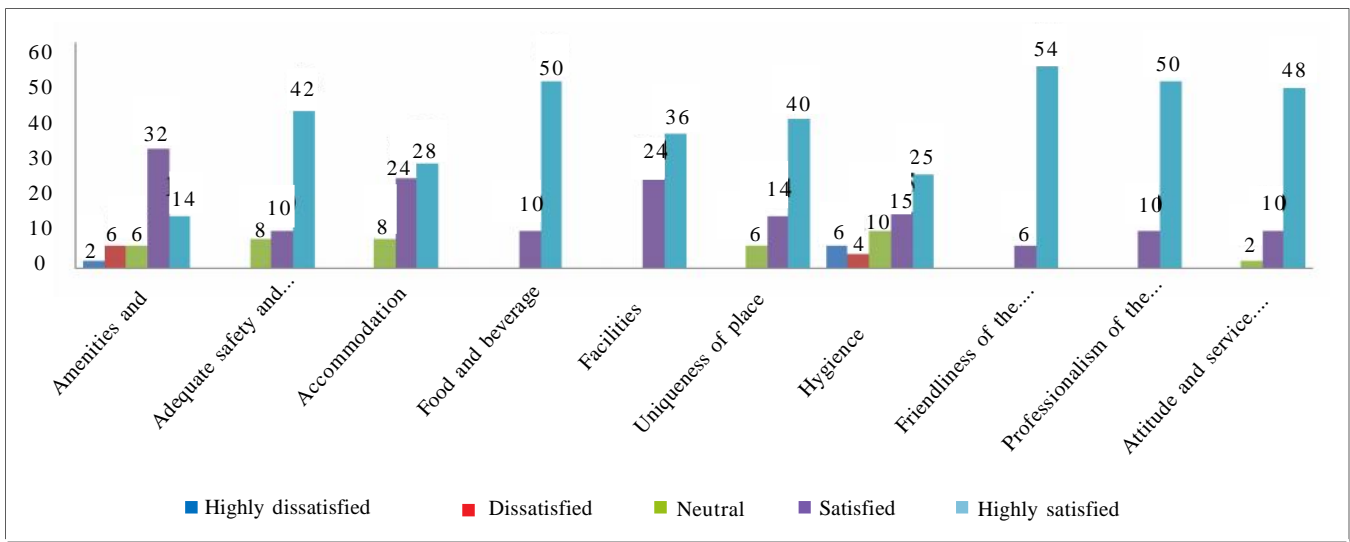


Fig. 6 : Satisfaction level of visitors

mean score of 51.61, which proves that the urban people be in love with rural culture; farm stay got the third rank with mean score of 50.06. Other important factors are natural greenery, participating in farm activities and authentic rural hospitality in agro-tourism.

Satisfaction level of visitors :

It can be inferred from the below graph that near about 80 to 90 per cent of the respondents were highly satisfied with friendliness and professionalism of the operator, food and beverage and attitude and service quality of the support staff. 10 per cent and 6 per cent respondents were dissatisfied about amenities and

arrangement at the destination and hygiene, respectively.

Conclusion :

Agro-tourism is a way of sustainable tourist development and multiple activity in rural area through which the visitors has the opportunity to get accustomed to the agricultural areas, agriculture occupation, local products, traditional food and daily life of the rural people as well as cultural elements and traditions.

People coming from the urban areas are really interested in seeing and visiting these farms. The tourists for such kind of tourism can get to see, experience a totally different world and can get to see and know those

cultures and traditions that have been long forgotten by the people staying in urban areas due to modernization and urbanization.

Majority of visitors visited the agro-tourism to taste local cuisine, mental and physical relaxation, close to nature, escape from stress, to be together with family and friends, to experiencing agricultural life and an escape from city life.

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