

Agricultural Tourism- Typology Study & Tourist Perception with Reference to Maharashtra

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Abstract Farm-based recreation or Agri Tourism is increasingly seen as a diversification strategy to promote rural economy and to protect farming incomes against market fluctuations. Within literature, there are many international studies that discuss the concept of agritourism in various ways. Wide-ranging definitions and labels concerning agritourism still create confusion as there is not a transparent and basic understanding of the characteristics that define it.

The form and concept has been studied in various ways and contexts. It can be argued, however, that studies have yet to provide a clear and basic understanding of the characteristics that underpin and define agritourism. This paper makes a modest attempt to propose an ordinary typology for defining agritourism by identifying the key characteristics currently used to define agritourism and also place it in the backdrop of Tourists perception of Agri Tourism and its various attractions in Maharashtra. The paper also tries to create awareness among the readers about Agritourism in Maharashtra.

Keywords: Agri Tourism, Typology, Perception, Characteristics

INTRODUCTION

In general, Agri-Tourism is the practice of attracting travelers or visitors to an area or areas used primarily for agricultural purposes. However, Agri-Tourism is small-scale, low-

impact, and, in most cases, education-focused. Because landowners operate the majority of farms in Maharashtra, opportunities for uniqueness and customization are limitless. Many agri-tourism activities require only a small farm crew in order to be successful. For instance, farm tours, bed and

Table 1. S.Philip et al./Tourism Management 31 (2010)

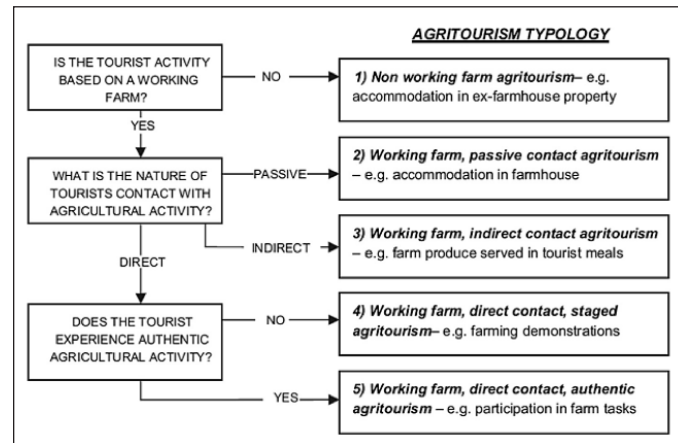
S. Philip et al. / Tourism Management 31 (2010) 754–758		755
Table 1		
Overview of definitions used in the literature for agritourism and related labels.		
Term used	Definition	Reference
Agritourism	"any practice developed on a working farm with the purpose of attracting visitors"	Barbieri and Mshenga (2008: 168)
	"a specific type of rural tourism in which the hosting house must be integrated into an agricultural estate, inhabited by the proprietor, allowing visitors to take part in agricultural or complementary activities on the property"	Marques (2006: 151)
	"rural enterprises which incorporate both a working farm environment and a commercial tourism component"	McGehee (2007: 111) and McGehee, Kim, and Jennings (2007: 280)
	"tourism products which are directly connected with the agrarian environment, agrarian products or agrarian stays"	Sharpley and Sharpley (1997: 9)
Agrotourism	"activities of hospitality performed by agricultural entrepreneurs and their family members that must remain connected and complementary to farming activities"	Sonnino (2004: 286)
	"tourism activities which are undertaken in non-urban regions by individuals whose main employment is in the primary or secondary sector of the economy"	Iakovidou (1997: 44)
Farm Tourism	"tourist activities of small-scale, family or co-operative in origin, being developed in rural areas by people employed in agriculture"	Kizos and Iosifides (2007: 63)
	"provision of touristic opportunities on working farms"	Wall (2000: 14)
	"rural tourism conducted on working farms where the working environment forms part of the product from the perspective of the consumer"	Clarke (1999: 27)
	"tourist activity is closely intertwined with farm activities and often with the viability of the household economy"	Gladstone and Morris (2000: 93)
	"to take tourists in and put them up on farms, involving them actively in farming life and production activities"	Iakovidou (1997: 44)
	"commercial tourism enterprises on working farms... This excludes bed and breakfast establishments, nature-based tourism and staged entertainment"	Ollenburg and Buckley (2007: 445)
Farm-based tourism	"activities and services offered to commercial clients in a working farm environment for participation, observation or education"	Ollenburg (2006: 52)
	"a part of rural tourism, the location of the accommodation on a part-time or full-time farm being the distinguishing criterion."	Oppermann (1996: 88)
	"increasingly used to describe a range of activities... [which] may have little in common with the farm other than the farmer manages the land on which they take place"	Roberts and Hall (2001: 150)
Vacation Farms	"phenomenon of attracting people onto agricultural holdings"	Evans and Ilbery (1989: 257)
	"an alternative farm enterprise"	Ilbery, Bowler, Clark, Crockett, and Shaw (1998: 355)
	"incorporate both a working farm environment and a commercial tourism component"	Weaver and Fennell (1997: 357)

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breakfasts, Tractor / bullock card rides, grapes, mangoes, and other horticulture farms, by product farms, birds / animal zoos, and many other activities may be operated with little additional investment in labor. (Source:<http://www.agritourism.in/about-agritourism.html>). But understanding any phenomenon requires a basic understanding of its fundamental defining characteristics. However this has yet to be done for agritourism. Comprehensive examination of the literature reveals numerous labels and definitions for agritourism based on a variety of characteristics (Table 1).

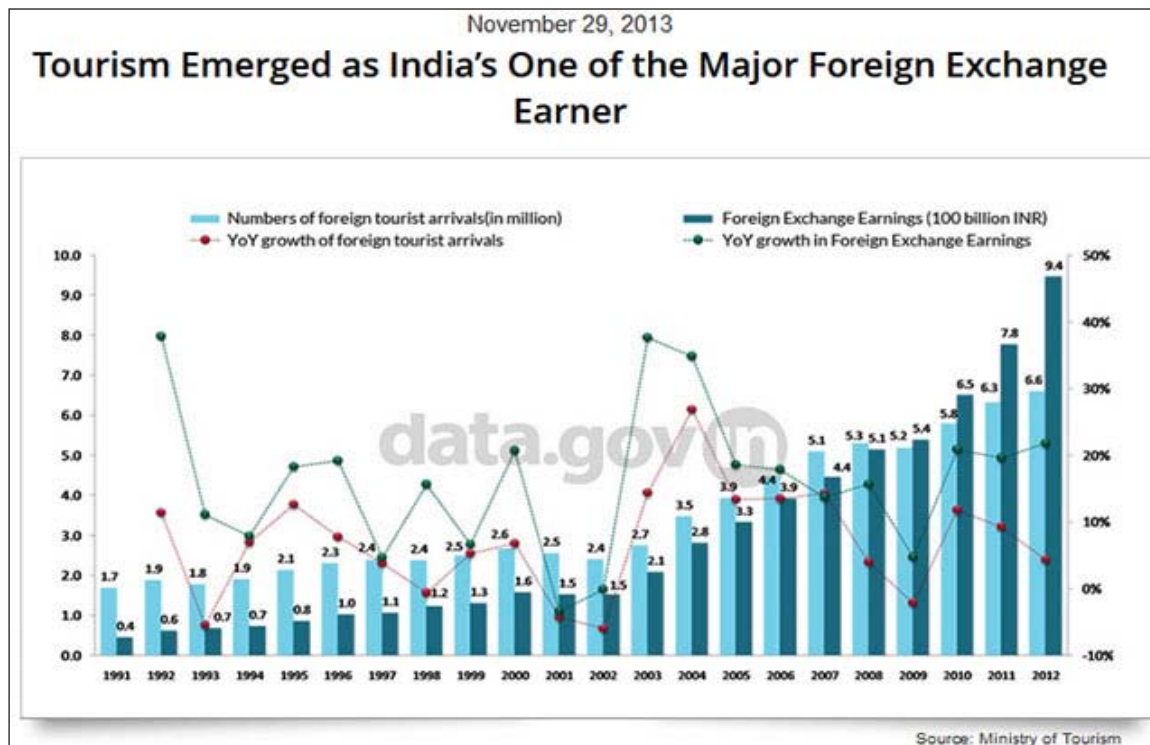
Labels such as agrotourism, farm tourism, farm-based tourism, and rural tourism are often used interchangeably with agritourism and each other (Barbieri & Mshenga, 2008; Roberts & Hall, 2001; Wall, 2000), but have also been used explicitly to denote similar but distinct concepts (Iakovidou, 1997; McGehee & Kim, 2004; Sharpley & Sharpley, 1997). The aforementioned discrepancies motivated Phillip et al. (2010) to propose a definition of agritourism through the development of an activity-based taxonomy. Table 2 illustrates the proposed typology for defining agritourism.

Table 2. A Typology for Defining Agritourism (Phillip et al., 2010)



The *non Non-Working Farm agritourism (NWF)* typology refers to activities where the non-working farm only serves for scenery purposes (e.g., bird-watching on an old mill). Although the majority of the literature excludes from definition of agritourism the tourism not based on a working

Table 3. Ministry of Tourism, Govt of India.



Source: Confederation of Indian Industry

AGRI – TOURISM CONCLAVE: CONCEPT NOTE 1

AGRI – TOURISM: INNOVATIVE SUPPLEMENTARY INCOME GENERATING ACTIVITY FOR ENTERPRISING FARMERS

Contributed by: Mr Pandurang Taware, Director – Marketing, A.T.D.C., Pune

farm, there are cases that tourists participate in agritourism through other different ways.

The **Working Farm, Passive Contact agritourism (WFPC)** typology refers to activities that allows farmers to continue their agricultural activities without having interferences by the visitors(e.g., attending a wedding in a vineyard).

The **Working Farm, Indirect Contact agritourism (WFIC)** typology refers to activities that are more directly related to farm procedures, although the nature of the visitor's contact focuses more on the agricultural products rather than the practice of farming itself (e.g., enjoying fresh produce or meals on site).

The **Working Farm, Direct Contact, Staged agritourism (WFDCS)** typology refers to activities through which visitors experience agricultural functions but through staged scenarios and pre determined tours (e.g. touring an operating cider mill). Other examples of WFDCS agritourism include farming demonstrations (e.g. milking cows) and direct physical contact with farm animals (e.g. feeding or petting animals).

Last but not least, the **Working Farm, Direct Contact, Authentic agritourism (WFDCA)** typology refers to activities where tourists fully participate in farm tasks.

Visitors work and contribute to the farm economy in return for accommodation and food.

Agritourism in Context to India with Special Reference to Maharashtra;

Indian tourism industry is growing @10.1% - The World Tourism organization has estimated that the tourism industry is growing at the rate of 4% a year and that by the year 2010 there will be more than one billion tourists visiting various parts of the world. But the Indian tourism industry is growing at the rate of 10% which is 2½ times more than the growth rate at global level. By introducing Agri-Tourism concept, not only present growth rate is sustained but also this value addition contributes to further growth.

Ministry of Tourism is implementing its Rural Tourism Scheme with the main objective of showcasing rural life, art, culture and heritage in villages which have core competence in art and craft, handloom, textiles, natural environment etc. Under this scheme, Central Financial Assistance (CFA) is provided upto Rs.50.00 lakh for infrastructure development and upto Rs.20.00 lakh for capacity building of the local villagers at each identified site.

Table 4. State-wise details of amount utilized and number of Rural Tourism Sites Completed (As on 31.10.12)

Sr. No.	State/UT	2009-10		2010-11		2011-12		2012-13 (till 30.9.12)	
		Amt. Sanctd.	Amt. released	Amt. sanctd.	Amt. released	Amt. sanctd.	Amt. released	Amt. sanctd.	Amt. released
1	Andhra Pradesh	220.37	165.92	109.8	87.84	62.54	50.40	0	0
2	Arunachal Pradesh	64.66	51.73	17.0	13.60	85.88	68.71	20.00	16.00
3	Jammu & Kashmir	374.82	236.8	136.74	109.39	266.19	212.95	51.00	40.8
4	Kerala	18	14.40	0	0	0	0	0	0
5	Maharashtra	0	0	0	0	17.29	13.83	49.08	39.26
6	Manipur	16.33	13.06	0	0	0	0	0	0
7	Meghalaya	20	16.00	0	0	0	0	50.00	40.00
8	Mizoram	0	0	20	16.00	50	40.00	62.7	50.16
9	Nagaland	205.1	175.10	0	0	268.44	214.75	0	0
10	Odisha	0	0	0	0	20	16.00	0	0
11	Punjab	0	0	15.5	12.40	15.93	12.74	0	0
12	Sikkim	146.76	117.41	181.27	145.02	0	0	0	0
13	Tamil Nadu	86.45	61.96	0	0	0	0	0	0
14	Tripura	163.22	130.57	164.9	131.92	0	0	0	0
15	Uttarakhand	0	0	0	0	17	13.60	0	0
16	Uttar Pradesh	0	0	40.51	32.41	0	0	0	0
17	West Bengal	0	0	0	0	70	56.00	0	0
18	Puducherry	50	40.00	15.17	12.13	0	0	0	0
	TOTAL	1365.71	1022.95	700.89	560.71	873.27	698.98	232.78	186.22

Table 5. Source(4&5) : The above information was given by the then Union Minister for Tourism Dr. K. Chiranjeevi in a written reply in the Lok Sabha during his tenure. Press Information Bureau Government of India Ministry of Tourism 30-November- 012 14:49 IST Rural Tourism.

Sr. No.	State/UT	Amt. Released (Rs lakh)	Amt. utilized (Rs lakh)	No. of Rural Tourism Sites sanctioned	No. of Rural Tourism Sites completed
1	Andhra Pradesh	593.10	335.79	11	4
2	Arunachal Pradesh	316.26	161.62	6	3
3	Assam	200.91	126.44	4	1
4	Bihar	60.00	16	1	0
5	Chhattisgarh	369.0	294.83	7	1
6	Gujarat	271.55	196	5	3
7	Haryana	60	55.98	1	0
8	Himachal Pradesh	170	150	3	3
9	Jammu & Kashmir	1570.13	1454.05	29	20
10	Jharkhand	107.81	29.38	2	0
11	Karnataka	2989	283.70	5	5
12	Kerala	338.64	135.24	6	0
13	Madhya Pradesh	411.80	360.79	7	5
14	Maharashtra	143.83	130.34	3	1
15	Manipur	129.90	95.73	4	0
16	Meghalaya	127.59	99.57	3	0
17	Mizoram	0	0	2	0
18	Nagaland	1010.10	803.15	16	11
19	Odisha	495.10	168.13	8	1
20	Punjab	216.83	160.20	5	2
21	Rajasthan	184.91	117.56	3	1
22	Sikkim	606.60	414.76	11	3
23	Tamil Nadu	565.79	494.16	10	8
24	Tripura	530.67	156.36	10	2
25	Uttar Pradesh	197.42	90.28	4	1
26	Uttarakhand	603.82	595.69	11	9
27	West Bengal	347.88	492.29	6	3
28	Delhi	46.08	0	2	0
29	Puducherry	52.13	0	1	0
	Total	12595.75	7418.04	186	87

Amount of funds sanctioned and released for Rural Tourism projects sanctioned during 2009-10, 2010-11, 2011-12 & 2012-13 (till 30.9.12). (Rs lakh)

Vital Statistics: Agri Tourism is growing at an average rate of 20% per annum in India. More than 70% of the urban Indian class has not seen a village. So far, 7000 plus tourists have visited the farm. ATDC has entertained National as well as International visitors and ATDC statistics conveys more than 12,000 visitors are expected in its first year.

Indian Agritourism Industry Challenges: 1. Ignorance 2. Fear of misinterpretation of the Agri Tourism concept 3. Absence of any regulatory authority to save farmers interests. 4. Presence of unorganized sector in the Agri Tourism industry. 5. Ensuring hygiene and basic requirements considering foreign visitors.

Package includes

Two way Journey by Luxury coach.

Stay for 3 days/2 nights on quadruple sharing basis

Table 6. Source : A.T.D.C Pune

Agri Tourism Baramati Taluka Tariff Plan w.e.f. 1st Jan 2008									
Units in Baramati Taluka Day Tour			1D/ 1N		2D/ 1N		3D/2 N		Groups
	Adult	Child	Adult	Child	Adult	Child	Adult	Child	Call Us for Discounted Tariff
Aarya Baug Katewadi	800	700	1000	800	1400	1200	2000	1700	
Malegaon Sheti Farm	600	500	800	700	1200	1000	1800	1500	
Jogawadi village near Morgoan	500	400	700	600	900	700	1200	1000	
Murti Village near Morgaon	500	400	700	600	900	700	1200	1000	

All meals, (early morning tea/coffee/milk ; breakfast & tea; lunch; evening snacks; dinner) pure veg only.

Local sightseeing.

Daily activity in the agriculture farm.

1. Animal Feeding;
2. Guided Crop /Vegetables / Fruits farms visits and tours
3. Watching domestic animals and How to care for cattle
4. U-Pick Operations
5. Harvest festivals
6. Rural Festivals/ Jatra
7. Farmers’ markets at the village and taluka place
8. Taluka Milk Collection centers Village fairs.
9. Roadside produce stands
10. Milking the Cow

Evening Entertainment Programs Rural folk dance, music, campfire & lot of fun filled games. *Rural games to be played*

1. Bullock card and tractor Rides
2. Vittidandu
3. Gotya
4. Surparanbhya
5. Kabaddi
6. Langadi
7. Kho-Kho
8. Bullock Ploughing
9. Lagore & Gallori

The Research & Methodology to Understand the Tourist Perception

Both Desk research and Field research was widely used to understand the various perceptions of the tourist with respect to Agricultural tourism in Maharashtra. A questionnaire was used comprising of both open-ended questions as well as close ended questions. The sample size used for the study was 200 out of which 180 responded. The sample was selected in a random manner and the respondents were personally

interviewed by the selected members. The subject being vast and the concept being new, the study was limited to the tourist in Mumbai, Pune and Lonavala, Maharashtra.

Research Outcomes

Survey on visitor’s experience: From the respondents, 119 were male (66%) and 61 were female (34%). In terms of civil status, 30% indicated they were single while 70% stated they were married. Regarding the background of visitors, the largest group was weekend travelers aged between 31 to 40 years and 2nd largest above 40 years. (Fig-1)

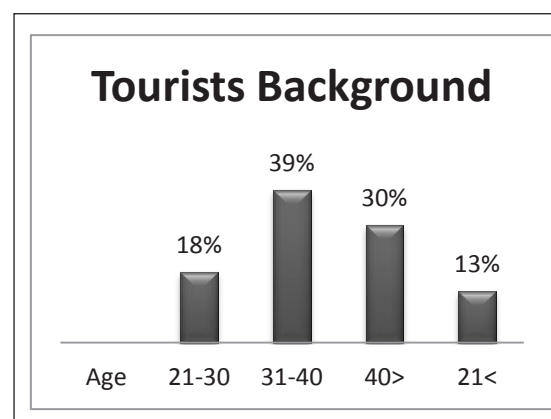


Figure 1.

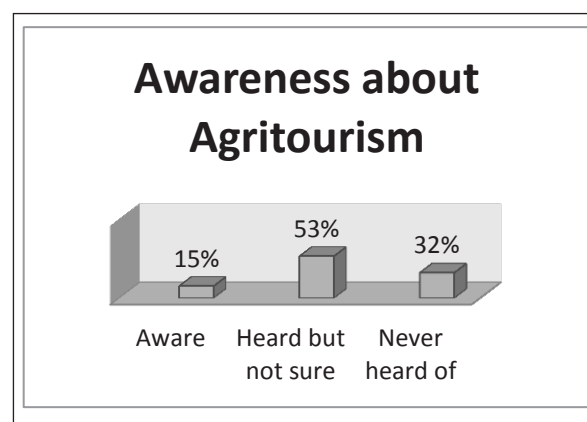


Figure 2.

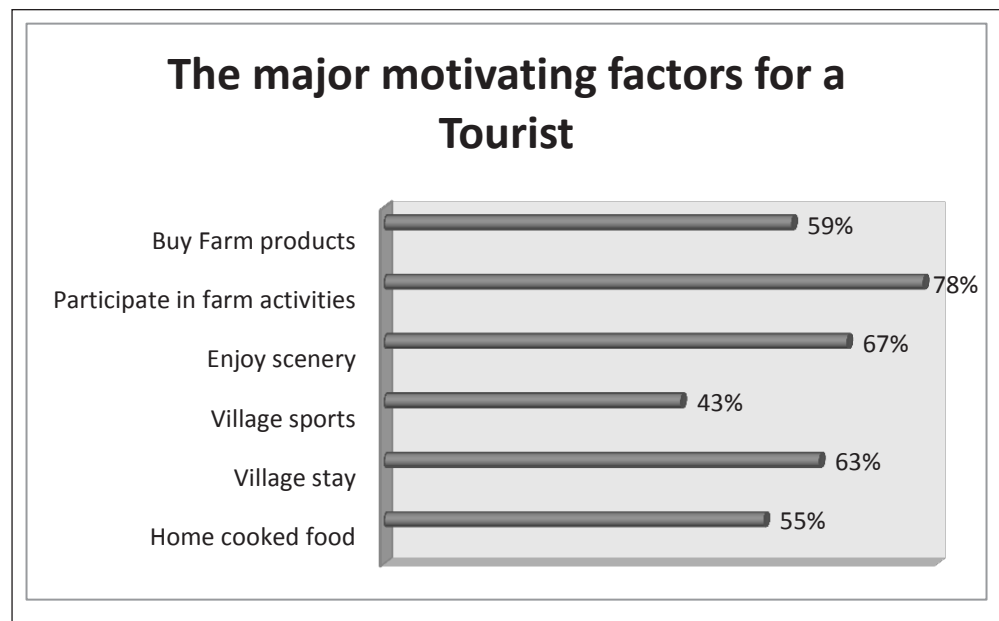


Figure 3.

Figure 4. . Expectation for Stay in a Farm (%)

Expectations	M	SD	%
a. Art & Craft	4.35	0.78	77
b. People - friendly and hospitable	4.17	0.63	70
c. Cleanliness & Hygiene of the place	2.98	1.59	55
d. It's too crowded for sightseeing	4.35	0.70	32
e. Comfortable stay	2.19	0.33	66
f. Beds are comfortable	3.91	0.51	33
g. Bathrooms are hygienic	2.65	0.36	29
h. Food served - fresh & good quality	4.23	0.75	71
i. Activities well managed professionally	2.17	0.64	75
j. People - well trained	2.35	0.40	35

It was revealed through the survey that only 15% of the tourist actually is knowledgeable about the typology of Agritourism and almost 32% tourist never heard of it, while 53% heard but not sure about the same. (Fig-2)

The survey showed that the foremost motivations for participating in the Agri Tourism were to “Take part in farm activities”(78%) followed by “Enjoying the scenery” (67 %) and “Village stay” (63%) .(Fig-3)

Regarding the stay at the Farm, the survey was conducted on a 5 point Likert scale with (1) Very Important and (5) Not so important. The tourist were then asked to rate the most common expectation from the stay in scale of 1-5.

With respect to the expectation while staying at the farm well managed activities was clearly identified by the respondents as being the most important area which needs to be looked into with 75% concerned, with a mean ranking of (2.17) and SD (0.64). It is also very closely observed that management in terms of trained people is also important with a mean of (2.35) and SD (0.40).(Fig-4)

The survey also tried to find out the favourite activities that a tourist would prefer to get engaged with during their stay in a Farm. It clearly showed that most of the tourist would love to be involved with the locals in their daily farming activities and would like to learn more about the same. (Fig-5)

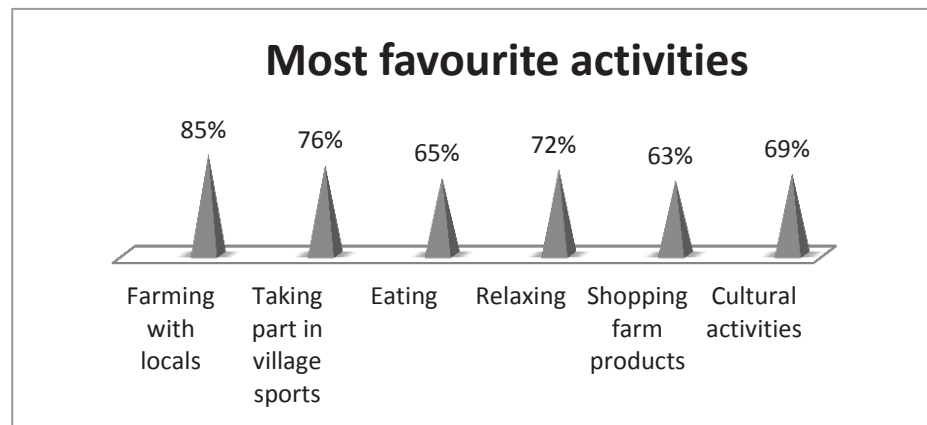


Figure 5.

Discussion and Conclusions

What becomes clear from the discussions above is that people in Maharashtra are very keen to be a part of the whole Agritourism concept and the awareness regarding the same is not much. If proper awareness is created among the tourist they would be very much interested to be a part of the same. There are some critical factors responsible in the evaluation and development of agricultural and rural tourism as a product. Some of these are –

- Changes in the preferences and needs of visitors.
- Destination of the natural and manmade environment.
- Change or disappearance of those attractions, which brought tourists to the area.
- Identification of potential consumer.
- Understanding the Agricultural and Rural tourists buying behavior.

To be competitive Agricultural and Rural tourism destination must possess basic tourist requirements

- Such as hygienic accommodation and catering.
- It should be connected with the farm accommodation

Scope of Rural and Agri-Tourism:

1. An inexpensive gateway: The cost of food, accommodation, recreation and travel and tourism is low, widening the scope of tourism.
2. Curiosity for the urban about farming industry and life style: Rural and Agri-Tourism, which involves villages and agriculture, has the capacity to satisfy the curiosity of the urban segment by providing scope for re-discovering the rural life, which is rich in diversity.
3. Strong family oriented recreational activities: through rural games, festivals, food, dress.

4. Finding solace with nature friendly life style: Peace and tranquility are in-built in Rural and Agri-Tourism.
5. Nostalgia for their roots on the farm: For tourists it is like returning back to their roots.
6. Educational value of Rural and Agri-Tourism spreading knowledge about Agriculture science where urban students are moving with the pace of technology.

Agri tourism is considered as the fastest growing sector in the tourism industry. The concept has been successfully implemented in states like Kerala, Rajasthan, Jharkhand, Gujarat and Himachal Pradesh. It has become a new avenue for earning the income for the rural farmers. In Maharashtra, rural areas have formed an organization named Maharashtra State Agri and Rural Tourism (MART). There are about 150 Agri tourism centres in the state working without financial assistance of the Government schemes. In Kerala, the Government has played a key role in boosting up the Rural and Health Tourism. Rajasthan is one of the preferred ventures to attract the foreign visitors. In Himachal Pradesh, the State Government is motivating the rural people to create required facilities in rural areas for tourism purpose. Information and technical assistance for tourism development and promotion; Different types of information for tourism development and promotion are especially important to Rural and Agri-Tourism development because small communities usually cannot afford to hire experts. Based on the results of this study, a suitable definition of Agritourism would be: Farming-related activities offered on a working farm or other agricultural setting for entertainment or educational purposes. Although this study was designed to capture the basic perception of a tourist on Agritourism (In Maharashtra), caution is advised in extrapolating study results elsewhere. Other regions may have different characteristics (e.g., agricultural context, landscape characteristics, and more specialized Agritourism offerings) that influence stakeholders' preferences, which

may lead to different understandings of the meaning of Agritourism.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to thank the students of Kohinoor International Management Institute to be a part of the whole study and contributing their share by interviewing the tourists in different parts of Maharashtra while going through the survey forms.

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