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DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL AREA OF WESTERN MAHARASHTRA**

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**AGRI TOURISM – AN CONTRIBUTION IN ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND CULTURAL  
DEVELOPMENT OF RURAL AREA OF WESTERN MAHARASHTRA**

**Mr. D.S.Gore** Ph.D Reseach Scholar of Brihan Maharashtra College of Commerce (BMCC), Pune

**Abstract**

The entrepreneurial nature of commercial enterprise includes a positive impact on the event of rural areas through creation of commercial enterprise infrastructure and diversification of connected and supporting industries. The article presents the results of associate offline survey of the population of the Western geographic region. The study confirms the hypothesis that the event of agricultural commercial enterprise in Western geographic region geographical area may be a strategic vector that reduces the share of migration of the agricultural population, includes a stimulating result on rural infrastructure, and it additionally contributes to creation of accessorial price, the employment of innovations, diversification of commercial enterprise product, it acts as a form of sponsor of the actual fact that the most profit can stay within the native economy, which, in turn, can have a helpful result on the socio-economic development of rural areas. the event of agricultural commercial enterprise can contribute to the revival of people crafts, culture and identity, the preservation, effective use and development of the potential of the country, the answer of socio-economic issues, overcoming the economic, social and religious crisis of rural municipalities. Integration of agriculture and commercial enterprise can absolutely have an effect on the fight of rural areas, the well-being of rural residents and therefore the strengthening of the country's agriculture as a full

**Keywords:** - Agri Tourism, Economic Contribution, Social and Culture Contribution

**Introduction:-**

Agriculture is taken into account to be the backbone of the Indian economy. Around 85% of the population is directly or indirectly addicted to agriculture and allied activities and nearly 26% of India's gross domestic product comes from agriculture. 90 million farmers are domicile in zero.625 million villages manufacturing over 20 Metric Tonnes of food grains feeding the country. over a profession or a business, agriculture is deeply frozen within the Indian culture. Farmer's are currently glowing to do newer ways aloof from the typified and orthodox patterns to make relations with the shoppers directly and earn further. Hence, adding on to the agricultural financial gain with some touristic activities is transfer in new hopes and higher lives. Serious efforts ar currently being created during this direction and Agri tourism is one such activity that matches the bill. Agri tourism as a thought isn't terribly new though its reach is proscribed to just some places. Agri tourism with its baby steps conjointly the amulet of analysis will positively bring changes within the lifetime of farmers and shoppers shall also reap the advantages of it.

Maharashtra has 328 agri tourism centers across twenty nine districts as well as Pune, Aurangabad, villages close to Nagpur, and therefore the social group belt of Thane district. Since its beginning, farmers across the State have gained a twenty fifth growth in their incomes. These agri tourism centres recorded four.7 lakhs, 5.3 lakhs, 7.9 lakhs tourists visit in 2018, 2019, and 2020 severally, that helped the farmers to come up with accumulative revenue/income of Rs fifty five.79 crore. Besides, the agri-tourism initiative helped produce over one hundred thousand jobs for ladies and youth within the rural areas. many instances within the districts like Raigad, Pune, and Satara have tested that agri tourism completely Economic, Social and Cultural contribution in development of local resident of whole village from a special perspective.

**Agri tourism Definition**

Agri tourism commercial enterprise will be outlined as a kind of industrial enterprise that links agricultural production and/or process with commercial enterprise to draw in guests onto a farm, ranch, or different agricultural business for the needs of fun and/or educating the guests whereas

generating financial gain, Agri tourism commercial enterprise might be thought of because the crossroads of commercial enterprise and agriculture. it's a non-urban cordial reception product, serving associate degree rural mode, culture associate degree heritage with an abundance of natural resources. Agri tourism commercial enterprise has gained traction within the commercial enterprise business.

**Significance of study:**

However, the importance of the rural tourism for rural development is not only measured in terms of money, but also by creation of new jobs which add vitality to a traditionally poor economy. Well-developed and focused rural tourism can become a new source of money and jobs and at the same time it can eliminate social isolation and be an important factor in resettling the country. The present study focused on the various impact on Rural studies with respect to Socio and cultural, Economical, Environmental and other areas

However, the importance of the agro tourism for rural development is not only measured in terms of money, but also by creation of new jobs which add vitality to a traditionally poor economy. Well-developed and focused agro tourism can help to generating additional revenue for local businesses , increasing protection of rural landscapes and natural environments, helping preserve and revitalize local traditions, art and craft, new source of money and jobs and at the same time it can eliminate social isolation and be an important factor in resettling the country. The present study focused on the contribution of agro tourism to Economic, Socio and cultural development of rural area of western Maharashtra.

**Research objectives**

1. To understand the economic contribution of agri tourism.
2. To understand the socio – Cultural contribution of agri tourism.
3. To Find out the Challenges of agri tourism in Indian Context.

**Methodology:-**

The present study was conducted in Baramati District Maharashtra State. Multi Stage Random Sampling method was followed. The Rural villages are selected in Random followed by the sample size of 100 farmers who directly involved in the Agriculture in Baramati District. A well structured Schedule has been prepared and conducted the Data collection with the Farmers on the agro-tourism in Baramati District. The collection of Data pertains to the year 2016 - 1

The paper is based on majorly Primary data derived from various sources which includes Questionary for Agri Local Resident and also secondary data from various sources which include research papers, news articles and thesis. Some data has been furnished from the websites of the government of India and Maharashtra, as well as ministry of agriculture.

**Sample Size :-**

There are five districts in western Maharashtra. Pune, Strata, Sangli, Solapur, Kholapur. Total population of five districts is more than 1,00,000. so as per Krejcie and Morgan Table 95% confidence level at 5% Margin of error total sample size will be 384 but more efficient result we have collected information form 400 local resident

Population size	Confidence level – 95%			Confidence level – 99%		
	Margin of error			Margin of error		
	5%	2.5%	1%	5%	2.5%	1%
100	80	94	99	87	96	99
500	217	377	475	285	421	485
1,000	278	606	906	399	727	943
10,000	370	1,332	4,899	622	2,098	6,239
100,000	383	1,513	8,762	659	2,585	14,227
500,000	384	1,532	9,423	663	2,640	16,055
1,000,000	384	1,534	9,512	663	2,647	16,317

Source :- Krejcie and Morgan Table (Abdul & Bukhari, 2021)

**Demographic profile of Local Resident**  
**Gender**

<b>Gender</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Male	272	68%
Female	128	32%
Total	400	100%

Source: - Primary Data

Table 1 states that, 68% of respondents were males and 32% of them were females. Majority of the local people covered in this study are males.

**Age Groups**

<b>Age</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Below 30	81	20.2%
31 to 45	214	53.5%
46 to 60	97	24.2%
More than 60	8	2%
Total	400	100%

Source: - Primary Data

It is clear from table 2 that, 20.2% of the respondents belong to an age group of below 30, 53.5% of them, between 31 to 45, 24.2% of the respondents between 46 to 60 and 2% of them come under an age group above 60. Hence majority of the respondents belong to an age group between 31 to 45.

**Occupation**

<b>Occupation</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Farming and allied activities	113	28.5%
Govt. services	61	15.2%
Private services	75	18.7%
Self-employed/Business man	92	23%
Student/Researcher	6	1.5%
Any other	53	13.2%
Total	400	100%

Source: Primary Data

As far as the occupation is concerned, table 3 shows that, 28.5% of the respondents are employed in Farming and allied activities, 15.2% of them in Government sector and 18.7 % of them in private sectors, 23% of them are Self-employed/Business men, Therefore it can be concluded that majority of the respondents in this study are engaged in farming and allied activities followed by self-employed/business men and private service employees.

**Educational qualification**

<b>Educational qualification</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Literate	34	8.5%
Below metric	74	18.5%
Metric	98	24.5%
Higher secondary	64	16%
Graduate	46	11.5%
Master degree and above	74	18.5%
Total	400	100%

Source: Primary Data

Table 4 indicates that 8.5% of the respondents under study are literate people. 18.5 % of the respondents have an educational qualification below metric. 24.5% of them have qualified metric level. 16% of them have qualified higher secondary level. 11.5% of them are graduates and 18.5% of

them are post-graduates. So, it can be concluded from the aforesaid information that majority of the local people under study have metric level qualification followed by post-graduates

**• Economic development of local Resident**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree (1)</b>	<b>Disagree (2)</b>	<b>Neutral (3)</b>	<b>Agree (4)</b>	<b>Strongly agree (5)</b>
Agri tourism has created jobs in the rural area	36 (9%)	38 (9.5%)	78 (19.5%)	150 (37.5%)	98 (24.5%)
Due to agri Tourism the basic facilities, infrastructure in the village and accessibility has improved	35 (8.7%)	37 (9.25%)	52 (13%)	149 (37.2%)	127 (31.7%)
Agro tourists appreciate the skills of the locals and are ready to pay good amount for	34 (8.5%)	40 (10%)	75 (18.7%)	100 (25%)	149 (37.2%)
The growth in rural tourism has motivated the youth to involve in tourism related jobs & activities.	37 (9.25%)	35 (8.7%)	60 (15%)	141 (35.2%)	127 (31.7%)
Demand for Local products, handicrafts & agricultural products by tourists have benefitted the traditional businesses and the local economy	26 (6.5%)	48 (12%)	59 (14.7%)	159 (39.7%)	108 (27%)

Source: Primary Data

The Table 5 shows the economic contribution of agri tourism in local resident development in terms of percentage and frequency. The Economic Impacts has 5 statements “Due to agri tourism the Job opportunity is available to local resident in this statement 9.5 percent respondents “Disagree” 19.5 percent respondents who responded “Neutral”, 24.5percent who responded “Agree”. Due to agri Tourism the basic facilities, infrastructure in the village and accessibility has improved”. In this statement, 9.25 percent respondents “Disagree”, 13 percent respondents who responded “Neutral”, 31.7 percent who responded “Agree” “Due to agri Tourism the Sales of local & handmade High value for local arts and crafts is available to local resident in this statement 10 percent respondents “Disagree” 18.7 percent respondents who responded “Neutral”, 37.2 percent who responded “Agree”. Due to agri Tourism Better involvement of youth in Agri related Activity”. In this statement, 8.7 percent respondents “Disagree”, 15 percent respondents who responded “Neutral”, 31.7 percent who responded “Agree”. Due to Better demand for Local products, handicrafts & agricultural products”. In this statement, 12 percent respondents “Disagree”, 14.7 percent respondents who responded “Neutral”, 27 percent who responded “Agree”

**• Social and cultural development of Local Resident**

<b>Question</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree (1)</b>	<b>Disagree (2)</b>	<b>Neutral (3)</b>	<b>Agree (4)</b>	<b>Strongly agree (5)</b>
Agri tourism has led to more awareness towards protecting culture.	46 (11.5%)	58 (14.5%)	58 (14.5%)	138 (34.5%)	100 (25%)
Heritage of the area is getting more protection after agri tourism development	55 (13.7%)	57 (14.2%)	62 (15.5%)	109 (27.2%)	117 (29.2%)
Local community prefers	44	70	75	90	121

tourism related jobs than their traditional livelihood occupations	11%)	(17.5%)	(18.7%)	(22.5%)	(30.2%)
The rural tourism has resulted in greater positive cultural enrichment & interaction of host and guest.	36 (9%)	38 (9.5%)	78 (19.5%)	150 (37.5%)	98 (24.5%)
Tourists completely feel at home & secure in open rural setting & revitalize them.	35 (8.7%)	37 (9.25%)	52 (13%)	149 (37.2%)	127 (31.7%)
Agri Tourism has given cultural identity and pride to the place and local community	34 (8.5%)	45 (11.2%)	85 (21.2%)	90 (22.5%)	145 (36.2%)

Source: Primary Data

The Table 6 shows the Socio-cultural contribution of agri tourism in local community development in terms of percentage and frequency. The Socio-cultural contribution has 6 statements “Agri tourism has led to more awareness towards protecting culture.in this statement 14.5 percent respondents “Disagree” 14.5 percent respondents who responded “Neutral”, 25 percent who responded “Agree”. Heritage of the area is getting more protection after agri tourism development”. In this statement, 9.25 percent respondents “Disagree”, 13 percent respondents who responded “Neutral”, 31.7 percent who responded “Agree” Local community prefers tourism related jobs than their traditional livelihood occupations”. In this statement, 17.5 percent respondents “Disagree”, 18.7 percent respondents who responded “Neutral”, 30.2 percent who responded “Agree”. The rural tourism has resulted in greater positive cultural enrichment & interaction of host and guest. In this statement, 9.5 percent respondents “Disagree”, 19.5 percent respondents who responded “Neutral”, 24.5 percent who responded “Agree”. Tourists completely feel at home & secure in open rural setting & revitalize them. In this statement, 9.25 percent respondents “Disagree”, 13 percent respondents who responded “Neutral”, 31.7 percent who responded “Agree” Agri Tourism has given cultural identity and pride to the place and local community In this statement, 11.2 percent respondents “Disagree”, 21.2 percent respondents who responded “Neutral”, 36.2 percent who responded “Agree”

• **Challenges to the Agri Tourism**

1. High cost of land development and initial investment,
2. Lack of awareness among people about the agro-tourism concept.
3. Poor infrastructure facilities like drinking water facilities, electricity, good telecommunication, safety and security, transportation facilities, medical facilities etc.
4. Marketing agro-tourism as a product effectively and consistently.
5. Inability to introduce more activities and lack of specific policy for promotion of agri tourism.
6. Lack of Proper communication skill of farmers.
7. Lack of organized effort like Farmer organizations
8. Complexity in getting license from Govt.
9. Danger of over exploitation of natural resources.
10. Insufficient Financial Support from government and Bank
11. Legislation Problem.
12. Due to seasonal condition.
13. Lack of Trained Human Resource.
14. Poor hygiene and basic require-ments considering urban visitors

**Conclusion :**

Agri tourism offers a unique chance to integrate components of the tourism and agricultural sectors to give travelers, farmers, and communities with a variety of financial, educational, and social benefits. Agri-tourism provides producers with an extra source of income as well as a channel for

direct marketing to consumers. It boosts the tourist business by boosting the number of visitors and the length of their stay in a certain location. Agri-tourism has the ability to improve local tax bases and create new job possibilities for communities. Agri-tourism also gives public educational opportunities, aids in the preservation of agricultural areas, and allows states to build corporate businesses. Agri tourism offers visitors ‘rural experiences,’ with the purpose of providing a source of income for farmers and communities in the surrounding area. The introduction and marketing of community-based agri tourism goods would be beneficial to the industry’s inclusive growth.

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