Tourists' Motivations on Agri Tourism in Kerala

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Abstract: *This study aims at exploring the motivation of tourists to choose agri tourism destinations as their holiday destination. Results obtained from the respondents motives of travelers, determinants of behavioral intention and factors influenced in making their decision to travel. The study enables the marketers and providers for the identification of market segmentation and target marketing. It also makes increasing awareness about the importance of responsible and sustainable form of tourism.*

Keywords: agri tourism, motivations, destinations

1. Introduction

Motivation is considered as the critical variable in the tourists' behavioural process. It is the factor that influences the tourists in the choice of destinations. It includes the needs and wants of the tourists that stimulate the tourists to visit a particular destination. The motivational forces behind tourists help the service providers to enlarge and adjust their services according o the needs and requirements of target population. Motivation is one of the several contributing factors that inspire the people to travel to different destinations and experience new things (Crompton 1979). Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943), Dann's Theory of Push and Pull Motivations(1977) have specified the importance of understanding the human behavious. Tourism as an activity contends with a wide range of tourist behaviours and the internal or external forces that significantly influence these behaviours. Tourists were always tries to search for alternative experiences. Agri tourism offers new experiences to tourists as it is considered as sustainable form of tourism.

Agri tourism is a innovative tourism product in the tourism industry as it combines the tourism and agricultural sector to develop synergy effect. It is essential for the providers in tourism sectors to recognize people's behavior and determinants of intentions in order to provide the facilities as expected by the tourists.

1.1 Objectives of the study

The present study "Tourists' motivations on Agri tourism in Kerala", is based on the following objectives.
1) To investigate factors that affect tourist's decision about participation in agri tourism in Kerala.
2) To examine the type of travel motivations that affecting tourist's decision making behaviour in agri tourism destinations.

2. Research Methodology

Descriptive research design is adopted in this study. The data for the research can be collected in two forms: primary and secondary. This research makes use of both primary and secondary data for the study. Primary data is data collected through a structured questionnaire. Secondary data for this research has been collected with the help of books, journals, magazines, and online sources connected with tourism. A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed among tourists stayed in agri tourism destinations in Kerala.

The questionnaire consisted of three sections consisting of the following: (1) demographic profile (2) Factors influencing tourists decision to participate in agri tourism. (3) motivations of the tourists. A Likert scale was used to elicit information regarding tourism motivations on the following five-point scale: 1 - "strongly disagree", 2 - "disagree", 3 -"neither agree nor disagree", 4 - "agree" and 5 - "strongly agree". These motivational items were identified and selected through in depth and careful analysis of existing academic literature specific to tourism motivations.

Data Analysis
In order to test the objective, the researcher employed mean and analytical hierarchy processing technique.

Demographic Profile of the Respondents
Table 1 provided below depicts the demographic characteristics of the respondents chosen for the study.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Demographic Factors		Gender	
		Male	Female
		Count	Count
Nationality	Indian	49	36
	Foreigner	12	3
Marital status	Single	29	25
	Married	31	15
Education	Illiterate	2	2
	Below Matric	7	3
	Matric	3	1
	Senior secondary	21	17
	Graduate	17	11
	Master degree& Above	10	6
	Others	0	0

Source: Primary Data

The table No. shows the demographic profile of the respondents, which reveals that 61% of the respondents were male and 39% of the respondents are female. With respect to nationality of the tourists 85 % of the respondents were

Domestic tourists and rest of them were foreigners. Majority of the respondents under the study were married. Most of the respondents under the study had senior secondary educational qualification.

Table 2: Factors influencing tourist's decision to participate in agri tourism

Factors	Mean	Rank
Urban Pressures	3.22	8
Ample time	2.98	10
Anxiety	4.52	4
Make a Difference	4.48	5
Learn about Natural Environment	3.28	7
Interest in Agriculture	4.32	6
Desire to Travel	4.58	2
Authentic experience	4.53	3
Recommended by others	4.8	1
Travel with a purpose	4	9

Source: Primary Data

The table No.2 shows the different factors affecting the tourist's decision to participate in agri tourism. It can be inferred from the above table that Recommendation by others is the most influencing factor in travel decision, followed by Desire to travel, Authentic experience, Anxiety and Make a Difference.

3. Motivations for the Implementation of Agri-Tourism Activities

The researcher identified fifteen motivating variables to participate in agri tourism. These fifteen factors were grouped into three factors, namely, 'events and recreation motives', 'experience and educational motives' and 'direct purchase of agricultural products'. In order to check which motive dominates first while taking decision to participate in agri tourism, the researcher applied Analytical Hierarchical Processing (AHP) technique.

3.1 Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP)

AHP is a multi criteria decision making method that was originally developed by Prof. Thomas L. Saaty. It is based on inherent human ability to make sound judgement about the problem. AHP starts with the construction of hierarchies. Then it moves on prioritization to find out relative importance. Prioritization involves eliciting judgements in response to questions about the dominance of one element over another with respect to a property. The scales used for the same is given below;

Table 3: Analytical Hierarchy Process (AHP) Scales

Scales	Definition	Explanation
1	Equal importance	Two activities contribute equally to the objective.
3	Moderate importance	Experience and judgment slightly favour one activity over another.
5	Strong importance	Experience and judgment strongly favour one activity over another.
7	Very strong importance	An activity is favoured very strongly over another; its dominance demonstrated in practice.
9	Extreme importance	The evidence favouring one activity over another is of the highest possible
2,4,6,8	For compromising between the above values.	order of affirmation. Sometimes one needs to interpolate a compromise judgment numerically because there is no good word to describe it.

3.2 Algorithm of FAHP method

According to the method of Chang's extent analysis, each object is taken and extent analysis for each goal performed respectively. Therefore, m extent analysis values for each object can be obtained, with the following signs:

$$M^1_{gi}, M^2_{gi}, \ldots \ldots M^m_{gi}, \qquad i = 1, 2, \ldots, n,$$

Where M^j_{gi} (j=1, 2...3) all are Triangular Fuzzy Numbers (TFN's). The steps of Chang's extent analysis can be given as in the following;

Step 1: the value of fuzzy synthetic extent with respect to the ith object is defined as;

$$S_i = \sum_{j=1}^m M^j_{gi} \otimes \left[\sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{j=1}^m M^j_{gi} \right]^{-1}$$

To get $\sum_{j=1}^m M^j_{gi}$, perform the fuzzy addition operation of m extent analysis values for a particular matrix such that:

$$\sum_{j=1}^m M^j_g = \left(\sum_{j=1}^m l_j, \sum_{j=1}^m m_j, \sum_{j=1}^m u_j \right)$$

And to obtain $\left[\sum_{j=1}^n \sum_{j=1}^m M^j_{gi} \right]^{-1}$, perform the fuzzy addition operation of M^j_{gi} (J=1,2,...m) values such that:

$$\sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{j=1}^m M^j_g = \left(\sum_{i=1}^n l_i, \sum_{i=1}^n m_i, \sum_{i=1}^n u_i \right)$$

And then compute the inverse of the vector above, such that:

$$\left[\sum_{i=1}^n \sum_{j=1}^m M^j_{gi} \right]^{-1} = \left(\frac{1}{\sum_{i=1}^n u_i}, \frac{1}{\sum_{i=1}^n m_i}, \frac{1}{\sum_{i=1}^n l_i} \right)$$

Step 2: As $M_1 = (l_1, m_1, u_1)$ and $M_2 = (l_2, m_2, u_2)$ are two triangular fuzzy numbers, the degree of possibility of $M_2 = (l_2, m_2, u_2) \geq M_1 = (l_1, m_1, u_1)$ defined as;

$$V(\tilde{M}_2 \geq \tilde{M}_1) = \sup_{y \geq x} \left[\min \left(\mu_{\tilde{M}_1}(x), \mu_{\tilde{M}_2}(y) \right) \right]$$

And can be equivalently expressed as follows;

$$V\left(\tilde{M}_2 \geq \tilde{M}_1\right) = hgt(\tilde{M}_1 \cap \tilde{M}_2) = \mu_{M_2}(d)$$

$$= \begin{cases} 1, & if \quad m_2 \geq m_1 \\ 0, & if \quad l_1 \geq u_2 \\ \dfrac{l_1 - u_2}{(m_2 - u_2) - (m_1 - l_1)}, & otherwise \end{cases}$$

Step 3: the degree possibility for a convex fuzzy number to be greater than k convex fuzzy $M_i(j=1,2,k)$ numbers can be defined by

$$V(M \geq M_1, M_2, \ldots M_k) = V[(M \geq M_1) \quad and \quad (M \geq M_2)]$$

$$= \min \quad V(M \geq M_i), \quad i = 1,2,3,\ldots$$

Assume that d (A_i) = minV $(S_i \geq S_k)$
For k=1, 2... n; k≠i. Then the weight vector is given by

$$W' = (d'(A_1), d'(A_2), \ldots, d'(A_n))^T$$

where $A_i = (i = 1, 2, \ldots n)$ are n elements.

Step 4: Via normalization, the normalized weight vectors are

$$W = (d(A_1), d(A_2), \ldots, d(A_n))^T$$

Where W is a non-fuzzy number (Cakir, 2009).

The researcher grouped the motivators for the implementation of agri tourism activities into three categories, i.e, 'events and recreation motives', 'experience and educational motives' and 'direct purchase of agricultural products'

3.3 Events and Recreation Motives

Under this head, the researcher identified eight variables; all were measured on a nine point's scale as shown in table 1. The table provided below represent the priority details of the variables under 'Events and Recreation Motives'.

Table 4: Events and Recreation Motives- AHP Analysis

S.no	Events and Recreation Motives	Priority Weight	Percentage Priority Weight
1	Spend time with family/friends	.18	18%
2	Have fun/an adventure	.15	15%
3	Participate in outdoor activities	.09	9%
4	Make a special occasion	.07	7%
5	Enjoy the natural beauty of rural area	.14	14%
6	Rest or relaxation	.09	9%
7	Food and beverages	.27	27%
8	Farm stay	.01	1%
	Total	1	100%

Source: Primary Data

The priority weights of each variable are estimated and are given in Table 2. It can be said that higher the priority

weight, stronger the importance. Hence, 'food and beverage' is found to be the most important 'events and recreation motive', which is followed by 'spend time with family and friends', 'have fun/ an adventure', 'enjoy the natural beauty of rural area', 'participate in outdoor activities' and 'rest or relaxation'. While, ''farm stay' is found to be the least important variable under 'events and recreation motive'.

3.4 Experience and Educational Motives

The researcher explored four variables in order to measure 'experience and educational motives'. The respondents were asked to rate these variables on a nine points scale as shown in table 1. The table 3 provided below depicts the priority details of the variables comes under 'experience and educational motives'.

Table 5: Experience and Educational Motives- AHP Analysis

S.no	Experience and Educational Motives	Priority Weight	Percentage Priority Weight
1	Learn how products are grown or made	18	18%
2	Learn something new	12	12%
3	Agri related study	46	46%
4	Participate in an activity close to home	24	24%
	Total	1	100%

Source: Primary Data

The priority weights of each variable are estimated and are given in Table 3. It can be said that higher the priority weight, stronger the importance. Hence, 'agri related study' is found to be the important 'experience and educational motives', which is followed by 'Participate in an activity close to home' and 'Learn how products are grown or made'. While the variable 'Learn something new' is found to be the least important 'experience and educational motives'.

3.5 Direct Purchase of Agricultural Products

The researcher identified three variables in order to assess the variables under 'direct purchase of agricultural products'. The respondents were asked to rate theses statements on a nine points scale as shown in table 1. The table 4 provided below represent the details of priority weights of variables comes under 'direct purchase of agricultural products'.

Table 6: Direct Purchase of Agricultural Products- AHP Analysis

S.no	Direct Purchase of Agricultural Products	Priority Weight	Percentage Priority Weight
1	Support local farmers/business	.49	49%
2	Purchase or consume a fresh food product	.36	36%
3	Purchase a unique organic products	.15	15%
	Total	1	100%

Source: Primary Data

The priority weights of each variable are estimated and are given in Table 3. It can be said that higher the priority

weight, stronger the importance. From table 4, it is observed that the respondent give the highest priority to 'support local farmers/ business', which is followed by 'Purchase or consume a fresh food product'. While, the variable 'Purchase a unique organic products' is found to be the least important motive comes under 'direct purchase of agricultural products'

4. Findings

1) Among different factors affecting the tourist's decision to participate in agri tourism Recommendation by others is the most influencing factor in travel decision, followed by Desire to travel, Authentic experience, Anxiety and Make a Difference.
2) From the test of AHP, 'food and beverage' is found to be the most important 'events and recreation motive', which is followed by 'spend time with family and friends', 'have fun/ an adventure', 'enjoy the natural beauty of rural area', 'participate in outdoor activities' and 'rest or relaxation'. While, ''farm stay' is found to be the least important variable under 'events and recreation motive'.
3) From the test of AHP, 'agri related study' is found to be the important 'experience and educational motives', which is followed by 'Participate in an activity close to home' and 'Learn how products are grown or made'. While the variable 'Learn something new' is found to be the least important 'experience and educational motives'.
4) From the test of AHP, it is observed that the respondent give the highest priority to 'support local farmers/ business', which is followed by 'Purchase or consume a fresh food product'. While, the variable 'Purchase a unique organic products' is found to be the least important motive comes under 'direct purchase of agricultural products'.

5. Conclusion

In recent times, the development of the innovative forms of tourism products in market has significantly increased, Agri tourism is a alternative form of tourism emerging as growing tourism product in Kerala with enormous scope and opportunities. This paper makes a theoretical contribution for understanding motivational needs of tourists and suggests practical implications for developing and marketing agri tourism by addressing the motivational factors. It provides some information to enhance research Destination Marketing Organizations, tourist offices and government and private bodies to attract potential visitors and to retain existing ones.

6. Future Scope

The study has great scope in the future in the area of behavioural intentions, motivational factors including pull and push factors, expectation and experience Gap analysis based on tourism motives.

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