



A Study on Perception and perspectives of students on Agri-tourism

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ABSTRACT

Agriculture being the oldest profession needs an upgradation time to time. Agritourism, a multifaceted intersection of agriculture and tourism, has emerged as a significant and dynamic sector in the realm of sustainable rural development. The study delves into the diverse range of agritourism activities, from farm tours and agricultural festivals to hands-on experiences, assessing their popularity and effectiveness in fostering a deeper connection between urban populations and rural landscapes. A critical analysis of the economic implications of agritourism is presented, elucidating its role in providing supplemental income to farmers, supporting local businesses, and contributing to regional economic growth. The study also aims at researching the awareness level of the students about the agritourism and their perception on the same, which will aid in creating awareness, identifying the problems and establish the solution for the same. The data for the study is collected by structured questionnaire, data is being collected in the districts of Bangalore, Kodagu, Shivamogga, and Hassan. The study uses various statistical tools like Chi Square, Tables, graphs and charts and descriptive Statistics and principal component analysis(factor analysis) to understand, analyze and present the data. Chi Square test is used to evaluate the association between the category of variables and Factor analysis is a statistical technique employed to describe variability among, observed, and correlated variables. Factor analysis is a technique employed to know the importance of each factor in the study.

Keywords: Agri-tourism, Awareness, Economic Implications, Students, Supplementary Income

I. Introduction

Background information on agritourism and its significance in the agriculture industry

Agritourism refers to a type of tourism that entails the act of visiting operational farms or agricultural regions. This educational initiative presents students with a valuable opportunity to get practical knowledge about agriculture, encompassing a range of activities such as farm-to-table food experiences and engaging in hands-on tasks like milking cows or gathering eggs. Agritourism has the potential to foster in students a heightened understanding and recognition of the significance of sustainable agriculture and the promotion of nutritious dietary practices. There exist numerous modalities through which students might engage in agritourism. Certain farms provide educational programs tailored exclusively for students, whereas others offer visitors the opportunity to independently tour the farm premises. Additionally, there exist various agritourism festivals and events that occur periodically throughout the year.

Importance of studying student perception towards agritourism

Agritourism has the potential to offer students a range of advantages, Agritourism provides students with a practical and experiential approach to acquiring knowledge about agriculture. Individuals have the opportunity to observe the cultivation and production processes of food, thereby acquiring knowledge regarding the

significance of sustainable agricultural methods. Agritourism might additionally facilitate the cultivation of students' enhanced comprehension of rural culture and the significance of agriculture within our societal framework. Agritourism is a valuable opportunity for students to engage in the investigation of career prospects within the realm of agriculture and its associated disciplines.

Students have the opportunity to engage in agritourism by visiting farms to participate in recreational activities and educational trips aimed at gaining insight into the lifestyle of farmers, their dietary practices, and the local culture. In response to the scarcity of labor and the advancement of agricultural technology, students have the opportunity to volunteer on farmlands and provide assistance to farmers during seasonal activities in rural areas.

Students can derive various advantages from agritourism, including the acquisition of enhanced knowledge pertaining to both traditional and contemporary agricultural methodologies. Additionally, they will have the opportunity to engage with and investigate regional customs and dietary habits, thereby fostering a deeper understanding of the sustainable practices that contribute to the advancement of agriculture and crop cultivation.

II. Literature Review

(Amaral et al., 2012) stated that, Agritourism is the best term to quote recreational activities associated with agriculture and rural tourism. (Poore, 2011) argued that, Agritourism destinations are suitable for educating the students through experiential activities. (Chen et al., 2020) the study focussed on studying the relationships between experiential benefits professional identity, career choice intentions, and support for educational tourism through Student Exchange Programme(SEP). The results of the study indicate for the few implications like policy level changes and ways to encourage students for overseas exchange programme. The researcher has also tried to understand the level of awareness about agriculture and interest towards agriculture among the students of the developing economies.

III. Research Design

a) Research Questions:

- What is the current level of awareness among students regarding the concept of agritourism?
- How familiar are students with the term "agritourism" and its implications?
- How do students perceive the potential benefits and challenges of agritourism?
- Where do students primarily acquire information about tourism and agriculture?
- How interested are students in participating in agritourism activities?

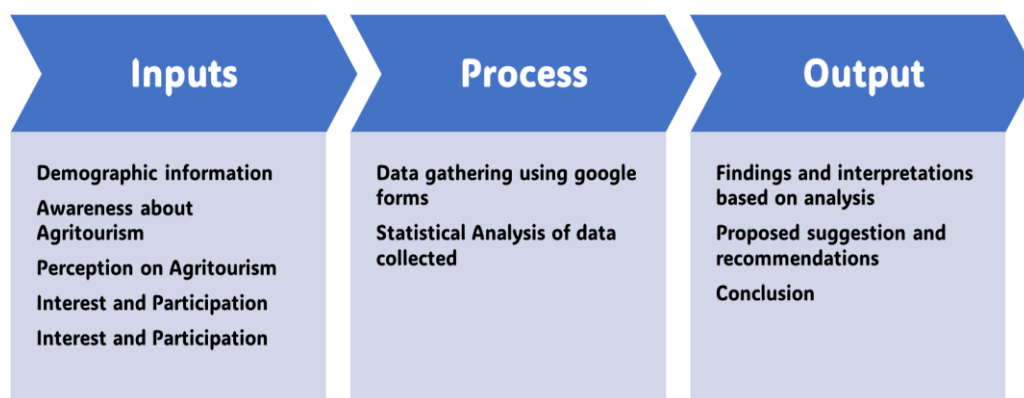
b) Objectives

- To identify students' level of knowledge in agritourism.
- To describe students' perceptions on the importance of agritourism.
- To study the various factors affecting agritourism, challenges faced and to establish a solution for the same.

c) Hypothesis

1. Ho There is no relationship between family background and awareness about agritourism
H1 There exist a relationship between family background and awareness about agritourism
2. Ho There is no relationship between area of stay and awareness about agritourism
H1 There is a relationship between area of stay and awareness about agritourism
3. Ho There is no relationship between family background and participation in agritourism
H1 There is a relationship between family background and participation in agritourism
4. Ho There is no relationship between area of stay and participation in agritourism
H1 There is no relationship between area of stay and participation in agritourism

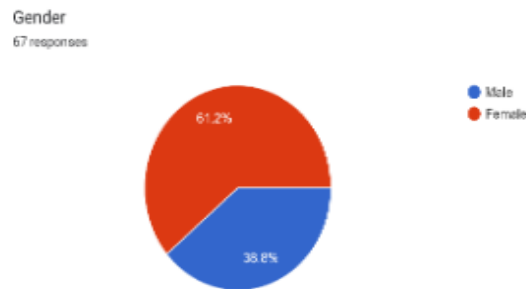
d) Process of research.



IV. Data Analysis:

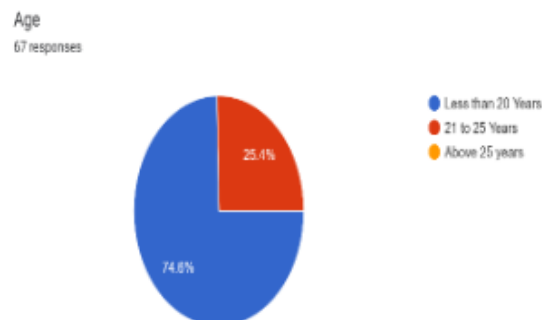
Objective 1 : To identify students' level of knowledge in agritourism.

Table 01: showing no. of male and female	
Gender	No. of students
Female	40
Male	26
Total	66



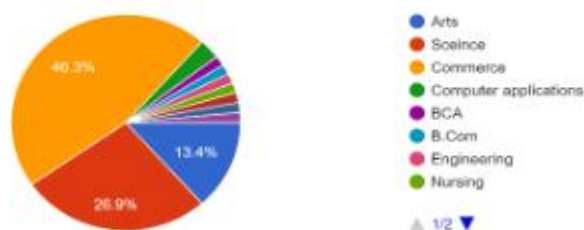
Inference: The above table and graph shows the distribution of the sample population. On an average 61% are female and 39% are male.

Table 02: showing age distribution of the population	
Age	no. of students
Less than 20 Years	49
21 to 25 Years	17
Total	66



Inference: The above table and chart shows the age group of the sample taken for the study. On an average 74% belong to the age group of less than 20 and rest are in the age group of 21 to 25.

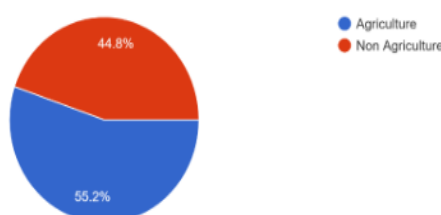
Table 03: showing stream of education of the students	
Stream	No. of students
Arts	10
Commerce	31
Computer application	3
D.Arch	1
Engineering	1
Management	1
Nursing	1
Science	18
Total	66

Stream of Education
67 responses

Inference: The above table and graph shows the stream of education of the sample taken for the study. On an average 40% of the students belong to commerce, approximately 27% belong to science, rest belong to diploma, computer application, nursing and others.

Table 04: Showing Background of students

Background	No. of Students
Agricultural	37
Non Agricultural	29
Total	66

Family Background
67 responses

Inference : The above table and graph shows the background of the sample distribution. Around 56% of the sample belong to agricultural background, and 44% belong to non agricultural background.

Table 05: Table showing the kind of participation in agritourism activity

Participation	No. of students	proportion
Hosting Farmer	24	36.
Mediator	5	8
Visitor	37	56
Total	66	100

Inference: The above table shows the information on interest of the students and the kind of participation. 36% of the sample are interested to participate in agritourism activity as hosting farmers, 8% want to participate as mediators, and 56% want to participate as visitors for the farm.

Hypothesis 1:

Null Hypothesis: There is no relationship between family background and awareness about agritourism

Alternative Hypothesis- There exist a relationship between family background and awareness about agritourism

Table 06: Cross table showing family background and awareness about agritourism

Family Background	Awareness		Total
	Yes	No	
Agricultural	25	12	37
Non Agricultural	19	10	29
Total	44	22	66

Pearson's Chi-squared test with Yates' continuity correction

data:	mytable
X-squared	5.8227
df	1
p-value	$p = 0.59 \geq 0.05$
Critical value	2.263

Inference: since p value is more than 0.05 therefore null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore we can conclude that there is no relationship between family background and awareness about agritourism.

Hypothesis 2:

Null hypothesis: There is no relationship between family background and participation in agritourism

Alternative hypothesis: There is relationship between family background and participation in agritourism

Background	Participation			Total
	Hosting Farmer	Mediator	Visitor	
Agricultural	19	2	16	37
Non-Agricultural	5	3	21	29
Total	24	5	37	66

Pearson's Chi-squared test	
data:	My table
X-squared	8.193
df	2
p-value	0.01663
Critical value	1.454

since p value is less than 0.05 therefore null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted. Therefore we can conclude from the test that family background and participation in agritourism are independent factors.

Hypothesis 3:

Null hypothesis: There is no relationship between area of stay and awareness about agritourism

Alternative hypothesis: There is relationship between area of stay and awareness about agritourism

Cross table showing area of stay and awareness about agritourism

Area of Stay	Awareness about agritourism		Total
	No	Yes	
Rural	29	15	44
Urban	15	7	22
	44	22	66

Pearson's Chi-squared test with Yates' continuity correction	
Data:	My table
X-squared	0
df	1
p-value	0.432
Critical Value	± 3.174

since p value is more than 0.05 therefore null hypothesis is accepted.

Inference: 66% of students staying in rural area are not aware of agritourism and only 34% of students in rural area are aware of agritourism.

Whereas 68% of students in urban area are not aware of agritourism and 32% of students of urban area are aware of agritourism

Therefore we can conclude from the test results that there exist no significant relationship between area of stay and awareness of agritourism.

Hypothesis 4

Ho There is relationship between area of stay and participation in agritourism

H1 There is no relationship between area of stay and participation in agritourism

Cross Table showing Participation and area of stay				
Area of stay	Participation			
	Hosting farmer	Mediator	Visitor	Total
Rural	18	3	23	44
Urban	6	2	14	22
Total	24	5	37	66

Pearson's Chi-squared test
Data: Mytable
X-squared = 1.1878,
df = 2,
p-value = 0.5522
Critical value- 4.263

Since the p value is more than 0.05 the Ho is accepted, i.e. there is no significant relationship between area of stay and participation.

inference:

Objective 2: To describe students' perceptions on the importance of agritourism.

Your opinion about Agritourism

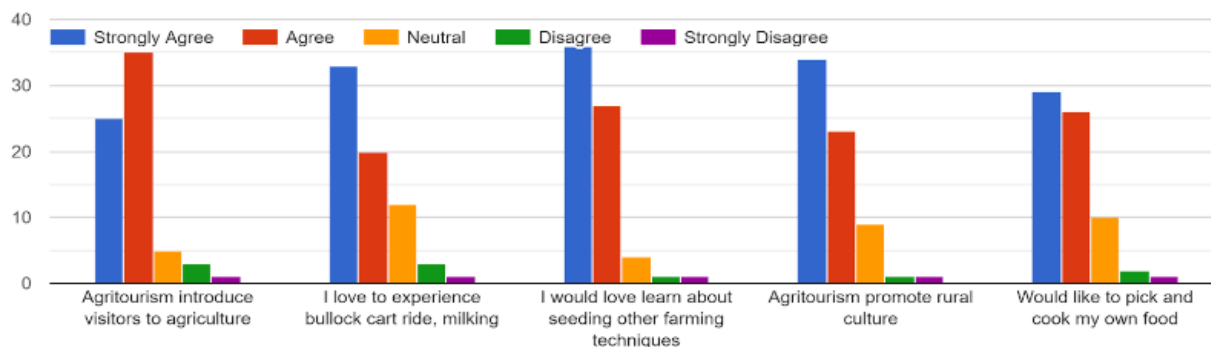


Table showing perception of the respondents on agritourism

Opinion	Economic Development	Educational opportunities	Promotion of sustainable agriculture	Preservation of cultural heritage
Strongly Agree(5)	12	12	14	14
Agree(4)	6	7	5	4
Neutral(3)	3	2	1	2
Disagree(2)	3		1	2
Strongly Disagree(1)	0	1	1	0

Inference: The above table and chart shows perception of the students about agritourism.

The questions were asked to know the perception of students whether agritourism will aid in economic development, whether agritourism can generate educational opportunities, whether agritourism will promote sustainable agriculture, and will it preserve cultural heritage. According to the data collected about 50% of the

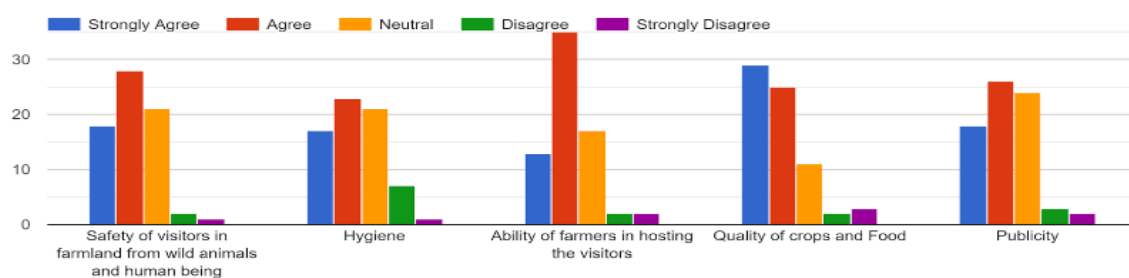
respondents strongly agree that agritourism aids in Economic development, 50% of the respondents strongly agree that the agritourism helps in educational opportunities, around 58% of the respondents feel agritourism promotes sustainable agriculture and 58% of the respondents feel agritourism preserves cultural heritage. A negligible percentage of respondents feel that agritourism does not help in economic development or it aids in educational opportunities or it helps in promote sustainable agriculture or preserves cultural heritage.

Objective 3: To study the various factors affecting agritourism, challenges faced and to establish a solution for the same.

Table showing various factors affecting agritourism.

Opinion	Safety	Hygiene	Ability of farmers in hosting the visitors	Quality of crops and food	Publicity
Strongly Agree(5)	17	16	13	27	17
Agree(4)	25	20	33	22	23
Neutral(3)	21	21	16	10	1
Disagree(2)	1	7	1	2	1
Strongly Disagree(1)	1	1	1	2	1

Challenges of Agritourism



Extraction method-Principal component Analysis			
Component	Initials	Extraction	Rank
Safety of visitors in farmland from wild animals and human being	1	0.834	2
Hygiene	1	0.733	4
Ability of farmers in hosting the visitors	1	0.796	3
Quality of crops and Food	1	0.551	5
Publicity	1	0.882	1

Inference: The above table and chart shows the various factors affecting agritourism. According to the principal component analysis publicity ranks first and then safety of the visitors in the farmland from wild animals and human being has been rated second followed by ability of the farmers in hosting the visitors and the next in the rank is hygiene factor.

Findings

- Agritourism would provide employment opportunities in the rural areas and can provide stable income for farmers.
- The respondents have commented that Agritourism is a beautiful concept which is beneficial for the stakeholders and helps the students to understand and experience the needs and issues of farmers in the rural area.
- Starting and exploring Agritourism, would help rural students from agriculture background to explore the career opportunities.
- The urban students can experience rural culture through agritourism.

- Agriculture is a subject that needs to be explored as a multi disciplinary area and Agritourism can help the urban segment to understand and learn about the same.
- Findings: About 59% of respondents have heard about the concept of agritourism from family and friends, only less than 10% of the respondents have learnt about the agritourism from formal sources like classroom lectures and online articles and blogs, about 22% are aware through social media.
- Findings: Majority of the respondents feel that agritourism activities can promote sustainable agriculture and preserve the cultural heritage
- Majority of the respondents have felt that, agritourism would introduces the visitors to agriculture and allows them to experience agriculture and allied activities
- Majority of the respondents have felt that, agritourism would introduces the visitors to agriculture and allows them to experience agriculture and allied activities

Suggestions

- Academic projects on Agritourism would enable the students to explore more on the concept and come up with ideas and suggestions to bridge the gap between farmers and visitors.
- There is a need to introduce the concept of agritourism in the curriculum.
- There can be more articles and blogs for agritourism which can make people aware of agritourism
- It would be good, if dept of tourism and agriculture focuses on promoting agritourism for bridging the gap between visitors and farmers
- Agritourism hosts can focuses on introducing the agricultural activities as part of tour itinerary

Conclusion

Agritourism, the intersection of agriculture and tourism, has gained increased awareness and significance in recent years. The multifaceted nature of agritourism brings about various conclusions regarding its impact on communities, economies, and the agricultural sector. In this study we have more concentrated on agritourism as an opportunity for students and inclusion of agritourism in the curriculum. Agritourism provides a means to preserve agricultural traditions and heritage. By showcasing traditional farming methods, local breeds, and crop varieties, agritourism helps in the conservation of biodiversity and cultural practices that might otherwise be lost over time.

Agritourism can contribute to increased environmental awareness. Visitors often gain a better understanding of sustainable farming practices, organic agriculture, and the importance of preserving natural landscapes. This heightened awareness can potentially influence consumer choices towards more sustainable and locally sourced products. Despite its positive aspects, agritourism also faces challenges. Balancing the influx of visitors with the need to maintain the integrity of agricultural operations, addressing potential environmental impacts, and ensuring the safety of visitors are critical considerations. Striking a balance between tourism and agriculture requires careful planning and management.

Policy Implications: Governments and local authorities play a crucial role in supporting and regulating agritourism. Developing clear guidelines, providing financial incentives, and investing in infrastructure can contribute to the success of agritourism initiatives. Policymakers should consider the unique needs of agritourism enterprises to create an environment conducive to their growth. In conclusion, awareness of agritourism has grown as it continues to offer a range of benefits, from economic diversification to community engagement and the preservation of agricultural heritage. However, successful implementation requires careful consideration of the challenges involved and the development of supportive policies. As the agritourism sector evolves, its potential to bridge the gap between urban and rural communities while promoting sustainable and culturally rich agricultural practices becomes increasingly evident.

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