



Agri-Tourism: Challenges for farmer in Satara District

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Abstract:-

The process of Globalization has brought about significant changes in the world economy. Global economic restructuring is taking place in economies for social and economic viability. Which are seeing changes in the global economy. The changes that have led to the emergence of new ideas as well as new perspectives on entertainment, recreation, leisure and especially tourism. This approach has paved the way for rural and agro-tourism. Agri-tourism is an innovative opportunity for farmers to complement traditional agricultural activities. In which it is possible to make innovative use of the resources available to the farmers. Agri-tourism creates a satisfactory and prosperous environment for farmers as well as tourists. This develops the farmer and the village as a whole from a social and economic point of view. Although Agri-tourism is on the rise, there is a dearth of appropriate policies and nutritional policies for Agri-tourism development. This paper is an attempt to identify the potential of Agri-tourism in Satara district of Maharashtra. Challenges include major opportunities for Agri-tourism, the need for and importance of Agri-tourism in this concern with some useful admonition or keys for renown.

Keywords: - Agri-tourism, Additional Income, Opportunities, Challenges, Potential, Rural life.

Introduction:-

India is an agricultural country. Most of the people in India depend upon direct and indirect on agriculture. Due to the use of traditional technology in agricultural farming, farmers have not been able to get much production and profit from agriculture. As a result, many rural people are underdeveloped. In order to bring about change in the economy, it is essential to develop the rural areas and change the living standards of the people there. Globalization has seen the emergence of new ideas in the economy. In particular, new approaches have been created for tourism and the outlook for rural and agro-tourism is evolving.



The concept of agri-tourism developed in the late 20th century. Agri-tourism is considered to be the fastest growing tourism sector. Urbanization has led to a change in daily life due to the rising cost of living, rising inflation and cheap tourism in a short period of time. At the same time, agri-tourism is an opportunity for the rural people to supplement their income. Today, agri-tourism is developing all over the world. Agri-tourism offers a variety of agricultural activities, which enable tourists to enjoy the natural environment, fresh air, rural culture, agricultural activities, and agricultural products. Agri-tourism is a special type of tourism in which agricultural places are used as tourism for educational purposes. Maharashtra is a leading state in the development and promotion of agri-tourism in India. Like other districts in the state, Satara district has huge potential for agri-tourism. The district has many historical, religious, cultural, natural and geographical tourist destinations.

Satara is geographically very important. Sahyadri and Mahadev mountain ranges are found in Satara district. There are also hill stations like Mahableswar. A variety of agricultural techniques like organic farming greenhouse are used in Satara district. Though it is the fact, there are some problems and due to theme there is no progress of the occupation of Agritourism. The present paper studies it.

Objective:-

- To examine the need and importance of agri- tourism development in Satara district.
- To identify the problems of agri tourism and make suggestion to installation and operation of Agri-tourism.

Database and Methodology:-

The present study is of descriptive nature and is based on secondary data. Secondary data has been obtained from the official website of the State Government, Collector office, various reports of the Department of Tourism, related articles, research paper reports, research papers and existing agri-tourism centers. Local Agri-tourism sites are visited to obtain the information required to meet the objectives of the study.

Study Area:-

Satara is a district in the western part of Maharashtra. The total area of this district is 10,840 sq. Km. The latitude of this district is 17°05' to 18°11' north and the longitude is 73°33' to 74°54' east. Before 1971, Satara district had 9 talukas but now it has 11 talukas and 1739 villages. Satara district is bounded on the north by Pune, on the east by Sholapur, on the south by Sangli, and on the west by Raigad and Ratnagiri. Satara district has Sahyadri and Mahadev mountain ranges. Krishna and Bhima are the main river systems. Satara district is



famous for its tourist attractions. Satara district has popular hill stations like Mahabaleswar and Pachgani. Important historical places like Pratapgad and Shingnapur, Sajjangad, Pusegaon, Gondwale, Buchaphal are very important religious places.

Concept and meaning of Agri-tourism:-

The concept of Agri-tourism is spread all over the world. Agro-tourism has gained importance in the European nation. Agri-tourism is a great opportunity to promote education, happiness and agricultural products along with extra income to the people. Agri-tourism is creating a bond between rural and urban people. Agri-tourism has the potential to attract tourists and is affordable to all.

The concept of Agri-tourism was formally launched in India on May 1, 2004. The concept of agri-tourism is related to agricultural activities. Agri-tourism provides the tourist with services like Clean, Healthy, Environment and Relaxation. Tourist also experience of rural life, culture, activities, food, agricultural products and agricultural activities. Agri-tourism is important for people who are attracted to rural, traditional, cultural knowledge. In agri-tourism, farmers organize various recreational activities such as rural folk dance, song, music, sports, local folk art. So one can experience peace, relaxation, entertainment, contentment and rural life through daily stressful life.

“Agro tourism is a type of rural tourism which the hosting house must be incorporated in to an agricultural state allowing visitors to participate in agricultural activities”. (Marques, 2006). “Agritourism has an opportunity for local farmer to increase income and revenue generation for government” (Bhavana M.A.2005). “In some cases it is proved that Agritourism is more profitable than agriculture occupation because Agritourism increases agricultural resources conservation and it diversified the farming value”. (Sangkhla T. & Samboonsuke. B.2012)

Needs and importance of agri-tourism:-

The agricultural sector is the backbone of the Indian economy. Most of the people in India depend on direct and indirect agriculture. Globalization and industrialization have threatened the very existence of agriculture. At the same time, rising costs, declining agricultural production and the price of agricultural commodities are reducing profits from agriculture. Due to these reasons, farmers are turning to jobs and similar occupations for their livelihood. Farmers need to be provided with alternative sources of additional income. Agri-tourism can serve this purpose. Agri-tourism provides farmers with an opportunity to earn extra income while at the same time allowing tourists to experience agricultural production, agricultural activities, rural culture and nature.



Given the global situation, farmers around the world are trying to diversify into agricultural products and services that complement agricultural production. In order to diversify the agribusiness, the farmers of Satara district get a great opportunity from agri-tourism. Farmers can increase their income through agricultural products and services. Tourism is gaining ground in today's world. This achieves great potential for economic growth and development. Tourism creates opportunities for foreign exchange, export growth, essential employment and development for many developing countries.

Due to globalization, tourism in India is getting a big boost. India is the second largest recipient of foreign exchange in the tourism industry. As per (CII report, 2011) the total direct employment in the tourism sector is around 20 million. According to the Maharashtra Agro-Industrial Policy Report 2010, Maharashtra is an agro-climatic zone and a bio-diverse state suitable for a wide variety of soils for agricultural development. According to (Industrial Policy Report, 2010) Maharashtra is an industrial state in India but most of the people in Maharashtra make their living from agriculture. Satara is a district in Maharashtra known for its agriculture, fruit production and tourism. Satara district has huge potential for agro-tourism due to its rich biodiversity, hill stations like Mahabaleswar and its historical background.

Challenges for agri-tourism

Due to the favorable climate and nature of Satara district, the potential for agro-tourism is high. Although agri-tourism is a business that benefits farmers and local people, the growth and development of agri-tourism in Satara district faces many problems and challenges.

- Lack of adequate knowledge about agri-tourism.
- Weak communication skills and dissemination failures.
- Lack of business acumen among farmers.
- Lack of capital for infrastructure required for agri-tourism.
- Uneducable staff and Lack of training on hospitality.
- Presence of unorganized sector in agri-tourism.
- Inadequate knowledge of farmers about alternative activities.

Key techniques for success of agritourism:-

Considering the tourism potential of Satara district, there is a huge opportunity for Agri-tourism in the district. Problems of strategic investment in Agri-tourism should be addressed through proactive means. This will motivate the farmers who are interested in Agri-tourism. In order to increase Agri-tourism centers and financial resources, effective marketing



strategy should be adopted by creating awareness among the tourists. The following are some of the important keys that farmers and the government should consider.

- Give wide publicity to tourist centers through newspapers, television, websites, etc.
- Update information from time to time by developing your website to attract foreign tourists
- Artificially utilize local resources to facilitate tourist services
- Plan service facilities according to customer expectations and desires
- Agri-tourism training should be imparted through Government Maharashtra State Agriculture and Rural Cooperative Federation(MART) and Agri-Tourism Development Corporation.
- Farmers should pay attention to develop characteristic features as well as maintain integrity.
- Small farmers based on cooperatives can develop their Agri-tourism centers.
- Workshops should be organized for tourists by developing Agri-travel packages from time to time.
- Improve service facilities by taking tourist feedback for further development
- Train your staff for the hospitality of tourists
- Government should make available from the agencies like Maharashtra State Agricultural and Rural Tourism Co-operative Federation Limited (MART) and Agri Tourism Development Corporation (ATDC) (Singh, P. And Mishra, M., 2016)

Conclusion

However, the development of Agri-tourism in Satara district faces many challenges. These are mainly farmers' education, inadequate capital, inadequate knowledge of Agri-tourism, lack of marketing skills and lack of government support. Satara district needs to have a proper business strategy for Agri-tourism development. At the same time, global economic restructuring will require economies to make adjustments to sustain social and economic viability. Agro-tourism is changing the nature and rural areas of the world. As a result, new concepts have emerged in tourism and a new approach has been created for recreation and leisure. Despite the development of Agri-tourism business in India, it is a fact that farmers should adopt a business approach. Government support should be given priority for the development of agro-tourism in rural areas through nutritional policies.



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