

Original Research Article

The Socio-Economic Status and Problems in Establishment and Running of Agro-Tourism Centers (ATCs) in Ratangiri District (M.S.)

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ABSTRACT

The data for present study was collected from selected six Agro-tourism centers (ATCs) in four tahsils of Ratnagiri districts (M.S.) viz; Dapoli, Guhagar, Mandangad and Khed. The socio-economic status of the ATC owners revealed that, half (50 per cent) of the ATC owners belongs to age group of 35-45 years while one third (33.33 per cent) of the respondents were in the age group of 45-60 years followed by 16.67 per cent of the ATC owner belonging to the age group 60-75 years. All of the ATC owners i.e. cent per cent belonged to rural background. The entire ATC owners were the male gender. The half (50 per cent) of the ATC owners were graduated while one third (33.33 per cent) of the ATC owners were higher secondary passed and 16.67 per cent i.e. only one ATC owner was post graduate. The majorities (66.67 per cent) of the ATC owners were having farming as a main while one third (33.33 per cent) of the ATC owners were businessman. The average operational land holding of ATC owners was 10.66 hectare. The average land utilized for ATCs was 1.78 hectare and crop production was 7.11 hectare. The cropping pattern of ATCs was dominated by perennial fruit crops (83.00 per cent) such as Mango, Cashewnut, Coconut, Arecanut, Kokum and other perennial crops etc. Rice was important food grain crops grown by ATC owners. The main problems of ATCs were high establishment cost, lack of trained person in Agro-tourism sector, lack of government support, lack of labour, lack of road facilities, high maintenance cost and high advertisement cost of ATC, etc.

Keywords

Agro-tourism,
Socio-economic,
Problem

Introduction

Tourism is a massive and growing industry already affecting millions of the poor, so a marginal improvement. It could generate substantial economic benefits. The direct contribution of Travel and Tourism to GDP was in Rs. 5651 billion (6.4 per cent of GDP) in 2011 and is forecasted to rise by 7.8 percent to Rs.12891.2 billion in 2020 (Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India 2011). It has been also mentioned in world Trade

Tourism Center (WTTC) report (2009). The direct contribution of Travel and Tourism to GDP was Rs.5,943.3 billion (3.7% of total GDP) in 2017 and is forecast to rise by 7.1%, from 2018-2028, to Rs.12,677.9 billion (3.9% of total GDP) in 2028. As one of the world's largest economic sectors, Travel and Tourism creates jobs, drives exports, and generates prosperity across the world. In our annual analysis of the global economic impact of Travel and Tourism, the sector is shown to account for 10.4% of global GDP and 313

million jobs, or 9.9% of total employment, in 2017.

Today the concept of traditional tourism has been changed. Some new areas of the tourism have been emerged like Agro-Tourism. Promotion of tourism would bring many direct and indirect benefits to the people. Agro-tourism is an innovative agricultural activity related to tourism and agriculture both.

Agro-tourism is defined broadly as any agriculturally based operation or activity that brings visitors to a farm or ranch. The dictionary meaning of Agro-tourism is tourism in which tourist's board at farms or in rural villages and experience farming at close hand (Dictionary of the English language, 2000). Maharashtra Agro-culture and Rural Tourism Federation (MATR) defined 'Agro-tourism', is that it is the holiday concept of visiting farm or any agricultural, horticultural, or agribusiness operation for the purpose of enjoyment, education or active involvement in the activities of the farm or operation.

Maharashtra is the second largest state of India in terms of population and third in area. Maharashtra is the third largest state in India and one of the few regions in the world that have an offer a variety of tourist destination. It is located on the west coast of India with a 720 km long coastline along the green Konkan region. The Western Ghats and the Sahyadri mountain range are several hill stations and water reservoirs with semi-evergreen and deciduous forests. Vidarbha, with its dense forests, is home to several wildlife sanctuaries and nature parks. Add to this the state's rich history, tradition, culture and delicious food and sea food with its ancient forts and monuments, caves, temples and pilgrimage centers that make it a whole some tourist destination.

Surrounded by the Sahyadri hills on the east and the Arabian Sea on the west, the coastal strip of Maharashtra is known as the Konkan Region. Historically Konkan has been land with dense forest cover and a landscape fringed with beautiful beaches, picturesque hamlets, paddy fields, coconut grooves and mango orchards. The region has tremendous potential with a variety of cultural aspects and production systems sufficient to attract tourists and other advantage is Mumbai and Pune is the nearest big cities. It has seen substantial growth in tourism in the past few years. Now the target area of Ratnagiri Agro-tourism is easily possible where mango, cashew and coconut based intercropping cultivation is present. Mango orchards have seasonal earning which starts from early April and it ends by June. It is experiencing that excess production of Mangoes never results in higher profit if that farmer cannot process that output in form of Pulp etc. on the other hand of due to natural factors if production is less than the average, it will clearly result in financial setback. Other than Mango, district produces Rice which is purely seasonal crop therefore no assurance can be given of income to farmers. According to data of 2011-12 related to Ratnagiri District, 27 % area is not suitable for agriculture, 40 % area is suitable but not used for agriculture, and this creates the opportunity for Agriculture Based Tourism activity.

Materials and Methods

The data for present study was collected from selected six Agro-tourism centers in four tahsils of Ratnagiri districts (M.S.) viz; Dapoli, Guhagar, Mandangad and Khed. Therefore Ratnagiri district was selected for present study has it's having more number of ATCs in the Konkan region of Maharashtra (2016).

The primary data were collected by survey method from selected ATCs; The ATC owners were interviewed personally with the help of comprehensive pretested schedule specially designed for the purpose.

Results and Discussions

General information of selected Agro-tourism Centers (ATCs) like location, year of establishment and operating experience were collected and presented in Table 1.

It is seen from the table that the AATD was established in 2014 and operating experience is 5 years. The GATG is located at village Abloli, Guhagartahsil of Ratnagiri district (M.S.). It was established in 2009 and operating experience is 10 year. The SMATGis located at village Asgoli, Guhagartahsil of Ratnagiri district (M.S.). It was established in 2011 and operating experience is 8 year. The BGEM is located at village Konzar, Mandangadtahsil of Ratnagiri district (M.S.). It was established in 2015 and operating experience is 4 years and the last RATK is located at village Shirvali, Khedtahsil of Ratnagiri district (M.S.). It was established in 2015 and operating experience was 4 years.

The details of the socio-economic status of ATCs owners such as age, gender, family background, education, main occupation and participation in social and extension activities were collected and presented in Table 2.

The socio-economic profile of the ATC owners revealed that, half (50 per cent) of the ATC owners belongs to age group of 35-45 years while one third (33.33 per cent) of the respondents were in the age group of 45-60 years followed by 16.67 per cent of the ATC owner belonging to the age group 60-75 years. All of the ATC owners i.e. cent per cent belonged to rural background. The entire ATC owners were the male gender.

The half (50 per cent) of the ATC owners were graduated while one third (33.33 per cent) of the ATC owners were higher secondary passed and 16.67 per cent *i.e.* only one ATC owner was post graduate. The majorities (66.67 per cent) of the ATC owners were having farming as a main while one third (33.33 per cent) of the ATC owners were businessman. One half of the ATC owners (50 per cent) had low extension participation and extension contacts while one third (33.33 per cent) of the ATC owners had medium participation and extension contacts followed by only 16.67 per cent of the ATC owners having high extension participation and extension contacts. The majority (66.66 per cent) of the ATC owners falls under low category of social participation while (16.67 per cent) of the respondents had medium and high social participation respectively.

The information regarding per ATC family size and educational status of family member presented in Table- 3

The data presented in Table 3 shows that the family size of ANSD, SMAG and RATK was 6, 7 and 9, respectively. The family size of AATD, GATG and BGEM was 5 members each respectively. The average family members were 2.00 male, female 2.50 and children were 1.66. The educational levels of family members of ATC owners at overall level, 16.23 per cent family members were having up to primary level, 24.35 per cent family members were having secondary education, 27.60 per cent family members having higher secondary education whereas 40.58 per cent family members completed graduation level education.

General information about operational land holding of selected Agro-tourism Centers (ATCs) is presented in Table 4.

Table.1 General information of selected Agro-tourism Centers (ATCs)

Sr. No.	Name of Agro-tourism centers	Location	Year of Establishment	Operating experience (year)
1	Amruttej Nisarg Sahavas Dapoli (ANSD)	Gavhe, Dapoli	2005	14
2	Arihant Agro-Tourism center Dapoli (AATD)	Sukondi, Dapoli	2014	5
3	Garva Agro-Tourism center Guhaghar (GATG)	Abloli, Guhagar	2009	10
4	Sai Meru Agro-Tourism center Guhaghar (SMATG)	Asgoli, Guhagar	2011	8
5	Blue Green Exotica Mandangad (BGEM)	Konzar, Mandangad	2015	4
6	Raturaj Agro-Tourism center Khed (RATK)	Shirvali, Khed	2015	4

Table.2 Socio-personal profile of ATCs owners

(N=6)

Sr. No.	Parameters	Categories	Frequency	Per cent (%)
1	Age (years)	35-45 year	3	50.00
		45-60 year	2	33.33
		60-75 year	1	16.67
2	Family background	Rural	6	100.00
3	Gender	Male	6	100.00
4	Education	10+2	2	33.33
		Graduate	3	50.00
		Postgraduate	1	16.67
5	Occupation	Business	2	33.33
		Farming	4	66.66
6	Participation in extension activities	Low (2-10)	3	50.00
		Medium (10-20)	2	33.33
		High (20-30)	1	16.67
7	Extension Contact	Low (0-3)	3	50.00
		Medium (3-6)	2	33.33
		High (6-9)	1	16.67
8	Social participation	Low (0-3)	4	66.66
		Medium (3 -6)	1	16.67
		High (6 -9)	1	16.67

(Figures in parentheses are the percentages to selected ATCs)

Table.3 Per ATC family size and educational status

Sr. No.	Particulars	ATCs						Average
		ANSD	AATD	GATG	SMAG	BGE M	RATK	
A	Family size							
	Male	2	1	1	3	2	3	2.00
	Female	2	3	2	2	2	4	2.50
	Children	2	1	2	2	1	2	1.66
	Total	6	5	5	7	5	9	6.16
B	Educational status							
	Upto Primary	2 (33.33)	0 (00.00)	0 (00.00)	2 (28.57)	1 (20.00)	1 (11.11)	1.00 (16.23)
	Upto Secondary	1 (16.67)	1 (20.00)	2 (40.00)	2 (28.57)	0 (00.00)	3 (33.33)	1.50 (24.35)
	Upto Higher secondary	0 (00.00)	1 (20.00)	1 (20.00)	2 (28.57)	1 (20.00)	2 (22.22)	1.17 (27.60)
	Upto degree	3 (50.00)	3 (60.00)	2 (40.00)	1 (14.28)	3 (60.00)	3 (33.33)	2.50 (40.58)
	Total	6 (100)	5 (100)	5 (100)	7 (100)	5 (100)	9 (100)	6.16 (100)

(Figures in parentheses are the percentages to the total)

Table.4 Operational land holding of ATCs

(Area in ha)

Sr. No.	ATCs	Cultivated		Un cultivated	Total	Area under ATC	Cultivated
		Unirri.	Irri.	Fallow			
1	ANSD	-- (0.00)	3.6 (100)	-- (0.00)	3.60 (100.00)	1.70 (47.22)	1.90 (52.78)
2	AATD	6.00 (37.50)	10.0 (62.50)	-- (0.00)	16.0 (100.00)	2.50 (15.62)	11.50 (71.87)
3	GATG	2.60 (50.00)	2.00 (38.46)	0.60 (11.53)	5.20 (100.00)	1.00 (19.23)	3.60 (69.23)
4	SMAG	-- (0.00)	2.60 (100)	-- (0.00)	2.60 (100.00)	0.30 (12.5)	2.30 (87.5)
5	BGEM	12 (34.28)	15.0 (42.86)	8.00 (22.86)	35.0 (100.00)	5.00 (14.28)	22.00 (62.85)
6	RATK	0.60 (37.50)	1.00 (62.50)	-- (0.00)	1.60 (100.00)	0.20 (12.50)	1.40 (87.5)
	Total	21.20 (33.12)	34.20 (53.44)	8.60 (13.43)	64.00 (100.00)	10.70 (16.71)	42.70 (66.71)
	Average	3.53	5.70	1.43	10.66	1.78	7.11

(Figures in parentheses are the percentages to the total)

Table.5 Cropping pattern followed by ATC owners

(Area in ha)

Sr. No.	Particulars	ANSD	AATD	GATG	SMAG	BGEM	RATK	Total	Overall
1	Kharif crops								
	a) Cereals	-	1.20 (12.12)	0.80 (20.00)	0.10 (4.17)	2.40 (12.18)	0.6 (36.36)	5.10 (12.89)	0.85 (12.84)
	b) Vegetable	-	-	-	0.04 (1.67)	-	-	0.04 (0.10)	0.006 (0.10)
	c) Flowers	-	-	-	0.10 (4.17)	-	-	0.10 (0.25)	0.016 (0.25)
	Total	-	1.20 (12.12)	0.80 (20.00)	0.24 (10.00)	2.40 (12.18)	0.6 (36.36)	5.24 (13.3)	0.87 (13.20)
2	Rabi crops								
	a) Vegetable	-	0.20 (2.02)	0.10 (2.50)	0.04 (1.66)	0.20 (1.01)	0.20 (12.12)	0.74 (1.87)	0.12 (1.87)
	b) Other crops	-	0.10 (1.01)	0.20 (5.00)	-	-	-	0.30 (0.76)	0.05 (0.76)
	Total	-	0.30 (3.03)	0.30 (7.50)	0.04 (1.66)	0.20 (1.01)	0.20 (12.12)	1.04 (2.63)	0.17 (2.60)
3	Summer crops								
	a) Cucumber	-	0.05 (0.50)	-	-	0.10 (0.50)	0.05 (3.03)	0.20 (0.51)	0.03 (0.51)
	b) Other crops	-	0.05 (0.50)	0.10 (2.50)	0.10 (4.46)	-	-	0.25 (0.63)	0.04 (0.63)
	Total	-	0.10 (1.00)	0.10 (2.50)	0.10 (4.46)	0.10 (0.50)	0.05 (3.03)	0.45 (1.14)	0.07 (1.10)
4	Perennial crops								
	a)Mango	0.60 (31.0)	3.00 (30.30)	0.60 (15.00)	1.00 (41.66)	7.00 (35.53)	0.30 (18.18)	12.50 (31.6)	2.08 (31.6)
	b)Cashewnut	0.50 (26.31)	2.00 (20.20)	0.90 (22.50)	0.80 (33.33)	5.00 (25.38)	0.00 (0.00)	9.20 (23.3)	1.53 (23.3)
	c)Coconut	0.40 (21.05)	0.70 (7.07)	0.40 (10.00)	0.20 (8.33)	2.00 (10.15)	0.20 (12.12)	3.90 (9.86)	0.65 (9.86)
	d)Arecanut	0.30 (15.78)	0.10 (1.01)	0.80 (20.00)	0.01 (0.42)	0.50 (2.54)	0.20 (12.12)	1.91 (4.83)	0.31 (4.83)
	e)Other crops	0.10 (5.26)	2.50 (25.25)	0.10 (2.50)	0.01 (0.42)	2.50 (12.69)	0.10 (6.06)	5.31 (13.4)	0.90 (13.4)
	Total	1.90 (100)	8.30 (83.83)	2.80 (70.00)	2.02 (84.16)	17.00 (86.29)	0.80 (48.48)	32.82 (82.9)	5.47 (83.00)
	Gross Cropped Area	1.90 (100)	9.90 (100)	4.00 (100)	2.40 (100)	19.70 (100)	1.65 (100)	39.55 (100)	6.59 (100)
	Net cropped Area	1.90	9.50	3.60	2.26	19.40	1.40	38.06	6.34
	Cropping intensity (%)	100.0	104.2	111.1	106.1	101.5	117.9	104.0	104.0

(Figures in parentheses are the percentages to the total)

Table.6 Problem faced by ATCs

(N=6)

Sr.	Problem	ANSD	AATD	GATG	SMAG	BGEM	RATK	Total
A Establishment of ATCs								
1	Lack of fund for Establishment of ATCs	1	0	1	1	0	1	4
3	Non availability of literature related to Agro- tourism practice	0	0	1	1	0	1	4
4	Lack of government support	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
5	Lack of training for Agro-tourism.	1	0	1	1	1	1	5
6	Complexity in getting license from the government	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
	Total score	4	2	5	5	3	5	25 (36.71)
B Maintenance cost of Machinery and Facilities providing in ATCs								
1	Maintenance cost is high	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
2	Inability to introduce More activities	0	0	1	1	0	1	3
3	Lack of awareness of technology	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
4	Weak Communication skills	0	0	1	1	0	1	3
5	Non willingness of the tourists to purchase farm products	0	0	0	0	0	1	1
6	Lack of Trained Person in Agro tourism	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
7	Lack of labour	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
	Total score	3	3	5	6	3	7	27 (38.57)
C Other problem								
1	Less number of visitors	0	0	0	1	0	1	2
3	Lack of transport facilities	0	1	0	1	1	1	4
4	Lack of road facilities	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
5	High cost in Advertisement of ATC	1	1	1	1	1	1	6
	Total score	2	3	2	4	3	4	18 (25.71)
	Total	9 (12.86)	8 (11.42)	12 (17.14)	16 (22.86)	9 (12.86)	16 (22.86)	70 (100)

(Figures in parentheses are the percentages to the total)

(1-Problem was faced by ATCs, 0- No Problem faced by ATCs)

The data presented in Table 4 revealed that, the total operational land holding of the ATCs owners was 64 hectare. The average operational land holding was 10.66 hectare. The average unirrigated land of ATCs was 3.53 hectare, irrigated was 5.70 hectare and average fallow land was 1.43 hectare. Maximum land utilized for cultivation of crops was 66.71 per cent and remaining 16.71 per cent of land utilized for ATCs. The average land utilized for ATCs was 1.78 hectare and crop production was 7.11 hectare.

The cropping pattern followed by ATC owners with cropping intensity were presented in the Table 5.

The data presented in Table 5 shows that, the gross cropped area, at the overall level, worked out to 6.59 hectare. The area under *kharif* crops was 13.20 per cent, *rabi* crops was 2.60 per cent, summer crops 1.10 per cent and perennial crops was 83 per cent of the gross cropped area. At overall level Cropping intensity was 104 per cent. It was highest in RATK (117.9).

Problem faced by ATCs owners were collected and given in the Table 6.

The majority of problems faced by ATC owners were categorized as per the score allotted to each of the problem faced by ATCs at total level. The information presented in Table 6 revealed that, 38.57 per cent ATC owner faced the problem in maintenance of ATC, followed by high establishment cost of ATC (36.71 per cent) and other problems (25.71 per cent) like insufficient number of visitors, lack of transport and road facilities, lack of government support, etc.

In conclusions, Ratnagiri district of Maharashtra has a great potential for the

development of Agro-tourism because of natural conditions and different types of agro-products as well as variety of rural traditions, festivals, beaches, Forts, etc. The socio-economic status of the ATC owners revealed that, half (50 per cent) of the ATC owners belongs to age group of 35-45 years while one third (33.33 per cent) of the respondents were in the age group of 45-60 years followed by 16.67 per cent of the ATC owner belonging to the age group 60-75 years. All of the ATC owners i.e. cent per cent belonged to rural background. The entire ATC owners were the male gender. The half (50 per cent) of the ATC owners were graduated while one third (33.33 per cent) of the ATC owners were higher secondary passed and 16.67 per cent *i.e.* only one ATC owner was post graduate. The majorities (66.67 per cent) of the ATC owners were having farming as a main while one third (33.33 per cent) of the ATC owners were businessman. The main problems of ATCs were high establishment cost, lack of trained person in Agro-tourism sector, lack of government support, lack of labour, lack of road facilities, high maintenance cost and high advertisement cost of ATC, etc. Hence this study observed to have Government policies and financial support to the establishment of Agro-tourism centers and development of good network of road facility.

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