



Agro Tourism and its Impact on Rural Development- A Geographical Study

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Abstract:

The trend of tourism has changed in recent times. At present, due to the availability of Transport system and accommodation facilities, tourism has become dynamic. Tourism can be seen towards rural areas for some period free from mental stress, pollution and traffic in urban areas. Recently, the concept of agro tourism has emerged to provide information about rural life. Our agriculture and agro tourism industries are providing employment to farmers at the local level. At the same time, it is helping the economic and social development of rural areas.

Keywords: Concept of Agro Tourism, Objectives and Importance of Agro tourism, Impact on Rural Development.

Introduction:

Today tourism industry has gained a lot of importance. Tourists visit many places like Ancient buildings, Historical forts, Ancient monuments, Pilgrimage sites, Rivers, Lakes, Hills, Beaches in the country and abroad. Results Economic growth, employment opportunities are available due to this industry.

India is an agricultural country and is known as an agricultural culture in the world. About 65 to 70% of the country's population is engaged in agriculture and agribusiness. Although the share of agriculture sector in the country's development is higher than other sectors, this share is decreasing recently. Due to many reasons like fluctuations in prices of agricultural products, higher cost of agricultural production, migration of people from rural areas to cities in search of jobs, suicides of farmers, the amount of agricultural area is decreasing. Recently, the concept of agro tourism has emerged. This concept is native to Australia. Agro tourism is the only industry that is environmentally complementary compared to other industries. The concept of agro tourism has emerged as a

sustainable solution along with the traditional complementary business of agriculture. May 16th is celebrated worldwide as the 'World Agro Tourism Day'. Agro tourism in India started on May 16, 2004 from Baramati in Maharashtra. Pandurang Taware is known as the father of agro tourism.

People in urban areas are suffering from mental stress, increasing traffic, increasing pollution, hectic life, therefore, tourists come to rural areas for entertainment, fun, leisure, satisfaction, as well as for children from urban areas to see the culture, lifestyle, and agricultural activities of rural areas. Therefore, it is seen that the farmers are getting financial benefit from this business, employment is being created for the local people.

Objectives:

1. To study the concept of agro tourism.
2. To study the objectives and importance of agro tourism.
3. To study the impact of agro tourism on rural development.
4. Emphasis for development of agriculture sector.

Hypothesis:

1. Economic stability is being achieved through agro tourism industry.
2. Agro tourism will create interest in agriculture among today's generation.
3. Agro tourism will raise the economic and social status of farmers.
4. Agro tourism will bring radical changes to the farmer in his farm.

Information Source:

1) Primary sources of information: Field visits to local agro tourism centers, observation, discussions with farmers, agricultural professionals and tourists to obtain information.

2) Secondary sources of information: Collecting information using published articles, books, various websites.

Agro Tourism Concept:

Agro tourism is the link between agriculture and tourism. The concept of agro tourism originated in Australia. In which tourists can visit agricultural fields, buy fresh vegetables, fruits, enjoy hearth meals, enjoy food, buffalo and horse rides, bullock cart rides, farm dam rides, water well pumping, swimming in ponds, village tours, animals. To experience cropping methods, nature, rural environment, rural culture, lifestyle. To experience the actual work like ploughing, sowing, weeding, threshing in the fields, staying at the farmer's house, the farmers used to entertain tourists or visiting guests for free. At the same time, people can experience the traditional program. In which Kirtan, Bharud, Jagran, Gondhaal, fire dance etc. Such is the basic concept of agro tourism.

Agro Tourism Activities

Source: Agro tourism center field visits and internet usage

Objectives of Agro Tourism:

1. Rural development through agro tourism and development of the state through rural development.
2. To provide market for agricultural products through agro tourism.
3. To promote agro tourism as a complementary business to agriculture.
4. Bringing folk arts and traditions of rural areas to urban areas.
5. Providing employment opportunities to rural youth and women.
6. To provide information about agricultural practices and agriculture allied businesses to people or students in urban areas.
7. Uplifting the standard of living in rural areas through agro tourism.
8. To give the people of urban areas the experience of living in a pollution-free, peaceful and close to nature.
9. Encouraging primary processing of waste, waste in rural areas.
10. To provide tourists with real farm work experience.

Importance of Agro Tourism:

Agro tourism has emerged as an option as a sustainable solution along with the traditional complementary business of agriculture. It is the only industry that is environmentally complementary compared to all other different industries. The coordination of the two departments of agriculture and tourism is helping in economic and social development of farmers and rural areas. There is no need to find a new place as an agro tourism center can be established within the farm premises. For this purpose, suitable land use of fallow, barren, saline land in rural areas is or can be done. Local market is available for agricultural products and farmers can decide the price of the produce grown by themselves. The sale of various handicrafts and products produced by women's self-help groups in rural areas provides employment to women. Youths are being encouraged to start small scale industries and cottage industries in the local area and are helping to strengthen the rural economy. Rural areas are being helped to maintain a pollution-free environment, rural culture, folk art, traditions, food culture, disappearing artefacts, Yatra festivals and also to exchange information and knowledge of rural and urban areas through agro tourism. It is seen that agro tourism centers are making it possible to

preserve and conserve many elements like the design of rural houses, costumes, hairstyles, traditional dress, dialect etc.

Impact of Agro Tourism on Rural Development:**1) Economic Development:**

It is seen that agro tourism is having a good effect on the rural economy through which employment opportunities have been created for the youth and women in the rural areas. This is providing a direct market for the agricultural produce of the farmers. This supplementary business is helping the farmers to achieve financial stability.

2) Promotion of Local Industries:

Agro tourism center has boosted not only the life of the farmers but also the social and economic development of the entire village. Various arts and crafts made from wood, bamboo, pottery, weaving, products made by women, products available for purchase by visiting tourists, are seen to boost local industries.

3) Social Development:

Tourism is a great way for cultural exchange. Due to this agro tourism, tourism experiences the culture and lifestyle of urban and rural areas, thus helping to reduce the ideological gap between rural and urban areas, showing respect, tolerance and love to each other is encouraging social progress.

4) Conservation of Environment:

Agro tourism is an eco-complementary business compared to all other industries and is associated with agriculture. This business appears to be very important for the conservation of agricultural land and surrounding forested areas.

5) Opportunities in Agro Tourism Business:

Agro tourism business like local handicrafts, processing of agricultural products, dairy business, fish business, nurseries, poultry farming, goat rearing, sheep rearing, animal husbandry, rural tours or nature tourism and adventure tourism etc. are providing various employment opportunities to the youth and women in the rural areas.

Conclusion:

1. It is seen that due to the agro tourism industry, there is a market for local industries and agricultural products in the rural areas.
2. Employment opportunities are being created for the unemployed youth and

women in the rural areas only in the local areas.

3. Preservation of rural culture, folk art, tradition and lifestyle is seen to be getting priority.
4. Exchange of information and knowledge of rural and urban areas through agro tourism is helping to reduce the ideological gap.
5. Economic and social development of the village is being boosted with the farmers.

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