Expectations of Tourists from Dairy Tourism:
A Case from Trans-Gangetic Plains of India

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ABSTRACT

The present study attempted to identify and provide a new non-farming income enhancing activity for dairy farmer-entrepreneurs. The main objective of this paper is to find the tourist expectation to identify characteristics components of an unexplored aspects of dairy tourism. More than 60.00 per cent of the respondent-tourists deemed all the identified expectations as important and very important. The findings imply that respondent-tourists expected all the identified assets, activities, and attractions to be an essential component of dairy tourism. The findings of the study are having theoretical and managerial implications. This paper contributed to the theory of tourist expectation and managerially is enable and guide the trainers, farmers, and entrepreneurs to implement the dairy tourism as a niche tourism activity.

Key words: Dairy tourism,; Expectations; Income enhancement; Niche tourism;

In the past two decades the role of livestock sector, particularly of dairy has become vibrant in upholding the growth in the agriculture sector *(Sirohi, et al. (2017). Ranganathan (2015)* in his study reported increase in the share of income from animal farming from 3.00 per cent to over 20.00 per cent in the 11 out of 18 states. The share of livestock income to total farm household income has increased from 4.3 per cent in 2002-03 to 12.00 per cent in 2012-13 (D*AHD, Annual report 2018-19)*. Among the agricultural sector, livestock in general and dairy in particular is having upper hand in contribution to farm household income. As per the report published by IMARC group (2019); in the year 2018 Indian dairy touched a market value of Rs.9,168 Billion and it is expected to be Rs. 21,971 Billion by the year 2024. Dairying provides regular income, unlike crop production. As per the DAHD Annual report 2018-19, based on the economic significance of dairying, articulates that any interventions in dairy eventually enhance the income of the farmers. From this, it can be said that dairying is the prospective engine of agricultural development.

Uncertainties may hamper the growth trajectory at any moment. According to USDA report quoted by *Jim (2019)*, in the year 2018 more than 2,700 dairy farms were closed in U.S. Similarly, Dairy industry of European Union has seen intervention shocks. The growth of Indian dairy industry is subjected to the dynamics of global dairy market (*NDDB, Annual report, 2017-18).* The performance of dairy sector is better, compared to agriculture sector, but still it has challenges such as; low productivity of dairy animals, indiscriminate breeding, price fluctuations, climate change, availability of adequate quantity and quality of fodder, water scarcity, unorganized milk market, milk adulteration, etc., are said to have made dairying unattractive activity. To address the growing unattractiveness, in this context there is a need to ask some (prelude) questions, which are as follows; How to make dairying attractive and remunerative? Lucrative income is what matters for any farmer-entrepreneur. The simple and straight answer to above question is "Income enhancement". The equation is simple, if there is no income there is no interest and no investment, more the income more is the magnetism in dairying. What can be done beyond regular dairy activities? It is a known

fact that milk production and processing are the two major sources of income to the dairy farmer-entrepreneurs. Farmer's income can be stabilized and cushioned from various risk factors by non- agricultural rural activity *(Cannarella, 2002)*. Income of the farmer-entrepreneur can be enhanced by farm diversification *(Economic survey, 2018-19)*. What is that novel income enhancing dimension of dairy farming? Keeping in the mind the future needs of dairy farmer-entrepreneurs, this study attempted to identify and provide a new non-farming income enhancing activity for dairy farmer-entrepreneurs. In this context, the study attempted to combine tourism with dairying as a novel income enhancing activity.

Why tourism? : Tourism is a social, cultural, and economic activity that involves the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual surroundings for various purposes. Global tourism industry contributes in cultural preservation, environmental protection, peace & security, jobs, economic growth and development (*UNTO World Tourism Barometer, 2018*). According to Economic survey of India 2018-19, India's Foreign Exchange Earnings from tourism were US\$ 27.7 billion in 2018-19 as compared to US\$ 22.9 billion in 2016-17. According to Ministry of Tourism, GoI, Annual Report (2018-19), tourism industry generated 81.1 million jobs in the year 2017-18 as compared to 72.3 million in the year 2015-16. India has a lot of scope for tourism development, and it has to tap the untapped tourism potential (*Economic survey, 2016-17*). Agri tourism is one such concept that is practiced by farmers in India. *Kiper (2011)* defines agri-tourism as "a set of rural activities, including participating in farming activities, exploring local culture, enjoying the landscape and agro-biodiversity, observing organic and conventional agricultural practices and sampling tropical fruits and vegetables." In a nutshell, agritourism is an activity in and around agriculture. Moreover, agri-tourism is in infant stage in India (*Mishra, 2016)*. According to Mahesh Israni, Chairman and Managing director, Parag Milk Foods Pvt. Ltd., as quoted by *Rodrigues (2013)*, expressed that, unlike in foreign countries, Dairy tourism is still an embryonic concept in India.

Niche tourism product development : Developing a niche tourism product is a process of creating value proportions for consumers, service providers, and other stakeholders. Niche tourism refers to a specific form of tourism tailored to meet a particular audience/market segment's need (*Robinson and Novelli, 2005)*. Any new activity is full of challenges, so is the process of developing a tourism product. *Canak (2016)* suggested understanding the customers' value and chasing a specific market as essential aspects of tourism product development. Further, *Chris (2019)* suggested seeking customer feedback through market research to develop a new business product. Thus developing the dairy tourism model requires a thorough understanding of consumer behavior. According to the *Indiana resource guide on agritourism (2007)*, agritourism should provide recreation, entertainment, and educational experiences to visitors. Whereas *Karri et al. (2016)* advice agritourism planners to have something for visitors to see, do, and buy. Thus, a new dairy tourism product should be based on tourist expectations have some activities, assets, and attractions based on dairying.

Tourists' expectations : *Oliver (1987)* defined expectations as 'the individual's beliefs about how a product is likely to perform in the future.' Later, *Lovelock et al. (1998)* define expectations as 'pre-purchase beliefs about service provision that acts as a standard or reference point for judging post-purchase performance.' This study defines tourists' expectations as pre-visit anticipations of the respondents with regards to assets, activities, and attractions at a dairy tourism destination.

This study attempts to develop a dairy tourism as a niche tourism product based on the expectations of tourist.

METHODOLOGY

The data for this study were collected by surveying 16 tourist places spread across the Trans-Gangetic Plains (TGP) of India during 2018-2019. Proportionate random sampling (PRS) method was used to select tourist destinations from TGP states. A list of tourist destinations in the Trans–Gangetic Plains region was obtained from the respective state tourism department website. A total of 16 tourist destinations were selected following the PRS method: following simple random sampling, a total of six tourist destinations from Punjab, two from Chandigarh, three from Haryana, four from New Delhi and one from Ganganagar district of Rajasthan were selected. Further, from each tourist destination, ten tourists were interviewed following

convenience sampling. Only those tourists were interviewed who were willing to respond. A total of 160 structured interviews were conducted to collect the data, out of which 150 valid interview responses were used for final analysis.

Tourists' expectations were identified using a structured "Tourists Expectation" interview schedule. The obtained data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (per centage and frequency), and the Relative importance index (RII) was calculated using following formula.

$$RII_k^i = \frac{n_1 + 2n_2 + 3n_3 + 4n_4 + 5n_5}{5\,(n_1 + n_2 + n_3 + n_4 + n_5)} \times 100$$

Where, RIIik is relative importance index for each factor i, for group of respondents k, while n1, n2, n3,n4, and n5 are the number of respondents who scored "1" representing not important; "2" representing slightly important; "3" representing moderately important; "4" representing important and "5" representing very important *(Aziz et al. 2016).*

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The demographic characteristics of respondents are illustrated in Table 1. Majority of the respondents were young (52 %). While 57.33 per cent were male and 42.67 per cent were female. With respect to the nationality, 84.67 per cent indicated themselves as Indian nationals. Whereas the level of education of the respondent is concerned 47.33 per cent were graduates. Among the respondent's majority of them (49.33%) had their annual income range between Rs. 3,00,001 to Rs. 5,00,000 (1 USD = 73.15 INR).

From Table 2, it is clear that collectively, more than 60.00 per cent of the respondent-tourists deemed all the identified expectations as important and very important. The findings imply that respondent-tourists expected all the identified assets, activities, and attractions to be an essential component of dairy tourism. it is evident that RII value for all the tourists expectations is approximately more than 70.00 per cent. It implies that all of the identified tourists expectations had higher relative importance from the respondent-tourists perspective. Further among the expected assets, animal-driven implements were ranked first with highest RII score of 82.53 per cent, followed by cafeteria of dairy animals (RII-79.07%) at second rank, whereas water pond (RII-77.60 %) and traditional kitchen (RII-77.60%)

shared the third rank, followed by a green landscape (RII-77.07%), visitors gallery (RII-76.67%) ad traditional lodging (RII-76.13%) that were ranked fourth, fifth and sixth rank respectively. On observing the RII values and rank order of expected assets, one can infer that the animal-related aspects were given primary importance, followed by other amenities. From this, it can be learned that customers pay more importance for the dairy components in dairy tourism and in another way we can say dairy component is the heart of dairy tourism.

Table 1. Demographic profile of tourists respondent (N=150)

Personal characteristics		No.	%
Age	Young (15-35years)	78	52.00
	Middle (36-50 years)	56	37.33
	Elderly (>51 years)	16	10.67
Gender	Female	64	42.67
	Male	86	57.33
Nationality	Indian	127	84.67
	Foreigner	23	15.33
Level of education			
	Secondary (IX-X)	15	10.00
	Senior secondary (XI-XII)	49	32.67
	Graduation	71	47.33
	Pot graduation	15	10.00
Annual income (Rs.)			
	1,00,001 - 3,00,000-/	7	4.67
	3,00,001-5,00,000/-	74	49.33
	5,00,001 - 8,00,000/-	45	30.00
	8,00,0001 - above	24	16.00

In the case of expected activities, cow cuddling had the first rank with highest RII score of 80.67 per cent, followed by animal rides (RII-79.33 %), goat yoga (RII-78.67%), playing with calf/lamb (RII-77.33 %), learning to prepare dairy products (RII-76.00 %), milking animal (RII-75.47 %) and playing tug of war with animals (RII-74.53 %) that were ranked second, third, fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh respectively. Similarly among the expected attractions, Gou tulabharam had the first rank with highest RII score of 78.00 per cent, followed by calf cradle (RII-77.20 %), cattle swayamwar/ goat swayamwar (RII-7587 %), dancing goat (RII-75.33 %) and music milking (RII-74.80 %) had ranking second, third, fourth and fifth respectively.

The above findings perhaps attributed to the

Table 2. Relative importance index (RII) of expectations of respondent tourists

Expected assets	RII %	Rank
Animal driven implements (Water pump, bullock cart, cane crusher, power generator)	82.53	I
Cafeteria of dairy animals (Cow, buffalo, goat, camel)	79.07	II
Water pond (for swimming with animals)	77.60	III
Traditional kitchen (local cuisine, dairy products, cookery, utensils)	77.60	III
Green landscape (lawn, fodder cafeteria, flowers, creepers, shade trees)	77.07	IV
Visitors' gallery (Orientation, interaction, resting and dining)	76.67	V
Traditional lodging (Thatched hut, tent, mud house)	76.13	VI
Expected activities		
Cow cuddling (Hugging, creasing, brushing , lying down with cow or a calf)	80.67	I
Animal rides (Buffalo ride / Bull ride/ Camel ride)	79.33	II
Goat yoga (A wellness activity of performing yoga in presence of goats)	78.67	III
Playing with calf/lamb (Feeding bottle, fodder, creasing, cleaning)	77.33	IV
Learning to prepare dairy products	76.00	V
Milking animal	75.47	VI
Tug of war with animals	74.53	VII
Expected attractions		
Gou tulabharam	78.00	I
Calf cradle	77.20	II
Cattle swayamwar / goat swayamwar	75.87	III
Dancing goat	75.33	IV
Music milking	74.80	V

RII-Relative importance index value;

following observations. The researcher learned that for all most all the respondent-tourists, the concept of dairy tourismwas new. The respondent-tourists had confusing and surprising facial expressions when asked about do they know anything regarding dairy tourism. Over that, respondent-tourists were asking for more clarification regarding the identified activities such as cow cuddling and goat yoga, and attractions like cattle *swayamwar*/ goat *swayamwar*, calf cradle, gou *tulabharam,* and music milking. Form all these observations; it can be inferred that they were unaware of the dairy tourism activities and attractions, and they were interested in experiencing them. Similar findings were found in the preliminary study conducted by the researcher (*Tengli et al., 2019*).

Findings of the tourists expectations of this study are unique since it was a different and an explorer study to identify the pre-visit expectation in the context of dairy tourism. Moreover past studies have identified general expectations like personal safety & security, cleanliness, climate conditions, friendliness of local people, local transportation services, quality of accommodation, sports facilities, recreational activities, adventure, entertainment, culture, and nightlife in the context of generalized tourist destinations (*Jadhav and More 2010;Baruah and Goswami 2017*). Tourists' expectations from dairy tourism are new additions to the theory of tourists' expectations, and the tourism body of knowledge in general.

CONCLUSION

From the above discussion it can be concluded that the primary motive of exploring the tourists expectations was to identify the characteristics components of dairy tourism. Prospective consumers are the demand creators, and a business is established based on the needs and demands of them. Thus, surprisingly all the identified assets, activities and attractions were expected to be important and very important by the respondent-tourists. The findings of this objective will help dairy tourism entrepreneurs, planners, and trainers in understanding the essential assets, entertaining activities, and tempting attractions to plan, train, establish, attract tourists and run a dairy tourism business.

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