Determining the Impact of Attributes of Haryanvi Festival Food on Tourist Attraction

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Authors' contributions

This work was carried out in collaboration among all authors. All authors read and approved the final manuscript.

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ABSTRACT

The Indian state of Haryana has a distinguished cultural heritage, and fairs and festivals are celebrated across the state with great enthusiasm. Various food items are prepared to celebrate each festival attributed to a unique cultural event. Every festival has its culinary delicacies, which leave you with a lingering aftertaste, asking for more. Some food items prepared for festivals and cultural events are Puri, Malpua, Halwa, Kheer, Sevia, Gulgulle, Sakkarpare, etc. To prepare these dishes, jaggery is used extensively rather than sugar, as jaggery is considered good for health. It retains more macro and micronutrients than sugar due to its unrefined form. As the economy and culture of Haryana are richly based on agriculture and cattle farming, dairy products like milk, homemade white butter, fresh cream, and curd are used extensively in the making of festive food items. The present study is conducted to determine the relationship between the tourist demography and their perception towards Haryanvi festival food. In this regard, the study further

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attempts to understand the key attributes of Haryanvi festival food items that influence the tourist's perception towards the festival food of Haryana as an attraction for tourist. The demographic factors of the 432 tourists taken into consideration are age, gender, marital status, the purpose of travel and history. The attributes of the Haryanvi festival food considered to study their impact on tourists' perception were aroma, flavor, taste, food presentation, variety, richness in spices, peculiarity of the food items, health & nutrition. The study results reveal that among the demographic profile of the tourists, age is the only factor that bears a positive correlation with the perception of tourists regarding Haryanvi festival food.

1. INTRODUCTION

Food can be recognized as a physiological need, as per the hierarchy of needs by Maslow's, [1]. In tourism, food can also be considered as a main factor in selecting destinations, even though it is a basic need, [2]. Yeoman, Dr. Ian [3] concluded that food is about new tastes and knowledge. Discovering a destination through its culinary offerings facilitates an exciting and satisfying experience and provokes visitors to revisit. Food is a spirit of civilization and a nation's identity. The national identity of a person is defined by their local language, food, costume, language, arts and artifacts. Henderson [4] found that in determining ethnic & national identity, food plays a major role. Food also helps in promoting a destination while meeting local development and economic needs. There is no singular concept of food in tourism; it is a social phenomenon influenced by various factors such as culture, social environment, sustainability, economy, history, and people. Thus, it portrays the lifestyle of a distinctive geographical area [5]. Among the key factors that influence food and beverage consumption are taste, price, health care, satisfaction, and convenience, which shape behavioral patterns and define human identity [6]. According to Correia, Moital, Da Costa, and Peres [7], food represents more than 25% of tourism expenditures. Festival foods are a significant part of ethnic identities since they represent the culture and traditions of a region [8]. Festival attendees consume ethnicity by ingesting foods explicitly associated with certain ethnicities [9]. In general, the content is classic nostalgia regardless of the forms of consumption. Arcodia and Whitford [10] assert that people attend festivals for celebrating and preserving the vividness of cultural diversity, and hence the festivals of the dominant culture weave a wider social fabric [11].

In India, a wide variety of traditional dishes are made to honor festivals. According to the ET bureau (2019), in India festivals are occasions for feasting. A variety of mouth-watering sweets are prepared for numerous festivals in India, as well as lavish meals laden with nourishment. From region to region, Holi offers a variety of cuisine, but thandai (sweet cream milk drink) is very popular. Many places like Mathura and Vrindavan celebrate Janmashtami with lavish celebrations featuring preparations of milk flaked with saffron and almonds. Among the festival foods in Karnataka, Inamdar, Chimmad, and Naik [12] found that the majority are cereal-based and are roasted, baked in open pans, or boiled. Traditional festival foods differ in their nutrient composition as revealed by the nutrient computation.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Several theories related to the concept of food as a tourism product have been studied to optimize the understanding of this concept. After that, a conceptual framework was developed to formulate research questions, study objectives, and research hypotheses.

2.1 Food and Tourism Relationship

Pamukçu et al. [13] concluded that the local food experience acts as a tool for the majority of tourists to know about the culture of a region. Hence restaurant operators and food-service providers use local products marked with geographical indications for the branding and marketing of their cuisine and development of gastronomic tourism in that region. Guruge [14] confirmed that visiting popular cuisine and gastronomy places and attending various culinary activities like food fairs, food festivals, cooking shows, cooking workshops, etc., constitute different components of gastronomic tourism. Regional gastronomy represents the local culture and heritage, and factors of food authenticity enhance the destination attractiveness.

According to Niedbala et al. (2020), tourists taste food that closely reflects their tour destination's natural surroundings, culture, and traditions. Culinary activities related to their local products can support the host community by generating entrepreneurship opportunities. Everett [15] suggests that in tourism the role of food is increasing as it is a multidimensional product that represents a place and identity and can be used for production and consumption in different aspects. Privitera, Nedelcu, and Nicula [16] illustrated that apart from food experience, food tourism relates to the knowledge of local traditions, culture, and culinary heritage. Local cuisine is a key tourist attraction that plays a critical role in enhancing the competitiveness of a destination and influencing the decisions of tourists to visit it. Kocevski Jordan and Risteski Michael [17] highlighted the complex role food plays in tourism by sometimes being the primary motive and sometimes complementing the primary motive by being the secondary one. Indigenous food of a region enables the tourist to learn deeply about the destination, and its culture helps in developing connections and strengthening the bond between the local people and tourists. Shah and Shende [18] explored that people involved in food business activities like street food stalls, local restaurants, specialty restaurants, food kiosks, and food tours grow directly with the increase in tourism in the region. The popularity of local dishes, authentic local tastes, and special occasion items attract tourists and generate employment opportunities for existing and new startups.

2.2 Attributes of Food Experience

Brokaj [19] revealed that five dominant attributes that persuade visitors to try regional cuisine are the quality of taste, authentic dining experience, rural development of the region, health issues, and learning experience. Among these factors, the participants have considered authentic experience as the chief motivational factor in consuming local food during their holiday. The study Upadhyay & Sharma, [20] reported that the preferences of international tourists visiting India are influenced by five factors, specifically the taste and quality of food, preparation of food, localization of food and dining etiquette, tradition and nutritional value of food, and its aroma and cleanliness. Qian et al. [21] categorized tourist experiences into three experiences: sensory experience, emotional experience, and spiritual experience. The food dimensions that constitute the tourist dining experience are taste, heartfelt food, authenticity, social interaction, value for money, novelty-seeking, acquiring knowledge, and esthetic appreciation. Sthapit [22] explored that local special dishes, taste, authenticity, novelty, togetherness, hospitality, services cape, and food souvenirs are the key attributes that provide memorable food experiences to the tourists. Furthermore, consumption of local dishes and acquiring knowledge about the culture through special regional dishes are considered most important in constituting a memorable travel experience. Stone et al. [23] identified five attributes that lead to memorable food experiences during traveling. These are: 1) Food/drinks consumed (locality, authenticity, novelty, variety, and service quality), 2) The Location/ setting (indoor/ outdoor, theme restaurant, street food stalls), 3) Companions (spouse, partner, friends, relatives, locals), 4) Occasion (festivals, cooking classes, food tours), and 5) Touristic elements (novelty, surprise, nostalgia, satisfaction, excitement, enjoyment).

2.3 Role of Food in Attracting Tourists

Niedbała et al. [24] highlighted the concept of developing a food trail which involves combining different culinary attractions into one unified product. For this, a specific product of a region is identified and associated with other attractions like food festivals, holidays and celebrations, and historical events that take place at a designated popular place. The combination of sets of attractions can be used to develop food trail routes and revival of long-forgotten regional dishes, which impart an authentic food experience to tourists and preserve the culinary heritage of the region. According to Kumar [25], a particular region offers exquisite delicacies that are authentic to its region, but fails to capitalize on the regional tourist market due to a lack of marketing. Local dishes and provincial cooking styles can be presented through live kitchens at craft festivals, regional events, dance festivals, cultural programs, film festivals, and exhibitions nationwide to resolve this issue. According to Richards [26], tourists who consume local food discover the local culture, savor authentic travel experiences, learn new cuisines, and get influence from their friends and the internet. Moira et al. (2015) explored that the gastronomy of a region can be represented by providing local cuisine in hotels, restaurants, airlines, and cruise lines. It can also be promoted by creating food trails and organizing food-tour to farmhouses, and production sites, organizing food festivals and events, food trade fairs, cooking lessons,

gastronomic conferences, seminars, and workshops. Lee & Scott [27] support the notion that food is considered a strong motivating factor to visit a destination and can be considered a peak experience of their visit. It has a robust and attractive nature and can be used for branding and marketing a destination through food festivals, ethnic restaurants, food events, web promotion, etc. Kalenjuk et al. [28], illustrate that the authentic food plays an important role in attracting tourists who look for new experiences. Hence the restaurateurs are recommended to add authentic dishes to their menu that incorporate fresh local ingredients and spices and follow a traditional preparation and serving style. Horng & Tsai, [29] identified authentic ethnic cuisine, food festivals and events, culinary workshops, food markets, food preparation, and processing units, restaurants, farms and farmers, and food and wine tasting markets as culinary resources and recommended creating food trails, itineraries, and tour packages can help in attracting tourist and developing culinary tourism.

2.4 Indian Cuisine and Tourism

According to Keshari [30], different communities in India living in a particular region have different ways of making a dish. They indulge tourists in different culinary activities like food trails, cooking classes, restaurant visits, and food festivals. Such activities provide tourists with a first-hand experience of local tastes and flavors. Awasthi1, Dhar, and Lomte [31] postulated that local gastronomy and culture in India strongly correlated and preserved the cultural identity of that region. Gastronomic heritage is an integral part of the region's cultural tourism, represented by traditional local food, local ingredients, and cooking methods. According to Prabhu [32], India is an emerging popular culinary tourism destination, and the credit goes to the innovative chefs, the regional restaurants, and the savvy food professionals. International tourists visiting India love Indian food prepared by using vivid spices and appreciate its various benefits. According to Kumar [33], Indian cuisine is extremely popular across the globe, and Indian dishes known for their unique tastes and spices used are adopted in many foreign cultures now. Indian masalas, naan bread, and sweets have become synonyms of Indian culture, and international tourists look forward to experiencing India's rich history and culture through famous Indian regional cuisine. Duttagupta, [34] asserted that India is progressing towards becoming a major food tourism destination in Asia. Foodies from across the world visit India to experience the mouthwatering dishes of every region and give positive feedback about these cuisines [35].

2.5 Objectives of the Study

This study aims to examine the relation between the demographic profile of tourists and their perception about Haryanvi festival food as a tourist attraction and to determine the impact of Haryanvi festival food attributes on the perception of tourists regarding Haryanvi festival food as a tourist attraction. To achieve these two objectives, two different hypotheses were formulated namely 1) $H_1 1$: There is a significant relationship between the demographic profile of the tourists and their perception about Haryanvi festival food as a tourist attraction and 2) $H_1 2$: Tourists do consider Haryanvi festival food as a tourist attraction.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study conducted primary data collection from tourists in four major cities within the state of Haryana, specifically Gurgaon, Faridabad, Rewari, and Mahendragarh. To gather information, a survey questionnaire served as the research instrument, designed to capture insights into tourists' food consumption behaviors during festivals celebrated in Haryana on various occasions. The sampling technique employed for participant selection was nonprobability convenience sampling. This method was chosen for its practicality, allowing researchers to approach and include participants readily available in the chosen cities who were willing to contribute to the study. The study population comprised 432 tourists who had actively consumed food items prepared during Haryana's festivals. This sample size was considered sufficient to yield meaningful and representative data for analysis. Following data collection, IBM SPSS 20.0 version was utilized for statistical analysis. Correlation analysis was applied to explore the relationships between different variables, shedding light on potential connections influencing tourists' food choices during festivals. Additionally, stepwise multiple regression analysis was conducted to identify and quantify the impact of various factors on tourists' food consumption patterns. This analytical approach helped uncover the unique contributions of each variable in predicting the overall behavior observed among tourists in their festival-related food choices.

4. RESULTS

For testing our 1st hypothesis, a Pearson correlation test was applied to the data collected. The data presented in the Table 1 shows that the tourists demographic factors gender (p = .084), marital status (p = .111), the purpose of the visit (p = .511) and visit history (p = .579) all had p > .05 meaning all these factors had no relationship with the perception of the tourists. The only factor having a significant positive relationship with the tourist perception was age (r = .137), where the p-value was significant (p<0.05), indicating that as the tourist's age increases, their perception about Haryanvi festival food as a tourist attraction becomes stronger. Hence our 1st hypothesis, i.e**., H₁1: There is a significant relationship between the demographic profile of the tourists and their perception about Haryanvi festival food as a tourist attraction,** is partially accepted.

For testing our 2nd, a forward stepwise multiple regression was applied to observe the impact of attributes of Haryanvi festival food on the perception of tourists. For this, the attributes of Haryanvi festival food items (taste, aroma and flavor, richness in spices, presentation, variety, uniqueness, and health and nutrition) were taken as independent variables, and the perception of tourists regarding the Haryanvi food festival as a tourist attraction was taken as the dependent variable. But before applying the test, data were checked for all the regression analysis assumptions. Residual statistics analysis of Table 2 for outliers showed that the minimum value of standard residual was -5.516 (above -3), and the maximum value was 2.705 (below 3), meaning that the data had no outliers.

Analysis of the histogram for regression standard residual from Fig. 1 and the normal P-P plot for regression standard residual from Fig. 2 showed that the histogram was bell-shaped and symmetrical, and residual dots almost lay down the diagonal line indicating the normal distribution of residuals. Similarly, the study of scatterplots showed that the dots produced a random array indicating that the data met the assumptions of linearity and homoscedasticity. The value of the test statistic for the Durbin Watson test analysis was 1.814, which was closer to, 2, which meant that no autocorrelation was found among the residuals Table 4).

After all the data met the assumptions of multiple regression, the stepwise multiple regression was applied. Based on the impact of Haryanvi festival food attributes on the perception of tourists regarding Haryanvi festival food as a tourist attraction, four models were generated by the analysis as shown below in Table 3.

Table 1. The Relationship between the demographic profile of the tourists and their perception about Haryanvi festival food as a tourist attraction

Tourist perception	Correlation statistics	Tourist demographic factors				
		Gender	**Age**	**Marital Status**	**Purpose of visit**	**Visit History**
Haryanvi Festival Food as Tourist Attraction	Pearson Correlation	.083	.137	-.077	-.032	.027
	Sig.(2 tailed)	.084	.004	.111	.511	.579
	N	432	432	432	432	432

Table 2. Residual statistics for multiple regressions

	Minimum	**Maximum**	**Mean**	**S.D**	**N**
Predicted Value	3.2583	4.4992	3.9659	.27788	432
Residual	-2.42426	1.18858	.00000	.43742	432
Std. Predicted Value	-2.546	1.919	.000	1.000	432
Std. Residual	-5.516	2.705	.000	.995	432

Table 3. Equations of Stepwise multiple regression models

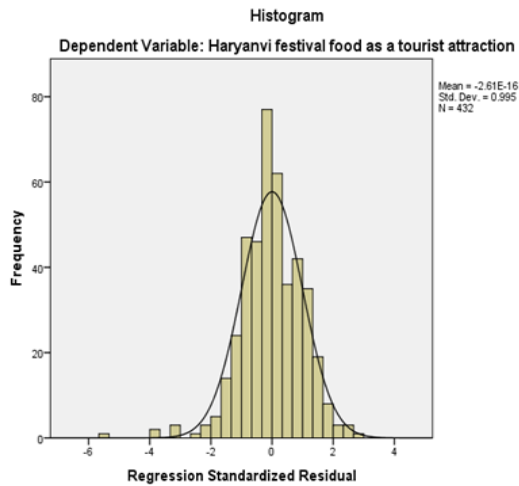|	
Model 1	$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1$
Model 2	$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2$
Model 3	$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3$
Model 4	$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4$

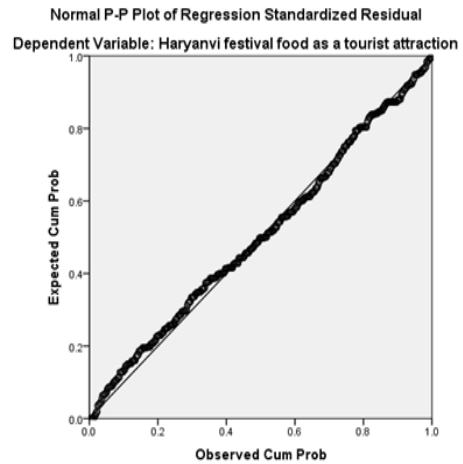**Fig. 1. Histogram for regression standard residual**

Fig. 2. Normal P-P plot for regression standard residual

The table shows the models created by applying stepwise multiple regression analysis along with the regression equations where:

- Y= Dependent variable (The perception of tourists regarding Haryanvi food festival as a tourist attraction),
- X= Independent variable (Attributes of Haryanvi festival food),
- α or Alpha, a constant (coefficient of intercept) equals the value of Y when the value of X=0,
- β or Beta, the coefficient of X that represents the slope of the regression line (how much Y changes for each one-unit change in X)

As evident from Table 4, the analysis of the proportion of variance indicated that the 4th regression model had R^2=.288 contained four significant factors that described 28.8 % of the maximum total variance for the dependent variable (the perception of tourists) explained by the independent variable (the attributes of Haryanvi festival food). Furthermore, looking at the F-statistic (43.081) with a p-value 0.000, it is

indicated that the 4th model is statistically significant (Table 5).

The ANOVA statistics (Table 5) for stepwise multiple regression between the perception of tourists and the attributes of Haryanvi festival food revealed that in the 4th model, the value of the sum of squares of mean is highest (33.281) and the value of the sum of squares of residuals is lowest (82.466) which indicates that the 4th model explains a significant amount of variance in establishing the significant impact of attributes of Haryanvi festival food on the perception of tourists regarding Haryanvi food festival as a tourist attraction.

To understand the individual contribution of each attribute of Haryanvi food towards tourists' perception, standardized beta values and t values of the 4th model were observed (Table 6). The p-value of the slope coefficients of t statistics (12.469) was less than 5% significance level, which meant that the attributes of Haryanvi festival food had a significant relationship among them. Looking into the unstandardized coefficients, for every one-unit increase in the

Table 4. Model summary for Stepwise multiple regression between Perception of tourists and Attributes of Haryanvi festival food

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.430	.185	.183	.46844	1.814
2	.504	.254	.250	.44874	
3	.527	.278	.273	.44198	
4	.536	.288	.281	.43946	

Table 5. ANOVA for stepwise multiple regression between Perception of tourists and Attributes of Haryanvi festival food

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
1	Regression	21.389	1	21.389	97.470	.000
	Residual	94.358	430	.219		
	Total	115.746	431			
2	Regression	29.361	2	14.680	72.905	.000
	Residual	86.386	429	.201		
	Total	115.746	431			
3	Regression	32.139	3	10.713	54.841	.000
	Residual	83.608	428	.195		
	Total	115.746	431			
4	Regression	33.281	4	8.320	43.081	.000
	Residual	82.466	427	.193		
	Total	115.746	431			

Table 6. A model summary of the individual impact of Haryanvi festival food on the Perception of tourists regarding the Haryanvi food festival as a tourist attraction

Model 4	Attributes of Haryanvi festival food	B	Std.Error	Beta (β)	t	p
	(Constant)	2.012	.161		12.469	.000
	Aroma and flavor	.172	.031	.265	5.651	.000
	Uniqueness	.142	.025	.246	5.718	.000
	Taste	.110	.034	.148	3.211	.001
	Variety	.074	.030	.108	2.432	.015

independent variable (Aroma and flavor), there is a .172 increase in the dependent variable, followed by Uniqueness (B= .142), Taste (B= .110), and Variety (B= .074). By looking into the value of standardized coefficients, attribute Aroma and flavor has the highest influence (β =.265) on the perception of tourists regarding Haryanvi festival food as a tourist attraction, followed by Uniqueness (β =.246), Taste (β =.148) and Variety (β =.108). In addition to this, all attributes of Haryanvi festival food have a significant p-value (p<0.05), meaning that there is a significant relationship between the Haryanvi festival food attributes and the perception of tourists regarding Haryanvi festival food as a tourist attraction. Hence our 2nd hypothesis, i.e., **H₁2: Tourists do consider Haryanvi festival food as a tourist attraction,** is accepted.

5. CONCLUSION AND DISCUSSION

In the course of this research, the primary objective was to delve into the perceptions of tourists regarding Haryanvi festival food as a potential tourist attraction, examining the impact of attributed qualities of this culinary experience. The study also aimed to uncover any correlations between tourists' demographic profiles and their perceptions of Haryanvi festival food. The

attributes scrutinized included aroma and flavor, taste, food presentation, variety, richness in spices, health and nutrition, and the uniqueness of the food items. Upon analysis, the study disclosed that among demographic factors, age emerged as the sole significant influencer, showcasing a positive relationship with tourists' perceptions. This underscores the pivotal role age plays in shaping how tourists view festival food as a tourist attraction. Further investigation into the impact of specific attributes of Haryanvi festival food revealed that aroma and flavor, uniqueness, taste, and variety were the key factors significantly shaping tourists' perceptions. Conversely, attributes such as health and nutrition, food presentation, and richness of spices were found to have no substantial impact on tourist perceptions. Despite the richness of offerings in Haryanvi festival food, the study identified a crucial challenge – a lack of awareness among tourists. This lack of awareness was attributed to the limited availability of Haryanvi festival food in restaurants. Consequently, the findings suggest a need for enhanced promotional efforts to acquaint people with the tradition, culture, and culinary delights of Haryana. It is recommended that regional tourism organizations and destination management organizations (DMOs)

intensify their focus on showcasing provincial cuisine through diverse channels. This could involve incorporating regional dishes into various tourism activities, such as cultural festivals, craft exhibitions, and local events. Moreover, promoting Haryanvi festival food at broader platforms like industrial exhibitions, book fairs, film festivals, and scientific exhibitions is essential to attract both domestic and international tourists. By fostering greater awareness and appreciation for Haryanvi festival food, there is a potential to elevate it to a prominent status as a sought-after tourist attraction.

COMPETING INTERESTS

Authors have declared that no competing interests exist.

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