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Impact of local food on the development of a tourism destination: A study on Himachal Pradesh

Ruchi Sharma

Bahra University, National highway 22, Tehsil Kandaghat, Wagnaghat, Himachal Pradesh, India

Corresponding Author: Ruchi Sharma

Abstract

Food, when we hear the word 'food', so many cuisines comes our minds. The definition of food is different for everyone, some just love to eat food, some are quite specific about their meals, and some are health conscious regarding their food habits, but, everyone wants to explore cuisines worldwide. We all hear the word food tourism. In Food tourism, people travel to different destinations to explore different specialties of the world. Food tourism gives expression like new trends in the market, but culinary tourism, gastronomy, and creative tourism are all the words that define people traveling to experience food. Destination can attract people to enjoy the local cuisines. Food plays a motivational role in tourism as a pull factor, they can attract tourists to visit the destination and enjoy the gourmet of the place. Travelers want to explore the culture and authenticity of the destination, tradition, and history of the destination. Himachal Pradesh is famous for its culture and hospitality. In the attraction, Himachal Pradesh is well known for its nature, mountains, culture, tradition, and food. Observation of the market and research, local food attracts tourists to explore the tradition of the destination and enjoy a pure meal. In this manner, the government needs to make a brand of local food to attract the tourist. Local food plays a key role as a push factor in tourism development.

Keywords: Cuisine, Local food, Culture and tradition, Food tourism, motivation, Gourmet food

Introduction

"Food means connection of two people, place and time." (Food and Road). Exterior tourism is climbing and challenges between the development of the destination and, the uniqueness of local and regional intangible cultural heritage grow progressively for the attraction of the tourist (UNWTO). Gourmet food of destination plays an essential role in their history, culture, and uniqueness and adds an important part of the nation's brand image. Gourmet food provides an opportunity to recreate and expand tourism, growth in the economic development of the destination, and into many professional sectors, and add, new trends in the development of the destination.

The Committee on Tourism and Competitiveness (CTC) of UNWTO defines as Gastronomy Tourism, Tourism activity according to the traveler experience connected with nature, food, and activities done by travelers through their journey as well as traditional, cultural, authentic, and innovative creative tourism experiences, Gastronomy is integrated with many activities like exploring local products, visiting food festivals, and exploring the places where they can cook by themselves.

According to United Nation World Tourism Organization

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(UNWTO) and its affiliate Member, the Basque Culinary Center (BCC), organized the 8th UNWTO World Forum on Gastronomy Tourism on 5-7 October 2023 in Donostia-San Sebastian, Spain. According to this, their aim is promoting and exchange the experience between experts in tourism and gastronomy, to identify good practices and to promote gastronomy tourism for the development of tourism destination. The key takeaways of this world forum are: 1) Gastronomy is prestigious, gastronomy tourism is on the rise 2) Sustainability is broad, reducing food waste is specific 3) Living at Fresco 4) Build a gastronomy tourism road-map for Africa 5) Agritourism revamped 6) Governance and Coordination 7) Preserve Traditions 8) Education 9) Tell the stories, But don't fake it, overwhelm or over-promise 10) Back to the roots, Producers, keepers of life. The world Forum on gastronomy tourism is focus on how tourism can foster rural development, build economic resilience, and preserve culture heritage and focus on the connection between product, gastronomy and tourism. They already launched the Global road map on Food Wasted reduction in Tourism on 7th World Forum of Gastronomy, in this year 8th World Forum of Gastronomy discussion on reducing food waste, promoting circularity, and combating

climate change with in gastronomy tourism.

India is the homeland of Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Sikhism and Persian. So, India is versatile in its culture, tradition, and food. India is worldwide known for its culture, tradition, heritage, and food. India has tourism potential because of its rich cultural heritage as well as its Gourmet food, which is a delicious mix of spices and Flavors. In India, Food is not just a meal, it's a feeling for those who cook it and who enjoy it. Indian food is known for its herbs and spices. Indian food has a large assortment of dishes. Because of their varied cooking styles, from region to region, and is divided into South Indian food and North Indian Food. Food is classified into three parts Sattvic (who eat only veg-meal), Raajsic (Who can eat non-veg meal), and Tamasic (meat and liquor). According to "India's culinary tourism market", is estimated to reach US\$ 23,028.91 million in 2023. According to Future Market Insights, from 2023 to 2033 the scope for culinary tourism in India is anticipated to increase at an astounding 23% CAGR.

Different cities hosted food festivals organized by the Government in partnership with many organizations and private entities. In Delhi, the Northeast Slow Food Festival, and in Mei Ramew, the Northeast Slow Food and Agro biodiversity Society (NESFAS) organizes ethnic food festivals (India Culinary Tourism market, 2023).

Himachal Pradesh is known for its nature, mountains, snow, culture, tradition, heritage, and food. In Himachal Pradesh, there are varieties of food cooked by daily routine. Himachal Pradesh culture and tradition also look at the Himachali food of each region, giving a remarkable place in Gourmet food. There are the following famous dhams of Himachal Pradesh: Kangri dham, Chambyali dham, Madayali dham, and Bilaspuri dham. Himachali food specialties include Siddu, Babru, Maal pude, Khatta, Mhaneer, Channa Madra, Patrode, Mah Ki Dal, Chamba Madra, Style Fried Fish, Kullu Trout, Chha Gosht, Pahadi Chicken, Sepu Badi, Auriya, etc. Local food is the main component in the development of the destination from the tourism point of view. Traveler spends 35 % of the amount of his trip on food. Travelers explore the culture, tradition, and authenticity of the destination. Travelers want to enjoy different and local food of the destination, mostly nowadays tourists are more focused on organic and healthy food. So, Himachal Pradesh local people have arranged their gourmet for travelers in traditional style and service. That makes customers learn the culture and tradition of the destination, and tourists also enjoy the hospitality of the place. It has government and private companies also play important role, every year in June month in Shimla organizes summer festivals, so many tourists enjoy the functions and as well as the local food of Himachal with many types of pickles, local product, and organic pulses and carry them with them. However, the government and local people need to maintain the authenticity of the food and develop the market, so tourists can enjoy and memorize the best memories of the culture (Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation).

Literature review

For the growth of tourism, it is very important to focus on the local cuisine. That destination has to provide hygienic

and nutritious food to the traveler. Food is an important meal for everyone to enjoy the trip of life. Its government has an important role in promoting any destination for its culture and tradition and should follow the traditional path to serve the food to the traveler for marketing the destination. The unique view of the destination gives opportunities for tourism growth. In other ways, it helps them to concentrate on the following ingredients which are used in the following dishes. It will help to raise the economy of all those who are associated with the cuisine in the region and the farmers who are producing the grains which are part of Himachali food. (Verma *et al.*, 2023) ^[24].

Himachal Pradesh has its unique taste and flavor. Food tourism can have a very important impact on any destination economy. Because Himachal Pradesh is rich in culture, values, and traditions, which demand tourists to enjoy the local food of the destination. Nowadays food tourism is very famous, by social media and television that promote the destination with their unique styles of the food. There are many ways to promote food tourism, Five factors are: Marketing of food (Promotion of Employment through entrepreneurship in local cuisine), Level of food (Three variables were loaded in this factor these are, Improvement in food service standard and quality), Service of local food (One variable was loaded in this factor which is, More number of specialty restaurants offering local cuisine), Familiarization of local food (Two variables were loaded in this factor these are, organizing special food events), Employment Centric (One variable were loaded in this factor which is, Employment opportunity for local producers). (Sharma *et al.*, 2022) ^[16, 17].

The main reason for tourists to visit any restaurant is a food cart for food, flavor, and satisfaction. Traveler attitudes and emotional and behavioural responses are all impressed by their food experience. Tourist satisfaction is very important for any destination from the tourism point of view. The word of mouth of any traveller gives an image of the destination and markets the place for all other visitors. Food image is an essential element of destination authenticity, culture, and tradition and has been encouraging the ethnic food and tourism of the destination. Destination images have an impact on the tourist's decision to choose the destination to visit. Service quality of the destination is defined as the service and hospitality of the place to meet customer satisfaction. Development of any destination, tourist satisfaction plays playing important role in any place's image. In this case, local food and the service of authenticity, culture, and tradition have a positive impact of to attract tourists. (Rahman, 2022) ^[12].

Authenticity, quality and character of food plays an important role for the customer satisfactions and loyalty of customer. Local food authenticity and quality give a brand name to the destination, authenticity of the food attract tourist to visit destination. Tourist travel to different destination to experience culture and tradition and authenticity of the place, local food give the value of the trip. Restaurant and food outlets leave positive impact on customer satisfaction and loyalty. Tourism services and differ from other products, in tourism product their are main factors that is intangibility, heterogeneity, perish-ability and inseparability. Tourists pay more attention on services and hospitality of the destination, how they talk, how they serve

the food, what is the uniqueness and authenticity of food taste. Taste of the local food give tourist motivation to visit the place, needs to explore local culture, tradition, dance, music and authenticity. Tourist consumption of local food and value of the local tradition, encourages the development of sustainable agriculture, authenticity of the food. Food tourism organizer focus on local food authenticity, food culture, tradition, word of mouth. Word of mouth play important role for development of the destination. Tourist trust choose destination on the review of given by other tourist, tourist blogs and destination feedback to visit place and choose destination on basis of feedback, review and blogs. Social -media network help a destination to attract tourist through photos, description and souvenirs. (Zhang *et al.*, 2019) [26].

Materials and Methods

The study is based on the secondary data. Secondary literature was obtained from different newsletters, websites, books, journals, magazines, and articles by researchers and scholars, and information was also collected from personal observations.

The study aims to understand how local food impacts any destination tourism development, and how specialized food tours may help in promoting the destination.

Objectives

To study how local food can attract the tourist to a destination.

To understand the role of local food in the marketing of tourist destination

To understand the importance of local cuisine in the image of a tourist destination

Tourist

Tourism is a social, cultural, and economic phenomenon that entails the movement of people to countries or places outside their usual environment for personal or business/professional purposes. These people are called visitors (which may be either tourists or excursionists, residents, or non-residents) and tourism has to do with their activities, some of which involve tourism expenditure. (UNWTO)

Tourist behaviour and Decision- making

Tourist have different purpose to visit destinations likes some tourist visit to enjoy the nature, snowfall, mountains, lakes, beaches, some tourist visit to their relatives and friends for function or gathering, some tourist visit to learn and soul purification in temples and now days tourist want to learn and enjoy different culture, tradition and local food. Local food plays important role in tourism market. Traditional food not only tourist wants to enjoy but also its trends for local people to visit restaurant for enjoy the meals. Resident of the destination also take out their relative for dinner or lunch, they can enjoy different meals of Himachal Pradesh. Himachal traditional food is not possible to cook at home with authentic ways. You can enjoy the taste and flavor at home but not the actually tradition of cook the food. In Himachal Pradesh, urban and rural areas, rural areas where people cook the food on fire and in their traditional style, but in urban area life of the people are busy and they don't have as much time to cook in an authentic

way, so when they want to enjoy authentic taste of the food they visit restaurants that provide the authentic Himachali food.

According to the Cohen's classification they are four types of Tourist

1. Individual Mass tourist (who travel on tailor made itinerary, if they want any changes they can do)
2. Organized Mass tourist (who travel on ready-made itinerary, they don't want any change on their trip, they want comfortable and according to their life style)
3. Explorer (who arranged their travel by their self but look for comfortable trip)
4. Drifter (they don't have any fixed plan, they visit and explore different places, comfort with residents and want to learn their culture and tradition)

In the same case with food tourist, want to taste different food and don't want to leave their style of taste, in different location also looking for his traditional foods. So, in all famous destinations every person gets their foods like Punjabi food, south-Indian food and so on. That help tourist to enjoy the place with their traditional food and also they enjoy different region food also.

Destination appeal and attraction

A tourist is a person who travels to another destination, nowadays people have so many reasons to travel from another place. People want to explore new destinations and try new things. Local food helps to grow in tourism. Travellers' basic need is food, but in the destination, they want to explore the new cuisine and specialty of that place. In tourist destinations, the Government and local people open new restaurants with local foods. Local food is also cooked in traditional styles (in slow flame) and served traditionally, so tourists can enjoy the culture and tradition of that destination. The state government also helps to promote the local cuisine, in their properties they sell the local foods. Local cuisine growth in the economy of that state and the employment of the local people.

Food specialty of the region

Food is important for everyone human and animals. Food is basic needs of survival. But for Humans, food is not just for survival but also the matter is the taste of food, authenticity of food, purity of food. Food is giving a flavor in life, some places are known for his food and beverages. People travel for different places for taste of their authenticity of food, to learn how they cook and what ingredients them adding on their flavors that make their food different from others. Food tourism is new trends in market for development of country or region.

Local ingredients and flavors

State government promoting their food by food show, Fest, Cultural festivals and food festivals. Different region have different in food flavor but their style of cooking and serving a food is also different from each other's. Himachali dham has not only varieties of taste but also full of nutritious. Every Regions know for different taste and flavour of food, some for spices, some for sweets . Region have their own authenticity in taste, cooking of style and

speciality in the flavour. Himachali food is also similar to north India. Himachali food have also lentil, broth, rice, vegetables and bread, Rajmaha, Sidhu. Himachali Dham is traditional food served in marriage, party, retirement function and other functions. Siddu, Patorde, Cheela, Tudkiya Bhath and Babru are the authentic tea-snacks of the Himachal Pradesh. In Discovery channel the name of the show is Raja, Rasoi Aur Anya Kahaniyaan also highlights the Kangari Dham and style of serving for kings and queens, food is serves in silver plates and also the style of cooking and uniqueness of the flavor.

Culinary tourism and experiences

Food tourism is like other tourism activities, its includes so many activities like taking cooking classes, attending food show, food and beverages festivals, attending wine tasting tour, and take participation on speciality of the dining experience, and visiting farms, local markets. Local food and drinks connect tourist to local people and understand and learn different culture, tradition, history and way of life. According to World Food Travel Association Food is finally become motivation tourist to choose a destination. Travelers start to spend more time and money for explore unique food and beverage experiences. We saw a global increase in the number of food companies, food and beverages events and food and beverage experience- focused marketing efforts. Food tourism is known become popular in among tourist. Local food is intangible heritage product but for the production and consume the product in their geographical location. Local food is not only present the food but also the culture, tradition and history of the destination, which attract tourist and authenticity in the taste and also serving also in traditional way. Food is experience the culture, tradition and history of the region. Local food is core product of the destination.

Himachali food

Himachali food is a great example of a perfect blend of different Pahadi food that offers a delightful gourmet

experience. Himachali food is famous for its different flavors and styles of eating.

Regional Variations

In Himachal, there are so many dhams, in every state has its speciality in dhams, e.g., Chambyali Dham, Kangri Dham, Mandyali Dham, and Bilaspuri Dham. Dhams are all made without onion, tomatoes, and even garlic. Dham is cooked by a specialist in the local language called Botis and their caste is also important when they are cooking especially in any kind of celebration. The utensil used to cook food is made of brass and is called in the local language Batohi. Preparation of this food starts one day before serving. This is started with plain aromatic rice, pulses, vegetables, and curd and legume-based curry added Chickpeas, kidney beans, and blacked eyed beans (known as Madraah), Sepu Badi, Moong, Kadhi (Curd sauteed with metric weight unit flour, spices, and condiments). Khatta is consumed at the side of those higher than, so many verities in khatta (made of pumpkin and black channa. Meetha is served as a sweet to complete the meal (made of Boondi, sweet rice). These are all dishes prepared by Botis. Dham could be a mid-day meal given to the individuals of Himachali society on occasions of weddings, parties, retirement parties, or any non-secular day. Invitations to sit down on the deck (a well-liked method of serving food) are served on special leaf plates called "Pattals" within the sort of courses from barrels and buckets. Himachal Pradesh is also known for pickels, like. Lingri, peach, pear, plum, tomato, dheu, radish, carrot, chilli, brinjal, garlic, mushroom, mutton, chicken and fish pickels serves in different states of Himachal Pradesh. Pickle give addition in flavor of food. In hiamachal pradesh, kheru is very famous dish in every home, this is made by just curd and species and increase the taste of your food and also it is healthy. (Sharma *et al.*, 2022) ^[16, 17].

Different regions of Himachal Pradesh serve different foods

Table 1: Local food of Himachal Pradesh (Sharma *et al.*, 2022) ^[16, 17]

| Food served by different regions in Himachal Pradesh | |
|--|----------------|
| Food | District |
| Siddu/khobli , Borhe, | Shimla |
| Babroo, Borhe, Gulgule, Khatta, Teliye mah, warri, Sepubari, Khoru, Redu, Mithdoo, badi, Rikvach | Kangra |
| Babroo, Bedvin roti, Borhe, Gulgule, Warri, Serra, Sepubari, Bhangolu ki Kadi | Mandi |
| Aenkadu/Askalu, Mande/Manna | Solan |
| Barri, Babroo, Bedvin roti, Borhe, Chilra/Chilte/Iwar, Gulgule, Marchu/Poltu/ Pole, Warri, Siddu/khobli, Serra, Sepubari | Kullu |
| Chilra/Chilte/Iwar, Marchu/Poltu/ Pole | Kinnuar |
| Aenkadu/Askalu, Serra, Bhaturu, Beduan, Dhandar, Chlru/Chareli, Rot, Mithdoo, Badi, Kadi, Jhol, Karalen ki sabji, Lasude ki sabji/pickle, Bhruni ki sabzi, Ambua, Chacha, Mahni, Patrode | Hamirpur |
| Aet, Aktori, Bagpinni/pinni, Bhatooru, Chhangpa, Chilra/Chilte/Iwar, Chhura, Doo, Dosh, khawalag, Marchu/Poltu/ Pole, Mande/Manna, mangajangkori, Marpinni/Marjag, Tchhaso roti, Tchog, Tcung, Thuktal, Tiskori, Siddu/khobli, Sang, Shunali | Lahual & Spiti |
| Aenkadu/Askalu, Babroo, Malpude, Warri, Serra, Sepubari, Rikvach, dhotua daal | Bilaspur |
| Borhe, Madrah, Patande, Bicchu Buti ka saag, Lungdu ki sabji, Chha Gosht | Chamba |
| Patande | Simraur |

Tourist destination

In ancient time people travel from one place to another for shelter, food, safety and various reasons. People style of living change, purpose of traveling also change. So the choice of destination also change, know people have nuclear family and disposal income. Traveling now days is trends to

explore new destination, learn different culture and tradition and explore different gourmet. According to LEIPER (1990) a tourist attraction system is defined as an empirical connection of tourist, nucleus, and marker with tourists being travellers or visitors seeking leisure-related experiences, which involve nuclear are marker elements.

According to him four interrelated components, components are 1) Human Components (tourists) 2) Industrial Components (tourism industry like F&B) 3) Geographical Components (Traveller generating region, transit route region and tourist destination region) 4) Environmental Components (Economic Factors, Political factors, Technological factors, Social/Cultural Factors, Legal Factors and Environmental Factors). These components make a tourist to select a destination, tourist have different purposes to travel to another places.

Tourist have different purpose to select destination, but new trends in market for tourist to attract the destination viz. tourist travel for taste wine, food shows and carnivals, photography, heritage, culture and tradition. Each tourist destination have their own uniqueness, which make destination differ from other destination. Himachal Pradesh attract tourist for his beauty, beauty of nature, snow-covered mountains, lush greenery of hills, beautiful lake with their methodology stories, fair and festival for learn the culture and tradition of Himachal Pradesh and taste for their uniqueness and authenticity, style of cooking and serving. In Himachal Pradesh, every states have their authenticity of gourmet.

Local food impact on tourist destination development

Tourists are more interested in local food. Local Food plays a motivational "push factor" to the tourist. Push factors are features that influence an individual to travel (Dann, 1977). Tourists Before visiting any destination search properly and search specialties of that destination. Today, social media plays an important role in developing any destination, traveller blog and some channels promote food tourism. And inform the authenticity of the destination to help the traveler to explore the place. Local food can appeal to those travellers who want to explore the culture, tradition, and authenticity of a destination. Tourist mostly spend 30% of their travel budget on food and beverage. This signifies an increase in profit for local people and state government. Due to taxes imposed on the goods purchased by travelers. This can help to government to invest in the state for marketing tourist destinations, which can help increase profit for local shops, restaurants, hotels, and accessibility services.

Local food play important role in the development and promoting women empowerment and young talents, exchange culture and authenticity, and promoting the value of destination and food producers. Himachal Pradesh has variety of production in food likes: red rice, red kidney beans, orchards and pulses. Tourist can buy the organic product and enjoy the natural taste of the products. In Himachal Pradesh, government help resident to sell their products and enhance the empowerment. So many outlets in himachal pradesh that provide himacahali products like: apple wine, peach wine, rhododendron (buransh) wine, juices and pickles. Local product make a destination branding and boost-up the local people economy. Tourist attract toward the local food and product, tourist looking for authenticity and organic food. Local food impact on the development the strategies and marketing of the destination for the benefits of tourist and tourism industry but also other factors like economic, social, environment. Local food linkages with the tourism destination, not only increase the economy of the local people but also local food tradition

and authenticity alive. Local food have potential to attract the tourist and development the destination.

Fair and festival relationship with local food

Fair and festival reflect the vibration of culture and tradition and uniqueness. Fair and festival play an important role in the growth of the tourism. In fair and festival local communities show their emotions and values. Fairs and festivals is the way their people meet with new people and their people try local food, music and dance. There are variety of different types of festivals all over the world and they have different purposes and benefits. These social gathering boost-up the local culture, tradition, trade, religion, local food, activities and celebrations give a happiness to the participation er in these carnivals.

In Himachal Pradesh, celebrated so many fairs and festivals viz. Nalwari fair (Bilaspur), Gugga Festivals (Bilaspur/Hamirpur), Markanda Fair (Jukhala), Dungri fair (Kullu), Losar festival (Kinnaur), Phulech Festival Kinnaur, Stone fair (Shimla/halog), Faag fair (Rampur), Manimahesh Yatra (Chamba), Ladarcha fair (Lahaul-spiti/Kaza), Chhechshu fair (Mandi /Riwalsar). According to the book of Himachal Pradesh General Studies there are seven fairs are declared as international fairs are: Minjar fair (started by Raja Sahil verman, held at Chaugan in the month of August, this fair is famous for his culture shows). Lavi Fair (started by 16th century, Raja Kehri Singh, this fair is one of the oldest fair of the country, oldest time in this fair tibet king exchanged the horses and weapons, but now days sells the dry fruits, pashminas, colts, yaks, chilgoza, Namdas, Pattis, Woolens, raw semi- finished wool). Rnuka Fair (Held in the month of November and culture show performed by locals). Dussehra fair (started in 1651 at dhalpur groud and main attraction of the fairs is Devi and Devta's of Kullu. Shivratri fair (started by Raja Ajbar Sen, held at Paddal ground, mandi). Winter Carnival manali (held in Kullu). These fairs visited by Domestic and international tourist and they enjoy the culture and tradition of the himachal, there so many local food vendors. Every state celebrated summer and winter carnival or festivals, which gives a boost-up of tourism market. In every festival and fairs there local vendors come and sell their product. HPTDC (Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation) also arranged Himachali foods. Media, blogs and television shows to help the promotion of the food tourism in Himachal Pradesh, they show the authenticity of the food and still the style of cooking and authenticity of food is live.

Infrastructure challenges in Himachal Pradesh

Infrastructure plays an important role in the development of a destination. It acts as a foundation, encompassing various physical, and organizational structures, and facilities necessary for the growth of a region. Infrastructure comprises a wide range of systems, facilities, and networks that support different activities and services, including transportation, communication, energy supply, water supply, sanitation, and public services. Both tangible elements such as roads, airports, and buildings, as well as intangible aspects like regulations, policies, and management systems, are included within the scope of infrastructure. Himachal Pradesh become one of the most visited and famous tourist

destinations in north India. The State Tourism Department has focused on the development of activity-based tourism and new trends for new and unexplored destinations with the evolution of infrastructure and tourism resources at the regional level.

Road infrastructure deficiencies

Himachal Pradesh, with its diverse terrains, environmental fragility, remoteness, limited working seasons, and significant influx of tourists, faces more challenges than opportunities in the context of the transportation sector. State and road development play crucial roles in the infrastructure's development. According to a press release by the Himachal Pradesh Information and Public Relations Department, the state has a network of 40,020 km of motorable roads, connecting 10,591 villages, and has constructed 2,278 bridges.

Although Himachal Pradesh has developed several national highways (NH), but road conditions remain poor, marked by potholes, cracks, and erosion. These conditions not only inconvenience tourists but also pose risks of accidents. The terrain in Himachal Pradesh changes frequently, making driving in hilly areas challenging, especially for tourists navigating themselves. During peak seasons, many districts experience overcrowding, surpassing their carrying capacities. As a result, tourists and locals face issues such as traffic congestion and shortages of supplies.

Furthermore, infrastructure significantly impacts the local cuisine of Himachal Pradesh. In areas with inadequate road connectivity, food availability is limited, and traditional Himachali dishes are often prepared using ancient methods. To savor the authentic flavors of these dishes, visitors must journey to specific locales that may lack proper infrastructure development.

Gaps in hospitality infrastructure

"Himachal Pradesh, divided into 12 districts, boasts diverse terrains and climatic zones, each with its unique tourist attractions. However, not all districts receive equal tourist footfall; while some destinations are renowned, others remain relatively undiscovered. Factors such as underdevelopment, climatic conditions, and limited road connectivity contribute to this disparity in tourist flow across districts. Nevertheless, these challenges can be overcome through effective advertising and marketing efforts, highlighting the distinct cultural heritage, traditions, and cuisine of each district.

While a few districts in Himachal Pradesh boast 4-star hotel properties, the majority lack quality accommodation options and services. The hospitality sector's service standards vary widely, with many establishments failing to meet tourists' expectations of cleanliness, comfort, and hospitality. Remote areas in Himachal Pradesh, though rich in culture, tradition, and local cuisine, face accessibility issues due to inadequate road networks. Consequently, tourists may struggle to reach these destinations, further exacerbating the disparity in tourist distribution.

Additionally, remote areas often lack essential tourist facilities such as information centers, rest areas, public toilets, and recreational activities. Addressing these deficiencies requires concerted efforts to improve infrastructure, enhance service quality, and promote the

diverse offerings of each district. By investing in tourism development initiatives and highlighting the unique attractions of lesser-known districts, Himachal Pradesh can unlock its full tourism potential and offer visitors a truly enriching experience.

Conclusion

The objective of this research is to know how local food can contribute to the growth of Himachal Pradesh as a tourist destination. Himachal Pradesh is known for its nature, temples, mountains, and snow but so far food of Himachal Pradesh is also famous. Authentic style of preparation of food and served in organic plates (called patal). Food tourism is creative in its style. Food tourism has an important impact on any destination's development and image. Food and beverage also give tourist options to choose their destination and fulfill their purpose of visit. Authenticity of food play important role to attract tourist to visit destination and enjoy the tradition, culture and authenticity of food. Fairs, festivals, carnivals, food shows and food fests organized by private and public companies give a positive impact on market of the destination through local food and gourmet. Local food marketing is impact to generate tourism but also put a positive impact on economic, social and environmental factors. In Himachal Pradesh, many states serve their local food for tourists and localities, so they can enjoy the gourmet food. Tourist wants to learn and explore the different culture, tradition, and authenticity of the destination. Food tourism has a significant role in the economic development of the destination. Different varieties and uniqueness of the destination, travelers want to enjoy and explore the culture. The study also indicates local food gives the brand image of region, this helps tourist to visit destination and explore the tradition, culture, and gourmet food. Himachal Pradesh tourism development corporation (HPTDC) also has a key role to develop the food tourism all over Himachal, through food festivals, food shows and culture functions and carnivals. Local food promoting the gourmet food of Himachal Pradesh and highlighting the culture and tradition of the state worldwide. The indispensable role of infrastructure in driving destination development, encapsulating a multitude of essential components necessary for progress.

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