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GASTRONOMY AND ITS IMPACT ON TOURISM: A CASE STUDY ON REGIONAL CUISINE OF COASTAL ODISHA, INDIA

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ABSTRACT:

Effort has been made in this study to understand the impact of Gastronomy on Tourism development. Gastronomy is the art and science of cooking and serving food to satisfy the consumer of all ages in all situations. It is an integral part of any celebration whether it is a joy or death. It has great impact on Tourism Promotion because no tour is complete without good food. Food is well related with the culture of any civilization. Authentic food is compulsory with celebration of ethnic culture. Local cuisine is one of the most important products of Special interest Tourism in India. To get experience of local culture tourists must taste the local food. In ancient time Cooking was mainly done to fill up the stomach and to digest food outside the stomach, now a days it is most difficult study or science. Not only cooking food, its garnish, accompaniments, texture, temperature, decoration and nutrient contents are all equally important. Food, through the choice of dishes and preparation, forms an integral part of life and remains the natural expression of hospitality. This paper discusses the position regarding development of food tourism in Coastal area of Odisha, India. Findings and recommendations for the development and promotion of regional foods of Odisha are suggested here. Proposals for future research are also outlined.

Keywords: Gastronomy, local food, destination marketing, economic impact, socio-cultural impact.

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INTRODUCTION:

Gastronomy is the art and science of cooking and serving food. Food is one of the most important elements for tourist's decision making and selecting destinations. Therefore Gastronomy is becoming more interesting subject to tourism researcher. The food and tourism industries benefit from this interaction, as local and regional food products become an important means of selling the identity and culture of a destination and enables food producers to add value to their products by creating a tourism experience around the raw materials (Quan & Wang, 2003). However there is little research have been done in this field. Long (2003) suggests culinary tourism is about food as a subject and a medium, destination and vehicle, for tourism. Local food contributes for maintaining sustainability in a destination. A gastro tourism framework and guidelines could enable destination marketers to develop the tourism potential of local food.

Food is considered as an expression of the culture of a place and its people. Therefore it is an integral part of any tourism product in any destination and can be used as a marketing tool. Tourism and food has close relationship and both are having socio-economic impact on the host community. A number of regions and locations in Europe, especially those in France and Italy, use their food and/or wine reputation for tourism promotion, e.g. Burgundy, Champaign, Bordeaux, Tuscany (Bessiere, 1998; Corigliano, 2002). Other countries that have developed food/food and wine tourism as an important component of their tourism strategy are Britain, Scotland, Canada, Singapore and most recently China (Boniface, 2003; Boyne *et al.*, 2002).

Gastronomy and Tourism

Food is considered as 'an expression of a society and its way of life (Kaspar, 1986 and Boniface, 2003). It is well related with culture, customs and traditions and is an inevitable part of food tourism. According to Hall (2003), food tourism is increasingly:

- recognized as part of the local culture, consumed by tourists;
- an element of regional tourism promotion;
- a component of local agricultural and economic development;

- a key element to competitive destination marketing;
- an indicator of globalization and localization; and

• a product and service consumed by tourists with definite preferences and consumption patterns.

Gastronomy is mainly depending upon agriculture, culture and tourism. These three components are in aggregate helps to promote food tourism as an attraction in any destination. Agriculture provides food material; culture provides the art, style and authenticity; and tourism provides the services to the tourists.

Food is often the key reason for visiting a destination and most often is considered as part of the overall destination experience (Hjalager & Richards, 2002; Long, 2003; Selwood, 2003). Therefore food is an integral part of Tourism in any destination. Food is becoming one of the most important attractions as tourists seek new and authentic experiences and alternative forms of tourism (Boyne *et al.*, 2003).

Impacts of Local Cuisine:

Local food is one of the most important components of tourism. Gastronomy helps the tourism and agricultural sectors in the destination by preserving culinary heritage, improving local economies and adding value to the quality of life.

A destination's image is glorified by the authentic local food amalgamated with its culture that it offers. The way, in which various ingredients are combined, cooked and eaten forms an important element of a national cultural identity and the destination's culinary heritage (Bessiere, 1998; Cusack, 2000). Food is an essential part of almost every celebration and increase attractiveness of any destination. Local food increases the appeal of a destination, and eating is an important activity for tourists once at the destination (Selwood, 2003).

Factors influences on what people eat:
1) Appearance, taste, colour, texture
2) Religious festivals, traditions,
3) Climate, availability of ingredients.
4) Spending capacity
6) Family structure, traditions
7) Traditional or modern Cultural
8) Nutrients
10) New techniques, styles of cooking etc.

CUISINE OF ODISHA:

Odisha is a land of culture and traditions. One of the more important cultural elements is its own wealth of culinary styles and regional foods. Regional food of this coastal state of India has great impact to attract the people from other places. Many foreigners used to visit here not only for leisure purpose but also to taste the ethnic food to know their indigenous culture. Hence the Gastronomy has a strong impact on Tourism and Hospitality business here. The main challenge regarding the development of food tourism in Odisha is the utilization of local food as a catalyst for local pride. Odia people need to cultivate a pride in which they will realize the benefit of promoting their local cuisine and culinary heritage.

Odisha's indigenous culture and religious beliefs have played an important role in the evolution of its cuisine. Odia Cuisine has some similarities with its neighbouring state. Several customs and ritual practices are associated with the etiquette of food preparation, services and consumption. In Odisha, usually, meals are eaten using the fingers of the right hand without cutleries while seated on the floor. In Odian etiquette eating with hands is considered ethical because a person eating with his/her hands feels the exact temperature of food before putting it in the mouth. This practice is scientific because very hot food if consumed by cutlery may burn inside of the mouth.

The evolution of Odia cuisine was flowed from mother to daughter at home. As there are no written rules, most hotels and restaurants follow the traditional home recipes. Odia food is

delicious because varieties of spices are used with natural vegetables and food grains though its cooking style is easy and simple.

Odia people are religious and their food habit is mainly controlled by *Jagannath* culture. In Puri, Lord Jagannath is worshipped like a human being observes his daily routine and food (Mahaprasad) is taken with all eagerness, care and respect. Food is taken on banana leaf while sitting on a floor. Not a single grain of rice is allowed to fall on the ground. Food is cooked in the temple premises with old traditions. This kitchen produces around 10,000 meals everyday and more than one lakh meals in Kartik month and other occasions of Jagannath Cult. The kitchen has around 752 fire oven (chulis), 600 Cooks (Suara) and 50-60 Head cooks (Mahasuara). It is supposed to be the largest kitchen producing maximum number of meals with different varieties. In the coastal area of Odisha, rice and vegetables are grown abundantly. Rice is the major staple food for the people of Odisha. Vegetables are also form an essential part of the meal here. Among the Hindus, majority of the people practices vegetarianism because of their deep religious beliefs. Among the non-vegetarians, people prefer fish and other sea food delicacies like prawns, crabs and sea fishes those are found in plenty in the huge coastline of the state. The fish and prawn from Odisha coast are fresh and free from toxic substances like mercury and lead etc. Both fresh water and salt water fishes are consumed here. Delicacies made of prawns, crabs, fish, chicken and mutton are widely available at the restaurants and fast-food outlets. Grated coconut is widely used in the curries here. Fishes, seafood and vegetables are cooked in the curries made of curd and tempered with mustard seeds and curry leaves. Five spices (Panchaphutana) a magic mixes of cumin, mustard, fennel, fenugreek and onion seed is used for tempering gram (dal) and vegetables.

People of Odisha relish sweets and many of these sweets are popular in other parts of India. *Chhenapoda*, the caramelised cottage cheese is popular among the local people and tourists. Other popular sweets are rasaballi, chhena jhilli, rasagulla etc. Small cakes or '*pithas*' which are both sweet and savoury are extremely popular in Odisha and essential part of many celebrations.



Odisha (Orissa) Map

OBJECTIVES

The Main objective of this paper is to find out the prospects of Odia Cuisine and its impact on Tourism development in this region. Some of the other objectives are as follows:

1) To understand the meaning and importance of Gastronomy for the development of Tourism destination.

2) To study the origin, growth & present status of Cuisine of coastal Odisha.

3) To analyze the impact of Local Cuisine for the development of tourism in Odisha.

4) To find out the future prospect of Odia Cuisine and how it can be promoted among the potential Tourists market in the study area.

SCOPE

The nature of this research paper is detail feasibility study to understand the impact of Odia Cuisine for the development of Hospitality and Tourism industry in Odisha. This paper includes the study of impact of the regional Cuisine on Tourism business. The survey was done mainly in the hotels of Coastal Odisha, especially, *Bhubaneswar, Cuttack, Puri, Konark, Chilika, Chandipur and Gopalpur.* The findings of this research paper will help the professionals of the

Hospitality and Tourism industry for taking better decisions. Information generated after analysis of data may be used by the Tourism professionals so that they can have better choices on food for providing tourists satisfaction. The results will help local DMOs to make proper marketing strategies to attract more tourists from different regions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The main purpose of this study is to collect, record and analyze data about problems related to the impact of Regional Cuisine on Tourism in a destination. For completing the research, the necessary data were collected from the following sources:

Primary sources:

For collecting the data from the primary sources, two sets of structured questionnaire were made both for tourists/customers and professionals of Tourism & Hospitality industry. Apart from that observation, schedules and interview methods were followed for the above said purpose.

Secondary Sources:

The secondary sources of data collection were made from collection of data cited in the reports of Department of tourism, Govt. of India, Govt. of Odisha, Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Association of India etc. Apart from these some relevant books, journals, magazines and news papers were also studied.

ODIA CUISINE:

Odia cuisine refers to the cooking of the coastal state of eastern India, Odisha. The state Odisha is situated on the east coast of India. It has plenty of beautiful natural Tourism destinations with Sea, Forest, Rivers and Monuments. It is the modern name of the ancient nation of Kalinga, which was invaded by the Maurya Emperor Ashoka in 261 BC. It carries its ancient culture and lifestyle with all its supremacy being protected by lord Jagannath.

Odisha has huge coastline about 480 km long and plenty of lakes and water bodies. The Mahanadi River delta is the most densely populated area of Odisha. The interior of the state is mountainous and thinly populated. Odisha is home to the brackish water lake the Chilika and

Hirakud Dam is one of the longest dams in the world. Odisha has several popular tourist destinations. Puri, with the *Jagannath* temple near the sea is famous for *Rath Yatra* or the Car Festival. The world heritage site Konark Sun Temple, the *Lingaraja* Temple of Bhubaneswar, the Barabati Fort of Cuttack and numbers of popular sea beaches like Puri beach, Chandrabhaga beach, Chandipur beach, Gopalpur beach etc. are visited by thousands of tourists every year.

Odia cuisine can be compared with other popular cuisines in its nutritious cooking style. Spices used in this cuisine are very subtle and there is minimal use of oil so that nutrient content remains intact. In Odisha, the art of cooking was handed down from mother to daughter. As there were no written rules, each family developed styles of cooking best suited to their tastes. In today's world with the advent of cookbooks, cooking has become an adventure with an increased awareness and appreciation of dishes from different parts of the world. Though relying heavily on local ingredients, foods from this area are rich and varied. The flavours are usually elusive and delicately spiced, unlike the spicy curries of North Indian cuisine. Cuisine of Odisha is simple, easy to cook, and delicious. Odisha food habit is mainly controlled by Jagannath culture. Lord Jagannath is worshiped here like a person observers like daily routine. Vegetarian foods are mainly influenced by Jagannath cult. Delicacies of prawns, crabs, fish, Chicken and eggs, prepared by experts are widely available at the eating joints and the specialized restaurant. The most popular is fish of both salt water and fresh water.

A classic meal in Odisha consists of a main course and dessert. The staple food of Odisha is rice. Rice is eaten with lentils (dals) during lunch and dinner. The main course also includes one or more curries, vegetables and pickles. The most famous vegetarian dish is '*Dalma*' (made of lentils & vegetables boiled together & then tempered with other spices) & '*Santula*'. '*Pakhala*', a dish made of rice, water, and yoghurt, that is fermented overnight, is very popular in summer, particularly in the rural areas.

Odisha food habit is pretty balanced between the vegetarian and non vegetarian habits. Due to its vast coastline & number of rivers flowing across, fish is available abundantly and form a very important part of the diet. Sea foods like Prawn & Crab are very popular here. The famous Chilika Lake is one of the major sources of Sea Food and is one of the lifetime experiences.

Odia people are mainly Rice eaters. The main course also includes one or more curries, vegetables and pickles. Vegetables which are grown in plenty in the coastal region are also the integral part of the meal in the state. Large number of people practice vegetarianism because of their deep religious nature. But a considerable numbers of people enjoy fish and other sea food delicacies like prawns, lobsters and crabs as these are found in plenty in the vast coastline of the state. Odia food is less spicy and has less calorific value as it is cooked with little or no oil. *Pancha-phutana'* a magic mixes of five spices like cumin, mustard, fennel, fenugreek and *kala zeera* (kalanji) is used for tempering vegetables and *dals (pulses)*.

In coastal Odisha, curd and grated coconut are used to prepare gravy. People are also very much found of sweets and many of the recipes are popular all over the country. Sea foods are traditionally cooked in curd and coconut milk and are unique food of Odia cuisine. Vegetables like brinjals, yams and pumpkins are also cooked in curd and tempered with mustard seeds and curry leaves makes the preparation delicious. Speciality of Odia cuisine is also using of variety of spices used with freshly gathered vegetables and food grains. The delicate flavours of these herbs and spices enrich Odia food into a divine practice.

People of Odisha are also like sweets and many of the Odia sweet dishes are quite popular all over the country. No Odia meal is considered complete without some dessert at the end. Odia desserts are made from a variety of ingredients, like milk, chhenna (cottage cheese), coconut, rice, and wheat flour etc. Sweets like Chhenapoda, *Rasagulla, chhena jhilli, Malpua, Rasamalai, Khirimohan, Rasabali, Kalakand*, etc. are quite popular among the tourists. The place, '*Pahala'*, located on the Cuttack-Bhubaneswar road is famous for its variety of Rasagullas. The famous rice pudding, kheeri (kheer) that is relished all over India, was also originated in Puri in two thousand years ago. *Chhenapoda,* the caramelised custard-like dessert is popular not only with the locals but also with the tourists.

Homemade cakes or '*pithas*' which are both sweet and savoury are made during the cultural festivals. *Pithas* made out of powdered rice and gram, like *chakuli, Kakara, mondapitha* etc. are traditional preparation that requires great expertise and served as local snacks. One of the major delicacies during the festival occasions of Odisha is Kakera Peetha (made of sooji or finely

grained wheat) especially with coconut filling sautéed with pepper, cardamom, sugar, ghee and sometimes cottage cheese (chena). Some of the other popular *pithas* like *arisa pitha, poda pitha, kakera* etc are unique delicious preparations loved by the locals as well as tourists visiting Odisha.

'Mahaprasad'- The Food of Lord Jagannath:

Another traditional delicacy of Odissa is '*Mahaprasad*' or the sacred food of Lard Jagannath. This rich food is available at the *Ananda Bazar* of the *Jagannath* Temple, Puri. The speciality of '*Mahaprasad*' preparation lies in its massive cooking that takes place in the temple kitchen that is believed to be the biggest kitchen in the world. Nearly 400 highly efficient cooks work around 200 fireplaces daily to feed over 10,000 people.

DOMESTIC & FOREIGN TOURIST VISIT IN ODISHA DURING LAST 5 YEARS:

In last five years the tourist arrival to the State is showing an increasing trend:

Year	Domestic		Total	%	Foreign	%	Grand	%
	From	Outside		growt		growt	Total	growth
	Odisha	Odisha		h		h		
2011-12	50,88,184	33,84,024	84,72,208	9.03	62,816	18.05	85,35,024	9.09
2012-13	55,79,909	37,11,825	92,91,734	9.67	65,522	4.30	93,57,256	9.63
2013-14	60,38,746	40,25,326	1,00,64,072	8.31	67,400	2.87	1,01,31,472	8.27
2014-15	66,30,499	44,20,852	1,10,51,351	9.81	72,215	7.14	1,11,23,566	9.79
2015-16	72,40,304	48,27,391	1,20,67,695	9.20	67,364	6.72	1,21,35,059	9.09

Source: Annual Activities Report-2015-16, Department of Tourism, Govt. of Odisha

HOTEL POSITIONS IN ODISHA:

Category of Hotels	No. of Hotels	No. of Rooms	No. of Beds
High Spending Group (HSG)	334	11,303	23,344
Middle Spending Group (MSG)	399	8,120	16,864
Low Spending Group (LSG)	956	15,950	30,392
TOTAL	1,689	35,373	70,600

Source: Odisha Tourism

FINDINGS:

The major findings of the study can be summarized as follows:

1. Tourism is a major revenue generating industry in Odisha. It has positive economic and socio-cultural impact on the host community. It involves Hotel, Restaurants, Transport, Shopping, Entertainment, Retail Shops, Food Services, etc which are having direct and indirect economic benefit to the people of this state.

2. Tourism and Hospitality industry can create job for all demographic classes of the people including highly educated, less educated and also to the illiterate people.

3. Though Odia food is very delicious and popular among the tourists, but these days fusion cuisine is replacing it. People nowadays are more interested in trying out other types of cuisine.

4. There is need for awareness campaign for sustainable development of indigenous culture and its cuisine.

5. This study depicts that majority of the respondents were strongly agreed with the statement, 'Food can influence the development of Hospitality and Tourism Industry in Odisha.

6. The study also revealed that majority of the customers is in favour of selecting Restaurants where variety of Cuisines are available including Local Cuisine.

7. This research survey exposed that most of the respondents were given their view that ethnic local cuisine has impact on the total food sale of the Restaurant.

8. This study finds out that Odia Cuisine is not as much promoted as per its potential. Looking at its variety Odia Cuisine still has not got that much of exposure in comparison to the other Cuisines like Mughlai Cuisine, Punjabi Cuisine, Bengali Cuisine, Hyderabadi Cuisine, and South Indian Cuisine.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study reveals that lack of awareness and promotion is the major problem for promoting Odia Cuisine. Based on this study the following recommendations have been given to have more positive impact among the local people:

1. Gastronomy can be taken as a lifestyle positioning and leisure components of tourism marketing.

2. Public private partnerships and local awareness would be the key thrust area for promoting local cuisine in Odisha.

3. The way our traditional recipes are losing its charm. It is very important to document them for the upcoming generations.

4. Odia Cuisine can be developed as a 'Niche Tourism' to the domestic and foreign Tourists.

5. Local food can be considered as a tool to attract Tourists even in off seasons.

6. The uniqueness of Odia Cuisine can be used as a branding tool because it is an attractive and unusual cuisine to the visitors.

7. Innovative signage and logos can be utilized for branding of Odia Cuisine.

8. Odisha Tourism through its tourist centre in and outside of Odisha should create awareness about Odia Cuisine. All Government accommodations like *Panthaniwas, Yatriniwas* in Odisha must provide Odia Cuisine.

9. Odia food festival to be organized in regular intervals. This will provide an opportunity to potential visitor to see the ingredients, methods of preparations and also have a taste of the ethnic food of Odisha.

10. This study also recommends that Odisha celebrates and organized many fairs and festivals, Odia Cuisine may be combined with those ethnic festivals.

11. Government may motivate by providing them financial support and other fiscal benefits to the hotels and restaurants so that they will open specialty restaurants, food outlets of Odia Cuisine.

CONCLUSION

Gastronomy is a style of cooking of particular region; it is the art and science of preparing and serving of unique food. It is also the study of the relationship between food and culture of a region. Odisha is situated in the east coast of India. Odisha's culture and religious beliefs have played an important role in the evolution of its cuisine. Odia cuisine is popular for the variety of spices used with natural vegetables and food grains. The variety of food cooked in Odisha is as vast and diverse as the taste and likeness of every Odias.

Cuisine of Odisha is easy simple and delicious. Rice is the staple food of the people of Odisha. Vegetables grown in plenty are essential of the meal and form a large part of Odishan diet. 'Pancha-phutana' a mixture of cumin, mustard, fennel, fenugreek and black cumin is used for seasoning vegetables and dals. Non-vegetarian delicacies include both fresh water fishes and sea food like prawns, crabs and lobsters along with mutton and chicken. A distinctive cooking style, mouth-watering curries are the uniqueness if this region.

Gastronomy is one of the important components of Tourism. Food can influence the development of Hospitality and Tourism Industry in any destination. This is proved in Odisha also. Odia Cuisine is not as much promoted as per its potential. Looking at its variety Odia Cuisine still hasn't got that much of exposure like its competitors of neighbouring states. Odia food festival may be organized in various Tourism destinations of Odisha. Public private partnerships and local awareness would be the key thrust area for promoting local cuisine in Odisha.

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