

Investigating Gender Differences in Tourist's Perceptions of Local Punjabi Food: Implications for Food Neophobic Consumers

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ABSTRACT

Purpose: The purpose of this paper is to investigate gender differences in tourist's perceptions of local Punjabi food. Based on findings of this study, the paper also discusses implications relevant to neophobic tourists.

Design/ Methodology/ Approach: The total sample size considered for the study was 600. In order to select a fixed number of tourists from the selected destinations of the selected districts, the study used proportionate stratified sampling method. The study selected 263 tourists from Golden Temple, Amritsar; 241 tourists from Gurudwara Keshgarh Sahib, Roopnagar; and 44 tourists from Virasat-e-Khalsa, Roopnagar. These three destinations constitute the top three data collection locations for the present study.

Findings: Tourists were found to have positive perceptions of local Punjabi food and they found this food very useful for them in various ways. Tourists reported that local Punjabi food is good for their wellbeing and this kind of food makes them feel good. It was noted that tourists perceived that local Punjabi food is good for their health and it seems to be very nutritious. Male tourist's perceptions towards wellbeing of local Punjabi food were found to be stronger in comparison to female tourists. Furthermore, male tourists reported that local Punjabi food is more useful for their health and this type of food is more nutritious for their body and it is more energetic. Male tourist's perceptions of local Punjabi food were found to be of higher intensity than for female consumers.

Keywords: Gender Differences; Local Food; Neophobic Consumers; Punjab; Tourists perceptions.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is an identifiable nationally important industry. The industry involves a wide cross section of component activities including the provision of transportation, accommodation, food, and related services. Tourism can be defined as the science, art and business of attracting and transporting visitors, accommodating them graciously catering to their needs and wants (Leiper, 1979). Tourism is recreational exposure in which people travel from one place to another for various reasons. Tourism is consist of various components such as sightseeing, food tourism, entertainment, experiencing different cultures, transportation, accommodation and various other constituents. Food tourism is one of the most apex tourism component considered in the tourism (Lertputtarak, 2012) Tourism is found over the globe and there are various types of tourism found in the whole world e.g Leisure tourism, cultural tourism, medical tourism, food tourism and many more. Tourism is one of the most rapidly growing industries worldwide. Cultural tourism is a tourism which is main fashion in worldwide, it also brings economic growth and infrastructure growth for the destination countries. In this today's world people wants to experience new things, also wants to have some unique experience which fill them with a several of entertaining experiences (H.Kim, 2010). Now a day's food is related with tourist activities which are associated with new type of component which is known as called food tourism, in this type of tourism the tourists motivation for travelling is to experience new food and other unique experience which has not been experienced in the past (Mak, 2012). The food is one of the most significant components of the tourism industry which plays a significant role in attracting tourist from all around the globe (Bessiere, 1998). Food tourism is getting very popular and its related activities have been credited a new type of tourism which is known as called food tourism. There have been very low attentions explored in this context that what factors encourages tourist towards to food tourism and destination choice (H.Kim, 2010). Rural areas have been playing a very important role in attracting people from different places for experiencing

entertainment, leisure activities and second homes. Food works as a communion because people sit together for eating food and sharing food. Food also creates fundamental social links e.g business meals, family functions, social get together and daily meals. It shows that food is an efficient way of communication with various people. Food also shows a class of the particular person those who eat exorbitant food delicacies e.g caviar, champagne, wine and whiskey it shows their class and lifestyle in the society (Cohen, 2004).

Food is a significant component or a factor for tourist attraction, incorporation and social dynamization. Food has lots of symbolism e.g food act as a symbol, food as a sign of communion, food as a class marker and food as an emblem (Bessiere, 1998). Food plays an important role in attracting tourist from all around the globe. To attract people and provides them a better dining experience to the tourist it is very important to develop those gastronomic products and also ensure that food used in catering are also matching with the tourist food culture and their daily dining habits therefore tourist operators if they provides affordable and hygiene meal arrangements to the group tourists (Tsai, 2016). Food tourism has a lot of potential and it is growing very fast, tourism industry is focusing on food tourism to attract the tourist from all around the globe. Food tourism has a significant input to the market destination; it provides enhancement to economy and infrastructure of the destination. The local food has a lot of potential to increase the sustainability to the tourism industry. Local food provides authenticity, ambience, and also strengthen the economy of the local area (H.Kim, 2010). Food tourism and its related activities attracts tourist from all around the globe. Food is becoming the key factor to attract the tourist in the various countries (Kim, 2010).

Food Tourism in Punjab

Punjab has a very rich culture with the mixture of rural and urban flavors; Punjab has lot of potential to offer to a tourist. Punjab is a land of dynamic people, portrays its energy and sparkle which is finely reflected in its traditional culture e.g Bhangara, gidda. Punjabi culture enclosed with folk music, painting, lifestyle, theater, sculptures and similar things related to this. The culture of Punjab has its unique place in the society and Punjabi people are open minded people who welcome their guest with their open heart. Punjabi hospitality is unique tradition of hospitality. The Punjabi culture is containing intangible heritage with rich poetry, folk music, devotional music, dance and customs which reflect the way of life. Punjab is a land of sufi truth-seeking which definitely attract tourist to know more about this grey area of tourism. Punjabi people are found all around the globe due to their open minded personality, culture of Punjab is really a typical culture so it's found all around the globe. Punjabi culture is prominent for many reasons due to sparkle and superiority in the lifestyle of the Punjabi people. Punjab is the one of the oldest and richest culture of the world. The Punjab is land of five rivers which is also mentioned in Mahabharata in the name of panchnada. Punjab is a land of Sikh; it's a one of the vivacious and beautiful state of India due to its unique culture. Punjab is divided into three regions Majha, Malwa, Doaba.

When partition was not done there was a huge Punjab was there but due to some political disintegration happen the Punjab has been divided into two portion northern Punjab comes to Indian territory and the western portion becomes a province of Pakistan. The most practiced religion in Punjab is Sikhism. Gurudwaras or Sikh temples are found ever where in Punjab. Golden temple is situated in the province of Punjab in Amritsar, which holds a very special place in the hearts of Sikhs. This Gurudwara has been taken care by committee called SGPC (Shromni gurudwara parbandak committee). Many of the people come all around the globe to take blessings and to see Golden Temple. This beautiful city has a rich culture and rich food. The food of Punjab is popular all around the globe because it suits to all palates. Punjabi cuisine has two different styles of cooking one is Indian style Punjabi cooking and second one is Pakistani style Punjabi cooking. Punjabi cuisine has a rich tradition of many distinct and regional way of cooking. There are so many cooking styles of cooking in Punjabi e.g chulla, Tandoori cooking. Tandoori cooking is one of the most significant part of cooking in Punjabi food there are many delicacies has been prepared by this method of cooking e.g Tandoori chicken, tandoori macchi, stuffed kulcha and many more. Tandoori method of cooking is very famous all around the globe as well e.g Canada, UK, Hong Kong and many more countries. The regional food and local food of Punjab is heavily influenced by agriculture and farming lifestyle.

The locally grown food is used in staple diet of Punjab. Punjabi cuisine is a rich cuisine as there is an abundance amount of butter and ghee is used into it, there are extensive amount of dishes from Punjab which is vegetarian and meat dishes. Some of Punjabi delicacies are Sarson da saag and makki di roti with lassi so more. The cooking style of old Punjab is traditional style masonry oven which is lit with wood and provides a smoky flavor to the food. There are so many underground tandoor were also used in Punjab in rural Punjab, it is very common practice communal tandoor which is known as called kath tandoor. Modern Punjabi style cooking includes pressure cooker cooking and lot more. Punjab tourism is very

famous for its cuisine, history and culture. Tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the worldwide. In India tourism industry plays a very significant role because it is generating lot of employment and also contributing to GDP earning of the revenue and foreign exchange. Punjab tourism has a lot of potential in tourism; it is land of GURUS and also has a great history of famous religious shrines, palaces, monuments, and various historical personifications. Punjab is also famous for its handicraft, needlecraft, and woodcraft. Most of the population of Punjab is based on agriculture near about 70 percent of population is indulge in agriculture. It is also known as Granary of India or bread basket of India. Now a day's people are getting more health cautions so Punjab has a potential to produce those ingredients which can be free from any pesticides, transfer to the local restaurants and serve it to the guest. Locally grown items can be processed and used in the Dhaba, Restaurants, and Hotels to serve it to tourist which impact the increase in economy of the local area. Agriculture places a very important role in suitability of the tourism because farm fresh ingredients can be used as a marketing tool to attract the people from different origins.

Food plays a significant role because 100% people spend their money on food when they are on tourism on a particular destination (Shenoy 2005). The people now a day's travelling for experiencing new food and beverages it is a combination of eating experience also enhances knowledge of the individual. For these types of tourist consuming food is not only satisfy their hunger but to gain in-depth knowledge about the local cuisine and also take knowledge about the destination culture (Hjalager 2003)

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Food tourism or culinary tourism is experiencing the food of the country, regional area; it plays a significant constituent of the tourism experience. This areas has a lot potential to attract the tourist from all around the globe, Punjab has rich food and vibrant culture which plays a significant role to attract people to experience the delicacies of Punjab. Punjabi local food and culture has a much potential to increase the sustainability in tourism and also add to the legitimacy of the region, also enhances the infrastructure as well as local economy. Destination marketing campaigns in all around the globe indicates that there is a strong relationship between food, culture and tourism. Punjab government is also taking initiative to promote the culinary tourism in Punjab under the campaign called "Dhaba Project" in which Punjab tourism department took initiative to increase the knowledge of dhaba people how maintain basic hygiene and how to maintain hygiene in each step of servicing food. So that people will visit Dhaba from all around the world and enjoy the local taste of Punjab (Berry, K 2014).

Food tourism is booming industry in this today's world; it has lot of potential to grow. Punjabi food and culture is very vibrant and prosperous, Punjabi food has already a stand in the market but many of authentic dishes has been reaped and it requires some attention so that these vanished authentic dishes will come up and introduced to the whole world. Punjab has agrarian society which has lot of potential to grow, but some initiatives has to be taken care by the regional market and by the government so that proper planning and strategy has to be created and implemented in a proper way to provide benefit to this farmer community. Punjab is a land of agriculture and its agriculture community can promote their product through farm tourism (Singh Jaswinder 2014).

Culinary tourism has become one of the most significant tourism products from past few years. In this research paper researcher took three countries for their research is France, Italy and Thailand. These mentioned three countries have their own well known cuisine all around the globe. Study suggests that France and Italy were known for their food and cuisine consist of various attributes eg. Taste, presentation, variety and quality of the food however Thailand could make awareness about providing better dining, affordable pricing, friendly service staff and menus should be written in English. This study also shows people visit those countries which have a good cuisine and wine so that they want to experience those things however this shows that there is a significant relationship between destination food image and travel intention to visit that destination (Ab Karim 2010).

Tourism industry shows a marvelous growth now a day as it has been identified the most revenue generating industry for many of the countries. Tourism industry gives recognition to the country; it also helps in making the culture alive and also helps people to earn their bread from tourism business. Our culture is found in our hospitality because Indian people treat their guest like a God, This sentence is perceived from the Sanskrit word Athi Devo Bhava which means guest is a god. Our culture is found in our hospitality so it shows that food, culture and tourism have a relationship between. Food is also an integral part of the culture. It also plays a very significant role in selecting the destination for tourism purpose (Singh Shilpa 2016).

Food tourism is one of the most attractive tourism in all around the globe. The province of Punjab contains distinguished kind of dishes which are well known to world and have rich cultural values and have history attached to it. Punjab is a Sikh state which was ruled by many of the rulers and left their

imprints on the food and culture of the Punjab. So Punjabi food consist of all taste attributes which suits every palate in the world. In this study research shows that food plays one of the most important parts while picking up the tourist destination. It also shows that food has a lot of potential to attract the tourist and choose the certain destination. The role of food tourism is very significant in sustaining the regional identity of the province. When foot and mouth disease was broken out in UK 2001, It was devastating situation and it hits the economy and social effect in the rural England. Due to this situation the rural and farming community was in serious crises situation. Various government initiatives were taken care to regenerate the rural tourism and farm tourism and reconnect the consumer with the land. Food tourism has its own charm because many of the provinces have seasonal tourist but if food tourism is there it may help by increasing the season as a food (Everett.S 2008).

Food and culture plays an important role in promoting the tourism. According to literature available food and culture have a lot of potential to increase the sustainability in tourism, it helps in increasing local economy, and also creates environment friendly infrastructure. In this study results shows that food plays an important role in promoting tourism and also considered as a supportive destination attraction. (Rand 2003). Food and culture is one of the most significant factors to attract the tourist for a particular destination. According to this paper the researcher mentioned in his paper the various respondents' responses have been mentioned that there are some attributes which attract the tourist to visit the destination was cuisine, culture, local history of the place, museums and galleries and music and performance. When one adds a traditional factor into the tourism attraction it will enhance the business (Enright. M.J 2004).

This paper suggests that food and culture is an essential part of tourist experience. Food and culture is a significant element of making particular regional identity and holds a special place for both tourist and resident. This study suggests that there is a lack of marketing strategy of regional food on the part of tourism industry; this is a hurdle to generating tourism. It is also mentioned that if proper marketing and promoting strategies will be implemented then there are greater opportunities for linking tourism with regional food, agriculture and culture in turns it will also enrich the tourist experience (Torres,R 2002). Food is a reflection of culture and its region and its people. It is an ideal merchandise to propose as attraction in a destination and could also be used as a marketing tool. Food always is the significant reason for visiting destination and therefore it is painstaking to be as piece of overall destination experience (Du Rand 2006). Food plays an integral part in choosing destination for tourism purpose. The study suggests that food and food tourism marketing on web is still very infancy. More efforts are required to help marketers capitalize on regional food resource and use them in proper way to attract the tourist to that area and enhance their income sources and infrastructure. Food tourism also put an impact on economy and social impact on local tourism businesses (Kim, Y.H 2009).

Many of the researchers say that tourist visit particular place for dining experience. It is also found that tourist least likely to make a cut on their food budget. Tourist visits various sites not only for sightseeing and shopping but also want to personally experience the food and culture of that destination (AU, N 2002). This research paper draws an attention on the performance of Punjab tourism development corporation and Haryana tourism corporation, as per research since from the beginning of the both the state department HTC is gaining profit from the tourism business because HTC is not leaving anything in terms of innovation of tourism product, managing existing products in a proper way. On the other hand PTDC is not managing their existing tourism products properly as a results, PTDC is in loss so they have to take some suggestions from HTC so that they can move forward in that way. Punjab has a lot of potential in terms of tourism product but this state is lacking behind in this area (Bhardwaj, D.S.S 2010).

Objectives of the study

The purpose of this paper is to investigate gender differences in tourist's perceptions of local Punjabi food. Based on findings of this study, the paper also discusses implications relevant to neophobic tourists.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The total sample size considered for the study was 600. In order to select a fixed number of tourists from the selected destinations of the selected districts, the study used proportionate stratified sampling method. The following number of tourists was selected from the destinations:

- Golden Temple, Amritsar: 263 tourists
- Gurudwara Keshgarh Sahib, Roopnagar: 241 tourists
- Virasat-e-Khalsa, Roopnagar: 44 tourists
- Durgiana Temple, Amritsar: 35 tourists
- Ram Tirath, Amritsar: 09 tourists
- St. Paul's Church, Amritsar: 05 tourists

- Wagha Border, Amritsar: 01 tourist
- Jama Masjid Khairudin, Amritsar: 01 tourist

Perceptions of local Punjabi food

The mean score of statements on perceptions of local Punjabi food is given as under:

Table 1: Perceptions of local Punjabi food

Options	Mean	Standard deviation
Local Punjabi food is good for wellbeing	3.92	1.155
Local Punjabi food makes me feel good	4.13	.956
Local Punjabi food is good for my health	3.93	1.060
Local Punjabi food is nutritious	3.94	1.128
Local Punjabi food helps me control my weight	3.97	1.090
Local Punjabi food keeps me fit	4.04	1.024
Local Punjabi food makes me feel satisfied	3.99	.919
Local Punjabi food gives me energy	3.81	1.052
Local Punjabi food improves my mental performance	4.02	1.021

Findings which are mentioned in the above table revealed the tourist's perceptions of local Punjabi food. It was good to note that tourists have every positive perceptions of local Punjabi food and they found this food very useful for them in various ways. Tourists reported that local Punjabi food is good for their wellbeing and this kind of food makes them feel good. It was noted that tourists perceived that local Punjabi food is good for their health and it seems to be very nutritious. Further, tourists reported that local Punjabi food helps them to control their weight and it helps them to stay fit. Findings in regard to tourist's satisfaction towards local Punjabi food revealed that local Punjabi food makes them feel satisfied and it gives them energy. Tourists were also found to report that local Punjabi food improves their mental performance.

Gender Differences in the Perceptions of Local Punjabi Food

The gender differences in the mean score of statements on perceptions of local Punjabi food are given as under:

Table 2: Gender Differences in the Perceptions of Local Punjabi Food

Options	Mean		t value	p value
	Male	Female		
Local Punjabi food is good for wellbeing	4.03	3.79	2.605	.009
Local Punjabi food makes me feel good	4.20	4.04	2.139	.033
Local Punjabi food is good for my health	4.03	3.82	2.421	.016
Local Punjabi food is nutritious	4.04	3.82	2.325	.020
Local Punjabi food helps me control my weight	4.15	3.74	4.681	.000
Local Punjabi food keeps me fit	4.24	3.79	5.432	.000
Local Punjabi food makes me feel satisfied	4.08	3.88	2.724	.007
Local Punjabi food gives me energy	3.98	3.62	4.230	.000
Local Punjabi food improves my mental performance	4.15	3.86	3.557	.000

Findings which are mentioned in the above table revealed the gender differences in the mean score of statements on perceptions of local Punjabi food. It was good to note that male tourists have higher perceptions of local Punjabi food as mean score for male tourists were found to be higher than for female tourists. Male tourist's perceptions towards wellbeing of local Punjabi food were found to be stronger in comparison to female tourists. Furthermore, male tourists reported that local Punjabi food is more useful

for their health and this type of food is more nutritious for their body and it is more energetic. Male tourist's perceptions of local Punjabi food were found to be of higher intensity than for female consumers.

Tourist's Perceptions of Food Neophobia

The tourist's perceptions of Food neophobia are given as under:

Options	Mean	Standard deviation
I like to try new and different foods	4.00	1.076
I like foods from different countries	3.93	1.017
I like to try new food at dinner parties	3.90	1.106
I am open to eat almost anything	3.51	1.159
I like to try new food restaurants	4.04	1.035

Findings which are mentioned in the above table revealed the tourist's perceptions of Food neophobia. It was good to note that tourists agreed that they like to try new and different foods from different countries. Tourists also reported that they like to try new food at dinner parties and they are open to eat almost anything. The tourists were also found willing to try new food restaurants.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this paper is to investigate gender differences in tourist's perceptions of local Punjabi food. Based on findings of this study, the paper also discusses implications relevant to neophobic tourists. The total sample size considered for the study was 600. In order to select a fixed number of tourists from the selected destinations of the selected districts, the study used proportionate stratified sampling method. The study selected 263 tourists from Golden Temple, Amritsar; 241 tourists from Gurudwara Keshgarh Sahib, Roopnagar; and 44 tourists from Virasat-e-Khalsa, Roopnagar. These three destinations constitute the top three data collection locations for the present study. It was good to note that tourists have every positive perceptions of local Punjabi food and they found this food very useful for them in various ways. Tourists reported that local Punjabi food is good for their wellbeing and this kind of food makes them feel good. It was noted that tourists perceived that local Punjabi food is good for their health and it seems to be very nutritious. Male tourist's perceptions towards wellbeing of local Punjabi food were found to be stronger in comparison to female tourists. Furthermore, male tourists reported that local Punjabi food is more useful for their health and this type of food is more nutritious for their body and it is more energetic. Male tourist's perceptions of local Punjabi food were found to be of higher intensity than for female consumers.

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