



Quick Response Code:



Website: <https://wgges.us>



Creative Commons (CC BY-NC-SA 4.0):

This is an open access journal, and articles are distributed under the terms of the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International Public License, which allows others to remix, tweak, and build upon the work noncommercially, as long as appropriate credit is given and the new creations are licensed under the identical terms.

Manuscript ID:
IJWGAFES-2025-020702

DOI: 10.5281/zenodo.16948875

DOI Link: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.16948875>

Volume: 2

Issue: 7

July

Year: 2025

E-ISSN: 3066-1552

Submitted: 05 June 2025

Revised: 10 June 2025

Accepted: 05 July 2025

Published: 31 July 2025

Sanskar Mandir Sanstha's Arts &
Commerce College, Warje-
Malwadi, Pune
Email:
santoshshinde395@gmail.com

Address for correspondence:
Dr. Santosh Maruti Shinde
Sanskar Mandir Sanstha's Arts &
Commerce College, Warje-
Malwadi, Pune
Email:
santoshshinde395@gmail.com

How to cite this article:
Shinde, S. M. (2025). Agro Tourism Potential
and Rural Development in Western
Maharashtra. International Journal of World
Geology, Geography, Agriculture, Forestry
and Environment Sciences, 2(7), 12–16.
<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.16948875>

Agro Tourism Potential and Rural Development in Western Maharashtra

Dr. Santosh Maruti Shinde

Abstract

This paper focused Quantitative analysis of agro-tourism centres plays a vital role in the future planning of the development of the agro-tourism industry. The systematic study of tourist satisfaction is exceptionally essential for growing the centre's income by attracting new tourists and expanding new facilities for the enjoyment of tourists. Identifying agro-tourism potential zones of the study area is the initial stage in developing the agro-tourism business. At the same time, cash flow analysis is a must for understanding economic feasibility. Hence, this chapter focused on the agro-tourism potential identification, and study the current status of agro-tourism centres and find out areas for establishing new agro-tourism centres in Western Maharashtra. Still, very few scholars have conducted a study to calculate tourism potential in the agro-tourism sector. Therefore, it is necessary to quantify the agro-tourism potential and suggest measures to tackle the problems of the agro-tourism industry. Hence, in the present research work, the tehsil-wise tourism potential of Western Maharashtra has been carried out. In this paper, the researcher investigates the studies on the status of Agro-tourism potential, studies low Agro tourism potential areas agro-tourism and studies on medium Agro tourism potential areas agro-tourism, the possibility of agro tourism high Agro tourism potential areas rural development. Researcher examined Agro tourism potential and Rural development of Agro tourism.

Keywords: Agro-Tourism Development Potential, Agro-tourism Potential Analysis, Low Agro-tourism Potential Area, Medium Agro-tourism Potential Areas, High Agro-tourism Potential Area.

Introduction

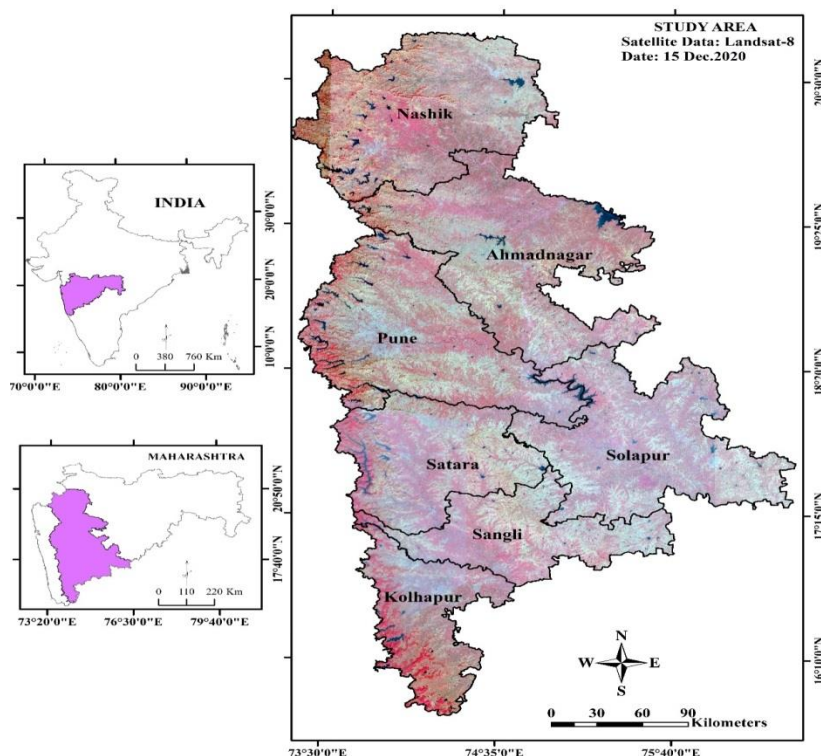
India is a country of villages, about 68.84 percent of the total population are living in the 6,45,856 villages (Census, 2011), where agriculture is not only the backbone of the economy but also the livelihood of people. More than 75 percent of the total workforce depends on agriculture directly and indirectly whereas, employing more than 54 percent of the workforce. But recently, Indian agriculture has been witnessing new challenges, one of the foremost is the rapidly growing population. The population of the country was 102.67 cores in 2001, jumped to 121.08 cores in 2011 means an increase of about 18.15 cores, which puts enormous pressure on agriculture to meet the hunger of millions of people from sinking land. A rapidly growing population leads to fragmentation of land, the average size of operational holding declined from 1.33 ha in 2000-01 to 1.08 ha. in 2015-16 at the national level. As a result, an increase in the numbers of marginal and small landholding farmers (Agriculture Census, 2016).

Study Area:

Western Maharashtra has been selected for the present research work covering Nashik, Ahmednagar, Pune, Satara, Solapur, Sangali, and Kolhapur districts. The present study has been focused mainly on the development of agro-tourism centers in districts of Western Maharashtra.

Location of the study area:

Western Maharashtra extends from 15° 40' N to 20° 53' N, and 73° 16' E to 76° 45' E. The study area is about 500 km. from north to south and 300 km. from east to west. Western Maharashtra covers seven districts with a total geographical area of 89,911 sq. km. Territorially, it has Gujarat to the north, Dule and Jalgaon district to the northeast, Jalana, and Beed to the east, and Karnataka, and Goa to its south, whereas Kokan to the west. The Western Ghats lies in the study area is well known as 'Sahyadri', which runs from the mouth of Tapi southwards along the western edge of the Deccan plateau to the southern boundary of Maharashtra. The average elevation of 1200 m (Arunachalam, 1967), found more than 1600 m in the northern part while declining towards the south.



Location of the study area

Agro-Tourism Development Potential:

Agro-tourism is one of the recent forms of tourism, and tourism potential is an index to find out the areas with high potential for growth of the tourism industry. Nnadi and Akwiwn (2005) discussed the potential of agro-tourism as a tool for rural development. Constantin et al. (2009) conducted a study in Romania applying Multi-Criteria Decision Methods to quantify the potential of tourism by reducing the imbalanced infrastructure. Srivastava Surabhi (2011) study 'Economic Potential of Tourism: A Case Study of Agra' shows that agro-tourism generated new job opportunities, basic infrastructure, and socio-economic upliftment of the farmers. Tourism potential is an emerging term widely used for studying tourism development (Mamun and Mitra, 2012). Suryawanshi, R. S. (2014) researched "Assessment of Tourism Potential in Thane District, Maharashtra." study focused on tourism potential by calculating physical and cultural factors.

Still, very few scholars have conducted a study to calculate tourism potential in the agro-tourism sector. Therefore, it is necessary to quantify the agro-tourism potential and suggest measures to tackle the problems of the agro-tourism industry. Hence, in the present research work, the tehsil-wise tourism potential of Western Maharashtra has been carried out.

Methodology:

In the present research work, the calculation of the agro-tourism potentiality was based on primary and secondary data. Preliminary data was collected from 30 agro-tourism centers with questionnaires conducted through the field survey. On the other hand, secondary data was compiled from multiple sources such as the Census of Maharashtra 2011, Economic Survey Maharashtra 2019, Agricultural Department of Maharashtra, Indian Metrological Department, Pune, and Forest Department of Maharashtra.

Tourism potential is a common term widely calculated using Multi-Criteria Decision Methods. In the present study, Weighted Sum Method was applied to assist agro-tourism potential in Western Maharashtra using the methodology adopted by Mamun and Mitra (2012). The calculating tourism potential, the following three significant steps were applied.

In the first step, physical and socio-cultural factors were selected for calculating agro-tourism potential. Weight assignment to each element was decided after discussion with experts and tourist interviews.

In the second step, each factor was subdivided into essential variables; the physical aspect included rainfall, forest, dams, irrigation projects, and connectivity, while socio-cultural aspects involved mode of transportation, population density, crop diversity, road density, urbanization, literacy, number of cities, Non-agricultural Workers, and tourist security.

In step third, each variable was assigned a weight on a Likert scale of 1 to 5 points; 1 was referred to as the lowest quality, whereas 5 was the best quality. Finally, tourist potential was calculated with an aggregation of physical and socio-cultural aspects. The lowest value indicated low agro-tourism potential, whereas the highest value showed high agro-tourism potential.

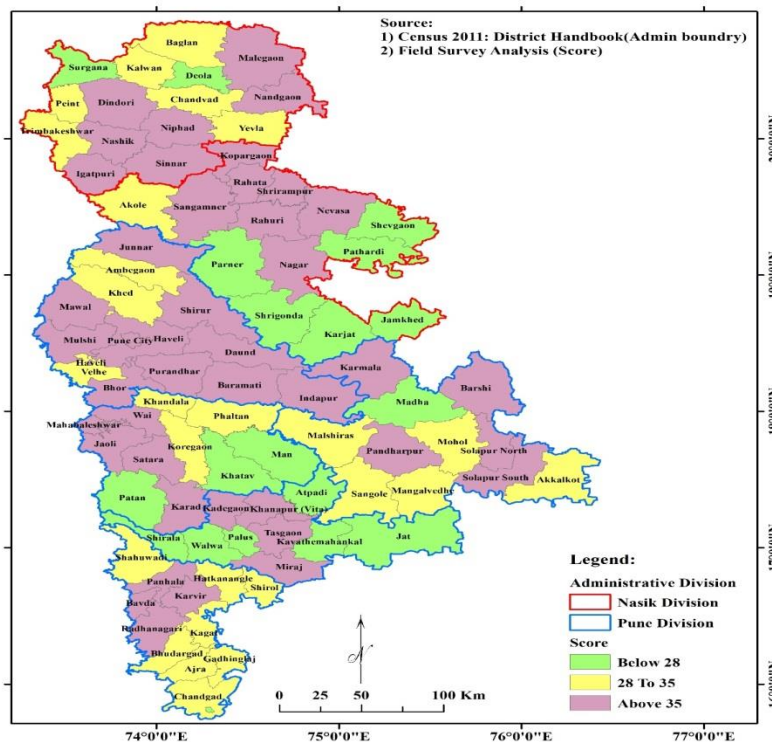
$$V = W_p * [w_1S_1 + w_2S_2 + \dots + w_nS_n] + W_s * [w_1S_1 + w_2S_2 + \dots + w_nS_n]$$

Where,

V is the agro-tourism potential

Variables and weightage for calculation of Agro-Tourism Potential

Sr. No.	Variables	Unit	Weightages				
			1	2	3	4	5
1	Crop Diversity	Numbers of Crops	< 2	3 to 4	5 to 6	7 to 8	> 8
2	Area under Horticulture	Percentage (%)	< 20	21 to 30	31 to 40	41 to 50	> 50
3	Area under Forest	Percentage (%)	< 20	21 to 30	31 to 40	41 to 50	> 50
4	Average Rainfall	mm	< 400	400 to 600	600 to 800	800 to 1000	> 1000
5	Numbers of Dams and Irrigation Projects	Major, Medium, Minor	Only Minor	Medium One	Medium Two	Major One	Major Two
6	Road Density	Per sq. Km	< 75	75 to 100	100 to 125	125 to 150	> 150
7	Other types of transportation	Types	District Road	State Highway	National Highway	SH & Railway	NH & Railway
8	Population Density	(Person per sq. Km)	< 500	500 to 1000	1000 to 1500	1500 to 2000	> 2000
9	Urbanization	Percentage (%)	< 20	21 to 40	41 to 60	61 to 80	> 80
10	Literacy (%)	Percentage (%)	< 50	51 to 60	61 to 70	71 to 80	> 80
11	Cities	Numbers	1	2	3	4	5
12	Non-agricultural Workers	Percentage (%)	< 20	21 to 40	41 to 60	61 to 80	> 80
13	Security	Level	Bad	Normal	Good	Better	Best



Agro-Tourism Potential of Western Maharashtra

Agro-tourism Potential Analysis:

The composite score was calculated for every tehsil based on the weightage given to each variable. With the help of a composite score, tehsils were classified into low, medium, and high agro-tourism potential areas.

Agro-tourism Potential in Western Maharashtra

Sr. No.	Composite Score	Potential	Tahsils
1	< 28	Low	Deola, Jamkhed, Karjat, Parner, Jath, Pathardi, Madha, Man, Patan, Khatav, Atpadi, Kavathe Mahankal, Palus, Shirala, Walwa
2	28 to 35	Medium	Chandvad, Kalwan, Peint, Satana, Surgana, Trimbakeshwar, Yevla, Akole, Shevgaon, Shrigonda, Ambegaon, Khed, Velhe, Akkalkot, Malshiras, Mangalvedhe, Mohol, Sangola, Khandala, Koregaon, Phaltan, Ajra, Bhudargad, Chandgad, Gadhinglaj, Hatkalangale, Kagal, Shahuwadi, Shirol
3	> 35	High	Dindori, Igatpuri, Malegaon, Nandgaon, Nashik, Niphad, Sinnar, Kopargaon, Nagar, Nevasa, Rahata, Rahuri, Sangamner, Shrirampur, Baramati, Bhore, Daund, Haveli, Indapur, Junnar, Mawal, Mulshi, Pune City, Purandhar, Shirur, Barshi, Karmala, Tuljapur, Pandharpur, Solapur North, Karad, Mahabaleshwar, Jaoli, Satara, Wai, Kadegaon, Khanapur, Miraj, Tasgaon, Gagan-Bawada, Karvir, Panhala, Radhanagari

(Source: Computed by Researcher)

- **Low Agro-tourism Potential Areas:**

In this category, tehsils were included with less than the composite score of 28. It has been observed that Deola, Jamkhed, Karjat, Parner, Pathardi, Madha, Man, Patan, Khatav, Atpadi, Jath, Kavathe Mahankal, Palus, Shirala, and Walwa tehsils have a lower potential for agro-tourism development. It has been noticed that a scarcity of rainfall is one of the crucial factors. Most of these tehsils receive less than 500 mm of rainfall, leading to low crop intensity, low crop productivity, low agricultural development, low population density, low road density, less urbanization, etc.

- **Medium Agro-tourism Potential Areas:**

The tehsils with a composite score between 28 to 35 were included in this category. Chandvad, Kalwan, Peint, Satana, Surgana, Trimbakeshwar, Yevla, Akole, Shevgaon, Shrigonda, Ambegaon, Khed, Velhe, Akkalkot, Malshiras, Mangalvedhe, Mohol, Sangola, Khandala, Koregaon, Phaltan, Ajra, Bhudargad, Chandgad, Gadhinglaj, Hatkalangale, Kagal, Shahuwadi, and Shirol tehsils are noticed in this category. Here rainfall is medium (600 to 800 mm), and irrigation facilities are better. Hence, agricultural development is quite good, and other factors like population density, road density, and urbanization are expanding.

- **High Agro-tourism Potential Areas:**

The tehsils with a composite score greater than 35 were involved in this category. It includes Dindori, Igatpuri, Malegaon, Nandgaon, Nashik, Niphad, Sinnar, Kopargaon, Nagar, Nevasa, Rahata, Rahuri, Sangamner, Shrirampur, Baramati, Bhore, Daund, Haveli, Indapur, Junnar, Mawal, Mulshi, Pune City, Purandhar, Shirur, Barshi, Karmala, Tuljapur, Pandharpur, Solapur North, Karad, Mahabaleshwar, Jaoli, Satara, Wai, Kadegaon, Khanapur, Miraj, Tasgaon, Gagan-Bawada, Karvir, Panhala, and Radhanagari tehsils. The agro-tourism industry already flourished in the tehsils due to the nearness of large cities like Pune, Nashik, Ahmednagar, Shirdi, Satara, Mahabaleshwar, Sangali, Kolhapur, Solapur, Pandharpur, Dhule, Nandurbar, and Jalgaon. Nowadays, rapid urbanization is one of the foremost factors supporting the agro-tourism sector.

Resume:

Tourism potential zones were determined using Multi-Criteria Decision Methods. It has been observed that Deola, Jamkhed, Karjat, Parner, Pathardi, Madha, Man, Patan, Khatav, Atpadi, Jath, Kavathe Mahankal, Palus, Shirala, and Walwa tehsils in a low potential zone with less than a composite score of 28.

It has been noticed that a scarcity of rainfall is one of the crucial factors. Most of these tehsils receive less than 500 mm of rainfall, leading to low crop intensity, low crop productivity, low agricultural development, low population density, low road density, less urbanization, etc.

Chandvad, Kalwan, Peint, Satana, Surgana, Trimbakeshwar, Yevla, Akole, Shevgaon, Shrigonda, Ambegaon, Khed, Velhe, Akkalkot, Malshiras, Mangalvedhe, Mohol, Sangola, Khandala, Koregaon, Phaltan, Ajra, Bhudargad, Chandgad, Gadhinglaj, Hatkalangale, Kagal, Shahuwadi, and Shirol tehsils with a composite score between 28 to 35 were noticed in a moderate potential zone. The tehsils with a composite score greater than 35 were involved in the high-potential zone.

This paper emphasized the quantitative analysis of Agro tourism potential in rural area. The result indicates that the working staff in agro-tourism centers are highly cooperative. Food quality, parking facilities, accommodation, cleanliness, hygiene, and personal safety are also excellent. The Agro tourism analysis revealed plays a vital role in the growth and development of the agro-tourism business.

The agro-tourism potential was also calculated. Due to the rapid urbanization of Pune, Nashik, Ahmednagar, Satara, Sangali, Kolhapur, and Solapur, the agro-tourism industry has flourished. The study revealed that the areas near these metropolitan cities have enormous potential for establishing new agro-tourism centers.

Acknowledgment

I am Dr. Santosh Maruti Shinde thankful to Sanskar Mandir Sanstha's Arts & Commerce College, Warje-Malwadi, Department of Geogrphi, Sanskar Mandir Sanstha's Arts & Commerce College, Warje-Malwadi, Pune for granting permission to carry out the work.

Financial support and sponsorship

Nil.

Conflicts of interest

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this paper.

References:

1. Bairagi, S. and Saptarshi, P. G. (1999): "Cost-Benefit Analysis of Population Resources," Maeer's system for Grapes – A Case Study of Pimpalgaon (B), Nashik," 'The Deccan Geographer, Journal' Vol: 37, No: 2, pp: 42-51.
2. Gadekar D.J. (2009) "A particular study of Shridi Religious tourist center in Rahata taluka," unpublished M. Phil Thesis, Tilak Vidyapeeth, Pune.
3. More J. C. (2008): "The Sustainable Agricultural Development in The Karmala Tahsil of Solapur District (M.S.)," Unpublished Ph.D. Thesis 2008.
4. Sonawane, A. E. (2020): "*Cash flow analysis of crops in the Shirur Tahsil*," International Research Journal of Geography, Maharashtra Bhugolshastra Sanshodhan Patrika, Vol. 37, No.1, pp 86-94.
5. Veer V.R. et al. (2011): "*Level of satisfaction of agro-tourist planning for Development of agri-tourist Industry in Satara district*," Maharashtra Geographer, Vol-I, Issue-II, pp.124-129.
6. Constantin, M., Daniela-Luminia, C., & Mihaela, G. (2009). Tourism Potential and the Diminishing of Regional Disparities in Romania, pp.151-155.