



**THE IMPACT OF LOCAL FOOD IN SUSTAINABLE TOURISM TRENDS AND
CONSUMER BEHAVIOR IN REFERENCE TO MP.**

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Abstract

Local food is a key part of making tourism more sustainable since it helps people feel connected to their location, boosts local economy, and lowers environmental footprints. In Madhya Pradesh (MP), a state with a lot of culinary history and biodiversity, adding local food to tourism experiences is a new trend that appeals to travelers who care about the environment and culture. This research looks at how local food affects how people act and how sustainable tourism works in MP. It does this by looking at how food appeal, tourist satisfaction, and ecological responsibility are all linked. We used structured surveys with both domestic and foreign visitors who were visiting in MP. The sample size was 200 people, and purposeful sampling was employed to get opinions from visitors who were actively participating in local food experiences. In addition, input from local food sellers and others in the hotel industry was collected to get a sense of the supply side. The survey will show that visitors really like authentic regional food, which makes their trips more enjoyable and helps them appreciate other cultures more. It also hopes to find a link between eating local cuisine and making environmentally friendly decisions when traveling. The results will probably show that Madhya Pradesh needs policies and tourist plans that include food history in the growth of sustainable tourism.

Keywords: Local food, Madhya pradesh, Tourism, Consumer satisfaction, Culinary Heritag

Introduction

Local food has been an inseparable element in the development of sustainable tourism especially in culturally diversified and historically rich areas such as Madhya Pradesh (MP). Combining gastronomy and tourism will result in a more enriching kind of tourism to a destination. The practice is not only a way of increasing satisfaction of the visitors but also a way of achievement of the larger intentions of economic development, environmental protection and cultural preservation. In the case of MP, where there is a long culinary history, the focus on local food is generating new venues of sustainable development and empowerment at the community level.

The global trend of tourism has been moving towards real and place-based experiences, as the tourists are no longer interested in the sightseeing tour of a place, but in the true experience of the place, the people, the culture, the flavors (**Carbonclick, 2025**), (**Purnomo, 2018**). Culinary tourism has therefore become a forceful avenue that has helped satisfy this demand. In Madhya



Pradesh such legendary delicacies as poha-jalebi, bhutte ka kees, dal bafla, and tribal thalis feed not only stomachs, but the oral histories about tradition, communal sentiment and the past. These are the food held in reflection of peculiarities of the regional agriculture, availability of production to the seasonal resources, and the traditions of the culture **(Futuremarketinsights, 2025)**. Consequently, this makes the food a strong tourist merit that brings about the reason to extend his/her period in the place or pay a second visit to the location to enhance his/her attachment.

The idea of promoting local food in tourism has a direct positive impact on five different ways in relation to sustainable development. To begin with, it empowers the local communities. Farmers, street vendors, home cooks, and small food producers enjoy the boost in demand of traditional ingredients and dishes. This allows maintaining economic value in the region and defining livelihoods closely associated to local heritage. Second, it promotes green living. Use of local ingredients reduces the carbon footprint created by long-distance shipment, and it encourages seasonal diet patterns usually harmonious with the balance of nature. Finally, it enhances cultural identity. **(Carbonclick, 2025)**

Customs, traditions, and histories are embodied in traditional culinary habits of the people of MP. Tourism that highlights these helps locals feel good about themselves and their heritage, which in turn encourages people to keep their recipes alive for the next generation.

So, in Madhya Pradesh, local food serves as a platform for cultural expression while also being a vehicle for sustainable tourist development. This way, economic opportunity, environmental conscience, and cultural life are all brought together. **(Carbonclick, 2025), (Purnomo, 2018), (Futuremarketinsights, 2025), (Chatterjee, 2025)**

Sustainable practices, genuine experiences, and positive community effect are becoming increasingly important to today's travelers, especially those visiting MP. Street food excursions, culinary workshops, and cultural walks are just a few examples of the food experiences that are becoming increasingly important to many travelers. Participation in locally unique meals and homegrown food culture is becoming more important to visitors' experiences as local cuisine becomes an integral part of MP's character. **(Futuremarketinsights, 2025)**

Key behavioral trends observed include:

- Tourists with a penchant for fine dining spend substantially more money on average during their visits, and the hotel and agricultural industries feel the effects of this spending boom.
- Tourists choose farm-to-table and community-centric venues because the food at these places is usually fresher, more sustainably produced, and more culturally immersing. **(Carbonclick, 2025), (Chatterjee, 2025)**
- Travelers are more likely to return or suggest MP to others after having a pleasant eating experience there. This is because memorable local dining experiences affect both immediate enjoyment and the possibility of these things happening. **(Ghanem, 2019)**



Broader Benefits and Challenges

Buying local in MP's tourist industry has a domino effect that helps the economy, protects rare crops, and makes communities more resilient to national and international crises. Projects like agricultural tours, culinary trails, and tribal food festivals highlight the region's intangible history while diversifying revenue streams. (Carbonclick, 2025), (Futuremarketinsights, 2025)

The necessity for a steady supply of ingredients, the standardization of recipes, and the balancing act between contemporary and traditional tastes are all obstacles to overcome when incorporating local food into tourism. If food tourism is to become a sustainable and inclusive growth engine, then hotel providers, politicians, and community stakeholders must work together to overcome these obstacles. (Chatterjee, 2025)

Operational definitions

Local Food: The term "local food" in this paper will refer to the culturally specific and locally distinctive cuisine of Madhya Pradesh, which is crafted in accordance with the state's culinary traditions. These include poha-jalebi, dal bafa, and bhutte ka kees dishes, which are deeply rooted in local traditions and are prepared using ingredients that are readily available. Local food is not merely a means of sustenance; it is also a manifestation of cultural identity that embodies the values, narratives, and practices of the community. In the tourism industry, local cuisine is indispensable for enriching the travel experience. Visitors are able to experience the culture and way of life of a destination through flavor, smell, or sight. It is a critical component of sustainable tourism, as it promotes the economic viability of small-scale producers, farmers, and food vendors, thereby fostering communities.

Tourist Satisfaction: Tourist satisfaction is defined as the extent of satisfaction and fulfillment that travelers experience when they are exposed to the local food culture in the state of Madhya Pradesh, as it is relevant to this study. This includes an emotional, cultural, and experiential response to the authenticity, flavor, and localness of local cuisine. The overall perception of the destination is significantly influenced by a delightful culinary experience, which contributes to a positive memory, a greater understanding of the culture, and a sense of intimacy with the place of travel. Tourists are more likely to establish a connection with the destination when they are satisfied with the local cuisine, which may result in their return visit or the recommendation of the destination to others. This means that the satisfaction of tourists is regarded as a critical indicator of the successful contribution of local cuisine to the enjoyment of tourists and the overall sustainability of tourism development in the region.

Local Food Appeal: Local food appeal presents the sensuous and cultural pull of the local food to the foreign visitors to Madhya Pradesh. Such factors that influence this appeal include flavor, visual presentation, authenticity, and the cultural value that each dish bears. Attractive local food becomes an interesting object of thought to a tourist, increasing his or her interest in knowing about local culture, and there arises a bond with the place. It is more than just a taste-the way it is prepared uniquely, local hospitality, and stories all make up the overall sensation. Local food can affect tourist behavior and motivate people to use environmentally friendly and



culturally diverse experiences when it is attaching. The appeal hence becomes an important driver in encouraging tourists to engage more in the practice of sustainable tourism, in addition to enhancing the regional character of the local people and their pride.

Ecological Responsibility: In this paper, ecological responsibility is defined as the understanding and feeling of doing right by a tourist in having the environmental-friendly choices on the food or on their trips wherever they go. It includes the realization that local food consumption will allow not only less destruction of the environment due to shorter transportation chains but also engage in seasonal and nature-friendly eating habits. Ecologically conscience tourists tend to visit local farms, reduce waste and engage in activities that are linked to sustainable principles. It is based on the idea of changing from passive to more mindful touristic action when visitors may show more attention to the influence that their food preferences have on the environment and populations. Due to the awareness of the environmental advantages of consuming locally, tourists, in addition to contributing to the ecological balance, also assist in promoting this model of tourism that does not disrespect the place or the people who live in the destination.

Sustainable Tourism Behavior: Sustainable tourism behavior refers to actions and attitudes adopted by tourists that support environmental preservation, cultural respect, and economic equity in the destinations they visit. In this study, it particularly includes behaviors such as choosing local food options, participating in community-based tourism, respecting traditional practices, and minimizing ecological footprints. Tourists who exhibit sustainable behavior are more likely to engage deeply with the local way of life while being mindful of their impact on the natural and cultural environment. Such behavior is seen as essential to the long-term viability of tourism in heritage-rich regions like Madhya Pradesh. By fostering a balance between enjoyment and responsibility, sustainable tourism behavior not only enhances individual experiences but also contributes to protecting the authenticity, resources, and livelihoods of the host communities, making tourism more inclusive and regenerative.

Tourist Behavior: Tourist behavior in the context of this study encompasses the patterns, preferences, and decisions made by visitors during their travel, particularly those influenced by food experiences. It includes choices about what to eat, where to dine, and how these decisions align with values such as cultural exploration, environmental awareness, and economic support for local communities. Tourists' behavioral responses to local cuisine reflect their openness to authentic experiences, their level of engagement with the destination's heritage, and their awareness of sustainable practices. Behavior driven by food appeal or cultural satisfaction often leads to deeper interactions with the local context, encouraging practices that are respectful, responsible, and community-oriented. Understanding tourist behavior helps identify how local food can act as a catalyst in shaping travel patterns that support sustainable development and cultural preservation.



Literature review

(Sharma et al., 2025) The many effects of overtourism on culinary tourism will be covered in detail in this chapter. It will look at how too many visitors might result in higher costs, a decline in authenticity, environmental damage, and adverse effects on nearby populations. The chapter will go into particular impacts including resource depletion, cultural appropriation, and the increase in mass-produced food. It will also look at ways to lessen the negative effects of overtourism, such as ethical tourism, community-based tourism, and sustainable food sourcing. Policymakers, tourism industry experts, and local communities may collaborate to promote sustainable and ethical culinary tourism experiences by comprehending the opportunities and problems posed by overtourism.

“(Wani et al., 2024) In recent years, the phrase "tourism and sustainability" has become popular in academic writing. The current study used an integrated route model to examine the growing importance of sustainable tourism, which is partly explained by domestic travelers' preference for eating food that is supplied locally. The study also determines the possible impact of regional food items on the economic, cultural, social, and environmental facets of sustainability. Purposeful sampling is used to gather data, and 462 answers from domestic visitors to the Kashmir Valley were screened and subjected to partial least squares structural equation modeling (PLS-SEM) and SPSS analysis. The results of the PLS-SEM analysis show that domestic travelers' consumption of locally grown food has a large and statistically significant impact on tourism that is focused on sustainability. Additionally, the economic, social, cultural, and environmental facets of sustainability are all positively impacted by the consumption of foods grown nearby. The current study adds to the body of knowledge already available on the topics of sustainable tourism and regional gastronomy. The authors' goal in this work is to demonstrate how local cuisine may support sustainable tourism in the areas that serve as tourist destinations. Policymakers in the tourist industry may use the research's findings to improve their capacity to promote local food, maintaining the long-term sustainability of the business.

(López Ganem & Kennedy, 2024) Scholars and practitioners agree that culinary tourism is the conscious choice to engage with foodways and foodstuffs outside of one's usual surroundings or routines. When Lucy M. Long defined culinary tourism as “the intentional, exploratory participation in the foodways of an other,” she provided the foundational definition for the modern discipline of food studies (Culinary Tourism). According to one definition, culinary tourists are those who voluntarily and actively work to create meaning and value by their artistic appreciation of food. The agent of culinary tourism—the culinary tourist, often referred to as a global foodie or food trotter—making food, drink, or substance preparation and consumption the vehicle for personal value creation, either through a solo experience or within the larger context of a group similarly focused on such aesthetic appreciation, either by moving themselves from one physical place to another or by incorporating “foreign” or “unusual” food items into a habitual physical place.



(Nematzadeh et al., 2024) The potential of Tabriz as a culinary destination is highlighted by this study, which looks at the factors influencing visitors' inclinations to return for local cuisine. By using a mixed-methods approach that incorporates both qualitative and quantitative techniques, the study offers a thorough evaluation. The impact of different elements of the local food experience, such as food features, identity, and ethnicity dimensions, on tourists' satisfaction and intention to return for local food (RVINTLF) is investigated in this study using descriptive and inferential statistics. Although the city's cuisine was not initially considered an attraction, the results show that most visitors were satisfied with all aspects of traditional meals, with souvenirs and the quality of traditional food greatly improving visitors' favorable impressions of the location. According to multiple linear regression analysis, dining traditions (DCUS) have marginal relevance, while the quality of ingredients (IGD) and the diversity of local food (DVS) are significant predictors of RVINTLF. Other factors do not significantly affect RVINTLF. The model's overall significance ($F = 6.763$, $p < 0.001$) was validated by the ANOVA F-test, which also explained 30% of the variance in RVINTLF. Furthermore, the results of ANOVA and T-tests indicated that sociodemographic factors did not significantly affect RVINTLF.

(Apak & Gürbüz, 2023) Determining the impact of domestic visitors' intake of local cuisine on sustainable tourism is the goal of this study. Furthermore, the study seeks to clarify how local foods affect sociocultural, economic, and environmental sustainability. Data in this regard was gathered from 394 domestic visitors to the Eastern Black Sea region's provinces (Artvin, Bayburt, Gumushane, Trabzon, and Rize). This study was created using one of the quantitative research designs, the correlational research approach. Structural equation modeling—a popular technique in the social and behavioral sciences—was utilized to assess the research data. This led to the conclusion that local cuisine has a favorable and statistically significant impact on sustainable tourism. The economic, sociocultural, and environmental subscales of sustainable tourism were also found to benefit by eating local cuisine.

(Izhar & Ul Gull, 2023) Tourism is a socio-economic phenomenon that encompasses the activities and experiences of travelers and visitors who are separated from their native environment. It is supported by the travel and tourism industry and host destinations. Madhya Pradesh has a significant opportunity to increase tourism due to its scenic locations. A source of direct and indirect employment in Madhya Pradesh is tourism. In that article, the first two districts were chosen as they were deemed to be emblematic of the region, out of the six districts identified: Gwalior, Bhopal, Indore, Jabalpur, Ujjain, and Panna. Additionally, it was stated that the Madhya Pradesh State Tourism Development Corporation (MPSTDC) is responsible for the protection and exploration of new destinations in order to promote tourism. The tourism department is responsible for the management of all resources and the associated marketing.

(Shankar R, 2022) India is experiencing a surge in culinary tourism due to the country's strong connection between food and culture, tradition, heritage, and health. India is the preferred destination for tourists worldwide to fulfill their culinary desires. This form of tourism is extremely profitable and viable for the promotion of other types of tourism. Although culinary destinations are effectively branded, a strategic approach to incorporating the critical aspects of sustainability, such as regeneration, rediscovery, and circular economy, into the branding process is not evident. This perspective note underscores the significance and relevance of



incorporating these critical factors into the strategic branding process of culinary destinations to ensure a sustainable future. Based on the self-reflection inferences, research readings, and interactions with the destination management organizations and marketers, the perspective elicited in-depth and feasible ideas regarding the integration of sustainability elements into the branding of culinary destinations.

(Singh & Najar, 2020) Food is one of the essential components of culture, which is why it is becoming more and more significant in tourism.” Native foods, especially those of a local or ethnic origin, are popular among tourists. Additionally, travelers increasingly show interest in learning about the local, regional, and national food. One of the main tourist attractions is the idea of eating or drinking local cuisine, which is regarded as a first-hand cultural experience. The marketing of food as a part of India's appeal as a travel destination is still in its infancy. The purpose of this contribution is to support the connections between cuisine and tourism that can enhance the destinations' cultural worth. The goal of the current empirical study is to investigate how Indian tourism is sustained by cuisine, culture, and travel. Additionally, the present study will try to explore how local cuisine contributes to a destination's cultural tourism. Additionally, the study will investigate how local cuisine aids visitors in remembering the destination's cultural legacy.

Research Methodology

The research methodology offers a structured framework that directs the whole research process, guaranteeing the reliability, validity, and precision of the results. It delineates the precise methodologies employed to find, select, process, and evaluate material pertinent to the research issue. This study employs a quantitative, qualitative, or mixed-methods approach, contingent upon its nature, utilizing both primary and secondary data sources. The methodology explicitly delineates the study design, which may be experimental, descriptive, correlational, or exploratory. It delineates the selection criteria for participants or data samples, encompassing the sampling technique, size, and demographic specifics. Data collecting instruments, including questionnaires, interviews, surveys, and observational checklists, are delineated, along by the justification for their application. Moreover, the approach delineates the protocols employed in data collecting and underscores ethical aspects, including informed permission and confidentiality. Statistical methods, such as SPSS, regression analysis, or thematic analysis, are utilized for data analysis to derive significant results and evaluate study hypotheses. The research technique provides a coherent and transparent framework for examining the research issues, so augmenting the study's credibility and enabling future replication.

Research Approach

The research study would be based on quantitative research design, whereby measurement of the relations among various variables e.g. the attractiveness of local food, tourist satisfaction, ecological responsibility and sustainable tourism behavior are assessed empirically and a statistical analysis would be conducted. To measure the tourist attitude and behavior towards local food and sustainability in Madhya Pradesh, a structured survey strategy was used to answer questions and provide some quantifiable data towards the behaviour and attitude



towards local food and sustainability in Madhya Pradesh. This method is well matched to research questions and allows testing hypothesis with the help of statistics instruments.

Research Design

In the study, a correlational and descriptive research design is used. Descriptive aspects can assist in characterizing the demographics of tourists as well as their behaviour, whereas correlational design will allow investigating the connections between the independent variables (such as, food appeal, satisfaction, ecological responsibility), and the dependent variable (tourist behaviour towards sustainable tourism). This pattern of design was suitable in measuring both the magnitude and intensity of connections particularly through regression and correlation analysis.

Proposed Methodology

The research was done by the field survey method that involved the use of structured questionnaire to survey the tourists who had been visiting the various regions within Madhya Pradesh. The design of the questions was based on 7-point Likert scales to gauge perceptions, experience and behavioral inclination. Also, the trends in the views of local food vendors and professionals in the hospitality industry were integrated qualitatively to define the results in the supply side. The approach has been developed to comprehensively decode how both the concepts of culinary and the values of sustainability can come together in the tourism behavior.

Sample and sampling

It was a purposive study which used the sample frame that included both domestic and international tourists who participated in the local food experiences as they visited MP. In the research, 200 respondents were included. The sample was diversified on different age groups and on the purpose of visitation, either on leisure, religious, cultural and business visits to ensure that the sample has representation. This was a specific strategy useful in obtaining expert views of people who had first hand exposure to the local food supply.

Data Collection

Structured Google Form questionnaires were used to gather primary data, and they were distributed both online and in person at popular tourist destinations. Demographic information, dietary choices, satisfaction levels, sustainability awareness, and behavioral answers were all included in the questionnaire. This made it possible to get statistics in real time from visitors who were actively visiting MP. Background information and validation of consumer-side responses were supplied by additional qualitative feedback from regional food vendors and tourist stakeholders.

Statistical Analysis

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22.0 was employed to analyze the collected data. In order to comprehend the demographic profile of the respondents and characterize general patterns in the dataset, descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, were implemented. Correlation and regression analyses were implemented to investigate the association between sustainable tourism behavior and variables such as the appeal of local cuisine, tourist satisfaction, and ecological responsibility. The strength and direction of relationships among critical variables were



determined using Pearson correlation. The predictive potential of independent variables on the dependent variable—tourist behavior toward sustainable tourism—was evaluated using multiple regression analysis. The model fit was assessed using R-square and F-statistics from the ANOVA table, and the hypotheses were tested based on significance levels (p-values). All analyses guaranteed the rigorous testing of associations and provided statistical evidence to facilitate the comprehension of the impact of local culinary experiences on sustainable tourism behavior in Madhya Pradesh.

Objectives

- To examine the influence of the appeal of local food on tourists' engagement with sustainable tourism practices in Madhya Pradesh.
- To assess the relationship between tourist satisfaction with local cuisine and their appreciation of local culture and heritage.
- To analyze whether the perception of ecological responsibility through local food consumption impacts tourists' environmentally conscious behavior.

Hypothesis

- **H₀ (Null Hypothesis):** There is no significant influence of the appeal of local food on tourists' engagement with sustainable tourism practices in Madhya Pradesh.
- **H₁ (Alternative Hypothesis):** The appeal of local food significantly influences tourists' engagement with sustainable tourism practices in Madhya Pradesh.
- **H₀ (Null Hypothesis):** There is no significant relationship between tourist satisfaction with local cuisine and their appreciation of local culture and heritage.
- **H₁ (Alternative Hypothesis):** There is a significant relationship between tourist satisfaction with local cuisine and their appreciation of local culture and heritage.
- **H₀ (Null Hypothesis):** The perception of ecological responsibility through local food consumption does not significantly impact tourists' environmentally conscious behavior.
- **H₁ (Alternative Hypothesis):** The perception of ecological responsibility through local food consumption significantly impacts tourists' environmentally conscious behavior.

Variables

Dependent Variable (DV):

- Tourist Behavior toward Sustainable Tourism (Measured through indicators like eco-friendly practices, cultural appreciation, and support for local economy)

Independent Variables (IVs):

- Appeal of Local Food (Flavor, presentation, uniqueness, authenticity)
- Tourist Satisfaction with Local Food Experience (Enjoyment, cultural enrichment, emotional connection)
- Perceived Ecological Responsibility of Consuming Local Food (Belief that eating local food reduces carbon footprint, supports biodiversity, etc.)

Result and discussion

“Table: 1 Age of the respondents.

Age (In years)		
	Frequency	Percent
18-25	58	29.0
26-35	45	22.5
36-45	51	25.5
46-55	46	23.0
Total	200	100.0

The above Table discusses the frequency and percentage of age. In 18-25 Years, frequency is 58 and percentage is 29.0%. In 26-35 Years, frequency is 45 and percentage is 22.5%. In 36-45 years, Frequency is 51 and percentage is 25.5%. In 46-55 years, Frequency is 46 and percentage is 23.0%.

Graph: 1 Graphical representation of Age.

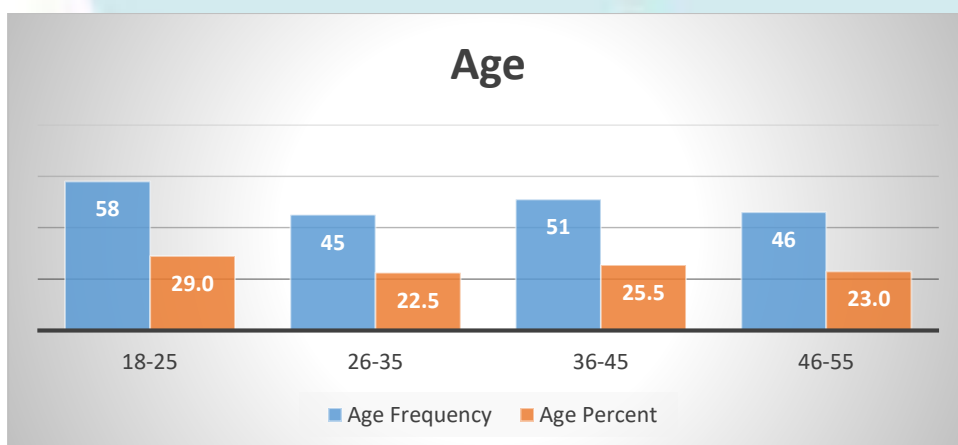


Table: 2 Gender of the respondents.

Gender		
	Frequency	Percent
Male	106	53.0
Female	94	47.0
Total	200	100.0

The above table discusses the frequency and parentage of gender of the respondents. In male, frequency is 106 and percentage is 53.0%. In Female, frequency is 94 and percentage is 47.0%.

Graph: 2 Graphical representation of Gender of the respondents.

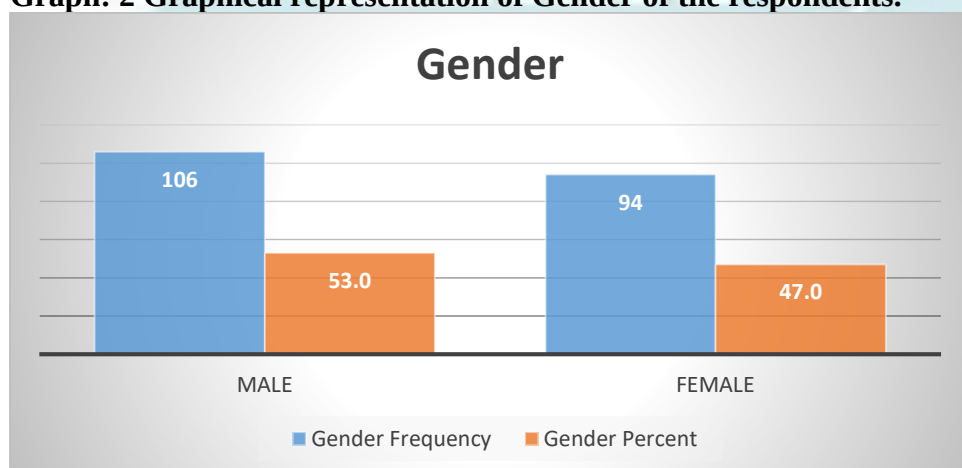


Table: 3 Purpose of visit to Madhya Pradesh.

What is your purpose of visit to Madhya Pradesh?"		
	Frequency	Percent
Leisure/Tourism	55	27.5
Business	38	19.0
Religious/Pilgrimage	58	29.0
Cultural Exploration	49	24.5
Total	200	100.0

Most respondents visited Madhya Pradesh for religious or pilgrimage purposes, accounting for 29.0% (58 respondents). This is closely followed by 27.5% of respondents (55 people) who went there for tourism or recreation. While 19.0% of travelers came to the state for business, 24.5% (49 respondents) came to explore its culture.

Graph: 3 Graphical representation of Purpose of visit to Madhya Pradesh.

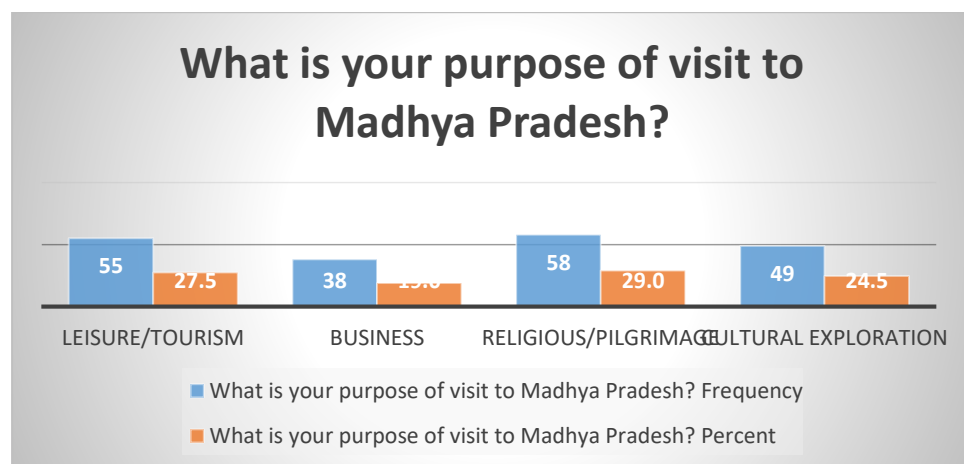


Table: 4 The appeal of local food significantly influences tourists' engagement with sustainable tourism practices in Madhya Pradesh.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.307 ^a	.094	.090	5.94310
a. Predictors: (Constant), Appeal of Local Food				

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	728.531	1	728.531	20.626	.000 ^b
	Residual	6993.449	198	35.320		



	Total	7721.980	199			
a. Dependent Variable: Tourist Behavior Toward Sustainable Tourism						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Appeal of Local Food						

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	17.350	1.632		10.634	.000
	Appeal of Local Food	.316	.070	.307	4.542	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Tourist Behavior Toward Sustainable Tourism ^b						

Regression analysis shows that visitors' interest in sustainable tourism practices in Madhya Pradesh is strongly influenced by the allure of local cuisine. With a R value of 0.307 and a R Square value of 0.094, the model summary shows a moderately positive correlation. This means that the allure of local cuisine accounts for around 9.4% of the variation in traveler behavior toward sustainable tourism. The regression model fits the data well, as shown by the ANOVA table, which also validates the model's overall significance ($F = 20.626$, $p < .001$). With a significant t-value of 4.542 ($p < .001$) and an unstandardized coefficient (B) of 0.316 for the attraction of local food, the coefficients table indicates that visitors' involvement with sustainable tourism rises by 0.316 units for every unit increase in the appeal of local food. The hypothesis that the appealing Ness of local cuisine is a major predictor of sustainable tourism behavior among Madhya Pradesh visitors is validated by the statistically significant connection ($p < .001$).

“Table: 5 significant relationship between tourist satisfaction with local cuisine and their appreciation of local culture and heritage.

Correlations			
		Tourist Behavior Toward Sustainable Tourism	Tourist Satisfaction with Local Food Experience
Tourist Behavior Toward Sustainable Tourism	Pearson Correlation	1	.380**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	200	200
Tourist Satisfaction with Local Food Experience	Pearson Correlation	.380**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	200	200
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The correlation analysis reveals a moderate positive relationship between tourist behavior toward sustainable tourism and tourist satisfaction with local food experience. This correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 level ($p = .000$),” indicating that higher satisfaction with local food is associated with greater engagement in sustainable tourism practices.

Table: 6 The perception of ecological responsibility through local food consumption significantly impacts tourists’ environmentally conscious behavior.

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.491 ^a	.241	.237	5.44082
a. Predictors: (Constant), Perceived Ecological Responsibility of Consuming Local Food				

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1860.686	1	1860.686	62.856	.000 ^b
	Residual	5861.294	198	29.602		
	Total	7721.980	199			
a. Dependent Variable: Tourist Behavior Toward Sustainable Tourism						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Perceived Ecological Responsibility of Consuming Local Food						

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	12.636	1.546		8.172	.000
	Perceived Ecological Responsibility of Consuming Local Food	.514	.065	.491	7.928	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Tourist Behavior Toward Sustainable Tourism						

Regression analysis shows that visitors' ecologically conscious behavior is strongly influenced by their concept of ecological responsibility, which is demonstrated by their consumption of local food. With a R value of 0.491 and a R Square of 0.241, the model summary demonstrates a larger positive correlation, suggesting that visitors' perceived ecological responsibility of eating local food accounts for 24.1% of the variation in their behavior toward sustainable tourism. The model's statistical significance ($F = 62.856$, $p < .001$) is further supported by the ANOVA findings, which suggest a significant predictive association. The coefficients table shows that a one-unit increase in perceived ecological responsibility results in a 0.514-unit increase in environmentally conscious behavior among tourists, with an unstandardized



coefficient (B) for perceived ecological responsibility of 0.514 and a t-value of 7.928 ($p < .001$). These results lend credence to the idea that visitors are more inclined to follow sustainable tourism practices in Madhya Pradesh if they understand the environmental advantages of eating locally.

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that there exists a complex association amid the consumption of local foods and sustainable tourism practices in Madhya Pradesh. The statistical examinations indicate that local food is not only satisfactory to tourist experiences, but relatively has a high capacity in behavior modification towards sustainability. To start with, the attractiveness of local cuisine is one of the decisive factors that can encourage tourists to become more responsible. Having an R Square of 0.094, there is no doubt that aesthetic and sensory qualities of food, like those of authenticity, taste and appearance, help tourists venture out traditional sightseeing activities and better participate in the local milieu and culture.

Moreover, the connection between tourist satisfaction with the local food and appreciation of the cultural heritage ($r = 0.380$, $p < .01$) indicates that the food can be described as a strong cultural vehicle. Tourists that derive pleasure in local cuisines appreciate the local traditions and stories that are observed in them thus creating a feeling of belonging and attachment to the heritage of the destination. This reinforces the claim that culinary tourism could be a driver in the conservation of the intangible cultural assets, at the same time fostering tourist experiences.

The most striking result is the one that presents the regression analysis of the ecological responsibility, as the R square of 0.241 shows that there is a high impact of the perceived environmental benefits of local food consumption and environmentally virtuous tourist conduct. The tourists of the present day know about the ecological questions behind the consumption of the locally grown ingredients, they are more aware of the changes, consumers would reduce carbon emissions, support biodiversity so that the tourists of the near future would prefer to travel in a sustainable way to the destinations.

These results may reinforce what is stated in the existing body of literature, such as Wani et al. (2024) and Apak & Gyrbus (2023), who believed that regional cuisine is associated with certain positive socio-economic and environmental benefits to sustainability. Also, qualitative leads of food vendors and stakeholders support the economic empowerment of local food tourism to the small producers and communities.

But issues like standardizing ancient recipes, ensuring a steady supply of ingredients, and striking a balance between authenticity and contemporary preferences need to be handled cooperatively. In order to preserve culinary traditions and meet the needs of modern tourists, stakeholders in tourism, agriculture, and policymaking must develop coordinated frameworks.

Conclusion

Finally, this paper confirms that local cuisine is the main ingredient of sustainable tourism and consumer behavior in Madhya Pradesh. The attractiveness and pleasure of the local cuisine



only complement the experience of the tourist whereas the local cuisine also helps preserve the culture of a country and makes the culture eco-friendly and aware of the environment. Tourists who are attracted by the authenticity of the food and its uniqueness tend to embrace sustainable traveling practices, such as eco-friendly actions, contributing to the local economy, embracing the local culture. As mentioned in the research, perceived ecological responsibility associated with local food consumption has emerged to have the greatest impact on sustainable behavior implying that the tourists are driven by emotional and moral rewards. The food fact and cultural appreciation also further concurs with the incorporation of gastronomy within the tourism plans. To take full potential of this in Madhya Pradesh there is need to build collaboration between communities, tourism boards and policy stakeholders to build sustainable food tourism circles. Further investment in culinary and infrastructure, as well as marketing, may further enhance the interest of the state as a culturally viable and environmentally-friendly travel destination.

Finally, local food is not only nutrition, it is a connection point of people, places, and practices. Strategically incorporated in the tourism activity, it is retrieved as an economic development, cultural identification and ecological balance tool that is sustainable.

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