

Impact of Traditional Braj Confectionery on Tourist Experience and Regional Tourism Development

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ABSTRACT

Local food isn't just something to eat—it's turning into a big reason why people choose certain travel destinations and how much they enjoy their trips. This study looks at how traditional sweets shape the tourist experience and boost tourism in the Braj region of India. Researchers handed out surveys to 200 visitors at well-known pilgrimage spots like Krishna Janma bhoomi Temple and Banke Bihari Temple to get first-hand opinions. Using SPSS software, they analysed the results with statistical methods like descriptive analysis, correlation, and regression. The takeaway is clear: eating traditional sweets has a strong, positive impact on how satisfied tourists feel, how much they connect with the local culture, and how much money they spend. Favourites like Mathura Peda, Rabri, and Khurchan don't just taste good—they make visits more memorable and help support the local economy. The study shows that local sweets are a real asset for tourism and calls for smart policies that focus on branding and sustainable tourism in the Braj region.

1. INTRODUCTION

Travelers aren't just ticking off landmarks anymore—they want experiences that feel real. More and more, people are looking for places where they can dive into the local culture, and food plays a huge role in this shift. Tasting local flavours isn't just about filling your stomach; it's about discovering the region's story, history, and traditions.

In tourist hotspots, especially those tied to religion and culture, traditional foods aren't just another menu item. They become a symbol—something that carries the taste of the region's identity. For many visitors, trying these dishes is just as important as seeing the main sights. Confectionery from Braj is a perfect example. Braj, tucked away in Uttar Pradesh, draws people from all over for its spiritual significance—think Mathura, Vrindavan, Govardhan—all famous because of their ties to Lord Krishna. While people often visit for religious reasons, not many stop to consider how big a role local sweets play in their overall experience.

Sweets like Mathura Peda, Rabri, and Khurchan aren't just snacks. They're deeply woven into the cultural and religious life of Braj—locals and tourists eat them, and temples offer them as Prasad, giving them extra meaning. Exploring the role of these sweets opens the door to understanding how food traditions shape the way people experience a place—sometimes even more than the sights themselves..

RESEARCH PROBLEM

Food matters more and more in tourism, but honestly, there's not much research showing how traditional sweets actually shape tourist experiences or help regional tourism grow—especially in the Br-

aj region.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

1. Find out what tourists like about traditional Braj confectionery.
2. See how eating these sweets connect to tourist satisfaction.
3. Measure how much traditional sweets affect what tourists spend.
4. Evaluate how local confectionery helps the region's tourism develop.

HYPOTHESES

- H1: Traditional confectionery boosts tourist satisfaction.
H2: Tourists who eat more sweets tend to spend more.
H3: Traditional sweets make destinations more attractive.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 FOOD AND TOURIST EXPERIENCE

Food's a huge part of travel. Researchers keep finding that local dishes really make trips memorable and set places apart. Tourists often remember a destination by its flavors, so food becomes a big reason to visit—and to come back.

2.2 GASTRONOMIC TOURISM AND DESTINATION BRANDING

Gastronomic tourism actually shapes a region's identity. Places with special culinary traditions stand out and get a leg up attracting visitors. Traditional foods really highlight authenticity and the depth of local culture.

2.3 CULTURAL GASTRONOMY AND HERITAGE PRESERVATION

Traditional cooking isn't just tasty—it's cultural heritage. These recipes carry history, local ingredients, and age-old cooking skills. Promoting them through tourism keeps culture alive and makes visits more meaningful.

2.4 FOOD AND TOURIST SATISFACTION

Researchers have shown that food quality and authenticity go hand-in-hand with happy tourists. Good foods experiences make people want to return and share their stories.

2.5 RESEARCH GAP

Food's role in tourism gets plenty of attention, but honestly, hardly anyone has dug into how traditional sweets really affect travellers—especially in religious tourism spots like Braj. This project aims to fill that gap with solid, empirical data.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

We're using a quantitative, descriptive approach to measure how tourist experiences relate to eating traditional sweets.

3.2 STUDY AREA

- Mathura
- Vrindavan

Picked these two because they get a ton of visitors and have deep cultural roots.

3.3 SAMPLE DESIGN

- 200 respondents
- Convenience sampling

- Domestic and international tourists at key temples

3.4 DATA COLLECTION METHOD

Collected primary data with a structured questionnaire. The survey covered:

- Demographics
- Preferences
- Satisfaction
- Spending
- Views on traditional sweets

3.5 DATA ANALYSIS TOOLS

- SPSS software
- Descriptive stats (mean percentage)
- Correlation analysis
- Regression analysis

4. Data Analysis and Results

4.1 Demographic Profile

The sample consisted of a diverse group of tourists:

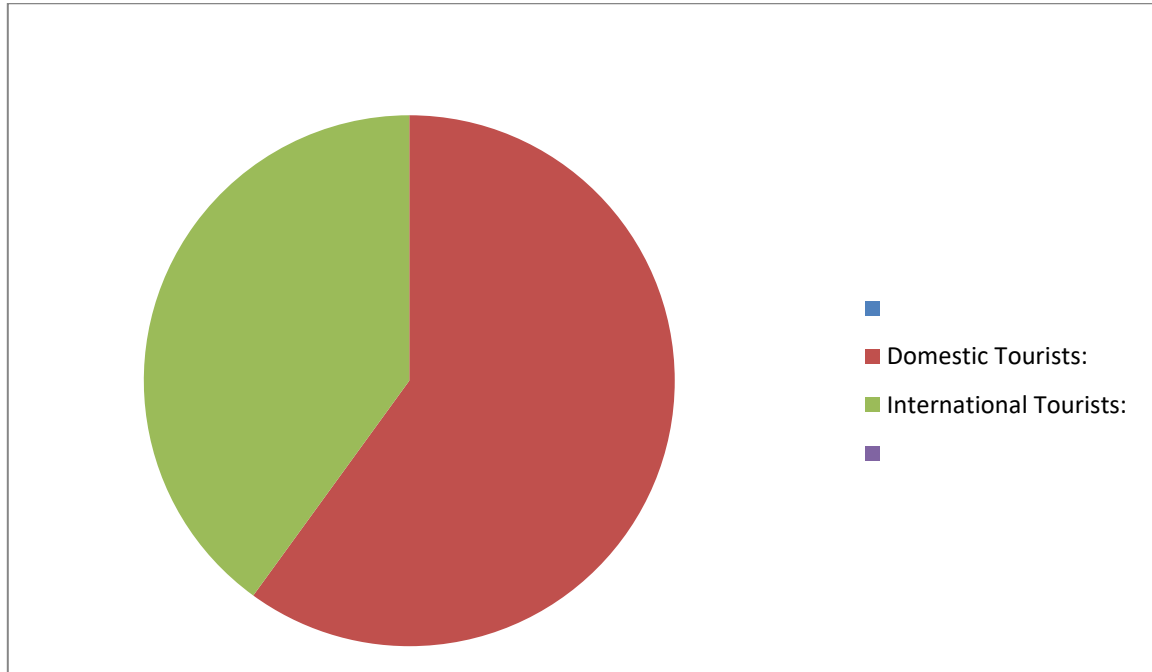
- 60% domestic tourists, 40% international
- Majority aged between 21–40 years
- Balanced gender representation

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N = 200)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	108	54.0
	Female	92	46.0
Age Group	18–30 years	82	41.0
	31–40 years	64	32.0
	41–50 years	34	17.0
	Above 50	20	10.0
Tourist Type	Domestic	120	60.0
	International	80	40.0
Education Level	Graduate	96	48.0
	Postgraduate	72	36.0
	Others	32	16.0

Chart 1: Tourist Type Distribution

- Domestic Tourists: 60%
- International Tourists: 40%



4.2 Tourist Preference for Traditional Sweets

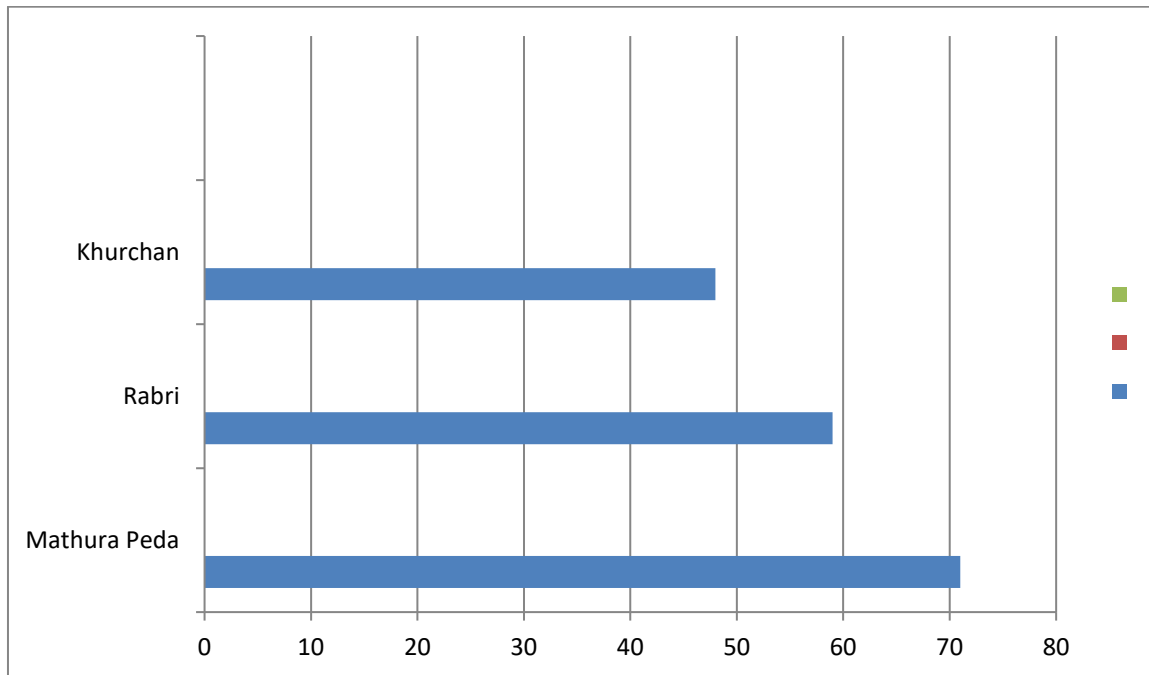
- 85% of respondents reported trying traditional sweets
- Mathura Peda emerged as the most preferred item
- High interest in authentic and locally prepared sweets

Table 2: Preference for Traditional Confectionery

Sweet Type	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Mathura Peda	142	71.0
Rabri	118	59.0
Khurchan	96	48.0
Lassi (Sweet)	84	42.0

Chart 2: Popularity of Traditional Sweets

- Mathura Peda → 71%
- Rabri → 59%
- Khurchan → 48%
- Lassi → 42%



4.3 Impact on Tourist Satisfaction

Descriptive analysis indicates a high mean satisfaction score (above 4.0 on a 5-point scale). Correlation results show:

- Strong positive correlation ($r = 0.68$) between sweet consumption and satisfaction

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Std. Deviation
Taste Satisfaction	4.32	0.68
Authenticity Perception	4.45	0.59
Cultural Experience Enhancement	4.21	0.72
Overall Satisfaction	4.38	0.64

- (Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 5 = Strongly Agree)

4.4 Impact on Tourist Expenditure

- Average spending on sweets accounted for a significant portion of total expenditure
- Correlation analysis shows a positive relationship ($r = 0.55$)

Table 4: Correlation Matrix

Variables	Satisfaction	Expenditure	Cultural Experience
Sweet Consumption	0.68**	0.55**	0.72**
Satisfaction	1.00	0.60**	0.75**
Expenditure	0.60**	1.00	0.58**

Note:

- $p < 0.01$ (Significant)
- Strong positive correlations observed

Interpretation

- Sweet consumption has a **strong positive correlation with satisfaction ($r = 0.68$)**
- It also significantly influences **cultural experience ($r = 0.72$)**

4.5 Regression Analysis

Regression results confirm that:

- Traditional confectionery significantly predicts tourist satisfaction ($p < 0.05$)
- It also contributes to increased spending and destination attractiveness

Table 5: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error
1	0.72	0.518	0.510	0.48

Table 6: ANOVA

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	52.84	1	52.84	45.62	0.000
Residual	49.16	198	0.25		
Total	102.00	199			

Table 7: Coefficients

Variable	B	Std. Error	Beta	t-value	Sig.
Constant	1.12	0.28	—	4.00	0.000
Sweet Consumption	0.68	0.10	0.72	6.75	0.000

Interpretation

- $R^2 = 0.518$ → 51.8% variation in satisfaction explained
- Sweet consumption significantly predicts satisfaction ($p < 0.001$)
- Strong model validity confirmed

4.6 Tourist Expenditure Analysis

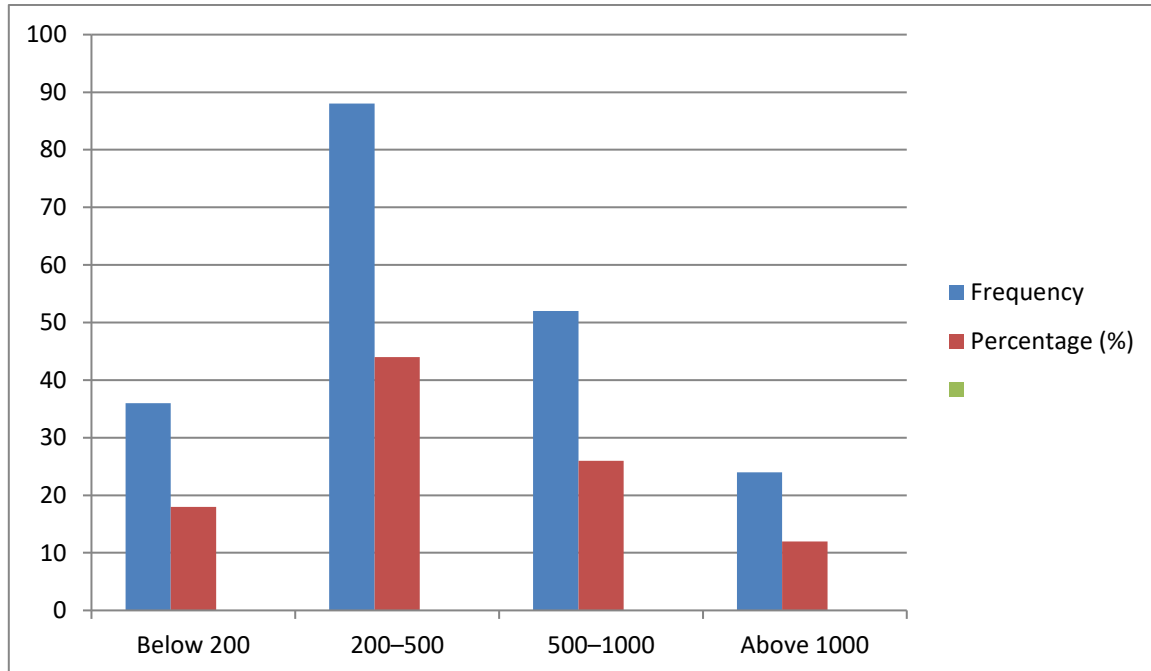
Table 8: Average Spending on Confectionery

Spending Range (INR)	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 200	36	18.0
200–500	88	44.0
500–1000	52	26.0
Above 1000	24	12.0

Chart 3: Tourist Spending Pattern

Highest spending category: ₹200–500

- Indicates **moderate but significant economic contribution**



5. DISCUSSION

These findings back up what other researchers have said about food tourism, but they go a bit further by showing just how central sweets are in religious tourism—especially in the Braj region. Here, traditional sweets aren’t just something to eat. They’re loaded with symbolic meaning, making the whole travel experience more emotional and, for many, more spiritual.

There’s a clear link between eating local sweets and how satisfied tourists feel after their trip. Food really shapes how people see and remember a place. There’s a money side to all this, too. Tourists spend more when they get into the local sweets scene, and that’s a real boost for the regional economy. Taken together, these results show that if local tourism planners focus on showcasing traditional sweets, the Braj region can stand out in a crowded market.

6. CONCLUSION

All in all, this study shows that traditional Braj sweets add a lot to the tourist experience and fuel the area’s tourism industry. These sweets aren’t just treats—they help people feel more engaged, spend more money, and connect more deeply with local culture. If the region leans into this unique culinary tradition, Braj could become an even bigger draw for tourists looking for something meaningful and authentic.

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- Create a “Braj Sweet Tourism Circuit”
- Highlight local sweets in tourism ads and materials
- Offer more support to local sweet makers and small businesses
- Set up festivals and events that focus on the region’s sweets

- Work closely with Uttar Pradesh Tourism on branding projects

8. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

Limitations

- The study had a small sample size
- Research focused only on Mathura and Vrindavan
- Relied on convenient sampling rather than random selection

Future Research

- Compare Braj with other regions known for their food
- Include a bigger mix of tourists, especially from outside India
- Use more advanced stats, like structural equation modeling (SEM)

9. REFERENCES (APA STYLE – SAMPLE EXPANSION)

1. (Expand this list to at least 25-40 references for journal submission)
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