

Micro-Enterprise Development Through Food Tourism: A Study of Local Producer and Vendor Ecosystems

Varinder Singh Rana, Bipin Sule, Anishkumar Dhablia

***Abstract:** Food tourism has become one of the strongest drivers of the local economic development, especially in terms of the growth of micro-enterprises run by small producers and vendors. This paper will examine how food tourism can enhance the local producer/vendor ecosystem and its role in enhancing micro-enterprise development in tourism destinations at a regional level. The research will examine the interaction of the local food systems and tourism demand and the ways in which these interactions affect the generation of incomes, creation of job opportunities, and development of the value chain of the regions. It uses a mixed-method research design, which is a combination of field observations, structured surveys of local food vendors and producers, and secondary tourism data analysis. The research creates a conceptual food tourism ecosystem framework that visualizes the relationships between the tourists, vendors, producers and the supporting institutions. In addition, an analytical framework in the form of an algorithm is suggested that will be applied to simulate the interactions between vendors and producers networks, align the demand of tourism with local foods, and calculate a score of economic impact of various micro-enterprises. These results reveal that food tourism is a critical boost to production diversification, market awareness of the traditional food items, and closer integration between the agricultural suppliers and tourism-based sellers.*

Keywords: Food tourism, Micro-enterprise development, Local food systems, Tourism supply chain, Vendor–producer networks, Regional economic development.

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Introduction

Food tourism also referred to as gastronomic or culinary tourism, is a very new phenomena in the world tourism industry as it is one of the areas that attract tourists more towards experiencing the authentic cultural life through appreciating the local food culture. The food tourism is not like other tourism activities that are more or less founded on sightseeing or recreational tourism where the major activity is sightseeing or recreational traveling. In food tourism the focus is on the culinary history of a given region, the food preparation method and foods that are offered in the given region. Such a tourism does not only enhance the experience to the visitor, but also it leaves behind giant economic potentials between the localities particularly between the small-scale producers, the peddlers of street food, the home-owned restaurants and the home-based food vendors. As the demand of tourism products increasingly becomes more experiential and culture-based travelling, the local food systems have been found to be key factors on the destination attractiveness and economic sustainability (Munoz et al., 2020).

Micro-enterprises are extremely significant constituents of food tourism ecosystem. Such firms are typically low capital, minor-scale labour and small-scope original of production chains but they do create a tremendous amount of employment as well as economical worth on a local scale. Most developing and emerging economies rely on food based micro-enterprises as the backbone of the tourism economy since they provide tourists with a local dining experience, as well as serve to support agricultural producers and food artisans (Pugh et al., 2021). Direct sales to tourists, participation in food fests and cooperation with hospitality facilities enables micro-enterprises to become more varied in their sources of income and expand the market base beyond the conventional domestic markets. As far as the tourists request the local food and the local food producers respond, it creates a dynamic ecosystem where there is a diverse group of stakeholders, including farmers, ingredient suppliers, and food processors, vendors, restaurants, tourism operators, and government agencies (Ratten, 2020). Here, the local producers offer raw agricultural products, such as fruits, vegetables, spices, dairy products and grains, which are changed to value added culinary products by vendors and small food businesses. This interconnection system is a localised value chain that helps in the circulation of the economy within the region (Ajani et al. 2025). When properly integrated with tourism activities, these value chains can improve the development of rural areas, entrepreneurship and preserve traditional family dishes (Gabinete et al., 2022; Ratten, 2020).

Whereas there is the growing recognition of food tourism as a local economic development driver, the greatest challenge facing most micro-enterprises is with the challenge of maximising the tourism prospects. The insufficient infrastructure, weak storage and transportation networks, regulatory and licensing factors, the impossibility of access to digital marketing, etc. can often limit the size of food vendors and producers because they are often small (Volkman et al., 2021). Also, absence of systematic coordination between tourism government and local governments and community-based enterprises can lead to disintegrated chains of supply and inefficient distribution of the economic resources. The limitations focus on the need to conduct the systematic investigation of the links between tourism demand and the development of local food production, as well as the development of micro-enterprises. The other notable feature of food tourism is that it boosts the cultural identity and makes the regional food heritage easier (Wurth et al., 2022). The cultural resources and traditional foods, the original cuisine, and the local produced foods are the peculiar features of some destinations. With these features, the communities can be in a position to create special culinary identities that attract both the local and the foreign tourists. Not only is it a process applicable to generate economic benefits, but it can also aid in safeguarding cultural traditions and local volumes of information pertaining to food production and preparation. In that sense, the present research project will aim at taking into account the role of food tourism in fostering micro-enterprises within the local producer and vendor networks (Dragin-Jensen et al., 2022). The purpose of the study is to clarify how the demand created by tourism affects the organization of the local food supply chains and how the micro-enterprises survive with the emergence of a tourism industry.

Literature Review

Concept of food tourism and gastronomic tourism

Gastronomic tourism or food tourism is another such niche of tourism where tourists visit a place primarily because of their food culture, their cuisines and local food experiences. The activities that are undertaken under this form of tourism include the local foods, food workshops, food festivals, and even touring of local markets or farms (Kwiatkowski et al., 2022). Food tourism also enables the tourists to feel the cultural identity of a given destination through food or cooking culture and this renders the travelling experience more genuine. Researchers also observe that gastronomy is not a sole need, and it is a cultural and experience element that defines the destination image (Guest et al., 2020). Tourist attractions that facilitate the local cuisine, local ingredients and local cooking styles are also likely to acquire competitive advantage in attracting tourists who desire to experience the local culture. In addition, food tourism also assists in maintaining the culinary practices because the local people will have the incentive to maintain the ancient recipes and cooking techniques. It also contributes to the regional branding through gastronomy and tourism development and engages the local community and cultural development (Fei et al., 2023).

Micro-Enterprise Development in Tourism Sectors

Micro-enterprises constitute a vital sector of the tourism business, particularly in developing economies which have also little scale businesses that dominate the local service economy. Typically, such businesses are those that lack financial resources, have fewer workers and local sources of inputs but have a tremendous impact on the creation of employment and the construction of economies within specific regions (Apak & Guerbuez, 2023). Micro-enterprises in tourism destinations involve street food vendors, small restaurants, home-based food enterprises, local food processors, and small agricultural producers that distribute their products to the hospitality establishment. The new markets of such businesses are also formed through the tourism activities as they market the demand of local products and services. As the number of tourists grows, the micro-enterprises get additional clients and they can earn more money and have additional sources of income (Richards, 2021). In addition, micro-enterprises are effective in dispersing benefits of the tourism industry amongst the locals as compared to consolidating profits in giant companies. The researchers attract the focus to the fact that the appearance of micro-enterprises in the sphere of tourism can result in the eradication of poverty, development of the entrepreneurship, and economic progress in the countryside (. Rahul Desai., 2025).

Local Food Systems and Supply Chain Structures

Local food systems Local food systems are collections of agricultural producers, food processors, distributors, vendors and consumers in a specific geographical location. These food tourism systems are relevant in the supply of locally produced foods and traditional food stuffs upon which authentic food experience is founded (Stone et al., 2019). Local food supply chain is typically a grouping of diverse interested parties, including farmers who render the uncooked agricultural produce, minor food processors who turn the uncooked agricultural produce into consumable items, restaurants or food vending organizations who offer ready meals, and suppliers of tourism services that make these experiences available. The proper coordination of these actors will ensure the smooth movement of these food products through the production and consumption process without affecting their quality and authenticity (Kritikos et al., 2025). Short supply chains in the food tourism ecosystems are preferred due to their ability to benefit the local economies, and because the produce maintains its freshness (Santos et al., 2022). Besides, the local food supply chain improves the community level of value addition by reinforcing economic connections between the agriculture and tourist sectors. Table 1 synoptic of previous studies of the food tourism and creation of micro-enterprises. Scientists emphasize that well-developed local food systems not only make certain economic sustainability of regions, but also contribute to the environmentally-friendly production in the agricultural sector and assist small-scale producers.

Table 1: Summary of Related Work on Food Tourism and Micro-Enterprise Development

Study Region	Methodology	Data Source / Sample Size	Key Findings	Research Gap
Europe	Conceptual study	Literature review	Gastronomy enhances destination attractiveness and cultural identity	Limited focus on micro-enterprise ecosystems
United Kingdom	Survey and case study	Tourist surveys (n=150)	Tourists prefer authentic regional food experiences	Producer–vendor supply chain not analyzed
Scotland [Kim et al., 2023]	Mixed methods	Interviews with vendors (n=60)	Local cuisine strengthens tourism branding	Micro-enterprise income effects unexplored
Finland	Empirical analysis	Rural tourism enterprises (n=82)	Food tourism supports rural economies	Lack of vendor–producer network analysis
Global (Duarte et al., 2021)	Systematic review	Secondary tourism datasets	Food tourism increases tourist engagement	Economic impact on micro-enterprises unclear
Turkey	Case study	Tourism stakeholders (n=90)	Culinary heritage enhances destination competitiveness	Limited supply chain integration analysis
Europe	Qualitative research	Tourism enterprises (n=70)	Culinary experiences drive experiential tourism	Micro-enterprise financial performance not examined
Global	Literature review	120 tourism studies	Food tourism strengthens destination branding	Producer participation insufficiently studied
Global	Policy analysis	Tourism industry datasets	Food tourism supports local entrepreneurship	Quantitative micro-enterprise evaluation missing
South Korea	Statistical analysis	Tourist survey (n=240)	Authentic food strongly influences travel decisions	Impact on local vendor networks unexplored
Spain	Empirical modeling	Producer–vendor data (n=95)	Short supply chains improve local income	Algorithmic ecosystem analysis absent
China	Econometric analysis	Rural tourism enterprises (n=110)	Tourism increases farmer income and employment	Limited focus on micro-enterprise structure
India	Field survey	Street vendors (n=130)	Tourism improves vendor revenue and visibility	Lack of integrated ecosystem framework

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

Food tourism ecosystem model

The food tourism ecosystem model is a conceptual model that characterizes how tourists, food vendors, local producers, tourism service providers, support institutions are interconnected in a regional tourism setting. The tourists in this ecosystem are the demand drivers as they require to experience local cuisines, traditional food preparation systems, and traditionally unique food products. As illustrated in Figure 1, it is through interactions between tourists and vendors, micro-enterprise producers that creates employment opportunities. Local

manufacturers like farmers and small-scale food processing companies provide raw agricultural products or raw materials, like vegetables, spices, grains, dairy products, on which the local cuisine is based.

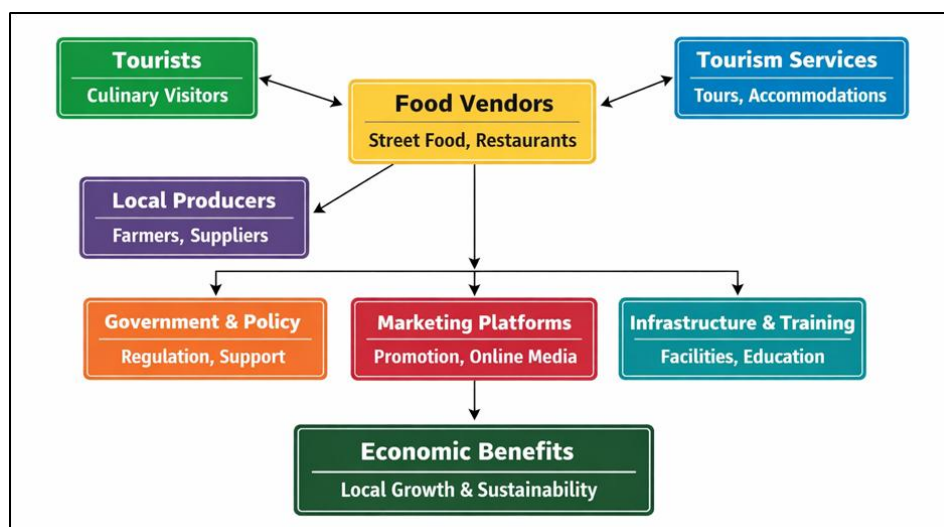


Figure 1: Food Tourism Ecosystem Model for Micro-Enterprise Development

These inputs are processed by vendors and micro-enterprises into ready-made food products and dining experiences which are consumed directly by tourists. Even the supporting stakeholders such as the local governments, tourism boards, food safety regulators, and digital marketing platforms that will help with the promotion and development of infrastructure and regulatory control are part of the ecosystem. The success of the ecosystem is based on the intensity of connections between these actors, supply chain effectiveness, and tourism market access. In the context of an efficient ecosystem, circular economic flows are encouraged where the tourism income is re-circulated between the local producers, vendors and service providers.

Micro-Enterprise Development Theory

Micro-enterprise development Theory is based on the development and sustenance of small-scale businesses running on a small sum of finance, limited number of workers, and local market presence. In the tourism economies, micro-enterprises tend to be community-based businesses which exploit the local resources, cultural assets, and the demand of tourism. Such businesses usually involve small food booths, family restaurants, home food production unit and small farms that serve the residents and other visitors. Micro-enterprise development is theoretically based on the entrepreneurship theory, models of local economic development, and inclusive growth models. These views hold that small businesses help in diversifying the economy by providing job opportunities, generating local revenues and making communities participate in economic activities. Micro enterprises can be in the form of informal or semi-formal economic organization enabling individuals with low financial capabilities to get involved in business. The demand of tourists, the accessibility of the local markets, presence of raw materials and institutional support of the government and community organizations are some of the factors which have a strong bearing on the formation of micro-enterprises in tourism settings. This growth potential of these enterprises can be greatly augmented with training programs, facilities of accessing credit, and digital marketing platforms.

Local Value Chain and Vendor Network Structure

The local value chain and the vendor network structure are the flow of goods, services, and economic value among various stakeholders in production and distribution of local food products in a tourism destination. A value chain usually starts with agricultural producers that produce crops, cattle or other animals and provide raw materials with the help of which traditional cuisines are prepared. The inputs are then passed onto small scale processors, vendors, restaurants or food stalls that makes them into market ready products or ready meals. The vendor network structure has different actors which interact in formal and informal relationships which enhance the exchange of goods, services, and information. Vendors usually have a long-term relationship with certain producers or suppliers to be able to be guaranteed of a constant supply of the items at the right time and of quality.

These associations establish local supply chains that supply small-scale farm producers and allows vendors to retain authentic culinary services to tourists. The market intermediaries also form part of the vendor network structure including local markets, food cooperatives and tourist operators that facilitate the process of linking producers and vendors with tourist consumers.

Research Methodology

Research design and study approach

The current research will take the mixed-method research design to explore the connection between food tourism and the development of micro-enterprises in local producer and vendor ecosystems. The mixed-method research involves the combination of quantitative and qualitative research methods with a view of achieving a holistic approach of understanding the economic and structural dynamics of food tourism. The quantitative data will be obtained based on structured questionnaires that will be distributed to the local food vendors, small restaurant operators, and agricultural producers that will provide items to food tourism-oriented food enterprises. These data furnish quantifiable results in regard to income rates, customer flow, job creation, and supply chain relations. Qualitative data is collected by use of semi-structured interviews, field observations and an interview with the stakeholders including tourism officials, local entrepreneurs and community representatives. Such qualitative data assists in determining the operational issues, relationships in the supply chain, and even the market opportunities that determine the development of micro-enterprises in the food tourism industry. Moreover, the secondary sources of data are also employed to supplement empirical results and set the analysis background such as tourism reports, government publications and regional economic statistics.

Study Area Selection and Justification

The choice of the study site is very pivotal in the appreciation of dynamics of food tourism and its impact on development of micro-enterprises. The research is narrowed down to a tourism destination where the local food culture, traditional cuisine and small-scale food enterprises are the major concerns in visitor attraction. These destinations are usually those that have a distinguished culinary tradition, lively street food markets, local food festivals and traditional agricultural food production systems. The ecological situation of a variety of food sellers, small restaurants, and local producers create a favorable condition to study the connections between the tourism demand and the local food supply networks. The area where the study is conducted is chosen on the basis of various criteria, such as the popularity of the destination as the place of both local and international travelers, the existence of well-developed local markets of food, and the engagement of small enterprises dealing with food in the tourist life. Moreover, the region has good cultural identity with traditional food, which makes it viable to discuss food tourism as the means of economic growth. The choice of the location of the study was also affected by accessibility of vendors and producers in order to collect the data. The second reason why the study area was selected is the increasing importance of food tourism in provision of livelihoods in the area.

Identification of Local Producers and Vendors

Such a factor as finding local producers and vendors is a critical part of investigating the food tourism ecosystem structure and determining its economic influence on the development of micro-enterprises. In this paper, the local producers are people or small businesses that deal with the production, harvesting, or cultivation of food materials used in the local foods. These can be in the form of farmers growing vegetables, fruits, grains, spices, dairy products and other farming commodities that feed the food vendors and smaller restaurants in the tourism destination. The systematic identification of producers and vendors in tourism ecosystem is shown in figure 2.

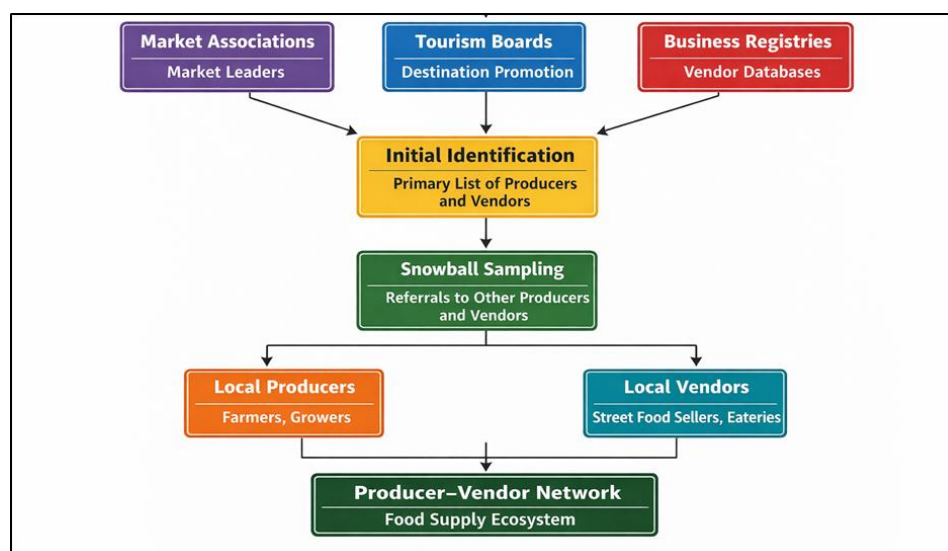


Figure 2: Identification Process of Local Producers and Vendors in Food Tourism Ecosystem

On the other hand, vendors consist of street-food vendors, small restaurants, food stall and home-based food vendors as well as local food processors, which prepare and sell food products to tourists and local consumers. There is a purposive sampling method of selecting participants who are actively engaged in the food tourism supply chain. The preliminary participants get identified via the local market associations, tourism boards and municipal business registries. Snowball sampling is then used to increase the size of the sample by getting referrals by the existing participants to other producers and vendors within the same ecosystem. This model assists in capturing the interrelatedness of the relationship between producers and vendors that constitute the local food supply network.

Algorithmic Framework for Food Tourism Micro-Enterprise Ecosystem Analysis

Vendor-producer network construction algorithm

The algorithm of the network construction of suppliers consists of the supply relations between local food vendors and agricultural producers of the food tourism ecosystem. The ecosystem, in this case, is depicted as a graph with nodes being producers and vendors and edges being the supply links amongst them. This algorithm is aimed at getting to know the food supply network structure and determining the key actors that play a significant role in the food economy based on tourism. This method assists in examining the trends of collaboration among farmers, suppliers and food vendors serving tourists.

The bipartite graph of the ecosystem is as follows:

Network Representation

$$G = (P, V, E)$$

Where:

$P = \{p_1, p_2, p_3, \dots, p_m\}$ represents the set of local producers

$V = \{v_1, v_2, v_3, \dots, v_n\}$ represents the set of vendors

E represents supply connections between producers and vendors

The strength of supply relationships between producers and vendors is represented using weighted edges based on supply volume:

Edge Weight Based on Supply Volume

$$w_{ij} = \frac{q_{ij}}{\text{(Sum from } k=1 \text{ to } m \text{ of } q_{kj})} \quad (1)$$

Where:

q_{ij} represents the quantity of ingredients supplied by producer p_i to vendor v_j .

To evaluate the overall integration of the ecosystem, the network connectivity index is calculated as:

Network Connectivity Index

$$C = \frac{(2 \times |E|)}{(m+n)(m+n-1)} \quad (2)$$

Where:

$|E|$ represents the total number of supply relationships.

A higher connectivity value indicates stronger collaboration and more integrated producer–vendor relationships within the food tourism supply ecosystem.

Tourism Demand–Supply Matching Algorithm

The algorithm of demand-supply matching of tourism assesses the state of the local vendors and producers in terms of whether the local food products can satisfy the demand of tourists. Visitors arrivals in tourism destinations have a direct effect on food service demand most notably the traditional food and foods produced locally. The algorithm approximates demand, which is caused by tourism, and matches it with the capacity of vendors.

It is estimated that the demand of food products by the tourists in a given time period is:

Tourism Food Demand

$$Dt = Tt \times \alpha \quad (3)$$

Where:

Dt = total food demand generated by tourists during time period t

Tt = total number of tourists visiting during time period t

α = average food expenditure per tourist

The total food supply available from vendors is calculated as:

Total Vendor Supply

$$St = \text{Sum from } j = 1 \text{ to } n \text{ of } s_j$$

Where:

s_j represents the production or service capacity of vendor v_j .

To evaluate the efficiency of matching between demand and supply, a matching ratio is computed:

Demand–Supply Matching Efficiency

$$\frac{M = \min(Dt, St)}{\max(Dt, St)} \quad (4)$$

Where:

M ranges between 0 and 1.

When M approaches 1, it indicates that vendor capacity efficiently satisfies tourism demand. Lower values indicate supply shortages or surplus production.

Economic Impact Scoring and Ranking Algorithm

The economic impact scoring and ranking algorithm measures the role of individual micro-enterprises to the food tourism economy. Every vendor or producer is measured in terms of economic indicators, including the income generation, creation of employment, and the percentage of serving the tourists. These are normalized indicators, which are summed up to a composite.

To start with, the normalized contribution to income will be determined as:

Income Normalization

$$Ii = \frac{Ii}{\max(I)} \quad (5)$$

Where:

Ii represents the income generated by enterprise i

$\max(I)$ represents the highest income recorded among all enterprises.

Next, employment contribution is normalized as:

Employment Contribution Score

$$Ei = \frac{Ei}{\max(E)} \quad (6)$$

Where:

Ei represents the number of employees working in enterprise i

$\max(E)$ represents the highest employment value among enterprises.

Finally, an overall economic impact score is calculated using weighted aggregation:

Overall Economic Impact Score

$$Score_i = \beta_1(Ii) + \beta_2(Ei) + \beta_3(Ti) \quad (7)$$

Where:

β_1 , β_2 , and β_3 are weighting factors.

Ti is the percentage of tourist customers.

Businesses are classified on the basis of the economic impact scores. An increase in the scores will mean more contributions to the development of local economy, job creation, and the participation of the market through tourism.

Economic Impact of Food Tourism on Micro-Enterprises

Income generation and employment opportunities

Food tourism is important in generating incomes and job opportunities to micro-enterprises involved in the local communities. When the places to visit receive tourists who want to taste the local food, the food items in the region, street food, and local prepared foods are in demand. The increasing demand directly translates into the economic opportunities of small food sellers, home based and family-run restaurants and home cooked food businesses. As a result, the micro-enterprises will enjoy the benefit of increased customer traffic whereby they will be able to realize more daily sales and consequently enhance their financial stability. Figure 3 indicates an increase in income in tourism and the creation of jobs in the micro-enterprises. There is also the increased employment opportunities as such enterprises increase their operations in order to service the increased demand of tourism.

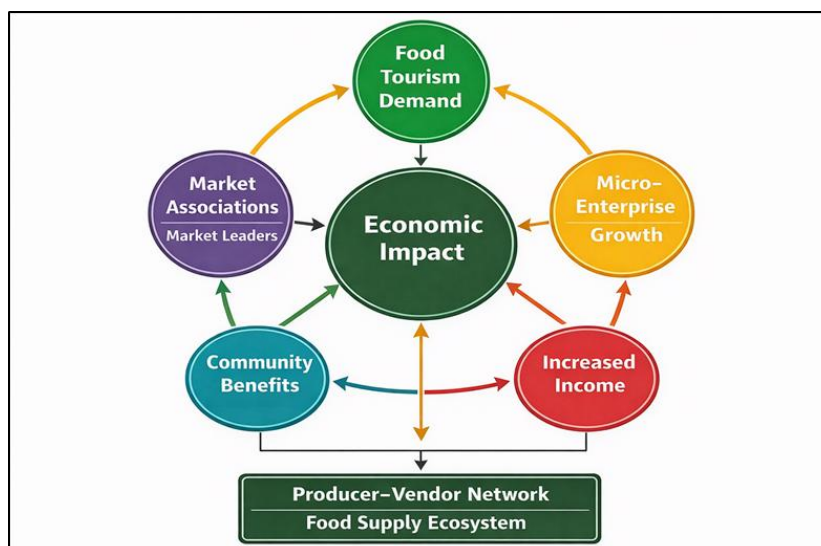


Figure 3: Income Generation and Employment Opportunities in Food Tourism Micro-Enterprises

Vendors tend to engage more people to make the food, manage the services, and handle the supplies thus providing employment opportunities to the locals. Family members are engaged in business activities in most of the situations and this fortifies the household income and promotes entrepreneurship in the community. Moreover, the food tourism supply chain creates indirect jobs to the agricultural producers, suppliers of ingredients, the transport system and middlemen in the market.

Revenue Diversification for Local Producers

Food tourism is a good source of revenue diversification to the local agricultural producers and small-scale food suppliers. Historically, a substantial number of producers depend on the sale of unprocessed agricultural goods in the traditional wholesale markets, whose profit margins could be rather low because of the price variation and intermediary expenses. Nevertheless, the introduction of food tourism enables producers to increase their market penetration through supplying ingredients directly to tourism-based food vendors, restaurants and local food markets serving visiting tourists. Participation in food tourism supply chains enables the producers to provide specialty crops, organic products, regional spices, dairy products and traditional food substances, which are part of the local culinary experience. The prices of these niche products in the market are usually high because they are culturally authentic and identify with the region. Other producers also perform value added processing like the packaging of their local snacks, traditional condiments or artisan food products that could be marketed to the tourists as a souvenir or as specialty food products. The involvement in food festivals and local markets helps producers to communicate with tourists directly as well and helps them not rely on mediators and increase the margin of profit.

Challenges Faced by Local Producers and Vendors

Infrastructure and logistics limitations

One of the biggest problems of local producers and food vendors involved in food tourism ecosystems is infrastructure and logistics constraints. The majority of micro-enterprises work in areas where transport systems, warehouses, and infrastructure in the markets are not adequate to facilitate an efficient food supply system. Poor road connectivity, poor access to cold storage, and poor food preservation facilities may result in the delay of supply delivery and loss of products especially having perishable agricultural products like fruits, vegetables, dairy products and seafood. Figure 4 indicates infrastructure impediments that impact on producers, vendors, and tourism supply chains. These logistical issues have the capacity of lowering the quality and freshness of food components delivered to vendors, which leads to consistency of the products and customer satisfaction.

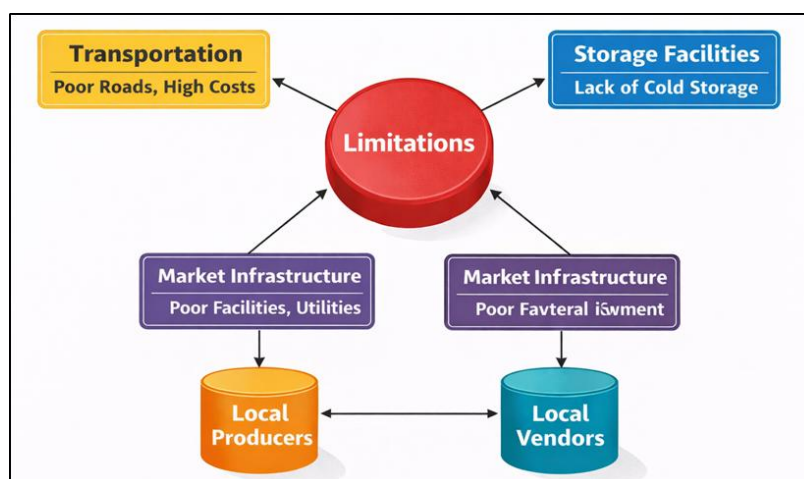


Figure 4: Infrastructure and Logistics Limitations Affecting Local Producers and Vendors

Further, small sellers and manufacturers are often not given room to sell foodstuffs to tourists in a well-managed and clean setting. The informal street vending points might not have some of the basic amenities like clean water, waste disposal and cooking facilities. These restrictions not only prevent the efficiency of the operation but also pose some questions about the food safety and sanitary standards.

Regulatory and Licensing Barriers

Small-scale producers and vendors who participate in food tourism ecosystems may experience major challenges in terms of regulatory and licensing issues. Most micro-enterprises are run informally because of complicated administrative setups/collected charges or ignorance on the regulatory compliance requirements. Granting business licenses, food safety license and local trade license can take long processes and bureaucracy, which can deter small business people to formalize their businesses. Consequently, a good number of vendors will still be in business without any official registration limiting their access to the government support programs, financial aid, and the involvement in the organized tourism events. Though this is necessary to protect the health of the people, food safety rules can also pose a challenge in the implementation of operations by the micro-enterprises who do not have the resources to comply with the stringent binding conditions. Hygienic practices, food preparation facilities and quality control system requirements could demand financial investments that would be quite difficult to afford by small vendors. Moreover, the lack of consistency in enforcing rules in various areas can pose a challenge to the entrepreneurs who might be struggling to survive in the legal world. The presence of licensing barriers can also limit the involvement of vendors in formal tourism space like food festivals, organized food markets and culinary events backed by tourism.

Marketing and Digital Visibility Challenges

Another major challenge facing the local producers and vendors who are aiming to increase their presence in the food tourism markets is marketing and digital visibility. Numerous micro-enterprises are more dependent on the power of word-of-mouth promotion or physical positioning instead of implemented marketing strategy. Although this could be an adequate method of serving the local customers, it can in many cases restrict the capabilities of small vendors to target tourists who use digital platforms to explore food experiences during traveling. Lack of an online presence by websites, social media, or online tourist-focused directories makes the local food businesses less visible to potential visitors. Low digital literacy and access to technological means are another constraint to the use of modern marketing tools among micro-enterprises. Small sellers might lack the ability to operate online shopping, online payment services, as well as social media advertising opportunities. Consequently, they can lose the chance to engage with tourists interested in local food experience by using travel apps, online restaurant reviews, and food directories.

Results and Discussion

As the outcomes of the paper show, food tourism contributes greatly to the development of micro-enterprises in the local producer and vendor cultures. The results of the surveys indicate that street food merchants, small restaurants, home-based food companies registered significant growth in the number of customers and monthly revenues after the growth of tourism activities. In the vendor-producer network analysis, there are good supply relations between the local farmers and food vendors which allows effective sourcing of ingredients and value addition. In addition, the demand support model shows that tourism demand plays a significant role in stabilizing the local food markets.

Table 2: Tourism Activity and Customer Flow in Local Food Micro-Enterprises

Tourism Season	Average Daily Tourists	Average Daily Customers per Vendor	Average Daily Revenue (USD)	Percentage of Tourist Customers (%)
Off-Season	210	38	64	22
Pre-Tourism Season	340	55	92	31
Moderate Tourism Season	520	72	128	41
Festival Season	690	96	178	54

Table 2 shows the correlation between seasonality in tourism and the performance of local food micro-enterprises. The statistics are very clear that the more the activity of tourism, the more customer flow and revenue of food vendors increases. Figure 5 illustrates that seasonal tourist flow impacts patterns of customer demand of vendors. The average number of visitors per day of the off-season is comparably low 210 people, which means that the average number of the visitors per vendor is 38 people, and the daily income is around 64 USD.

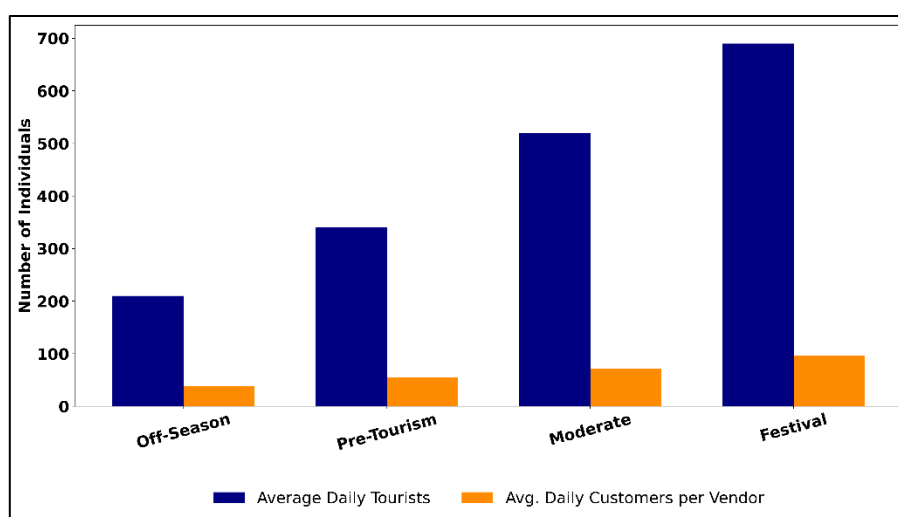


Figure 5: Seasonal Variation in Tourist Footfall and Vendor Customer Load

But as the tourist activity picks up towards the pre-tourism season, the numbers of customers and the amount of revenue collected by the vendors also display some improvement. The greater effect can be noticed during the moderate tourism season and festival season. During the middle season, the Contractors sell to an average of 72 customers each day and the average revenue is 128 USD with a fraction of tourists skyrocketing to 41%. Figure 6 illustrates that the tourism seasons contribute to the growth of the revenue and share of tourists.

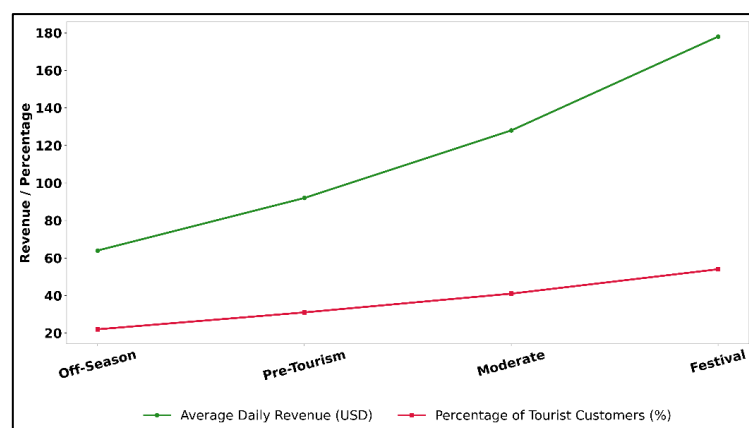


Figure 6: Revenue Growth and Tourist Customer Share across Tourism Seasons

The economic activity observed during the festival period is the top-most, as the number of visitors (690 daily) and the number of customers (96 on average) on average per booth amounted to about 178 USD of revenue per day. These results indicate how much micro-enterprises rely on tourism demand and prove that seasonal tourism events are major drives in the development of local food business.

Table 3: Economic Performance of Food Tourism Micro-Enterprises

Enterprise Type	Average Monthly Income Before Tourism (USD)	Average Monthly Income After Tourism Growth (USD)	Income Increase (%)
Street Food Vendors	420	690	64.3
Small Restaurants	850	1320	55.3
Home-based Food Businesses	310	540	74.2

The economic performance of various food related micro-enterprises as prior to and after expansion of tourism activities is presented in table 3. The statistics clearly indicate that, food tourism has greatly enhanced the level of income of local vendors and small food business. In figure 7, it can be noted that there was tourism-induced growth in monthly earnings among micro-enterprises.

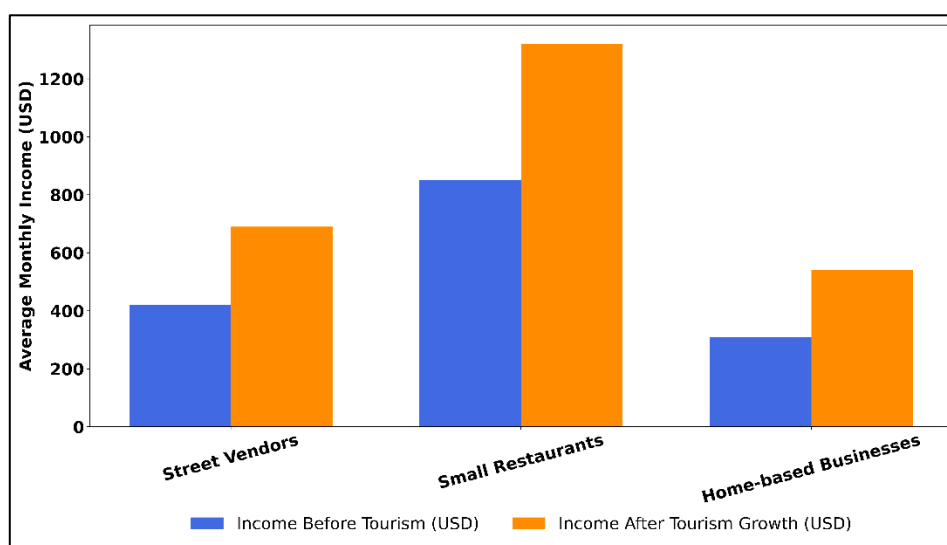


Figure 7: Comparative Analysis of Monthly Income Before and After Tourism Growth

The monthly revenue of the street food vendors before and after the tourism development increased by 64.3% as the monthly income increased twofold, 420 USD to 690 USD. Figure 8 demonstrates the growth of percent income in different local food businesses. This growth shows that street food vendors enjoy a lot of goodwill as a result of tourist demand since most of them offer fast, cheap, and culturally expressive food experiences that tourists love.

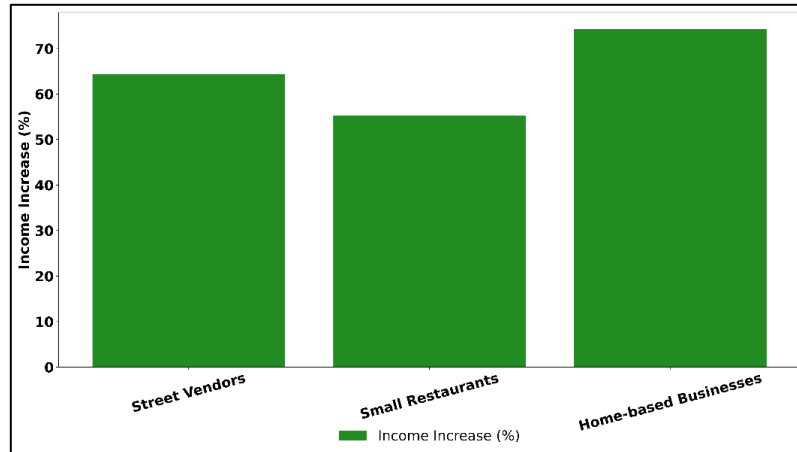


Figure 8: Percentage Income Increase across Local Food-Based Enterprises

Small restaurants show also significant economic growth as the average monthly income of such restaurants grew by 55.3% and now amounts to 1320 USD instead of 850 USD. This implies that the existing food corporations can appeal to a greater number of tourists and grow their operations during the surge in tourism.

Table 4: Vendor–Producer Network and Supply Chain Participation

Indicator	Small Vendors	Medium Vendors	Large Vendors
Average Number of Producers Linked	3	5	8
Average Weekly Ingredient Supply (kg)	86	142	218
Local Ingredient Utilization (%)	62	74	83
Vendor Participation in Food Festivals (%)	28	46	61

Table 4 demonstrates the extent to which various types of vendors are involved into the local producer-vendor supply chain network of food tourism ecosystems. The statistics show that bigger vendors have greater supply chain connections with local manufacturers than small and medium vendors do. Figure 9 demonstrates that the size of the vendor affects the supply connections and amounts of ingredients.

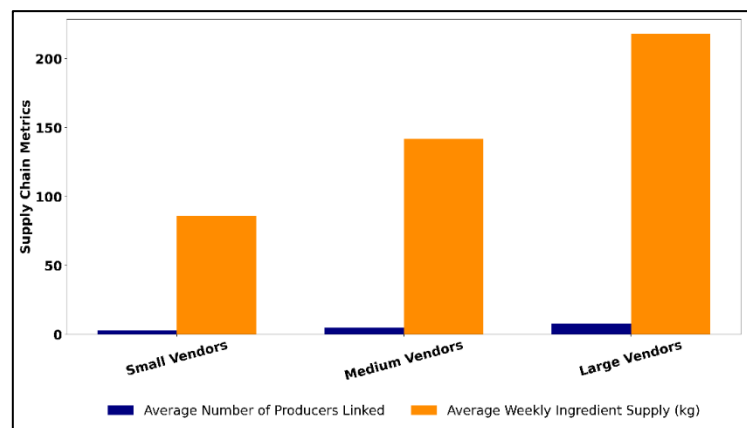


Figure 9: Supply Chain Linkages and Ingredient Volume across Vendor Scales

Big vendors are linked to eight producers on average, medium to around five producers and small to three. This trend indicates that bigger companies have a more diverse supplier system to maintain regional supply and product diversification. Figure 10 reveals that the vendor size is a factor that affects the use of local ingredients and attendance on the festival.

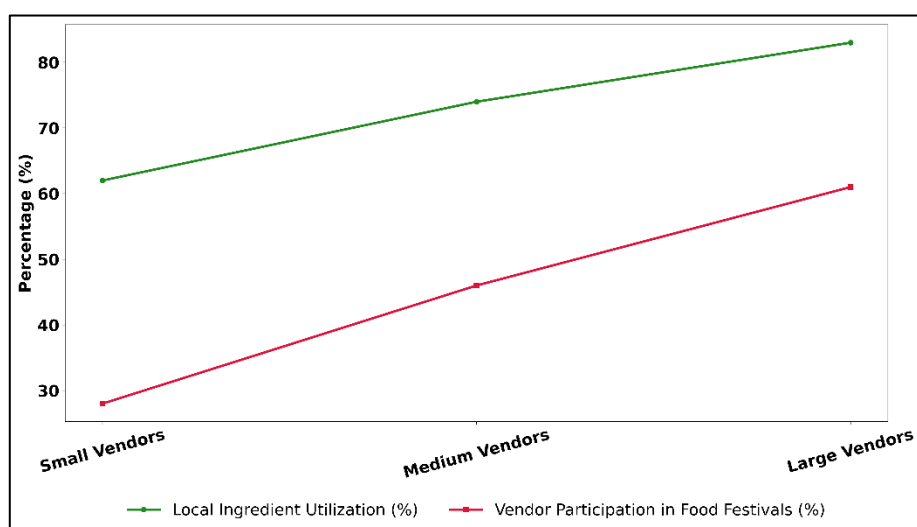


Figure 10: Local Ingredient Utilization and Festival Participation by Vendor Size

It is also the case that the larger the vendor, the larger the number of weekly ingots supplied. Small vendors are given a weekly amount of about 86kg of ingredients as compared to medium and large vendors who are given 142kg and 218kg. This is an indication of greater production and demand of things of bigger establishment by the customers. The use of local ingredients is also positively moving with the small vendors having 62 percent and large vendors having 83 percent with regard to the usage of locally sourced food in tourism markets.

Conclusion

This paper has evaluated how food tourism can encourage development of micro-enterprises due to the interplay between local food producers and food vendors in the regional tourism ecosystem. The results indicate that food tourism is a significant economic force by providing small-scale entrepreneurs a chance, raising the level of local incomes, and enhancing the local supply chains of food based on communities. The increase in the food demand associated with tourism will help the vendors and producers to be more engaged in the local economic activities, thus increasing the stability of the micro-enterprises and facilitating better livelihood security of the local communities. The study also indicates that close connections between agricultural producers and food vendors are factors that lead to the emergence of localized value chains that reinstate local food economies. Local producers can enjoy the new market opportunities that are provided by tourism activities involving supply of fresh food materials and traditional food products. Simultaneously, sellers can offer genuine cuisine experiences which appeal to tourists with cultural and gastronomic tourism. This symbiotic partnership enhances food tourism ecosystem and fosters good economic flow within the area. Although they have these positive results, the research indicates that there are a number of limitations that would influence the effectiveness of food tourism based micro-enterprises.

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