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SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACT ON FARMERS THROUGH ARUNACHAL PINEAPPLE FESTIVAL, BAGRA CIRCLE, WEST SIANG DISTRICT, ARUNACHAL PRADESH, INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Background: Bagra Village is situated under West Siang District of Arunachal Pradesh, India. This village has been emerged as one of the largest Pineapple production in the state, which contributing nearly 9,000 metric tons annually. Even after so much of Pineapple production, the farmers were not able to sale their produces due to various constraints like proper market facilities, lack of marketing awareness, communications and connectivity problems etc.

Methods: The study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to examine the socio-economic impact of the Arunachal Pineapple Festival (APF) on the local community. Conducted in Bagra Circle, Arunachal Pradesh, the location was purposively chosen for its prominence in pineapple cultivation and close association with the festival. A total of 60 respondents were selected through purposive sampling, representing farmers and community members involved directly in the festival

Results: The results revealed that the Arunachal Pineapple Festival (APF) has been contributed socio-economic development of pineapple farmers of Bagra Circle, West Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh. The introduction of APF in Bagra village has mostly benefited to the farmers, as the festival has enhanced income generation, created seasonal employment, promoted business opportunities, encouraged investment in farming, improved infrastructure, strengthened government support, and fostered community unity

KEYWORDS: APF, Bagra, Farmer, Pineapple and Socio-Economic

1. INTRODUCTION

The Arunachal Pineapple Festival (APFB), celebrated every year in the month of January at Bagra Circle, West Siang District in Arunachal Pradesh, is a landmark event that blends the region's

agricultural abundance with cultural heritage. Bagra has emerged as the epicentre of pineapple production in the state, contributing nearly 9,000 metric tons annually from the district alone. Around 265 farmers are directly engaged in pineapple cultivation, while the region's oranges further highlight its rich horticultural potential. Beyond its traditional and cultural essence, the festival has grown into a catalyst for socio-economic development, fostering new avenues of income and opportunity for local communities. The high-altitude terrain of Bagra and its adjoining areas is particularly suited for the cultivation of organic pineapples, renowned for their juicy, flavorful, and distinctive taste. Consequently, pineapple farming has become a vital cash crop, sustaining nearly every household in the circle and reinforcing the community's agrarian identity.

Over time, the Arunachal Pineapple Festival (APFB) has gained both regional and national recognition. The participation of government ministers and officials as distinguished guests lends significant credibility and visibility to the event, while also reinforcing the political will to support local development initiatives. Their involvement enhances farmers' market access and visibility, allowing local produce to reach wider audiences. Beyond showcasing fresh pineapples and processed food products, the festival also provides a platform for artisans, cultural performers, and entrepreneurs to display handicrafts, cultural expressions, and entrepreneurial ventures. This dual emphasis on cultural preservation and economic opportunity positions the festival as an important site for examining the intersection of agriculture, marketing, and community development.

Notably, during APFB 2.0, the state government allocated ₹4 crores for the development of pineapple farms. These funds are currently being utilized for essential infrastructure improvements, including the provision of fencing wires and posts to farmers. Such interventions are expected to protect crops from damage, reduce losses, and enhance overall productivity, thereby strengthening the long-term sustainability of pineapple cultivation in the region.

Furthermore, the festival provides short-term business opportunities for the people of the Bagra area, particularly the youth, by engaging them in multiple income-generating activities. These include setting up food stalls; running tea and refreshment counters; selling local agricultural and horticultural produce, handicrafts, and handloom products; and organizing small trade kiosks. Youth also participate in cultural functions as performers, volunteers, and event organizers, which offer both monetary incentives and exposure. Additionally, opportunities arise from transport services for visitors, photography and videography, temporary decoration and stage management work, renting out sound systems, and providing accommodation facilities for guests. Collectively, these avenues enable local people, especially unemployed youth and women, to earn supplementary income, gain entrepreneurial experience, and contribute to the vibrant economic atmosphere of the festival.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

(Khamung & Program, 2015) highlight a model of sustainable tourism development that is locally owned, developed, and operated across all tourism resources and activities. This approach emphasizes both individual ownership and community organization, ensuring that local stakeholders actively participate in managing and preserving resource capacity. Such participation not only safeguards natural and cultural assets but also fosters economic, social, and resource development for the local community, ultimately leading to the success of sustainable tourism.

(Black, 2016) highlights that festivals enhance social sustainability by fostering local pride, belonging, and place attachment. Rural communities, with their natural resources and cultural heritage, are well-positioned for agritourism development, which can succeed if supported by self-sufficient farming, sustainable agriculture, and cultural preservation.

(Lopes & Hiray, 2024) emphasize that cultural events and festivals significantly contribute to the economic growth of the tourism industry. Such events not only attract visitors but also stimulate spending on accommodation, food, transportation, and shopping, thereby generating revenue for local businesses. In addition, they create employment opportunities and foster investment in tourism infrastructure, reinforcing the long-term sustainability of the tourism sector.

(Nyandoro, 2024) observes that cultural events and festivals play a crucial role in conserving and promoting cultural heritage, traditions, and identity. Beyond their cultural significance, such events often stimulate improvements in local infrastructure and growth in tourism, which, if managed effectively, can generate sustainable long-term economic benefits for host communities.

1. Objectives

- 1.1. To assess the socio-economic impact of the Arunachal Pineapple Festival on local farmers

2. Hypothesis

- 2.1. The present study is guided by the following Null hypotheses:

H₀: There is no significant relationship between celebration of Arunachal Pineapple Festival and Socio-Economic benefits on farmers.

3. Methodology

3.1. The Study Area

The study was conducted in Bagra Circle of West Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh, where the Arunachal Pineapple Festival (APFB) is celebrated annually. The area consists of seven villages that actively participate in pineapple cultivation and festival-related activities. This location was chosen due to its prominence in pineapple production and its cultural association with the APFB

3.2. Research Instrument.

In this study, the scale items measuring the variables were primarily adopted from existing literature on socio-economic impacts, which include income generation, business opportunities, promotion of local products, and infrastructure developments. However, a few modifications were made to the wording of the statements in order to ensure clarity, simplicity, and contextual relevance for the respondents in the study area. To evaluate the socio-economic impact of the Arunachal Pineapple Festival (APFB), ten statements were framed covering the key dimensions of income generation, employment creation, business opportunities, community participation, cultural preservation, and infrastructure development.

3.3. Sample Design and Data Collection

The study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to examine the socio-economic impact of the Arunachal Pineapple Festival (APFB) on the local community. Conducted in Bagra Circle, Arunachal Pradesh, the location was purposively chosen for its prominence in pineapple cultivation and close association with the festival. A total of 60 respondents were selected through purposive sampling, representing farmers and community members involved directly in the festival.

Primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire comprising both closed- and open-ended questions. Closed-ended questions employed a five-point Likert scale (SD–Strongly Disagree to SA–Strongly Agree) to assess perceptions of socioeconomic aspects and their impacts on local farmers, while open-ended questions captured qualitative insights and experiences. Secondary data was sourced from event organizers, government reports, statistical handbooks, published studies, departmental documents, and official records of the festival.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION.

The data analysis and interpretation of the study are presented in two parts. The first part deals with the demographic profile of the respondents, while the second part focuses on the socio-economic impact of the Arunachal Pineapple Festival (APFB) celebrated at Bagra Circle. The analysis is based on primary field data collected from 60 respondents who were directly or indirectly involved in the festival. To assess the level of agreement among respondents, Average Weightage Scores (AWS) were calculated for each statement. Based on these scores, meaningful inferences and conclusions were drawn to understand the overall impact of the festival on the local economy and society.

4.1. Demographic Profile of Respondents

4.1.1. On the basis of gender

Table-1: On the Basis of Gender

Gender	Respondents	In Percentage
Male	54	90
Female	6	10
Total	60	100

Source-Field Study

Table 1 shows the gender distribution of the respondents involved in pineapple farming. The findings showed that 90% of the respondents were male and 10% were female, implying that men were more often identified as the main respondents or heads of farming households in the study area. But this does not mean that pineapple husbandry is only a male affair. Field observations indicated that horticultural farming is predominantly a family-based venture, with husbands and wives jointly involved in different farming activities such as land preparation, planting, intercultural operations, harvesting, post-harvest handling, transportation, and marketing.

6.1.2 On the Basis of Age

Table-2: On the Basis of Gender

Age	Respondents	In Percentage
Below 25 Years	2	3.3
25-35	4	6.7
36-45	12	20.0
46-55	20	33.3
56 Years and Above	22	36.7
Total	60	100

Source-Field Study.

As per the age of the respondents, 70% of them were above 46 years and only 30 were below 46 years,

as stated in Table 2. Here, the mean age distribution indicates that the sample is largely dominated by older individuals, and therefore, it may be assumed that the farmers are primarily shaped by senior community members, reflecting a greater involvement of elder age groups in cultural and socio-economic activities associated with the festival.

5. COMPREHENSIVE DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table-3: Result showing the impact on Socio-Economic condition of farmer through Arunachal Pineapple Festival (APFB)

Sl. No.	Socio-Economic Variable / Statement	Positive Response (A + SA)	Agreement %	Mean Likert Score (Max 5.0)	Result / Interpretation
1	Income Generation	44 / 60	73.33%	3.78	Strongly Positive
2	Short-term Employment Opportunities	41 / 60	68.33%	3.77	Positive
3	Business Opportunities	52 / 60	86.67%	3.90	Highly Positive
4	Promotion of Local Products	48 / 60	80.00%	4.08	Highly Positive
5	Market Access and Linkages	30 / 60	50.00%	3.32	Moderate / Area of Concern
6	Investment in Farming	51 / 60	85.00%	4.15	Highly Positive
7	Promotion of Unity and Cooperation	51 / 60	85.00%	4.35	Highly Positive (High Social Capital)
8	State Government Support	51 / 60	85.00%	4.15	Highly Positive Institutional Trust
9	Infrastructure Developments	51 / 60	88.14%	4.36	Highest Rated Impact

10	Preserving Local Culture & Traditions	38 / 60	63.33%	3.53	Positive
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Source-Field Study

7.1 Interpretation of Key Socio-Economic Variable/ Statement

7.1.1 Economic Transformation & Investment Cycle:

As per the data is concern, the celebration of festival observed to be successfully created a positive financial loop for farmers i.e. 73.33% of farmers experienced immediate income growth, an even higher 85% report an increase in farming reinvestment following the festival. This shows that the APFB does not just offer transitory cash but actively drives capital back into long-term agricultural productivity.

7.1.2 Infrastructure & Structural Growth:

As per the Infrastructure and Structural growth is concerned, there is a massive agreement rate on infrastructure development (88.14%) demonstrates that the festival acts as an anchor event for Bagra Circle. It prompts public or communal upgrades (like roads, stalls, or electrification) that benefit the agrarian community well after the festival ends.

7.1.3 The Supply Chain Bottleneck:

The data pinpoints a clear structural issue like; Market Access and Linkages has a massive neutral/negative response (50%). While the festival is an excellent temporary marketplace, it currently struggles to establish permanent commercial supply networks or long-distance buyer links for the farmers.

7.1.4 Hypothesis Verification:

Since the mean score of all items heavily skews towards Agree (4) and Strongly Agree (5), the null hypothesis is rejected. Hypothesis H1 is validated: The Arunachal Pineapple Festival exerts a significant, multi-dimensional positive socio-economic impact on the farming community of Bagra Circle.

The empirical data collected from Bagra Circle, West Siang District, strongly establishes that the Arunachal Pineapple Festival (APFB) functions as a critical engine for regional rural development. Descriptive statistical analysis reveals a highly positive systemic shift in the socio-economic status of local pineapple farmers, validating the research hypothesis (H1). Out of the total surveyed populace ($N=60$), an overwhelming average of 76.46% of respondents expressed positive agreement (Agree to Strongly Agree) across the ten designated socio-economic parameters, yielding a high overall Likert composite mean score of 3.94 out of 5.00.

7.3 Structural and Economic Dynamics

The primary economic indicators show substantial positive shifts. Income Generation (Statement 1) achieved a 73.33% positive response rate ($\text{Mean} = 3.78$), matching regional assertions that sweet pineapple cultivation acts as an effective catalyst for rural wealth

expansion. This primary income spike feeds directly into a long-term capital loop; Investment in Farming (Statement 6) recorded 85.00% agreement ($\text{Mean} = 4.15$). This implies that earnings generated during the festival are not merely consumed on transitory needs but are systematically reinvested into agricultural inputs, acreage expansion, and farm modernization. The structural impacts are further amplified by macro-level components. Business Opportunities (Statement 3) registered 86.67% agreement ($\text{Mean} = 3.90$), and Infrastructure Developments (Statement 9) emerged as the highest overall rated benefit at 88.14% agreement ($\text{Mean} = 4.36$). Because the APFB has been institutionalized as an annual state calendar event, it serves as a justification for localized public works, including roadside connectivity upgrades and community market stalls in the Pushi–Bagra region. Furthermore, institutional and social capital scored exceptionally high: State Government Support (Statement 8) and Promotion of Unity and Cooperation (Statement 7) both achieved 85.00% agreement with means of (4.15) and (4.35) , respectively, reflecting deep community alignment and high trust in state-led agro-welfare mandates.

7.4 Critical Bottlenecks

Despite these widespread benefits, the data exposes a glaring structural friction point in the supply chain. Market Access and Linkages (Statement 5) recorded the lowest performance across all metrics, with only 50.00% of farmers agreeing that the festival improved long-term market pathways ($\text{Mean} = 3.32$). A significant 26.66% of respondents remained completely neutral, while 26.66% actively disagreed. This clearly demonstrates that while the APFB succeeds as a highly efficient, localized, short-term point-of-sale expo, it has not yet successfully transitioned into a long-term commercial trade channel capable of securing structural off-take agreements or reliable supply networks outside the district.

7.5 Actionable Policy Recommendations

- 7.5.1** Based on the explicit data findings—leveraging the high infrastructure/investment scores and addressing the market linkage gap—the following policy framework is proposed for the West Siang District administration and the Government of Arunachal Pradesh:
- 7.5.2 Establish a Post-Festival B2B Transition Bureau:** To bridge the market linkage deficit (Statement 5: 50% agreement), the Department of Horticulture must establish a permanent "agro-marketing cell." This bureau's sole focus should be converting short-term festival connections into formal, year-round buy-back agreements with large-scale retail chains, processors, and exporters in national and global markets.
- 7.5.3 Accelerate the Processing Infrastructure Pipeline:** Given that 85% of farmers are eager to reinvest in farming but lack stable market access, the state should expedite its plans to revive the non-functional fruit processing unit at Nigmoi near Doji-Jeko village of Bagra Circle and establish the proposed regional mega food park. Localized

processing of pineapples into pulp, juice, and dried snacks will reduce post-harvest losses and eliminate the dependence on immediate fresh-fruit sales.

7.5.4 Institutionalize Micro-Cold Chain Subsidies: Capitalize on the high willingness of farmers to invest in their own operations (Statement 6: 85%) by offering targeted state co-investment matching grants. Providing capital subsidies specifically for refrigerated transport and solar-powered village cold storages within the Bagra Circle will allow farmers to store excess festival produce and regulate supply to match market demand throughout the peak season.

7.5.5 Implement Digital Supply-Chain Integration: Launch a dedicated digital marketplace mobile application ("Bagra Pineapple Portal") tied to the annual festival. This platform should track real-time yield estimates, fruit grading parameters, and organic certifications, allowing verified bulk institutional buyers to negotiate directly with local farmer cooperatives well after the physical festival ends.

8. CONCLUSION

The present study demonstrates that the Arunachal Pineapple Festival (APFB) has been demonstrated to be productive in the socio-economic development of pineapple farmers of Bagra Circle, West Siang District, Arunachal Pradesh. The study confirms the Null Hypothesis H_0 , was rejected, as the festival has enhanced income generation, created seasonal employment, promoted business opportunities, encouraged investment in farming, improved infrastructure, strengthened government support, and fostered community unity. While doing so, the festival has also improved the visibility of locally grown organic pineapples and conserved the unique cultural legacy of the region.

Moreover, pineapple production in the study area is mainly a family-based enterprise in which male and female family members are actively involved in cultivation, harvesting, post-harvest management, and selling, yet during the survey, male household heads were more frequently interviewed. The survey has also identified market access and long-term marketing links as the key barrier that restricts farmers' income beyond the festival season. Thus, increasing processing facilities, cold-chain infrastructure, digital marketing, and permanent market networks are important. The Arunachal Pineapple Festival is a good example of merging agriculture, culture, tourism, and rural development towards sustainable livelihood enhancement and long-term development of the horticultural sector in Arunachal Pradesh.

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