

ENTREPRENEURSHIP FOR RURAL TOURISM GROWTH

NEW PERSPECTIVES AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

PART 1

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Bentham Books

Entrepreneurship for Rural Tourism Growth: New Perspectives and Future Directions

(Part 1)

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Future Directions (*Part 1*)**

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ISBN (Online): 979-8-89881-435-9

ISBN (Print): 979-8-89881-436-6

ISBN (Paperback): 979-8-89881-437-3

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First published in 2026.

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FOREWORD

Rural tourism is a crucial accelerator to sustainable development, cultural conservation, and economic well-being across global communities. In the midst of the complex environment of globalization and urbanization, rural areas face the challenge of entrepreneurship as a key initiative that can enable tourism to transform the region and ensure that local communities have the motivation to share equitably in the growing industry.

Through the unique compilation of two parts titled *Entrepreneurship for Rural Tourism Growth: New Perspectives and Future Directions*, this book brings together prominent scholars, practitioners, and researchers to investigate the complex nature of the association between entrepreneurship and the development of rural tourism. The eleven chapters of Part I lay the groundwork for the principles and theory of indigenous entrepreneurship, community-based tourism models, and sustainable practices as the cornerstone of a successful rural tourism venture.

Part I covers important underlying issues such as indigenous entrepreneurship and community-based tourism development, sustainable waste management, customer preferences in agritourism, gastronomy and sustainable development, and the evaluation of technical efficiency in rural tourism enterprises. The chapters present strong case studies and research findings that shed light on how sustainable development in rural areas can be achieved across various geographical and cultural settings.

In combination with Part II, this full package can equip policymakers, businesspeople, academics, and community leaders with evidence-based information and practical solutions to establish a healthy, inclusive, and sustainable rural tourism ecosystem. The studies and ideas undertaken in this context can be considered necessary assets for supporting the further development of entrepreneurial excellence in rural areas and ensuring that the benefits of tourism are broadly distributed, without sacrificing the environment and cultural integrity.

We are wholeheartedly grateful to our cooperating authors whose skills and effort enabled us to realize this two-part version. Their academic rigor, field experience, and dedication to excellence in rural development have become an indispensable asset to the world of rural tourism.

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PREFACE

We are pleased to introduce Part I of the book, *Entrepreneurship for Rural Tourism Growth: New Perspectives and Future Directions*, an in-depth study that explores the potential of rural tourism through the application of entrepreneurial thinking and community-focused activities.

Part I provides the fundamental basis for understanding entrepreneurship in the context of rural tourism. The eleven chapters of this book address key themes, such as indigenous entrepreneurship and community-based tourism development, through a strong case study of the partnership between Tadom Hill Resorts and the Orang Asli community in Malaysia. This seminal case shows that genuine cultural integration can lead to sustainable tourism growth and development, as well as empower indigenous people.

The book presents major issues in rural tourism entrepreneurship in a systematic way, such as sustainable waste management via new biofertilizer initiatives, the analysis of customer preferences for agritourism, and the contribution of gastronomy to sustainable development. A thorough bibliometric analysis will provide evidence-based insights into the rise and future research opportunities in the field of rural tourism, offering readers a data-driven understanding of its development.

Specific focus is placed on social entrepreneurship and community development models, drawing on successful practices in Asia and Africa. The chapters examine technical efficiency in recreational service operations, how renewable energy solutions can fit within rural tourism facilities, and the models entrepreneurs use to resolve differences in sustainable development across regions and settings.

The book is aimed at scholars, policymakers, businesspersons, and community leaders who want to understand the theoretical framework and practices through which rural populations can be empowered to establish successful and sustainable tourism businesses. Combining intensive research and descriptive case studies gives clarity in conceptual understanding and practical insight into the development of rural tourism.

All these chapters reveal that effective rural tourism entrepreneurship is based on genuine community involvement, the importance of cultural heritage, environmental conservation, and smart innovation. We are of the opinion that Part I is a book that must be read by anyone willing to gain in-depth insight into how entrepreneurship can help turn rural communities into sustainable tourism destinations.

The interdisciplinary theme of this volume addresses the intricate nature of the issues and prospects of rural tourism development. From cultural conservation and environmental sustainability to technical efficiency and financial sustainability, every chapter also contributes to the overall picture of understanding rural tourism entrepreneurship.

The authors of this volume have generously shared their knowledge and research experience, and we owe them our gratitude. There is a serious commitment to improve their knowledge of rural tourism entrepreneurship and sustainable development, which is a great contribution to the field.

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CHAPTER 1

Indigenous Entrepreneurship and Community-focused Rural Tourism: A Case Evident from Tadam Hill Resorts' Development with the Orang Asli Community

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Abstract: Malaysia's rural population is made up of a diverse range of races, including several indigenous subethnic groups such as Orang Asli. Acknowledging the financial and social difficulties faced by rural and indigenous communities, Malaysia's government has implemented a range of strategies and measures. Among these, tourism development has emerged as a critical strategy for accelerating rural socio-economic regeneration. Previous research on rural tourism discovered that its expansion has had a number of positive effects, primarily on local communities, including increased employment opportunities, better cultural understanding, increased financial stability, and improved overall community well-being.

Tadam Hill Resorts, a private resort located in Selangor, exemplifies how rural tourism can connect, inspire, and empower the neighboring Orang Asli communities. The resort's partnership with the Orang Asli community serves as a model for incorporating indigenous entrepreneurship into tourism development efforts. The inclusion of the local Orang Asli community in the resort's construction process, selling handicrafts, souvenirs, and forest resources, directly contributed to creating new job opportunities for the neighboring community. Furthermore, Tadam Hill Resorts' development has also boosted skill development and cultural preservation within the community.

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Despite these efforts, Tadam Hill Resorts faces challenges in ensuring the long-term sustainability of its practices, particularly in aligning tourism development with the socio-economic needs of the local Orang Asli community and environmental conservation. These challenges stem from the delicate balance between tourism development and environmental conservation. Conversely, some argue that tourism can foster economic growth and community development if managed sustainably. This perspective emphasizes the potential for tourism to enhance local livelihoods while promoting environmental and cultural conservation. Therefore, by integrating sustainable practices and engaging with the local community, the resort aims to create a positive and lasting impact on both the environment and the local economy.

However, there is limited research that has specifically investigated the effects of Tadam Hill Resorts' development on the sustainability and socio-economic status of the neighboring Orang Asli community. Hence, this chapter aims to examine Tadam Hill Resorts through the lens of the 3I model framework (Information, Inclusion, and Identification) to explore how indigenous entrepreneurship and community-focused tourism can promote rural development. By emphasizing active participation among local communities, the study seeks to highlight the importance of aligning operations with community needs to achieve environmental, social, and economic sustainability. This study is expected to address the importance of active participation among local communities, and thereby, the resort can align its operations with community needs, promoting environmental, social, and economic sustainability.

Keywords: Community entrepreneurship, Indigenous development, Local empowerment, Rural tourism, Socio-economic.

INTRODUCTION

Rural tourism focuses on travel and leisure activities in rural areas, which offer a unique experience in these less urbanized regions (Kanagawa & Nakata, 2008). The tourist will be able to engage with local traditions, landscapes, and a wealth of cultural, natural, and agricultural attractions (Smith *et al.*, 2007). This type of tourism focuses on a small scale, placing importance on sustainability, community-driven experiences, and cultural preservation, which is a more relaxed and immersive travel experience (Rosalina *et al.*, 2021). The communities will have an opportunity to showcase their natural resources and heritage while promoting economic development in their rural areas. Furthermore, this rural tourism will generate income and employment, which will often address rural poverty and depopulation (Lv *et al.*, 2021).

Community-based entrepreneurship plays an essential role in promoting sustainable development in semi-urban and rural areas (Morley, 2014). Community-based entrepreneurs who initiate and manage business ventures aimed at directly benefiting and serving the needs of their local communities (Parwez, 2017). These entrepreneurs focus on building sustainable businesses that

promote environmental development, and economic and social growth in their communities (Murphy *et al.*, 2020). They are often aligning their practices that prioritize nature, drawing on traditional ecological knowledge. Moreover, they will typically adopt practices that prioritize biodiversity, conservation, and sustainable resources, which align with global sustainability goals.

The Orang Asli, the indigenous people of Malaysia, have unique cultural and traditional practices that have been inherited through their generations. These communities have traditionally inhabited the mountains, forests, and rural areas of the peninsula. They rely on forest resources for sustenance and are deeply connected to the natural environment for their living. Tadam Hill Resort, which is located near the Orang Ali community in the state of Selangor, Malaysia, has become well-known as an ecotourism destination and a distinctive example of sustainable rural tourism development. It has a stunning natural landscape, such as caves, limestone hills, and crystal-clear water sources. The resort offers water sports, cultural experiences, nature walks, and outdoor activities which draw an increasing number of tourists from domestic and international. The resort's breathtaking landscapes and immersive experience of traditional Orang Asli culture provide a unique setting of Indigenous heritage. However, what truly distinguishes Tadam Hills Resorts is that it has strong collaboration with the local Orang Asli community, particularly the Temuan tribe, one of Malaysia's indigenous groups.

The Orang Asli community has been involved in the development of this resort by utilizing their skills in craft-making to construct the resort from forest resources. As a result, such an effort has created employment opportunities for the Orang Asli community. Few studies have stated that when tourism development occurs in an area and benefits the indigenous people, it creates employment opportunities (Anderson *et al.*, 2005). These communities are hired as hospitality staff, guides, taking care of the water sports, and artisans, which allows them to earn and share their culture with the guests. This resort also provided training programs to enhance their skills in hospitality and tourism and improve their communication skills to support long-term economic growth and self-reliance. Their culture and traditions are central to the resort's identity, whereby the tourists are introduced to their way of life through cultural performances, storytelling, traditional cooking demonstrations, and handicraft workshops. These activities not only enrich the visitor experience but also help preserve and promote the unique heritage of the Orang Asli community. The Orang Asli actively participates in the decision-making process for the resort's operations and development, extending the collaboration beyond mere employment. This inclusive approach ensures that the community's voice is heard, and their values and interests are respected (Dong *et al.*, 2022). The resort's building is significantly inspired by Orang Asli design and

CHAPTER 2

Leveraging Entrepreneurship for Rural Tourism Growth and Sustainable Solid Waste Management through Biofertilizers in Rural Destinations

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Abstract: Tourism is a vital part of India's economy, providing revenue, employment opportunities, and cultural exchange. The Indian government has made concerted efforts to grow and improve the country's tourism industry through various initiatives. The development of rural tourism offers a promising path for economic growth in underserved areas, yet it often brings challenges with waste management, environmental sustainability, and resource utilization. This chapter explores how entrepreneurship can be harnessed to drive rural tourism growth while tackling the pressing issue of sustainable solid waste management. By emphasizing biofertilizers derived from organic waste, the study proposes an innovative approach to managing solid waste in rural destinations and enhancing the sustainability of both tourism and agricultural practices. Tourism in rural areas frequently leads to increased waste production, especially organic waste. If left unattended, this can damage the local environment and impede tourism potential. However, this same organic waste can be transformed into valuable biofertilizers through composting and bioconversion, offering a sustainable solution for waste management. Biofertilizers, rich in nutrients and microorganisms, can enhance soil fertility, boost agricultural productivity, and reduce reliance on chemical fertilizers, thereby promoting environmentally friendly farming practices. This chapter explores the significant potential of combining entrepreneurship with sustainable waste management practices, particularly through the use of biofertilizers, to drive rural tourism growth. By embracing this approach, rural destinations can not only enhance their tourism offerings but also contribute to environmental sustainability, create new job opportunities, and ensure the long-term prosperity of local communities. The integration of biofertilizers into waste management and tourism strategies offers a promising pathway for achieving a harmonious balance between economic growth, environmental protection, and community development in rural areas.

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Keywords: Biofertilizers, Circular economy, Economic growth, Entrepreneurship, Rural tourism, Rural destinations, Sustainable waste management.

INTRODUCTION

Rural tourism has blossomed into a promising avenue for economic growth, offering rural communities meaningful opportunities to diversify their economies, create jobs, and safeguard their cultural and natural heritage. In India and other developing nations, rural areas have increasingly become sought-after destinations for both domestic and international tourists seeking authentic experiences, nature-based adventures, and cultural immersion. Yet, the thriving rural tourism industry often brings with it significant challenges, most notably in the form of waste management, environmental degradation, and resource utilization.

India has seen a massive surge in MSW output over the past few decades. This is mostly because of the nation's economic and population expansion. Between 2001 and 2011, the population of India grew by around 181 million, or 17.64%, greater than it was in 2001. In India, managing solid waste is one of the most important environmental problems. In India, the daily amount of MSW created per person varies from approximately 120 grams in small towns to 530 grams in large towns (Kumar & Henock, 2015). One of the biggest issues facing state governments in rural areas is solid waste management. The municipality is in charge of gathering and disposing of this solid trash. The science of managing the creation, storage, collection, transportation, processing, and disposal of solid waste while utilizing the best principles and techniques in public health, economics, engineering, and other related fields; environmental circumstances; aesthetics, and conservation (Kumar & Henock, 2015; Yong *et al.*, 2021; Asad & Ahmed, 2024; Aghdashloo *et al.*, 2019). Municipalities lack the resources necessary to properly manage solid waste because of their low revenue levels. Because of leachate generation, poorly maintained landfill sites are more likely to contaminate groundwater (Singh, 2013; Ajaweed *et al.*, 2022). So, as far as looking into the matter, solid waste can be managed by converting it into biofertilizers, and its utilization will be done. Applying biofertilizers through seed or soil results in the application of live or dormant cells of effective strains of microorganisms that facilitate crop plant nutrient uptake through interactions in the rhizosphere. They quicken several soil microbiological activities that increase the amount of nutrients available in a form that plants can readily absorb (Yong *et al.*, 2021; Sharma *et al.*, 2023; Devi & Sumathy, 2018).

This chapter explores how rural destinations can achieve lasting economic, environmental, and social gains by blending entrepreneurship, sustainable waste

management, and biofertilizer production. The goal is to foster a harmonious balance between tourism growth and sustainability, benefiting the local community in meaningful ways.

Solid Waste

Because of rising living standards and population density, solid waste has a complex composition and a much larger volume. As a result, people are realizing how important effective solid waste management is. Today, non-liquid waste products from kitchen, farming, fruit, and mining operations are referred to as “solid waste” in international contexts. Numerous types of garbage are included in solid waste, such as fruit, culinary, and agricultural waste, as well as vegetable waste (Asad & Ahmed, 2024; Singh, 2013; Lim & Matu, 2015; Asadu *et al.*, 2019). Combustible and non-combustible garbage are both considered solid waste. It is important to handle the disposal of solid waste effectively. They put human health at risk and create unsanitary circumstances.

Communities all around the world face a serious problem with solid waste management, especially in rural locations where infrastructure and resources may be scarce. Sustainably managed areas offer opportunities for sustainable practices in addition to contributing to environmental health and cleanliness (Kumar & Henock, 2015; Aghdashloo *et al.*, 2019; Sharma *et al.*, 2023; Ngumah *et al.*, 2013). The application of biofertilizers made from organic waste is one method that shows promise. This chapter examines solid waste management techniques for rural communities as well as the advantages of turning garbage into beneficial biofertilizers (Aghdashloo *et al.*, 2019; Singh, 2013; Bhat *et al.*, 2018).

Biofertilizers

A product that is biodegradable, not chemically synthesized, and has fertilizing properties is referred to as “biofertilizer.” Nevertheless, biofertilizers are defined as fertilizers that contain live organisms; these include fungi and bacteria that fix nitrogen and phosphate (Ngumah *et al.*, 2013; Srivastava *et al.*, 2024; Paliya *et al.*, 2019).

Entrepreneurship in Rural Destinations

Entrepreneurship in rural destinations plays a vital role in driving local economic development, improving livelihoods, and fostering sustainability. Traditionally, rural areas have been dependent on agriculture, with limited access to markets, infrastructure, and services. However, as global trends shift towards more diversified economies, rural destinations are increasingly embracing entrepren-

CHAPTER 3

Identifying the Factors Influencing Customers' Preferences in Agritourism

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Abstract: This research explores the key factors shaping customer preferences in agritourism and evaluates their attitude by considering customer experience, perceived value, satisfaction, and motivation as influencing elements. Using the well-prepared self-administered questionnaires, data from 400 customers were collected from selected ten farm resorts located in the Coimbatore District of Tamil Nadu and used for testing the hypotheses. By employing the Structural Equation Modeling (SEM), factors influencing agritourism under the customer experience were a traditional image, excitement, hospitality, and learning experience. The results show that satisfaction was the highest influencing factor on customer attitude, followed by motivation and hospitality. This study explores customer preferences in agritourism and supports agritourism providers in developing strategies to attract and enhance visitor experiences.

Keywords: Agritourism, Customer experience, Customer motivation, Customer satisfaction, Destination loyalty, Experience quality, Farm resorts, Hospitality, Learning experience, Market awareness, Perceived value, Rural development, Service quality, Structural equation modeling, Tourism consumption, Traditional image.

INTRODUCTION

The global agritourism market is expected to reach a value of \$62.98 billion by 2027, growing at a CAGR of 13.4% from 2020 to 2027, after being valued at \$42.46 billion in 2019 (Anil & Roshan, 2021). This market encompasses a variety of offerings, including food and beverage services, events and festivals, educa-

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tional and recreational tours, nature observation, U-pick (harvest) opportunities, hunting, fishing, and product sales (Tew & Barbieri, 2012). Agritourism also encompasses both direct participation in farming activities, such as fruit picking, and indirect involvement, such as visiting farmers' markets or attending agricultural-based events like weddings (Barbieri, 2013). Additionally, it includes farm-based accommodation and food services.

Agritourism has seen significant growth in foreign countries due to various factors, with the primary driver being economic considerations (Montefrio & Sin, 2019). Many farmers view it as a low-risk and low-investment opportunity, as they can utilize their prevailing resources (Tew & Barbieri, 2012). Agritourism can boost rural economies through the multiplier effect and provide benefits to a variety of local businesses (Contini *et al.*, 2009). In developed countries, farmers have increasingly entered the tourism industry as a way to compensate for significant losses in agricultural profits (Deville *et al.*, 2016).

Agritourism has been heavily promoted in both Italy and America as a significant source of income and employment, particularly in rural areas where agriculture has declined (Kline *et al.*, 2016). When developed properly, it has the potential for higher profit margins for agricultural products and services over the long term, particularly for small, struggling farms, and may encourage entrepreneurship (Naidoo & Sharpley, 2016).

Many agritourism enterprises are small, family-run businesses that often lack market awareness and business management expertise. To design attractive offerings that align with customer expectations, it is crucial to gain in-depth insights into consumer preferences and behavior (Hurst & Niehm, 2012). Understanding what customers want is fundamental to maintaining a competitive edge and ensuring business success (Kenebayena, 2014). Venkatraman *et al.*, (2012) emphasize that reliable data on customer preferences plays a key role in shaping business decisions. Similarly, Hurst *et al.*, (2009) emphasize the need to consider the expectations of rural tourism visitors, noting that perceptions of agritourism can vary significantly between local and non-local customers.

Tailored tourist services are essential in meeting the varied needs of visitors, especially in agritourism, which focuses on delivering unique experiences. Shaw *et al.*, (2011) emphasize the increasing importance of customer experience in the tourism sector. They also observe a rising trend of greater engagement between tourists and service providers, along with a growing preference among visitors to actively contribute to shaping their experiences.

Individuals operating agritourism businesses in rural areas need to have a comprehensive understanding of customer preferences to be able to improve their tourist offerings, enhance the customer experience, and increase customer

satisfaction. Considering unique differences and similarities in customer preferences while developing agritourism products and refining the agri-experience can help foster long-term commercial and economic success.

This study is motivated by the lack of research on customers' preferences in agritourism and the importance of attitude in affecting customers' pre- and post-behavior towards consuming tourism attractions (Srikatanyoo & Campiranon, 2010). The study aims to (1) investigate the characteristics of the customer experience in agritourism and (2) evaluate their choice based on four crucial attitude determinants: Motivation, satisfaction, perceived value, and experience. The findings are expected to add to our understanding of how customer experiences in agritourism affect post-visit behavior and provide guidance for agritourism managers and farmers in creating and expanding agritourism destinations through appropriate strategies. The conceptual framework and hypotheses will be discussed in the following section.

LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Customer Attitude in Agritourism

The term “preference” is often used interchangeably with “attitude” (Philips *et al.*, 2002), and the preference for a location or type of vacation is frequently evaluated by considering either the overall appearance or an individual's attitude towards it. Therefore, the attitude was intentionally utilized as a predictor of choice to determine the factors that influence agritourism.

According to the ABC model, attitude is comprised of an affective component (what the customer feels about an object), a cognitive component (what the customer thinks about an object), and a behavioral component (purchase of the object). The attitudes towards a tourism service were measured by their willingness to return and recommend the attraction in the future, which is a common metric used in tourism studies (Suhartanto *et al.*, 2018).

Customer Experience in Agritourism

Schmit (1999) argued that experiences are personal and a result of a reaction to stimuli or images, often arising from active engagement in a real or virtual event. In agritourism, customers have both psychological and social responses to attractions or performances. This suggests that a tourist's experience encompasses more than just the attraction itself, including pre-visit and post-visit interactions (Babakaev *et al.*, 2019). Customer experiences vary across different segments, as the factors shaping their visits and motivations can differ significantly (Shah *et al.*, 2020). Srikatanyoo & Campiranon (2010) examined the perspectives of guests

CHAPTER 4

Sustainable Development and Its Contribution to Gastronomy

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Abstract: Food is one of the reasons why people travel. Food is an important aspect of tourism. Sustainable restaurants have emerged as a result of the need to cater to the increasing number of consumers who are aware of the need to reduce their environmental impact and who desire nutritious, sustainable Food. Eco-gastronomy is the practice of ethical cooking and dining, in which selecting, preparing, and serving Food while keeping an eye on the environment are all crucial factors. Food has cultural importance that draws tourists; therefore, many establishments have made it a part of their main menu. This study provides an explanation of gastronomy, tourism, and eco-gastronomy. It also examines important standards, environmentally friendly and sustainable hospitality practices, and the role and significance of sustainability. A survey was created using the body of existing research and disseminated through the hospitality industry's social media platforms. After receiving 159 responses, SPSS was used for analysis.

Keywords: Gastronomy, Sustainable tourism, Eco-gastronomy, Culture, Tourism, Promotion, Motivation.

INTRODUCTION

One of the fastest-growing economic sectors in the world, tourism has expanded and become more diverse during the last few decades. According to Ahlawat *et al.*, (2023), tourism is becoming a significant industry in international trade and a major source of income for many developing countries. Employment, the battle against poverty, gender equality, and the preservation and enhancement of our natural and cultural heritage are all impacted by tourism (World Tourism Organization, 2013). While authenticity and slow food have received attention

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(Scarpato and Daniele, 2003; Sims, 2009; Fusté-Forné and Jamal, 2020), food festivals have been the main focus of most research on food tourism and sustainability (Crespi-Vallbona *et al.*, 2019; Tsai and Wang, 2017).

The United Nations created the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Growth in 2015 with the intention of achieving balanced and integrated growth in the economy, society, and environment. The strategy had 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) out of a total of 169 goals (UNI, 2023). Global growth is guided by these goals, which tackle problems including income inequality, changes in the climate, loss of biodiversity, and peace.

The sustainable expansion of the food tourism sector depends on the management of Food, which is a cultural resource (Ellis *et al.*, 2018). This can only be accomplished with a more interpretive sociocultural perspective on Food (Everett, 2019). Gastronomy, according to the renowned French epicurean Jean Anthelme Brillat-Savarin, is the study of human sustenance, or “all that relates to man as a feeding animal.” Resources and energy are needed for both moving items through the various food value chain phases and storage. The consumer sector's environmental impact, particularly in terms of greenhouse gas emissions, is mostly attributable to production and distribution activities. In order to achieve sustainability goals, including the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations, reducing greenhouse gas emissions throughout the food supply chain is consequently essential. With their responsibility for product selection, encouraging creativity, and adopting ethical methods of food procurement and preparation, chefs hold the key to a sustainable future in the culinary industry.

Objective

- Researching the notion and application of sustainable gastronomy.

Literature Review

• Gastronomy Tourism and Sustainable Development

One way to define gastronomy could be “reflective cooking and eating.” Owing to its many benefits, tourism is especially effective as a development tool. It encourages the productive potential of trade as well as the generation of jobs related to the tourism value chain. It thrives especially on resources in which developing countries have a comparative advantage, like the environment, a pleasant climate, a rich cultural heritage, and a large human resource base. Local Food in tourism contributes to shorter travel distances, which has a positive impact on the environment (Bianchi, 2017). Bianchi addresses this from the perspective of environmental sustainability. In this context, Slow Food—which is

predicated on secure, slow, and ecologically sound food choices and processes—is frequently associated with environmental sustainability (Fusté-Forné and Jamal, 2020). It could be seen as a representation of and a window into another culture. In addition to maintaining and conserving cultural history and customs, it can increase citizens' pride and involvement (Everetta and Aitchison, 2008).

Fig. (1) shows The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) are a set of 17 interconnected global goals established by the United Nations (UN) in 2015 as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. They are a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet, and ensure prosperity and peace for all by the year 2030. Each goal has specific targets and indicators (169 targets in total) that are used to measure progress. They recognize that ending poverty and other deprivations must go hand-in-hand with strategies that improve health and education, reduce inequality, and spur economic growth – all while tackling climate change and working to preserve our oceans and forests. The SDGs apply to all countries, not just developing nations. Progress is monitored through annual reports and voluntary national reviews (VNRs).



Fig. (1). Sustainable development goals (Source: <https://india.un.org/en/sdgs>).

- Food and wine are about people and places; it's about leveraging technology to uphold and foster authenticity in regional communities, improve the patron experience, and convey a narrative about the tangible and intangible (Anonymous, 2018). By participating in “gastronomy tourism,” visitors can fully experience a place's culinary culture and sample the Food that is unique to that area due to the ingredients, climate, history, customs, and traditions of that area. It may provide the following benefits (UNWTO, 2018).
- The ability to differentiate and position different locations is made possible by gastronomy tourism.
- It might provide guests with fresh perspectives and moral lessons.

CHAPTER 5

Unlocking the Potential of Rural Tourism, Entrepreneurial Challenges and Opportunities: A Bibliometric Study

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Abstract: Rural tourism entrepreneurship refers to any organization and its operation of tourism-related businesses in rural locations, with the goal of promoting local culture, heritage, traditions, and natural landscapes. This type of entrepreneurship protects and emphasizes the distinctive qualities of rural communities while simultaneously promoting their economic development. This research paper explores the multifaceted impact of rural tourism entrepreneurship, examining both the opportunities it presents and the obstacles it faces. Drawing on case studies and empirical evidence from various rural tourism destinations, the paper highlights the potential of rural tourism to revitalize the local economy, create jobs, and foster community resilience (Sharpley, 2002). The report also examines the unique challenges faced by entrepreneurs in the rural tourist industry, such as the domination of mass tourism operators, low demand, high development costs, and a lack of skill. In order to encourage the expansion of inclusive and sustainable rural tourist businesses and ultimately advance the larger objectives of rural development and community well-being, the paper ends by outlining tactics and legislative initiatives.

Keywords: Tourism entrepreneurship, Rural entrepreneurship, Rural communities, Rural tourism, Bibliometric analysis.

INTRODUCTION

One of the main sectors that can raise and preserve the quality of life in rural areas is tourism. The tourism sector is crucial to entrepreneurship. Tourism entrepreneurship is the process of establishing and running a respectable business in the travel and tourism industry (Carree and Verheul, 2012). Lately, the tourism industry has grown as one of the most significant economic sectors, playing a critical role in business development. According to the World Travel and Tourism

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Council (WTTC), tourism was marked as the second-largest industry in 2005, contributing over 3.8% to the worldwide GDP (Rosli and Othman, 2011).

Effective rural tourist management can benefit from the community, economy, and the course of regional enlargement (Ayhan, Taşlı, Özkök, and Tatli, 2020). The weakening in agriculture and population outmigration in recent years has increased curiosity in rural tourism (Cunha, 2020). Hence, one of the main objectives of the rural development strategy should be for the government to support entrepreneurial activity (Kuratko, 2015).

Rural tourism has become a feasible strategy for sustainable development and economic diversification in many regions of the world. As traditional agricultural and industrial activities decline, rural communities have increasingly turned to tourism as a source of generating employment, income, and preserving cultural legacy (Ariyani, 2023). The development of rural tourism business, however, is not without its challenges.

Entrepreneurship is crucial for the region's economic growth (Stathopoulou, 2004; Sá, 2019) stated that social values that foster community development have a beneficial association with entrepreneurship. Therefore, as entrepreneurship can have positive effects on the economy, environment, and society, such as the creation of jobs and an improvement in quality of life, it is intimately linked to the rise of rural tourism.

The aim of this paper is to employ a bibliometric analysis of recent Scopus literature on rural tourism in order to identify scientific journals, papers, and authors who have significantly modeled scientific thought in the field over the last 15 years. Additionally, it will highlight recent trends that the academic community has expressed and is keeping an eye on in terms of subject, geographic location, and research methodology.

Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the current state of research on rural tourism and entrepreneurship.
2. To highlight the opportunities available for entrepreneurs in rural tourism.
3. To provide understandings and recommendations for policymakers, practitioners, and researchers to support and enhance entrepreneurial activities in rural tourism.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Establishing and running tourism-related businesses in rural areas with the intention of supporting regional customs, heritage, culture, and natural landscapes is known as rural tourism entrepreneurship. This type of entrepreneurship not only

contributes to the growth of the economic development of rural communities but also conserves and highlights their unique characteristics and features. Rural tourism entrepreneurship has become apparent as a noteworthy economic driver in many regions, providing opportunities for individuals and communities to leverage their unique cultural, natural, and agricultural assets to create innovative tourism experiences (Dwiesty Dyah Utami, 2023). The success of Rural economies needs combining the growth of the agricultural sector with the creation of infrastructure, human capital, and social capital (Harpa, 2017).

Firstly, diversifying local economies and extending the economic benefits of tourism beyond conventional coastal resort locations are the two main advantages of rural tourist entrepreneurship (Sharpley, 2002). This is especially crucial in areas dealing with issues like rural unemployment and population decline, as rural tourism has the potential to create jobs and draw in new investors (Das, 2019). Rural tourism entrepreneurs can also play an imperative role in conserving the natural environment and local cultural heritage, contributing to sustainable expansion in these areas (Ariyani, 2023).

The creation and administration of tourism-related enterprises in remote or rural areas that provide tourists with distinctive experiences and chances to interact with local customs, culture, and natural environments is known as rural tourism entrepreneurship. It includes the application of rural resources, such as landscapes, heritage, and community assets, to create tourism products and services that supply to the growing demand for immersive, authentic, and sustainable travel experiences (Das, 2019; Sharif, 2014). The development of rural tourism entrepreneurship has been driven by several factors, including the shift towards more eco-friendly and experiential forms of tourism. There is a need to address the issues of unemployment and rural-urban migration, as well as the desire to diversify rural economies beyond conventional agricultural or industrial sectors (Panzer-Krause, 2022).

Rural tourism entrepreneurship includes a broad range of activities, such as the operation of small-scale accommodations (e.g., Bed and Breakfasts, agritourism lodges), outdoor recreational experiences (e.g., hiking, biking, horseback riding), the development of artisanal products and local cuisine, and the organization of cultural events and festivals (Sharif, 2014). The main fundamentals of rural tourism entrepreneurship include leveraging local resources, developing community engagement, promoting sustainable practices, and delivering unique and memorable experiences to visitors or customers.

CHAPTER 6

Social Entrepreneurship and Community Development in Rural Tourism: Lessons from Community-driven Models in Xidi Ancient Village, Anhui Province, China

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Abstract: Social entrepreneurship is pivotal in fostering sustainable community development, especially in rural tourism settings where unique opportunities and challenges converge. Rural areas often grapple with unemployment, cultural erosion, and environmental degradation issues. These challenges hinder sustainable development and limit economic opportunities for local communities. Social entrepreneurship provides a transformative pathway by empowering communities to design and manage tourism activities while ensuring social, economic, and environmental sustainability. This chapter examines the influence of social entrepreneurship on rural tourism development, with a focus on Xidi Ancient Village, a UNESCO World Heritage Site in Anhui Province, China. As a renowned cultural landmark, Xidi demonstrates how community-driven models can preserve cultural heritage, promote economic empowerment, and uphold environmental stewardship. Key practices identified include participatory decision-making, equitable benefit-sharing, and capacity building, which collectively enhance the sustainability of rural tourism. The chapter also highlights persistent barriers such as limited resources, regulatory constraints, and market access challenges, alongside innovative strategies like digital marketing, niche tourism development, and public-private partnerships that bolster the resilience and scalability of rural social enterprises. By analyzing the success and lessons of Xidi Ancient Village, this chapter underscores the potential for social entrepreneurship to create inclusive and sustainable rural tourism models that can inspire similar initiatives globally.

Keywords: Community development, Participatory models, Rural tourism, Social entrepreneurship, Sustainability.

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INTRODUCTION

Social Entrepreneurship in Rural Tourism

Social entrepreneurship has emerged as a transformative force in addressing the complex challenges faced by rural communities worldwide (Abdildinova, 2024). By integrating economic innovation with social and environmental objectives, social entrepreneurship provides a sustainable framework that empowers communities to leverage their cultural and natural assets while tackling critical issues such as unemployment, resource depletion, and cultural erosion (Muhamad and Kusuma, 2024a; Teng-Calleja *et al.*, 2023). Unlike traditional development approaches that often rely on external aid, social entrepreneurship fosters long-term self-sufficiency by equipping local populations with the tools and resources necessary to drive their progress (Imanuella, Idris, and Kamaruddin, 2024).

In the context of rural tourism, social entrepreneurship plays a pivotal role in fostering both inclusivity and sustainability by promoting community-driven economic models (Priya and Mohanasundari, 2024). Rather than imposing top-down solutions, successful social enterprises emphasize participatory decision-making, equitable benefit-sharing, and capacity-building, key strategies that enhance local livelihoods while preserving cultural heritage (Abdildinova, 2024; Sulaiman *et al.*, 2024). This approach not only diversifies rural economies and generates employment but also strengthens community cohesion by ensuring that tourism benefits are distributed fairly among local stakeholders. However, while these models demonstrate significant potential, their scalability and long-term viability remain contingent on overcoming structural barriers such as financial constraints, regulatory challenges, and skill gaps (Kulish, 2022).

Xidi Ancient Village in Anhui Province, China, provides a compelling case study of how social entrepreneurship can drive sustainable rural tourism development Fig. (1). As a UNESCO World Heritage Site, Xidi represents a successful balance between cultural preservation, economic empowerment, and environmental stewardship (Zhang *et al.*, 2022). Through locally led tourism initiatives, Xidi has transformed its historical heritage into an economic asset, creating employment opportunities while ensuring the conservation of its architectural and cultural identity. However, despite its success, Xidi's model is not without challenges and issues such as maintaining cultural authenticity in the face of commercialization and ensuring long-term financial sustainability, which require continuous adaptation and innovation (Ferrara *et al.*, 2023).

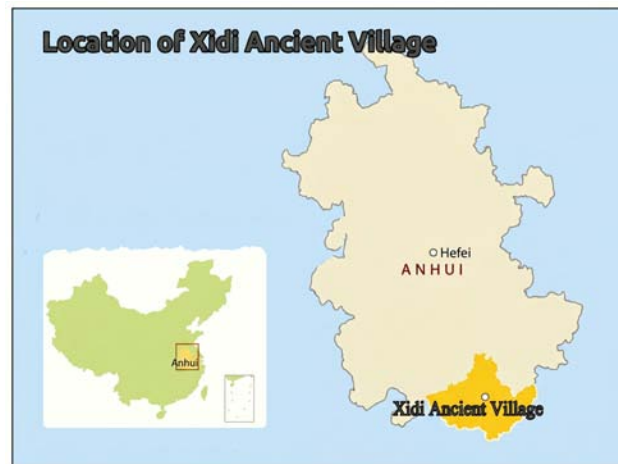


Fig. (1). Map of the location of xidi ancient village in China. (Source: China Discovery, 2025)

By examining the intersection of social entrepreneurship and rural tourism through the lens of Xidi Ancient Village, this chapter critically analyzes both the opportunities and limitations of community-driven tourism models. It investigates the innovative strategies that have contributed to Xidi's success, the persistent barriers that threaten its sustainability, and the broader lessons that can inform similar initiatives worldwide. In doing so, this chapter contributes to the discourse on sustainable tourism and inclusive rural development, emphasizing the need for adaptable, context-specific approaches that balance economic growth with cultural and environmental preservation.

DEVELOPMENT OF SOCIAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP IN RURAL TOURISM

The origins of social entrepreneurship can be traced back to philanthropic activities aimed at addressing social problems. Initially, these efforts were predominantly charity-driven, focusing on immediate relief rather than long-term sustainability or entrepreneurial innovation (Kulish, 2022). However, by the late 20th century, scholars such as Dees (1998) emphasized the need to integrate entrepreneurial principles with social objectives, laying the foundation for modern social entrepreneurship. This shift marked the beginning of a transition from donor-dependent models to self-sustaining social enterprises, which introduced market-based solutions to social challenges (Betancourt *et al.*, 2021). As we can see from Table 1, it provides a clear chronological overview of the development of theoretical foundations in social entrepreneurship within the rural tourism context.

CHAPTER 7

Evaluating Technical Efficiency and Entrepreneurial Approaches in Recreational Service Activities of Rural Community-based Agrotourism

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Abstract: Huangdong Village, located in Huizhou City, Guangdong Province, China, is a community-based agrotourism destination rich in agricultural resources. Tourism activities in the village are operated by five operators, including four local villagers who operate 4 Recreational Service activities and a Village-enterprise cooperation approach that operates 21 Recreational Service activities. However, the village faces challenges of low technical efficiency, characterized by high costs with limited economic returns. Issues such as inadequate resource management, suboptimal visitor experiences, and insufficient community cohesion in tourism development hinder its potential for sustainable growth, resulting in inefficiencies. This chapter explores the best practices to address these issues, including improving the Village-enterprise cooperation approach, enhancing visitor management, and increasing community participation. It also emphasizes optimizing collaboration among operators, granting local villagers greater participation rights, and diversifying Recreational Service activities to improve technical efficiency. Moreover, the chapter analyzes the economic benefits brought by tourism, such as job creation, improving the living conditions of local villagers, and increasing local economic revenue. In conclusion, the case of Huangdong Village provides valuable insights into enhancing technical efficiency and achieving economic sustainability in community-based agrotourism development.

Keywords: China, Community-based agrotourism, Entrepreneurial approaches, Guangdong province, Huangdong village, Recreational service activities, Rural area, Technical efficiency.

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INTRODUCTION

Rural tourism encompasses various types, among which community-based agrotourism is considered an important branch (Ammirato *et al.*, 2020). It has evolved from the concepts of agrotourism and community tourism, integrating both to create a more inclusive and sustainable tourism model (Ana, 2017; Bauer, 2011; Susila *et al.*, 2024). In general, community-based agrotourism combines agricultural resources with tourism services, offering visitors engaging and interactive experiences through recreational activities such as ecological tours, cultural performances, and handicraft workshops, which serve as key attractions (Rahmah and Djuwendah, 2021). While providing unique experiences for visitors, community-based agrotourism also generates new income streams for local communities, contributing to rural economic development (Jiang, 2022).

Currently, research on the classification of community-based agrotourism activities is relatively limited, whereas studies on the classification of agrotourism activities are more common due to the significant similarities between the two (Ana, 2017; Vukolić *et al.*, 2023). Farm-based activities, culinary activities, accommodation types, educational activities, and agricultural product sales are five commonly observed activity types in the development of community tourism destinations (Olya *et al.*, 2014; Putra *et al.*, 2019; Wiranatha *et al.*, 2024). Although community tourism activities share many similarities with agrotourism activities, community tourism places greater emphasis on community participation. Community-based agrotourism encompasses a broader range of activities and offers a more diverse set of tourism experiences (Thea and Mardy, 2023).

Many rural communities are technologically inefficient in managing these recreational service activities, which reduces economic returns and leads to wasted resources and decreased visitor satisfaction (Krisna, 2019; Roslina *et al.*, 2022). Technical efficiency measures how well resources are allocated and utilized to maximize output (Farrell, 1957). In the context of community-based agrotourism, efficient recreational service activities enhance visitor satisfaction while optimizing community resource use (Charmondusit and Vardhanabindu, 2017). Improved efficiency is crucial for sustaining the economic benefits of community-based agro-tourism (Badia *et al.*, 2023).

This study focuses on evaluating the technical efficiency of recreational service activities in community-based agrotourism. A case study of Huangdong Village identifies the main factors contributing to inefficiency and provides actionable recommendations (Djuwendah *et al.*, 2023). The structure of the paper includes a

literature review, a case study analysis, and a discussion of challenges and long-term impacts.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Development of Technical Efficiency in Community-based Agrotourism

Technical efficiency refers to the ability to achieve maximum output with a given set of inputs (Farrell, 1957). It is a key metric for evaluating resource allocation and utilization under constraints. In the context of community-based agrotourism, efficiency assessments typically consider factors such as workforce distribution, facility utilization, and land use efficiency (Charnes *et al.*, 1978). Methodologies such as Data Envelopment Analysis (DEA) and Stochastic Frontier Analysis (SFA) are commonly used for efficiency evaluations (Cioca *et al.*, 2018; Amirov, 2022). Total Factor Productivity (TFP) is also employed to analyze efficiency changes over time, particularly in projects with diverse inputs and outputs (Jiang, 2022). DEA, due to its suitability for multi-input and multi-output scenarios, has become a widely used tool for studying the efficiency of agrotourism activities (Cioca *et al.*, 2018).

The development of technical efficiency in community-based agrotourism has progressed through multiple stages, evolving from an early reliance on natural resources and traditional agricultural models with low efficiency to the introduction of modern agricultural technologies, and eventually to the widespread adoption of digital and intelligent systems Table 1. These advancements have significantly improved resource utilization and enhanced rural economic benefits. Before the 1980s, rural tourism primarily depended on natural landscapes and traditional farming practices, resulting in low technical efficiency and a weak integration of agriculture and tourism (Arru *et al.*, 2019). Labor distribution relied mainly on family members, facility utilization was low, and market promotion was limited to word-of-mouth, restricting the growth of rural tourism (Leonte *et al.*, 2016). Between 1980 and 2000, the advancement of modern agricultural technologies led to the emergence of new tourism models such as eco-farms and agritainment, strengthening the link between agriculture and tourism. The adoption of computerized management systems in farm and tourism operations further enhanced productivity (Galluzzo, 2022; Belliggiano *et al.*, 2020). From 2000 to 2020, the rapid development of information technology facilitated the integration of smart agriculture and tourism, with IoT, drones, and precision agriculture techniques improving resource efficiency, while e-commerce platforms expanded the market reach of rural tourism destinations (Sgroi *et al.*, 2018; Lupi *et al.*, 2017). In recent years, emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, big data, and blockchain have further optimized the management of

CHAPTER 8

Social Entrepreneurship and Community Development in Rural Tourism: A Review Study for Future Agenda

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Abstract: Thus, Rural tourism is often seen as a potential catalyst for rural development, boosting local economies, supporting rural culture, and combating social exclusion. Rural tourism, associated with social entrepreneurship, can address problems faced by territorial systems, such as unemployment and the depletion of resources. In this study, we attempt to flesh out the evidence of this ongoing convergence between social entrepreneurship and rural tourism and its promise to achieve sustainable community development goals. Social entrepreneurship fosters inclusive and sustainable entrepreneurship and employment through innovative business models. It provides opportunities for local people to promote cultural, natural, and recreational assets by using local resources and knowledge. This approach creates job opportunities in rural areas and encourages sustainable environmental practices. Still, a few things pose a threat, like fiscal constraints, poor structures, and a lack of enabling laws. This review offers a structured paradigm focused on community involvement, capacity building, resource mobilization, and sustainable practices. The future research agenda could explore longitudinal studies on impact assessments, gender-inclusive outcomes, alternative financing mechanisms, and enhancing rural tourism experiences through technology. When it works in synergy, social business, as a tool for social change, can provide a new and sustainable approach to rural tourism that focuses on social responsibility and the needs and interests of society.

Keywords: Rural tourism, Social entrepreneurship, Community development, Economic sustainability, Cultural preservation, Sustainable practices.

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INTRODUCTION

Rural tourism is one of the most effective community development tools, catering to the needs of developing economic sustainability, local culture, and social inclusion (Zenelaj and Pifti, 2013). Rural tourism and social entrepreneurship have a vast potential to solve urgent problems, such as unemployment, depopulation, and underutilized resources of territorial systems (Kummitha *et al.*, 2021). Putu Devi Rosalina *et al.*, (2021). This chapter explores the evolving convergence of social entrepreneurship and rural tourism, focusing on the transformative role of community development. Rural tourism Social entrepreneurship integration as a driver of sustainable community development Social entrepreneurship, a concept that involves approaching social issues with innovative and sustainable business models, represents an important tool for community-led initiatives in the countryside (Cannatelli *et al.*, 2012). Rural tourism can enable local populations to promote their distinctive cultural, natural, and recreational resources for economic gain by creating employment opportunities, encouraging cultural preservation, and sustainable practices within these communities (Long and Nuckolls, 2014). The Rural Social Enterprise Pioneers will demonstrate how tourism encourages communities to create, empower, build capacity, and be resilient by diversifying income in rural areas. For social entrepreneurship in rural tourism, there is limited scholarly attention given in the literature (Kummitha *et al.*, 2021; Bramwell, 2018; Jørgensen *et al.*, 2021; Dahles *et al.*, 2019). Ensuring ownership and sustained involvement from the community is already high on a social entrepreneur's agenda, so it would not hurt to put the plan down on paper. The training and capacity-building initiatives allow community members to improve their job prospects and startup capabilities. The efficient use of all available resources, such as local knowledge, cultural assets, and natural landscapes, can be the driving force behind the success of these initiatives (Cho, 2015; Giampiccoli, 2014). Incorporating social entrepreneurship within rural tourism faces many challenges, including financial limitations, restricted access to funding and investment, and a lack of supportive regulatory frameworks and incentives that could catalyze the scaling up of such initiatives (Ansari *et al.*, 2013).

Two of the biggest concerns include an inadequate infrastructure system: transportation, connectivity, and basic amenities play a huge role in determining the growth of rural tourism. However, the emerging opportunities can be leveraged to enhance the relationship between social entrepreneurship and tourism in rural areas (Liu *et al.*, 2023). Strategies for focusing on underserved rural destinations and crafting unique travel experiences while supporting inclusivity can be reviewed. The demand for conscious travel is increasing; thus, rural tourism can play an important role in promoting sustainability by applying

ecotourism principles (UNWTO Recommendations on Tourism and Rural Development 2024). This includes this when explaining how integrating digital technologies can deliver digitalization solutions that deliver the future of tourism, collaborating in services, experiences, and partnerships that help bring visitors to the doorstep in a more effective marketing world, Helping rural tourism businesses manage social entrepreneurs' landscape: this chapter suggested a structured framework design focused on the community approach on the four main pillars: community engagement, capacity building, mobilization of resources, and sustainable business models (Jørgensen *et al.*, 2021).

Objectives of the study

- To review existing literature on the role of social entrepreneurship in rural tourism.
- To analyze how rural tourism initiatives contribute to sustainable community development.
- To identify challenges and opportunities for integrating social entrepreneurship into rural tourism practices.
- To propose a future agenda for researchers, practitioners, and policymakers to maximize the potential of rural tourism through social entrepreneurship.

Methodology

A systematic review using the Scopus repository was first conducted using the search term “social entrepreneurship.” This search generated 5,377 documents, indicating a robust interest and research effort. However, the results decimated nine documents paired with the keyword “Rural tourism.” This stark difference showed a gap in research, and we know very little about the intersection. Thus, to mitigate this gap and ensure that all relevant articles found within this intersection were included, an additional search was performed on Google Scholar using the exact keywords. To ensure completeness, we also conducted this additional search to find relevant studies/explanatory cases that may not have been indexed with Scopus yet would help frame the discussion on how rural tourism could complement social entrepreneurship. We examined publications through Google Scholar with relevant research objectives on how social entrepreneurship may affect sustainable development through rural tourism. This method, which merges Scopus and Google Scholar outcomes, allows for a comprehensive overview of relevant literature, showcases the existing research gaps, and justifies this study. Analyzing and integrating these two data sources can provide a comprehensive understanding of the subject at hand, which can inform developing strategies leveraging social entrepreneurship as a catalyst for community renewal through rural tourism.

CHAPTER 9

Opportunities and Challenges for Rural Tourism in India: Unlocking the Potential of Rural Landscapes

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Abstract: Rural tourism in India presents a transformative opportunity to harness the untapped potential of the country's diverse rural landscapes. With its rich cultural heritage, traditional lifestyles, and picturesque settings, rural India offers unique and immersive experiences for travelers seeking authenticity and tranquility. This chapter explores the opportunities rural tourism provides, including job creation, economic diversification, and the revival of traditional art, crafts, and cultural practices. It also highlights its role in fostering sustainable development by encouraging environmental conservation, promoting equitable growth, and bridging the rural-urban divide. Despite these prospects, rural tourism in India faces significant challenges. Poor infrastructure, inadequate connectivity, lack of awareness, lack of skilled labor, and limited. Moreover, issues such as seasonality, the commodification of local cultures, and environmental degradation pose additional risks. This chapter delves into these challenges while presenting strategies to overcome them, such as fostering community participation, implementing sustainable tourism practices, leveraging technology for digital marketing, and forming public-private partnerships to enhance resources and infrastructure. It concludes with recommendations to create a sustainable framework that maximizes the benefits of rural tourism while minimizing its potential drawbacks. This holistic approach can help unlock the immense potential of India's rural landscapes, making rural tourism a pivotal driver of inclusive growth and sustainable development.

Keywords: Rural tourism, Sustainable development, Sustainable tourism.

INTRODUCTION

Indian rural tourism is an emerging industry of tourism engaged in the exploration of rural destinations' cultural, historical, and natural heritage. Since over 65% of India's population resides in rural India (Census of India, 2011), rural tourism is a

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great way to bridge the rural-urban divide by stimulating economic activity and generating employment opportunities while maintaining cultural sustainability. Rural tourism offers a way for tourists to experience the traditional practices of the people, their artistic skills, and craftsmanship that exist in India's villages, while promoting socio-economic development in the latter.

The importance of rural tourism in India is that it can offer a secondary source of livelihood to rural individuals, thereby preventing migration to cities and enabling the Conservation of traditional knowledge and practices. Tourism is also in harmony with the greater objectives of sustainable tourism as it promotes the values of ecological balance, community involvement, and Conservation of heritage. As per the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2020), "Rural tourism encourages tourists to experience the diversity of rural life, engage with rural communities, and participate in traditional cultural activities, thereby contributing to the socio-economic development of rural areas."

Definition of Rural Tourism

Various scholars and institutions have made attempts to define rural tourism within the Indian setting, highlighting its distinguishing characteristics and roles:

- The United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2019) defines rural tourism as "A type of tourism activity in which the visitor's experience is related to a wide range of activities in rural areas, including cultural, natural, and agricultural tourism."
- According to the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India (2020), "Rural tourism refers to any form of tourism that showcases the rural life, art, culture, and heritage at rural locations, thereby benefiting the local community socially and economically."
- Lane (1994) describes rural tourism as "Tourism taking place in the countryside, often based on rural landscapes, small-scale accommodations, and local traditions."
- Sharpley and Roberts (2004) emphasize that "rural tourism encompasses various forms of tourism developed in rural areas, including agritourism, ecotourism, and heritage tourism."

The Scope and Importance of Rural Tourism in India

India's large and diverse rural areas have a huge scope for rural tourism development. Rural villages across India are rich in cultural heritage, handicrafts, traditional farming, and nature, providing unique tourist attractions both within India and from abroad (Nagaraju and Chandrashekara 2004). The government has

realized the scope of rural tourism for economic diversification and has launched several schemes, such as the Rural Tourism Scheme and the Swadesh Darshan Scheme, to promote rural tourism.

Economic and Social Impact of Rural Tourism

Rural tourism is a strong catalyst for economic development through the creation of jobs, entrepreneurial activity, and higher levels of rural income. It integrates local inhabitants into the tourism chain and therefore creates jobs in the hospitality, handicraft, transportation, and agriculture sectors (Slee *et al.*, 1997). Through the establishment of small enterprises, including homestays, handicraft centers, and cultural performances, rural tourism increases self-sufficiency and economic viability among rural inhabitants (Frederick, 1993). Furthermore, rural tourism plays an important role in the Conservation of indigenous knowledge, traditions, and artistic expressions. By providing tourists with authentic rural experiences, made up of traditional handicrafts, folk performances, and actual culinary experiences, rural tourism conserves cultural heritage and reinforces a sense of local pride. Such cultural interaction increases mutual understanding between rural and urban inhabitants and thus encourages unity.

The expansion of rural tourism also leads to significant improvements in infrastructure. Increased tourist inflow induces investment in better roads, accommodations, health, sanitation, and internet connectivity, for the benefit of both tourists and locals. In addition, government and private agency support for rural tourism operations ensures sustainable development, thus preserving natural and cultural assets while ensuring economic rewards. Apart from economic dividends, rural tourism fosters social cohesion through increased joint involvement in tourism operations. Rural tourism also empowers downtrodden segments of society, such as women and youth, through the provision of economic opportunities and a means of showcasing their capabilities (Sanagustin-Fons *et al.*, 2018). This, in turn, promotes well-being in rural society, thus making tourism an important tool for overall and sustainable rural development.

Environmental and Cultural Sustainability of Rural Tourism

Sustainable rural tourism is designed to minimize environmental effects while, concurrently, facilitating the Conservation of natural landscapes and biodiversity. Ecotourism, agritourism, and heritage tourism in rural settings encourage responsible travel behaviors and appreciation for India's cultural and environmental richness (Ivona, 2021). The adoption of sustainable measures in rural tourism is critical in averting ecological degradation, minimizing carbon footprints, and encouraging the utilization of renewable resources (Shen *et al.*,

CHAPTER 10

Entrepreneurial Models in Rural Tourism: Sustainable Development Disparities in Nigeria and Malaysia

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Abstract: Disparities in entrepreneurship in rural areas of different countries help to determine the access to opportunities that can promote social equality within communities. The idea of bringing the entrepreneurial models to bear in rural communities to promote inclusivity is necessary. The ever-neglected and underdeveloped rural entrepreneurial activities lead to the debasement of locals and unconservative and stagnant socioeconomic activities and services. Therefore, addressing these significant challenges necessitates comprehensive strategies by looking into the possible entrepreneurial models. This research aims to mitigate practices of social inequality in resource development and service distribution through revitalization strategies of the models, comparing two countries, Nigeria and Malaysia. Employing a qualitative approach, the research utilizes secondary data analyzed with ATLAS. Ti version 8. The findings highlight limited access to development, healthcare, education, and adequate roads as essential services that could alleviate disparities, considering Wellness and Retreat Tourism. Recommendations include fostering collaboration among governments, local authorities, NGOs, and community members to provide tourists with the opportunity to experience agricultural life. A rural lodge located near a national park or nature reserve that offers guided tours, creating educational tours based on the area's history and culture infrastructure, provides essential services, fosters sustainable development, and empowers residents in decision-making processes, thus fostering a sense of inclusivity within the urban system.

Keywords: Disparities, Entrepreneurial models, Rural, Sustainable development, Tourism.

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Vipin Singh, Amrik Singh, Amjad Imam Ansari, A.K. Haghi & Nimisha Maheshwari (Eds.)
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INTRODUCTION

Entrepreneurship forms the cornerstone of societal development, rooted in the concept of innovation. The entrepreneurial models that have evolved over time stem from the classical idea that the owner of resources can assume the role of the entrepreneur, with ownership rights being fundamental. These models have since transformed into contemporary entrepreneurial theories in which innovation is key to identifying business opportunities (Stroe, 2020). In recent decades, rural entrepreneurship has emerged as a dynamic and expanding area of research. It has seen contributions from diverse academic fields, though it remains fragmented and lacks a clear framework. Despite the large body of literature, four principal themes have emerged: spatial dimensions, sustainability, income generation, and the obstacles to rural entrepreneurship (Shrivastava and Dwivedi, 2020).

According to the World Bank's 2012 report, Sweden's rural population accounted for 15.3%, underscoring the importance of rural areas for the country's future development. Previous research has mainly focused on the economic aspects of rural development. However, there is a growing need for fresh perspectives to better understand the challenges and opportunities faced by entrepreneurs in small businesses (Imedashvili *et al.*, 2013). One such perspective is ecotourism entrepreneurship, which is seen as a strategy for sustainable rural development. This approach creates job opportunities through the sustainable use of local resources while focusing on the internal development of villages. Additionally, factors such as physical infrastructure, economics, education and information, institutions, the environment, socio-cultural elements, and individual characteristics have been recognized as critical drivers of rural ecotourism entrepreneurship (Abbasi *et al.*, 2022).

The tourism industry is heavily reliant on entrepreneurship and cannot thrive long-term unless it is both sustainable and entrepreneurial. These three domains—entrepreneurship, sustainability, and tourism—form a conceptual, multi-layered model that offers a comprehensive approach for studying sustainable entrepreneurship within the tourism sector (Crnogaj *et al.*, 2014). Therefore, rural tourism entrepreneurship is seen as a powerful tool for empowering rural communities (Seal, 2016). As such, frameworks for assessing the impacts of tourism entrepreneurship development provide meaningful and well-supported explanations (Abbasi *et al.*, 2020). This highlights the necessity for a deeper understanding of rural tourism entrepreneurship, particularly through a comparative analysis of Nigeria and Malaysia, both of which are developing countries with significant rural potential.

CONCEPT OF RURAL ENTREPRENEURSHIP

Recognizing the impact of innovation in defining the characteristics of entrepreneurs is essential, as is the need for theoretical models that illustrate the conceptual and practical connections between the degree of innovation and effective growth (Elena *et al.*, 2015). Key factors influencing innovation in rural development have been categorized as governance, human resources, investment, research, marketing, communication, and coordination. Entrepreneurs who are actively engaged are seen as vital in providing local leadership to drive product development, packaging, advocacy, training, and development, all of which contribute to the overall success of rural tourism (Joppe *et al.*, 2014).

Entrepreneurship plays a crucial role in addressing socio-cultural and economic challenges in disadvantaged areas, offering effective solutions to improve rural business environments. Knowing the essential components of rural entrepreneurship is key to tackling poverty and deprivation while enhancing efficiency and development (Hosseininia and Fallahi, 2017). Strengthening the rural tourism sector requires a development approach that leverages both tangible and intangible resources alongside improved entrepreneurial initiatives (Almeida, 2017). Accordingly, the five pathways of tourism entrepreneurship—reflecting variations in livelihood strategies, critical capital, business models, innovation diffusion, and application potential—serve as significant factors in shaping rural tourism destinations, fostering innovation, and enhancing competitiveness (Dias and Silva, 2021).

Entrepreneurship Model

The development of rural entrepreneurship serves as a key strategy for accelerating rural progress by harnessing local resources. Entrepreneurship in rural areas is essential for generating new economic opportunities, contributing to the reduction of unemployment and poverty, particularly in rural communities.

Village-owned Enterprise: In Indonesia, among the government's initiatives to promote rural entrepreneurship is the establishment of village-owned enterprises, which support local economic growth in rural areas. This new model highlights collaboration among stakeholders to ensure the long-term sustainability of rural entrepreneurship (Dhewanto *et al.*, 2020). Also referred to as Rural-Owned Enterprises, these economic institutions play a crucial role in improving the welfare of lower-income communities. A management model for entrepreneurship-based Rural-Owned Enterprises has been developed, integrating tourism as a key attraction. The governance of these enterprises is reinforced by a structured organizational framework, designated leadership, policy guidelines, and clear operational procedures (Aryaningsih *et al.*, 2021).

CHAPTER 11

Integrating Renewable Energy Solutions into Rural Tourism Infrastructure

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Abstract: Rural Tourism is the form of tourism that involves the activities of rural people and their lifestyle. It focuses directly on the Art, craft, Culture, tradition, and heritage of rural people and their daily activities. This form of tourism highlights the economic development and sustainable growth opportunities for local communities. It emphasizes how renewable resources can decrease environmental impact and promote sustainability. By doing so, it also helps lower carbon footprints, enhances and preserves natural resources, offers eco-friendly accommodations, and supports the local economy. Incorporating renewable energy and its technologies into rural tourism can significantly reduce energy consumption while also creating economic growth opportunities for rural residents through green energy solutions. This paper underscores that with the integration of technology and renewable energy resources, rural communities—particularly those involved in tourism—can enhance their sustainability and establish green infrastructure.

Keywords: Carbon footprint, Environmental impact, Rural tourism, Sustainability, Technology.

INTRODUCTION

Integrating renewable energy solutions is the fundamental need for every sector worldwide. Yet nowadays, rural tourism is still struggling with this energy shortage and scarcity. We are concentrating on integrating renewable energy

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solutions into rural tourism infrastructure. This approach not only enhances rural tourism but also promotes sustainability, minimizes environmental impacts, and decreases carbon footprints. At the same time, it supports the development of rural tourism destinations and their infrastructure. By utilizing renewable resources alongside sustainable practices, we can benefit both the environment and local communities. There are some types of strategies that can be followed through the renewable energy solutions into rural tourism infrastructure through some audits and assessments for energy utilization. While such types of audits and assessments mostly fall on hotels, accommodations, guest rooms, Restaurants, tourist destinations, *etc.* These are mainly focused on sustainable practices to develop the rural tourism infrastructure. Embracing different renewable energy solutions in rural tourism can reduce the carbon footprint and enhance rural tourism more sustainably for those who are looking for an eco-friendly destination in rural tourism.

Background

The rural communities and destinations are creating opportunities to improve the environment and develop the local economy through renewable energy solutions. The rural destinations are especially positioned to provide a natural environment through natural sources and innovative natural energy solutions. These different types of energy solutions support the rural communities with their natural climate and sustainable environmental goals worldwide.

Integrating this energy solution into rural tourism has been utilised for many daily needs, such as agricultural use, use of water supply, and developing the infrastructure of rural areas. Harnessing the renewable energy solutions involves the use of solar energy, wind energy, Biomass and biogas Solutions, Geothermal energy, electric transport, charging infrastructure, rainwater harvesting, Community education, financial support, Sustainable tourism certification, observation, monitoring, and reporting, *etc.*, at the rural tourism destination.

When we are looking into renewable energy solutions for rural tourism infrastructure, it mostly falls on sustainability and budget-friendly solutions for the tourists and local people. This type of initiative not only provides the infrastructure for tourists as per their needs but also provides long-term sustainability and energy solutions. Through this initiative, it is providing a quality, eco-friendly destination with an improved global economy for the local people. From this paper, the rural tourism infrastructures will be assessed to be clean, budget-friendly, and eco-friendly renewable energy solutions in various rural tourism settings.

Significance

The integration of renewable energy solutions into rural tourism infrastructure yields significant benefits across multiple sectors, particularly regarding environmental sustainability and local community development. This approach can promote sustainability and protect the environment. By harnessing solar and wind energy, we can lower greenhouse gas emissions and mitigate the environmental impact of tourism destinations and activities. Integrating renewable energy solutions enhances the natural beauty of rural tourism destinations while minimizing ecological effects. This creates a compelling definition of rural tourism that attracts visitors. After the installation and utilisation of the renewable energy solution in the rural tourism destination, it can reduce the maximum use of electricity, especially by the use of solar and wind energy. This approach helps reduce costs while enhancing the skills and knowledge of employees involved in the work. Additionally, it establishes an ideal destination for nature-loving and eco-conscious tourists, making rural tourism infrastructure more appealing. This solution is particularly beneficial for areas facing challenges related to grid access, as it offers a reliable energy source and helps minimize electrical shortages for tourists during peak season. As a result, local communities can reap benefits and gain education through this infrastructure. By promoting a green environment with natural energy solutions, these rural destinations become more eco-friendly, providing improved lighting, heating, and cooling systems powered by renewable resources. Implementing these renewable energy solutions not only enhances the environment but also increases tourist demand for green destinations.

Objective

- To enhance sustainability by integrating renewable energy solutions into rural tourism infrastructure
- To reduce the carbon footprint and promote eco-friendly practices
- To support and create a local economy with lower energy costs
- To create an attractive green destination for tourists

Scope of the Study

Integrating renewable energy solutions into the rural tourism infrastructure mostly provides a great opportunity to develop the area like sustainability, green effects, natural environment, with eco-friendly practices for local communities' people and for tourists as well. Solar energy can be a great option, such as solar panels and solar farms at rural destinations for tourists. Through which the lighting, charging, and heating can be possible for tourists.

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